

THE TOILER

A. F. of L. WRESTLES WITH PROBLEMS IN 41st CONVENTION AT DENVER.

Stands against O. B. U. principle. Opens formal fight against wage reductions. Gompers has competitor.

True to its character of a dyed-in-the-wool conservative craft labor organization, the A. F. of L. at its 41st annual convention at Denver, Colo., has appealed to the politicians of the capitalist State for assistance in a proposed war against reductions of wages that are fast making inroads upon the standard of living of millions of workers and members of organized labor in this country.

After 8 months of severe unemployment and wide-spread wage slashing the convention took formal notice and instructed the executive council of the Federation late last week to take steps that no further reductions in wage scales were made. Its first step in this direction was an appeal to enlist the support of President Harding, secretaries of labor, commerce and agriculture and members in congress in support of this enterprise, Dennis K. Lane presented the case of the Chicago packing house workers as an example of the extent of wage slashing that has taken place in recent months. "They are now receiving a wage which furnishes them a bare existence far below the cost of living," he said. The convention has these matters under consideration this week.

At The Crisis.
President Gompers, in his opening statement to the convention, declared that the great unsolved post-war labor problems facing the convention constituted a crisis which must be met now. More than 500 delegates from the U. S. and Canada attended the opening sessions. J. H. Thomas, President of the Railway Workers' Union of England is present as a fraternal delegate. Thomas is classed as a traitor in the ranks of labor by British militants because of his opposition to the Triple Alliance upholding the present British miners' strike by a sympathetic approach John Mooney, brother of Tom Mooney, now serving a sentence at San Quentin for complicity in the San Francisco preparedness parade bombing was present and spoke in favor of continuing the agitation among labor unionists for his release. Indications are that John L. Lewis of the miners will oppose Gompers for election to the presidency. Claims are made that he has an exceptionally strong backing in the convention.

Gompers assailed the German workers for not taking action to stop the war in the early stages of its development. "The failure of men to act at a time of crisis is faithfulness to a common cause," he stated. Gompers has undoubtedly taken the method of the pot in calling the kettle black, to set his own sins upon the shoulders of the German workers.

Many Problems.
The convention has a list of major issues before it among which are the following according to Gompers.

"The condition of unemployment, of which estimates run as high as 5,000,000 workers.

"The un-American movement to crush labor and blast its spirit through what is called, with miserable disregard for the truth, the open shop movement.

"The railroad problem, involving the nation's chief means of transportation.

"The immigration problem, with its vital bearing on American standards of living and of citizenship.

"The problem of Russian affairs, the cancer that is eating at the vitals of world civilization.

"The problem of how best to meet conditions brought about by court decisions, a problem unhappily not decreasing in importance and for that reason demanding more than usual attention."

Without discussion, the convention voted solidly in sustaining the action of its Committee on Organization in not concurring in a resolution brought by a W. Va. delegate, calling for "one body of workers thru amalgamations, federations and protective agreements," and urging all national and international unions to insert clauses in their working agreements whereby they can "render such assistance as is needed by any and all crafts, when called upon to do so." It also declared for the setting of expirations of union contracts with employers at one and the same time. Scant courtesy was shown the negro delegation when a resolution condemning mob violence and the activities of the Ku Klux-Klan was denied the floor thru objections raised by a

few delegates. A letter from Eugene V. Debs was read in which he thanked Gompers and the A. F. of L. for their efforts in attempting his and other political prisoners' release. The convention called for an investigation of the lock-out of the seamen. The convention is running strong for federal investigations. A resolution calling for the investigation by Congress of the cotton mills of the South was also adopted. A special committee to investigate unemployment and possible Congressional relief and a measure designed to abolish the color line in the Federation were likewise adopted.

Wants No Irish Support.

J. H. Thomas, fraternal British delegate spoke upon the Irish question. No support for the Irish revolutionists will be rendered by this convention if Thomas' advice is followed. "British labor stands for Irish freedom; the only limitation we insist upon is that Ireland shall not be allowed to become a menace," he stated. Being interpreted this can only mean that British labor according to Thomas, is in favor of Irish freedom when the Irish do not constitute a danger to the British capitalists. That would be altogether too much for traitor Thomas. In an attempt to discourage the Irish sympathizers in the convention from taking any steps favorable to their oppressed brothers in the old country, Thomas said, "I warn you against trying to create in their minds the feeling that you can solve their difficulties." There will be no revolutionary solidarity on the score of Irish freedom if Thomas has his say. His speech brought a storm of protest from the Irish sympathizers in the convention who are however, divided upon immediate tactics.

Coal Owners Loud For Open Shop.

ONLY SALVATION OF PROFITS SAY THE EXPLOITERS.

"An Open Shop in every coal mine in America," was inscribed upon the banner of the Michigan-Ohio-Indiana Coal Association at its convention at Cedar Point, Ohio, last week.

Tom L. Lewis and C. E. Maurer voiced these sentiments to a loudly applauding audience of coal mine owners. Lewis is a former President of the United Mine Workers of America but now secretary of the New River Coal Company. His changed status from miner and miners' union official seems to have considerably changed his viewpoint. Economic interest seems to still be working in the same old way of determining one's views upon the operation of mines as well as other things.

Labor "Intoxicated."

Concerning the labor situation in the mining regions, Lewis expressed himself as of the opinion that the miners "have been intoxicated with their success of the last few years" and that this "intoxication" would work their ruin "unless the methods of the labor leaders are radically changed."

Lewis is strongly against the lowering of the price of coal—one basic commodity that has remained at the war price in spite of the tremendously lessened demand. He stated that salvation for the coal owners lay, not in Congress and legislation but in the "education of the American people." That apparently means that if the people are continually forced to pay high prices for coal they will "get used to it."

C. E. Maurer, of the Glen Run Coal Company, attacked the government's policy of mine control and voiced approval of the Open Shop in the coal mines. "An Open Shop policy will have to prevail in every mine in the United States before coal can be produced at a profit," he declared. Pity the poor Coal Barons!

The convention closed with a dance—at which it is presumed no one went away hungry—or thirsty.

CRIME WAVE ROLLS HIGH.

Sheriff Stannard of Cleveland, O., states that the crime wave is rolling too high for him. Altho he "has a nice jail, it can't handle the rush of prisoners," he states. All cells are occupied by two prisoners and many are sleeping on the floors of corridors.

Two Important Announcements.

The national convention of the Socialist Party will be held in Detroit beginning June 25th.—Many questions having an important bearing upon American and international working-class problems are on the agenda of the convention.

The Socialist Party claims to be the best expression of militant socialism in the United States. Workers here, are therefore vitally interested in how it will sustain that claim in its convention. The officialdom has definitely repudiated the Russian revolution and condemned the principle of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a working-class weapon in the struggle for power over the capitalist class. It has condemned the Third International, the greatest revolutionary force in the history of the world. Just what is the Socialist Party and what it stands for are, we repeat, matters of importance to American workers.

The Toiler will report the convention proceedings for its readers. From the moment the gavel falls on the opening day until adjournment our representative will be in the hall.

Probably no one present will be better qualified to give a correct and true report of the convention than our representative, Thurston Lewis. Having a sound knowledge of the principles of Marxism and a thorough conception of the various principles and elements which make up the revolutionary movement here as well as abroad, comrade Lewis' reports are sure to be both accurate and interesting.

FOSTER'S SPECIAL ARTICLES ON RUSSIA.

William Z. Foster, leader of the Steel Strike of two years ago, author of "The Great Steel Strike" and the later booklet, "The Railroaders' Next Step", is now in Russia attending the Third Congress of the Communist International and the Congress of the Red Trade Union International.

He is writing a series of special articles for the Federated Press on Russia as he sees it now. These articles are sure to be exceptionally interesting and instructive. The Toiler will begin publication of this series very soon. Watch for them.

Should Syndicalists Join The Communist Party?

Translated by Frederick A. Blossom.

"La Vie Ouvriere," weekly organ of the organized revolutionary minority in the French Confederation of Labor, has been conducting a symposium on the above question. The following article translated from a recent issue, is signed "A Communist Doctor."

One reply, signed Albert Lemoine, interested me, especially by its clear-cut character, above all in the following declaration: Either the Communist Party will admit only workers, in which case it will uselessly duplicate the labor unions; or it will admit members regardless of their class, and then the class struggle it preaches becomes an absurdity or a lie.

In other words, Lemoine, like many active revolutionists, wants a revolution made by the workers against all the other elements of the population, and he has more faith in the labor unions than in a political party.

Now, "working class" and "labor unions" are not identical and both will stand a little closer examination.

I know an industrial city where there is a political group and a union of metal workers. The political organization does not ask its members whether they work iron, steel, literature, wood or leather. It asks them, "Do you stand for a communist social revolution?" And the advocates of such a revolution are admitted to membership.

The labor union, on the other hand, does not question applicants as to their opinions. It merely asks them, "Do you work in the iron or steel industry?" And the metal workers join the union without necessarily being partisans of the Social Revolution.

But lo and behold! the revolutionary unionists scorn the revolutionary party (whose members come from different trades and callings but are all of the same economic and political opinion) and they expect the revolution to be put across by the labor union, which draws its members from a particular trade without reference to their opinions—an arrangement which makes it possible for anti-revolutionists to join and to feel perfectly at home—and even, at times, to constitute a majority.

Apparently, an organization cannot do effective work for the revolution unless it is composed of members who are not required to be revolutionists, but merely to prove that they can cut steel, tan leather or saw wood!

And yet Lemoine is one of the railway workers who were discharged for their activity in the strike last May. He must have seen and learned many things. Has he forgotten certain "fellow workers" to whom he is partly indebted for the loss of his job? Jack, for example, who took part in the strike only in order to do his work as stool pigeon for the company? Or Jim, a member of the union, who said that, since the strike seemed to him to have a political object which went beyond the proper limits of a labor union, he refused to take part in it? Or George, who, timid, spineless, nagged by his wife, quit the strike the very first day?

And that is not all, for Lemoine does not speak merely of the unions, but, more broadly, of "the working class." Well, don't Tom, Dick and Harry also belong to the working class? Tom, a member of the scab

THE DIFFERENCE.

By TOM CLARK.

The clothing workers of the country and of New York in particular are claimed by the Socialist Party as staunch supporters of the party. A large number of the most active workers in this industry, however, are Communists. In all the internal struggles, in the strikes, the Communists have taken a leading part, fortifying the organization from within and without.

During the late strikes, the needle workers (according to statements of the party itself) have been remiss in their duty toward the Socialist Party. Taken up with union troubles, they let "politics" go by the board.

What did the Communists do during the strikes? What do Communists do just during strikes?

Then Communist activity becomes keenest. Then the class struggle, which the Socialists claim is basic to their movement, is most apparent. Then the workers are most alive to the bitter problems that they must solve, most accessible to the needs of better and more formidable organization, more effective fighting methods and more conscious, more energetic leadership. The lessons of the class war are easiest to inculcate. The necessity of being on the firing line—in the actual fight, draws the Communist to the front. Then the party functions best—then the Communist is doing his party work in the real sense!

The Communist shows up the weaknesses of the organization. The vulnerable points must be strengthened, the form, possibly, must be changed. The rank and file must be put in control. The will of the membership must prevail. Every act of the leaders and officials is subjected to searching criticism. The rank and file must make the demands: forces must be organized so that the leaders dare not betray them. With the slogan of maximum demands, the leaders dare not turn back. If they compromise them, the workers must be in a position to oust them at once.

Communists point out the attitude and action of the government toward the workers. Court decisions, injunctions, the use of gunmen and thugs by the employers and tolerated by the authorities—finally the use of troops to break the strike and crush the workers into submission—these are the object lessons that the Communist teaches the workers in the struggle itself—in practice, in action. Then the workers learn best—they discover who their real enemies are and how to combat them.

Communism is no hobby for after working hours.

There is no returning to it after the economic struggle has been settled. Communism is the force driving the workers in the midst of their struggle!

That is one of the differences between Communism and Socialism—the positiveness of the Communist movement against the negativeness of the Socialist movement.

Well, every man to his taste. I am not a workman, but, just the

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Prosecution Witnesses Weak in Accusations Against Sacco and Vanzetti.

Moore's Cross-Examination Makes Witness Confess Former Lies.

Dedham, Mass.—Every witness put on the stand by the prosecution to identify Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti as automobile bandits during four days of testimony-giving has either failed to identify the defendants or has thoroughly discredited his own testimony.

Louis Pelsler, shoemaker, went to pieces on the stand while a courtroom packed with spectators watched the process of collapse. Pelsler tangled himself up in lie after lie.

Pelsler was in the cutting room of the Rice & Hutchins shoe factory when the shooting began. The windows there are opaque, and must be raised if one would look outdoors. One window was open three or four inches, Pelsler said, and he looked through this opening. Berardelli was lying on the ground. Pelsler opened the window fully. Immediately the bandits began firing at that window, but Pelsler asserted that he stood up amid the rain of bullets and did two things—he wrote down the number of the approaching bandit automobile and he made a mental note of the appearance of one bandit who was standing in the road shooting at the fallen Berardelli.

This bandit, Pelsler declared, was dark and wore dark green pants and khaki shirt with the collar tucked up around his neck. In the collar was a pin. Assistant Prosecutor Harold Williams asked Pelsler if he could pick the bandit out in the courtroom. Pointing to Sacco in the prisoner's cage, Pelsler answered: "I wouldn't say he is the man, but he is the dead image of him."

At this point Defense Counsel Fred H. Moore cross-examined Pelsler. He reminded the witness of a lengthy statement made by Pelsler on March 26 to Robert Reid, investigator for the defense.

"Did you tell Reid all the truth?" Moore asked.

"No; I told only part of the story." Then Pelsler admitted he had told Reid that he had not seen any of the bandits, that the highwaymen were all in the automobile by the time he looked out of the window, and that he ducked under a bench as soon as the shooting turned toward that window.

"Why did you lie to Reid?" asked Moore.

"Because I wanted to avoid being a witness."

"You hold your word so lightly," said Moore, "that you would lie to avoid being a witness?"

"Yes," said Pelsler.

He denied he had ever discussed the case with anyone representing the prosecution, denied he had discussed it with Assistant Prosecutor Williams. But five minutes later, under Moore's heavy bombardment, Pelsler admitted that he talked with Williams and that he had been told to go into the courtroom before the session at which he was to testify, so he could look Sacco over. Next he denied that he had ever discussed the case with any one previous to Reid's interview with him, and later was trapped into admitting that he had talked with a state detective previous to that time.

Further cross-examination by Defense Counsel Jeremiah McAnarney revealed that Pelsler was the only person who noted the bandit car's number and this information he withheld from the defense all these months.

New testimony to refute Mary Eva Splaine's identification of Nicola Sacco as an automobile bandit was given by one of the prosecutor's own witnesses. Hans Behrsin, chauffeur for E. W. Slater, one of the firm from which the payroll was taken at Braintree last year, testified that he was only 10 feet from the bandits as they fled, and saw one man leaning out of the car as Miss Splaine had said, but he could not identify Sacco as that man.

There is large significance in this. Miss Splaine was in a second-story window 80 feet from the fleeing car, and her observation was made while the bandit automobile traveled 35 feet at high speed. At the end of that 35 feet, her view was cut off by a cobbler shop. Yet she offered a minute description of the invaders, and identified Sacco as that man.

Behrsin was sitting in an automobile at the roadside in front of the cobbler shop, directly in front of Miss Splaine's observation point, but 50 feet nearer to the fugitive car. He had an unobstructed view, and was able to state that there were five men in the automobile, a seven-passenger Buick, but he could not describe the one man who was leaning out.

25 PER CENT ARE JOBLESS.

One out of every four workers in the 22 leading industries is now out of a job, says a Federal Reserve Board survey.

Unemployment is most severe in the rubber industry, with building trades second.

Kansas City is the jobless center. It has less than half as many employed as a year ago.

Developments indicate that unemployment in July may be most severe in the iron and steel industries.

Unskilled day labor in Cleveland has fallen in some cases to as low as \$15 a week.

In Louisiana rice fields many are working for \$1 a day.

Eastern dockbuilders' strike, which lasted three months, settled. Wages reduced an eighth.

Strike of American marine unions cut sailings of American merchant ships from New York 35 per cent in May.

Number of strikes now in the United States nearly three-fourths less than year ago.

About 60 out of every 100 soft coal miners are out of work.

Union wage scales now average a fifth less than the war peak.

FRANCE IN BERLIN.

Senator France of Maryland, who recently sailed from New York for Russia, has arrived at Berlin. A dispatch states that the Senator asserts Leonid Krassin, Soviet Trade Commissioner will soon be in America on important trade business.

DEPORTED TO AMERICA.

Patrick H. Reid, arrested at Montreal, Canada, last winter for participation in bread riots and food raids on restaurants has lost his appeal on an order for deportation. Reid, the British subject, had taken out his first papers as a citizen of the U. S.

CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM ACT MAY BE INVALID.

Oakland, Cal.—The State Appellate Court has announced that it has temporarily abandoned the case of Anita Whitney, convicted under the California criminal syndicalism act, pending the outcome of an attack on the constitutionality of the act, at present being made before the State Supreme Court on behalf of John C. Taylor, formerly state secretary of the Socialist party and later member of the Communist Labor Party.

The Appellate Court has already declared the act constitutional, and the probability is that the Supreme Court will concur; but meanwhile Miss Whitney is out on bail pending appeal.

Taylor is already serving his sentence of one to fourteen years at San Quentin prison.