



Greetings!

Fred Ellis

FOURTH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA

"Fighting Bob" was scarcely in his grave before a mad scramble began among the Wisconsin Old Guard as to whether his successor should be Bob, Jr., Governor Blaine, Congressman Nelson or somebody else. Just now Bob, Jr. seems to have the edge, the idea being to take a leaf from the notebook of the Republican Party which has persistently been trying to establish the dynasty of the Roosevelt family by pushing the political fortunes of Teddy, Jr. But whether or not he goes to the Senate, it must be clear that young La-Follette cannot take the place of his father. Senator Norris is willing, but he does not quite fill the bill. Brookhart and Frazier are weak sisters. Wheeler is out of the question. Hiram Johnson, the ambitious freebooter from California, could establish neither contact nor confidence.

"But," writes the New Republic's Washington correspondent, "there is still Borah. As a matter of fact, Borah is the real hope—the one best bet. . . His friends here have a feeling, which I fully share, that the La Follette death will force him forward as the real Progressive leader, and that as such he will in the long run be more effective than any other man. The logic of things, they contend, points directly to him."

#### Effect of La Follette's Death.

Borah, however, is not La Follette. His past history and present connections offer many serious disadvantages. If the "Third Party" movement should now push forward Borah as its leader—a not improbable eventuality—a number of readjustments will be necessary. Borah—or someone else—might serve to crystallize the petty-bourgeois forces almost as well as La Follette did, but La Follette's other functions of confusing and seducing the workers can not be taken over so simply. Swapping horses while crossing a stream is always ticklish business, and especially when the new team is not immediately at hand and furthermore is unused to the harness.

The effect of La Follette's death must be to spread temporary demoralization in the camp of La Follettism and to hasten the separation of the Labor Party forces.

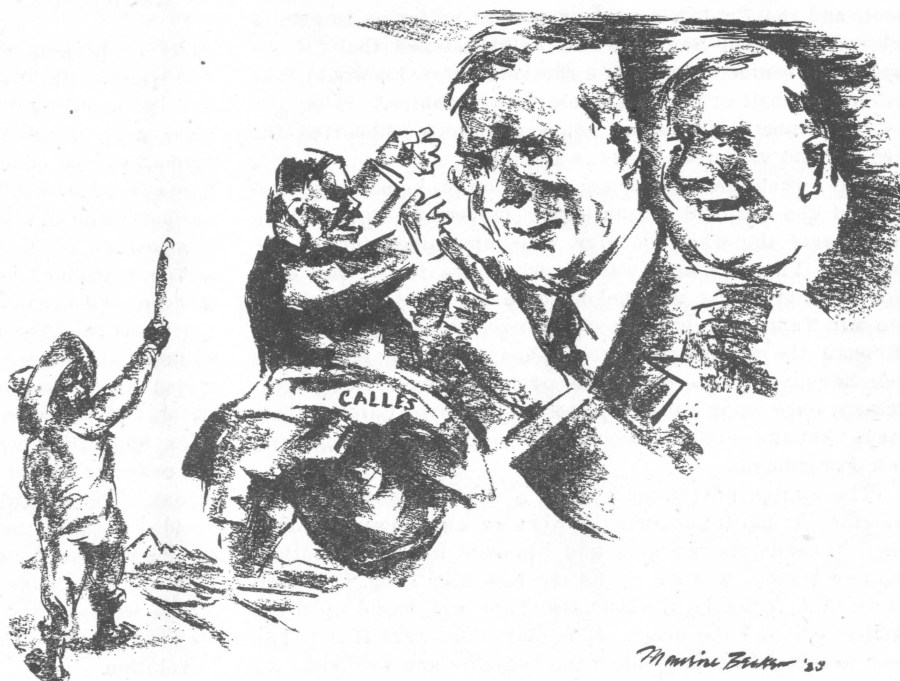
#### Stone and Johnston; the Passing of Gompers.

The death of Warren S. Stone, of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and the loss of prestige of Johnston of the Machinists, must also operate as powerful influences in this direction. Stone and Johnston have been the two most important links between the trade unions and La Follette. Both rose to public importance in politics on the crest of the movement for an independent party of the workers and both were instrumental in the capitulation of their movement to La Follettism. Johnston is still head of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, it is true, but the setback that he received from the rank and file of the Machinists' Union in the recent grand lodge elections, will tend to weaken his hand there.

More important still is the disappearance from the scene of Gompers. The passing of Gompers marks the break-up of a whole leading grouping in the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and releases many dammed up forces making for working class progress. This is not immediately visible on the surface, but it is beyond doubt. The rule of the small aristocratic unions is at an end. And in the larger unions, where the unskilled workers are becoming a more and more important factor, the movement for independent political action has gained considerable foothold. William Green may be a black reactionary—as he most certainly is—and John L. Lewis may be a pal of Cal Coolidge's, but the United Mine Workers of America which is the source of their power is overwhelmingly in favor of a Labor Party. The A. F. of L. obviously cannot continue to be the barrier to independent working class political action that it was under Gompers. The need of the American workers to enter politics as a class cannot remain permanently unsatisfied.

#### Towards a Labor Party.

Communists should be prepared to take advantage of the situation created by the deaths of La Follette, Stone and Gompers. We must not only throw the weight of our influence into the campaign for rousing the political consciousness of the trade unionists inside and outside of the La Follette movement, but we must also put forward concrete propositions tending to give organizational substance to the Labor Party movement as against La Follettism. We must, however, always bear in mind the general co-relation of forces and the position and role of our own Workers Party. We cannot proceed as though all the strings were gathered in our hands, as though we were the Labor Party. The Communist International has only recently emphasized the fact that the Labor Party must be deeply rooted in the trade unions. If we remember this, we can play a noteworthy part in leading the American workers into taking the first steps toward conscious political activity on a class basis.



WALL STREET'S NEW PUPPET IN MEXICO

Maurice Becker

# The Consolidation of The Revolutionary Government in South China

By Tang Shin See

**H**ONG KONG constitutes the imperialist headquarters in South China. Right opposite this town lies revolutionary Canton, the general staff of the national revolutionary emancipation movement. This town is a thorn in the flesh of the bourgeoisie; it would very much like to destroy it. It has already several times attempted to do so by direct and indirect means.

In the year 1922 the English egged on Chen Shui Ming, who was at that time a follower of Sun Yat Sen, to fight against the revolutionary government. Sun Yat Sen had to leave Canton. But after some months the revolutionary government again established itself in this town. England continued on every occasion to support Chen Shui Ming, whose troops were in East and South Kwantung. This lasted until shortly after the death of Sun Yat Sen.

In the middle of April of this year Chen Shui Ming was finally annihilated by the revolutionary troops. The English incited another general, the governor of Yunnan, against the Canton government. But he was unable to penetrate through Kwangsi (a neighboring province of Kwantung and a sphere of influence of the Canton government). This was how the imperialists carried on their indirect work.

Sometimes, however, they lost patience and made direct attempts against the Canton government. At the end of 1923 the imperialists concentrated their warships before Canton on account of a customs dispute. Sun Yat Sen declared that he was not afraid of entering into war with them; they should only start. But one ship after the other steamed away from the harbor.

In the summer of last year the English supported the so-called volunteer bands of the merchants against the government, and the English consul even went so far as to send a letter to Sun Yat Sen in which he threatened that "if the Canton government fired upon the volunteers, he would take action on behalf of the volunteers with warships."

In October last, Indian soldiers directly supported the revolt of the volunteer bands in Canton.

Now, when the fight for emancipation broke out in Shanghai and the national revolutionary movement threatens to spread over the whole country, the imperialists incited the troops of Yunnan and Kwangsi, who have for a long time been in Canton and who belonged to the right wing of the Kuo Min Tang, to fight against the revolutionary government. Although the treacherous troops had the town entirely in their hands, before a week was over the revolutionary government once again had complete mastery over Canton. This means that the revolutionary forces are capable of defending their government.

The Canton government is not a workers' and peasants' government; but it supports the workers' and peasants' movement; it leads the workers and peasants in the revolution. The government was set up by the Kuo Min Tang. It is well known that, formerly, the Kuo Min Tang was based upon the intellectuals and the army. It is only since 1922 that it has come to rely particularly upon the peasants and workers. As a result the old members formed a right wing within the



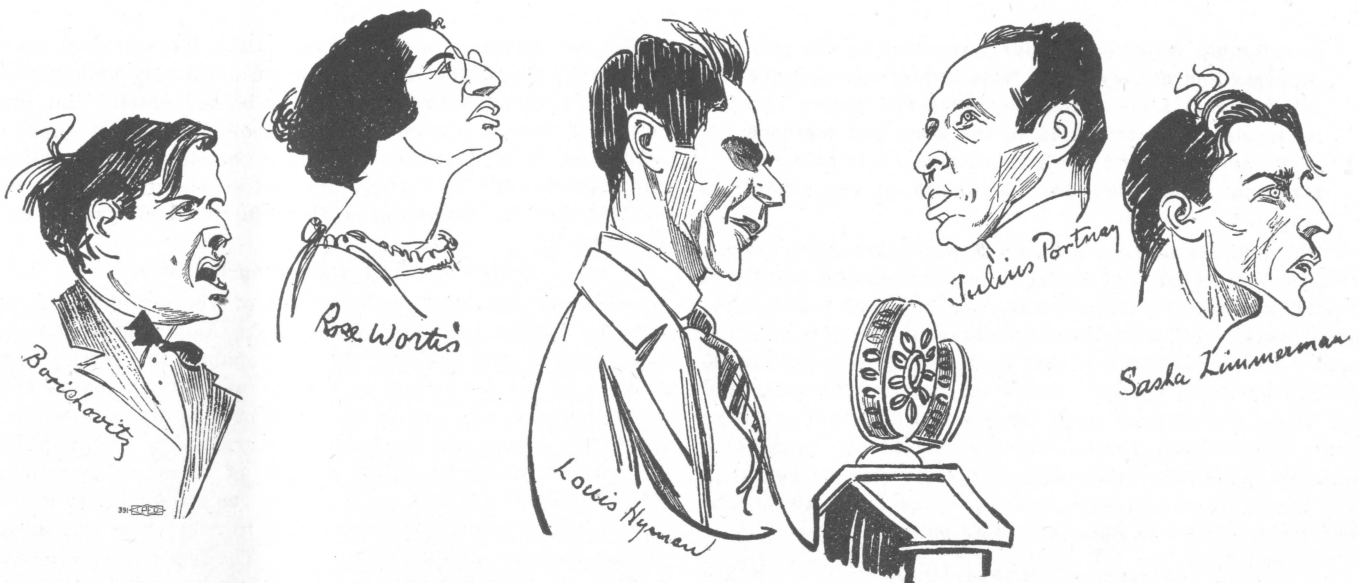
Billie Burke

**MOTHER RUSSIA: NEVER MIND THE BIRTH PANGS OF REVOLUTION. MY BOY AND YOURS WILL STAND AND FIGHT TOGETHER.**

party or became out and out counter-revolutionaries. The two traitors: the leader of the Yunnan troops, Yang Hsi Ming and the leader of the Kwangsi troops, Liu Tchun Wan, were right wing members of the Kuo Min Tang and have meanwhile become counter-revolutionaries. As a result of the fights in Canton, a thorough purging has taken place within the party and this purging of the Kuo Min Tang has rendered the position of the Canton government more firm than ever and has enabled it to come into closer contact with the workers and peasants.

Since Sun Yat Sen established direct relations with the workers and peasants, the Canton government has been protected by the workers and peasants. The fascist revolt in October last year was only defeated by the Canton workers. Chen Shui Ming was completely annihilated solely because the peasants fought against him along with the revolutionary troops. The struggle in this month was likewise so speedily decided because the Canton workers assisted the revolutionary government by going on strike. Many workers and peasants are now being armed (in accordance with the decision of the workers and peasants conference held on the 1st of May in Canton). They are to constitute the Red Guard of the Revolution.

The Canton government has various bodies of troops at



From "The Big Stick," Jewish satirical weekly.

LEADERS OF THE I. L. G. W. U. LEFT WING AT THE GREAT PROTEST MEETING IN YANKEE STADIUM, NEW YORK, WHERE 30,000 CLOAK AND DRESSMAKERS DEMANDED THE RESIGNATION OF SIGMAN, PERLSTEIN AND FEINBERG.

unions, Nos. 2, 9, and 22, by arbitrarily removing their executive boards, they touched the match to the great heap of tinder they had piled up. They soon became confronted with a conflagration which threatens to consume them. It was pushing the rank and file beyond the last limit of endurance, and they revolted en masse.

#### Rank and File Aroused.

The story of this revolt, one of the most spectacular and significant in the history of the American labor movement, need not be repeated. The spontaneous outpouring of thousands of rank and file members to the great mass meetings to protest against the insufferable policies of Sigman & Co., the raids of the administration gangsters to capture the union headquarters, the defense of these headquarters by the rank and file, the enormous meeting at the Yankee Stadium, where 30,000 to 40,000 needle workers gathered to protest against betrayal by their leaders and to organize themselves to defend their interests, the farcical trial staged by the Sigman administration in a desperate effort to discredit the leaders of the left wing and to find some faint plausibility for their brutal expulsions—all these things have received the widest publicity, and striking though they may be, they will be followed in all probability by events even more significant than those that have happened so far.

It is characteristic of the right-wing program of betrayal in every union that the reactionaries seek to cover up and justify their ruinous policies by concentrating an attack upon the left wing and by trying to convince the workers that the danger they have to confront is from the left and not from the right. In the present situation, the Sigman bureaucrats are following this policy with classic orthodoxy. They viewed with alarm the growing strength of the left wing. They awaited only a favorable opportunity to deliver a heavy blow at this left wing. They thought they saw their opportunity in connection with the May Day meetings, and they struck their blow by sweeping out of office 77 members of the executive boards of these three local unions which constitute not only

60 per cent of the International in New York, but also its very best proletarian elements.

In their eagerness to strike at the Communist militants, trade union bureaucrats have in many other unions raised the charge that the Workers Party and the Trade Union Educational League have been, in the first case in opposition to trade unionism generally, and in the second place a dual union, and upon the basis of such charges they have either expelled members outright from the union or have deprived them of their rights to sit as delegates in Central Labor Councils. But in no case was there such flimsy pretext seized upon as in the case of these suspended executive boards. Once again, even as he did in the case of beginning the expulsion policy in general, Sigman takes the lead in proceeding to extremes to make war upon the revolutionary elements in his organization.

In the New York Times which is pleased to give Sigman and his agents ample space in which to spread their poison against the best members of the organization, Sigman's tool, Feinberg, charges the 77 suspended officials with having violated the Constitution by the commission of the following "crime":

"On May 1st, 1925, the Executive Board of Local 22, and the Secretary-Treasurer of the local, called and organized a public meeting under the guise of a May Day demonstration, which, upon the invitation of the Executive Board and the Secretary-Treasurer of the local was addressed by avowed enemies and opponents of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; the speakers who were invited to address the meeting were members of organizations opposed to all the settled principles of trade unionism, and particularly those of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and the American Federation of Labor with which it is affiliated, i. e., the Workers Party, the Communist Party, and the so-called Trade Union Educational League. The speakers so invited advocated at the meeting methods of violence and



A YOUNG FACTORY CHAIRMAN.

Then came the war. It was a "great shake-up," as Shishkin told me. A number of workers fell under the influence of patriotic propaganda. The foremen insisted the war was being waged in defense of Russian independence against German aggression. However, part of the workers hated the war from the start. As to Shishkin, he could see no reason for hostilities. "There is no difference between myself and any German," he said to his fellow-workers. "I suppose if we cut his flesh the German would feel pain the same as we do. Why, then, should we fight?"

That was seditious talk and Shishkin would have been discharged if his skilled labor had not been indispensable. The factory was making war material, labor had become scarce, and Shishkin was an expert worker. He was warned time and again to desist from undesirable discussions but the job was not taken away from him. Being indispensable in the factory he was also exempt from military service.

The war dragged on and the "undesirable discussions" became even more heated. The workers lost all fear of their superiors. Throughout the country, the impending catastrophe spread dark forebodings. Everybody became tense with expectation. Shishkin, a rebel by nature, cursed the war-lords, cursed the traitorous czarist generals, cursed the

bosses who were coining money, "filling barrels of gold," out of the peoples' misery. The prices were mounting and bread was becoming scarce. Then, like a thunderbolt, came the March revolution. Meetings were held on the factory premises—for the first time in the history of Russia. Members were elected to the **Soviet of Moscow**. Shishkin felt like "walking on the air." For a few days he was in a delirium of mad joy. Still, the effect of those first revolutionary days was to make him look for organizational and ideological guidance. Activities in the factory threw him closer to Sidorov, now the secretary of the Communist nucleus, and a number of others who, by a quick process of selection, became the spokesmen of the factory. The group decided to get connected with the Bolshevik Party. This was accomplished a week after the fall of the monarchy, through the aid of a woman worker who hailed from Shishkin's native village and knew some Bolsheviks. The leading group joined the Bolshevik Party and began to work under its direction.

Throughout the summer of 1917 there were three parties active in the factory: the Mensheviks numbering about eighteen adherents, the Socialist-Revolutionaries (S. R.) with a stronger following, and the Shishkin-Siderov group of Bolsheviks. There was a fierce struggle for influence between the Bolsheviks and the S. R. Innumerable discussions and meetings took place, floods of literature poured into the factory. In the end the Bolsheviks prevailed. Shishkin's group managed to gain control over all the workers' organizations created after March. The strongest of these new-born organizations was the Factory Committee, which gradually assumed control of the business of the factory administration.

These were stirring times. Immediately after the March revolution, the question of wages came up. The workers were unwilling to continue work on the old terms. A wave of strikes brought, first, the eight-hour day, second, an increase in wages. At that time, the unions being still weak, the brunt of the burden of leading the workers in their struggles fell on the Factory Committees. The latter soon revealed themselves everywhere as the strongholds of the workers. Conferences of factory committees were held throughout the country and demands formulated. Both the employers' organizations and the Provisional Government looked askance at these new proletarian nuclei, but the committees felt their strength; they often made laws for themselves disregarding the government authorities and working in co-operation with the then extra-legal power, the soviets. In this way the Factory Committees gained control over the hiring and firing of workers, over the order and distribution of work. Later they mixed in the price-fixing and banking activities of the factory administration with a view to prohibit profiteering.

In the Factory Committee of this particular factory, Shishkin became one of the most active members. He manifested good organization abilities and understanding of the workers' psychology. Through the Bolshevik group, the idea of seizing power penetrated into the factory. By the end of the summer we find the Factory Committee drawing the workers into the Red Guard. The question of armed uprising was the order of the day. The Factory Committee obtained revolvers to arm nearly all the Bolshevik workers. The employers were cowed into silence. The leadership of the Bolshevik Party was followed by an overwhelming majority of the non-partisan workers.

This supremacy, however, was not reached without struggle. At one time in the course of the summer, the S. R.'s had gained control over the shop committee. They did not maintain their power, because they had no definite program of action. Under their leadership discipline slackened, the workers became restive. The Bolsheviks conducted a vigorous propaganda for confiscation of the factory in order that its closing down by the employers might be prevented. After a brief period of indecision the workers held new elections and the Bolshevik slate won complete victory. Shishkin was made chairman of the shop committee and under his leadership the workers fought the November revolution. Immediately after the access of the Soviets he was charged with the duty of safeguarding revolutionary order in the district adjoining the factory. This implied the right of search and seizure. Shishkin was now a Commissar. He had red guards at his command. He became a part of the newly created proletarian administration.



MEETING IN THE SHOP.

It appears that he did well, for several months after the November events he was made chief of the militia (revolutionary police) of the Rogoshsko-Simonovsky district. He had to quit factory activities, as his new duties left no time for anything else. The Rogoshsko-Simonovsky district is a vast suburban area populated by workers mainly. It contains industrial establishments, railway shops, and storehouses. To keep order in that district in times of great upheaval was no mean task. Where did Shishkin acquire the experience and the knowledge of law for his new duties? "We learned as we worked," is his explanation. "Life made us find the proper methods of work. As to laws, the revolution was creating them every day. We could not fail to know them. Quite often we of the district were instrumental in creating new revolutionary laws. We saw what was good for the workers and we gave the bourgeoisie no quarter." There was no bridge between Shishkin and the bourgeoisie, no community of experiences, no way of conciliation. Those members of the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia whose houses were searched by order of Shishkin, looked upon him as an abysmal brute, while Shishkin looked upon them as "whitehands"

and exploiters. It was civil war in its most dramatic manifestations.

Shishkin, gentle, almost timid, overwhelmed by the avalanche of events, ardent in his revolutionary faith, proved a good officer. In 1919 he was promoted to the position of manager of the commissariat of the militia in his district; later he was drafted into the Red Army and sent to eastern Russia against Kolchak. By the time he arrived at the front, Kolchak's retreat from Ufa assumed a catastrophic character. Shishkin was ordered to remain in Ufa where he was made chief of the intelligence force of the region. Later he was made commander of the forts along the Belaya river. In 1921, after the cessation of hostilities on the various internal fronts, he was returned to Moscow in the capacity of special commissar (party representative) on the Alexandrovski railroad. His duty was to supervise the work, to prohibit sabotage, to detect counter-revolutionary activities. Later, he was given a similar appointment on the Yaroslavl line.

These were all administrative, military and police activities dictated by civil war and the necessity to establish the new order. The year 1922 witnessed a revival of economic activities. Skilled workers were gradually called back to their shops. The Labor Commissariat issued a decree ordering all electricians to return to their industrial units. It was obedience to this decree that Shishkin, rich with three years' experience in the heat of revolutionary struggle in various regions of his country returned to his home factory. This was in September, 1922. Up to July of the following year he worked at the bench as a rank and file worker. Then he was elected member of the factory committee and finally was made its chairman.

He merits the respect of his fellow-workers. He is not a student. His general education is meager. His party education never exceeded the course of "political A. B. C.," which he attended on several occasions and in which he passed examinations. "There is no time to study," he says. "One is happy when he has time to read his paper after the day's activities." But he has the practical knowledge of the factory, the industry and the union. He seems to live in absolute peace and harmony with the workers.

His activities are as follows: He is chairman of the factory committee, chairman of the cultural committee, chairman of the production conference, member of the factory school committee.

Shishkin has a wife and two children. He draws the average wage of the workers of his shop and his degree of skill. He receives no other remuneration.



# The War in Morocco

**A**BD-EL-KRIM'S victories against French and Spanish imperialism have stirred all Africa and Asia. His armies are pushing on toward Fez, swelling with eager recruits at every advance. The French Communists are lending him active and effective support. It is a life and death struggle for imperialist France.

The negotiation proposals made by Abd-el-Krim were systematically rejected by Herriot and Painleve who organized the blockade of the Riff by swarming the neutral zone with block-houses and then luring Abd-el-Krim into the ambush on the Uergha. The Moroccan events between 1907 and 1911 and the Agadir episode were the forerunners of the great slaughter from 1914 to 1918. The plundering expedition now undertaken by France against the Riff contains elements which may well lead to severe international complications. Not only France and Spain, but also England and Italy are interested in the plundering of Morocco. France waited for the defeat of Spain in order to acquire the Riff territory at Spain's cost.

Just as in 1914, so today we hear of the "attack on France's prestige." Today also we are told that it was the inhabitants of the Riff who first attacked peaceful France. England and Italy are waiting for a favorable chance to demand in the name of their international prestige their share of the spoils. In this manner French imperialism once more lets the Moroccan fire flare up which may lead to heavy international conflicts. This is an imperialist war directed against an oppressed people; it is the war of French, British, Italian and Spanish imperialism against the independence of the oppressed peoples.

By defending themselves the Riff inhabitants are only defending their independence in the name of the right of self-determination of all peoples. The democratic Left Bloc which presented itself to the workers and peasants as the angel of peace, has started the Morocco war in order to do justice to the colonial interests of high finance and the Comite des Forges. The socialists who are part of the bloc, were the accomplices of Herriot in the preparation of the war, and they are now the accomplices of Painleve in the starting and the continuation of the war. They are no better than in 1914; they support with their ideology the imperialist adventures of the Left Bloc, those pacifist pretensions have now unceremoniously been thrust aside.

## The Months Prize News Story

(*"American Federationist," A. F. of L. Organ*)

"June AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST, page 440, an error stated that the Executive Council granted the request of the Egg Inspectors' Union No. 8705 to amalgamate with the Tea, Coffee, Cheese and Egg Drivers' and Salesmen's Union No. 772. The decision of the Executive Council upon this application was that the Egg Inspectors' Union No. 8705 does not come under the jurisdiction of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters."



ABD-EL-KRIM, LEADER OF THE RIFF ARMY OF LIBERATION.

England is intriguing with Spain which is also opposed to the French penetration into the Riff. In the meantime Italian imperialism is taking advantage of this situation by demanding Tunis. It points to France's intentions in order to hide its own ambition for colonial expansion, and in order to hush up its own plans in Tripoli. Because of the international complications, the government of the Left Bloc tries to assure the world that it will confine itself to driving Abd-el-Krim out of the Protectorate and to the defense of the borders. In reality however, the war will be carried on in the form of a blockade whose goal is to force the Riff inhabitants into submission and thus to get hold of their land.

Such is the policy of "peace" which is supported by the Democrats and Social-Democrats of the Left Bloc. Their colonial policy differs in no way from that of the Bloc National. They have prepared the war, they are now prosecuting the war, and they will carry the Morocco war to a finish. This war may lead to another war yet more frightful than that of 1914-18, a war that will cause rivers of blood to flow, and will require thousands of corpses and unparalleled destruction and devastation.

## Amazing

**T**HE new attitude of business men toward employes is "sometimes paternalistic and frequently amazingly generous," according to William C. Dickerson, vice-president of the American Car and Foundry Co., speaking before the United States Chamber of Commerce. The speaker favored the company "union," bonuses, the piecework system and efficiency charts.



JOE HILL, MARTYRED WOBBLER AUTHOR OF "PIE IN THE SKY"—DRAWN BY RALPH CHAPLIN.

interesting detail space forbids recounting, is not the only theoretical error upon which the I. W. W. has come to grief.

#### An "Original Sin."

The organization at the beginning inclined toward, and finally definitely took up dual unionism as a matter of principle. Although millions, then, as now, of unorganized workers lay before the new organization as a rich field from which to gather numerical strength, and many elements among the "founding fathers" inclined to accent the organization of the unskilled and unorganized outside of the A. F. of L. (looked upon as devoted only to the skilled), the influence chiefly of Daniel De Leon, and of Gene Debs, both powerful factors, was thrown to the adoption of a hostile dualist position toward "the Fakeration."

Haywood's more constructive attitude (at that time) was seen in his speech:

#### Haywood Aimed at the Unskilled.

"We are going down in the gutter to get at the mass of

workers. I do not care a snap of my finger whether or not the skilled workers join this industrial movement at the present. When we get the unorganized and unskilled laborer into this organization, the skilled worker will of necessity come here for his own protection."

But the natural reaction to the hide-bound craft unionism and political reaction of the A. F. of L. was an emotional and subjective sentiment that the A. F. of L. was "gone," "impossible to do anything with" and De Leon was the leader in ridiculing the revolutionists who wished to stay in the unions and work to broaden them and make them an organ of class struggle. He said:

#### De Leon—Dual Unionist on Principle.

"Boring from within with the labor faker in possession is a waste of time." He wanted all rebels to get out of the A. F. of L. and form a "union" of revolutionists.

Delegate Dalton of the De Leon Socialist Labor Party said: "We call upon the socialists of the United States to get out of the pure and simple organizations and smash them to pieces."

Debs said: "There is but one way to effect this great change and that is for the workingman to sever his relations with the American Federation and join the union that proposes on the economic field to represent his class."

#### "Boring From Without."

It was generally expected that at the trumpet call of an organization, so perfect and faultless in both structure and principle, the A. F. of L. would crumble like the walls of Jericho and the I. W. W. would not only have the desired masses of the yet unorganized unskilled, but the skilled workers as well—all marching at the double quick toward the goal of the co-operative commonwealth down a broad highway, with all ruts and rocks removed and the pavement strewn with flowers.

Hence, Father Haggerty's "Wheel of Fortune," later known as the "Industrial Union Chart" was diagrammed, showing that there was room for all workers in the I. W. W. Having a great big empty space to put them, the I. W. W. felt it needful to convince not only the unorganized millions, but the already organized that they should leave the existing unions and come under the I. W. W.'s big umbrella, and its appeal was couched so as to get, if not the mass of craft unionists, at least the class conscious ones, sickened with craft unionism and lacking the inspiration of collective effort furnished now by the Trade Union Educational League.

So the I. W. W. drifted into a policy devoted (if not altogether in theory certainly in practice) to dual unionist attacks on other labor unions: to anti-political (instead of its formal "non-political" statement) attacks upon workers' political parties; and to what has been its really beneficial work though crippled dreadfully by the organization's other policies, the propaganda for industrial unionism as an instrument of struggle.

#### Much Heat and No Fight.

The bitter struggle to "throw out the politicians" and cut out the "political clause" from the Preamble, usually stressed as an event of overwhelming importance by both pro and anti-I. W. W., the present writer deems of only academic interest. Firstly, the "politicians" of that day rather deserved the booting they got because they were generally

(Continued on page 476.)



# A Communist Milestone

## The Fourth Convention of the Workers Party of America

By Max Shachtman

THE revolutionary party of the working class is not born with its full vigor, strength, and ability. It develops and reaches maturity only with years of struggle against unhealthy elements and tendencies within its ranks; its arms and mind are steeled and sharpened in the crucible of fiery battle against the enemies of the proletariat; its leadership is built and made firm by test and by the experiences and errors and victories of the workers throughout the world. With the knowledge of its tremendous historical role it aids in the task of leading the masses to their triumph by consciously improving the quality of its revolutionary mettle.

The fourth national convention of the Workers Party of America which meets this month is a milestone in the development of an American Bolshevik party. It is to be held after two highly important gatherings of the Communist International: the fifth world congress and the sessions of the enlarged executive, which considered the bitter defeats of the revolutionary movement in 1923 and their causes, which reflected the crystallization of the sharp struggle for the liquidation of the perils of the right-wing deviations and ultra-left errors on an international scale, which laid down a detailed line for the building of mass Leninist parties in a period of the temporary and partial depression of the revolutionary wave in Europe and its rise in the "backward" parts of the world.

The American party convention is taking place at a moment which follows a period of intense internal discussion and strife over various political differences which will, with

the fraternal aid of the Communist International, result in a consolidation of Communist forces in this country and a greater clarity and definitiveness of political line, more solid theoretical conception and practical pliability.

The delegates will gather at a time when American imperialism is rushing madly towards world domination over the bodies of millions of weaker peoples in all corners of the earth, and the convention will be confronted by a situation where it will proclaim its revolutionary task of transforming the swiftly approaching world war into a civil war of the proletariat against the ruling class. America, no longer the relatively isolated nation of some fifty years ago, is now a power of the first magnitude and has its far-flung financial interests which a well-knit military machine stands ready to defend and widen at a moment's notice. And a Communist party in this country must put in the forefront of its problems that of combatting imperialism which places under the yoke of slavery the people of the colonies and semi-colonies, which prostitutes broad sections of the aristocracy of labor at home, drags ever broader sections of the working class down to the level of colonial slaves, and sacrifices the flower of the proletariat in its conflicts with other imperialist powers: war.

This is not the only problem of the Workers Party. There are many others which are in many respects unique in the international Communist movement. We are relatively the most decentralized of the Communist parties of the world, with our cumbersome apparatus of language federations and social-democratic form of territorial branches which

can be remedied only by a determined ideological campaign for the re-organization and further organization of the party upon the basis of shop nuclei, along with actual organizational measures to accomplish the aim of a Bolshevik party rooted in the shops and mines. Thus we shall have the means whereby a party can be built composed primarily of the workers in the heavy, basic industries: the miners, the steel workers, the metal and machinery workers and the like.

But shop nuclei by themselves do not make a Bolshevik party. To become the party of the masses, to represent their interests in every single strike, lockout, in every progressive movement in the trade unions, to lead and fight for their bread and butter needs every day, to broaden and intensify every issue that affects the workers, to increase their political mass consciousness—to become, in short, the recognized leaders of the aspirations and desires and struggles of the workers is the aim of the party. To become the champion of the interests of



Maurice Becker  
Maurice Becker

the millions of brutally oppressed Negroes and to secure an alliance with or the neutralization of broad strata of the poorer sections of the farmers is another condition for victory.

Lenin pointed out that a Communist Party also carries on a consistent theoretical struggle for the purification of its ranks from hangovers of the social-democracy which formed the first reservoir from which most Communist parties drew their strength. In the United States this struggle takes the form of a campaign to eliminate the ideology of Loreism. This does not mean only a struggle against those who avow themselves of Loreist tendencies but also against those who actually express or represent these tendencies while formally repudiating any connection with right-wing deviations. As Bukharin pointed out: many comrades who raise their hands in holy terror at being associated with Trotskyism and vehemently assert their opposition to it, nevertheless follow a purely Trotskyist policy in the peasant question, for example. The building of Leninist circles in the ranks of the party, the creation of a body of functionaries who are well-trained in the doctrines of Leninism, the Bolshevization of the press and all the other instruments of the party is a guarantee against the development of new or old deviations from the line of the Communist International. Especially is theoretical training—at which there is often a tendency to laugh—imperative for the development towards a Bolshevik organization.

Numerous other problems will be before the convention. The intensification of work in the trade unions and the building of a network of fractions within them, a task which the Communist International places at the top of the list for the American party, the problem of the campaign for the labor party, anti-militarist agitation, agrarian work, work among the Negroes and a dozen other questions will have their place on the agenda.

We all recognize the difficulties we face. In a country with such little revolutionary tradition, with numbers of workers eating at the second and third tables of the imperialist banquet and scorning the reds, with other millions poisoned against their own interests by the amazing propaganda machine of the bourgeoisie which is the most cunning, brutal and powerful in the world, our task is surely not an easy one. Ourselves numerically weak, we are faced with a united front ranging from the old reactionary parties of capital, through the "progressive" movement, the most conservative (that is putting it mildly!) trade union bureaucracy of them all, and a host of lesser opponents in the Socialist movement together with a number of petty renegades, like Mr. Salutsky, without whom we breathe more freely.

But we have great progress to record and a known future to strive for. We have built our party from the best elements of the old Socialist and Socialist-Labor parties, and from the I. W. W., as well as from previously unattached proletarians. We are the quintessence of the revolutionary forces of the past. Our movement has been through its underground existence and forced its way again into the open, making itself a factor in the trade unions, on the economic and political field, a factor which is reckoned with by even those who wish to be blind.

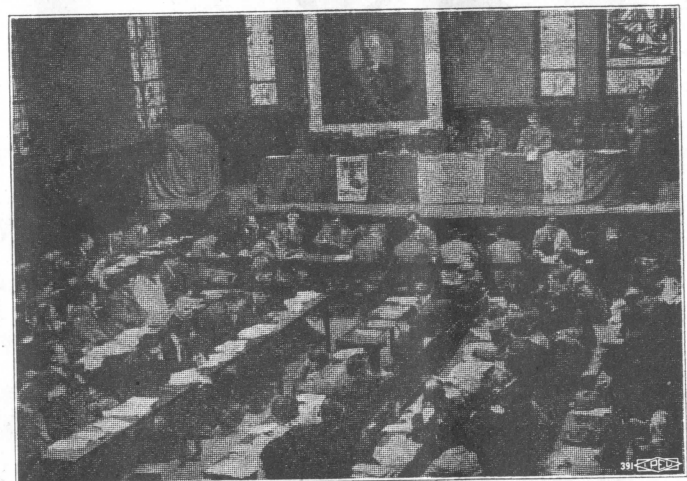
The Socialist Labor Party sits in its dusty attic re-reading and misunderstanding De Leon. The Socialist Party adds a fresh betrayal of the working class to its black record every day, lives in the reflected glory of its more successful brethren in Europe and hopes for the day when it too may crown its infamy by active counter-revolution. The revolutionary blood of the I. W. W. is being drained by anarchist and syndicalist misleaders. The Workers Party stands out as the recognized party of the class-conscious, militant revolutionary workers of America, gaining in prestige and numbers and following. We have a growing Communist movement in the younger generation, the Young Workers League.

Our enemies may yap at our heels and gain small comfort from our internal struggles. Our struggle for clarity and correct principles and tactics in our own ranks is open, and we carry it on without secrecy so that the workers may see that we seek always the right road to working-class revolution and understand that it is in the interests of the proletariat that we so determinedly draw a balance to our past activities and set ourselves firmly against the "priggishness, smug self-content and conceit" which are so typical of the social-democracy.

Our convention goes forward with the enthusiasm and faith which is inspired by the Russian revolution and the growing power of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. We are determined in the knowledge of the inevitable victory of the oppressed. We follow the leader of the toilers of the world, the international of revolution which strikes terror into the heart of the bourgeoisie, the Communist International. We gain new revolutionary fervor to fan the flames of discontent until it blazes as the funeral pyre of the ruling class.

Hail to the Workers Party!

## While Police Watched Outside



BRITISH COMMUNISTS IN CONVENTION

Police watched all avenues to head off the special representatives of the Comintern, but the latter quietly slipped by the "bulls" and greeted the convention amidst a thunderous ovation.

# Lewis Performs for the Anthracite Miners

By Alex Reid

*Secretary, Progressive Miners International Committee*

ON July 3 the Scranton, Pa., tri-district convention of the anthracite miners, embracing districts, one, seven and nine of the United Mine Workers of America, passed into history. The Progressive Miners at the convention came forward with a splendid, clear-cut program, part of it being accepted unqualifiedly and part being referred to the next international convention of the U. M. W. of A.



ALEX REID

John L. Lewis himself was on hand from the opening on June 29 to the very end, as was Secretary-Treasurer Kennedy. Lewis graced the chair throughout most of the proceedings, giving free rein to his accustomed bombastic and empty phraseology, posing deliberately, playing to the gallery in such a manner as to capture the imagination of a goodly number of the uninitiated. But despite some successful stunts on his part, he was hardly quite pleased with the unmistakable signs of progressive development among the anthracite miners at the convention.

First of all, the militant elements introduced resolutions calling for a change in the system of payment for coal produced. Under the present system the miners get paid so much per car but as the cars vary in capacity this arrangement can hardly be called satisfactory. The tri-district is one of the few places in the country—in fact in the whole world of mining—where it is still in effect. The progressive delegates demanded that all coal mined should be paid for on a tonnage basis. This demand was adopted unanimously.

The progressives also demanded an increase of wages to meet the increased cost of living and to enable them to give their children an education. The enormous profits of the lords of anthracite in the last nine years, mounting into billions of dollars wrung from the blood of the underground slaves of Pennsylvania, make the boasted wealth of Rome look like the income from a peanut stand. Why then must the miners live in misery? They demand a ten per cent increase in wages. And precisely at this time the operators are insisting upon not higher wages, but another decrease in the pittance now doled out to the coal diggers.

The miners are also demanding other changes, notably more equitable payment for the labor-power they are forced to put into comparatively "dead work."

The following resolutions of the progressive miners were adopted by the convention unanimously, or almost unanimously:

Abolition of Child Labor.

Abolition of so-called Criminal Syndicalism laws.

Endorsement of the Pennsylvania Labor Party.

The check-off system of dues payment in the Miners' Union was indorsed in the resolution calling for complete recognition of the union, as explained by Horne and Kennedy, both acting as "officials to the convention." The check-off of dues from the wages paid out to the miners by the coal companies adds but an insignificant expense to the operators, and results in a great saving to the miners.

It is small wonder that this gathering in the hard-coal field found the miners in anything but a pleasant mood. Unemployment has reached tremendous proportions throughout America, but in the coal mining industry its ravages have been ghastly. The encroachment of cheap coal from the non-union fields of West Virginia, Kentucky, etc., menacing the anthracite market, and the threat of a cut in wages already far too low to meet even the bare necessities of life—with the alternative of a shut-down—aroused the fighting spirit of the miners.

The miners knew that in the bituminous fields the coal operators had wrecked the many parts of the U. M. W. of A. and that the boasted Jacksonville agreement is merely a scrap of paper to be violated whenever or wherever the operators desire.

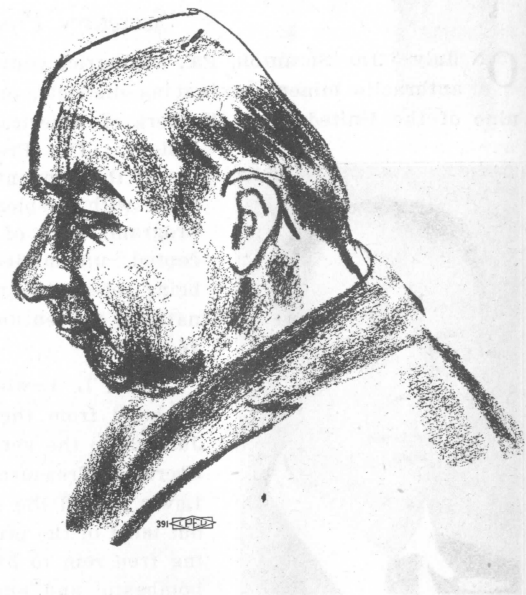
That this feeling existed in the convention, no one knew better than John L. Lewis. He weighed it well and decided that it must be reckoned with and offset. Understanding the psychology of the coal miners, he is experienced in the ways of demagoguery. It was necessary to play upon the emotions of the delegates in some way or other. Like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, he belloyed out the following declaration:

"If this conspiracy of big business to violate the contract continues. . . it may be necessary to authorize a nationwide shut-down of all bituminous mines in the United States, while the government, the coal operators and the mine workers discuss whether the Jacksonville agreement is to be carried out."

The convention was electrified. The miners were so carried away by the heat of the declaration that they failed for the moment to recognize the joker that was in it.

But the men who knew Lewis of old were not fooled by his theatrical phrases. They realized that the word, "may," tied up the statement so completely as to mean plainly that no action against the operators would be permitted. The observant few in the tri-district convention knew that John L. Lewis, from the moment of signing the Jacksonville nonsense, has openly aided the coal kings to violate and repudiate the agreement by his steadfast refusal to call the American miners out on strike as he now states he may be forced to do. Not only has Lewis refused to fight for the miners' rights under the terms of the agreement, but he has rendered aid and comfort to the operators by sanctioning expulsions of militant miners who have urged action to enforce the agreement.

# Symposium of Scabs and Mine-guards



It is a comedy for those who are acquainted with Lewis to watch him perform before the uninitiated but what a tragedy to the trustful miners who give him their confidence only to see it ruthlessly betrayed!

John L. Lewis, international president of the U. M. W. of A., Labor Banker, and ex-committeeman for Coo Cal, the Boston strikebreaker, will never sanction a general strike of the coal miners under any circumstances unless forced to do so by the militant rank and file. The reason for his phrases and his empty gestures is to be found in the 66,000 votes counted for the progressive miners in the last miners' election and the rising resentment against the unconstitutional tactics by which he strives to maintain himself in power.

Anthracite and bituminous miners alike will soon learn that no hope can come from this American king of labor fakers and cast him out of the union which he has nearly destroyed.

The Progressive Miners' Committee of the U. M. W. of A. has the only real solution for the problems facing the miners. In part, it is the following:

Nationalization of mines, with workers control—a policy which Lewis repudiates.

Six-hour day and five-day week, to assure division of the available work among all the miners.

Minimum wage to guarantee the coal diggers a union rate of pay when working or prevented from working through no fault of their own.

Unemployment benefits, to guarantee the miners a living when the mines are closed down, the same to be paid by the coal operators out of the profits from the industry, at union rates.\*



Don Brown

\* If you agree with the Progressive Miners' Committee, aid the committee by subscribing to the "Progressive Miner," 50 cents per year. Send all subscriptions to the international secretary, Alex Reid, 7020 So. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

# A Solid Line of Proletarian Defense

By  
Thurber Lewis

THE first time a national conference of workers ever convened in this country for the sole purpose of creating a movement for the defense of ALL workers was on June 28th last. It was called the National Conference for Labor Defense and it met in Ashland Auditorium, Chicago. More than a hundred delegates attended representing workers' organizations in all parts of the country. The conference did tangible things for workers' defense that had not been done before.

The delegates who came to Chicago on June 28th, founded a movement whose effect on the current American class struggle is destined to be tremendous and far-reaching. The name of the new movement is INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE.

## The Double Need for United Labor Defense.

The Labor Defense Council called the conference. There were two reasons. Objectively, the conditions of Labor Defense showed unquestionable signs of another campaign of jailing and persecution of workers in prospect. Subjectively, Labor Defense generally was not in position to meet a new onslaught. There was too much disunity, there were too many defense committees doing the same thing in different ways. Although the call was issued as late as May 30th, when June 28th came, the response was discovered to be beyond expectation.

The unity slogan was taken seriously. Credentials were presented from local trade unions, central bodies, local defense bodies and workers' fraternal and benent societies. In



addition there were individuals who had distinguished themselves in their efforts on behalf of labor defense. Ex-political and industrial prisoners were invited. They came in force, I. W. W.'s, Communists, trade unionists; all ex-class-war prisoners, were seated in the conference.

James P. Cannon was elected chairman, Andrew T. McNamara of Pittsburgh vice-chairman and Wm. Mollenhaur, representing the Detroit Federation of Labor, secretary. There were few formalities. Only one day was available for deliberation and there was much work to be done. While the credentials committee was out, greetings were read and a few speeches made. The greetings came from all over the world. Eugene V. Debs, Upton Sinclair, Scott Nearing, Alice Stone Blackwell, and other individuals prominent in the labor and radical movements of the country expressed solidarity with the move. Workers' organizations wired their support. Many men sent greetings from prison.

Wm. F. Dunne and others called up memories of older battles in and out of the courts. You felt that, after all, the American working-class has a tradition behind it, young as it is. It was with a full sense of this tradition and the responsibility resting upon them that the delegates set to work.

## Founding of "International Labor Defense."

Three committees were elected: Manifesto, Constitution and Resolutions. The first committee reported a document which was unanimously adopted, calling for the founding of an organization to be called "International Labor Defense," non-partisan and non-sectarian. It will defend all workers, regardless of political opinion or industrial affiliation. International Labor Defense is to be built on the firm foundation of individual membership supplemented by collective affiliations from all working-class bodies. The dues are low, ten cents a month. Every worker whose heart is in the right place should stand ready to support it. A great mass organization is in view.



WHEN "INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE" WAS CREATED James P. Cannon, its elected secretary, and George Maurer, secretary of the "Labor Defense Council" which merged with the unity organization.

A large national committee representing all shades of working-class belief was elected to supervise the organization. What was more necessary to the progress of the workers' cause in America?

This constitution was adopted unanimously. International Labor Defense, the first non-sectarian workers' defense organization ever created by the labor movement in America, was born.

The first paragraph of the manifesto summed up the general situation: "There are not less than 128 workers confined in American prisons because of political opinions or activity in behalf of the workers' cause. A half-hundred more await trial. No crime has been proved against any of these workers. They are in prison because they fought against capitalist exploitation and because they organized, inspired and led workers in the struggle for class betterment. They are class-war prisoners."

#### A Broad Program.

The resolutions submitted were more than a mere series of statements. Taken together they made a complete program for the guidance of the new organization. An ex-class-war prisoner, Harrison George, reported the resolution for the release of political and industrial prisoners. It reminded the labor movement in this country of its imprisoned soldiers: Mooney and Billings, Ford and Suhr, Sacco and Vanzetti, Rangel and Cline and many others, and called for a new fight for their release: "The International Labor Defense will take the initiative to organize a wide-spread campaign for the unconditional release of imprisoned fighters of the class struggle."

When Andrew T. McNamara of the Machinists' District Council of Pittsburgh reported the resolution against injunctions and anti-labor legislation he told of a worker in Western Pennsylvania who was arrested for having a red lamp in his parlor. Thirty-five states have criminal syndicalist laws that can send any worker to jail any time the bosses want him there.

The labor movement was warned that the jailing of Communists and I. W. W. members under these laws were mere rehearsals. The labor movement as a whole is next.

#### "Unknown Soldiers" of the Working Class.

The International Labor Defense was pledged to stand ready to supply legal aid to any and all workers attacked for their activity in the class struggle. Legal defense is necessary. Frame-ups must be made as difficult as possible. Then, publicity: "Not a single instance of labor-baiting shall be allowed to escape the attention of the labor movement."

The question comes: how many "unknown soldiers" of the working class have been hidden away in prison? And what about those living martyrs wasting away in the prisons that we know of: 128 of them? They are to be looked after, "The International Labor Defense will raise special funds for the systematic provision of material comforts and the necessities of life to class-war prisoners." And working-class families will be cared for too.

The delegates to this "National" conference were not unmindful, as delegates to such conferences usually are, that the class struggle is an international affair. Benjamin Gitlow, who any minute expected a call back to Sing Sing, told the story of White Terror that the workers abroad have to contend with. There was a feeling that our own little brand

of terror is gradually approaching it. The conference expressed its unconditional solidarity with all exploited and oppressed workers the world over and promised the support of the International Labor Defense in aid of the victims of capitalism everywhere.

#### Watchword of the Conference.

The watchword of the conference was unity. "The defense of persecuted fighters for the cause of labor and the fraternal support of their dependents is a common platform upon which all sincere workers who believe in the principle of the class struggle can unite." So begins the key resolution of the conference. It is this sentiment of unity that will make International Labor Defense a vital organization.

A National Committee of 37 was elected in the same spirit. This committee was representative of all shades of opinion and many diverse working-class groups. Eugene V. Debs, Upton Sinclair, Wm. Z. Foster, Benjamin Gitlow, Alice Stone Blackwell, Fred Mann, William Mollenhour, Andrew McNamara are on the committee.

#### A Rousing Send-Off.

A word should be said about the mass meeting with which the conference closed. Temple Hall was jammed to

*(Continued on page 476)*



BEN GITLOW, FACING SING SING, TAKES PART IN DEFENSE CONFERENCE



SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS PARTY, LONDON, 1903.

now active in Karelia; Lydia Makhnovetz, the second delegate from Petersburg, and a sister of Akimov-Makhnovetz; one of the most passionate exponents of Economism, and a right-winger; N. Baumann, of the Moscow Committee; from the North Russian Alliance, in which were united a number of committees in northern Russia, came Lydia Knipovitch, who must still be remembered by the old workingmen and women of Petersburg, where she was active for many years under the nick-name of "Djadenka". The other representatives of the North Russia Alliance was Stopani, the founder of the workers' movement in Baku, and a leading Bolshevik; from the Ufa Committee there were Makhlin and Lenov, who later became an anarchist; from the Kiev Committee, Krasikov; from the Tula Committee, the brother of Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov, Dmitry Ulianov, in our ranks today; from the Odessa Committee, Zemlyatchka; from the Crimean Union, the Menshevik, Panin; from the Donetz Union, Maschinski, also a Menshevik; from the Don Committee, Gussev, now a Bolshevik, and the Menshevik, Ackerman; from the Saratov Committee, Galkin and Lyadov, both now Bolsheviks; from the Kharkov Committee, Levin and Nikolaev; from the Siberian Union, Dr. Maldenberg, Menshevik, and a member of the Second Duma, and Comrade Trotsky, at that time a Menshevik; from the Batum Committee, Zurbob, later a deputy to the Second Duma, Menshevik and Internationalist; from the Baku Committee, Bogdan Knuniantz, who participated in the first Workers' Soviet, in 1905, and, during the counter-revolution, went over to the side of the Mensheviks; from the Tiflis Committee, Topuridze; from the

Bund, Kramer, Eisenstart, Portnoy, Liber, Medem and Kossovsky, all Mensheviks; and finally, Comrade Lenin, representing the foreign organization of Iskra, and Martov, representing the editorial board. Plekhanov, Axelrod, Deutsch, and others were also present at the Congress.

#### The Social Composition of the Party at Its Origin.

The Iskra organization and our committee was for the most part made up of students and of professional revolutionists; there were not many workers in it. The workers were still individual figures such as Babushkin, and Schatman, who were beginning to make their way out of the worker masses. Due to this fact, the second party congress which laid the foundations of the party, was also in the main not made up of workers. But, despite this fact, the Iskra organization was, in reality, the first Bolshevik organization, playing a great and active role in the revolution, the role of the Communist vanguard. Made up of professional revolutionists led by Comrade Lenin, although not purely working-class in composition, it bore along with it, nevertheless, the worker masses, and gave expression to that which was ripening deep within the proletarian masses. And this group, later the creators of our party, was borne on the crest of the waves of the toiling mass.

#### The Controversy with the Bund.

But to return to the second congress, in which the cleavage between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks was clearly revealed. The first point of divergence was the attitude toward the national question, in other words, to the Bund. Although once again paying tribute to the heroism of the