

NEW MILITANT

Official Organ of the Workers Party of the U.S.

VOL. 1, NO. 52

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1935

PRICE 3 CENTS

Russell Sentenced To Four Months in Hosiery Strike Case

Ellis and Swanson, Strutwear Strikers, Get Six Months in Workhouse; N.P.L.D. To Appeal Cases

BULLETIN (By Wire to New Militant)

MINNEAPOLIS, Dec. 23.—Labor hating Judge Molyneux sentenced Al Russell to four months in the work house and Ellis and Swanson, Strutwear strikers to six months each for their militant activities in the strike.

All cases are being appealed by the Non-Partisan Labor Defense, the legal representative of the defendants.

Vernon Simonson, Strutwear striker, was arrested today and is being held on charges of criminal contempt.

MINNEAPOLIS, Dec. 22.—On Thursday, Dec. 18, the trial of the three arrested Strutwear pickets (David Ellis, Lawrence Swanson and Al Russell) got under way in the Federal Court building in Minneapolis, with Judge Molyneux presiding. All three young boys are charged with the same offense, criminal contempt of court, growing out of the November 29 disturbances at the Strutwear hosiery plant, where federal marshals attempted to move merchandise from the struck plant to a railway siding, where the goods were to be shipped to the bogus "Peacock Co." in St. Joseph, Mo.

But a day or so before the trial commenced, a bill was introduced in the state legislature calling for an appropriation of \$100,000 to investigate strikes and riots in Minneapolis. It is considered unlikely that any such bill will pass this session. Later the city council of Minneapolis passed by a vote of 14 to 11 a motion calling for a congressional investigation of circumstances surrounding the federal repression of the Peacock Knitting Company against the Strutwear strikers. It was obtained through an alleged fraud on the court to permit the Strutwear Co. to evade the anti-injunction law and the Wagner-Conroy act, and to deprive strikers of their legal rights.

Russell Supporters Pack Court
When the trial opened Thursday morning, the courtroom was packed with workers and leading figures in the local labor movement. Dozens of Strutwear striker buttons were seen in the audience. Attorney Francis Heisler of Chicago, who, with Attorney Gilbert Carlson of St. Paul the Non-Partisan Labor Defense had secured to defend Al Russell, addressed the court for an hour or so, asking that all charges against the pickets be dropped, on the grounds that the jurisdiction of the court had been obtained by fraud. Attorney Heisler gave the background of the so-called Peacock Company in some detail, citing the fact that this company was formed on Nov. 8, that none of the three stockholders knew much about it, that it had no official residence, etc. Heisler charged that the writ of replevin was entered into to circumvent the anti-injunction act and the Wagner labor disputes act. "There has been an offense committed against this court," he said, "but not by the defendants in this case." In denying the motion, the judge admitted that there may have been fraud, but held that even so, the U. S. marshals had been ordered by the court to move the goods, and that any attempt to interfere with this process was a criminal offense.

In the afternoon various federal marshals testified to having seen the three defendants at the scene of the disorder. They claimed that 125 pickets had stoned the three trucks as they were being escorted into the plant by eight deputy marshals, six police squad cars and (Continued on Page 4)

A Xmas Gift for A. Sloan

Ohio Chevrolet Workers 'Thank' G.M. Head for Empty Christmas Tables

To the accompaniment of blaring newspaper publicity, General Motors has climbed on the Christmas bandwagon and out of the generosity of its great strike-breaking, labor-hating heart, has presented its employees with a \$25 Christmas bonus. The 900 laid-off employees of the Toledo General Motors (Chevrolet) plant have written the following letter of Christmas cheer to Alfred Sloan for his magnanimous deed:

"Dec. 23, 1935

"Sir: "It is with extreme satisfaction that we have learned through every channel of publicity possible of your act of incredible generosity in giving a \$25 Christmas bonus check to the men now employed in the Chevrolet Motor Ohio Co. plant here.

"There are those who unkindly have termed this bonus for Xmas as a sort of bribe (you know that it is the first time that General Motors has ever given any Xmas present to its employees in Toledo) in your alleged drive to split unionism in the Toledo plant and make those who are now working forget those of us who you recently laid off and are now outside your gates as a result of your "economy" program. This, you will not of course say, is all wet. It would not be either, of course, the fact that wages in your plant are so low that the \$35,000 you are giving as a gift to the 1,400 men in the Toledo plant represents but a fraction of the amount you have saved as a result of the speed-up and the General Motors low wage-scale. You could afford to spend untold sums to break our strike last April rather than give us a slight increase in wages, and spend \$5,000,000 as "gifts" now. But a five per cent wage increase last spring was an "impossibility," wasn't it? Nevertheless, we are genuinely happy that the 1,400 men now working in the Toledo plant are receiving this \$25 Xmas gift because everybody knows that they are in dire need of it after a month's lay off and the low wages they are now receiving.

"Since you are getting so much publicity on this act of generosity, we feel that it is only your just due for us to inform the public of that other Xmas gift you have given 900 other Chevrolet employees in the Toledo plant. We, whom you recently threw on the streets in order to break our union, wish to publicly thank you for our Xmas gift. As we gaze at our empty Xmas tables, our kids whom no Santa Claus will visit, our eviction notices, we will bless you for a most Merry, Merry Christmas. You have a hearty of gold, yes solid gold.

Yours truly,
COMMITTEE OF 900,
(signed) JAMES HOLLY,
Secretary,
Former employees of Toledo Chevrolet Ohio Co."

500 in NY Hear Max Shactman
Cannon to Speak on Labor War in Mpls., Jan. 5th

More than 500 workers attended the regular weekly lecture of the Workers Party, held in Irving Plaza last Sunday, to hear Max Shactman who just returned from a nation-wide tour, tear to shreds the Stalinist argument that the "People's Front" as constituted in France, can stop Fascism or war in France or elsewhere.

Thoroughly analyzing the program and tactics of the "Front Populaire," comrade Shactman showed that it was copied from the social-patriotic class-collaborationist and coalition government program of the Second International at its worst—1914-18. Quoting from Stalinist documents beginning with the Sixth Congress right down to Olgin's pamphlet on "Trotskyism" printed last June, Shactman proved to the hilt that the present social-patriotic course of the C. I. had in the past been roundly denounced from a principle basis by its present protagonists.

The next lecture of the series will be held Sunday, Jan. 5, when James P. Cannon, who has just returned from Minneapolis, will speak on the struggle in the A. F. of L. and the labor war in Minneapolis.

Independent Auto Unions Amalgamate

900 Auto Men Act In Toledo

Organize Vigorous Campaign to Save Chevrolet Union

TOLEDO, O., Dec. 23.—The 900 men, who have not been recalled to the Toledo Chevrolet plant, keen with resentment, that after six weeks, the Chevrolet union has taken no action to protect their jobs, and has allowed the union membership to become demoralized, have taken vigorous action at a special meeting last week of a number of the so-called "outside" 900 men, to protect their interests and to "Save the Union."

Forming into a "Committee of 900," they elected a membership committee of seven to act in their behalf, with James Holly as secretary for the group.

On Dec. 16, there appeared a statement in the Toledo Press, over the signature of James Holly, secretary of the "Committee of 900" that "the automobile and auto parts manufacturers are carrying on a deliberate and well-planned drive to destroy our union organization in Toledo. General Motors took the lead some six weeks ago when it moved part of its Chevrolet transmission machinery to Saginaw, Mich. and Muncie, Ind. It is obvious that not only do we 900 Chevrolet men face the prospect of pauperism and dependence on public poor relief but also the remaining 1,400 Chevrolet men who are today temporarily employed, as well as thousands of other union automobile workers, will soon be thrown on the streets to become public charges."

"We wish to make it clear," the statement concludes, "that anyone who at this time deserts the union or attempts to create out of the troubled situation a dual or competitive union in the Chevrolet plant will meet the most determined resistance from our ranks."

Following through on their campaign, the Committee of 900 held an open meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 18 at the plant gates where they explained to a crowd of 500 Chevrolet men the necessity for strike action.

Union Leadership Weak
In this troubled period, when General Motors is clubbing the union on the head, determined to wipe it out, the leadership of the union proved to be amateurish and weak. The confidence and aggressiveness which revolutionary elements in the union had provided during the previous strike was sadly lacking. Six weeks ago, when General Motors was first preparing to move out its machinery to other cities, the Workers Party gave the warning that decisive action was necessary and that the whole membership must be aroused to the danger facing the union. But the executive committee marked time; allowed itself to be seduced by the fair promises of General Motors and did nothing.

When the plant reopened, and the management announced that (Continued on Page 2)

Detroit Convention Launches New Organization with 100 Delegates Present

BULLETIN

DETROIT, Dec. 22.—About 100 delegates from Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Defiance, Pontiac, Chicago and other cities, representing the three independent unions: the Mechanics Educational Society of America, the Associated Automobile Workers of America and locals of the Automobile Industrial Workers Association came together Saturday night for a "constitutional convention" at the Fort Wayne Hotel here in Detroit to amalgamate into one independent union representing the Automobile and Metal Workers of America. A telegram from Richard Frankenstein, president of the A.I.W.A., was read to the convention to the effect that the A.I.W.A. promises to cooperate with the amalgamated union, but was not yet ready to enter the convention. Boos greeted this hypocritical declaration. It is understood that both Frankenstein and Morris Fields backed out at the last moment, because they feared that they would lose the jobs which they now hold. It is understood that eight locals of the A.I.W.A. voted in favor of the amalgamation as against five that voted against. In spite of this disruptive action by the officers of the A.I.W.A., a solid delegation of the A.I.W.A., representing the Motor Products local and the Pressed Steel local, attended the convention and voted to amalgamate to the new union.

After a day and a half of deliberation, a constitution and preamble were adopted, stating that the final objectives of all workers were "the complete industrial and political freedom of all workers and to end we dedicate our lives." The amalgamated union is to be called the Automobile and Metal Workers Industrial Union of America (A.M.W.) and its temporary officers are to be Tee Woolly of Pontiac, president, Mathew Smith, secretary and Arthur Greer treasurer.

Another meeting is to be held on Feb. 1 at which time dues books will be issued, permanent officers elected, financial arrangements completed and an organizing campaign planned.

The convention pledged continued support of the Motor Products strike and pledged solidarity with the battle.

The mass meeting of the Motor Products strikers was held at Schiller Hall following the convention. Mathew Smith reported on the successful amalgamation of the unions, to the enthusiastic applause of the strikers. The Toledo delegates, Brothers Becker, president of local 4, Crookes, secretary, and Burke Cochran of the Mather strike advisory committee, local 4, then addressed the strike meeting and pledged the support of Toledo for the Motor Products strike.

Rap Ferrero Mini Defense Deportation In New Move

In a last-minute appeal to save Ferrero and Sallitto from deportation on Dec. 28 to Italy where death probably awaits them, a delegation representing the Ferrero-Sallitto Defense Conference had a hearing on Monday with McGrady of the Department of Labor. The delegation consisted of Ulisse De Dominicis, manager of the Baltimore Joint Board of the A.C.W.A., Rose Pesotta, national vice-president of the I.L.G.W.U., Albert Strong, secretary of the Defense Conference and member of the Journeymen Stonecutters Union of North America; William Taback, delegate to the conference and formerly a member of the Boilermakers Union.

During the previous week protests from over 100 A. F. of L. and independent unions and from hundreds of prominent individuals all over the country had poured in on McGrady's desk as a result of the drive for such mass protests just started by the Defense Conference. These, with personal letters, telegrams and phone calls from many including John L. Lewis, Norman Thomas, Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., Samuel Dubinsky and Luigi Antonini of the I.L.G.W.U., Joseph Schlossberg of the A.C.W.A., had convinced McGrady that the labor movement of the country was mobilizing, in the defense of Ferrero and Sallitto.

McGrady, as usual, passed the buck, claiming that the charges against Ferrero and Sallitto could not be dropped and that the fight, (Continued on Page 2)

Mini Defense Deportation In New Move

Raymond W. Henderson, attorney for Norman Mini, is proceeding with the next legal steps in his fight to compel the state of California to provide copies of the trial record, thereby making possible an appeal by Mini and the other victims of the Sacramento criminal syndicalism frame-up. It is expected that the case will shortly be in court again, when Henderson moves to upset the recent adverse ruling of the District Court in Sacramento.

The National Sacramento Appeal Committee, which has retained Henderson, is opening a drive to get unions and other bodies to send resolutions to the California authorities calling for the release not only of Mini but of his fellow-prisoners. Among the organizations which have given financial aid and also adopted resolutions, the N.S. A.C. announced yesterday, are the following:

Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (General Executive Board; New York, Cincinnati, Boston Joint Boards; many locals); the General Defense Committee and many of its locals; the League for Industrial Democracy; the I.L.G.W.U. (New York Joint Boards and several locals); Jewish National Workers Alliance; New York Forward Ass.; Workmen's Group (N. Y. C.); Proletarian Circle (N.E.B. and many circles); Workmen's Sick and Death Benefit Fund (National Office and many branches); branches of the S.P., W. P., Y. P. S. L., Young Circle League, etc. (Continued on Page 2)

Toledo Projects Organize

O.U.L. Backs New WPA Set-up After Unity Efforts Prove Fruitless

TOLEDO, O., Dec. 23.—Real progress is being made in the organization of the 11,000 WPA workers here into the WPA Workers Union, affiliated to the Lucas County Unemployed League.

The much hatched WPA program originally scheduled to be under way as far back as last June, has already simmered down into a weak imitation of the old FERA program, but on a much less stable basis. Originally scheduled to employ 18,000 men in Lucas County, it has to date given jobs to only 11,000 workers on the relief rolls. Approximately 14,000 families are still dependent upon direct relief and face the prospect of outright starvation with the withdrawal of all Federal relief funds, on Dec. 1.

The Lucas County Unemployed League, alive to the possibilities inherent in this situation, realized the necessity for a swift and aggressive campaign to organize these thousands of WPA workers into a stable organization for the achievement of better working conditions, continuous employment, trade union wage-scales; the ability to get back on relief as the WPA projects are demobilized; and for the realization of united action between the organized unemployed and the trade union movement.

Unity Efforts Fruitless
In order to create the broadest possible basis for this work the Lucas County Unemployed League proposed at the start of the WPA program here to the Workers Alliance of Lucas County to set up a joint committee for the purpose of jointly organizing the WPA workers. But all attempts to achieve joint action with the Workers Alliance have thus far proven fruitless. Some of the Socialist Party members holding leading positions in the local W.A.A. organization have united with Communist Party unemployed leaders who have officially liquidated the Unemployed Councils, have joined the W.A.A. and are using every means to sabotage and prevent any joint action between the W.A.A. and the U.L.

The confusion in the organization of the WPA project workers in Lucas County, which the leaders of the Lucas County Unemployed League predicted would ensue, cannot be exaggerated. Because of this hundreds of WPA workers will undoubtedly be lost to both organizations and the strength of the unemployed organizations considerably lessened due to the factional warfare that exists.

U. L. Organizes Project Union
The Lucas County Unemployed League, finding joint action impossible at the moment, sponsored and helped organize an independent organization, the WPA Workers Union. This union is an independent organization, has elected its own officers, set its dues at 25c per month and has proceeded to organize the WPA workers on the basis of project stewards and project committee subdivisions. The (Continued on Page 2)

Class Struggle Issues Arouse West Coast Maritime Unions

By C. CURTISS

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 18.—The issue of job action has assumed great proportions on the West coast.

The recent convention of the maritime federation (organization of all waterfront crafts on the coast) has attempted to resolve this question of job action, with what success remains to be seen.

Job action is a term that describes a multitude of activities. But speaking generally it is action taken right on the job by the men involved in order to gain a demand or a set of demands.

Above all the seamen have been forced to take recourse to job action. The "award" they received some time ago has proven to be a cruel farce, and in order to maintain conditions of living and safety, the seamen have been compelled to utilize job action as an ultimate weapon.

The conditions under which the seamen live and work are described by Harry Lundberg, leader of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, and president of the Maritime Federation:

Conditions of Seamen
"The seamen are still working 56 hours a week or more for an (Continued on Page 4)

New Zealand Seamen's Union Adopts Revolutionary Position on Sanctions

(Editor's Note: The following resolution, carried at a stop work meeting of the Seamen's Union in New Zealand, speaks for itself and shows that the New Zealand seamen are well aware of the illusions that are being spread by those who would capitalize the League of Nations in the present international crisis. We heartily endorse the attitude of the New Zealand seamen and hope that seamen in the U.S. will follow their position. The resolution is quoted from "The Militant," monthly organ of the Fourth Internationalist Workers Party of Australia.)

"That in the opinion of the members of the Federated Seamen's Union the international situation is as follows:
"In 1914 the majority of the

the world safe for democracy, to end war, and to overthrow German militarism for ever. Emphasis was laid on the importance of safeguarding international law against treaty breakers such as Germany and on the certainty, if Germany were allowed to do as she pleased, that there could be nothing but international anarchy throughout the world.

"Influenced by their hatred of the tyranny of German militarism, the working class supported its capitalist governments. But when

the war was declared the evils of British and French militarism were immediately added to those of German militarism; and at the end of the war, British, French, Italian, and American militarism were triumphant, and democracy everywhere was either greatly weakened or wiped out of existence. In this manner the capitalist system managed to survive the conflict between the two great capitalist powers, Great Britain and Germany, and after the war prof- (Continued on Page 2)