

In the Labor Unions

By B. J. WIDICK

The Ohio Federation of Teachers, affiliated with the A.F. of L., recently held its state convention.

Gains were made in membership, affiliation of new locals with the Federation and the organization of new locals in the state of Ohio.

One state official openly told delegates, "If you don't go along with us (amend the Wagner Act) we'll withdraw support from your organization."

For Labor Unity

A call to the national A.F. of L. to submit a national referendum on the question of unity between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. was also made by the convention.

The referendum would be on two questions: "Shall a department for industrial unionism be set up within the A.F. of L.?"

"Shall all bona-fide labor unions, not now affiliated, be invited to affiliate with the A.F. of L., on exactly the same terms, and to enjoy the same rights, benefits and cooperation in the Federation as the unions now members of the same."

A blast at the anti-Allen bills pending before Congress was made in a special resolution which condemned the vicious persecution of minorities embodied in those bills.

All Stalinist-supported candidates lost in the elections. E. Glenn Baxter of Elyria was chosen president, George Hamersmith of Toledo, vice president, Eugenia Couden of Cleveland, recording secretary, and Paul Parker of Springfield, sergeant of arms.

Trainmen Meet

Another convention in Ohio has a different character—the quadrennial convention of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen. While thousands of railroad workers are walking the streets, 975 delegates are leisurely going through a convention that is expected to last at least two months!

What a convention! All sessions are closed. Anyone talking to a newspaperman is subject to expulsion. But despite these steps to keep absolute silence over his moves, President A. F. Whitney is having a little trouble.

There seems to have been a falling out between Whitney and George Anderson, secretary-treasurer. Anderson published a small pamphlet, charging the Whitney administration with exorbitant expenditure of union funds. He claims that expenditures increased \$990,000 during the past ten years, compared to a previous period.

When part of this pamphlet was reprinted by a Cleveland newspaper, Whitney, instead of replying to the accusations, threatened to take the convention to another city where the press would be more favorably inclined to him.

Later on Whitney declared that the increase in the union revenue by \$10,000,000 in the past ten years justified the increased expenditures because the union had grown from 57,000 to 123,000.

Whitney can scarcely blame the rank and file of his union for being very suspicious of any explanations in view of the dictatorial control he holds over the convention and its proceedings. Anderson, for example, got the axe because of his opposition to Whitney.

CURRAN POLICY ON "HOT OIL" ENDANGERS TANKER STRIKE

Militant Traditions of N.M.U. Membership Smothered by Class-Collaboration of Curran Leadership as Strike Enters Seventh Week

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ment of the "hot oil" and break the resistance of the tanker companies.

The Curran leadership conducted some demonstrations. These forced the Department of Commerce to become more careful in the aid they were giving the oil companies in issuing certificates of efficiency to their finks; it has even fined the companies a total of \$67,000.

Then there was picketing of the docks. This was good publicity, but it was difficult to stop the finks from getting aboard the tankers and this policy, by itself, could not stop the shipment of "hot oil".

Gas Stations Picketed Picketing the gas stations that were selling the "hot oil" was a method of warning the consumers that there was a strike on against the oil companies. But the strikers could cover only a very small section of the gas stations selling the struck oil.

Declaring the struck oil companies "unfair" would help warn the union men and union sympathizers against buying their products — if the notice was brought to their attention and if they then remembered the products.

Only Effective Way The only effective way to stop the sale of "hot oil" was to stop all and any movement of the struck oil. To a considerable extent this was in the power of the Curran leadership.

C.P. Machine Forces Arbitration on Brass Rail Strikers

NEW YORK, May 23.—After twenty weeks of striking the Brass Rail in a crucial struggle with the Restaurant Guild, the members of Waiters' Union Local 16 are facing loss of job security through the acceptance of compulsory arbitration.

From the first, the Albertson-Lee administration of the local has tried to cook up a settlement based on the Guild's main demand. Meeting after meeting has repudiated such a line; and as recently as a month ago, President Lee was voted out of office in an election in which the progressives, organized in a group, made substantial headway in weakening Stalinist control.

Significant of the role played by the inter-local Stalinist machine in their attempt to offset progressive influence in Local 16 is the action taken by Harry Reich, C. P. leader in Cooks and Kitchen Workers Local 89, which is also involved in the controversy with the Restaurant Guild.

Progressives Must Act That's a straw in the wind which should arouse the progressives in Local 16 and the militant membership behind them to the greatest vigilance. A grave responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the Progressive Group of this local.

June New Int'l Features Trotsky on Bonapartism

The June number of the New Internationalist is just off the press. Leon Trotsky is featured, with an article on the Bonapartist philosophy of the state. This article examines Stalin's present day conception of State power and his revision of the traditional Marxist doctrine of the state.

ST. PAUL UNIONS DISCUSS PLIGHT OF UNEMPLOYED

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) ST. PAUL, Minn., May 24.—95 delegates representing 41 unions discussed the problems of unemployment and relief at a special conference sponsored by the unemployment committee of the Trades and Labor Assembly on May 19.

Although the first speaker, Frank Rarig, representative of the local relief administration, tried to confuse the issues by talking in terms of million dollar bond issues and by playing down the low standards of relief, the problems were clearly stated in discussion from the floor by delegates who from their own experience or that of their members know what the really miserable relief conditions are.

The general attitude was well summed up in the words of a delegate from the Carpenters' Union, who said, "Let's stop trying to make provisions to push the poor further down in the gutter. No matter how much money is appropriated, the poor keep getting poorer and the rich richer."

The inadequacies of the clothing allowances were sharply pointed out by a woman delegate from the Restaurant Employees Union who cited such cases as that of three children, 2, 3, and 4 years old with blisters on their feet from shoes which were too small, but who were nevertheless denied shoes.

The Housing Question Housing in St. Paul is one of the major problems of the unemployed and received much attention from the delegates. The newspaper of the city central body, the Union Advocate, in publishing a survey made on housing conditions by the unemployment committee quoted from an article in Fortune of three years ago which stated, "The slums of St. Paul are among the worst in the nation."

The questions of unemployment compensation were reported by Frank Starkey of the Industrial Commission, and delegates questioned the interpretations of the new 1939 legislative rulings. Further actions on these questions were referred to the unemployment committee of the Assembly which will lay out a program to help the union movement to face the problem.

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- 1. The Editor's Comments: Coughlin and Fascism. 2. The Bonapartist Philosophy of the State—by Leon Trotsky. 3. Class Politics in Palestine—by L. Rock. 4. A Program of Action for Palestine—by Haor. 5. The National Question in Central Europe—by Jan Buchar. 6. Popular Education in Crisis—by Dwight Macdonald. 7. The War in China and Japan—A Letter from Shanghai. 8. Australia Cognita—by N. Origliasso. 9. Old Garbage in New Pails—by Max Shachtman. 10. Correspondence. 11. Ireland and Ulster—by V. F. 12. Zionism and the Arabs—by Naomi Handleman.

LEHMAN SIGNS REACTIONARY DEVANY BILL

(By Staff Writer) ALBANY, N. Y., May 28.—Governor Lehman of New York, darling of the liberals, social-democrats and Stalinists, today approved the notorious Devany bill, which bars from civil service and teaching positions in the public schools "persons advocating the overthrow of the government by force."

The bill was signed by Lehman, self-styled "democrat," in face of the fact that similar bills on the statute books of numerous states, usually under the title of "criminal syndicalism" or "criminal anarchy" laws, have been used by reactionaries and labor-haters as a vicious weapon against all non-conformists and critics of capitalism.

The Devany bill is a direct blow at the freedom of thought and social or political activity of civil servants and public school teachers. It is designed to intimidate anyone in the schools or civil service, threatening them with loss of their jobs if they express any kind of vigorous, or say nothing of revolutionary, social opinions or engage in activity that corresponds to their beliefs.

Hypocrisy is added to this attack on the labor and radical movements by the pious assertion that it is "also" aimed at "reactionaries" and "fascists," a claim which is loudly belied by the fact that almost without exception every red-baiter and reactionary in the state stood solidly behind the bill.

A C. I. O. representative warned that the police could not continue their dictatorial tactics forever without the workers retaliating. A representative of the county A.F.L. central body condemned the "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde attitudes" of the city law department. "Sympathy from a pious law director doesn't heal a cracked head," he declared.

Rubber Workers Pace New Activity in Akron Unions

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) AKRON, O., May 24.—Indications of a dynamic resurgence of the Akron labor movement were expressed last week in several major developments in the United Rubber Workers of America.

A strike at Goodrich, now, the largest rubber factory in the city, was narrowly averted after workers in the processing division attempted to set their own production schedules. When the company changed the shifts onto night work, the workers entered the factory at the regular time during the day.

The resultant confusion so crippled production that an almost complete shutdown occurred. At a special union meeting, it was voted by a slim margin to return to work.

A departmental strike of truck tire builders at the General Tire and Rubber Co. was temporarily ended when the union acceded to a wage cut for the time being. Union officers, however, have been empowered to call a strike if wage negotiations are not satisfactorily concluded.

To the embarrassment of the union officialdom, the ghost of the 1936 Goodyear sit-down strike was raised during the N.L.R.B. hearings against the company, which began May 22. Plushed with the victory scored against the C.I.O. when the Supreme Court declared sit-down strikes illegal, the company has responded to

WORKERS' FORUM

FIGHTING COUGHLIN Editor: A number of the comrades here in Newark, in an informal discussion of the Appeal's articles on Coughlin, came to the following suggestion: We don't think it enough to merely characterize Coughlin as an anti-Semite and a fascist. What is much more important is a series of articles analyzing his program, explaining that Coughlin exploits the sentiments of the masses against their own interests, how their discontent with unemployment, war, fascism and an inadequate standard of living is used by him to answer that to end these things one must kill the Jews.

Local 544 Exposes Boss-Inspired Court Action

Show Boss Hand in Charges Against Union; C. P. Backs Union Busting Suit

By CARL O'SHEA MINNEAPOLIS, Minn.—Way back in February, 1938, five alleged members of the General Drivers Union Local 544 filed a complaint against the union, calling upon the district court to turn over all the union's books and records to the complainants.

No honest working-class organization would act any differently. BUT THE COMMUNIST PARTY WOULD—AND DOES. New Low for C.P. In a breath-taking article, the Stalinist Midwest Labor "Wrecker" for May 22 refers to the five finks as "rank and file members" of the union. "The Communist Party of Minnesota in a wire to the Record declared that the defendants were Trotskyites, who called themselves 'Communists' to hide their fascist inclinations. The Communist Party agreed with the complainants that the Trotskyites were guilty of anti-labor activities."

For the first time the Stalinist leaders are out in the open defending the finks who are acting for the employers in attacking the drivers' movement. The union movement, to a man, recognizes that the ONLY thing Local 544's leaders are guilty of is acting militantly and successfully in defending the interests of its members and the unemployed. All the fink charges boil down to this: How About This? This shameful behavior of the leaders of the Communist Party in Minnesota and the Midwest Record, in joining the fink attack on the union movement, ought to bring down upon the heads of the C.P. the condemnation of every honest worker, no matter what his political beliefs may be.

How about this? Certainly no honorable union man or woman can do less than denounce this foul act of betrayal, and pledge further support to 544 in this fight. One of the five complainants had become an employer and was no longer a truck driver; one had been disciplined by the union for undercutting the stipulated union scale; one scabbed during a strike. All were alien to trade unionism, all were tools of reactionary politicians and bosses who inspired and financed their move. At least one of them has since been caught recruiting members for the fink "Associated Independent Union."

Local 544, true to its militant tradition, mobilized its members and the entire Minneapolis labor movement against the fink suit. When the case was tried before court, Judge Reed ordered 544 to turn over its books and records to the five finks. Local 544 refused and challenged the court's decision. All Labor Backs 544 For fifteen months Local 544 has steadfastly refused to permit the five agents of the employers access to the union's books and records. At every stage in this remarkable fight, the General Drivers Union has had the complete support and endorsement of the Teamsters Joint Council and the Minneapolis Central Labor Union. Every worker realized the fink suit was a fight against the entire labor movement and that a fundamental union principle was involved. This fight is of prime importance to the labor movement of the United States, and the resistance of Local 544 and the local labor movement to the fink suit has certainly dissuaded employers from the idea that it is an easy matter to gain access to the books and records of unions.

Courts Back Down The case went to the state supreme court which, reacting to the pressure of the city and state labor movement, left a loop-hole for the district judge to retreat. The district judge then amended his order, denying the plaintiffs access to the union's books and ordering the case to be heard. Since then the attorney for the finks has made one attempt after another to get the union books and to smear the name of the union. Last week the finks' attorney, Arthur Anderson, filed new charges against Local 544. The union officers are accused of being communists; of calling strikes without authority from the membership; of holding the union election contrary to the union laws; of deliberately concealing the records from the plaintiffs; of being guilty of contempt of court because Miles Dunne, at a mass meeting of the union movement held in the municipal auditorium, said: "Court order or no court order, we'll never show our books"; for "causing to be collected large sums from various employers allegedly for back pay for employees who were members of Local 544."

Every union man and woman in the country will recognize that the new charges are cut from the same cloth as the original charges. And every

FARRELL FORCES GETTING SHAKY, ASK CORRECTION

By the Political Sports Editor Great significance was attached to an announcement, indignantly made by James T. Farrell, Captain of the Studs Lonigan Athletic Club, who is to lead his team in a grudge baseball match against the Marxist Maulers (captained by "Snorky" Jim Cannon), at the Heckscher Foundation, 104th St. and 5th Avenue, on June 10, under the auspices of the American Fund for Political Prisoners and Refugees, beneficiary of the game.

Farrell violently denounced the Socialist Appeal for having given the name of his dark-horse scrub as Schmelka Gainsborough, declaring that the misprint was a deliberate attempt to create the impression that his team would permit the collaboration of an Englishman. His scrub's real name, he contends, is Schmelka Gilligan, formerly Fitzgilligan. The Marxist Maulers are claiming to be gleeful at this announcement, seeing in it a confirmation of their boast that they would rattle their adversaries even before the game began.

More impartial observers, however, find the teams fairly evenly matched, with the edge going, if anything, to either side. However that may be, sport fans have been clamoring in increasing numbers for the tickets available at the American Fund, 100 Fifth Ave., Room 1609, where they are still selling at 85 cents a crack.

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