

In the Trade Unions

By B. J. WIDICK

Conspicuous by their absence from the C.I.O.'s proposals to the A.F. of L. were two important considerations.

In the first place, the C.I.O. proposals threatened to create a new "forgotten man" in the labor movement. None other than David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. John L. Lewis probably took great personal satisfaction in snubbing Dubinsky in the union movement. Dubinsky's feelings when he read about the proposed convention of the A.F. of L., the C.I.O. and the railroad unions without mention of his powerful independent union can easily be imagined.

However, Dubinsky and the I.L.G.W.U. cannot be counted out as easily as Lewis would like. Any peace between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. in regard to the clothing industry that doesn't include the I.L.G.W.U. simply won't matter.

No Guarantees for Industrial Unionism

In the second place, the C.I.O. committee did not ask for any guarantees for industrial unionism in the mass production industries. Since this was the original bone of contention in the labor movement, the omission is very revealing on how the nature of the struggle and the split in the union movement has changed character.

Lewis did not leave that out because he is going to give up industrial unionism. Not at all. Industrial unionism is an accepted fact. Not even the most reactionary A.F. of L. negotiator would seriously propose craft unionism for the mass production unions. The A.F. of L. committee already has stated its willingness to recognize industrial unionism in major industries. The addition of Dan Tobin, as we pointed out in the previous column, helps industrial unionism in this respect.

The C.I.O. wants equality with the A.F. of L. in the new union movement. Or to be more specific, Lewis wants to dominate the new American Congress of Labor (if his proposals are carried) through the friendship of the railroad brotherhoods who would hold the balance of power.

Of course, the A.F. of L. leaders also want to control the united labor movement. That is why they rejected the C.I.O. proposals. The question of which bureaucracy shall dominate is playing a very large role in the present negotiations.

Keeps Faith with Stalinists

It is tragic that the C.I.O. was not able to sweep forward to greater victories after the auto strikes and the signing of the steel contracts. Replacement of the A.F. of L. by a new and larger union movement based on the mass workers would have been a great advance for the American workers. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Between Lewis and his Stalinist allies enough mistakes were made to slow down and finally stop the growth of the C.I.O.

Lewis proposes the inclusion of certain C.I.O. craft unions in the new set-up. This indicates he is keeping faith with his Stalinist allies who control those unions and want to enter the new union movement on the ground floor.

Only Labor Can Achieve Its Own Unity

Perhaps the most popular and most dangerous part of the C.I.O. proposals was that President Roosevelt be chairman of the unification convention. In its own way it is a confession of bankrupt union leadership to ask for outside intervention. It would give Roosevelt an unparalleled opportunity to swing the entire labor movement behind his war program. Although we haven't seen the Daily Worker because it is not obtainable in the backwoods, we are confident that this proposal was hailed with great hosannas!

The C.I.O. proposal to have the U.S. Department of Labor act as mediator "on all controversial questions affecting overlapping jurisdiction or other matters between the constituent unions of the Congress," is a dangerous attempt to hog-tie the entire union movement to the government. It would place a chain around the free and independent action of the unions, and should be rejected. Lasting labor unity with benefit to the workers can come only through the unions ironing out their own differences.

AFL Balks at CIO Unity Proposals

(Continued from Page 1)

was much milder than the statements he actually made. Not only is the President eager to bolster the New Deal forces for the 1940 election by uniting the labor movement and tying its bureaucrats closely to his machine, but the fast approaching war makes it imperative that the labor movement be chained to the capitalist war machine.

If the present unity conference fails, it is very probable that the President will take drastic steps in the direction of restrictive labor legislation. The outlawing of sit-down strikes, the business "appeasement" policy, the various schemes to lower taxes on big business and high incomes as well as the drive to reduce relief appropriations are steps in this direction.

Green's Plan

That the A.F. of L. top bureaucracy fears unity proposals of any kind except on their own dictatorial terms was clearly shown by assertions of William Green at a Washington D.C. banquet last Saturday.

The A.F. of L. plan for unification of labor is the return of the original A.F. of L. unions now in the C.I.O. to the A.F. of L. and division of the 20 new unions upon a craft basis with "certain industries excepted."

Green plans to atomize the industrial unions so that they can be absorbed into the A. F. of L. craft structure without endangering the control of the reactionary clique now in control.

Green stated at the banquet that "we will never liquidate the American Federation of Labor for anybody."

He declared that the A.F. of L. was a part of "the fabric of our civilization," and continued as follows:

Won't Liquidate AFL

"We find men who propose that this organization be wiped out overnight—liquidated, destroyed. Who is there here within the sound of my voice who will agree the American Federation of Labor shall be liquidated tomorrow? We are willing to go a long way to assure good-will and peace in American labor. But I solemnly declare we will never liquidate the American Federation of Labor for anybody."

It remains to be seen whether the President's open threat to take drastic action against unionism will succeed in composing the jealousies and the thirst for power among the labor bureaucrats which have so far defeated all attempts at uniting the labor movement.

SWP AIDS GUILD PICKET HEARST

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

CHICAGO—Over 100 workers marched in the ranks of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Peoples Socialist League on Saturday, March 11 in a protest demonstration before the Hearst Building. The demonstration was organized to protest the injunction against the Newspaper Guild pickets now on strike against the Hearst newspapers, the Chicago American and the Herald and Examiner.

After marching for more than an hour in a drenching rain, the demonstrators paraded down the streets shouting slogans in favor of the strike and denouncing the Hearst thugs and the injunction. The parade then returned to the headquarters of the S.W.P.

MINNESOTA BILL WOULD OUTLAW UNION ACTIVITIES

Vicious Oregon Law Is Pattern for Measure

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

MINNEAPOLIS, March 10—The reactionaries who now control the state of Minnesota are trying to force through a labor law, patterned after the notorious Oregon bill, which would put the curb and bit on the organized labor movement here.

House File 352 if passed would outlaw closed shop agreements, strikes except under certain stringent regulations, secondary boycotts, and would open the way for the bosses to call for an accounting of the books, records, correspondence and "all other evidence" of any union at any time.

The bill provides for a "Labor Relations Board" which would be appointed by the Republican Governor Stassen. This board would be empowered to hold elections in any place of business where any group of workers wanted to go on strike. They would not only be given the power to force the election but would have the full authority to say just who in the plant could vote. In other words, if the truck drivers from a department store wanted to strike for higher wages or better working conditions, this board, hand-picked by the labor-hating governor, could allow the entire personnel of the store, from the management down, to vote on whether or not the truck drivers could strike.

The only strikes which would be "legal" would be those called for higher wages or better working conditions. Strikes for union recognition would be outlawed. The secondary boycott would also be illegal. Any union which petitioned a central labor body for the placement of any firm upon the unfair list would be guilty of violating the law, and punishable.

Another vicious feature of this completely vicious piece of legislation is the clause making it unlawful to "interfere in any way with the movement of articles of commerce by motor vehicles or teams upon the public roads, alleys or highways of the state." This is aimed directly at Local 544 of the Teamsters International.

According to the carefully prepared publicity which has been allowed to leak out of the Capital about this bill, it is sponsored by a group known as the "Farm Bloc." It is almost an established fact that Stassen intends to veto the measure when it comes to him, but the ground work for passing it over his veto has already been laid. In this manner our good governor can claim that he had nothing to do with the bill but that the farmers of the state passed it in defiance of the labor movement.

The "Farm Bloc" is supposed to be composed of genuine dirt farmers who are "sick to death of listening to the dictates of labor." Actually the bill is the brain child of the rank reactionary Associated Industries, successors to the Citizens Alliance. The Citizens Alliance has tried, unsuccessfully, for many years, to destroy and liquidate the labor movement.

Debate on Bill  
The joint Minneapolis and St. Paul Workers Defense League held a dinner meeting on March 10 at which the Minnesota State Federation of Labor president, George Lawson debated the bill with an attorney named Elmquist who has represented the bosses in the legislature for the passage of the bill.

Minnesota labor does not intend to allow this bill to pass without a most aggressive fight against it. 1934 is remembered here as a bloody year. Should House File 352 pass and become a law of the state, 1934 will be remembered, by comparison to 1939, as a very mild sorcerer.

Shoe Workers Organize Fight Against Stalinists

Progressive Groups Form on Nation-wide Basis to Oust Reactionaries from Control

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

NEW YORK — Progressive groups in the union over the entire nation are organizing to fight the Stalinists and other reactionary forces who have been conducting a rule or ruin policy in the United Shoe Workers of America (C.I.O.).

Although in many sections, members of the General Executive Board are to be elected, the main fight will center around the key position of General Organizer. The post is considered so important that the Stalinists are not running anyone for the office of Secretary-Treasurer in order to concentrate their fight on winning the General Organizer's position.

The Stalinist candidate is one McGrath. The progressives are pushing Michael Padgett of Los Angeles. John D. Nolan, a reactionary red-baiter has been pushed in at the last minute in an attempt to split the progressive voter.

McGrath's Qualification  
McGrath, the Stalinist choice, was picked for his name and not his ability as a shoe organizer. The original candidate of the Stalinists was Rosenthal of New York, but it was felt that his name was against him and if the provinces were to vote "Stalinist" and "Ar-yan" had to be found.

Michael Padgett, at the present time the General Executive Board member from the west coast, has done a good job as an organizer out there, and the reactionaries are at a loss to find some weakness in his work in order to sway a few of the progressives. Padgett has consistently fought the Stalinists on principled ground, and was instrumental in having the U.S.W.A. and the other bona-fide unions on the west coast break from the Bridges-dominated Los Angeles Council, leaving the Stalinists and their paper unions in complete control of themselves.

At the Pittsburgh convention of the C.I.O., Padgett again exposed Bridges and his union-busting tactics.

Nolan's Program  
John D. Nolan is the former president of the Shoe Workers Protective Union which merged with the U.S.W.A. He is at the present time one of the organizers jailed in Maine. The boss press in all the shoe centers is playing up Nolan's candidacy, referring to him as another Mooney. He is spending a barrel of money in analyzing through circulars and pamphlets emphasizing his hatred of all radicals and militant policies. He is being supported by all the narrow "backyard" unionists who were opposed to national affiliation of shoe workers. Nolan's policies, if he were elected, would be as disastrous as those of the Stalinists.

The progressives are gaining ground daily. Although Padgett was originally nominated by one Local in California, eventually a whole series of Locals throughout the entire country came out solidly in his favor.

In many sections where the Stalinists have been unopposed and have held full sway for years, progressive groups are being formed. In Boston, for example, the workers are no longer swallowing the sell-out line of these twentieth century pilgrims, and the next Boston elections will reveal it. At Lowell, in the same state, the Stalinists are on their way out. Philadelphia has the elements for a strong militant op-

position. But the most amazing development, during the past two weeks, has been the growth of a large progressive group in New York City.

Situation in N. Y.  
The New York City Shoe locals are under the complete domination of the Stalinists. The workers have seen, over a period of time that the bosses gain concession after concession from the leaders of the Union. Only a few days ago the leadership permitted a ten per cent cut to go through in a large number of factories.

It is a matter of only a few weeks before the cuts are forced onto the entire industry. The progressive shoe workers had become passive, and were sitting back waiting, knowing that the Stalinists would eventually ruin the Union. Many of them were talking of splitting and going back into the notorious A.F.L. Boot and Shoe. The workers were so sick, disgusted and demoralized at fighting against the Stalinist machine, that they disliked even voting in the coming elections. It was when they saw the other sections of the country slugging through, that they stiffened, regained confidence, and plunged into the middle of the fight.

If a national progressive group had been developed a few months ago, the progressives would be in a position to-day to win the coming elections with ease. But each group thought it was fighting alone, and did not realize that others in their union were faced with the same problems against the same cliques. Nevertheless it is not too late now, and the enthusiasm with which the progressives in all areas are greeting the news that they have a fighting chance, is giving the Stalinists the biggest headache that they have had in a long time.

BURNHAM SPEAKS ON FIGHT AGAINST FASCISM IN U. S.

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

NEW YORK, March 13—Despite exceedingly bad weather 150 persons turned out last night to hear James Burnham deliver the last of three lectures organized by Local New York of the S.W.P. on how to fight fascism. Analyzing the economic crisis of American imperialism, comrade Burnham traced the development of the fascist movement and influence in this country. The American bosses, said Burnham, will turn ever more to the brutal methods of fascism in order to keep the workers in subjection.

The workers in this country will not, however, give up without a fight. They have already demonstrated their willingness to defend their hard-won positions. But the only guarantee they have for final victory over the fascist forces is a solidly organized party of the working class, whose program is that of revolution—the Socialist Workers Party. In the immediate fight against fascism, it is absolutely imperative, that workers organize their own defense guards.

One worker in the audience joined the party at the conclusion of the meeting, thus bringing to six the number who have joined the party during this series of three lectures.

India Nationalist Congress Meets

(Continued from Page 1)

sants? The 500,000 workers, peasants, students and middle class Indians who are attending the open-air Congress impatiently await the answer.

Early reports indicate that a sharp and bitter struggle between the conservative followers of Gandhi on the one hand and the radical-minded Congress socialists on the other hand is now going on. Gandhi—who is now held in high favor by the British imperialist circles, and who is looked upon (with complete justification) as England's best friend among the Indian people—is determined that the Congress shall not pursue revolutionary methods. Apparently he has succeeded by his recent demagogic fast in strengthening the hand of the Congress right-wing.

The furthest thought from Gandhi's mind is to embarrass the British by launching a direct mass struggle for power. It is with little wonder that we learn of his nomination as "Britain's best policeman" in India. He, along with his middle-class and capitalist following, do not oppose the Slave Federation of Britain, provided certain milk-and-honey reforms are adopted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PATE DE FOIE GRAS? IT'S FREE! AT UN SOIREE DANSANT featuring recordings by swing artists. Skits by our own Wash. Lights. Follow Travelers. Games. Refreshments. Sat. —March 18—at 916 9th Ave. near 59th St. Admission, 15c.

APPEAL ARMY

THE MINNEAPOLIS RED BUILDERS AT WORK:

"During February, Minneapolis sold 1,089 copies of the Appeal—the best record ever achieved by the Party branch. The Appeal Brigade was responsible for the showing. We want to do better during March. We have set up charts in the headquarters with scores of individual Brigade members. Martin Nelson is our star salesman, selling about 40% of the total 1,089 copies. A Brigade report is made at every branch meeting."—M. Freed, Appeal campaign director.

The Appeal is just splendid. I imagine that it means very hard work for all of you, but you are putting out a first rate revolutionary paper. . . —Dr. Konikow of Boston, Mass.

THREE WEEKS TO GO: There are still three weeks left

to go on the Appeal sub drive for 1,000 new readers. So far this week things are so good that it looks like another record-busting sub week!

Youngstown, Ohio is stepping ahead to first place for the No. 1 prize (a set of Lenin's works) with New York City running a close second.

But there are still three good weeks to go on the drive!

MAY DAY PREPARATIONS UNDER WAY: This week branches will receive full information about the Special May-Day issue of the Appeal already in preparation. Branches should begin preparing to send in greetings, collection lists that are filled out, etc. More information later on.

REMEMBER: Have you made your regular Appeal bundle-order payment?

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