

Thousands Vote General Strike in N. Y. Hotels and Restaurants

(Continued from page 1)
 on strike 600 strong on Tuesday night as a protest against the discharge of Andre Fournigalt, an active union man in that haughtiest of the country's first class hostilities. The men of the Waldorf Astoria and their fellow union members considered the firing of Fournigalt as a demonstration of hostility on the part of Mr. Boomer, president of the powerful Waldorf Astoria Corporation and of the Hotel Owner's Association against the union's attempt to organize their employees.

A tremendous ovation greeted the Waldorf strikers as they entered the hall and took their places in the gallery.

Following Field, Smith, of the Waldorf delegation, was introduced among cheers of enthusiasm that turned the meeting into a striking

demonstration of solidarity for several minutes. Delegate Smith reported on the strike and asked the union men to make it unanimous if the bosses do not comply by Friday.

The chairman introduced Jas. P. Cannon as the next speaker. Comrade Cannon stressed the seriousness of the step to be taken, pointed out the spirit of fighting determination that inspired the resolution and told the meeting that the eyes of all labor in America were directed upon them, urging the men to carry the resolution and follow the example of the Waldorf vanguard with a militant struggle till victory. Sweeping bursts of applause interrupted his speech from time to time as he drove home the slogans for the strike.

Garcia, one of the Waldorf men who organized and led the strike

at that establishment, spoke in French and was also given a rousing reception.

General Strike Acclaimed

Ben Gitlow, who spoke next, dwelled on the proposed strike as a means of getting action from the NRA administration. It was by action and organization, he said, that the union had brought the NRA to the point of recognizing the Amalgamated union as the legitimate representative of the Casino de Pared workers who had gone out on strike. This decision had been made known only that afternoon. An organized general strike was the only means of the workers in the whole industry taking advantage of section 7a of the National Recovery Act, he continued. There are two kinds of recovery, comrade Gitlow exclaimed. One, "recovery" of profits for the bosses who throw

the vast majority of the people into constant misery. The other, "recovery" by the workers of the right to live like human beings. The general strike would be a great step in the direction of getting the latter kind of "recovery". Applause and cheers greeted the concluding remarks of the speaker.

The chairman then proceeded to the vote. At the call for a show of hands in favor of the resolution, all hands in the hall went up as one. Not a single hand was raised in opposition to the resolution. Secretary Fields then told the assemblage that this demonstration of unanimity was already in itself a very heartening stride towards victory and the meeting was adjourned.

FURTHER STRIKE NEWS
 A steady flow of new applicants

for membership poured into union headquarters to sign up, as strike news got abroad, from early this morning till late at night.

1200 men, working at night shifts in their hotels and restaurants, met in shop meetings all afternoon, and declared for strike action before the final vote.

Leaders of the Waldorf strike flatly denied the claims of Oscar, maitre d'hotel at the Waldorf Astoria, and of Mr. Boomer, made in interviews with newspapermen, that some of the workers had declined to join the strike. All regular employees of the hotel, including the night watch, walked out to a man, they declared.

The Geneva Club and the Vatel Club, fraternal organizations of

hotel and restaurant workers, today displayed signs indicating support of the Waldorf strike. Strikers stated that this action, coming surprisingly from Executive Boards which had helped the bosses in their aim to set up the company union "Guild", was the result of pressure from the outraged membership. A stormy meeting at the Vatel Club this afternoon, in which the rank and file forced through an open session, compelled a vote in support of the Waldorf strikers and for an early meeting to consider withdrawal from the "Guild".

The leaders of the A. F. of L. hotel and restaurant union, who have been vociferous in their proclamations of disassociation from the Amalgamated and the general strike, received a heavy blow against their scabbing activities at the

Casino de Pared, in which they have installed strike-breakers, by a decision from the NRA local labor board. The Labor Board has recognized the Amalgamated as the only representative of the Casino de Pared workers.

Among the hundreds who signed with Amalgamated today, was the complete crew of the aristocratic Marlborough Club at Madison Avenue and 63rd Street.

Strike meetings to arrange for picketing and map out local actions will be held in halls designated by the Executive Board in all parts of the city on Friday night. The exact location of the halls will be given in leaflets to be put out by the union Friday morning. Watch for the strike leaflets.

Notes Of A Journalist

"NOT ONLY, BUT ALSO..."

In 1920, in order to save the transportation system from collapse, the party Congress, upon Trotsky's recommendation, instituted the so-called political-sections over the railroads, that is, specially picked and militarized party organs, placed over the transport trade unions and the local party organizations. This emergency measure produced results: the transportation was improved. But the workers took a hostile attitude to these political-sections which infringed upon the trade union democracy. At the beginning of 1921, these political-sections were removed and the normal order restored.

Today the political-sections once again rule over transportation, and this time with unrestricted powers. In a public report, the head of the political directorate, Zimin, was not at all optimistic in describing the situation in the railroads, and in particular the results that have been achieved by restoring the political-sections. Everywhere Zimin uncovers the activities of the Whites, enemies and saboteurs; and after each exposure, he never fails to point out that "all this took place under the very eyes of Communists."

The reporter does not offer any explanations for this unconcern on the part of Communists. As Zimin puts it, the administrative reforms introduced by the political-sections meet with resistance at every step. "It must be stressed—says he—that sabotage is current not only among the links below but also within the directing apparatus of the roads and the N. K. P. S." In this casually tossed off phrase there is impeccably expressed the soul of the present Soviet regime. During the initial years after the Overturn, the havens of sabotage were the bureaux, departments and administrative organs and staffs of all sorts that were manned by the old specialists. The struggle against sabotage was led by means of control from below, through the rank and file workers, that is. Today this inter-relationship has been stood on its head: What incenses Zimin is that sabotage takes place not only amid the workers—this, so to speak, is in the nature of things—but also in the highest staffs whose mission it is to preserve the regime. Without desiring to do so, the political dictator of transportation has defined faultlessly the political bases of the entire Stalinist dictatorship.

THE DRIVE FOR QUALITY

The editors of the Pravda explain nothing, criticize nothing, but sit on a high horse. They "call to attention", "place in full view", and "demand immediate explanations". Since the question relating to the quality of products is on the order of the day (or, to put it more precisely, has been for a number of years), the Pravda, in a tone that brooks no contradiction, issues regulations how to improve steel and calico and transportation.

But what about the quality of the Pravda itself? Evidently there is no one around to "call to attention" and "place in full view". In the meantime, the quality of this newspaper, which has at its disposal exceptional resources and possibilities, is extremely low. It is printed on paper of the worst sort; from among the pile of newspapers over the entire world, the Pravda stands out by its ashy color and porous tissue. The print is dreadful, the typography ferocious. But worst of all is the newspaper itself as a newspaper. Instead of news—an incessant din. Instead of political articles—administrative decrees. Every column seeps with fulsome fawning to the "genial leader", the "greatest theoretician" and so forth. And all this is written in the style of a frustrated functionary who has been put in charge of "ideology" because he is good for nothing else.

THE CLASS ENEMY

Toward the end of October, the engineers, technologists and workers of the mine, Butovka, in the Don region, made public the successes they had achieved, in a letter addressed to Stalin. The first

victory—they wrote—did not come easily; the agents of the class enemy, disguised in a miner's blouse, offered us rabid opposition, and in the darkness of the mines they worked their dark deeds, trying to put the machines out of order, to flood the shaft, and to obstruct the veins.

"The class enemy disguised in a miner's blouse" is none other than the dissatisfied worker. The extract from the letter shows with tragic eloquence that here the matter touches not isolated and demoralized elements but a mass struggle, a civil war in the mines. If the victory over sabotage did not come easily, it was because the victors did not have mass support. The authors of the letter cherish no illusions as to how stable the "victory" is under such conditions. "We are not letting matters rest here—they write—and we cannot let them rest. We know that the class enemy and the saboteurs have not been crushed. They have gone into hiding in order to bide opportune time to execute their destructive work."

Despite the Byzantine terminology that they are compelled to use, the authors of the letter point out clearly how and why the worker is turned into a class enemy. Enumerating the victories, the letter admits casually that "in the sphere of improving the living and cultural conditions... we still continue to lag behind." What is hidden behind these words? We may gather a partial answer from their inventory of successes and victories: "Individual gardening has been widely extended in our mine... Our cadres are fully assured of vegetables for the entire winter." This last phrase is printed in bold type in the newspaper, to stress the extent of the victory. Individual gardens imply that after a hard day's labor, the worker must dig a way at a little plot of land in the manner of a Chinese peasant; as a consequence of this double labor, the working cadres, the mining aristocracy, that is, are assured of vegetables for the entire winter.

Such is reality even when it is seen through the prism of a laudatory official dispatches!

CLEANSING THE PARTY

A good crop in the Ukraine was needed, and Roosevelt had to recognize the Soviet government, before the Stalinist bureaucracy would graciously consent to call a party Congress, after an interval of three and a half years. The party Congress is intended not to determine the policies to be pursued under the difficult conditions but to sing hosannas to the leaders upon these episodic successes.

But even given the conditions that we mentioned above, a preparatory cleansing of the party was felt needed prior to the calling of the Congress. The cleansing took place under various criteria. No doubt, a certain number of rascals and agents of the class enemy were cleaned out. Under the present regime, it is impossible to judge the percentage that has remained in the party. But the chief aim of the chistka was to terrorize the party prior to the Congress. Of course, the party is sufficiently cowed even without this. But who can tell? Might not the dissatisfaction brewing and collecting in the masses break out into the open in the form of a discussion before the Congress... Therefore, to prepare for the Congress not a discussion was in order, but a cleansing. This time, everybody was to be kicked out who had ever evinced the slightest inclination toward party discussion.

One needs at least three pairs of spectacles to judge the course of the chistka by the Pravda. These people have become so attuned to lying that they cannot halt their proclivities even in those instances where a minute pinch of truth would rebound to their advantage. But, in any case, one thing is clear: "Trotskyism" won't let the bureaucracy rest in peace. "Trotskyism" is no longer referred to as crushed, buried and so forth; on the contrary, the tendency is rather to exaggerate its forces.

Workers Oppose Mendieta Regime

Through all the articles and notices on the chistka there runs the red thread of "Trotskyism", and thereto in a double guise; on the one hand, enrolled as "Trotskyites" are those bureaucrats who have been most compromised and whose hides can no longer be saved; and on the other hand, all criticism of bureaucratism in general falls under the category of "Trotskyism". The two symptoms mutually exclude each other. But the Stalinist apparatus can dispense with neither of them; it is necessary that the guilt for the crimes of the Stalinists who are most hated by the populace be loaded upon Trotskyism; but, on the other hand, it is equally necessary to remind those who have a tendency to reflect and to be critical and who are courageous that if they let themselves be carried away, they will be dealt with as beings Trotskyites.

The Pravda in summing up the results of the cleansing bewails the obstacles that the apparatus has to meet with on the part of the enemies of the party. "It is characteristic—writes the paper—that in all these activities a very active role is played by those Trotskyites who did not disarm. They stream to the chistkas from different places and in groups, and they are ready to crawl out of their skins in order to whitewash their crimes, saving them for the future work. Commonly, they resort to masked methods, instead of coming out openly they sow their seeds of counter-revolution in the guise of asking questions, interjecting remarks, and offering explanations and so forth."

These words ring with the inimitable indignation of a frightened bureaucracy: the enemy sows the "seeds of counter-revolution" by means of ordinary questions, remarks and explanations. How tense must be—how saturated with lies, that is—the inter-relationships between the workers and the "Cleansers" if it is necessary so viciously to bound ordinary questions, the moment that they threaten to unveil the mechanics of the leadership!

—ALPHA.

Gems From Stalin

Along with greetings to the tenth anniversary number of the *Daily Worker* from the Metropolitan News Co., and a big "ad" by the Modern Investment and Loan Corporation calling on workers to yield up their money to these leeches, the enterprising editors of "America's Only Working Class Daily Newspaper" include the speech Stalin made at the Congress of Soviets five days after Lenin died. It is called *The Heritage of Lenin*.

To really appreciate the political period and how it compares with his line today one should read the whole of the original. Space prevents us from reprinting it. We beg the indulgence of our readers if, from the oyster, we choose only the rarest pearls.

"Lenin told us more than once that the respite we have gained from the capitalist states may be a short one." Trotskyist contraband! "Lenin never regarded the republic of Soviets as an end in itself,"—say, like building Socialism in one country—"He always regarded it as a necessary link for strengthening the revolutionary movements in the lands of the West and the East, as a necessary link for facilitating the victory of the toilers, of the whole world, over capital. Lenin knew that only (1) such an interpretation is the correct one, not only from the international point of view, but also from the point of view of preserving the republic of Soviets itself." Hear! Hear! Picture of a man polemizing against his own future position!

"In departing from us comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of consolidating and expanding the Union of Republics. We vow to you, comrade Lenin, that we will also carry out this bequest of yours with honor."

"In departing from us comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of remaining loyal to the principles of the Communist International. We vow to you, comrade Lenin, that

Workers Oppose Mendieta Regime

On January 15 Grau resigned as provisional president of Cuba. He was succeeded by Hevia, formerly one of the representatives of the Nationalist party in the Revolutionary Junta in Miami, and secretary of agriculture in the Grau cabinet. Hevia occupied the seat of power for only thirty hours. He resigned and was succeeded by Colonel Carlos Mendieta, who is the present incumbent of the presidential office.

Mendieta is the leader of the Nationalist Party which does not differ essentially from the Liberal Party of Machado. Inasmuch as Mendieta was selected by a conference of representatives of all the bourgeois and revolutionary petty bourgeois factions, in which the hand of Caffery can be seen, the new regime constitutes a development of the Cuban situation, to the right. As first announced Mendieta's cabinet—four members of the Nationalist Party, two of Menocal's party, outrightly reactionary, three members of the ABC and two without party affiliations—has the same rightist stamp.

Workers Oppose Mendieta

The workers are reported to be opposed to Mendieta and his cabinet, but there is no serious struggle against him yet. Guiteras, Grau's Secretary of the Interior, who evidently had presidential ambitions attempted to stay the swing to the right and elevate himself to power. He threatened a general strike and has actually succeeded in calling out the Railway Workers Brotherhood, affiliated to the Pan-American Federation of Labor, a creature of the American Federation of Labor.

Washington has already granted recognition to Mendieta. Apparently it is Roosevelt's purpose to strengthen Mendieta, as he hoped to strengthen De Cespedes. But, as yet, there is no indication that Mendieta will be more successful than Grau in dealing with the extremely delicate and complicated problems of Cuban politics and economy.

In trying to balance himself on the tight-rope of compromise between American imperialism and the Cuban proletariat Grau fell into the abyss. All his complicated maneuvers did not advance the solution of the problems of Cuban society an inch. Mendieta is setting out to accomplish what the petty bourgeoisie could not do. In our opinion he will be as little successful. Although he has made no announcement of his government's program his task is dictated to him by the situation and his imperialist masters. It is to harvest the crop.

Cuban Sugar Problem

That is now the vital question for the American imperialists and their Cuban bourgeois subalterns. Cuba is equipped to raise and grind between five and six million tons of sugar a year. In 1924-25 the crop was five and a half million tons; in 1929 it was five and a fifth million tons and more than four million were exported. Under the Chadbourne restriction plan the crop for 1932-33 was set at two million tons with only one half destined for export. In these figures is contained the story of the frightful misery of the Cuban masses.

Cuban sugar has to compete in the United States, its chief export market, with cane sugar from Porto Rico, the Philippines, and with beet sugar from the Western states. Quotas are assigned to each external source of supply. Conferences to establish the quotas between the beet growers of the Western states

Workers Oppose Mendieta Regime

and the Secretary of Agriculture are being held now.

Deadline For Harvest

The second or third week in January is the deadline for beginning the harvest if the cane is to be cut and ground in time. Delay in getting the harvest under way may mean an even smaller quota for Cuba than the 1932-33 figure with corresponding increases in the quotas of Cuba's competitors. Failure to harvest the crop will mean no taxes for the government; an empty treasury, inability to pay the principal and interest on loans, still more drastic cuts in the public services, difficulty with the army over wages, etc. etc.

Grau's failure to make even a beginning in establishing conditions for a harvest profitable to the American and Cuban owners explains why he made his exit at this time. It is Mendieta's assigned task to drive the workers off the plantations they have seized, and recover for the capitalists the ground they have lost to the workers through the strikes for higher wages and better conditions.

Before Mendieta can harvest the crop he will have to come to grips with the workers. In the period following Machado's fall they have made some improvement in their economic position, extended their organizations and repossessed themselves of a spirit of confidence in their ability to struggle against the enemy. In fact they have reached a point where they can threaten the entire social system. And they have given ample evidence of the fact that they can and will fight. They are not likely to surrender their hard-won gains without a struggle. Such is their temper that they strike at a moment's notice. On hearing a report that Mendieta intended to return to their American owners the property of Morgan's Cuban Electric Company, seized by Grau's government, the workers struck.

So far is Mendieta from being the bourgeoisie's ideal of a strong man that he forced the company's officials to agree to a committee to settle the differences between the company and the workers. Mendieta has proclaimed the postponing of the Constituent Assembly from April 22 to a future, undetermined date. That is likewise a sign of weakness.

High Mark of Struggle

The high water mark of the workers' struggles was reached in the strike of the electrical workers of the Cuban Electric Company just before Grau fell. The company refused the workers' demand and they struck. The Grau government seized the property. But the workers ran the plant. Here was realized on a microscopic scale the first stage of the Cuban proletarian revolution—nationalization of industry under workers control of production.

The formation of a right government means that the tide has begun to set in against the workers. But it is not yet too late to advance on the road to nationalization. No decisive battles have been fought. The workers are undefeated. But this is practically their last opportunity in the present period. The government is weak. To harvest the crop it needs class peace. Moreover it has made a public demonstration of its weakness. Now is the time to hit it hard. Preparations should be set on foot for the general strike for nationalization of industry under workers control of production. The demand should be raised for the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly. At the same time the Soviets should be organized in the towns and on the plantations.

The Cuban Revolution vitally concerns the proletariat of the whole world. The Cuban workers need support and assistance. The silence of the Communist International is nothing short of a betrayal. Moreover, the Communist parties outside of Cuba cannot mobilize the workers against American imperialism. That is our task as revolutionists and internationalists. Together with all those workers' organizations which are willing we must begin the organization of the movement to demand **Hands Off Cuba!**

—T. STAMM.

Rackets at the McAlpin

New York.—Conditions today in the kitchen of the Hotel McAlpin are typical of those existing in the majority of hotels of this type in New York City. Therefore, I believe that I am justified in declaring that I speak not only for the food workers in the Hotel McAlpin kitchens, but for the thousands of unorganized men and women who are exploited in hotels all over the city.

Food workers in the McAlpin kitchen are divided into three departments. First there is the chefs department which includes the chef, assistant chefs, butchers, vegetable cleaners, fish men, etc. Before the owners of this hotel signed the NRA blanket code, the women in this department were receiving \$13 to \$18 per week; the men, \$16 to \$32, depending on the length of time they had been employed. Out of approximately 45 workers in this entire department there were two men who received the \$32 maximum. At that time one of these men had been employed for 17 years; the other for 20.

Wage Cuts Under NRA

Now that NRA "is in effect" everybody in the chefs department receives \$2 to \$6 less, with the exception of those women who now, as before, receive \$13. The two old-timers who were getting \$32 have been cut to \$26. The majority of the men today receive \$15. (These salaries do not apply to the chefs, who usually work under contract.)

The kitchen staff has now been cut to a fraction of what it used to be. Although it is true that business has fallen off during the past few years, the men are now required to do twice as much work as formerly. If you are hired as a butcher, you must become, during rush hours, a vegetable cleaner, porter, or whatever is required of you. This shortage of workers prevails throughout all the departments of the kitchen.

Next down the scale is the stewards department, composed of dishwashers, silver men, porters, etc. Here, too, the National Recovery Act had an adverse effect upon salaries. Before the NRA workers in this section of the kitchen received \$60 per month; under the NRA they get \$50.

The third department includes all workers in the hotel employees dining rooms and kitchens—salary \$45 per month.

Unpaid Overtime

All kitchen-help work, ostensibly, a 48-hour week. But due to the insufficient number of workers, the entire kitchen staff is compelled to do overtime very frequently—without pay. Once in a great while a worker is given an hour off, but that is a rare occurrence.

The kitchens are very old and poorly ventilated. Because the kitchens are built into a sub-basement, there are no windows. Improperly built air shafts and a few electric fans are poor substitutes for up-to-date ventilation. The place is always stuffy and uncomfortable; the summer months are torture.

The hotel employment offices prefer to hire Cubans, Porto Ricans and Mexicans, or any foreign-born workers who are not citizens, or have come into the U. S. illegally. There is a reason for this preference. The majority of these foreign-born workers come from countries which have lower standards of living than this country, and so are accustomed to working hard, saying little, and earning next to nothing. The non-citizens live in constant fear of being discovered by immigration authorities and all of them know full well the consequences of objecting to any abuses imposed by the hotel regulations. If they do not keep their mouths shut they are reported to the immigration authorities and stand in danger of being deported.

Compulsory Deductions From Wages

Workers receive pitifully little, but even that is subject to numerous compulsory deductions. Racket Number 1 is carried on by the Chefs' Club, an organization run on the same order as the Tammany clubs. The charter members in-

Rackets at the McAlpin

clude most of the chefs in the New York hotels. Your job is never secure unless the chef receives a few dollars every now and then. Initiation fees in the Chefs' Club are from \$60—to as much as they can get. Old men have to pay at least a hundred dollars, because it is harder to place them in jobs. A man who can't get a job through the regular employment offices of the hotel can always get one through the Chefs' Club (if he can afford it) at the expense of somebody who is unable to give his chef enough. At one time the French monopolized all kitchen jobs because the majority of the chefs were Frenchmen. When the hotels discovered, that Cubans, Porto Ricans, etc., were "cheaper", the French lost out. The Chefs' Club is no longer so "exclusive"; they take anybody's money now—and the racket still flourishes, undisturbed.

Racket Number Two

Racket Number 2 is carried on by the individual chefs in each kitchen. In the McAlpin, the chef is affiliated with numerous charitable enterprises. Several times each week he collects money from all the help for "missionaries in China", "orphan asylums in Squeadunk", or "starving peasants in Armenia". Everybody knows whose pockets that money lines, but no one dares refuse.

Rackets Number 3 and 4 are carried on by the hotel owners themselves. For two years the Hotel McAlpin generously pledged support for the Gibson fund for the unemployed. For those two years a sum of money was systematically deducted from the salaries of its employees. This was advertised by them as voluntary contributions.

The last racket is the most vicious and costly of all to the workers. Several years ago the Hotel carried sickness insurance for the workers and paid the premiums. Now, the Hotel still carries the insurance, but at \$1.15 to \$1.65 is automatically deducted from every worker's salary each month, to pay for the premiums. Such expensive insurance should confer many more benefits upon the workers than it does. The only benefit received is two-thirds of your salary if you are ill for two weeks or more. A worker ill for less than two weeks receives nothing.

Discrimination

Discrimination of the meanest kind is practiced on the workers in the different departments of the kitchen. The men and women who prepare and serve the food for the kitchen and hotel help receive less pay, although they work the same hours, and just as hard as the others on the kitchen staff. There are two dining rooms for the hotel help: one for members of the chef's department, chamber maids and hotel porters, and the other for dishwashers, silver men and kitchen porters. The former get food that is slightly stale and none too good, and the latter get food that is extremely stale and sometimes inedible.

—MCALPIN WORKER.

TROTSKY'S ARTICLE

The Militant has discontinued the publication of comrade Trotsky's article on the Soviet State and the Fourth International. The whole article, which is of considerable length, will appear in a very short time as a pamphlet, issued by the Pioneer Publishers. Inquiries as to price and orders should be addressed there. Complete details about the new publication will be given in an early number of *The Militant*.

OPEN FORUM

SUNDAY, February 4 — 3 P. M.

"THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE NRA"

Speaker: V. R. DUNNE

1530 E. Franklin Ave.
 Minneapolis, Minn.

ADMISSION FREE