Need for Unity Is Leading Issue at Coming Steel Workers Convention

Trend of Steel Union Depends On Action of Progressives

convention of the Amalgamated As- tion for the trade union movement sociation of Iron, Steel and Tin Upon the solution of the problem Workers is scheduled to convene at it presents depends the firm estab-Canton, Ohio. It will have before lishment of unions in other basic it issues of unusual importance. and mass production industries. Chief among them is the question of whether or not to make a serious attempt to organize the industry. Of course, this question involves the fate of the union it- the A. F. of L. Executive Council self. It is now split wide open by on the one hand and the progresthe expulsion actions of the union sives on the other. Without the officialdom, and any approach to progressives nothing will be done the problem of organization would about organization, and there is of necessity be connected directly little inducement for the steel scabs go through. with the issue of restoration of workers to join the union. The unity.

In these as well as in a number of other questions that are pending before the convention the progressive forces are naturally particularly intérested. Much depends on how well they are prepared.

We need not expect that the official union leadership of Mike Tighe and his cronies will be deeply concerned about the organization of the industry. All past experiences have refuted any such expectations. Nor can it be expected that they should show any interest in restoring the unity of the union. For them the present sination means the elimination of a militant opposition. many of the regularly constituted lodges now operate under a suspended charter as a result of the high handed action taken by the Tighe administration following the Feb. 3 progressive conference.

A total of 78 local lodges were represented at this conference, called jointly by several district organizations of the Amalgamated Association. All were since declared liable to expulsion. A much smaller number have been actually expelled; but they were the ones a duplication of the sorry role operating in the most important played by the Stalinists in the exsteel mills. Most of the leading tent to which they influenced recent progressives have been read out of events in the steel workers' union. the organization.

All indications so far point to the strenuous exorts being made by the union officials to unseat all delegates coming from these lodges. If successful that would remove from the agenda any serious consideration of the organization of the industry.

So far Tighe has succeeded in dealing the union a heavy blow. From its promising revival and growth last year it has been reduced to the old negligible tin mill division. However, the issue is not yet finally settled. Much still depends on what the progressive forces are ready and able to do.

All Promises-No Action

craft union officials insisted that to back up the fight. not one penny of the A. F. of L. funds be spent on any campaign be instituted inside the Amalga-

On April 23 the sixtieth annual | steel industry remains a key ques-

Unity Chief Issue But the organization forces are divided owing to this open breach between the Tighe officialdom and progressives therefore have as their main duty the fight to restore the unity of the union. Unity in this case means to fight for reinstate-

In our opinion there can be no evasion of this vital issue. Any attempt to obscure the fight for reinstatement can only introduce new confusion. This appears to be the case in the announcement coming from the sixth district, calling upon the steel workres to join the rank and file Amalgamated Association. It fails entirely to make clear to the steel workers that the first job is to fight for unity of the union forces. It attempts to put before the steel workers something that is unreal, when it is necessary to name things by their right name. When speaking to the steel workers today in the name of the locals that have been declared expelled, or calling upon the steel workers to support them, it is necessary that the support be conditioned on carrying on the fight for reinstate- raises a hand in welcome. Annie, ment, that is, carrying on the fight the little floor girl is here. Little to restore the unity of the union.

Stalinist Parades

The other policy will become only They were chiefly interested in parade maneuvers to further their own momentary aims with no concern for the actual organization of the steel workers. In this they closely linked to the Home Relief posedly interested in welfare work, of Public Welfare have invented a became a purely disruptive force Bureau and its maladministration has stood calmly by. preventing the progressive move- of relief. The population of Harlem mass basis.

tively to the steel workers. A enough to have work earn miser- social pressure which groups, with- malpractices? Of course, the gen- wreck the Progressive Miners of union to be successful in the indus- lable wages. Yet only 15 percent of in that precinct's territory, can ex- eral answer is that it has behind America. The alliance of local and try must show that it can mobilize the population is on relief. the power of solidarity and of united action of the workers. The Amalgamated Association leadership has not shown this at all. But the progressives have the opportun- work or relief. ity still. Their fight has just begun. Those who looked to the A. F. of It should have reasonable prospects L. for any support to the organ- once they solidify their own ranks white landlords (the bankers) rents cretion of the individual supervisor. ization of the steecl workers' union and establish a genuine mass basis are 40 percent higher in relation to have been disappointed. Nothing which is easily possible. The first has come of its much heralded San- step toward an accomplishment of Francisco convention decision to this objective is to take up an eforganize the steel industry. It is fective fight for restoration of unreported that plans for organization ity of the union, that is, to fight were laid before the February Ex- for reinstatement while keeping the ecutive Council meeting; but the expelled locals intact as the force

The fight for unity will have to which did not assure separate un mated Association, through the still ions for the machinists, pattern existing lodges and the organized makers, electrical workers and the districts as well as through the other crafts. The plans were contacts available in the A. F. of L. city central bodies and all the Still the organization of the way up to the Executive Council.

Solidarity Forever

By FLORENCE WYLE

below is written by a participant in the Los Angeles Millinery Workers Strike reported elsewhere in this issue. The characters are written about living strikers.

The tiny line moves slowly 'round and 'round. From tired throats comes a weary wasp of ers with eager hearts would venture forth this cold California on strike! morning to watch and see that no

A voice is raised. Big Tony shouts and the line straightens; weary voices are refreshed anew as and unity . . .

. . . Solidarity For-e-e-ver!

Big Tony gave the shout. Big Tony is a blocker. He takes the felt and straw, and steams and shapes them and brings forth the lines in the hats that later on saleswomen will gushingly call-"Panama", "Bolero", "Rhumba". days he made his eight to ten dollars a day. But Tony sighs. He works much harder now and faster. His once proud shoulders are bent and lifeless. His boss has cut his wages down 'till Tony does not know how he can ever feed the many mouths at home. So he is out on strike. At home his poor bambinos cry some more-but Tony is on strike!

"Little Annie"

The line is filling. Big Tony is right! When the boss first saw her he was glad because he thought heat of the strikers' cry . . . that he could brow-beat her. And Poverty and Discrimination

It is almost unbelievable but a

Death Stalks the Streets

Price-levels are, even on essen-

tial commodities, like bread, 7 to

30 percent above the city level,

Is it any wonder, then, that

four or five Negro families are

erowded into a one-family apart-

ment with no heat, no bathing

facilities, no air-no room to

The death-rate for tuberculosis

through the city is 60 per 1,000

dead. In Harlem it is 250 per

1,000, and in the "lung-section"

between Madison and 5th Aven-

ues, 116th Street to 125th Street

In 1934, the Harlem Hospital

in examining clients found that

6,000 had syphillis and had to

turn away 5,000 of these because

it had no adequate facilities to

Home Relief Discriminates

precinct supervisors, a Mr. Court-

ney and a Mr. Swarz, have been

transferred to different sections of

the city after their open discrim-

had brought a strong protest from

chaos, find it difficult to prove resi-

Special Rules for Harlem

the Employees Association.

What have the Home Relieb Bu-

the rest of the cities.

it is 275.

treat them.

The interesting story printed | so he could-and did. But Annie's brother is on the bum now that he is black-balled after the seamen's strike and Annie's father can still be called upon to tell the story of the Railroad strike - so Annie knows the ways of bosses and when they called the strike Annie stopped her endless scurrying between the various benches and went out with the others. Her boss yelled and song. It is very early. Only strik- raved and then was dumbfounded because she didn't listen. Annie is

The Old-Timer

The line is full now, even to old Morris. Morris can tell you all about hats—(if you understand Yiddish because Morris speaks no they sing their song of strength other tongue). For you see, Morris has been bending over the machine for thirty years. So now his shoulders are humped and misshapen and his chin has made a wellworn niche in his chest. Many times has Morris been on strike and few were victories. But Morris wouldn't scab and is the first to leave his shop. Each defeat finds him more misshapen, more hump-Tony is a good blocker. In the old backed, more weary than the lastbut Morris is on strike!

Surging Hopes

'Round and 'round the endless line goes ,and no longer weary. sure that now he'll have to wait another year before he's got enough for college; and there is Joe and Jake and Mike and Everyone-all enough to see the common struggle. the situation in the strike fieldeyes and minds of the craven scabs and bosses are full with the steady . . . Solidarity For-e-e-ver!

Allard Calls on the P. M. A. Convention For United Struggle in Coming Coal Strike

The following is the substance of a speech delivered by comrade Gerry Allard at the scale convention of the Progressive Miners of America which met at Gillespie, Ill., Feb. 12-17. Comrade Allard made the speech extemporaneously in the course of discussion on the question of the strike situation in the Illinois coal fields which involves about 8,000 miners victimized because of their opposition to John L. Lewis and because of their allegiance to the Progressive Miners Union.

Allard's Remarks

This question is, indeed, the most rucial question to come before the scale convention of our union. As view it, the question whether our union is to survive depends upon the policy which we set forth on the strike situation. Thousands of our members have been on strike for nearly three years. What they have gone through is almost indescribable. it would take an artist of unusual gift to portray the woes, sufferings and tribulations which our people have undergone in the past many months. The remarks of delegate Centers, of Kincaid, Ill., moved me very much. He is from There is Evelyn whose mother has the striking territory. He spoke T.B.; and there Manny who is quite with unusual eloquence as to the conditions in the strike field, and dare say he expressed the fervent wishes of the rank and file there.

I do not choose at this time to with their little woes but each big deal with the emotional aspect of Their hopes are surging now and although that is important. That they are singing. And the ears and part of the question has already been covered.

What I want to do is to attempt in the little time alloted me to analyze the situation to date and

new color. On the basis of color,

cause of its theory in regard to the

applicants are classified as white,

on that basis present proposals for | President Keck has raised the the American coal miners.

Two Roads

There are two roads open to us at this time on the strike situation. Firstly, to militanize the strike and carry it forward backed by the full resources of the P. M. of A., or, secondly, to plan to call off the strike and strategically retreat in an organized and honorable fashion. There is no third road nor middle road. We must frankly face the situation and set forth a program just as courageously as the rank and file have fought during

the many months of bitter struggle. I said there were one or two roads open for us at this time. Being a Marxist, a revolutionist, it is my opinion that we should militanize the strike, revamp the Women's Auxiliary along the original lines, augment our forces by seeking the organizational support of the powerful unemployed movement in Illinois, seek allies in the rank and file of the United Mine Workers of America, and go forward once again with the same determination that built this union. This is the road of struggle, not the road of least resistance. This is the only correct road, and a program contrary to the one that has been pursued in the last

Unholy Alliance at Work Today's newspapers report that

twenty months.

Lewis is to begin negotiations with his cronies in Washington-the coal operators and the NRA agents. Significantly timed with this and the meeting of our convention here this week is the fact that newspapers report that federal authorities from the department of justice are to begin wholesale arrests of miners in connection with a mysterious "\$1,000,000 bombing ring" which has for months terrorized the countryside of the Illinois coal country. And along with this, we have the intensified efforts of Ray Edmund- and automobiles, are great. son, Lewis spear-head in Illinois, to win our membership back to the Now we must examine the possi-The question which Marxists United Mine Workers. These deof Negro misleaders, agents of Tam- ing their conditions through the many or Fusion, can not be over- Progressive Miners of America. We utopian and quack ideas. Secondly, ence. We must, if we are to live party which, although it has con- acy by wholesale mobilization and centrated in Harlem for years, be- preparation for strike if necessary.

A union is a medium by which They are as follows: Negroes has accomplished nothing. wage earners fight to advance or Nor is the Unemployed Union free protect their economic interests. It from criticism. Its tactic of iso- is not something to be set on a and five day week and \$6 basic And it is always an easy task to lated case-work, conferring with the pedestal and worshipped blindly. A wage. discover a "case-work" reason for Home Relief Bureau like one char- union is a fighting instrument, day a petty-bourgeois who happens to ity organization, with another, has by day, to protect our conditions the workers within its ranks. Our when the situation is favorable.

comrades in the W.U.U. have got | On this point I might state that relief are discrimulated against to propagandize and agitate for there is a great possibility for us when it is a question of filling a mass action. It is the only way to gain the six-hour day and \$6 work-relief project. This particu- the discrimination can be smashed, basic wage scale. And more than The Negroes all over the United that, we have the chance to increase trade unions. One of the main tasks go by. The Workers Party must our striking forces out of the rut undertake this task by intensifying to complete victory.

Rank-and-File Holds Key

The key to the situation is the rank and file of the Illinois miners strong. irrespective of what union they belong to. We might differ as to what union we want to belong to, linois miners to finally consummate but I know that there can be no the aforementioned program. disagreement as to the need or the shorter work day and the \$6 basic scale. We coal miners know that that will save the situation for our we cannot continue to live even already striking brothers. This is meagerly in the face of the steady the program that will get us our inflationary measures of the federal government and subsequent sharp rises in the cost of living all down the line. This is a problem for the rank and file of both the United Mine Workers and the Progressive Miners. On the basis of this need it is possible for us to arrange some sort of unity on the demand for shorter hours and more pay.

and to raise funds. Socialists, Workers Party, trade unions, frahas not only functioned in the ternal groups, etc. have been drawn

The example, and the direct aid, of

the successful termination of the question: "How are we to help the strike. An issue which will deter- striking miners by striking the mine whether our organization- miners that are working under our the Progressive Miners of America, jurisdiction?" In answer to this is to perpetuate itself as a medium question let me state that the P.M. for the defense of the interests of of A. is attempting for the first time, and rather late at that, to meet the strike problem. A convenion of this kind to discuss the strike situation should have been called twenty months ago. There was a greater chance for us to rejuvenate our forces then there is now. It would have been easier to answer Keck's question twenty months ago. Now the forces of reaction have had their breathing spell. They have gained new courage and are knocking at our doors with unusual boldness.

Strikes Looming Everywhere Let me point out further, in anwer to Keck's question, that there are other forces and developments to look at then our own situation. Look at the steel, rubber, textile and auto situation! Strikes are again on the order of the day. No greater opportunity have the Illinois miners had than the present one. Strikes will ogain boom up from one end of the country to the other. There is tremendous pressure being brought on the government for social security legislation and the 30-hour week that is unequaled. The working people of this country are beginning to feel the thrill of their power as never before. The Progressive Miners of America can lead the way for the shorter work week. It's going to take strikes, and plenty of them, to complete the pressure for enact-

ment of the six-hour day. And if we take advantage of this situation we will steal the thunder from John L. Lewis. We can start the ball rolling that will not only save our own situation but immeasurably increase our standing with the workers throughout the United States. A spark now on the shorter work day will have profound repercussions in the American labor movement. The possibilities of spreading the strike to other coal sections of the country and other heavy industries, such as rubber

bility of advance. The proposition we have contracts must be repudiated. We must initiate the movement for less hours and more pay with unflinching determination.

Plan of Action Proposed My time to speak has elapsed. Let me say this, however, in conclusion. I have hurriedly scribbled several points which briefly embodies what I think ought to be done to win our demands and the strike of 8,000 of our members.

1. Strike every mine in Illinois and elsewhere for the six-hour day

2. Offer to the members of the United Mine Workers of America a proposal for joint action on the basis of these and other demands. 3. A referendum vote of all II-

linois miners to determine what union the Illinois miners want to belong to. 4. Lifetime compensation for the dependants of all victims slain

in the mine war. 5. Release all prisoners now

serving prison sentences. 6. Unity in Action of our forces with the Illinois Workers Alliance which is now organized 150,000

7. Call on extraordinary convention of the rank and file of all Il-

This is the program that will win for us. This is the program demands. There is no other course. If there is I would like to hear it before this convention adjourns.

WORKERS

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Plentywood Leads Drive

Plentywood has led the way in real achievement on the circulation drive. By March 31 the drive will reach the half way mark. All branches should have at least a 50% score by that time.

Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Davenport, Louisville and Youngstown should have no difficulty in surpassing this 50% mark during the next

Greater effort is needed in the other branches and districts. New is of interest to point out that two York has not given the drive sufficient support. Chicago and Philadelphia are still behind. These Branch es must get solidly in line with the campaign and push it to a success-

does his part can this be done. Bundle orders have increased also, but not enough. New bundles are going to California, Oregon, Arizona, Illinois and Canada, but here again the New York branches have fallen down. Their bundles have decreased. Fortunately this decrease has been more than com- Rubber, Auto and Steel Industries". lief must establish two years resi- vigilante terrorism, of a raid on pensated by the gain in the rest of Grand Fraternity Building, 1626 dence in the state the last year of strike headquarters, of the arrest the country. However, it is about Arch Street. time for New York to get busy again and show the way.

ful conclusion. Only if every one

What is your answer? What are you going to do about it during the next two months?

The answer must be a vote of support expressed in increased subs and bundle circulation. Your scores here will indicate your willingness to lay a solid basis for the movement.

Donations, Contributions

From G., New York....\$5.00 From H., New Jersey .. 2.00 This does not begin to be enough. for regular pledges of weekly or The date has been postponed from where except in Harlem. Only Tobin, Green, Woll and Co. For the signal for a standing cheer the Northwest to a new high level. monthly amounts. Send them now the 13th because of the S.Y.L. dance through pressure and workers' hours after the revocation of the everywhere in Fargo. to the Business Manager:

NEW MILITANT 2 West 15th Street New York, N. Y.

WHAT TO ATTEND

Philadelphia, Pa.

March 31, Sunday evening-A .J.

New York City March 31, Sunday afternoon, 2:30 live jammed together, because they N. Y. headquarters, 2 West 15th St. Report on Pittsburgh Conference. April 6, Saturday evening-Tri-

Branch Dance. Headquarters, 2 W. 15th St., 3rd floor. The date has been postponed from March 30. April 13, Sat. evening-Spartacus

Youth League Dance.

Rates are nominal.

April 20, Sat. evening-Chess

ment from attaining a genuine is, roughly, 250,000. Calculated on Harlem, the Bureau gives the Ne- black, and Porto Rican!

The recent riot in Harlem is | Negro petty-bourgeoisie and sup- | discriminatory artists of the Dept.

BEHIND THE HARLEM

In face of the high rents in a basis of 65,000 adults capable of groes the minimum rent. To illusholding jobs, 80 percent are unem- trate: Every precinct supervisor is must ask is: How does the Home velopments are no accidents. They to retreat at the least opposition nine mass basis can appeal effect ployed and almost all who are lucky allowed a budget in relation to the Relief Bureau get away with its are well organized and planned to of the coal operators with whom ert. A strong unemployed move- it ail the repressive machinery of federal agents along with Lewis and ment means more blankets and capitalism. Briefly, however, the the coal operators is a conspiracy simple calculation reveals that 65 clothes, etc. The rents vary within enormous influence of the handful to prevent the miners from improvpercent of the 250,000 are without a small margin: the simplest exany means of support either from ample is a single man or couple; they can be allowed \$14 to \$16 a looked. . They spread confusion, cannot meet this situation by sil-In Harlem where the real-estate month (1 or 2 people get the same is almost exclusively owned by amount) deepnding upon the dis- the impotence of the Stalinist as a union, counter-act this conspir-

The Iron Starvation Rule In Harlem the iron rule handed

down to the investigators is pay \$14. Of course higher rents can be paid for "case-work reasons". know the local ward healer, but noticeably sapped the militancy of and advance the cause of our class not for a Negro worker.

Further, the Negroes on homelar discrimination is, to a degree, rooted in the A. F. of L. bureau- States are a crucial problem for the prestige of our union and probcracy's stand against admitting the American revolutionists. We ably in the course of the fight for Negroes on an equal basis into the have little European experience to shorter hours and more pay, pull of progressive unionists must be to hammer down this bar.

New Color in Spectrum Naturally, the same discriminations are used against the Porto jured-the Negro workers and ten-Ricans. As a matter of fact, the ant-farmers.

reaus done? In the first place it Dan Tobin Rats On Fargo Union

(Continued from Page 1) ination against the Negroes on the attacking the union, Miles Dunne, staff of the Home Relief Bureau and the local leadership.

This treacherous blow to the Fargo workers came in the tenth The Bureau has deliberately re- week of a heroic struggle against the Associated Industries. tected thousands of Negroes on the the reactionary Associated Indus-Muste, National Secretary of W.P tasis of no residence proof. Under tries of Fargo-Moorhead. The unwill speak on "Coming Struggles in the Wicks Law an applicant for re- ion has held firm in the face of In every part of the city notar-

ized letters saying that Mr. So and A dance class has been estab- demonstrations have notarized charter, workingmen and women To raise money to finance the Local 574 has been the decisive lished and is now meeting regularly statements been accepted. The walked around stunned and grim appeal to the State Supreme Court, factor in the Fargo resurgence. on Tuesday and Friday evenings. Urban League, and organization with rage. A provisional commit- and to further the struggle, an ac-

March 23, at 4 P.M. Three hours later the new union had recruited four hundred members, and a queue of men and women was still waiting down the steps from the headquarters and out on the street. Today the Fargo-Moorhead Local 173 confidently faces the bosses across the picket line, with every assurance that the Local can quickly force a favorable settlement from

its work among those who are the

most oppressed and downtrodden,

the scorned, the insulted, the in-

N.P.L.D. Attorney At Work Partisan Labor Defense, the Fargo strikers have had for the past two weeks the services of one of the which must be spent in New York of practically the entire section of crack labor lawyers of the country, City. The Negroes, because they Local 371 out on strike, of the most Francis Heisler of Chicago, a form- functioning in the Twin Cities and vicious attacks from the Fargo er I.L.D. man. Since Heisler has throughout the state of Minnesota. P.M.—General Membership Meeting. are evicted wholesale and have no Forum and from local pulpits, of a been in Fargo, he has abruptly The Workmen's Circles in this terplace to preserve letters, cards, etc., recent injunction prohibiting the checked the high-handed tactics of ritory are appealing to their membecause thousands never live in one union and all its friends from doing Judge Paulson and States Attorney bership for financial aid for the place long enough to register and anything but sit still and breathe. Bergeson. A 30-day extension has Fargo strikers. Tag days, dances to vote, because the rude hand of It was precisely at this point that been granted the 16 defendants now and card parties are being given in poverty compels them to live in the bureaucratic Mr. Tobin chose under sentence from 2 to 6 months Minneapolis to popularize the fight to perform his signal service for hard labor for 'inciting to riot". the employers by revoking the All strikers are out of jail for the Farmer-Laborites, comrades in the charter and bitterly attacking the first time since January. Heisler Tobin's attack on Local 173, by courtroom but has also aided strik-, into the defense movement. York District membership. Head- So knows that the applicant has far the strongest and most militant ers to get relief, and participated In short, it can be truthfully said quarters, 2 West 15th St. All paid lived at such and such addresses union in North Dakota, was fol- in the organizational work. In that the conduct of the Fargo ments from \$360 to \$900—to men lowed by exactly the opposite re- short, he is everything that a labor strike has contributed to raising and women, according to classes. 16th will be honored at this effair. cepted as residence proof. Every- action from that hoped for by attorney should be. His name is the entire trade union movement in Monthly assessments from 45c to

Through the efforts of the Non-

ended by the numerical very few tee began recruiting on Saturday, tive Fargo Defense Committee is INVLITIM THE OL SHINDSHOS