

Trade Union Strategy

Unionism the Main Issue

Unionism—the right of union organization and union recognition—is the crucial issue involved in the San Francisco general strike. But it is not confined to this one section of the battle front, it is the most burning issue before the American working class today. At the same time it is also the most sharply contested issue wherever the differences between exploiters and those who are exploited come to a head. In this San Francisco is in the limelight.

The right of union organization is by no means an established fact. Union recognition is not something that can be taken for granted. On the contrary, it is accorded only wherever the workers themselves secure it through the force of their collective efforts.

Recognition Still to Be Won Many fierce struggles to secure the right of union organization are recorded in American labor history and yet the issue had to be fought out again and again. History once more repeats itself. The present sweep of union organization has brought large numbers of new recruits into unions formerly existing only in skeleton form and now infusing them with new life and new hope. New unions have grown up in formerly unorganized industries. A strong stimulus was undoubtedly provided by the NRA, at least in its early stage. But it did not at all establish the right to organize nor secure recognition of the unions. That this right can be assured only through struggles is verified once more by the San Francisco general strike. It was verified before by the struggles in Minneapolis and Toledo and in its reverse form by the treacherous sell-out in the automobile and steel industries.

On the Pacific Coast the Longshoremen and the other maritime workers in their battle of almost three months duration demanded this elementary right—union recognition and union control of hiring halls. From the outset the contest centered around this issue. The owners of the maritime industry refused to yield and refused to concede even this elementary right. Supported solidly by the whole of the capitalist interests and their government, the San Francisco section assumed the offensive to endeavor to settle the issue to their own liking through their armed forces. The concentration of troops and police became a direct threat to the very life and existence of the unions.

Efforts to Smash Strike Ever since the general strike began, the combined forces of the capitalist interests and their government, stiffened their offensive and assumed a more aggressive attitude. No longer was the object merely the defeat of the demands for union recognition and control of hiring halls, the whole scope extended to one of smashing the strike, put a stop to the organization developments and to crush the unions. Watchful of any weakening of the general strike, the capitalist forces prepared, as stated in the New York Post dispatch, to challenge the workers, that "they can return to work only upon a basis to be determined by the employers."

Could it be more clearly and more brazenly stated that the issue of the right to union organization is a definite class issue? Additional

The New International The long awaited first issue of the New Internationalist is now off the press. It is an issue that every member and sympathizer should have. Beginning with a stirring editorial for the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL which gives the general perspective of the magazine, it contains two documents by Comrade Trotsky: The Testament of Lenin and The "Clementine Thesis" and the Party Regime, a document of great historical importance. Comrade Cannon contributes two analytical articles on the Minneapolis Strike and the Socialist Party Convention. A prominent German Communist under the pen-name of A. Max, writes on the Legend of the Vienna Commune—a castigating analysis of the treacherous role of the Social Democratic leaders in the recent Austrian events. Then there is an editorial on the Soviets and the League of Nations, an article by Jack Weber on New Trends under the New Deal; Strikes and the Economic Cycle by Alfred Weaver; The Decay of the Stalinist Party by Arne Swabeck; Engels on Bimetallism, which is particularly interesting in view of the monetary crisis. An article on the internal political situation in France serves to illuminate the recent events there. It also contains a book review section, a survey of current periodicals and numerous miscellaneous items. All in all, it is a splendid issue which shows great promise for the future. Every effort should be made to secure it the widest circulation. All inquiries should be addressed to The New Internationalist, Station D, P.O. Box 119, New York, N. Y.

The Betrayal of the Coast Strike

(Continued from Page 1)

An order permitting scab trucks to move. When the teamsters came out in sympathy with the waterfront fight, they had seen to it that no trucks rode the Frisco streets without a permit from the union. This procedure was also followed the first two days by the general strike committee. The bosses obeyed, and only trucks with union permits moved. The milk, bread, produce and other trucks exempted from the strike had to have union drivers. But after the resolution and the Longshoremen's Board interpretation, the bosses decided they could flout the union's orders, and non-union drivers drove trucks. Especially the Standard Oil Co. and other gasoline companies ran scab trucks. The teamsters and longshoremen got busy, and chased trucks off the street, and closed gas stations as far as San Mateo. When for provocative purposes, two filling stations were opened early Wednesday less than a block from the Longshoremen's headquarters, with National Guard sentries guarding each station with rifles, bayonets and machine guns, scores of carloads of pickets went cruising to prevent shipment of fuel into Frisco. Whatever reasons the general strike committee might have about sending municipal car workers back, and liberalizing issuance of truck permits to include owner-driven trucks, it was essential to the salvation of the marine strike, let alone the general strike, to keep scab trucks off the street. That's why the teamsters came out, independently and before the general strike. Had the general strike never come, the teamsters themselves would have seen to it that no scab trucks rode the street.

It was this vital spot of the strike that Vandeleur and his gang stabbed mortally. The small executive committee, without even consulting the big general strike committee on this fundamental question, issued an order "releasing gasoline and fuel oil supplies to the general public." While every other embargo lifted previously had provided for union truck-drivers, this most strategically important factor included no such provision. With the result that scab drivers are filling the streets. This has made the union permit ridiculous, and bosses are tearing them off with impunity. On Tuesday no truck rode the streets without a union permit. Wednesday evening few permits were in evidence. With these two moves, first the demoralizing resolution, then permitting scab drivers, the labor fakers have broken the back of the general strike. They have also largely nullified by the second move the value of the teamsters' strike.

Waterfront Strike Not Over But this by no means ends the waterfront strike. Even with the National Guard in control, not only of the waterfront but also of a large part of the surrounding territory, including markets and warehouses, it is a lie that steamers are being loaded and unloaded to any degree approximating normal. They can't get enough scabs on the Pacific Coast to man the ships and service them, nor trucks to bring and take away the freight. If the waterfront workers and the teamsters stick it out, they can still win. The teamsters over-rode their President, the reactionary Mike Casey when they went out. But the rank and file are an inexperienced lot, with no militant core to hold them together. By one trick or another Casey may still drive them back to work.

The longshoremen are solidly behind Harry Bridges, but he is a lone militant. The other marine unions have no experienced rank and files. If Joseph Ryan, strikebreaking head of the I. L. A.—word has come that he is driving the men on the East coast to unload ships loaded here by scabs—and Andy Furuseth, white-haired "old man of the sea"—and like the old man of the sea in the story, he's got his legs

lightly twisted around the neck of the Seamen's Union—if these two ghouls start driving the marine workers back to work, can Harry Bridges with a handful of men around him keep them fighting? **Stalinist Responsibility** If the marine strike fails, the Stalinists will bear a heavy responsibility for it. By going right on with their splitting policy of building the Marine Workers Industrial Union, they have done a perfect job for Ryan, Furuseth and the bosses. The existence of the M.W.I.U. has meant the isolating of splendid, fighting militants who should have been in the midst of the marine workers within the unions. Instead of that, most marine workers have come to hate these militants for being in a dual union. The M.W.I.U. was like a man sticking his chin out for a sock, and when the troops and vigilantes raided its headquarters, the result of the whole splitting policy was that the striking thousands did not come to their help. The failure of the strikers to defend the M.W.I.U., and the condemnation by the Vandeleurs of the red raids, would have been absolutely impossible if it weren't for the splitting policy of the Stalinists. The confusion bred in the minds of the workers has also enabled the police and troops to march right into groups of pickets and soup lines and arrest militant strikers. There have been plenty of fights in which strikers fought to save arrested men, but defense has been spontaneous and unorganized, whereas if the M.W.I.U. members had been all along inside the regular unions, this raiding of strikers would have led to a tremendous and organized defense of the rights of strikers.

It's just beginning to dawn on the masses of strikers what the Vandeleurs, Kidwells, Caseys, are doing to them. It's a known fact here that the Standard Oil Co. has contributed two million dollars to the Frisco Industrial Association's open-shop fund, that almost every firm in town has signed a pledge card covering five years' contributions to this strike-breaking fund, and that the banks are discounting the pledge cards for the full sums in cash, so that the Industrial Association has a terrific batch of cash, and is out to smash the union movement here. The workers are contrasting these known facts with the backing-down of the union leadership and are finding that the answer to this contradiction is: Fight Now or Never.

If the teamsters and waterfront men hold out they can still save the union movement here. —C. G. E.

Bosses' Terror (Continued from Page 1) civilians, who had dressed like workers and circled through the crowd, struck like lightning. Several speakers resisted and were reported to have been beaten. Later dispatches in the World Telegram (July 18) by the United Press further exploded the worker-vigilante myth and revealed the tie-up with the government authorities: "Just Hoodlums," Declare Police by EVELYN SEELEY, World-Telegram Special Correspondent.

SAN FRANCISCO, July 18.—"America Today," announced the red and white poster bared to view at the first broken window of the San Francisco Worker's School, demolished in yesterday's first general strike violence. "America Today" was a lecture to have been given last night by Jim Branch, tall young Harvard economist and head of the Workers School. Students said Branch probably would have spoken of strikes and violence, the struggle between capital and labor. But last night's newspapers told the story for him. We were having a sandwich at

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Brass Check Journalism The Boss Press and Frisco

A venomous attack on the San Francisco strikers is being carried on by the nation-wide capitalist press.

The Los Angeles Times of July 16 editorially called for the crushing of the strike by force, calling it an "insurrection" and saying: "There is but one thing to be done—put down the revolt with any force necessary." The Sacramento Bee, and the Oakland Tribune editorially hailed Governor Merriam and Mayor Rossi's strikebreaking efforts. The San Francisco Chronicle, declaring the "radicals" are in control of the strike, says the "majority voted for the strike in fear of radical thuggery."

The newspapers are enthusiastically backing the red scare and the raids on groups of strikers being carried on by the police, the bosses' vigilantes, and the National Guard. Before the raids even began on Tuesday, every San Francisco newspaper carried front-page editorials proposing crushing of all militant elements. With eight-column streamers, the yellow Hearst press throughout the country is hailing the mass arrests of militant strikers as seizures of "Reds." The two great national press services, the United Press and the Associated Press, are reporting the raids as raids on "Communist meeting places" and those arrested as "Communists." The N. Y. Times of July 17 attempted to convey the impression that the raids were made by longshoremen. The N. Y. Post was the only paper whose headlines made it clear that strikers were being arrested.

The Myth of the Food Shortage The red scare was merely the latest of a series of propaganda methods by which the capitalist press has been aiding the bosses against the strike. The worst of these was the myth of a food shortage in Frisco.

In San Francisco, where the public could learn from Strike Committee statements, from strikers, and from the bread, milk and other food trucks passing freely in the streets, that the Strike Committee had made every possible arrangement before the strike began for adequate distribution of food, the myth of a food shortage could make little headway.

But the rest of the country, unable to see what was going on in Frisco, were systematically propagandized by the nation-wide capitalist press with preposterous stories about famine in the strike area. In this attempt to alienate the masses from the strikers, the "liberal" press played its part. As early as Saturday noon the N. Y. World Telegram carried the screaming headline: "Refugees Flee Coast As Food Shortage Grows." This was the main point of many stories. But when an enterprising reporter checked up outgoing traffic, and found few more than usual were leaving the city, the fact was buried inconspicuously in the later stories.

Food "Riot" Scares While usually the capitalist press maintains a dead silence about the fact that every day in the week desperate unemployed break into food stores, two or three usual instances of the same kind occurring, not in Frisco but in Oakland which was as yet not involved in the strike, were magnified beyond recognition into a fantastic picture of enormous mobs. The ultra-respectable and ultra-reactionary N. Y. Herald Tribune ran on Monday a four-column scarehead: "Famine Menaces San Francisco; Stores Looted in Strike Crisis." The ever so "liberal" N. Y. Post went even further, carrying the same day an eight-column streamer: "Coast Mobs Riot For Food."

This was based on an Associated Press dispatch. A careful reading of the three column dispatch disclosed that one grocery store was involved.

Thus the press attempted to create sentiment against the strikers by falsely picturing them as preventing food distribution, and also to create an atmosphere of rioting mobs and chaos and violence, in order to justify the use of violence against the strikers. In addition, the press pictured the strike as a blow, not at the oppressive capitalists, but at the whole population. These various ways of creating antagonism against the strikers were cleverly woven together. One example is the lead of the Associated Press story of July 15: "The general strike began to swing down upon the 1,300,000 residents of San Francisco's metropolitan area accompanied by vandalism and violence." Another example is the United Press story of July 14, in the N. Y. World Telegram, which said that "unions met to deliver the most devastating blow organized labor has ever dealt to an American city."

Anything Goes in Brass Check Press The same dispatch says not a word about the Strike Committee's arrangements for food distribution, but instead makes it appear that the unions are attempting to prevent food distribution: "Governor Merriam was ready to declare martial law to assure food deliveries, while leaders said that a general strike and a complete stoppage of

business was inevitable." Anything, any trick, to make propaganda against the strikers!

"All the News That's Fit to Print" Freed from the restraint of approximating the facts in the news columns, the newspaper editorials were bitterly hostile to the workers. The "fair-minded" N. Y. Times of July 16 said the aim of the strike was "to inflict such hardships upon the people of the city that the authorities will yield"—leaving out entirely the fact that it was a strike against the bosses. The Times hailed the red scare and provocative attacks of the Mayor and Governor, saying their "attitude and proclamations" are correct and commendable, "said the strikers had already alienated public sympathy" and talked lyingly of the strikers' "determination to keep food and supplies from hospitals and children. Such an open effort to hold it up the city must be prepared to resist with all its might."

The N. Y. Tribune's editorial of July 16 was a tissue of lies. The attempt to separate the longshoremen from the other marine workers, and the bosses' refusal to abide by a vote for representatives of the seamen—issues fundamental to the strike—are thus described: "The most difficult issue . . . is a rather minor one about the recognition of some weak maritime unions in trades in which an election cannot be held at once because most of the workers are at sea." Then the Tribune, like a magician making rabbits disappear, does away with all the issues of the strike: "It is a strike about very little, which presumably means that it is not really a strike at all, but the discharge of pent-up emotions," etc. Then, like true bourbons, the Tribune blames for the strike—"the Roosevelt labor policy!" The Tribune, no doubt, would like to outlaw labor unions altogether, instead of, like Roosevelt, chaining labor to arbitration boards, special mediators, extra-special mediators and the rest of the clap-net class collaboration machinery.

A "Pro-Labor" Paper As hostile as the bourbons is the N. Y. World Telegram's editorial of July 16, but it finds itself subtler arguments. It denounces the general strike as "suicide for organized labor" because "the basis of organized labor is the union contract and any union which engages in a sympathetic strike can do so only by breaking its own contract with its employers." In other words, it denounces unions for breaking the clause often inserted in contracts by bosses to prevent sympathetic strikes—a clause, by the way, which the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, to which the Telegram belongs, has always forced from the Typographical Union. Then the Telegram goes on to say that in a general strike "the public is certain to be wholly hostile. The public, indeed, is made a direct party to the conflict. It fights to save itself." Certainly the World Telegram, for all its false claims to be pro-labor, has been doing all it can to make the public hostile.

By Tuesday the elaborate arrangements made by the Strike Committee, to insure adequate food and other necessities, had become too obvious to ignore, and after two days of ranting about famine the truth began to get through the press, but distorted as in the World Telegram by such phrases as "labor was slowly relaxing its grip on the throat of Frisco."

Militant Builders

ONE MORE WEEK TO GO No Club Plan Cards Sold After August 1st. BUY YOUR CARDS NOW! 4 six-month sub cards for \$1 Cards not sold in clubs of less than 4 at a time. Pittsburgh Branch bought 12 cards last week and A. S. New York City, got 4. This brings the total subs of the second drive to 390. Take advantage of the last week to stock up on the club plan cards. Invest a few dollars and have these cards on hand so as to be able to give an opportunity to such workers as cannot afford to pay the full rate to buy a six-month sub for 25c. After August 1st a six-month sub will be 50c. Only those who have bought the cards before August 1st will be able to get the special rate.

Bound Volumes We have just received from the binders a number of Bound Volumes of the Militant, Series No. 3 which includes all issues of the Militant from January 7, 1933 to December 30, 1933 inclusive. Copies can be obtained from Pioneer Publishers, 84 E. 10th Street, at the phenomenally low price of \$1.50 plus twenty-five cents for postage. Regular price is \$2.50. Order your copy immediately before our supply is exhausted.

