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N. West Militants Meet

Seeks Link with A.F.L. Industrial Unionists; Cannon Speaks

AUSTIN, Minn., Dec. 7.—An unqualified stand for industrial unionism and a move to coordinate the independent unions in the north-west with the movement for industrial unionism in the A.F. of L. were the outstanding features of an enthusiastic meeting of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference held here today. Forty delegates from various northwestern points were in attendance. Local 574 was represented by Ray Dunne and Farrell Dobbs. A strong delegation was present from the Independent Union of Packing House Workers at Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Other delegates representing independent packing house workers' unions were present from Austin, Albert Lea and Mason City.

After a speech by James P. Cannon of New York City, who had been specially invited to address the conference on the subject of progressive labor policy, a thorough discussion took place in which the majority of the delegates participated. Unanimous opinion was crystallized that the conference must push its campaign for a policy of class struggle and for industrial unionism as a necessary modern form of labor organization.

Hall Movement in A. F. of L.

The movement for industrial unionism which has developed in the A. F. of L. was hailed as a big step forward, which must be supported and encouraged by all progressive unionists, whether affiliated to the A. F. of L. or not. Emphasizing that progressive independent unions must on no account give up their demand for industrial unionism and the democratic right to regulate their own internal affairs, the Conference unanimously recommended that, on these conditions, independent unions should declare their readiness to affiliate to the A. F. of L.

It was pointed out in the discussion that the independent auto workers unions of Detroit, now on strike, had taken this position, and the action of the Detroit Independents was hailed with approval in the adopted resolution. The resolution also calls for a coordination of efforts and activities of the progressive independent union movement in the A. F. of L. in order to hasten the day when we will have a truly unified trade union movement organized on an industrial basis.

A motion was unanimously carried to send a wire of greeting to the Packing House Workers now on strike at Oklahoma City, pledging support in their struggle and asking for the establishment of closer communication and co-operation. Organizations represented at the meeting ordered 450 subscription cards to the Northwest Organizer.

It was decided that a full Conference be held at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on Saturday, February 1. The resolution adopted for consideration by all the affiliated organizations pending the next conference is as follows:

RESOLUTION ON POLICY OF THE NORTHWEST LABOR UNITY CONFERENCE
1. The Northwest Labor Unity (Continued from Page 2)

Sanctions End in Scandal

LEAGUE POWERS PLAN PARTITION OF ETHIOPIA

ANGUISHED wails were sent up by pacifists, liberals, social democrats and Stalinists throughout the world last week over the proposal for giving about half of Ethiopia to Italy, which Sir Samuel Hoare, British Foreign Minister, and Premier Laval of France advanced as a basis for peace negotiations between the Fascist aggressor and the last of the independent nations of Africa, fighting to escape just such partition. The League of Nations had been "betrayed" especially by the Baldwin cabinet in Great Britain. The "honor" of Britain had been sullied. This was no way to break into the preparations for the celebration of Christmas, and more of the same kind.

If the Hoare-Laval proposals teach the middle-classes, and what is more important, the workers, who have been led into confusion by them, something about the true role of the League of Nations, the real character of the modern capitalist state and the anti-working class character of the policy of dependence on the League of Nations which has been followed by the bureaucrats in control of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, Messrs. Hoare and Laval will indeed have rendered a service!

The League of Nations was never anything but a tool by which certain great powers, especially France and Great Britain, carried out their imperialist designs, an idealistic screen behind which their war preparations could go on. For months after Haile Selassie first appealed to the League against Italian aggression, the League machinery served precisely this function of a screen behind which Italy poured troops into Africa and accumulated supplies for a war. At one point in these negotiations France and Great Britain advanced proposals which in principle were no different from the present ones though offering Italy much less territory than now. The full application of League sanctions, as the NEW MILITANT pointed out, meant imperialist war against Italy. If now the great powers have decided that they are not ready for a general showdown and that therefore the Italo-Ethiopian conflict must somehow be stopped, how else will it be composed except on such terms as the imperialist powers may agree on among themselves? And what should be the function of the League

except to give a cover of legality and idealism to this "settlement"? This will still be the underlying truth of the matter even if the Hoare-Laval proposals should be considerably modified or even shelved altogether for the time being.

It is nevertheless quite evident that the plans of the French and British governments, whatever they may have been, did not work with the smoothness which the respective cabinets would undoubtedly have liked. The fact that such abrupt maneuvers are necessary is in itself an indication of how acute the imperialist tensions are at present. Some new threat may have developed from an unexpected quarter about which we shall learn as the plot of the great drama develops. It may well be also that certain "statesmen" have become involved in a particularly juicy bit of intrigue which will not see the light until the workers gain control of some capitalist government and give its secret documents to the world, as Lenin and Trotsky did in Russia in 1917.

The main factors in the situation are sufficiently clear. The application of oil sanctions to Italy might produce an "incident" which would lead to open warfare between Italy and England; but England is none too certain just how prompt and efficient French support would be in such a case. Probably a general conflagration would then be well nigh inevitable and the powers are probably not ready to face that. Whether or not Stanley Baldwin deliberately maneuvered to outsmart the Labor Party in the recent elections over the issue of sanctions and League support, the fact is that the National government is in power again, that need of British imperialists has been met, and the government can now turn with more freedom to guard British interests at the most vital points in disregard of "peace sentiment." Possibly the steady progress of Japan in China requires the release of British ships from the Mediterranean.

The recent revolt in Egypt which compelled the British government to restore the constitution of 1923, giving at least a semblance of independence to that country, is only one of many indications that England and France may

face serious situations with their colonial possessions and other dependencies if the disturbance does not soon die down. Another ominous (for all imperialists) specter is raised by the fact that the Italian campaign in Ethiopia, what with transport and other difficulties, is not proceeding too smoothly. What dangerous thoughts its collapse would put into the heads of "backward peoples"! In Italy, too, the pinch of sanctions and war expenditures are being felt, and unrest is mounting.

Should Mussolini fall, who and what is to succeed the Fascist regime in Italy? Complications which might flow from that eventuality might shake the entire European capitalist structure. In particular the French Right has probably made it clear to Laval that it will not accept this eventuality without bitter opposition. It is no surprise, therefore, to read coincidentally with the announcement of the Hoare-Laval proposals that diplomatic conversations aimed at an agreement between Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy, are under way. From their own point of view these powers might do worse than come to an understanding among themselves, and to quiet things in Western Europe so as to leave themselves free to carry out their imperialist policies in Asia and Africa and against the Soviet Union.

To the Workers Party the recent developments did not constitute a shocking surprise, a miracle for which there is no explanation, a case perhaps of a bad attack of flu on the eve of a badly needed vacation in Switzerland causing Sir Samuel Hoare to make a regrettable personal mistake. Our policy remains the same:

- Exposure of the role of the League of Nations!
- Opposition to League sanctions!
- Against imperialist war measures!
- Defense of Ethiopia and resistance against Italy by the independent action of the working class and its allies!
- Struggle against imperialist war by building the movement for the overthrow of capitalism!
- Defense of the Soviet Union through building the Fourth International!

Ill. Unions Aid IWA Walkout

Conference Sets Date for Tie-up on All Projects in State

By a W.P.A. Worker
GIRARD, Ill., Dec. 9.—Delegates from twenty organizations were present at the Macoupin county conference of the Illinois Workers Alliance today in preparation for the state-wide W.P.A. strike Dec. 16.

Another conference was held last week at Marion, Ill., where thirteen counties were represented to discuss the strike problems. The conference here decided to place the matter to a referendum vote. In the meantime the I.W.A. organizers are organizing hundreds of men working on dozens of projects.

The Macoupin county conference was attended by delegates from the Progressive Miners, Progressive Trades and Labor Union, International Hod Carriers' Union and the I.W.A.

Support from Many Workers
Al Hemmer, O'Fallon, state representative of the Hod Carriers' Union, decided that all members of his union would be called off W.P.A. jobs Dec. 16 unless the prevailing union wage was paid. John Fisher, Gillespie, representing local 1, P. M. of A., comprising a membership of 2,400 mine workers, stated that the movement for strike action had the financial and moral support of his union. Andrew McFarlane, state chairman of the Progressive Trades and Labor Union stated that he would join with the A.F. of L. unions in calling his men off the projects not paying the union scale of wages.

To Meet WPA Administration

A committee from the various organizations present are to appear before the Labor Relations Board of the W.P.A. at Vandalla this week for a last minute conference. The Labor Relations Board has agreed to raise wages ten per cent if the strike is called off. The offer to date has been rejected. The Illinois Workers Alliance, the big push behind the strike, is standing pat for the original demands.

The United Mine Workers of America and the State Federation of Labor have been asked to cooperate in strike preparations and negotiations with the W.P.A. officials for the demands laid down at the Auburn conference Dec. 1.

Bergdorf Men in St. Louis

A committee representing the striking warehouse workers of St. Louis reported their struggle against the Kroger Grocery and Baking Co., who have imported the midwestern section of the Bergdorf strikebreaking agency into the situation. The conference voted to cease patronizing the Kroger and Piggly-Wiggly stores. The St. Louis warehouse strike is important for labor at this time as it is one of the few sections of the country where an attempt is being made to organize the food industry.

A state-wide conference is to be held Sunday, Dec. 15, at Staunton, Ill., where over a thousand delegates are expected to attend. Dec. 16 is the dead line for W.P.A. scab wage in Illinois.

600 in Newark W.P.A. Protest

NEWARK, N. J.—Over 600 Newark W.P.A. workers crowded into every available inch of sitting and standing room in Newark's City Hall auditorium on Monday, Dec. 9. The meeting, called by the Project Workers Division of the Association for Adequate Relief, Newark section of the National Unemployed League, gave expression to the tremendous dissatisfaction with the \$55 a month slave wage among the project workers.

The speakers, Moore, Gilliard, Thompson and Rosenberg, received a rousing hand when they pointed out the need for rapid organization and the fact that the workers have already won victories over the W.P.A. administration in other sections of the country through strike action.

Tony Ramaglia, President of the N.U.L., spoke and told of the successful two and a half week strike in Lehigh County, Pa.

A committee was elected to call on the W.P.A. County administrator and present the demands of the project workers which were: "A minimum of \$72.50 a month for a work month of no more than 120 hours; recognition of all project workers' organization" (Continued on Page 2)

Where Is Roosevelt's Relief Program Going?

FACTS AND POLICIES FOR WPA WORKERS

By HERBERT CAPELIS

From the bombastic scheming and prattling that accompanied the introduction of the Works Progress Administration, the naive observer would have been led to believe that the problem of unemployment in the United States was about to be liquidated.

In line with its propaganda campaign, the government acted with startling suddenness. Between Sept. 1 and Sept. 15, 1935, the abolition of the Federal Transient Bureau began and was completed. Relief to roving workers in search of employment was wiped out to the last penny, leaving tens and tens of thousands of people destitute far from their home towns.

On the heels of this move, Federal relief terminated in 26 states by Nov. 15. On that date, also, the remaining states received their final unemployment "dole," thereby casting the unemployed entirely on the tender mercies of the state and municipal relief agencies. As bad as had been the situation of the unemployed before, it now struck new and horrible depths. Worse than in any other section of the country, the conditions in the South fell to unbelievably low levels. Numerous FERA surveys (many of them existed only as secret documents and so entitled) were taken which reveal appalling conditions. Witness: In Atlanta, Georgia, a typical survey of 133 cases at random—only ten were eating "regularly"; 16 existed on one meal a

day; dozens were actually found ravaging garbage pails and dumps! For the month of July 15 to August 16, 26 of the families had an income of less than \$6 per family for the month! Noted in the survey was the following astonishing statement: "that these conditions are general in the larger cities and yet much better than conditions in the rural communities." One could cite such examples indefinitely—the daily papers carry a fraction of them. Such were the pre-conditions and background upon which flashed the star of the W.P.A.

II. FACTS

In April, 1935 the Works Progress Administration of the FERA was set up with an appropriation close to \$400,000,000. On Nov. 30, the FERA ended, having run out its \$3,700,000,000 appropriation as of May, 1935. By Dec. 1, the W.P.A. nationally had taken on 2,225,000 workers; with the largest single section, over 225,000 concentrated in New York alone. (One might add ironically that 40,000 out of 240,000 applicants in New York were turned down as unfit physically for work—glorious tribute to the effects of the crisis on the unemployed!)

The overwhelming bulk of projects put into effect were "labor projects," public works, highway construction, parks, playgrounds, reconstruction, etc. While the Roosevelt opposition in the ranks of the capitalists has shouted of "grandiose" boom-bogging at exorbitant rates of pay, the fact is that only 6 per cent of the total number of projects nationally fall into the "white collar" class. Swiftly and chaotically, 2 and a quarter million workers of every sort and variety were transferred from relief rolls over to the W.P.A.—primarily on so-called "unskilled labor" projects (following Roosevelt's formula of "putting the unemployed onto 'useful' work projects").

Conditions? 120 hours a month at wages ranging from \$19 to tops of \$93 per month. (A small, insignificant fraction, such as foremen, certified accountants, apparatus people, etc. receive higher pay—and generally work more hours.) The South again offers the worst picture: Seven states, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, and the Carolinas offer the magnificent pay of \$19 per month on the so-called "unskilled labor" projects. Magnificent pay indeed! 30 hours a week at a little over \$4 per week to support a family—and there are complaints that the men do not work hard enough and "there ought to be stricter discipline"! Hovering on the Mason-Dixon line, Baltimore, Md., sev-

(Continued on Page 3)

Direct Relief Remains Central Issue for Unemployed; Workers' Organizations Must Demand Large-Scale Public Works

By JOHN WEST

The new stage in the Roosevelt relief program began during the first weeks of the last session of Congress, and has now reached its culmination. The publicity agents of the Administration explained their idea as follows:

At the beginning of 1935 there were approximately 5,000,000 persons receiving direct relief (the dole), at least part of which came from the Federal Treasury. Direct Federal relief was to be eliminated. 1,500,000 of these 5,000,000 could be classified as "unemployable" because of illness, old age, or some similar reason. These were to be transferred entirely to the relief rolls of the states and municipalities, and cut off from Federal relief. The remaining 3,500,000 were to be given temporary work at a "security wage" by the Works Progress Administration. This temporary work was to continue for the most part until some time during 1936. By then, the majority of the "employables" would be re-employed by reviving private industry. The rest would be transferred to "heavy" and more permanent public works projects along the lines of the W.P.A.

Program Not Fulfilled

To accomplish this program \$4,880,000,000 was appropriated by Congress. \$880,000,000 was to be used to continue direct relief until the W.P.A. program was fully running, and the unemployables sent back to the states and cities. The

original announcements promised that the W.P.A. would be at maximum operation by July 1, and that at that time the full 3,500,000 would be on its payroll.

Naturally, none of this program has been fulfilled. The July 1 date was successively advanced until it became December 1. The \$880,000,000 for direct relief grew into a billion and a half. The W.P.A. was to "put 3,500,000 to work"; but actually more than 500,000 were merely transferred to it from the already operating CCC, and even with these the December 1 figure is considerably below the full 3,500,000. How much below it is not yet possible to say, since the publicity from Administrator Hopkins' office is not noted for accuracy.

Nevertheless, Hopkins has announced that the program is "essentially completed," without, of course, offering any explanation of what happened to delay completion from July to December. He has "officially" cut off direct Federal relief grants to the states and through them to the cities. Meanwhile, however, he made some additional allocations to the states, to aid them in "completing the transition to the new program"—though this is a little confusing when we remember that he has also at the same time announced that the transition to the new program is completed.

What are we to make of all this? (Continued on Page 2)

Texas Jobless Face Hunger

Spur Demand for General WPA Strike in State of L.

(Special to the New Militant)

By JAMES EVANS
DALLAS, Texas—One million people, out of a total population of six million, face eventual starvation in Texas. These work relief clients and their families are in addition to the thousands who are being shunted on the barren subsistence farms, described in a previous article. After the W.P.A.—what? This question becomes increasingly important in view of the recent attack upon workers' relief by James P. Buchanan, Texas Congressman and chairman of the House appropriations committee.

Even now, final preparations are being made for "getting out of this business of relief." Since September 1, there has been a progressive series of attacks upon the meager living standards of the destitute. Free lunches for school children have been abandoned with the result that thousands of pupils are contracting anemia induced by malnutrition. Medical service for relief families has been discontinued, and women are bearing infants with no attendance except that of unskilled midwives. The 200,000 "unemployables," casualties of capitalist industry, have been reduced to \$5 in direct relief per month; and they will be turned over to the grafting ministrations of local community chests after February 1. Meanwhile rations for other direct relief clients have been cut until they are grossly insufficient.

No Relief for Paupers

"Reduce the case load." This is the ultimatum of Adam R. Johnson, state relief director, to his county administrators and case workers. Families are being dropped from the rolls because one of the daughters may have a job cooking or washing dishes for three dollars per week. I know of one incident where a case worker told a young man that \$5 per week was sufficient to support his wife and baby. It so happened that the rent paid by this family for a leaky apartment in an old store building amounted to \$16 per month.

Nor has the state legislature appropriated any funds to provide for the destitute after the final expenditure of present funds. The Federal government has cut off Texas with a final million dollars—a New Deal stake of one round dollar for each person who has been forced on the dole. Congressman Buchanan has promised his masters that the present \$4,000,000,000 will be the last that the unemployed of the nation will receive. (Continued on Page 2)

Pa. Jobless Organizations Unite in Statewide Action

HARRISBURG, Pa., Dec. 9.—A conference of representatives of various state-wide organizations of the unemployed in Pennsylvania met in the capitol building over the week-end and decided on several important steps for joint action.

Delegates from the Pennsylvania Unemployed League, the Pennsylvania Security League, the Allegheny Unemployed Citizens League, the Unemployed Councils and several inter-county alliances agreed on the following systematic and militant program of united front activities:

1. A Joint Action Committee to present the demands adopted before Governor Earle, the State Emergency Relief Board and the Works Progress Administration.
2. Joint picketing of the capitol and the Governor's mansion for the convocation of a special session of the legislature to consider the demands of the unemployed arising out of the discon-

tinuance of federal relief.

3. Joint picketing of the Works Progress Administration building against the anti-labor activities of Administrator Edward N. Jones, demanding his removal and the establishment of collective bargaining procedure.

4. A state-wide march on the capitol to force the calling of a special session and to exert mass pressure for the enactment of necessary relief legislation.
5. The preparation of a state-wide strike on WPA projects for higher wages and improved conditions of work.

The Joint Action Committee, consisting of two representatives of each organization, will be convened again to determine on the exact date for the march as well as the strike.

The conference lasted for two whole days. In protest against the (Continued on Page 2)

L.D. Trotsky's Wife Makes New Appeal for Son Sergei

From Norway where she shares the exile of her famous Bolshevik husband, Nathalie I. Trotsky has issued a new appeal for her 27-year old son Sergei and his wife who have been imprisoned in Russia and with whom she has been unable to communicate since last summer when news of their incarceration first leaked out.

Received here by many prominent liberals, Nathalie Trotsky's letter reveals that remittances sent to her son's wife to aid in securing his release and attending to his needs were returned after long intervals marked: "RECIPIENT NOT AT ADDRESS INDICATED."

This was the first intimation that Sergei Trotsky's wife was also being held by the Soviet authorities.

Neither young Sergei nor his wife have ever participated in politics and their arrest is stigmatized by Nathalie Trotsky as a sheer piece of persecution impelled by Stalin's vindictive hatred for Leon Trotsky.

Young Trotsky is a teacher at a technical school in Moscow and his wife, suffering from tuberculosis, is a librarian. First news of their arrest became known last June. Protests made by foreign liberals elicited the reply from the Soviet authorities that young Trotsky was not in prison but "under surveillance."

Failure of all attempts to communicate with him and his wife has aroused the fear that he has been killed. Mme. Trotsky renews in her letter an appeal for the formation of an impartial international committee to investigate the fate of her son and his wife.

The text of Nathalie Trotsky's letter follows: (Continued on Page 2)