

Comments

On Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness

By BILL REICH

Youth . . . Italian boys start military training at eight. . . 120,000 "war babies" in France are called to serve in the army. . . Military training is made compulsory in Chinese high schools. 100,000 soldiers are turned out annually. . . The CCC enrollment is enlarged to 600,000. Army officers advocate complete militarization of the camps. . . Says Roger Babson: "The CCC camps are becoming hot beds of radicalism. If these young men are not soon absorbed in legitimate industry they will become a revolutionary army."

Collective Bargaining...

William Knudsen, vice-president of General Motors tells Federal conciliators: "The company cannot resume negotiations with strikers at the local Chevrolet plant while the strike is on." . . . The National Textile Labor Relations Board rules that mills need not rehire union workers where strikes are lost. . . Twenty-one strikers were arrested in LeGrange, Georgia, when they attempted to prevent the eviction of one of their number from a company house. . . By picketing and boycotts Los Angeles housewives lowered meat prices 5c per pound. . . "Striking is a bad way to get what you want," advises H. L. Mencken to striking office workers of the American Mercury magazine. . . Every large strike in the nation in the past year has been sold out by Federal mediators. . . Mrs. Roosevelt purchases Julius Bloch's picture "The Striker" to hang in the White House. . .

Education . . .

Chancellor John G. Bowman of Mellon's University of Pittsburgh states that faculty members are "fools" who make speeches on controversial subjects. . . Fifteen states and the District of Columbia have passed oath-of-allegiance laws for teachers. . . Professors Norbert Wiener and Carl Bridenbaugh of Massachusetts Institute of Technology conclude from a lengthy survey of college reds that "undergraduate radicals are headed in the wrong direction. They are a continual embarrassment to their well-wishers." . . . An Indiana college professor kidnapped himself. . . Over 60% of the world's population is illiterate. . . Mississippi spends \$45.34 per year for the education of a white child, \$5.45 for a colored. In Georgia the ratio is \$35.42 to \$6.28. . .

Society Notes . . .

Marion Davies spent more than \$50,000 in preparation for a house party planned in honor of William R. Hearst's 72nd birthday. . . Forty men in Wallace, Nebraska, pledged not to shave until it rains. . . Thyras Amos, Dean of Women at the University of Pittsburgh, stated that Ralph Turner, ousted liberal professor, "dressed like a jockey" and "spoiled a perfectly good dinner party by arguing too violently." . . . Leo Durocher, St. Louis Cardinal baseball player, swore out a warrant for Doris Smith, garment striker, charging her with "disturbing his peace" while he escorted his scabbing wife through a picket line. . . Alfred Shegolin, unemployed, was killed by an auto when he ran into the street after stealing a pair of shoes from a New York store. . . Thirty thousand London unemployed demonstrated in protest to King George's jubilee. . . The annual income of the English Royal family is nearly \$3,000,000. . .

State of Nation . . .

Says Hamilton Fish: "No president has fumbled the situation so completely. His socialistic experiments have impoverished the people, increased unemployment and destroyed business confidence." . . . Total profits of 1,136 industrial corporations for 1934 were \$982,000,000, an increase of 54% over 1933. . . Twenty outstanding companies account for 80% of the increase. . . 1,200,000 unemployed are deprived of relief in Illinois. They face starvation as police are substituted in relief headquarters for the regular workers. . . 989 government employees receive incomes in excess of \$10,000 annually. . . Relief wages in rural Alabama are as low as \$3.60 per week. . . State Senator George Woodward of Pennsylvania advocates a state sales tax to help the unemployed. Such a measure would save him \$77,000 annually. . . 1,700,000 unemployed in Pennsylvania live in constant fear of starvation as the state legislature refuses to provide funds. . . Dr. C. F. Schnable, Kansas City chemist, finds that grass is more nutritious than spinach, carrots or lettuce. . . 600,000 unemployed in Missouri are threatened with being cut from relief rolls as the legislature fails to provide funds. . .

Strikers Reject Union Busting "Peace"

Spread Strike Is Task Ahead

(Continued from page 1) concessions. Not one word did Dillon mention of spreading the strike to Flint and other places, in which course lies the only possibility of bringing General Motors to terms. He largely skirted the Toledo strike and the issues involved in it by a pompous oration in which he spoke of "industrial democracy," "justice," "equity" and many other fine-sounding but empty phrases. His only references to the vote tomorrow was in his last sentence, in which he was forced by the sentiment and temper of the workers to declare himself against the Company's proposals.

Knudsen Won't Negotiate

Even should the union win by a substantial majority, William S. Knudsen, vice-president of General Motors, has stated that the company will not negotiate with the union committee or with any of the workers until they return to work. Nothing has been gained by the strikers through this vote, even should they win. Instead much valuable time has been lost.

Roland Fights Capitulation

The outstanding and only significant remarks made through the entire long meeting were the straightforward and militant proposals of Jimmy Roland, progressive chairman of the Toledo strike committee, who directly urged the Flint representatives to call a strike in Flint immediately, to call for the establishment of a national strike committee and a national conference of all General Motors locals in order to strike the entire company, and stated that the Toledo Chevrolet strikers would not return to work until a settlement had been made for all the other workers on strike in other cities.

Roland's points were greeted with loud and approving applause, as were all remarks which had the slightest color of militancy made by any of the speakers. Fred Schwake,

How the Tables Were Turned

One year ago Toledo Chevrolet officials were looking out of plant windows extremely irritated. They were watching Jimmy Roland marching around the factory gates with picket signs on his back. A one man picket line around a factory employing 2,500 men!

Brazen, insane, unprecedented—but successful. The Regional Labor Board decided in his favor. The company ignored the decision, but the one man picket line was too much. It might be contagious. So Jimmy was rehired.

Roland was no "slacker" in those days. His efficiency had won for him a company offer of foremanship. Union-conscious even then, he spurned a job that would make him a watch-dog over his fellow workers.

It was then the company was organizing one of the famous employee representation plans. Jimmy entered the company union to convert it into a real one. General Motors would not stand for that and Roland was fired. The one man picket line baffled them and he was rehired. But not in the production department. He would contaminate the others. . . Good Lord, never!

They put Roland in the office, although he knew as much about clerical work as a Kentucky mountaineer.

Fate was against Mr. Gulliver, however, and the plant was nonetheless infected with the unholy virus of unionism. . .

If they only could have foreseen. . .

Two thousand men were marching around the factory gates. Suddenly they stopped. A well dressed gentleman wanted to enter the plant. The picket captains shook their heads. Orders are that no one goes in. "But, but," he stammered enraged, "I'm Mr. Knudsen, I own this plant."

"Sorry, mister, orders are orders," they replied, "but you can see the chairman of the strike committee, maybe he'll help you."

And who should the chairman of this strike committee be? Jimmy Roland!

business agent of the union, whose previous activities in the strike had been in line with the policies of Dillon, made a verbal about-face and declared: "In 1934, Toledo workers made history with the Battle of Chestnut Hill (Auto-Lite strike). We are prepared to make another such historic battle although we don't know what name it will go by until after it is won." He further stated that in a conference with the management, when told that the General Motors could not make an exception in its national policy for a group in Toledo, he had remarked, "We are going to make General Motors change its policy, starting in Toledo."

Workers Party Active

The Workers Party branch here has been extremely active in this strike, organizing the progressive forces to counter-act the weak-kneed and conciliatory policies of the A. F. of L. top officials and its putting forward a program calling for the spread of the strike, an immediate visit of a large delegation of Toledo strikers to Flint and other auto centers to appeal for strike action, a caravan of striking auto workers to Muncie to rally the Muncie workers and to prevent the

crash, those who were hit by bank foreclosures and live in the shadows of economic insecurity but know that wealth is available in abundance, turn once again to the political demagogue and harken to the glamor of a middle class panacea. And in Father Coughlin's political organization many of them undoubtedly expect to find a haven. To make it attractive for them he announces that its national council and its state committees will be composed of appointed representatives of what he calls various groups, such as labor, farmers, veterans, small manufacturers, youth and possibly certain specialized industries. Of course, this is the characteristic middle class approach of defining interests by business groups and avoiding any open acknowledgement of class lines.

Makes Bid For Farmers, Workers

Both Coughlin and Long are now making special efforts to obtain farmer and labor support for their movements. William Collins came to Coughlin's Michigan state convention, officially delegated by the A. F. of L. Executive Council together with Edward Kennedy, Secretary of the National Farmers' Union from Chicago. Among the members of Congress attending were William Lemke of North Dakota, co-author of the Lemke-Frazier farm mortgage bill and William P. Connery Jr. of Massachusetts who is co-author of the Connery-Black 30-hour week bill and the Wagner-Connery trades disputes bill in addition to being Chairman of the House Committee of Labor.

Says It Is Not a Third Party

Of course, the radio priest insists that his organization is not a political party; it is not a third party, he says. According to his plans it is to take shape through a number of so-called state conventions similar to the one held in Michigan last week, and Coughlin maintains that it is to be only an instrument to provide a little more articulate expression so that the representatives in Congress may know what the people back home want.

Real Appeal is to Petty Bourgeoisie

Otherwise the appeal of Father Coughlin, the same as the appeal of Huey Long, is addressed essentially to the lower middle class, to the small businessmen, the farmers and the petty bosses. A good many of those among them who in former times managed to save up for a rainy day and since saw the bank

Dillon Stifles Flint Action

(Continued from Page 1)

Monday morning." The meeting roused itself and howled: "We had an election last year! How about strike!" Dillon was in a tight spot, but he shouted back: "I thought I would have to come here tonight to ask you to strike tomorrow morning." The workers in the crowd listened to him again. "I didn't think Knudsen would accept a government election—but he did! We forced G.M. to accept a government election!"

Progressive Lewis . . .

The question of another labor Federation is a serious one. Does a real basis exist for such a move? Louis Stark sees the initiative for its formation coming from John L. Lewis of the Mine Workers in conjunction with the unions of metal miners, brewery workers, clothing and printing tradesmen. Such a phalanx might, he believes, swing the new mass unions of aluminum, rubber and auto workers into line behind it.

A realistic examination of the facts lends little hope that such a development lies close ahead. No progressive is going to get unduly excited about the prospect of an industrial Federation of Labor headed by Lewis and Berry, as an improvement over Green and Wolf as leaders of a craft formation. Nor are the various unions mentioned, with the possible exception of the metal miners and the brewery workers, anxious to leave the Federation ranks. The astute Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers has labored too hard and too long to crash into the Federation. The influence of the A. F. of L. has made him a key figure in the NRA machinery and the risk of breaking with the craft moguls would be too great. Dubinsky of the Ladies Garment Workers cannot be distinguished from any other member of the Executive Council. At the last convention of the A. F.

Classes and Production

Yes, only when labor power is applied to capital can the process of production take place; but this is not the union that Coughlin presents it to be and cannot be such a union unless the social relations of capitalism are abolished and productive industry socialized. The sum total of relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society. These relations are today capitalist relations, based on production for profit and exploitation of labor. This is the real foundation on which rises the legal and political superstructure—the foundation of the government. Consequently all government intervention for the distribution of wealth under capitalism has served only to strengthen the system of exploitation and to protect the owners of wealth against those who have none. The system of tomorrow, Coughlin says, will not be socialism, the government which he proposes shall intervene will therefore not be a Soviet government and to make his stand more clear he adds: "I eschew all radicalism." Would a distribution of wealth enabling the laborer to enjoy the things which we produce as a nation be thinkable on any other basis? That is excluded and this exposes the fraudulent position from which the Machiavelian shepherd appeals for the support of the working class.

Coughlin Explains His System

The political padre explains the system that he is aiming for as follows: "I believe that the economic system of tomorrow will not be that type of socialism which desires to nationalize not only natural resources, but also all productive industry. Nor will it be capitalism wedded to the theory of private financialism and production for a profit. It will be a new system based on the belief that wealth is not money, but that wealth is created by the union of capital and labor; and that this

Crash, Those Who Were Hit by Bank Foreclosures . . .

wealth must be distributed, even through the intervention of the government, in such a way that every laborer who cooperates in producing this wealth shall have that share of it which will enable him to enjoy, according to his merits, the things which we are capable of growing and of manufacturing as a nation."

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Brownsville headquarters reopened at 1776 Pitkin Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. Open Forums every Friday night, Socials every Saturday.

IN THE UNIONS

By KARL LOBE

When as well informed and cautious an observer of the labor scene as Louis Stark of the New York Times writes that "Organization of a bloc of industrial unions into a separate national labor federation . . . was regarded as an eventual possibility in labor circles today," we will do well to lend a second thought. It has been obvious for some time that the industrial union issue was coming to a head and that the Federation faced a major crisis in its solution. The shelving of the campaign in steel, the war against the brewery workers, the splitting up of the metal miners' ranks and the increasing drive against the industrial structure of the Federal Labor Unions was bound to create deep seated revolt.

Fireworks . . .

There is some fire behind all the smoke however. May it be the well known ambitions of John L. Lewis which are involved here? For a number of years it has been rumored that Lewis wants to sit in the seat which Bill Green warms so gracefully at the present time. At each Federation convention it has been denied by the Mine Workers chief. But John L. protests too much to be convincing. And when the 1935 convention opens its sessions at Atlantic City in October we may see fireworks and an open rupture in the ranks of the officialdom. For which radicals will be grateful. "When thieves fall out. . ."

Lumber . . .

Some weeks ago we reported that the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners had been given jurisdiction over the 130 newly organized locals of loggers and timber workers. The suggestion was made that at least part of the motive for such action was the need to take care of growing strike sentiment in the north-west camp.

Developments of the past few days confirm this view. May 6 had been set as the day for a general strike. Longshoremen had promised their support. On the day before the walkout Abe Muir, vice-president of the Carpenters stated that a general strike was unlikely and that "I expect to see a number of closed mills reopen on Monday." The closed mills were those shut down by advance strike action of the workers. Latest news indicates that the strike movement is spreading however, and that the sabotage of the Carpenters' officialdom may not be able to check its development. Over 12,000 are reported out as I write. A complete shutdown will involve about 75,000 men.

S.Y.L. Regional Confab Held In Youngstown

By M. SLAVIN

YOUNGSTOWN, April 28.—The Regional Conference of the S.Y.L. held here on April 27 and 28 bore witness to comrade Gould's statement that the S.Y.L. is fast becoming a mass youth organization. Delegates from Akron, New Castle, Columbus and Youngstown, reported on the progress made, the number of members gained since the National Convention of the S.Y.L., and the work conducted among the young workers and students. State College, a newly organized branch, reported that its S.Y.L. led the Students Strike on April 12, numbering some 1,500 students with comrade Shachtman speaking at the mass meeting. The Columbus Branch participated in the strike at Ohio State University where about 1,000 students struck against war and fascism.

What to Attend

May 11, Saturday even.—Dance, entertainment and games for the benefit of the Toledo strikers. Given by the New York District membership at its headquarters, 2 W. 15th St. Everybody invited. All who can are urged to bring chess sets. There will also be refreshments and drinks. Admission 25c.

May 17, Friday 8:30 P.M.—Simon Williamson will speak on "The Decline of American Individualism" at 859 Westchester Ave. (near Prospect) Bronx.

May 17th, 8:30 P.M.—Geo. Clarke will speak on "Huey Long and Father Coughlin" at 420 E. 19th St., Manhattan. Aus: Branch 1, W.P.

Any worker desiring to get in touch with the Akron Branch can do so by writing to: WORKERS PARTY of U. S. Box 221 Akron, Ohio

Dance, Entertainment and Games Benefit for the Toledo Campaign Saturday Evening, May 11th At 2 West 15th St., 3rd Floor Auspices: New York District Membership of the W. P. Admission 25c