

# Unions in Czechoslovakia

(Continued from page 5)  
 The Union of Chemical Workers, which subsequently became the organizational center of the revolutionary labor movement. Even before its expansion from the General Federation of Labor, this union had organized itself, the various districts expelled by the reformists, and organized them into a new union. This was the beginning of the future One Big Union. It is hardly necessary to mention that most of the trade unions remained with the reformists, so that the young revolutionary labor movement was very short of both educational and material resources.

This situation, which demanded the greatest economy and efficiency, was also largely instrumental in the adoption of the organizational form of the One Big Union, whose financial and other advantages are beyond any doubt. The October (1933) congress of the revolutionary minorities expelled by the reformists, therefore approved by a considerable majority (only the above-mentioned revolutionary unions being in opposition) the adoption of the One Big Union, with 17 industrial sections, as the new form of organization.

The independent unions were given a year's time to call congresses for the purpose of deciding the question of their affiliation in the future sections to the One Big Union. During 1933 the unions of land-workers, leather and shoe workers, clerical workers and miners affiliated, so that the O. B. U. has, at present, 300,000 members distributed among eleven industrial sections while the four independent unions have a membership not exceeding 40,000.

However, it is not always applied, owing to the scarcity of the movement so that it will be more correct to consider the local organization as the basic organizational nucleus of the O. B. U. The local organizations are united by joint district committees with a president of 12, elected at district conferences to which every 100 members of the union send one delegate.

The secretary of the district committee is appointed by the president of the O. B. U. by agreement with the district council and is usually selected from among the workers of the largest industry of the district. In the vertical direction, the section conference elects a president of the section, consisting of nine members. The work of the section president is to coordinate and carry on the economic struggle, negotiating collective agreements and carrying on propaganda and agitation in coordination with the president of the O. B. U. General congresses as well as section conferences, are held once in three years. At these meetings one delegate represents two thousand good standing members. The congress elects the president of the O. B. U., each section being entitled to proportional representation in the president.

**Financial Arrangement.**  
 The central place of the organizational schemes of the O. B. U. belongs to the financial question. But membership dues collected by the local organizations go directly to the central treasury of the O. B. U., where the entire occupancy and allocation of the funds is controlled. The president of the section, which has in this central treasury its current account, recording all the deposits and expenditures of the section, receives from the central treasury all the funds necessary for its activities.

This financial structure has the advantage of freeing the separate sections from all cares of a financial character, and in case of great stringency, as for instance, in case of long strikes, the funds of the O. B. U. section, the latter is enabled to borrow from the general treasury.

Workers centralized in the work of agitation and propaganda. All agitators and lecturers are paid by the central treasury of the O. B. U. and their engagement by the various sections is regulated by the O. B. U. president. The union press has also been decentralized, and the O. B. U. is publishing a general organ with regional supplements.

The most serious criticism leveled against the O. B. U. and its leaders by its opponents, consists of the claim that the organizational centralism of the O. B. U. prevents the separate sections from showing sufficient initiative, and deprives them of the measure of independence necessary in Czechoslovakia, considering the general development of the labor movement.

It is true that the O. B. U. is inasmuch as the craft spirit is still deeply rooted in the Czechoslovakian

labor movement, and the principle of industrial unionism is still far from realization. The application of the plan from all care of a financial character, and in case of great stringency, as for instance, in case of long strikes, the funds of the O. B. U. section, the latter is enabled to borrow from the general treasury.

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"The idea becomes power when it penetrates the masses."  
 —Karl Marx.

## SPECIAL MAGAZINE SUPPLEMENT THE DAILY WORKER

MAY 24, 1934

# IN THE LAND OF GLOOM - -

SECOND SECTION  
 This magazine appears every Saturday in The Daily Worker.

- - By M. J. OLGIN

WHEN a man has spent in a foreign country a little, over four days, you cannot expect him to have a clear view of every phase of its life. The press correspondent who says "he knows it all" is fooling himself or his readers, would not claim to give here an adequate account of the German economic and political situation. I will only confine myself to a few salient facts which force themselves upon every observer as soon as he begins to orientate himself on German soil.

**WAGES, Unemployment, Starvation.**  
 FACT number one is the miserable situation of the German working class. With the stabilization of the mark, prices in Germany, excepting rents, are on the same general level as are the prices in the United States. The average wage of a German workman is somewhere in the vicinity of twenty marks a week. Peak wages for the highest skilled workers (such as the members of the printers' union) do not exceed thirty-six marks; after deducting taxes, sick benefit dues and other obligatory payments, the highest

labor. His wife told me that, as a rule, the German worker eats meat only once a week. The life of the unskilled laborers is still worse. The life of the unemployed is hell. There is a movement afoot to change the eight-hour day for ten. In some cases it has been accomplished. That there must be dissatisfaction among the workers under conditions like these is easy to imagine.

**The Revolt of the Workers.**  
 FACT number two is this bitter revolutionary dissatisfaction of the laboring masses. The wave of resentment against the reformists, which has become more manifest every day. The masses have come to after the fashion of last October, in reality the masses had never been subdued. It is true that long years of hopelessness under the treaty of Versailles, long years of underfeeding and actual starvation have sapped the vitality of the German working class as a whole and have thrown a portion of the workers into a state of servile resignation, but even among the most degraded elements amidst the fire of revolt. Under the ashes of despair there is so much hatred for the ruling

Class Democracy is No More.

# Dinner Pail Epics

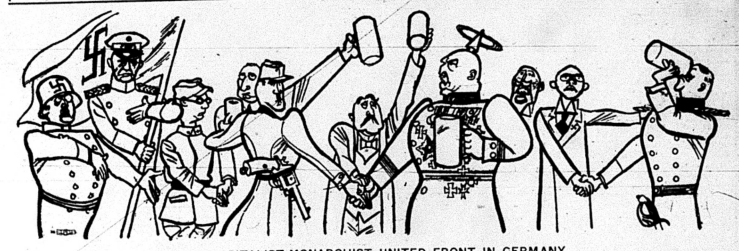


It ain't as easy as can be, shaking things up. We should have a Woodrow's promise less a fake—the promise that it was the last of wars in which our youth will call for peace advocates may know some things, but hands they pull their strings. They own the papers, radio, schools, the colleges are made their tools. Boy Scouts are trained to think their way, the editors are in their pay. In fact, they own all in the town, that much of Berlin.

The clock will strike the peacetime hour when we have licked the money power. With the condition of our soil, not sell, then we can route Mars thru to hell. Until that time, this peacetime stuff is mostly kind but harmful stuff.

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## TO THE GOOD, OLD TIMES!



THE CAPITALIST-MONARCHIST UNITED FRONT IN GERMANY.

paid worker brings home no more than thirty marks. The dollar buys there a little over four marks. Those of the German workers who are happy enough to have full-time continuous employment, earn as much as \$5 to \$7.50 a week. The number of such fortunate, however, is not very large. There are four million of unemployed in Germany today. There are twelve million who work part of the time.

"How can you make both ends meet?" I asked a cabinet maker in a suburb of Berlin.

"I look at it since the war," he said.

"HAD soon a vivid illustration of how 'one must' The man had come home after eight hours of work. He was a sturdy fellow of about thirty, of a middle height. The meal his wife put before him on the table consisted of a soup-pile of mashed potatoes with gravy and a piece of bread. This was all, later in the evening he would drink a pint of beer in his saloon, or maybe he would even abstain from this.

"THIS man lived in one small room with his wife and a three-year-old child. He could not allow himself the luxury of decent clothes. He could not allow himself the luxury of a theatre, or a concert. He could not allow himself the luxury of an 'ausflug' (holiday trip) out of town on a Sunday. He could not allow himself anything. And he still belonged to the aristocracy of

classes and so much contempt for capitalist law and order that any shock is capable to provoke an explosion. "We have reached the end of the rope. "We have nothing to lose." Where this sentiment is widespread, a revolution is abroad.

"The first manifestation of this strengthening will to struggle among the working masses is the wave of strikes. When I arrived in Hamburg, I was struck by the fact that the passengers themselves (to the great and bitter resentment of the chauffeurs) were carrying banners because the porters had gone on strike. This was the first striking incident in an impending all-German railroad strike. The strike has been averted by the compromise of the union bureaucrats, but the workers are not content with the results. There has been a partial strike in the Hamburg area, but the workers are not content with the results. There has been a partial strike in the Hamburg area, but the workers are not content with the results. There has been a partial strike in the Hamburg area, but the workers are not content with the results.

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# The Needle Trades Conventions

By Alexander Bittelman

BETWEEN the dates of May 15th and 17th, national conventions have been held by three unions in the needle trades. The Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (L. G. W. U.) held its convention in Boston, May 15th and 16th; the Forward-Sigman machine was in the seventeenth convention of the union coinciding with the 52nd anniversary of that organization's founding. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (A. C. W. of A.) held its 15th biennial convention in Philadelphia, May 16th to 17th. And the International Fur Workers Union (I. F. W. U.) held its 12th annual convention in Chicago, May 17th to 19th.

Three national conventions of the most important unions in the garment industry of the United States. An important event in the lives not only of the workers of that industry but of the American labor movement as a whole.

These conventions mark an epoch in the development of the Left Wing in the needle trades. They are the first to have taken up the struggle for revolutionary unionism in the needle trades. From Abstract Proposals to Leadership in the Struggle.

The Right Wing had control of the convention. The "Forward-Sigman machine was in the majority. But what does this really mean as far as the state of mind of the rank and file is concerned? Nothing, absolutely nothing. It was a machine-made majority, arrived at by previous election of Left Wingers, their disfranchisement by removing leading candidates from the ballots, and by sending left wing delegates from the convention by packing it with delegates of practically non-existing local, and by every other dirty trick known in the hands of capitalist politicians. The majority that ruled the last convention of the L. G. W. U. was made up of representatives of the A. C. W. of A. and the American Congress of the Oppressed Masses of the country.

What had this majority to offer to the union? What plans and proposals did this majority submit to the convention to strengthen the union, to make more effective its control of the industry, to combat unemployment, and in general to make the union a better instrument for the struggle against capitalist exploitation? The answer is: Nothing. On all these matters the Right Wing, the

everyday life of the organization. The "Forward-Sigman machine" of the organization knew that it is the Left Wing, the Left Wing, not the Forward-Sigman machine that is willing and capable of building a strong, powerful union to fight the battles of the masses.

And, thirdly, strengthen the Workers' Union by the membership of the L. G. W. U. It should be clear by this time to every progressive trade unionist that the real backbone and only source of inspiration for every progressive move in the unions is the Communist movement of the masses. Hence, the best immediate answer to the attacks of Gompers and his crew on the L. G. W. U. is to double and triple the membership of the Workers' Party from among the workers of the needle trades workers.

The Convention of the Furriers. "The convention of the International Fur Workers' Union was held up in Chicago, a city which has only one small local of the union. The center of the industry is in the East. But the convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

FOR the first time the Left Wing in the A. C. W. has come to a convention of the union. It is a clear, definite program of action. This program was of such a nature as to establish the Left Wing as a definite leading force in the organization which cannot be confused thereafter with the Right Wing nor with the Center. For there are in the A. C. W. three groups: the Right Wing (Forward machine), Center (the administration) and the Left Wing. The last convention was dominated by the forces of the Center.

Because of the domination of the Center, generally in the past, and also at the convention, the Left Wing in the A. C. W. had a complicated problem before it. On the one hand, it had to support the Center as against the Right. It goes without saying that whenever the Center is in the Right or the Center, at the same time criticizing the Center, is to criticize the Right. On the other hand, because of the very nature of the Center's waverings between Right and Left, its shifting positions and general unreliability, the Left Wing has the duty of establishing its own identity and independence of action. For it must never be forgotten, that it is only by following consistently Left Wing policies, on the economic and political field, that the A. C. W. (the same as the other unions) will become a real effective instrument in the revolutionary class struggle.

In the past the Left Wing in the A. C. W. did not always manage, because of the difficult situation, to combine the support of the Center with the always necessary political independence, which at times militated very strongly against the successful establishment of the separate identity of the Left Wing.

We are glad to say, however, that in the months prior to and at the convention itself the Left Wing succeeded in solving this problem. It went beyond all expectations. And if these policies and tactics are consistently followed in the future, the A. C. W. will very soon become a better, stronger and more revolutionary union than it has ever been before.

## THE BATTLE CRY OF K STREET, N. W. VOTELLES

"Hip, hip, hooray!"  
For the little green house on K.  
For there government comes  
In a retinue of bums.  
And-boiling booze flows free  
As Hugh's morality,  
Thank God, we're not like the Russian Red,  
We're respectable and well fed.

And the best people of the land  
Sit at the feet, and right hand  
Of Deberry and Daugherty  
To uphold the family's sanctity—  
Shall rends disrupt the home?  
Never—We answer by Teapot Dome!"

controlling power of the convention among the workers of the industry. It feared and trembled, and perhaps he hid. It removed itself, therefore, to Chicago.

In the Furriers' Union, fascism holds full sway. This union is ruled by a gang of renegades and betrayers whose bloody methods of suppression of the Left Wing were not surpassed even by Mussolini. It was by these methods that the machine managed completely to exclude the Left Wing from representation at the convention.

And as to the rank and file, why, Kaufman himself could tell us an interesting story. He could remind us of the famous O'gin-Kaufman incident when the membership of the Furriers' Union in New York City almost to a man stood up in support of O'gin (Freiheit!) and the Left Wing and against Kaufman and the "Forward." Kaufman could tell us many more similar truth-revealing stories. But he wouldn't. For, if he did, his whole seemingly powerful machine would instantly crumble to pieces. The Left Wing in the Furriers' Union has the majority of the membership behind it. It has also developed a strong and capable leadership. And were the Left Wing in the other needle trades unions somewhat more advanced than the Furriers' union, would have been by this day already in the

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# ABROAD WITH LENIN

REMINISCENCES BY L. TROTZKY

(Continued from last issue.)  
I DECIDED to put the shoes on the first time I met Lenin. On the way there everything was all right. But in the theater I already began to feel that something was wrong. Perhaps this is the reason why I do not remember the impression which the opera made on Lenin and on myself. I remember only that it was a very good mood.

After the opera I had a very hard time. I suffered terribly and Lenin mercilessly mocked me all the time. He said: "You are a coward, even under his jests there you hid a sympathy born of experience; he himself, he said, had suffered several hours from those same shoes."

THE first delegates to the coming second convention were arriving in Geneva and ceaseless conferences were going on. In this preparatory work Lenin unquestionably was the leader, although it was not always noticeable. Altogether, three workmen arrived for the convention. Lenin spoke at great length with each of them and won all three over.

THE most acute question for Lenin was the organization of a central organ, which was practically to play simultaneously the role of a central committee. Lenin considered it impossible to maintain further the old board of six. Zussliuk and Axelrod unflinchingly took the side of Plekhanov in every dispute. And then it was at best three against three. Neither the one nor the other side agreed to have one member leave the board.

THERE remained the opposite direction—enlargement. Lenin wanted to introduce me as the seventh member, so as to later form a narrower editorial group consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov. I was gradually drawn into this scheme by Lenin who, however, did not intimate even by a single word that he proposed to have me as the seventh member of the board, that this proposal was actually approved by everybody but Plekhanov, who resolutely opposed the plan.

Ashortly afterwards took place with the newly-arrived delegates, Lenin, who said: "Let Martov argue against Plekhanov on the subject of the popular organ. Martov oils and you back away. It is better to let him oil." I clearly remember this expression—"to back and to oil."

AND now I want to set down the reasons why, in my opinion, the decisive change in the political consciousness and self-education of Lenin must have taken place in the days of the old "Spark," and why this change became necessary and inevitable.

LENIN arrived abroad from Rissia in the first Social-Democratic groups. He was a first-class passenger. He could not help feeling his power, for the reason that everybody whom he had met and worked with recognized it. He left for abroad with a load of theoretical knowledge, with a considerable supply of political experience and permeated thru and thru with that tension toward a goal which he had met and worked with.

COLLABORATION with the "group of labor emancipation," and first of all with Plekhanov, the profound

and brilliant exponent of Marx, a teacher of several generations—a priest, statesman, publicist and orator of European connections—was Lenin abroad. With Plekhanov were two such sudden self-education could have dared? These were the students of the old leaders. How

Then there was another pupil. He had prepared his soil in Russia. It was not in vain that all communists of the staff against Lenin's conduct was mixed with perplexity: "How did he dare to do it?" The perplexity increased soon after the convention, following the break between Lenin and Plekhanov, when Lenin nevertheless pursued the fight.

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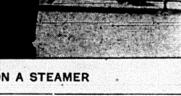
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## BACK TO WORK



TROTZKY ON A STEAMER

# Union Centralization In Czecho-Slovakia

By I. GRASHE

FOR nearly two years the problem of organizational centralism, which in Czecho-Slovakia is represented by a centralized One Big Union, has held the attention of the entire revolutionary labor movement of that country, causing various misunderstandings and preventing a more rapid development of the movement.

The point is that part of the revolutionary trade unions of Czecho-Slovakia—the greater part—are organized in the One Big Union known as the International General Workers' Union, while the minority, the revolutionary unions of builders, woodworkers, railwaymen, transport workers, and commercial employees, and the German Section of the revolutionary textile workers in the district, have not yet been organized. It is very important sections of the organization and strives to retain its autonomy, advocating at the same time the principle of the federative form of organization of the revolutionary unions.

Objective Reasons. While in other countries the creation of the One Big Union was a result of Anarcho-Socialist tendencies, in Czecho-Slovakia this form of organization arose in consequence of a number of special circumstances of that country, causing various misunderstandings and preventing a more rapid development of the movement.

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Weakness and Disruption. This weakness of the Czecho-Slovakian labor movement was aggravated three years ago, during the revolution and the organization of the revolutionary labor movement by the disruptive tactics of the Czecho-Slovakian reformists and by the general industrial stagnation which drove more than half a million workers into the camp of the unemployed. On the whole, the situation under which the Czecho-Slovakian revolutionary movement was born in the middle of 1922, was entirely unfavorable to it. The very fact of its birth was a result of

the enforcement of the disruptive policy by the reformists, who had good grounds to fear the complete overthrow of the Communist Party in their unions and therefore hastened, through apathy, to save as far as possible their positions in the labor movement.

They were enabled to do so thanks to both the statist and unemployment, and to their support by the capitalist, government machine which helped them to capture all the material resources of the trade unions. They acted mainly through exploitation of the most militant revolutionary elements, including both individuals and organizations and they did not even try to organize the national unions when the latter were completely in the hands of the reformists.

Mass Expulsion. They thus expelled more than ten (out of 54) national unions. The largest and best organized of these was (Continued on page 8.)