

Comments On Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness

By BILL REICH
Wisdom in Washington...
The New Deal is "delicate social surgery," a "third economy somewhere between Individualism and Socialism," declares Professor Tugwell to a New York group of teachers...

America the Beautiful...
Bayonets glistened, bands blared patriotic airs and six army planes whirred over the City of Brotherly Love as 10,000 soldiers marched in observance of Americanization Day...

The State of the Nation...
The motion picture "Black Fury" was barred from Chicago because the strike scenes might "give people ideas..."

State of the World...
Sir Herbert Lawrence, chairman of Vickers, Ltd., munition-makers, states: "Orders on hand are satisfactory..."

St. Louis Gas Workers Stand Firm in Strike

Second Month of Fight Finds Picket Line Solid

ST. LOUIS.—It is now more than a month since the Gas House workers went on strike. Demanding as one of their major demands the closed shop they are determined to stay out until that and all other demands are granted.
"Among the things that have contributed to the successful carrying on of the strike," we quote from one of the issues of the Daily Strike Bulletin, "are: 1. The solidarity of the strikers themselves and the spirit of the rank and file. Not a single union man has gone back to work since the beginning of the strike...

Capitol News Letter

The Meaning of the Wagner Bill — A Noose for Labor

By JACK ELDER

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The Senate Committee on Education and Labor has just concluded its prolonged series of hearings on S. 1958: Wagner bill to "outlaw" company unions. No doubt the Committee will report the measure out favorably; but that should hardly be a cause for rejoicing among the rank and file of the labor movement.
First, the bill as written is an invitation to the A. F. of L. to entangle itself more thoroughly than ever before in the complex arbitral machinery for which Section 7a is responsible. The A. F. of L. has plunged into the present network of boards head-over-heels. To the accompaniment of one "moral victory" after another, Green and Co. have succeeded in suppressing all strike movements to date: steel workers, automobile workers, aluminum workers, soft coal workers, and so forth.
Second, although the bill as written is prima facie innocuous, it is likely to be deadly poison to the right to strike before the Senate Committee gets through rewriting it. Do not forget what happened to S. 2926 in 1934. The original draft of the Labor Disputes bill expressly safeguarded the right to strike. The rewritten version—the National Industrial Adjustment Bill—called for compulsory arbitration...

Miners Honor Slain Fighter In Mass Funeral

Swarm into Springfield to Protest Mable Murder

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Five thousand pickets, members of the Progressive Miners union, retreated from this city after they had failed to stop the Woodside mine of the Peabody Coal Co. from operating. The sudden swarm of pickets was precipitated by the murder of Edris Mable, a Progressive miner. Mable and several other miners were shot down by Ray Edmundson, U.M.W.A. state president, and two other company gunmen, who broke up an Easter day affair at the miners' hall.
Hundreds of miners came from as far south as Saline and Franklin county to join the picket army. For days they swarmed around Springfield, sleeping on floors, eating piece-meal here and there, until finally misleadership on the part of the right wing caused them to leave in disgust.
The miners had a splendid opportunity to see the bankruptcy of the Keck leadership. From the outset of the march Keck's second lieutenants were telling everyone not to mention the officers of the union in connection with the picketing as it might result in their arrest. The miners were flabbergasted at such tactics and they wanted to know what officers in a union were for besides drawing handsome salaries.
Edris Mable's funeral was truly an impressive affair. Fully ten thousand miners and the Women's Auxiliary members marched solemnly for three miles as an escort to the cortege. A sixty-five piece band from Gillespie, Wilsonville and Bend played at the rites. It took over an hour for the huge funeral procession to pass one given point.
Mable was employed in one of the Progressive mines. He was the father of five children. Although an avowed right winger he had great courage and most all the hot struggles found him in the heat of the fight. The left wing miners came from many parts of Illinois by the hundreds to pay tribute to this worker, the 18th Progressive miner to die in the long mine war.
MONTGOMERY, Ala. (FP).—Ten hours a day in the cotton-cropping season, instead of 14 and 16, are demanded by the Share Croppers Union of Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.
The Workers Party in Toledo and Detroit held mass meetings Sunday and Monday nights respectively, addressed by A. J. Muste. A clear presentation was given by Comrade Muste of the issues in the strike, its national significance and the course to be pursued in order to achieve victory. His warning on the dangerous influence of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy has had a powerful and responsive appeal.
Despite the efforts of the capitalist press in Detroit and other auto centers to keep news of the Toledo strike from its pages, word is spreading rapidly. Toledo strikers managed to evade Michigan state police and Detroit police for a sufficient length of time last Friday to place a brief picket line before the General Motors office building in Detroit and spread copies of "Strike Truth" in various G.M.C. plants. Further action in Detroit was halted by the arrest of 19 picketers, who were later released. Word has been received from J. J. Griffin, Detroit district organizer of the Mechanics Educational Society, that the M.E.S.A. has passed a resolution to refuse to handle any materials sent from struck plants and companies. This followed the action of the Toledo local of the M.E.S.A. in adopting a resolution to man the picket-lines if they are called.
No militant as the Toledo strikers that not even the management is permitted to enter the plant. The plant manager, A. J. Gulliver, was forced to appeal to the strike committee to get permission to enter the plant. Nine company police, who had remained inside the plant at the time of the walk-out, were starved out by the refusal of the strikers to permit food to be sent into the plant. They had to submit to being searched before leaving the plant and speeding back to safe territory in Detroit. For the first time in labor history, strikers were paid while marching on a picket line when on the insistence of the strike committee pay booths were set on one side of the company fence and as the strikers marched by their pay-checks were handed to them through the fence by a special group of office workers selected by the strike committee. In this way the strikers avoided returning on company property.
A May Day United Labor Demonstration will be held here tomorrow called by the Joint Action Committee, composed of the Toledo Building Trades Council, Unemployed League and Workers Alliance. The Toledo Central Labor Union has endorsed the demonstration, the first time in many years that organized labor has partici-

IN THE UNIONS

By KARL LORE
The fight at the Colt's Patent Firearms Company of Hartford, Conn. is one of the most significant labor battles that have come up the pike in some time. Its great importance is widely recognized in the trade union movement of New England. The strategy board of the Hartford Central Labor Union has threatened a general strike and authorization to go ahead has already been secured from the state Federation of Labor. No strike in some time has received the financial support from unions in Connecticut and Massachusetts in particular, that this struggle has called forth.
The issue is the basic one of union recognition. Months of negotiations left the union just as much in the soup as ever. The company would not recognize the right of its employees to organize into unions of their own choosing. A powerful and ruthless Manufacturers' Association is very much on the job and has done more than its share in stirring up sentiment for a city-wide walk-out.
A particularly interesting angle to the Colt strike is the revealing picture it paints of the NRA swindle. Most of Colt's business is with the government and if Uncle Sam were to withdraw its orders, the company would be in a bad way. The strikers demanded that the firm's Blue NRA Eagle be taken away for violation of Section 7a. The National Labor Board ruled to that effect and, according to the rules, government buying of Colt products should have automatically ceased. But Donald Richberg rushed into the breach to act as the manufacturer's fair haired boy once more. He has refused to notify government departments of the facts and U.S.A. purchase of Colt goods proceeds merrily.
Weakness...
The strike is a militant one and the labor movement seems remarkably well united behind it. But there is a serious weakness in the situation which, though not apparent as yet, may do great harm before the last chapter is written.
There are four unions in the Colt plant which are conducting the strike jointly. Two of them are Federal Labor Unions which take in the mass of the workers. The others are craft locals affiliated to the American Federation of Labor international. In order to coordinate the activities of these four, a plant council was set up. Representation on this Council, however, is not on the basis of proportional representation. The craft locals which represent a mere handful of the Colt workers, nevertheless have a vote equal to that of the two Federal Unions which embrace the unskilled and production workers. There seems, at present, to be no conflict among the unions. But this punk imitation of industrial unionism must be shown up for what it really is. Inevitably it will produce division and weakness in the ranks. The issue must be squarely faced and fought by the progressive and militant elements in the unions everywhere.
Shoe Workers...
One union of the shoe workers. It has been the goal of all intelligent unionists in the industry for years. A long step toward the achievement of the goal was the organization of the United Shoe and Leather Workers, brought into being by amalgamation of 5 independent unions in the industry. But some organizations stayed outside. And the A.F. of L. Boot and Shoe Workers would have no part in the unity movement.
Early in the year a conference held in Washington of every important labor group in the industry and including the Boot and Shoe Workers agreed on the necessity of unification. The United Shoe and Leather Workers posed three points as a minimum basis for amalgamation. They called for a progressive union democratically controlled by its membership; the right of referendum and recall with officials elected by referendum and regular conventions.
But the Boot and Shoe couldn't take it. A later meeting of their Executive Board called off the negotiations for the unity and, in effect, invited the membership of the other groups to join them as a substitute for amalgamation.
No Fights...
An attempt was made to at least come to an understanding which would end the bitter fights between the various organizations. "At an informal meeting held on March 15 at which several officials of the B. & S. and the heads of the Independent Unions were present," reports the United Shoe and Leather Worker, "a sort of gentleman's agreement was suggested whereby each organization would undertake not to interfere with the organization activities of the other." Mr. Mara (chief of the Boot and Shoe) even sent a letter to all his locals in which he declared that where there was evidence of an organizing campaign by an independent group, no special efforts be made to discourage or disrupt them.
No Gentleman...
But Mr. Mara turns out to be no gentleman. The United now charges that the A. F. of L. union, with the approach of the slack season, is busily engaged in trying to persuade manufacturers to break their agreements with the independent and sign up with the Boot and Shoe. In Haverhill, Mass. they have induced the Emerson Shoe Company to get out from under its agreement by reorganizing and discharging the United members. Other bosses are being coaxed to move from their present locations for the same purpose. The Boot and Shoe offers lower wages and more docile labor. It has always relied chiefly on the union label to get contracts with manufacturers. Instead of genuine organization work, they have used the prestige and the buying power of the organized labor movement to set up a neat little racket all of their own. The movement for unification is proceeding, however. The various independent groups are continuing negotiations. It is probable that a real united organization will be too strong for the bureaucrats of the Federation union to withstand. The amalgamation movement seems to have taken real hold in this one industry at least. May its tribe increase...

'Settle the Strike on Picket Line Not in Washington,' Say Strikers

(Continued from Page 1)
meeting of the strikers here and with his usual class-collaboration line spoke in glowing terms of the vice-president of G.M.C., William S. Knudsen, declared that Francis Perkins and President Roosevelt were "behind labor," that the members of the Auto Labor Board had merely "tricked and betrayed" Roosevelt, and termed the strike an "action," "protest" and "misunderstanding on both sides."
Knudsen returned Dillon's compliment by a blast in the next morning's paper calling the strike an "arbitrary and lawless act," charging that the strike committee was acting against the wishes of the workers, and asserting flatly that the G.M.C. would sign no contract with the union nor even meet with a union committee "until the men returned to work."
Despite Dillon's attempt to influence the strikers by his misleading statements to rest their case with the government, the strike committee and the strikers are insisting on nothing short of genuine union recognition, a signed contract and direct negotiations with the company. It is generally admitted here that the Auto Labor Board has the approval of Roosevelt and that it was he who personally wrote into the Automobile Code the notorious "merit" and "proportional representation" clauses. Strikers themselves point out that it was Roosevelt who forced the renewal of the Auto Code against the universal protest of organized labor and who could, if he would, remove the so-called "traitors" from the Auto Board.
Tries to Divide Workers
T. N. Taylor, Green puppet and machine-man, has been here for the past week trying to usurp the leadership of the strike and localize it. He had been in Toledo previously for five months attempting to divide the solid and powerful union here into many different locals in each plant, the divisive and ruinous craft policy of the old-line A. F. of L. bosses. The local union would have nothing to do with his policies before. His efforts here now are dangerous in view of the lack of experience of the Chevrolet workers.
The local press, always anxious to select labor leaders for the workers whom the employers can

trust, have played up Taylor and Fred Schwake, business agent of the union, as the "acknowledged leaders" of the strike. This is not true. Although these individuals have a certain influence and are doing all in their power to gain control, the definite authority lies in the hands of the strike committee which is increasingly strengthening its influence by its correct and militant tactics.
Strikers Demand Strike Paper
"Strike Truth," the official bulletin of the Chevrolet strike committee, was temporarily suspended after the first edition due to the pressure exerted by Dillon, Taylor, Schwake and Co. on certain inexperienced members of the strike committee by spreading rumors that it was "communistic," etc. By unanimous vote in mass meeting this evening, the strikers demanded that "Strike Truth" be published from now on. Already demands are coming from all parts of the country and from workers in other plants in Toledo for bundle orders of "Strike Truth." There is talk of publishing "Strike Truth" as a national auto strike paper.
Rousing applause at the mass meeting tonight greeted the telegram from the Workers Party in New York that its members were picketing the G.M.C. office building in New York. Telegrams from the Ohio and National Unemployed Leagues pledging support also met a hearty response. With the spread of the strike, the strikers are repudiating all efforts on the part of Taylor to deny useful and sympathetic support from other unions and workers' organizations. For several days Taylor and Schwake tried to start a "red scare" in an effort to undermine the progressive leaders of the strike. The overwhelming devotion and loyalty of the strikers to their elected leaders, who proved their ability and integrity, forced Taylor in the meeting tonight to make an elaborate speech of endorsement of the strike committee as he is trying desperately to stand in the good graces of the strikers.
A further call is expected to be sent throughout the country to all other G.M.C. locals for a nationwide conference of representatives of all strike committees and groups planning strike to be held as quickly as possible in Toledo.

ated in a May Day celebration. A. J. Muste has received a special invitation from the Joint Action Committee to address the demonstration. Art Preis and Bill Kitt, Unemployed League and W. P. members will also speak.
So far, the predictions of the New Militant are coming true. It appears that Toledo and the Chevrolet strike will indeed be the spark for the 1935 national strike wave. If the present militancy and correct tactics are carried through, if the present avowed policy of the strikers to settle "this thing on the picket lines and not in Washington" is maintained, there is the strongest possibility that the strike will finally engulf the entire auto industry, spread into other major industries and lay the basis for a drive of national militant labor action which no power of the bosses and their government will be able to halt.
LANG-HEARSTIAN SOCIALIST
The latest exhibition of one of the Forward gang, a leader among the Old Guard of the Socialist Party is enough to make any worker in or outside of the Socialist ranks turn sick with disgust.
We refer to the series of articles—or should we rather say filth—running in the N. Y. Evening Journal. Not even a lurid minded editor of a Hearst Sunday magazine supplement could have conjured up so much horror and indecency to satisfy the depraved tastes of his thrill-seeking clientele.
A sense of respect for the tastes of our readers forbids us to quote at length from these atrocity stories. Just a scanning of the heads and sub-heads should give one an inkling as to the tripe Mr. Lang is dispensing with the good wishes of his editors, Abraham Cahan and Willy Randolph Hearst. "6,000,000 Dead in Ukraine," "Eat Children," "Graves Opened," "Red Army Soldiers Turn Bandits," etc., etc.
This hysterical yapping at the first workers' state, the Soviet Union, will undoubtedly defeat its own ends. But it marks again the necessity for vigilance and revolutionary mobilization for the defense of the Soviet Union. Only an aroused international working class can fulfill that defense!
The national committee of the Socialist Party has issued a statement criticizing Lang and disclaiming responsibility for the articles. The "Militants" have called for Lan's expulsion from the party. As a "preventive" step James O'neal has preferred charges against his colleague—so that they could pass a light sentence.

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