

UMW Gives Blank Check To Roosevelt

District Autonomy Is Blocked By Lewis Union Machine

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The United Mine Workers convention held here has adopted policies reflecting the basic aims and purposes of John L. Lewis and the C.I.O. leadership. They indicate the trends that the C.I.O. movement will follow in the coming period.

Although over 200 resolutions were introduced asking for the right to district autonomy (the right of districts to elect their own officials) the Lewis administration was able to forestall the introduction of this elementary democratic procedure by pushing through a spurious "compromise" resolution.

In the compromise resolution passed, the majority of the districts which are in dispute were given the right to elect vice-presidents and other minor officials, but the key posts of president and secretary-treasurer are still subject to appointment. Lewis intends to continue his iron-hand control of the miners' union.

For Roosevelt

Faith in Roosevelt was the keynote of all political speeches delivered and a special resolution of unqualified support to F.D.R. and his policies was unanimously approved by the convention. No mention was made of the role of Roosevelt in the "Little Steel" strike betrayal, nor of the action of the miners' executive board condemning the role of the Federal Government at that time.

The Lewis machine squashed any rumors about beginning a "third party" movement. Labor's Non-Partisan League was praised and its policies approved. The C.I.O. intends to use the League as a buffer force between politicians and not for independent political action by the working class, the speakers indicated.

The need for fighting against wage-cuts was realized and emphasized by Lewis in his opening address.

High, Wide and Handsome

The salary of Lewis was raised from \$12,500 a year to \$25,000, while Vice-President Phillip Murray and Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Kennedy get increases to \$18,000 a year from their present pay of \$9,000. At the last convention Lewis dramatically refused a wage increase because \$12,500 was enough. The time for that sort of demagoguery apparently has passed.

The reactionary A.F. of L. Executive Council was put squarely on the spot by Lewis in his offer of unity between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L.

Lewis said the C.I.O. would be willing to march as a whole into the A.F. of L. on Feb. 1, with A. F. of L. charters given to all C.I.O. unions at once; or, if the A.F. of L. wanted, it could march as a whole into the C.I.O. which would give charters immediately. A convention of the united labor movement would then decide any question raised by jurisdictional claims, etc.

Unity Approved

The convention approved this offer of unity.

The size of the convention and the power of John L. Lewis were impressive testimony that the back-bone of the C.I.O.—the miners' union—was intact and that talk by A.F. of L. bureaucrats that the C.I.O. is a "mere passing phase," is sheerest nonsense. The C.I.O. is still the powerful, historically progressive movement and the miners' union is its stronghold.

Widick Flays Hague

(Continued from page 1)

support to this struggle since it spells the beginning of Hague's end as the pompous, "I am the law" political over-lord," Widick emphasized.

"Hagueism is a classic example of American politics. Hague is a supporter of Roosevelt, along with most reactionary democratic politicians. His outrageous political activities are possible because he has the united support of the Chamber of Commerce and sweatshop owners, who are willing to pay a high price to keep Jersey City labor unorganized so they can continue to exploit them mercilessly."

"The answer to Hagueism is a union organization drive conducted on the lines of the Crucible strategy, and independent political action of the working class to combat him on the political field," Widick said.

Progressive Slates Win In Lundeberg Victory

West Coast Seamen Show Their Determination To Follow Militant Leadership By Casting Huge Vote

By Glen Trimble

SAN FRANCISCO.—As usual on the West Coast, the Sailors' Union of the Pacific has taken the lead in blazing the progressive trail. The results of the annual elections overwhelmingly favor amalgamation of the unlicensed seamen into a united, industrial union affiliated to the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast. This decision was outstanding in a general landslide for the progressive candidates and policies backed by the militant group headed by Harry Lundeberg.

In one of the largest votes ever cast, the West Coast's Stalinized C.I.O. took a terrific drubbing despite an intensive, expensive and vicious campaign which involved the expenditure of thousands of dollars on radio broadcasts, leaflets, pamphlets, "mass meetings," and so on. Every ounce of "C.I.O." talent was mustered but the S.U.P. membership again proved its title to the rating of most advanced section of the working class in the Western United States by discounting the flood of hostile propaganda and attack and holding to a genuinely militant course.

Reactionary Squabble

The amalgamation resolution read: "Are you in favor of the amalgamation of the unlicensed seamen as divisions of a single, united, independent industrial union of West Coast seamen, affiliated with the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast?" Two thousand three hundred and eighty-two sailors voted yes; five hundred and sixty-five No.

Only slightly less decisive was the rejection of any entanglement at the present time in the C.I.O.-A.F. of L. "beef," which, on this coast, has degenerated into a thoroughly reactionary squabble between Stalinists and other reactionaries for jurisdictional picarons and machine control. Sailors voted 2,203 for Independence.

The combined A.F. of L. and C.I.O. votes totaled only 641! The coast-wise referendum on coast and branch officers resulted in a 21 to 0 victory for the progressives and a crushing shut-out defeat for the Stalinists. Lundeberg's 2,496 to 453 election over Harry Meyer was outstanding but still typical of the vote of confidence given the entire progressive slate.

SO. CALIFORNIA A.C.L.U. FIGHTS FOR ANARCHIST

The Southern California branch of the American Civil Liberties Union has started a campaign in behalf of Marcus Graham, well-known philosophic anarchist who after 18 years of persecution by reactionary officials of the U.S. Department of Labor is now being threatened with prison and deportation.

Graham was first arrested in 1919 and ordered deported to Canada, but the Canadian authorities refused to admit him. In 1921 he was arrested by New York's iniquitous "Bomb Squad" and, after brutal third degree treatment, turned over to the immigration authorities. The Labor Department jailed him for six months.

The next stage in the hound-hunt by the Labor Department had him arrested on the trumped-up charge of having crossed the United States border into Mexico without a permit. The only evidence produced against him was the fact that he was found in possession of a copy of "An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry" which he had compiled and edited. A nation-wide protest by well-known authors and educators forced the Labor Department to dismiss the proceedings.

Then followed official harassment of the monthly publication, "Man," of which Graham is editor. Subscribers were visited by immigration inspectors and threatened with prosecution unless they cancelled their subscriptions.

In October, 1937, Graham was again arrested. Immigration inspectors searched and ransacked his home without a search warrant and seized his personal papers as well as correspondence and articles belonging to "Man." Deportation proceedings against Graham, based upon an order dated more than 18 years ago, are now under way in an effort to stifle the publication, "Man."

The A.C.L.U., which has taken issue with the authorities on the ground that the new move against Graham is a threat to freedom of the press, has furnished counsel to Graham and is sponsoring a civil suit for damages against the immigration officers based on their unlawful search of Graham's home.

The Stalinists' chief figure in the S.U.P., Al Quittenont, ran for three offices and failed to make the grade even as a trustee, though five were elected.

Election Results

The annual elections in the Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association have also resulted in an upset progressive victory and a crushing defeat for the Stalinists and for the Stalinized C.I.O. top staff on the West Coast. All coastwise officers—Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer, branch agents at the three most important coast points (aside from San Francisco Headquarters whose officers are the union heads)—San Pedro, Portland, and Seattle, and the majority of port patrolmen were elected by the "progressive seagoing firemen's" group. Stalinists won the Agent at Honolulu and a San Francisco patrolman, chiefly because of six—and seven—candidate fields.

Even "uptown" the new line is getting a working-class kick-back. Two Stalinist bases of supply for every innocent front and phoney conference have revolted. The Waiters Union, a strong unit of the powerful miscellaneous bloc in the labor council, defeated the entire heavily-subsidized Stalinist slate and elected a relatively progressive group around Hugo Ernst. The Office Workers Union, sole clarity "mass base" but so overrun with Stalinists that the latter's election seemed sure, defeated every Stalinist candidate for individual office, allowing them only three out of ten on the executive board in a proportional representation election.

Clearly, the days of Stalinist disruption in the San Francisco labor movement are numbered!

Police Terror In St. Louis Strike

Ford Workers Fight Provocations; Union Men Arrested

ST. LOUIS.—The vicious tie-up between the management of the St. Louis plant of the Ford Motor Co. and the St. Louis police and relief agencies has been thoroughly demonstrated to the striking Auto Workers here by this time. The U.A.W. strike, forced on the union by company discrimination against militant workers in rehiring, has been on since the last week in November.

Bert Gantner, personnel director of the Ford plant, accompanies the police every time the union headquarters are raided and selects for arrest whatever members he wants detained. He then directs the examination and questioning of the arrested men at police headquarters. It would be superfluous to say that the police never trouble themselves about warrants in making their illegal raids.

Provocateurs At Work

Strikers applying for relief are forced onto WPA jobs, though ordinarily relief applicants are not handled in this way. This method naturally diminishes the number of strikers available for picket duty, and active union work.

A number of acid-throwing cases, in which new Ford cars and even some Ford scabs have been the targets, have occurred recently and naturally have seriously injured the union's popularity. There is little doubt that these incidents are the work of agents-provocateurs, and the union members are leaving no stone unturned to find the actual aggressors. Naturally, each such event is the signal for mass arrests of union members. Absolutely no evidence has been found to link any unionist with these tactics.

Publicity Backing

Unfortunately for the cause of the strikers, the strike bulletin which was published for two weeks has been allowed to drop, and the union, taking no advantage of the lessons of the big gas house strike here a few years ago, has been forced to see its fight presented to the public only by the capitalist press, where the facts are consistently sensationalized and garbled.

The necessity of active publicity presenting the union's case correctly, both for the sake of the morale of the men and that of the union's sympathizers, has not yet been grasped by the union leadership, which otherwise is waging a courageous fight against serious obstacles.

Lundeberg Hits Back At Charges

Denounces Slanderous Accusations Made Against Seamen

WASHINGTON.—Appearing recently at the hearings of the Copeland Committee Harry Lundeberg, militant head of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, registered a vigorous protest against the establishment of a Maritime Mediation Board as proposed in Senate Bill 3078. He scored the flood of false propaganda charging American seamen with being "undisciplined" and inefficient, declaring it to be not only untrue, but "camouflage to cover up the real reason for the sickness of the American shipping industry."

"In the last few months," Lundeberg said, "the seaman has been constantly accused of lack of discipline, insubordination, and bad performance aboard ships. This publicity has been carried on through the newspapers, leading magazines, and statements by various people in public office to such an extent that by now the front pages of the nation's papers are covered with stories about the 'undisciplined' American seamen, etc., which in their language is ruining the American Merchant Marine. We know that these stories are not based on fact but on assumptions."

Cites Federal Laws

"As a matter of fact, the United States federal laws take ample care of the handling of 'undisciplined' seamen. If a man refuses duty on the high seas on American ships he can, according to the laws, be prosecuted for mutiny, which carries a sentence of from three to five years. Secondly, before an American seaman goes to sea today, he must sign articles before the U. S. Shipping Commissioner with a government certificate, called the 'Certificate of Efficiency.'"

He cited the Merchant Marine Act of 1936. "This in itself," he pointed out, "takes care of any undisciplined crews. In fact, in our opinion, as we stated when we appeared before the House Committee on Merchant Marine last year, this is too severe a law.... We maintain that the department of Steam Boat Inspection Service has more than enough power to invoke discipline under this act, and that thereby anyone accusing the seamen of lack of discipline, is in reality accusing the Department of Commerce of failing in its duties."

Grounds of Opposition

The opposition of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific to the Mediation Board was based, he said, on the following reasons:

"1. It takes from the workers their most important means of protection: strike action.

"2. It delays for months the settlement of grievances.

"3. It will ultimately put the sailors in the same category as the seamen of Italy, Germany and Russia, whose right to economic action has been completely taken away from them and consequently their conditions are not what they want, but what have been forced upon them by edict.

"4. We, as seamen, believe we should have the same right as other American workers, the right to have a direct voice in the determination of our own working conditions.

Defends Union Power

"5. Seamen are entitled to the prompt adjustment of grievances by means of direct negotiation. But all experience has shown that negotiations can be fruitful only if the unions have the power and freedom to back up reasonable demands by strike action. This proposal would tie up the adjustment of the most pressing grievances in so much red tape and involve so many delays as to be tantamount to a virtual stoppage of the right to strike. The American seamen can never agree to such an infringement of their rights.

"6. Furthermore, the adoption of this proposal, with its provision for endless delays would involve the industry in prolonged periods of unrest and uncertainty injurious to normal functioning and to the morale of the seamen. Drawn-out delays in the adjustment of grievances would tend to demoralize the workers and lead to all kinds of sporadic actions beyond the control of the unions."

Party Resolutions

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT and the S. W. P.

The following is the first installment of the resolution on the trade union question adopted by the convention of the Socialist Workers Party.

The most important single field of activity of the revolutionary proletarian party is the trade unions. Unless the party is deeply rooted in the basic economic organizations of the working class, and is inseparably associated with them in their daily struggles, it can be, at best, a literary propagandist group but not a living revolutionary political party of the proletariat, able to lead the latter in the decisive struggle for power. The party that is divorced from the trade union movement and its daily work, is doomed to sterility and disintegration. This is especially true in the United States at the present time.

The outstanding characteristics of the working class movement in the United States in the recent period are the enormous growth of trade union movements which now embrace millions of workers never organized in the past; the development of the C.I.O. as the movement of the workers in the basic key and mass-production industries, organized in industrial unions, as contrasted with the classic A. F. of L. form of craft unions; the violent conflict between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., and the recent trend toward the unification of the two bodies; and the expansion of the powers and role of the federal government as "mediator" in the conflict between the workers and the employers.

Most significant and promising of all recent phenomena in the working class is the speedy growth of the C.I.O. movement among the hitherto unorganized workers.

Essentially the A. F. of L. always was and today especially is the organization of the skilled worker or the aristocracy of labor. With the exception of a few of its affiliates or of certain periods in its history, it pursued a deliberate policy of ignoring the great mass of the unorganized proletarians in the basic industries of the country. So far as organizing the mass production industries was concerned the craft union structure of the A. F. of L. made the achievement of that task practically impossible.

The C.I.O. movement represents a radical break with this reactionary tradition. Under the banner of this movement hundreds of thousands of hitherto unorganized workers have swelled the ranks of organized labor, demonstrating the practicability and even the ease of organizing the masses of unorganized once the doors of unionism are thrown open to them. Moreover, the C.I.O. movement has grown on the basis of the organization of the key and mass production industries of the country controlled by the most powerful financial oligarchs (rubber, auto, steel, packinghouses, etc.). Still more, it has shown that the only possible and feasible means of organizing big industry and of preserving the unions is the industrial, or vertical structural form.

Industrial Union an Essential Form

Contrary to the obsolete craft union structure of the A. F. of L., which is thoroughly reactionary and divisive, the industrial union corresponds entirely to the modern organization of industrial life, made possible by the tremendous technological progress and consequent leveling of skilled workers to the plane of semi-skilled or unskilled. Finally, the organization by the C.I.O. of the unskilled mass production industrial workers, the most poorly paid and the least subject to petty bourgeois influences, produced a decisive change in the social composition of the organized labor movement.

Up to that time, the latter was dominated overwhelmingly by the labor aristocracy, closely interwoven with the bourgeois political parties, and presided over by a reactionary bureaucracy which never encountered any really perilous proletarian opposition in the ranks. Now, the organization of several million truly proletarian elements into unions drastically alters the relationship of forces in the organized labor movement. The unskilled, truly proletarian forces are the predominant element in the union movement for the first time, and thus constitute a formidable power not only against the conservative labor bureaucracy but also against capitalism itself.

This is already indicated by the fact that, immediately upon their organization into unions, and despite the fact that their employers represented the most powerful groups of the bourgeoisie (or rather, precisely because of that fact), these masses in the basic industries adopted the most advanced fighting tactics, encroaching directly upon the "sacred" property rights of the bourgeoisie (sit-in strikes), and conducted their struggles in the most militant and aggressive manner, often in disregard of the restraining hand of the C.I.O. bureaucracy.

It is indicated also by the fact that, scarcely having entered the field of economic organization, they already showed their inclination to arm themselves with independent political organizations as well, to break with the traditional bourgeois parties (which are also the traditional alternatives of the A. F. of L. political policy), and to create their own party. This highly significant political tendency is weakened or checked—but its existence is not disproved—by the attempts of the C.I.O. leadership to direct it back into old party channels or to distort it

in the form of petty-bourgeois Labor and Farmer-Labor parties. All these considerations underline the fact that, on the whole, the C.I.O. has been and remains the more progressive force in the organized labor movement.

The growth of the C.I.O. movement has not, however, eliminated the A. F. of L. as a factor in the labor movement. Quite the contrary. The A. F. of L. has not only succeeded in maintaining virtually intact all the forces it had after the disintegration of such C.I.O. organizations as the United Mine Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers but has even registered an increase in membership, in vitality and even in strike activity. The unionization of the American working class in the recent period has not, by and large, taken place in one section at the expense of the other, but has proceeded along parallel lines, both in the C.I.O., which has recorded the greatest and most significant gains, and in the A. F. of L.

The preservation and even growth of the A. F. of L. is accounted for by a number of important factors. In the first place, it still remains the organization primarily of the skilled workers, the aristocracy of labor. The A. F. of L., furthermore, is the "traditional" organization of union labor, with strong craft traditions. In many industries and trades, its solidity is based upon the fact that it has regular contracts with the employers. Moreover, its main basis is constituted by more or less stable unions of long standing, having a strong apparatus, regular dues systems, and ample treasuries, a firm bureaucracy, regulated local and national organizations, with their own regular meetings, conventions, constitutions, elected officialdom, etc., etc.

A. F. of L. Also Using Industrial Form

In addition, under the irresistible influence of the patent successes of the industrial form of organization, certain sections of the A. F. of L. and its bureaucracy have relented from their stiff insistence on the craft union form of organization and organized new unions on an industrial basis. Finally, the fact that the once apparently unhalting sweep of the C.I.O. has been checked, and even driven back by the employers, has served to strengthen the feeling among certain sections of the working class that the A. F. of L. is not outdated and can be utilized as well as or even better than the C.I.O. for the defense of labor interests. The flagrantly undemocratic system of leadership instituted by the C.I.O. in the new unions organized by it, has also been skillfully exploited by the A. F. of L. bureaucracy to its own advantage.

A whole series of circumstances has now brought prominently to the fore the question of the unification of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. The main responsibility for the split two years ago unquestionably lies on the shoulders of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy. By its reactionary control of the labor movement, the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. sought to stifle every attempt to modify the obsolete craft union structure upon which it is based, and actively sabotaged all efforts to organize the unorganized, especially in the mass-production industries, on an industrial, that is, on the only conceivable basis.

The formation of the C.I.O., its fight against the Green-Woll-Frey machine, its decisive plunge into the work of organizing the masses of the unskilled in the key industries, were progressive steps and more than warranted the active support given by the revolutionists to the C.I.O. as the progressive section of the labor movement. In its fight against the C.I.O., the leadership of the A.F. of L. played a disloyal and reactionary role. Instead of facilitating the work of organizing the big industries of the country, it stood in the way at every turn, joining in the union-breaking chorus of the employers and their apologists. In many cases, the A.F. of L. leadership even resorted to downright strike-breaking in an effort to stem the sensational advances made by the C.I.O.

However, notwithstanding the wide rift that developed between the two sections of the labor movement, there are now strong forces at work for their unification. The setbacks suffered by the various sectors of the union movement in most recent times has strengthened the feeling that one united organization, instead of two antagonistic ones, would make it easier to win labor's battles against the employers. The defeat registered by the workers in the "Little Steel" and similar strikes, has only served to emphasize the need of putting an end to the division in labor's camp.

On top of this is the ominous deepening of the new crisis, which weakens labor's hold on industry and foreshadows an employers' offensive to reduce the workers' standards of living, annul all the gains made in the past period, and wipe out whatever union control has been established. The dangers of the crisis are reflected in the mounting sentiment among the organized workers throughout the country for a speedy unification of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. so that labor may be able to present a sorely needed common front against the capitalist class.

Pressure from All Side for Unity

Contributing to this inexorable trend are a number of subsidiary factors. The Roosevelt regime is not antagonistic to (Continued on page 4)

Seamen Stop Stalinists In Union Fight

(Continued from page 1)

they did not take part in the Unity Conference in San Francisco on January 17. Therefore we will have to force them to unite with us."

These arguments were squelched by proof that N.M.U. men sail from the S.U.P. halls; that seamen from all unions were on the beach because of the depression and because winter is the worst time of the year for shipping; that because the S.U.P. wanted unity of the men on the job they went independent so as not to take part on either side of the labor civil war between the A.F.L. and C.I.O. on the Pacific Coast, and that the S.U.P. has always united in action with all seamen against the bosses or the government.

The final motion that passed was to rescind the "civil war" resolution, ask for a statement from the S.U.P. on their policy toward N.M.U. men on West Coast ships, and refer any action on this matter to a referendum vote of the N.M.U. This

Revolt Crystallizes In Newsstand Union

NEW YORK.—During the last two weeks rank-and-file revolt has begun to crystallize in Local 906B of the C.I.O. Retail Newsstand Employees Union against the Stalinist leadership.

Discontent has been created by the manner in which the Stalinists precipitated the unprepared strike against the Collier's Service Corporation on the I.R.T. and B.M.T. lines, fostering false illusions and faith in the State Labor Relations Board until the strike was lost.

The Stalinists have been offering no opposition to the wholesale firing by the Interborough News Company, and refuse to prepare for a strike despite the coming expiration of the closed-shop contract.

passed by an overwhelming majority of 356 to 101—a victory for the Union, a defeat for the Communist Party.

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