

# Rebel Spirit Stirs Akron Gum Miners

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the union men was not given a fair wage allowance when he was transferred to another machine.

A tirebuilders committee went from department to department rallying workers to their banner and thus entire production was stopped within an hour. This involved 1,500. Another shift came in at midnight and joined, doubling the number refusing to work.

A committee of two union men from each of the four shifts was selected by the workers to confer with the management. The company quickly agreed to give the worker his allowance and the men went back to work.

However, it was discovered that the company wasn't going to pay any of the workers money for the time lost during the sitdown so the entire factory again quit work.

Threats by the company to forcibly move the workers from the plant were met with jeers and the police were defied. Although the plant normally is closed over Sunday the workers prepared to remain inside until their demand for half pay was met.

When the company saw that the workers were going to keep the plant closed at all costs and would not let anyone work, it agreed to pay all the men except the tirebuilders half pay.

The tirebuilders, to show that they were willing to sacrifice for the sake of fellow-workers, accepted the proposal but the other workers refused it for over two hours although union leaders urged them to accept.

The union committee was "tricked" into accepting the proposal and recommending it to the men, some of them said later, but not many were disturbed because it was seen that a mistake this time could and would be rectified in the near future.

During the entire time of the sitdown, active union members, enthused by the fight of their leaders in the negotiations, signed up hundreds of non-union men into the bona-fide union.

### Union Grows After Struggle

The union at Goodyear grew after the sitdown but for just the opposite reason which brought the great increase of membership at Firestone and Goodrich local.

Goodyear workers realized clearly that it was their lack of organization, of leadership that brought the tirebuilders defeat. Failure of the union leadership itself to utilize the situation quickly enough also left the workers without confidence and so they went to work when the Goodyear company assembled its prize strike-breakers, the Flying Squadron to do the work.

They joined the union because together with the other union workers they make a solid front and so were able to plan a 100 per cent sitdown at plant 2 which the company was afraid of. That's why the order to carry out a wage cut is still in the superintendent's office and will remain there for a while.

Since both Goodrich and Firestone unionists and their leaders quickly stepped into the forefront of the sitdowns and led the workers to victory, hundreds joined the organizations for they have found an answer to the crying need of the rubberworkers—a militant trade union constantly fighting for the workers rights.

That the rubberworkers would themselves take spontaneous action against the slow but steady depression of their living wage through various moves of the companies is thousand fold proof of our contention that the unions must show in action that they will lead the workers for the workers are demanding action.

### Causes of the "Sitdowns"

The causes of the sitdowns can not be found in the issues around which the recent skirmishes were fought. There have been wage cuts, longer hours, etc. introduced before in the factories without voluble protest. Union men have been laid-off before and not for just a week as the Firestone unionist whose case started the sitdown.

L. L. Callahan, Goodrich local president, correctly gave as the reason for the sitdowns the following statement. "The whole thing in a nutshell is that the men have been overworked, overloaded and underpaid over a period of time to a breaking point. It has been reached now. Any incident will serve as the spark to set off an explosion."

In other words, the sitdowns are significant as portraying the mood and temper of the rubberworkers; as showing what working conditions and the drive of economic forces have done to their ideas.

The rapid spread of the sitdowns shows how a fighting slogan will be concretized by masses in motion and that the rubberworkers are in motion.

This places squarely before the union leaders the responsibility of answering the fundamental demands of the workers and leading them in a battle for a real victory against the rubber barons who have been running everything their own way while Claherty previously was ruining the unions.

### Workers Ready for Strike

Every avenue of thought arising from a study of the meaning of the sitdowns leads to the inescapable conclusion that the rubberworkers not only are ready for but demand an industry wide strike to break the continual drive against them by the companies.

There are no smooth-tongued Clahertys to divert the growing strike sentiment among the workers into the channels of betrayal and defeat this year.

Whether any individual union officer wants to continue the fight against the rubber companies, he will not have any chance to decide. The upswing of the workers will carry him along.

What is needed is conscious preparation for the strike so that the workers can have every advantage possible against their ruthless class enemies.

# Miners Union Conference Hurls Defi at Green Ultimatum on CIO

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about 100,000 workers in by-product and gas and chemical plants to the organization. But the craft union officials already claim jurisdiction over skilled mechanics working in these plants. This, however, may be considered only a minor matter in view of the general conflict around the industrial union issue. While this specific action will play its part, it is the attitude of the miners' convention in regard to this larger question confronting the trade union movement today that will serve to sharpen enormously the present conflict in the A. F. of L.

No doubt John L. Lewis has also emerged considerably strengthened in the union leadership since this convention. In its most extreme form this was indicated by laudatory and uncritical statements such as those made by delegates from Logan County, West Virginia who compared Lewis to Moses, who "has led us out of the land of Egypt." But in its real essence the strengthening of the position of John L. Lewis can be motivated only by the readiness of the rank and file coal miners for industrial unionism and to accept progressive ideas. They understand the issues involved in this fight and they have proved that they are ready to make it.

### In the Grand Style

John L. Lewis, however, understands also how to make the best use of his strengthened position. We need mention only the incident of the contemplated boost in salaries for the leading officials, which by the way, became a mere incident only after Lewis had had the opportunity to gauge the real sentiment of the delegates present.

The committee on officers report brought in a proposition to increase the officers' salaries by 100 percent, which would elevate the remuneration for Lewis from a "paltry" \$12,000 yearly to \$25,000. The resentment to this proposal was well expressed by an Indiana delegate, J. W. Norris, who said: "We have miners that are going barefoot. Isn't the present salary plenty to sustain any one in a standard of

decency and health." A turbulent debate followed with a demand for a roll-call vote. But the opposition was steam-rollered; both Pat Fagan, who was in the chair at the time, and later John L. Lewis ruled this demand out of order and declared the committee's report, including the projected salary boost, adopted. The following day, however, Lewis cleverly manipulated this question to his own advantage. With a grandiloquent gesture he declined to accept the salary increase. The other officers hurried to follow in his footsteps.

### Autonomy and Roosevelt

A turbulent debate ensued also on the autonomy question. In this is involved the right of the district organizations to elect their own officers against the present practice of the general officers instituting what is called provisional governments, by appointment of officials who are to work under the supervision of the general officers. On a roll-call vote this practice was sustained more than two to one. Lewis won an easy victory, but surely not, in this case, a victory for progressive ideas.

Similarly Lewis carried the day with ease lining up the convention practically unanimously for support of Roosevelt—to "go forward with Roosevelt," fighting under his banner for re-election. Undoubtedly the ease of these victories must in a large measure be attributed to the all-overshadowing issue of the fight for industrial unionism in which the delegates by their determination to support the position taken by John L. Lewis and the Committee for Industrial Organization were easily swayed to swallow a good deal more than would otherwise have been the case.

### Clash with Craft Unions

On this major issue none of them made any mistake. They were able to judge also from practical experience. Last year, for example, a number of the higher, and particularly reactionary, craft union officials attempted to have the Guffey coal bill amended so that skilled mechanics, working in or around the mines, would be taken out of

the jurisdiction of the U.M.W.A. Needless to say, the miners became thoroughly aroused by this attempted raid.

This, however, is only one small example of the conflict between craft unionism and industrial unionism that is now extending deeper into the whole of the movement in every instance where actual union advance is projected. The Oil Workers Union, also represented on the Committee for Industrial Organization, recently obtained an election under the National Labor Relations Act in a campaign against a company union. Here again the higher craft union officials stepped in and attempted to have the National Labor Relations Board recognize the craft unions who claimed jurisdiction over the mechanics in this field instead of the Oil Workers Union.

### Radio Workers Bolt

It will be remembered that the A. F. of L. Executive Council meeting, held in Miami recently, rejected the appeal of the radio workers' federal unions for a national charter based on the industrial form of organization. The radio workers have since decided to ignore the council's decision and to proceed to organize industrially regardless of whether or not this means expulsion from the A. F. of L.

There are similar indications that the automobile workers' union will go ahead, defy the A. F. of L. decision to segregate skilled mechanics and refuse to let the craft union chiefs raid the industrial jurisdiction which this union has already written into its constitution.

It is thus clear that great forces are already set into motion in the fight for industrial unionism. In increasing measure these forces will look toward the miners' union for leadership. And if the recently concluded convention is to be taken as an indication, the United Mine Workers is becoming conscious of its new role. Fundamentally this is the light in which the results of this convention must be viewed in order to get a full and complete understanding.

# WPA Official Found Guilty

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proved that Walker was permitted to lie on the ground helpless in freezing weather for a period of six or more hours with the project officials refusing to give him any assistance. The acting prosecutor then proceeded to read a number of notarized affidavits, the sworn statements of Walker's widow and orphan daughter, workers on the job and other witnesses. The climax of this startling but conclusive evidence was the presentation of a written and signed statement by Dr. Phillip M. Johnson, a physician of long standing in the community who attended Walker before he died. The statement was as follows:

"This is to say that I was Alonzo Walker's family physician for many months. I took care of him in his last illness. Here are some of the things he said to me before he died: 'I was so cold I felt to the ground. I begged the foreman to send me home, but he walked away. I lay on the ground until about 4:30 P.M.' His death was caused by extreme exposure to cold. (Dr. Johnson's emphasis.)"

### Verdict Is "Guilty"

Gerry Allard, acting judge, then called upon any representative of the W.P.A. administration present in the audience to assume the role of defense attorney. Although the administration had been publicly invited to present its side of the case at the trial, no representative was in attendance. The judge then appointed Ted Selander, union executive-secretary, to act as defense counsel. He proceeded to give all the statements on the case given to union committees by the administration. The audience laughed derisively throughout the presentation of these statements at the cold-blooded stupidity of the lies and twistings of the administration, although everyone agreed that Selander was honestly attempting the personally unpleasant task of a fair and conscientious defense. The audience, acting as jury, ended the hearing with a thunderous and unanimous verdict of "Guilty!"

Allard, in his address, spoke of the necessity of organization on the jobs, stated that he had learned a great deal about the form and activities of the W.P.A. union which he was going to attempt to have carried out in Illinois, and invited representatives of the union to an I.W.A. conference to be held shortly. He ended his remarks with an impassioned plea for unity among the unemployed organizations and called for the quick establishment of one big united unemployed and relief workers national organization.

### Urges Unity of Unemployed

Speaking of the national unemployed situation, Arnold Johnson

pointed out the permanency of unemployment, how the federal government uses unemployed relief as a vote-catching device, the uselessness of the projects and work under the present set-up. He emphasized the necessity for the W.P.A. workers to work together with all the other unemployed and the need for establishing complete cooperation between the trade unions and unemployed organizations.

The presence of Allard and Johnson speaking together on the same platform, although spokesmen for two different national unemployed organizations, is regarded here as of the greatest significance for the establishment of unity between the National Unemployed League and the Workers Alliance of America within the very near future. Scores of local W.A.A. members attended the union meeting despite the fact that the union is affiliated with the Lucas County Unemployed League

against which the Stalinists have been spreading a whispering campaign of the most slimy slander. They were tremendously impressed by the size and methods of the union and a number of them expressed the sentiment to union officials during and after the meeting that they were going back to their organization to demand that unity negotiations be successfully carried through at all costs immediately.

Throughout the meeting, speakers stressed the necessity for state and nation-wide unified action on the part of the W.P.A. workers and unemployed. This was the key-note of the entire proceedings. The union announced in this connection that it is calling a conference of unemployed and W.P.A. organizations of 24 Northwest Ohio counties on February 25 in Toledo to consolidate the unemployed and relief workers' forces in this large area.

# C. P. Union Reneges On Office Workers

How the Stalinists work in the trade unions, how they substitute their own factional interests for the general interests of progressive militant trade unionism is brought out once more by their activities in connection with the lockout of eight office workers of the Margon Corporation. This company which produces doll and toy parts, has both an inside factory and an office. The workers in the factory are members of a Stalinist Metal Workers Union outside of the A. F. of L. The office workers were members of the Office Workers Union, also a Stalinist organization, but when this union liquidated they joined the B.S. & A.U. (Bookkeepers and Stenographers Union) which is affiliated to the A. F. of L.

The issue arose in connection with the discharge of two members of the office staff for their union activity. The rest of the office employees immediately showed their solidarity and demanded the reinstatement of the discharged workers. The bosses refused to reinstate them and demanded of the remaining office workers that they sign a pledge agreeing to remain at work should the factory workers strike when their agreement expired. This the office workers refused to do and were immediately locked out by the boss.

**Discouraged Strike Action**  
In view of the fact that last year the office workers had agreed 100 percent to strike if and when the factory workers struck when the latter were negotiating their present agreement, the role of the Stalinist Metal Workers' Union in this situation becomes doubly treacherous. Instead of receiving help from the metal workers' union as they had expected, the locked-out workers were told that for them to strike at present would embarrass the factory workers since this was the slow season and because their agreement with the Margon Corp. does not expire until July.

In addition, the leaders of the Metal Workers Union sought in every way to put pressure on the Bookkeepers Union in order to prevent them from calling a strike against the Margon Corp. They have even tried to discourage the locked out workers from picketing. In a conference between the Book-

keepers Union and their organization they went so far as to say that if the union would not call a strike, they would see to it that the Stalinists in the Bookkeepers Union would "vote right," meaning that they would throw their support to the present leadership of the union.

Unfortunately for the Stalinists, the present leadership of the Bookkeepers and Stenographers Union is not ready to bargain away the principles of progressive unionism in return for votes. It is not going to permit its members to sign a "yellow dog" contract in order to oblige the Stalinists. It insists that the locked out workers be reinstated. Its policy is a clear-cut militant one of strike action.

**Membership Fights "Yellow Dog"**  
This policy of strike was presented by the Executive Board to a special membership meeting of the Bookkeepers and Stenographers Union attended by five hundred workers. At this meeting the Stalinists were forced to retreat. Sharp criticism was leveled against the leadership of the Metal Workers Union for its attempts to prevent the strike in order to further their own narrow factional interests as opposed to the general progressive policy of waging a militant fight against the "yellow dog" contract. They did not dare at this meeting to defend the leadership of the Metal Workers Union. All they did was to whine that on the eve of a strike such an attack divided the ranks of the workers. This argument was effectively ridiculed. Various speakers from the floor pointed out that it was vital for the membership to know all the facts in connection with the impending strike. When the motion to declare the strike was put, it was unanimously carried by the 500 workers present.

The strike is now on. A mass picket line has already been thrown around the plant. The Bookkeepers Union in its fight is appealing for support from the rest of the labor movement. The B.S. & A.U. further calls upon the workers in the factory to participate in this struggle and see to it that no scabs are permitted to work. The strike must be won. The attempt on the part of this corporation to get its office employees to sign a "Yellow Dog Contract" shall be defeated!

# Mooney Calls Meat Packers For Support Launch Drive

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about the Mooney-Billings frame-up.  
Charles Goff, in 1916 a sergeant, now a captain of police, is daily doing everything within his power to seal the frame-up forever by refabricating the necessary evidence to hold together the foul conspiracy against us.

These framers are tenaciously defending their foul conspiracy and are renewing with all the vigor of their beings the rankest accusations against us to becloud the real issues. No depravity will be too low for them to stoop to in justifying the dastardly deed that has robbed us of the best years of our lives. James Brennan, assistant under Fickert and active prosecutor who railroaded innocent twenty-two-year-old Warren K. Billings to the penitentiary for life, last year introduced into the California Legislature a resolution calling upon the Governor to commute our sentences to time served, thus branding us forever as "ex-convicts", "time-expired felons", "convicted murderers". That cowardly, tricky maneuver would have ended forever any hope of redressing this monstrous wrong in court.

It is only through the splendid support that you have given through these many years that we are still alive and fighting for freedom and vindication. It is only through your generous, loyal, financial help that we have been able to continue exposing this frame-up to the world. We need funds desperately to carry through the present move we are making. We must immediately prepare a complete transcript of the hearing proceedings of over fifteen thousand pages to enable my attorneys to prepare their brief for the United States Supreme Court. We are compelled to pay for that transcript, the California Supreme Court having refused to pay such expenses for us. I know you will do your utmost to strain a point at this time to give us desperately needed financial assistance. With your continued aid I know we shall crown our struggle with victory. Without your aid we are helplessly lost.

With profound proletarian appreciation of what you have done for me through these many desperate years, I send you warmest fraternal and militant trade union greetings.

Very Sincerely,  
TOM MOONEY  
31921

Direct all funds and communications to: Tom Mooney Molders' Defense Committee, Box 2475, San Francisco, Calif.

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mittie. The A. F. of L. Committee For Industrial Organization in Washington, D. C., will be contacted, and at all times the work of the industrial union movement in the packing house industry will be closely co-ordinated with the national movement for industrial unionism.

The Committee For Industrial Unionism in the Packing House Industry does not pretend to set itself up as a central body for the federation of packing house unions. The only requirement which it lays down for affiliation is a sincere desire for the building of industrial unionism in the industry. The principal role of the Committee will be to carry on an educational campaign to prove the need for industrial unionism and thus to bring organized pressure to force the American Federation of Labor to issue an unrestricted industrial union charter for the packing house industry.

The date on which this objective will be realized is governed by the developments in the national movement and by the intelligence and sincere effort which the packing house unions apply to this work. There will, however, be immediate gains for the local unions through the benefit of closer cooperation in the day by day struggle against the packing house employers.

The next conference of the Committee For Industrial Organization in the Packing House Industry will be held in Austin, Minnesota, on Saturday, February 29, and Sunday, March 1. Further information may be secured through Joseph Voorhees, Austin, Minnesota, and Lewis Clarke, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

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