

A Talk To Miners -- and Others

By L. J. Wydra.

The fighting coal miners of the Belleville, Illinois District, who have always been in the forefront of the industrial struggle in America, are now beginning to wake up to the fact that labor's fight for freedom is a world-wide affair and that the workers of all capitalist countries must stand or fall together. It was with this new idea in mind that local union No. 2703 of Nigger Hollow mine No. 1 passed a resolution endorsing Soviet Russia with its working class government and calling on all class conscious workingmen, especially miners, to stand by our Russian brothers and refuse to do any work that would help their enemies.

Following this lead, the sub-district miners' convention held at Collinsville passed a similar resolution and the subject is up for discussion in a great many of the other locals in this district. For the information of miners and other workers in different parts of the country, I will quote a part of the resolution adopted which sets forth the reasons for the action we have taken.

Workers' Control in Russia.

"Today in Russia the entire control of the government is in the hands of the organized workers. The management of industry fixing of wages, hours, shop conditions and other phases of the work of production is handled directly by the labor unions without any bosses or "operators" drawing any profits from the labor of the workers or exploiting them in any way.

"The idle, parasite class, that lives by sucking the blood of labor, realizes that when the working people of other countries see that working class control is a success in Russia and that it is much better than the present system of wage slavery, they will organize themselves for action to follow their example. Therefore they are doing every thing in their power to break down the Russian Soviet Government. They blockade the country and thereby starve innocent women and children, hoping by this to weaken the courage of the brave workers and peasants.

"They also furnish money and supplies to different generals of the old czar's regime who have tried time and again to organize armies to defeat the revolutionary forces. But the brave soldiers of the red army, fighting for bread and freedom, have defeated all such attempts.

"We declare our firm opposition to any war which the capitalist governments of the world may undertake against our Russian brothers and appeal to all coal miners to refuse to produce any coal or to do work of any kind to help them in this murderous conspiracy."

The West Virginia Struggle.

Another matter which should be considered by the organized coal miners is the struggle in West Virginia. This is a very important affair which should concern the miners at large, especially the Illinois miners. Our brothers there are hounded by corporation thugs, spies, etc. The miners' wives and children are suffering, being starved and thrown out of their homes in a so-called "free" country. Why is it that President Lewis and the other officials of the U. M. W. of A. do nothing?

The coal miners in West Virginia are carrying on the struggle to free themselves from the clutches of the coal corporations and we must recognize that an injury to one is an injury to all. Their fight is our fight and if the officers of our union do not want to take action, then I say it is high time the rank and file should take it up. And if 400,000 coal miners cannot do it alone, let us take the entire labor movement. Let us all unite as a body of workers to help the coal miners of West Virginia win their struggle.

Railroad Workers and Anthracite Miners.

The same thing applies to the so-called "out-law" railroad workers and the anthracite miners who are making a fight for living wages. We are not doing our duty when we stand idly by and offer no help to any body of workers who carry on their battle alone against the organized power of the capitalists class.

Fellow workers, the time has come when we as workers in general must unite as a solid body in One Big Union to accomplish our freedom. And furthermore, working men and women, it is our duty to look after the coming generation to see that they are not enslaved as we are at present. The slave chains of the masters are clinching tighter and tighter. Let us get rid of that slavery. It behooves us, vanguards of the coming generation, to work, to organize for working class control in industry and government.