

NEEDLE TRADES LEFT WING PROGRAM

Dealing with
Economic Situation and
Demands
Jobbers-Contractors Problem
Out-of-Town
Class Collaboration
Amalgamation
Shop Delegates System
Labor Party, Etc.

PRICE 20c.



The
NEEDLE WORKER

*Official Organ of the
Needle Trades Section of the T. U. E. L.*

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A rank and file monthly advocating the amalgamation of all Needle Trades Internationales into ONE Departmentalized Industrial Union and the abolition of the union bureaucracy through the democratization of the union machinery on the basis of the Shop Committee Shop Delegate System.

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John B. ...

**A FIGHTING UNION FOR
THE NEEDLE WORKERS!**

PROGRAM

Adopted at a Conference of Delegates Representing the Progressive Members of the Following Needle Trades Unions:

**Amalgamated Clothing Workers
International Ladies Garment
Workers
Furriers
Cap and Millinery Workers
United Hatters
Journeyman Tailors
United Garment Workers**

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of Program Adopted at the Third Conference of the Needle Trades Section, Trade Union Educational League, held in New York City, N. Y., September 12-13-14, 1925.

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Introduction

The Needle Trades Left Wing, the coming power in the Needle Trades industry, has a rich history behind it. Its development from local isolated groups into a powerful national organization with its groups in practically every local union of importance, in all trades throughout the industry is an achievement to be credited mainly to the Trade Union Educational League headed by the famous leader of the great steel strike, WM. Z. FOSTER.

Long before the TUEL entered the field there were organized opposition groups here and there. These groups sought to eliminate some outstanding grievances that the mass of members were interested in here and there. They had no constructive scientific program and usually were crushed by the machine in no time. Quite often the leaders of these haphazard opposition movements made a horse deal with the ruling union bureaucracy and betrayed the interests of the workers much the same as the former leaders.

The one outstanding instance of a victorious opposition to the A. F. of L. bureaucracy was the creation of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers which resulted from the split forced upon the United Garment Workers Union by Rickert, its president. In this instance the former opposition, the present Hillman bureaucracy, degenerated into one of the most treacherous and

corrupt union bureaucracies in the Needle Industry.

By the time the TUEL entered the field, the numerous defeats of the isolated opposition groups by the nationally organized and centralized union bureaucracy and their treachery when victorious, had demoralized the workers to such an extent that the bureaucracy appeared omnipotent. The demoralization became black despair when the workers began to realize that the Socialist Party and the anarchists who previous to that were furthering and encouraging these opposition movements became accomplices to the treachery and corruption of the new bureaucracy whom they helped to lift into power. However after some preliminary agitation by the newly formed needle trades National Left Wing composed of a combination of all remaining Needle trades opposition groups in the various Internationals of the Needle Industry, the spirit of the workers revived wonderfully and victories were achieved one after another. The ruling bureaucracy alarmed at the strength of this movement began to adopt war measures, expulsions, and suspensions and in the first test on a National scale, it appeared as if they had scored a victory. It turned out however, to be one of these victories that brings one nearer to the grave. The Left wing today is stronger than ever and before long will be the undisputed leader of the organized workers in the Needle industry.

The outstanding characteristic of the Left wing as a national organization, that differen-

tiates it from all former opposition groups, is that it combines all the most class conscious, active and loyal union members into groups based upon the definite program outlined in this pamphlet. Thus the Left wing is no private property of any one union politician that may creep in. Many of the careerists that tried to climb on its band wagon to obtain office, especially in the ACW, soon found out that it was the quickest way to the ash can. The individuals in the organized Left wing only count to the extent that they follow the collective will of the thousands of class conscious workers organized nationally, as expressed in the program here outlined; and this is the best guarantee that any opportunists or job seekers that may creep into a victorious movement will not be able to degenerate it to serve their personal purposes.

Finally there is one more important feature that differentiates the present opposition as embodied in the Left wing from all former opposition groups, and this is that the Needle Trades Left wing is but a part of a tremendous mass movement in all industries and on an international scale throughout the world. The Left wing in the Miners' Union which even according to the count of the bureaucracy was credited with 66,000 votes and probably elected the president and secretary-treasurer but was cheated out of it; the 10,000 votes in the Carpenters' Union, 14,000 in the Machinists', the two thousand locals in the Railroad unions that endorsed the Left wing amalgamation program, are but some illustrations that the American workers can be won

over to an aggressive policy and the Left wing program. The growing Left wing of the American Labor Movement of which we in the Needle Trades are a part, affiliated as it is to the Red International of Labor Unions comprising 14,000,000 workers, is not a passing phenomenon, nor can any one individual sever it from its purpose of complete emancipation of the working class from the rule of capital.

The program as embodied in this pamphlet adopted by the Third Conference of the National Needle Trades Left Wing is an embodiment of the spirit and experience of the entire Revolutionary Labor Movement throughout the world as applied to the problems of our industry. It is on this basis that we present this program to the Needle Trades workers for their consideration and adoption.

JOSEPH ZACK.

Our Economic Demands:—

1. Union control of jobbers and manufacturers.
2. Guarantees to enable needle workers to make a living in the industry by the establishment of:
 - a) A thirty-six hour week.
 - b) Forty weeks employment per year.
 - c) Abolition of minimum standards of production and piece work; establishment of union maximum standards of production to insure the workers an adequate season of employment based on week work throughout the industry.
 - d) A wage scale that will bring the yearly earning power within a minimum of two thousand per year. (\$2,000.00)
 - g) Unemployment insurance paid by the employers and administered by the union.
 - h) Guarantees against discharge by the employer.
 - e) Minimum Scales of Wages Locally and Nationally.
 - f) Agreements to expire Nationally at the same time.

Our organizational Demands:—

1. Amalgamation of all needle trades international unions into a departmentalized industrial union as the only effective means to organize the unorganized and to establish control over conditions in the industry.
2. Democratization of the union through reorganization on the basis of the shop committees (shop delegates) system which would make the shop the foundation of the union to be run by and for the workers.

Political Demand:—

All inclusive Labor Party based upon the Labor Unions inclusive of all Workers Political and fraternal organizations.

The Class Struggle and Our Place as Needle Workers in the General Struggle of Labor Against the Employing Class

THERE are workers in the needle industry who along with many workers of other trades, consider the U.S. a land of unlimited opportunities and freedom. Those workers consider shop work only a temporary occupation waiting for the time when they will do "better" by going into business. This conception is a hangover from the time when undeveloped land and mineral resources could have been gotten, so to speak, for the asking. At present all wealth and all natural resources are the domain of the various monopolies and all praises about freedom and opportunities is propaganda of the labor baiting capitalist press.

This country has long passed the stage when free or cheap land or mineral resources could afford an independent existence to most of its citizens. It has also passed the time when on the rich and free land, a large independent farming class and a commercial middle class could grow and prosper. Not only is there nothing left for the small fellow in land and natural treasures, to seize or divide, but there is hardly an opportunity left in industry and commerce for a worker to establish an independent "middle class" existence. There is hardly anything left

that has not been seized, divided or brought under the control of powerful trusts and banking combines. The tens of thousands of small middle-class families that could make a living through the operation of small shoe stores, cigar stores, groceries, restaurants, textiles, etc., etc., are being rapidly eliminated and their places taken by big combines, operating with latest machinery and up-to-date methods.

In many instances, as in the case of groceries, restaurants, etc., the change is hardly apparent to the public. The people operating this so-called "independent" business are in reality only the agents at the mercy of the milk or meat or fruit trust, etc. Even the United States farmer, who used to be the most militant middle class independent, has been largely expropriated and practically subjugated to the most insidious and trustified credit system in the world. The last agricultural upheaval in the West, in which Wall Street came out a triumphant victor, paves the way for complete dominance of big capital over the one element of the middle-class that could and did offer militant resistance.

The present stage of capitalism in the U. S. is not one of all around ascendancy, but of expropriation and subjugation of the middle-class by big capital. Still, there are thousands of workers every year who, immersed in bourgeois ideology and kept in ignorance of the actual economic conditions by the capitalist press they read, make an attempt to go into business. It is a chance, a bet, of thousand to one against the worker.

As against the forlorn hope of individual efforts to free oneself from exploitation, the labor movement offers the possibilities of material improvement thru collective action. In a country where trusts and financial monopolies dominate, an individual, whether he goes into small business or demands a raise in wages, has no chance. In the long run, he is bound to be crushed and to lose. The only salvation there is, lies in collective effort. United with our fellow workers in hundreds of thousands and millions, we have the necessary strength. To cope with organized capital, we must organize and act *as a class*, the working class, against the employers, the capitalist class.

Development of Technique, Machinery and Science

The development of big trusts and the accumulation of big capital in few hands would not have been possible without the simultaneous development of modern machinery which, cheapening production, gave the owners, the big capitalists, an advantage over the small manufacturers who could not afford to buy such machinery. Big modern machinery greatly facilitated the introduction of efficient methods. With every advance of technique, machinery and science, the big employers became stronger while the small fellow—the worker, farmer, the small middle-class man became weaker. A newly invented machine usually replaces many workers, knocks out small independent manufacturers,

makes the farmer more dependent upon those that sell him machinery and distribute his products, or eliminates him thru big-scale farming methods.

Simultaneously with this, another transformation takes place, namely, the old highly skilled mechanic loses his importance in the process of production, he thus finds either part or all of his skilled work done by the machine and becomes a plain machine operative. This is the leveling process of modern production. The independent middle-class man is being expropriated and driven into the ranks of the proletariat. The small farmer is being driven the same way and is becoming a farm hand. The skilled mechanic made useless and replaced by new machinery and efficiency methods, is driven to the position of a common worker. This is the general direction we are moving towards in slower or faster pace according to the peculiarities of each industry and the conditions in which capitalism finds itself in each particular country. On the one hand we have the swelling ranks of the working-class, the impoverishment of all sections of the population; on the other we have the small clique of money-lords who, year by year, are growing richer and tightening their grip upon our lives.

The Employers Organizations

On both sides, on that of capital and labor, the forces are organizing. The employers, organized into trusts and banking combines as their

strongest basic units, linked up into Bosses' Associations in each industry and in Chambers of Commerce nationally, control the national, state and local government, and thru it the army, navy, militia, courts and police. Thru this double machinery of economic organization and state power, they manipulate the cost of living, suppress strikes, and force us into wars to defend and increase their profits. *As against this formidable power of the employing class, the workers can only fight as a class organized economically into powerful industrial unions and politically into mass political parties of labor.*

One section of the working-people, be it the coal, steel or garment workers, taken by themselves, cannot effectively defend themselves against this formidable power of organized capital, nor can they obtain, economically or politically, the necessary protection. This is why all sections of labor must be combined, organized, united as a class.

International Capitalism and American Imperialism

The exploitation of the immense natural resources and the development of the productive forces in this country achieved mainly thru the flowing in of millions of European immigrants and capital, made the U. S. until about two decades ago a self-sufficient country. After the War of Independence, the new American bourgeoisie, liberated from the British colonial yoke, had plenty of room to exploit natural resources

and develop industry. The home market could not only easily absorb all the products of American industry, but a considerable amount of such products had to be imported from Europe. At that time U. S. did not think of wars for conquest of lands in the European sense. The early American wars were of an internal civil war character. The civil War between the North and South was a war between rival bourgeois groups in the U. S. itself, a war that established the rule of the modern northern bourgeoisie over the feudal slave order of the South.

Until the period immediately following the Civil War, American industry could live on the home market, and American Imperialism, "foreign entanglements," played hardly any part in the policy of the government of the U. S. The rapid development of industry and technique since the Civil War, however, necessitated the expansion of the markets beyond the U. S. And the first step of U. S. Imperialism was to obtain dominance over the American continent itself, which led to the Spanish American War, the Mexican War, and all the acts of aggression, military and economic, against the various South American republics, which has rendered the American continent a mandate territory of the U. S. under the rule of the so-called "Monroe Doctrine."

Even the American continent, however, became insufficient for the rapid development of the U. S. industry and wealth. Already before the World War, severe economic crises, throwing millions out of work, were recurring. The

U. S. bourgeoisie had its interests deeply enough involved in the European countries and their colonies and dependencies to be dragged into the World War, the biggest imperialist war in the history of mankind.

The peculiar situation of the U. S. in the World War resulted in a still further expansion of its industry and commerce, which have now reached undreamed of proportions. The bourgeoisie of the U. S., choked with wealth, is taking full advantage of the crumbling imperialism of England, France, Germany, etc., not by assuming responsibilities as a member of League of Nations (Woodrow Wilson's policy), but as a receiver out to loot as much as possible from the crash of its competitors. Wielding the great power of enormous wealth as against weakened capitalism of all other countries, American capitalism becomes the leader of world capitalism, thus tremendously strengthening its own power over the workers at home and dictating its will to the rest of the Bourgeois world.

The Need of International Working Class Unity

While the readjustment of sick European capitalism to new conditions under the receivership of the U. S. proceeds by means of lowering the standards of living of all categories of workers down to a starvation level, and of expropriating the middle class, the American bourgeoisie, acting as the overlord of the bourgeoisie in all capitalist countries, at the same time attempts to

save that bourgeoisie and to protect its privileges against the attacks of the working class.

All this has resulted in an enormous strengthening of U. S. capitalism against labor in the U. S. Capitalism has become international. There are at present international trusts in the steel, coal, oil, shipping and other industries, and international banking combines. There is the financial dominance of Wall Street over the world money market. Development of transport and communication has greatly facilitated capitalist combines on a world scale. To take only one or two instances. The American capitalist can avoid paying a high wage scale for shipbuilding in the U. S. by having his ships constructed in the ship yards he owns or controls in Hamburg (Germany), or in some other European port at a third of what he would have to pay at home. The American capitalist can use European coal to break a miners' strike in the U. S. The same may be said, to a degree, of many other industries. As a whole, products manufactured in America in the long run compete on the International market with cheap European products. This means that either the wages of European workers will have to rise, or the wages of the American workers will have to be further reduced. The big open shop drives in U. S., the wage cuts, the injunctions against strikes, the so-called Anti-Syndicalist laws, have been the direct means used by American capitalism to lower the workers standard of living. Indirect and direct taxation and an average rise of 10% per year in the cost of living went along

to accomplish the same purpose. Despite appearances to the contrary, the average worker in the U. S. now earns less in actual buying power of the total of his wages than he earned 30 years ago. In order to maintain and to raise the level of real wages of the American workers, i. e. the wages expressed in the amount of goods they will buy, it is necessary to raise the standard of living of the workers in all other countries, and this is only possible thru concerted action of all the workers organized in unions on an international scale. It necessitates *world trade union unity*.

The Trade Union Educational League Program

From all the foregoing it will be apparent that our aims as Needle Workers must be in harmony and closely connected with the aims and actions of the entire working class. As against the national and international political, financial and economic domination of the employers, the working class must be organized nationally and internationally. In the present situation, when the forces of the working class are divided both nationally and internationally, with the craft form of workers' organization facing the tremendous national and international trusts, effective solidarity and unity of action on the part of the workers is well nigh impossible. On the other hand reorganization of the existing unions and organizing the unorganized for the class struggle is extremely difficult, as

long as our unions are nationally and internationally, dominated by a reactionary bureaucracy, by members of the Republican or Democratic Party, by so-called Socialists or Syndicalists, or Anarchists, who openly cooperate with the employers in order more effectively to solve their problem of increasing production instead of solving our own problems. In the present situation, organized labor is choked and condemned to stagnation.

This labor bureaucracy who have become the allies of the employers and the chief bulwark against further material or social progress on the part of labor, are determined to maintain the capitalists in power and possession of the factories. In countries where they have or had the power they shoot down and imprison, expel and suspend the members of their own unions in order to crush opposition.

In the United States, the union bureaucracy, often in cooperation and under the direction of the employers, successfully subjugated the incoherent early radicalism of American labor. The bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor, the most reactionary in the world, became an open adjunct of the U. S. imperialist machine. During the World War and after, this bureaucracy worked hand in hand with the Department of Justice to run down the radicals in the various unions and to aid in their arrest. As against the betrayal of the best interests of the working class and the persecution of its best champions, the TUEL has a program of consolidation of the present craft unions into de-

partmentalized industrial unions, a program of world wide unity of labor, a program of class struggle aiming at the complete elimination of capitalist rule, and its substitution by the rule of labor. Our motto is, "Labor produces all the riches, and is entitled to own it." Labor, allied with other sections of the exploited population and leading them in the struggle against the exploiters who form only a fraction of the population, should be the ruler. Our goal is not only the improvement of the immediate standard of living and the strengthening of labor on all fronts, but the final substitution of the present order of society by another where power is in the hands of the workers and is being used for the benefit of those that actually produce and where the parasites, the capitalist class, has no place.

Soviet Russia the First Great Proletarian Victory

The struggle of the workers against exploitation is as old as the first factory, as old as feudalism, as old as chattle slavery. Thru all these centuries, the oppressed class strove to throw off its yoke, only to be betrayed and harnessed in again under another form. There was the Roman Spartacan uprising, the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution of 1905. In all of them the exploited masses struggled for freedom only to be crushed under the iron heel of the oppressors. In the French, German, and other "national" revolutions, the masses parti-

icipated in the fights but the fruit fell into the hands of the bourgeoisie. At last, the underdog of the ages conquered one mighty fortress, Russia, which he organized into a *Union of Soviet Republics* and which he held against all accursed bloodhounds of capitalism, from the Junker down to the so-called Socialists and Anarchists. The Russian proletariat has rebuilt and fortified the conquered fortress into an impregnable proletarian stronghold, and it stands now solid, as a mighty beacon tower, alongside with the bloody mire and darkness of capitalism, to inspire the workers and peasants of other countries to new deeds, show them the way to victory over the capitalist class. With Soviet Russia thriving and growing ever stronger, with millions proletarians organized the world over under the banner of the Red International of Labor Unions, to which the Trade Union Educational League is affiliated, the struggle of the workers becomes easier and the prospect of victory certain.

The Role We Needle Workers Can Play in the American Class Struggle

In our industry, substantially the same development as in all other industries, tho in different form, has been and is taking place, in as much as our employers do not materially differ from the others. The day when the old-fashioned tailor shop with the foot-power machine dominated, is relegated to history. Our needle trades program which follows, traces *the development*

of capitalism in our industry. As a section of the American working class, *the most class conscious section*, we can play a big part in influencing and supporting progressive policies in the American labor movement instead of being an aid to the reactionary bureaucracy, as our unions have been heretofore.

We, the needle workers can push forward the coming of the new day in the American labor movement by putting into effect the progressive program and leadership here advocated, thus once more placing the needle workers to the fore as the vanguard of the American labor movement.

Our Industrial Program and the Economic Situation of the Workers in the Needle Industry

THE needle industry of the United States is the biggest of its kind of any country in the world, producing several billion dollars worth of clothing per year of which 600,000 workers engaged in the various trades of the industry receive a scant 14 to 20 per cent of the value produced.

In the last four years, the employers increased the output in ladies wear 39%, fur 42%, men's clothing 26%. But this increase did not mean a corresponding increase in the wages received by the workers, and in some instances, as in ladies wear, wages decreased 10% and 15,000 workers were driven out of the industry during that period.

The actual yearly wage of a needle worker averages \$1,250.00 in ladies wear, \$1,200.00 in men's clothing and about \$1,600.00 in the fur trade, making an average of \$23.00 to \$24.00 per week for the bulk of the needle workers with their families. This at a time when in 1924 alone, the cost of living rose 10%. From actual experience we know that a considerable percentage of needle workers make even less, while only

a small portion actually make a living in the industry. The rest are on the brink of starvation.

Why the Employers Have Prospered and Become Stronger

The very profits the bosses made in the last four years clearly indicate that their power of exploitation has not only not been weakened, but on the contrary it became much stronger. More profits for the bosses at the expense of the workers became possible through the following:

1. Further introduction of the efficiency methods of production and improved machinery, the beginning of trustification, especially in the men's garment industry. (Hart, Schaffner and Marx, Kuppenheimer, etc.)

2. Moving of production out of big centers into unorganized localities: out of 8000 establishments reported, 3,500 were out of New York by the end of 1924.

3. The Jobber and Contractor system: it is reported today that there are 5,000 contracting shops in existence employing nearly 100,000 workers.

4. The spread of the worst of all forms of exploitation—the cooperation shop and the so called "homework."

At the bottom of the rapid strengthening of the employers' power has been the greater centralization of capital in fewer hands and the influx of finance capital, the small bosses becoming less important and the jobbing capitalist and fi-

nance capital coming into leadership. In this development the bosses have been greatly aided and supported by the *policy of cooperation with the bosses* (Class Collaboration policy) of the union officials.

Who Is Responsible for the Worsening of Our Conditions and the Weakening of the Labor Unions?

The last four years, with some exception, were years of comparative economic prosperity in the country in general and in our industry in particular, hence economic conditions can not be blamed for our miserable situation. The workers in the industry are 50% organized, in some trades even 65% and more; hence there is in existence the organizational strength necessary effectively to approach the unorganized workers and to swing them into action. It is not lack of organization that we can blame for our misery. *The responsibility for the weakening of our power of defence and offence rests squarely on the shoulders of the present union leadership.* Instead of adopting a policy that would mobilize the entire strength of the needle workers to the onward march of the employers with a smashing counter offensive, our leaders adopted a policy of cooperating (Class Collaboration) with the bosses, yielding to their demand for more production through standards of production and piece work, demoralizing the struggle through Governor's commissions, the so-called arbitration and impartial chairman, the secret agreements,

secretly supplemented, the fake strikes to fill the treasury and the phony agreements that looked good to the workers but behind which there were gentlemen's understanding that they would not be enforced.

This policy of peace with the employers at a time when the latter proceeded to increase their profits and to make war upon the unions by abolishing the inside shop and moving out of town for cheap labor was tangible proof for the bosses of the weakness of the union and the double faced easily corrupted leadership.

In fact our leaders seemed to abandon the idea that anything can be gained through struggle. They now talk about "more civilized methods," meaning the conference table; they claim the strike to be out of date except when it serves some of their particular purposes, like collecting of dues and assessments and various shady manipulations. Having in fact abandoned their belief in the efficacy of the class struggle and fearing that their glory in the union may not long endure, they are using the means and machinery of our organizations to open up for themselves careers in business through banking, thus freezing up the union funds in permanent investments, insurance schemes and direct commercial connections in and outside the industry. They thus move closer to the business world and are more sympathetic to the bosses needs and points of view. While pursuing this policy of closer cooperation with the employers, they suppress through expulsion and dictatorial rules the growing opposition to such tactics.

Outstanding Characteristics of Class Collaboration Policy

Attitude towards Employers Associations.

The most outstanding feature of the class collaboration policy of the union bureaucracy is their solicitude for the bosses needs and point of view up to encouraging and organizing of bosses' associations with the aid of the union. More than one bosses' association in our industry would never have come to life, or would have died long ago, if it were not for the support and privileges granted them by the union bureaucracy. This policy of organizing our own enemies and helping to keep their organizations alive under the pretense that in this way the bosses can be outmaneuvered, divided and controlled, is the most treacherous part of this entire policy. As already pointed out, the bosses prosper tremendously under this policy. They are better organized than ever before, while the means of livelihood of the needle workers become smaller and smaller.

Against this policy we must fight with all our strength, for this is the root of all other evils. Graft, corruption, bureaucracy go hand in hand with a corrupt policy. Not only is it not in the interest of the union to organize bosses' associations or to keep them alive, but on the contrary, it is to our interest to disintegrate, to demoralize

and crush these associations. This does not mean that the union will not deal with bosses' associations if they must be dealt with on account of their strength. We do not fight associations as such, we fight for better conditions, but the association is the bulwark of the enemy, and just as the disintegration of the union is in the interests of the bosses, so is the disintegration of the bosses' association in the interests of us workers.

Strikes and Peace with Employers

Sidney Hillman, President of the A. C. W., says that the strike is an antiquated weapon, that more peaceful, civilized methods round the conference table must be found to deal with the problems of Labor and Capital. Meanwhile he accepts wage reductions and reduction in working forces, the Standard of Production, Piece Work, etc., as an illustration of what his sort of "peace" really means to the workers.

Industrial peace cannot be realized until the workers own the factories and there is no more capitalism or capitalists. Strikes are the open clashes between the workers and the employers resulting from the uncompromising exploitation of Labor, which the workers under Capitalism cannot avoid. Nor can they afford to surrender or weaken the weapon of the strike, as it is their strongest weapon of struggle for their demands. The value of a union, and the protection it can give, can best be determined by what its strength is in the case of strikes, and the whole union must be constructed on the basis of contin-

ual preparedness for continuous pressure and for mass struggles to defend the workers' rights and to force new concessions from the employers. The union by virtue of its strength, particularly during periods of prosperity or expected prosperity, may gain its demands without a strike, especially if the employers are badly organized. But such cases are rather exceptions. Important demands are, as a rule, not achieved except through bitter struggle. In fact, the nature of the relations between Capital and Labor is such that the employers always try to cheat the workers even out of concessions that are recorded in written agreements, and live up to these only if the union through repeated threats of using its power is able to enforce them. The right to strike is, therefore, the most important weapon, and must be valued as such and must be secured regardless of any agreement with the employers. A real militant union does not only recognize this principle, but acts accordingly by continual adequate preparations organizationally, financially, education, publicity, etc.

Single Settlements

If the union refuses to make single settlements it means in fact that it forces the individual employer to join the employers association. It means that instead of trying to divide the employers we are forcing them to act as a unit. On the other hand, by making single settlements in a careless manner we may relieve the struck employers by enabling them to have

part of their work done in the settled shops. Therefore, we are in favor of single settlements, since this method if properly applied, retards the organization and consolidation of employers' association and divides the enemy and at times helps considerably in relieving the union financially, demoralizing the employers and making for a speedy and complete victory,—care must be exercised however that the employers shall not utilize the single settlements as a relief for themselves by strictly controlling and limiting the settled shops to the number of workers and output they should have normally, allowing somewhat for their normal increase in business due to the strike in the trade.

Class Collaboration and the Strike Machinery

The deadly harmfulness of the class collaboration policy comes especially to the fore during and previous to strikes, and since the strike is the chief weapon of the union in its struggle for better conditions, the class collaboration Policy destroys the very aim of unionism, which is the betterment of the workers' economic conditions.

The harmfulness of these policies is so apparent that the bureaucracy could not impose it upon the membership without a strangle hold upon the strike machinery which is even more bureaucratic and corrupt than the rest of the union. Strikes become veritable looting expeditions upon the union's treasury after the mem-

bership, like loyal honey bees, have produced the cash.

The democratization of the union will help considerably in *democratizing the strike machinery*. It is only through a strike machinery thoroughly representative of the workers in the shops that the membership can effectively be mobilized for strike activity. The struggle for better conditions must go on. We cannot wait till the rest of the machinery is democratized. If the bureaucracy does not wish to give over the control of the strike machinery to the rank and file, it means that it does not want to fight for the economic demands. It also means secret manipulations with the bosses and the capitalist politicians. It means more treason to the workers' interests. Therefore, foremost of our immediate aims during strikes is *the democratization of the strike machinery*. We therefore demand, pending the democratizing of the whole union machinery as provided in this program, 1) that the general strike committees and heads of the strike be elected by the delegates and chairmen from the shops and responsible to them; 2) that all strike assessments be collected as legally due to this strike committee, to be expended only for strike purposes; 3) that secret diplomacy be done away with and negotiations with the employers be conducted on an open basis.

Nothing less than this will guarantee the workers against underhand strike settlements, grafting and corruption in the conduct of strikes.

Arbitration

In the last few years there have been so many handicaps created in order to control and subdue the militancy of the workers, through mediation, so-called impartial chairmen, arbitration, etc., that this whole question deserves serious consideration. To begin with, we must say most categorically that we are in principle against arbitration. Arbitration, as practiced at present, is essentially a part of the class-collaboration policy of the Bureaucracy. It means to avoid strikes in principle. It facilitates a surrender to the employers by enabling the union officials to shift the blame for the surrender to the arbitrator.

The employers know this fact well enough, and they will not agree, as a rule, to an arbitrator of whom they are not absolutely sure. And when, by some mischance, they make a mistake, they do not abide by his unfavorable decision if they feel themselves strong enough to resist it. There are exceptions, when the employers are so weak that they seek arbitration to save themselves from complete defeat, and these are the only cases which the union can point to as apparent victories. Whenever a labor union fails to abide by the decision of an arbitrator, the entire capitalist press opens an attack on the union, molding the so-called public opinion against the workers. On the other hand, when the employers defy an arbitrator's decision the capitalist press takes no note of this. The history of the modern labor movement knows no instance when a weak labor

union gained something substantial in the face of a strong employers' organization through arbitration.

The value of arbitration and mediation as a method of avoiding or demoralizing strikes was early recognized by the employers and their government, and all sorts of compulsory arbitration schemes were put on the statute books by the various agencies of government, both Federal and State. The outstanding instances are the Federal Railway Labor Board and the Kansas Industrial Court Law. The Bureaucracy surrendered even in this, by voluntarily writing in recent years all sorts of arbitration clauses into the agreements with the employers, in many cases practically giving up the right to strike.

We are in favor of DIRECT negotiations with the employers—with their organized bodies when necessary, with single employers whenever possible. We are categorically in favor of the unlimited right to strike for the enforcement of the demands of the workers or for maintenance of the agreements. And considering the speed with which exploitation increases and the cost of living rises, we favor short term agreements.

There may be manoeuvres. In cases when the employers, owing to their weakness, seek arbitration; we may accept arbitration provided the employers accept OUR arbitrator; or the union may seek to win time by accepting the proposal for arbitration but bargaining on the selection of the arbitrator, until either the employers accept our candidate or it comes to a break, meanwhile aggressively preparing for the real struggle. In

an unfavorable economic situation we may even have to accept arbitration and accept an unfavorable decision, in order to gain time. In such cases the union leadership should not fool the workers and should avoid creating illusions as to what can be gained through arbitration. At the same time the union should prepare for a fight, in case it should become necessary in order to save the prestige and the morale of the union. In short, manoeuvres on arbitration are to be countered on the basis of the relative strength of the contending forces in each particular case, and not as a means of cooperating with the employers in preventing strikes.

Labor Banking

The logical evolution of the class-collaboration policy of the trade union bureaucracy brought into existence, as one of its results, the numerous so-called Labor Banks, Insurance Companies, etc., designed to utilize the trade union treasuries and workers' savings for financial and industrial investment and exploitation, and blooming forth into a new theory of "revolutionary" Trade Union Capitalism competing with "ordinary" capitalist enterprise for exploitation and profit. This Trade Union Capitalism, as an outstanding characteristic of the class-collaboration orientation of the trade union bureaucracy, has in fact become the mainstay of this orientation.

To use the trade union machinery, its re-

sources and its influence, to go into business on a large scale has become the aim of the trade union bureaucracy. The old objective for which the unions have been founded, the struggle against the employers for better conditions, is being gradually abandoned and jeopardized in favor of schemes of cooperation with the employers to increase productivity through speed-up systems and elimination of so-called waste in production, through efficiency methods, centralization and new machinery, the number of workers is being reduced. Thus the bureaucracy establishes a policy of peace with the employers, which secures for them to a considerable degree forcible control over the masses, guarantees them their regular income of dues from the trade unions, and enables them to concentrate on their schemes for sharing in capitalist-imperialists prosperity by utilizing the union treasuries and the savings of the workers for investment in industry and commerce, through Labor Banks, etc.

It is no exaggeration to say that under this policy the unions are becoming a mere money gathering medium to serve the financial schemes of the bureaucracy. In proportion that Trade Union Capitalism establishes itself in the business world, the bureaucracy becomes less and less dependent upon the will of the members of the union and less responsive to their needs.

Labor Banking and Fake Progressivism

Why should workers deposit their savings in Labor Banks instead of Capitalist Banks? Un-

less they are imbued with a certain degree of class feeling, they are apt to think that a Capitalist bank is safer, more efficient and effective. Labor banking, and the entire policy of class collaboration, has been developed into a science of working class betrayal precisely by those so-called Progressives of various shades who favored the LaFollette movement, Independent political action, and a Labor Party on the basis of the exclusion of the Communists. They present Labor banking and class-collaboration as a progressive policy, and are peddling it, especially to the advanced workers, as a class struggle policy. It is not a mere coincidence that this group of labor bureaucrats, who represent the next step on the part of the entire A. F. L. bureaucracy, offer new adaptations of class theory to modern capitalist imperialism, for it is upon the exploitation, economic and political, of the working class that they must base their capitalist schemes and careers. Hence their nonsense about buying out and peaceful penetration and transformation of capitalism. They pretend to buy out the capitalist industries controlled by the small group of capitalists who own and control THE BULK of the national wealth and whose power and wealth constantly increases at an enormous rate, by the 5% of National Wealth represented by workers' savings. They never attempt to show how the finances of the Labor banks invested in all the various capitalist exploitation schemes, mostly open shops, will in any way improve the workers lot and undermine the power of the employers and the power of capitalism.

The term Labor bank is as much a misnomer as the term union in the Boot and Shoe Workers Union. The entire Labor banking machinery is so constructed as to be under the absolute control of a few leading bureaucrats, functioning almost independently of the union and not responsible to its members. Wherever there is a nominal official control by the national or central body of the union as such, it only stiffens the resistance of the bureaucracy and its determination to retain control by hook or crook of the official machinery of the union and to rather split the union than to turn it over to a victorious opposition, especially if the opposition follows a class struggle policy.

Our Program on the Banking Question

We do not tell the workers to invest their savings in Capitalist banks or Insurance Companies, or buy bread, groceries, clothing, etc., etc., from capitalist undertakings, if it can be avoided. The trade union machinery, the workers savings and union treasuries can and should be utilized to advance the power and influence of organized labor to combat exploitation by organizing the workers and their families as consumers, by organizing cooperatives, by organizing the unorganized, working class education, etc., etc. We can never buy out capitalism, just as we can never overthrow it by merely fighting for wage increases. But we can reduce to some extent the exploitation of the workers not only on the field of production through unions, but also as consumers

by the creation of a powerful workers consumers co-operative movement. In the frame of such a movement, and controlled by it on a truly co-operative basis, workers savings and credit banks, workers sick, accident and death insurance societies can play a big role. As against capitalist trade union banking, we propose Labor savings and credit banks controlled not by a few bureaucrats, or national or central unions, but by cooperatives in which all labor organizations, cooperative, trade union, fraternal, political, etc., can take part as legitimate partners in the class struggle. The funds of such banks to be used not in capitalist financial and industrial investments, but for the building up of the labor movement, cooperative, industrial and political.

Neo-Company Unionism

The logical outcome of the class collaboration policy of the Bureaucracy leads to company unionism, with a union label. The foundation-principle of all Company Unions is to increase efficiency and production, eliminate waste and cultivate a friendly feeling and mutual cooperation between the workers and employers. The most "peaceful" unions, in the U. S. are the company unions with union labels like the Boot & Shoe Workers union and the United Garment Workers, both A. F. of L. unions whose unionism chiefly consists in the manufacturers paying graft to the union Bureaucracy by the sale of the union label and enforcing collections of dues,

and whenever a real union attempts to do something the Bosses call in these so called unions to fool the workers, scab on them and suppress the strike or rebellion.

The class collaboration policy of the Union Bureaucracy liquidates the militance of the unions and brings them nearer to the kind of unionism desired by the employers, which especially during periods of imperialist expansion and prosperity need peace between Capital and Labor. The labor bureaucracy after the blow the unions received during the post war deflation period through the open shop drive, which could only have been off-set by a radical change in policy leading to Amalgamation and the Labor Party, instead of resuming the offensive with the new prosperity period the union bureaucracy surrendered to the employers all along the line changing its policy to obtain the good will of the employers in order to be permitted to graft upon and to dominate the workers. The employers, one group of which believes that a flat anti-union policy must be pursued while another believes that they must allow some sort of unionism, were willing to have a temporary peace in order not to be disturbed through strikes in their prosperity, the bureaucrats wanted Peace, in order to assure an undisturbed income of dues and assessments.

There are at present altogether 2,000,000 workers organized by the Bosses in outright Company Unions in the U. S. without a union label, but the workers are not satisfied with Company

Unions and experience shows that after some experience in them, they become valueless, as their influence on the workers wanes and hence also their usefulness to the employers. The new illusion with a union label may serve their purpose better.

Thus we have the bona fide unionism and Company Unionism nearing each other on the common basis of increase in efficiency and production. Elimination of waste, good will of the employers and mutual cooperation between the employers and the workers, emerging in new brand of Unionism where the bureaucrats will be allowed to collect dues by the employers while using the unions as tools to keep the workers in subjection.

In the Needle trades we have two unions who hardly ever come into trouble with the employers, they are the most "peaceful" in the entire industry; the United Garment Workers and the United Hatters. There is little if any hostility by the employers towards these unions, they represent of what appears is the policy cut out for the entire labor movement by the Bureaucracy. Upon the rest of the unions in our industry this policy expresses itself best by Hillmanism in the A. C. W. who attempts to organize the unorganized through the employers in several instances, accepts reductions in wages and working forces at a time of prosperity in the industry. This complete surrender of the A. C. W. bureaucracy to the pressure of the manufacturers has put this once radical independent union fully in line

with the A. F. of L. policy of Company Unionism with a union label.

In other trades of the needle industry this development will probably be halted by the rapidly growing struggle of the Left Wing. It manifests itself everywhere by the class collaboration policy of organizing Manufacturers Associations, Labor banking, Governors commissions, fake agreements, etc.

Militant unionism as advocated by the T. U. E. L. or Company Unionism with a union label as practiced by the Labor Bureaucracy are the two lines of policy battling for supremacy in the American Labor Movement.

Union Maximum Standard of Production

The main objective of the employer in his labor policy is to get the maximum of production per dollar. He can do that by setting up a minimum standard of production to which only the most speedy mechanics can come up, driving up to the maximum of human endurance, and by fixing the work scales accordingly into 1, 2, 3 minimum standards and discharging any worker that cannot reach that minimum.

The same objective can also be achieved by piece work in continually trimming the prices when new styles come in or new methods or machinery are introduced. It can also be achieved by an ordinary week work system without a generally established standard of production, each boss trying to speed up production and

thus establishing his own minimum standard in each shop. It is therefore necessary that the union have a policy to control and limit the output in accordance with the interests of the workers. To content ourselves with the formal maintenance of the weekly wage scale, when thru speed up systems and efficiency methods the boss gets more value for the dollar each season thru the various schemes enumerated, thus shortening the seasons and throwing many out of work will lead us deeper into the misery we are suffering now. The only method of limiting the output or controlling production in accordance with the workers interests is by the union establishing a *maximum standard* beyond which no good union men are allowed to produce. In fixing such a standard, the following data should be taken into consideration:

- a) The number of workers to be employed by the industry on a fair living standard.
- b) The total output per year thus far and the reductions necessary to lengthen the seasons; the amount that can be easily produced by a worker.
- c) The marketing value of the garments produced compared with the wages and profits.
- d) New production methods and machinery, and the minimum of earnings per year necessary to make a decent living. Each line of garments and each trade must have its own standards on the basis of above considerations. It is of secondary importance, whether the minimum of income per year is reached by crowding the production within shorter or longer seasons as the

needs of the trade may be, as long as the minimum of \$2,000.00 per year or more is reached.

Each innovation in methods, machinery or styles which tends to reduce the earnings or shorten the seasons, must be taken account of in each trade or shop through reduction of hours and union standard of limiting production. It would be futile to attempt to establish the accurate maximum standard for each trade in this program. It can be said, however, that the present rate of production is generally 30—40% above the one that the interests of the workers demand.

The Jobber and Contractors Problem.

HAND in hand with the transformation of the needle industry went the centralization of capital through the growth of big enterprises and the development of the jobbing capitalist.

In other industries the prevailing unit of production is the big factory with its advantage of great concentration of machinery in one place and the resulting possibility of efficiency methods of exploitation. The growth of big concerns and the concentration of capital in fewer hands is also taking place in our industry, reducing in importance and eliminating the small manufacturer, there is arising however a new middle-class in our industry, which is the creation of the jobbing capitalists and is known as the *contractor* or the *submanufacturer*. This new middle-class, completely dependent upon the jobbing capitalist, is a weapon created by the jobbers to undermine the union. The extent of the danger from the contracting system to the union will be understood when we realize that nearly *one-third* of the total output of garments in the big centers, and in some trades like cloaks and dresses even considerably more, is being produced in contracting shops. We have therefore in our industry *two forms of exploitation*; first, the usual big factory with its capitalist development, second, the small numerous dingy contracting and corporation shops dependent upon the new type of

capitalist, the jobber that the union has not been able to force to responsibility as yet.

Through the system of contractors, the jobber is in a position to dictate to the contractors the price for garments they produce for him, at the same time he is not responsible to the union for wages or hours under which the garments are being produced. The contractors underbid each other in order to get more work, and if a contractor has the bad luck of being unionized, the jobber often withdraws his work from that contracting shop and gives it to those that remain unorganized, the reason being that a union shop cannot produce cheaply enough, or that the jobber does not want any union control in his contracting shops. Thus we see numerous contracting shops appearing and going out of business, altogether eliminating union control over conditions of labor.

The jobbing capitalist has all the advantage over the employer who runs his own factory and who is held directly responsible by the union for all conditions specified in the agreement. This so-called "inside-manufacturer," in order to obtain the same advantages enjoyed by the jobber, namely a lower cost of production and absence of union control, begins to press wages down and must eventually adopt the jobbing system or run the risk of being driven out business. There are now over 5,000 contracting shops operating in the industry. These, together with the large scale open shops in and out of town, produce the bulk of garments manufactured at present, and if the present policy of the union official-

dom continues to prevail, they will continue to lower conditions, shorten the seasons, and lead the industry backwards into the small sweat shop situation of pre-union days.

The leaders of our unions, in line with their general policy of cooperation with the bosses (class collaboration), try to solve this problem by proposing to fight for the interest of the contractors, arguing that if the contractor will get more work and higher prices for the garments produced in his shop, the jobbers will live up to union conditions. For this purpose our leaders encourage the organization of the contractors, in fact more than one Bosses' Association has been organized and kept alive under the stimulation, initiative and cooperation of the union bureaucracy. Incapable of conceiving a clear policy based on our class-interests, the union leaders seek to help the inside shops through gentlemen's agreements or supplementary agreements which admit worsening conditions of labor in these shops so as to make them able somewhat to overcome the competition of the contracting shops.

Thus a situation has been created where the workers are in utter confusion as to whom to fight. The union bureaucrats sometimes double cross the contractors, other times the inside manufacturers, but most of the time, the workers. The workers actually do not know what is what. An agreement is not an agreement, because there may be a secret understanding that will keep the officials from enforcing it. The workers apparently win a victory, but when they return to

AMALGAMATION OF THE NEEDLE TRADES

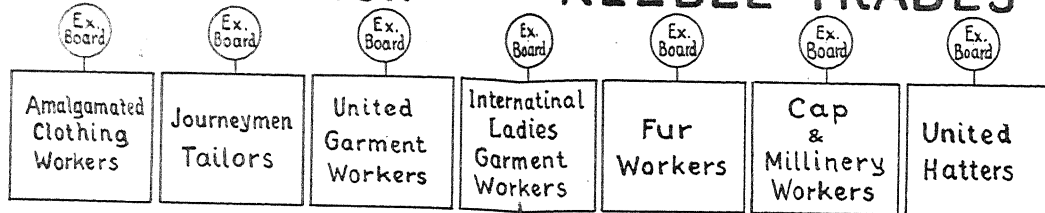


FIGURE 1.- PRESENT DIVIDED STATE OF UNIONS

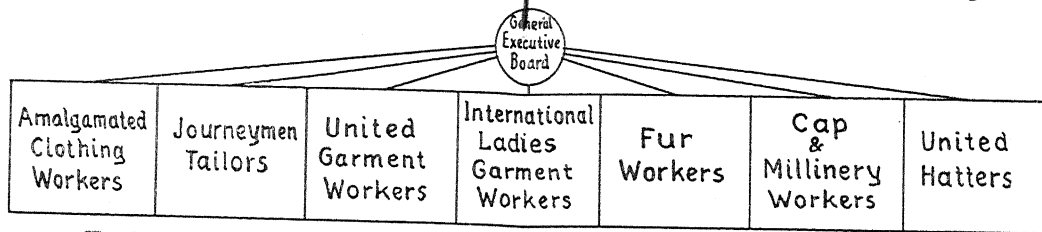


FIGURE 2.- FIRST STAGE OF AMALGAMATION

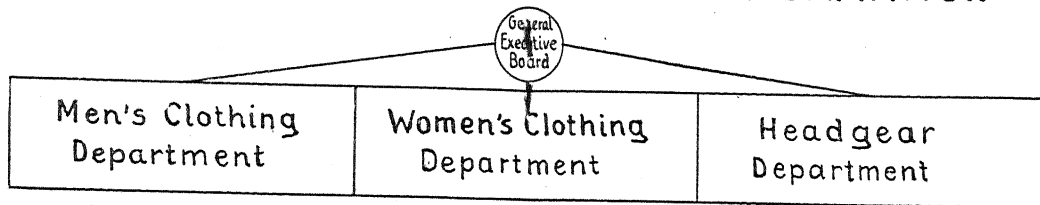


FIGURE 3.- AMALGAMATION COMPLETED

the shops, it is all different. The workers do not know whether to consider the contractor as an enemy or a friend from the official point of view. These are fruits of the cooperation-with-the-bosses-policy of our leaders.

Our Program on the Jobbers' and Contractors' Problem

One can conceive of only two factors that would be able to force the industry into normal channels. One is an advance in production technique so overwhelming as to render the small shop practically obsolete and to drive it out of existence. This possibility, however, may, for the near future, be discarded as far as our needle industry is concerned. Another is an advance in union power and union control so substantial as to compel the bosses to resume a normal course of production. In this connection the main problem is not so much the re-establishment of the inside shops as *making the jobber directly responsible for the condition in the shops where garments are being produced for him*, in other words, depriving him of the advantages he enjoys through his present irresponsibilities. The loss of these advantages in the long run is bound to lead to the re-establishment of the big inside shop in one form or another. The issue at this time is therefore *a struggle against the jobbers to force them to full responsibility for labor conditions under which garments are being produced for them; the issue is union control of contractors through the jobbers*. It is true that,

driven by the irresponsible and reckless exploitation of the jobbers, the contractors have made attempts to organize. It is true that they are vitally interested in fighting the jobbers so as to assure themselves a sufficient margin of profit instead of the present situation when they are continually on the verge of ruin at the hands of the organized jobbers.

This, however, should not mislead the workers as to the actual character of the contractors. Though the contractors are glad to accept the support of the union, they are not our friends; quite the contrary, holding as they in reality do, the position of straw-bosses for the jobbers in the industry, they are bound to be the meanest sort of petty exploiters. They may at present have some interest to fight the jobbers and for that purpose to ally themselves with the organized workers, but they will drop and betray us the moment the jobbers will show readiness to make concessions to them. The small fry in business generally, and the contractor in our industry in particular, is forced by his weakness to lean in moments of despair on the strong arm of labor. Under certain circumstances labor may accept a temporary alliance with these elements in its struggle against the jobbers provided it has no illusions as to the true character of the ally it is dealing with, and provided labor leads in such a temporary alliance, so that the entire struggle serves the interests of the workers and results in strengthening the prestige and the material position of the organized workers. The contractor as a new middle-class in our in-

dustry is doomed to extinction as soon as we regain sufficient strength. We cannot therefore recognize the contractor as a permanent normal factor in the development of production processes of the needle industry, on the contrary, the contractor must be looked upon as an artificial product of the big employers in their scheme of fighting the union and escaping responsibility for labor conditions. Our goal must be *the complete abolition of the contracting evil and the re-establishment of full responsibility of the real employer (jobber, manufacturer) before the union.*

In order to successfully control the jobbers' shops and to carry on a big general campaign, it is necessary that all those working in contracting shops for one jobber as far as practicable at present, should be organized together into one shop-committee composed of delegates and a chairman from each contractor's shop. This shop-committee to elect a general chairman of all the workers working for one jobber, the chairman to have the authority to call joint meetings of all workers engaged in the contracting shops of a given jobber.

These rank and file organizations should be connected with the *general organization committee which* properly supported by the entire union, would serve to establish union control over the jobbers, enforcing the agreement in all contracting shops of the jobber and treating all the contracting shops as one shop working for the same capitalist.

The organization of the contracting shops and

the solution of this problem generally, however, depends on the problem of the out-of-town shops. A one-sided drive against the contracting evil in the big cities would only increase the tendency to move out of town into small centers. Both the contracting system and the fleeing of the industry into small towns have the same reason: the desire of the bosses to weaken the union and to cheapen production. Since both leaks spring from the same cause, they must be closed at the same time.

The Out-of-Town Problem

NOT very long ago, the bulk of all clothing, men's women's and children's was produced in New York City. At present 50% of men's clothing is produced outside of the big cities. Of this so-called out-of-town work, only 15% is done under union conditions. The migration of the industry from New York created clothing centers in Chicago, Philadelphia, Rochester, Baltimore, Cleveland, Boston, Montreal, Toronto, Cincinnati, etc. This drift from New York was made easy by the accumulation of large masses of working population in the above cities and by the development of transportation and communication facilities, but the main moving force was the employers' desire to escape union control and to obtain cheaper labor. The decentralization of industry did not stop at the enumerated cities. Shops began to appear in smaller towns. Thus we find, for instance, a great number of factories spread between Boston, Rochester and Philadelphia. These factories produce men's garments, headgear, ladies wear and some fur apparel, not for the local market but for New York. Even bigger cities like Rochester, Baltimore, Philadelphia produce not only for the local market but for New York and Chicago. The same applies to the towns and cities around Chicago which is second to New York as a union center in the clothing industry.

The drift from the big unionized centers into

small localities has been especially pronounced in the men's garments, hat and millinery trades where improved machinery and efficiency methods make it possible to manufacture wearing apparel with cheap unskilled country-side labor taught in a few weeks to perform simple operations with the aid of machines or on parts of garments. Even in the ladies garment trade, where rapid radical changes in style are an impediment to standardization and hence to the migration out of town, 35% of the work is now being done out of New York.

The strong preference of the employers for the weakly organized or entirely unorganized small towns will be understood when we realize that the production costs in a small town are about one-half the costs in big centers, and that this is far more profitable than even the contracting system. The effect on the city workers of this drifting of bundles from the big centers, from union shops into small towns and non-union shops, is enormous. All in all, the number of workers in the entire industry has not decreased in the last 15 years. But the use of labor saving machinery and the migration of the industry out of town shortened the seasons in the big organized centers and caused tremendous unemployment which leaves thousands practically out of work even during the season.

Plainly between these double pincers of cheap out-of-town labor and the contract system in the cities, our union is being rapidly ground to pieces. We face the alternative: either our standards will go down to the level of the pro-

duction costs that the employers secure through the out-of-town work and the contract system, or we must wipe out that menace, and that means *intense organizational activities and war with the employers*. It is a hard task and it may take years to achieve substantial results, but there is no other way. No green table secret diplomacy and no governor's commissions will help us against the contracting system and the out-of-town evil. If we let things go as they are now drifting they will become worse year by year. We will become weaker, while the bosses will grow more powerful.

The bundles that have gone from New York to Chicago seeking cheaper labor will not come back, with small exceptions. Therefore, it is not a question to make New York come back to its old days as the producer of most all garments, but rather to *organize the small centers and towns, raising their standard to the one prevailing in the big centers*. Our industry in its chief trades is not going to be a one town industry but a nation-wide industry and must be treated as such. It is becoming very difficult to have a strike in New York in the men's garment trades while between Boston and Philadelphia a large number of open shops freely produce men's garments. (Not to mention the scab shops in New York itself which can be reached if the union were properly conducted.)

What sense is there in having all the above enumerated cities only half-way organized, each city with a separate agreement expiring at a different time, with longer hours at half the wages

paid in the big centers? One city organization offering the Bosses more advantageous terms than the other in order to compete for more work, thus undermining the conditions of the rest of the workers in the same union. This is nothing short of organized scabbery with the permission of the union. We have organized union cutters cutting garments in New York to be shipped to non-union plants out of town. We have big firms that have their New York and Chicago shops unionized while they most ruthlessly fight the unions in Montreal or Baltimore, the New York and Chicago shops continuing to produce and scabbing on the Montreal or Baltimore workers who are on strike against the same company. This is an every day practice. This is how our unions look under the present leadership. A correct policy which takes into consideration the changes that take place in our industry would make it possible for us to utilize the strength we still possess in the big cities to advance organization work into small localities. But this would not sufficiently improve the situation. No union can single-handed effectively tackle the out-of-town problem today. It is very expensive and difficult to organize small towns. Progress in organizing the unorganized out of town can only be made when *the various international unions combine their organizations and resources locally and nationally* in a real united front against the contract system in the big cities and the open shop in and out of town. It would be deluding the workers to pretend that

any of the vital demands can be won without vital internal reforms to strengthen our union and its organization machinery.

Why We Favor Amalgamation

WE must defend our daily interests against the boss in the shops with whatever means and organizational strength we have right now. We cannot wait until the vital reforms within our organization are put into effect. However, we must recognize that effective, successful struggle to improve our conditions is virtually impossible as long as our unions have not consolidated their organizations and resources to meet the changed conditions in our industry and the increased power of the employers.

We have shown the changes that have taken place in our industry—the ascendancy of big concerns, modern machinery, efficiency methods, the jobbing capitalist, the wide-spread contractors disease and the out-of-town open shop menace, which are a direct result of the centralization of capital in our industry in fewer hands which enables the bosses better to manipulate their resources. These hard economic facts are enough to convince anyone except a self-seeking job holder in the union that new policies, new methods of organization are necessary in order successfully to meet the forces arrayed against us. We propose to achieve this by two main radical reforms: *The democratisation of the union through reorganization on the basis of shop instead of craft through the shop committee shop delegate system and amalgamation of all Needle*

Trades International Unions into one Departmentalized Industrial Union.

It would be practically superfluous to argue with needle workers as to the desirability of an industrial union over the present form, if it were not for the confusing interpretation that the present leaders give to industrial unionism. We will quote from the amalgamation program adopted by the Needle Trades Section of the TUEL in 1922 to settle some of the misrepresentations.

"The industrial union resulting from the general amalgamation of the needle trades organization must not be a confused conglomeration mixing the various trades and callings indiscriminately. On the contrary, it must be highly specialized and systematized so that the many trades may have proper expression and protection. The latest and best types of industrial unions (such as the metal workers and building trades of Germany and the Railroad Workers and Transport Workers of Great Britain), show us how this can be effectively accomplished. All these splendid organizations follow the same general lines. They sub-divide themselves nationally into several departments, one each for the principal sections of their respective industries. Locally all branches are concentrated under single central boards, also properly departmentalized. Over all stand the general executive boards, each made up of the representatives of the several departments and each acting in the name of the whole organization. A modern departmentalized industrial union may be com-

pared in structure to an army, which, with its various branches of infantry, cavalry, etc., all specialized but locked together at every point, moves always as one great machine.

The departmental type of organization settles the long-continued argument between industrial unionists and craft unionists. The oldfashioned industrial unionist, in seeking to achieve the required solidarity of labor, proposed a general type of organization, mixing the trades together. The skilled worker rebelled at this prospect of losing his craft identity, and sought to bring about solidarity, of which he also perceived the necessity, by setting up various kinds of flimsy alliances between his craft unions, which the industrial unionist rightly condemned as ineffective. So the craft unionist and the industrial unionist remained at loggerheads, with little chance for agreement. But now comes departmentalized industrial unionism and satisfies the essential demands of both. With its broad, well-knit industrial form it develops the great power sought by the industrial unionist, and with its specialized sub-divisions it gives the craftsman the expression and protection without which he would not go into any general combinations of labor. Departmentalized industrial unionism is the most effective, therefore the most scientific form of labor organization yet developed.

In constructing the needle trades industrial union, intelligence demands that the departmental type be followed. We must combine the several organizations, letting each of them function as a separate department, but

all acting as organs of one body. Later on, when the amalgamation is completed, the number of departments can be reduced by merging the closely related trades, such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Journeymen Tailors and United Garment Workers, into a men's clothing department, the Ladies Garment Workers and Fur Workers into a ladies garment department, etc.

Eventually, the number of departments might be cut to three or four, as the needs of the industry dictate."

Arguments have been advanced by our officials to the effect that we have already the industrial form since as a rule, the workers of one shop belong to the same union. But this is not industrial unionism. The members of the union know of many cases where one company produces and sells various types of garments, from men's and children's clothing to all kinds and variations of cloaks and dresses, ready and measure made, furs and headgear. When one section of the workers go in strike, the other needle workers belonging to a different International remain working. Quite often this happens even in concerns where all members belong to the same international but to different crafts having separate agreements which expire at different times. One group of members of the same International goes on strike while the other remains working, with the result that if the strike is lost, the workers return to work if their places have not been previously filled with scabs, while the other department, unionized, continues as if

nothing happened. With the growth of the jobber and the big capitalist in our industry this is becoming one of the most disgraceful features of present-day unionism. This is not industrial unionism when workers working on one floor of the company or making one kind of garment—cloaks, dresses, hats, etc.—are organized in one union.

Industrial unionism means that all workers of one industry using similar tools and having common problems peculiar to their industry are organized to fight together. Who would deny, for instance, that the contracting evil which is affecting all needle workers could be better fought if we were to pool all our resources and organizations instead of keeping them divided as at present? Or take the out-of-town question, which also affects all needle trades internationally equally. No serious effect can even be attempted to organize this mass of unorganized small town workers without amalgamation. Our officials in their silly attempts misinterpret industrial unionism because they are afraid to lose their jobs, as many of them undoubtedly would in case of amalgamation.

The Futility of Federation

Realizing, to some extent at least, despite their misinterpretation the burning need for solidarity among all needle workers, the union bureaucrats propose loosely to federate the organizations, leaving to each its autonomy. That was the structure of the first Needle

Trades Alliance. It is also that of the newly proposed Needle Trades Alliance put forth by the cap makers (which since, died the same death as the first Alliance, even as we then said it would).

Federation cannot possibly produce the solidarity necessary for the needle workers. Experience demonstrates this beyond all possibility of doubt. Everywhere federation fails to produce real unity of action between the several branches of the industry. We need not go beyond the confines of our own industry to prove that. The utter collapse of the first Needle Trades Alliance in the face of a bitter industrial struggle furnishes ample proof. The complete breakdown was not due, as some allege, to unusual circumstances. It was only a typical instance of the inadequacy of federation and it was in harmony with federation experiences in all industries and countries. The railway shopmen have passed through a similar bitter experience. Although federated with them, the Railway Clerks and the Maintenance of Way Workers abandoned the shopmen in their struggle and thus delivered them into the hands of the companies. The federated trades in the packing industry suffered the same fate, their frail alliance going entirely to pieces under pressure from the employers. It was the same with the steel workers in their memorable struggle. Despite their federation, the twenty-four unions of the steel workers were totally incapable of putting up a united front at any stage of the battle, neither in the organizing campaign nor in the strike. The result was defeat

and demoralization. The alliance blew up like a bubble, even as all other federations do when real demands are made upon them.

Federation or alliance, as our industry calls it, cannot possibly develop the full material, moral and financial strength of the needle workers. This is because it does not touch the basic evils of craft unionism. In the Capmakers' plan, for example, the separate headquarters, official staffs, journals, conventions, etc., remain as before. All the elements of disunion and confusion are left intact. The central body of the Alliance is weak and without authority. It has no legislative power or centralization. Everything important has to be referred back to the Allied autonomous organizations. There the crippling influences of the several executive boards, the divergent international constitutions, the interplay of organizational egoism, the jealousies of crafts and individuals jockeying for positions and similar complications make united action impossible. Consequently, the alliance degenerates into merely a talking machine. It has neither the power to lead the struggle itself nor to raise money from the non-involved branches to help those that are carrying on the fight. It is chronically in the helpless, paralyzed condition that would afflict an army if it granted autonomy to its various sections, such as infantry, cavalry, artillery, etc.

In substance, federation amounts only to an alliance between the officials of the various organizations. There is no life giving organic connection between the rank and file of the unions

concerned. The boundaries of the several unions constitute so many seams running through the mass. Under a strain, whether it is a question of a joint strike or the raising of substantial funds, the organization tears apart at these weak places. The worst feature of alliance is that, as has been well stated, it creates an illusion of power. The joining together of several craft unions into an alliance gives the workers concerned no considerable increase in strength. But, until experience teaches the contrary, both employers and workers are inclined to think that it does. Consequently, the employers are frightened and stimulated into developing their own organization; while the workers putting false hopes in their federations, go ahead upon a militant course, only to come to disaster when their frail alliance goes to pieces in the crisis. *Federation is only slightly modified craft unionism.* It does not bring out the power of the workers and it cannot satisfy the requirements of the needle trades.

Our officials also argue that workers from different crafts could not scab on each other because of the skill needed to produce the different types of garments. If tens of thousands of unskilled workers have easily been apprenticed to the industry because of the section method and new machinery, certainly an unskilled operator, finisher, or presser on men's garments can easily enough learn similar functions on cloaks or dresses, etc. One of the King Pins in the arguments against amalgamation is that our members are not sufficiently educated. This ar-

gument is made by the very ones that themselves argue against amalgamation. The amalgamated members and the cap and millinery workers have several times voted for amalgamation although their officials really do not do anything for it. Certainly the I.L.G.W.U. members and the Furriers are no less intelligent than the men's garment workers, and why suppress agitation for amalgamation in the official journals, and why not use the union's educational machinery to educate these members if it is a matter of education?

Industrial Unionism the Remedy

We quote from the 1922 program:

"Nothing short of industrial unionism will produce real solidarity among all branches of the needle trades, and make us strong enough to substantially improve conditions. Unity of action, whether on the executive, legislative or financial, presupposes unity of organization. This is a fundamental of labor unionism. One union must stretch over the entire needle industry, the various branches of which shall be not detached fragments, but definite organs of a united whole. In this industrial union there must be only one general convention, one national executive board, one official staff, one set of journals, one educational organization, and one common treasury. The whole present complicated and criss-crossing machinery, legislative, executive, financial and educational, must be reduced to a single unified system. In no

other way can real solidarity be achieved. Only with such a well-knit organization will the needle trades workers be able to develop the great sources of power which our present primitive forms of craft unionism and craft alliances leave untouched. This is definitely proved by universal labor experience.

In a compact industrial union of this character the various branches of the industry would almost automatically rally to each others support. Were one or more sections of the industry involved in a strike and it became necessary for others to join them, the latter, being and feeling themselves parts of the same general organization would do so as naturally as local unions of the same international do now; likewise if it were a case of developing financial aid in strikes. At present when a particular branch of the industry has a strike, it practically has to finance itself, the other unions making only a small fraction of the effort to help that they would if they themselves were directly involved. This condition is incurable as long as craft unionism or craft federations persist, but with an industrial union in such cases, the different branches being organically connected, would respond with money as liberally, naturally, and intelligently as did, for example the Chicago clothing workers in the 1921 New York strike of the Amalgamated. The handling of all strikes, whether in extending actual participation or providing strike benefits, would be the task of the combined organization. This would make enormously for the staying power of the

workers and the effectiveness of our strikes. Lost strikes in the needle trades would become a thing of the past."

ALTHO all progressive adhering to this movement stand for the full program of amalgamation and against alliances, and altho our unions are in the direst need of these reforms, our officials who cling to their jobs as a bee to honey, will not heed it. Therefore, until they are thrown out or forced to yield to the membership on this point, we propose as the first step towards full amalgamation the following measures that would to some degree consolidate our unions to make them able to fight with some measure of effectiveness the main evils in the industry:

1—A Joint Action Council should be formed by the various Internationals thru the merging of the various G. E. B., with sufficient authority, power, and treasury to assure united action to organize the out of town places and to unify action in the contractors situation; Local Councils of all locals of the various Internationals should be formed in each locality.

2—Establishment of one Joint Board in each city to comprise all locals of the same International. This should not mean more bureaucracy but democratic centralization on the basis of proportional representation of the locals. With departments for each important trade such as dresses, cloaks, men's and children's clothing, the departments to be also constituted on the basis of proportional representation with separate delegated committees and officials elected

by the Locals of each trade, and sufficient organizational autonomy, not inconsistent with central control and enforcement of unified policy necessary for unified action. The same with national departments for important trades which may be found necessary to establish from time to time.

3—Amalgamation of related craft locals.

Why We Favor Reorganization of Our Unions on the Basis of Shop Committees (Shop Delegates)

THE days when small groups of workers organized in craft locals, could gain concessions from small unorganized employers are gone forever. This is the era of vast concentration of big capital, national organization, and mass struggle. And yet, our organizations are still in the main constructed on the old craft principle with only a quasi modern superstructure which bureaucratizes the union machinery and removes it even farther from the life of the masses in the shops. We quote here from the program adopted in 1923:

“The development of modern industry and the inevitable sharpening of the struggle between the workers and the employers necessitates a much broader participation, a more intense activity on the part of the masses of members in behalf of the union. With the present small number of active members, it is impossible to make great progress for the future. The number of conscious active union workers must be increased many times the present number. This can, however, not be accomplished without reforming considerably the present bureaucratic system of management and leadership of our organizations. This system must give way to one that will make mass interest and mass activity

on the part of our membership possible. We must strive by all means in our power to eliminate all the artificial devices set up by the present bureaucratic system for the purpose of breaking and counteracting the will of the membership.

"In order to accomplish this, our form of organization must be changed so as to make the shop the basic unit of our unions. The present form of organization of local unions as the basic units has definitely outlived its effectiveness, and cannot longer serve the purposes of militant unionism.

"The shop delegate system does away gradually with the craft local as the basic unit of organization and substitutes in its stead the shop. The workers in the shop being then the basic unit of the organization of the union will take up all matters pertaining to the union at their regular shop meetings, and thru their delegates to the Shop Delegates Council of their District will be able to bring their wishes directly to the Shop Delegates executive and to the assembled delegates of all the other shops in the trade. The Shop Delegates executive representing all the workers in the shops of that trade, will have full power over all questions of the trade and the management of all union affairs in the trade, acting for all the workers in the trade. The workers in the shops thru their delegates will have the possibility of directly influencing and being represented in this important union body, instead, as now, of being forced to accept the rulings of the unrepresentative manipulated

joint boards which they have no means of influencing nor of participating in its deliberations. The Executive Board and its officers, elected by the shop delegates Council or thru referendum in all the shops will run the machinery of the union, keep individual records, receive dues, complaints, handle business agents, call general membership meetings on important questions, etc., under the direct supervision of the Shop Delegates Executive Board.

"Delegates to national conventions of the unions will be elected on a proportional basis by delegates from the shops elected for that purpose and convening in a city convention of a trade. This simple machinery will enable the workers to exert a greater and more direct control over the affairs of the union, it will arouse the interest of the thousands of workers in union affairs. It is a reform that will invigorate our unions and make them more efficient bodies in dealing with the problems faced by the workers in the shops."

A broader participation of the mass of workers in constructive union work is impossible without the widest democratization of the whole union machinery, which democratization is impossible under the craft local form of organization. When a local grows to include thousands of members, a worker cannot express himself thru it. Only speakers and parliamentarians get a chance. And even if big locals do express more or less the collective will of the membership, the Joint Boards can always be manipulated with the aid of paper locals so as to override

the will of the membership and keep officials perpetually in office. The union machine becomes an independent self-satisfied body perpetuating itself. The officials grow into the habit of ignoring the members and doing as they see fit. The bureaucracy practically owns the union. Again we quote from the 1922 program:

"We need not point out that the shop committee movement is nothing new in the international labor movement. In Germany, Austria, it is now in effect. In Italy, France, England, it has been partly put into effect. In Soviet Russia, 6½ million workers are completely organized on the shop committee basis. This principle of organization has proven to be the most effective and democratic wherever it has been applied, and for that reason it has been bitterly fought by the bureaucracy everywhere. In Germany and Austria, where the union bureaucracy was forced to yield to the pressure of the rank and file, this system was introduced, but at the same time craft locals were maintained as the authoritative union bodies, with the evident intention of gradually taking all power from the shop council bodies back to the bureaucratic machinery."

The present bureaucratic machinery is so little representative of the will of the membership that wherever this shop committee system was introduced, a new leadership came to the fore. Let us for a moment compare the workings of the new system with the present one.

At present we are organized mainly as opera-

ators, pressers, finishers, cutters, etc., and consider our interests in the shop mainly on a craft basis. As long as operators or cutters get a little more, they usually worry little if the other craft gets less. The interests of a local are considered foremost, and craft patriotism has developed among the members which often aids the reactionary leadership in the unions.

In addition to the craft system we have the staff of business agents and officials known as the "machine". These bureaucrats are not responsible to the workers in the shops but to the manipulated joint boards, and as long as they do the bidding of the clique of two dozen or so in the Joint Board, they remain on the job and get away with almost anything. If a business agent is elected that is not acceptable to the machine, a way is found to dispose of him. On top of all this are the managers, department heads, etc. Underneath are the professional organizational committees, usually composed of sluggers connected with the underworld. The whole structure is capped by the G. E. B. of the "International" which keeps itself in power by the same method and means as the Joint Board. This clique decides upon the most vital questions, agreements, negotiations, demands, policies, etc. Of course, the bureaucrats make a pretense of democracy, just like capitalist politicians do. But it is they who count the votes in elections, they always declare themselves elected, and their propositions carried. If the votes happen to be counted by a rank and file committee, and op-

ponents elected, the latter are removed or unseated. Democracy stops when it endangers their power.

Now, what chance have the workers in the shops to register their will in the face of this machine? Very little indeed, unless it be in mass revolt. No wonder, then, that a worker is reluctant to give his time and money to such a union when he very well knows that hundreds of well paid loafers, a president, vice-presidents, business agents, managers and gangsters, grow wealthy from the treasury of the union, doing as little as possible outside dictating to the membership.

Any organization except a union would have died long ago under such management, but a union is a life necessity to the workers. However, even a union cannot stand it forever.

Quite different is the shop committee system. The shop committee, the fundamental unit of the union, will represent the workers of all crafts, cutters, operators, pressers, etc. In the shop meeting no fancy oratory will be required. Any worker can participate in the shop discussion, and take up matters pertaining to the shop and the union. At these meetings, shop committees representing the various crafts to conduct the shop affairs and delegates to the District shop council of the entire trade can be elected on a portional basis. In a big trade, there will be, say, 2000 delegates from all the shops of the trade which will meet to decide the most important questions such as strike, assessments, settlements, etc. These delegates must

be the best and the most active union people both in the shops and in the union. Assembled in a *shop council* of the trade or through Districts they should form the supreme body. Certainly, such a body would be more representative than a clique of three dozen joint board delegates, mostly full time officials.

The shop council of each trade would elect its executive to take the functions of the present joint boards. This large joint board representing all the trades of women's wear in each city and responsible to the joint meeting of the shop councils, could be re-called at any time. The various language sections, such as Italians, Poles, etc., where organizational work demands certain adoption to national traits, could be taken care of thru a special organization (not a local) formed for the purpose. Thus each trade would have its proper body with sufficient power to take care of its specific work and problems in the ladies, men's headgear or fur trade. The elected representatives from each shop council would form the general industrial council of the entire needle industry in each city. This form of organization would not only establish real workers democracy in the union, it would not only be representative of the interests of the workers in the shop, but like amalgamation in general, it would eliminate hundreds of thousands of dollars of yearly waste. What is the most important, it would draw thousands of members into union activity.

The idea that the organization work in a big industry under modern conditions with the em-

ployers well organized, can be done by professional organizational committees of special organizers on the union pay roll, who are not vitally interested in improving conditions knowing that they will be paid just the same and who work with the aid of gangsters, is a utopia. Only by drawing the shops into union activity, which cannot be done thru the present bureaucratic system, only by creating a powerful base of active union members, can any machinery at the top be effective. No amount of persons added to the pay-roll, no special departments created to reward important union politicians will ever organize the unorganized or keep up the necessary sacrificing and fighting morale amongst the workers which is a prerequisite to any successful union activity.

But knowing as we do, that our officials will not jeopardise their jobs thru such an important reform and that they will not be anxious to strengthen the fighting power of the union, we, pending full reorganization on the shop committee (shop delegate) basis, propose for the present the following:

1—That the new form of shop organization be partly introduced without abolishing local unions. This should be done in the following manner: The local unions shall continue to maintain their machinery and partly their present rights; the shop delegates council, however, shall replace the present Joint Board, taking over all matters pertaining to wage negotiations, agreements, organizational work, etc., belonging to the jurisdiction of the present joint boards.

2—Pending the full introduction of these reforms, the task of organizing the unorganized in the big cities and all facilities and powers for that purpose be given over to the rank and file organization committees formed on the basis of shop delegates.

Political Action

THE reactionary bureaucracy of our unions has taught the workers that no politics should be brought into the unions. Political and economic struggle are separate issues, they say. Political parties should not mix in union business, etc. Nevertheless, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy has consistently and officially supported and belonged to either the democratic or republican party. Our own bureaucrats in the past followed the Socialist Party, but with the disintegration of that Party, they are reverting back to capitalist politics.

In the last big election campaign they supported the candidacy of Tammany, of Governor Smith and other capitalist politicians. Not only do they support the candidacy of capitalist politicians, but they turn over the most important union business to be decided by capitalist politicians. The recent governor's commission is an example.

So we see that their cry of no politics is merely a subterfuge to keep the workers from working class political action, independent of the old parties, while they themselves play capitalist politics. They only follow here, as in union work, the policy of class collaboration. If they can co-operate with the bosses for more production, make secret or supplementary agreements in their favor, thus cooperating with the enemy, why should they not support the political parties

of the bosses? One is the product of the other. So we see that the unions are in politics, but in capitalist politics, manipulated behind the backs of the membership.

The truth is that the unions cannot stay out of politics just as they cannot stay out of strikes. Why? Because the employers, those that we fight in the factories, are the controlling factors in governments and just as they fight us in the shop they use their control of government to fight us through injunctions, arrest of our pickets, and our organizers out of town, privileged legislation, etc. They use their political power, police, courts, state and federal governments to defeat our demands and to crush our struggles.

Can we avoid this by appealing to the good-heartedness, justice, honesty, etc., of the capitalist politicians, and voting for them? If we can, do that, we might as well wait until the boss, also on the ground of goodness, justice, etc., would voluntarily raise our wages to a decent standard each year in accordance with the rise in the cost of living, or reduce the hours so that all of us get employment. If we do that, we might as well vote for the boss as shop chairman or executive board member.

The capitalist politician is now completely dependent on Wall Street, and Wall Street is dependent on foreign markets, which demands cheap labor at home. Hence we have more injunctions, more anti-labor (criminal syndicalism) laws, more arrests and interference in union business by the local, state, and federal government, than ever before.

The class struggle has sharpened, because the economic base of American capitalism has changed, American employers and their political tools in the government will make less and less concessions to labor because they are better organized, capital is more centralized, and generally they are more class-conscious, while labor under the leadership of Gompersism is divided, not class conscious, and weak. The capitalists are not even any more in such need of bribing the highly skilled mechanics, politically and economically, in as they formerly used to be, since the advance in machinery and technique has generally undermined the position of the skilled mechanic. Still our prostituted leaders cringe before capitalist politicians. Hat in hand, they offer their wares, the workers who follow their lead.

While the employers become more ruthless and militant, politically and economically, our leaders become even more servile.

Economic Action Not Sufficient

We may have the finest constructed and strongest union, but if we do not use our power politically we will expose it to destruction. Proper political action and policy therefore becomes life and death necessity for our unions. The government in the hands of the employers is a mighty power, a terrific weapon against us. It must be paralyzed through us, and the ruling power taken over by labor. We cannot control the capitalist parties just as we cannot control

the manufacturers associations. But just as we stay the hand of the bosses' association from inflicting damage on us, we can offset the political power of the bosses by building our own political party controlled by our unions and responsible to them.

The Socialist Party having disintegrated and degenerated, the Workers Party not yet being powerful enough to unite all the workers under its banner, we propose the formation of a Labor Party which shall unite the workers' unions and other organizations of all shades of opinion on a platform on which they can jointly or in their majority agree. The Labor Party to fight for our political interests as a working class, thus completing the structure and the weapons necessary for the improvement of our daily living conditions and the protection of our rights politically, and marching on to complete emancipation from capitalism through working class rule and the cooperative commonwealth.

In our every-day struggles in the unions and in our fight for the labor party, we must constantly bear in mind the great necessity of broadening the political horizon of the workers. The workers must be taught the true implications of the constant struggle going on against the employers in the shop. We must seek to unite these struggles and to develop them into a broad political struggle against the employing class. The workers must be raised above the low level of a simple trade union struggle for improved conditions in the shops. They must be politicalized, and drawn consciously into the

broad sweep of the mass struggle of the whole working class against the employing class. Our whole strategy must be directed towards the accomplishment of that aim.

The workers must realize and proceed upon the understanding that there can be no hope for permanent improvement in their condition under the present social order. The root of trouble is *in capitalism itself, in the private ownership of industry*. Our main objective must be the abolition of capitalism. This we must never forget in our every-day struggles. We must aim ever and always to break the power of the capitalist class and to put the workers in control of society. There is no other final solution for the multitude of problems that confront us as workers.

Conclusion

We active workers in the needle trades industry belonging to the various international unions, to wit the A.C.W., I.L.G.W., Furriers, Cap and Millinery Workers, United Hatters, Journeymen Tailors, and United Garment Workers.

Realizing that a progressive policy and radical reforms necessary to strengthen our unions in order to enable them to fight for a better living for their members cannot be achieved as long as the present corrupt and treacherous leadership remain in control of our organizations,

Realizing that in order to rid themselves of those traitors it is necessary for all honest, pro-

gressive and class conscious union members to organize for the overthrow of this leadership so that the aim for which our unions were founded may be pursued with vigor and determination

Have assembled in a conference representing thousands of active trade union workers in various internationals throughout the country and adopted this program of education and action, and we call upon all those in agreement with our proposals to organize in their respective unions into groups and to join us so that with united strength, intelligence and organization we may bring nearer the day when our unions shall again be carried forward by the magnificent spirit of struggle and sacrifice which was the soul and the motive power at their inception and without which victory over the employers is impossible.

We have here set forth a platform on which honest workmen with a constructive mind may well agree.

Even if all these reforms would be introduced we would still be far from the dictatorship of the proletariat or the Communist system.

Such improvements as we here propose, have partly been achieved in other countries even under conservative leadership. Those that will attempt to stop progress in the labor movement as it proceeds in its inevitable development to complete victory over capitalism, will be swept away no matter what their fulminations may be, and in history they will look like King Canutes who tried to stop the waves. As the left wing will remain the only sponsor of true working class progress, it will become the acknowledged leader.

Gompersism continued in our unions in the present epoch means stagnation and death to the labor movement. The here proposed policies mean life and progress.

It is a life and death struggle between the new, that is fit for the 20th century and the old that should have died with Gompers long ago. The labor movement must and will live and hence victory will be with those who march with progress and progress now in the American labor movement marches hand in hand with the Left Wing. Therefore, we appeal to you progressives, left wingers, honest trade unionists to unite, combine, and follow the lead of the TUEL, for it is the organization that now champions progress, hope, achievement, working class solidarity and victory. Join us and bear in mind that in unity and organization there is strength. Let us therefore organize and continue under the banner of the TUEL, until exploitation has been destroyed and the workers have achieved their goal of emancipation.

On to Amalgamation.

On to Workers Democracy and Shop Committees.

On to the Labor Party.

Report of Comrade William Z. Foster

*Secretary TUEL, National Organization,
to the 3rd Conference.*

THE League must become a real mass movement. A League similar to the Minority Movement in England. The formation of combinations with Progressives in the unions against the right wing machine, and the rooting out of all right wing tendencies within our own ranks were the chief messages in Comrade Foster's report.

Comrade Foster gave a bird's eye view of the International situation pointing out the partial stabilization of capitalism in a number of countries with the exception of Russia where capitalism has been crushed and England where capitalism is on the decline.

America is a country where capitalism has stabilized itself. The stabilization process of capitalism resulted in a relentless fight against the existing unions and through the vicious and open shop campaign capitalism has succeeded in wiping out the greatest part of the gains achieved during the war period.

The rapid decline of the membership in the Unions and the weakening of the position of organized labor alarmed the right wing leadership. But instead of mobilizing the workers and leading them in a fight in order to resist the onslaughts of the capitalists they answered with a Class Collaboration Policy. A policy of beg-

ging the employer to permit the workers to make more profits for them in exchange for some semblance of a union to be maintained in the shops.

The adoption of this class collaboration policy, which is International in its character, made it necessary that the Left Wing movement start a vigorous campaign against it. The TUEL was right on the job. It began a merciless attack upon this policy and its promoters.

The attacks of the TUEL upon the class collaboration policy very much interfered with the carrying out of the latter and provoked a policy of terrorism against the Left Wing in all the unions. Thus the bureaucratic leadership of the unions although reluctant in taking up the fight against capitalism, directed the most vicious blows against the militant workers in the unions. A number of unions adopted a policy of expelling members and sympathizers of the TUEL. The stronger our influence became, the more extreme their terroristic methods. Expulsion from the unions, removal from jobs and a number of other punishments were inflicted upon our comrades. Yet we stood the ground.

The black terror in the unions forced us to become an underground movement in most of the unions. This fact reduced the membership of the TUEL, chiefly to the members of the WP and its revolutionary sympathizers. Nevertheless our influence upon the workers has not been diminished. Today our position in the unions varies much from place to place so also our tactics must correspond to the conditions in the various unions. While in the U. M. W. of A.

we must still remain an underground movement, in the Needle Trades we are in a position to declare ourselves in the open and centralize our efforts on creating a real strong mass movement.

The class collaboration policy is just as strong if not stronger in the Needle Trades than in the other unions. But the membership of these unions which has been brought up on socialist and communist agitation is revolting against this policy. Thus the powerful movements in the ILGWU and in the Furriers Union. The beginnings of such movements in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union and in the Cap and Millinery Workers Union are already seen. The day when we shall have to assume leadership and supplant the old reactionary officialdom is not far off. We are not strong enough, however, to win the entire leadership solely with our own forces in the Needle Trades. We will have to enter in combinations with the Progressives. Such "united fronts" or combinations have been successfully practiced already in the Fur Workers and the International. The "united front" in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union proved to be unsuccessful. The united front in the ACW was not successful. The leadership of the ACW repudiated all its previous actions and went over to the right wing of the labor movement. Such united front combinations as the Joint Committee of Action in the International and the united front in the Fur Workers Union will have to be encouraged. These combinations with the Progressives against the rights will have to be broad-

ened and further extended in order to make our movement grow into a mass movement.

But such combinations are dangerous. We may have to pay too big a price for them if we will not be on the lookout. Such combinations have a tendency of provoking right wing deviations on the part of those comrades closely connected with these combinations. The immediate prospective gains from such alliances may often make the comrades refrain from criticism of the action of the progressives—our allies, even if such be absolutely necessary. The National Committee of the TUEL must realize the dangers to which the comrades are exposed in forming such combinations and watch every step of these comrades, criticize if necessary and check every right wing deviation that may be developed. Such tendencies will have to be fought and fought bitterly.

There were and there still are such right wing tendencies among the comrades in the Needle Trades; there are even some very influential comrades in the Joint Action Committee afflicted with this sickness; we fought these tendencies and we are going to fight them till they are completely eradicated. We do not want to eliminate these comrades, we have not got too many comrades to carry on the fight with the right wing, but a fight against the right wing deviations will be one of our chief tasks which we feel certain to tackle and tackle it properly.

In concluding, Comrade Foster once more emphasized the necessity of making our TUEL a

mass movement and also the necessity of making the Labor Party issue a big issue at the next I. L. G. convention.

A motion to adopt the report of Comrade Foster and the points raised in his report to be taken up under the report of the Resolutions Committee was unanimously accepted.

Comrade Wortis was then given the floor for her report. She outlined the activity of the National Committee during the time of her secretaryship. She dwelt considerably on the fight in the International. Comrade Foster then took the floor to answer. He again emphasized the importance of following a real militant line which the comrades of the old National Committee failed to do. He pointed out that right wing tendencies existed yet in the first conference of the Needle Trades Section. There was then the problem of Amalgamation. Many comrades were then ready to accept federation instead of amalgamation. There was the attitude toward the problem of injunctions to be used by the labor organization against employers. Some of the comrades of the needle trades were overjoyed by the fact that the International succeeded in taking out an injunction against a certain firm. Comrade Foster charged the National Committee with failure to make the issue of amalgamation a fundamental issue. He criticized and branded as a right wing deviation the inclination of some of the comrades to apply to the capitalist courts for "justice" in the fight against the trade union bureaucracy in the beginning of the fight in the Furriers Union and in the

International. He accused the National Committee of having a too local view on the entire situation and limiting their activity to New York and neglecting the other sections outside of New York. He criticized their tactics used in the International, such as letting Sigman steal their program of local amalgamation; because of their readiness to support Sigman when the break in the International machine occurred; because of their readiness to sign a statement condemning the League without offering any too strong resistance. The TUEL tried to correct these tendencies but the comrades offered a strong resistance. Drastic criticism from the National Executive Committee of the TUEL followed because of this strong resistance. The comrades have refused to stand corrected. Instead they sent in their resignation. The TUEL then had to accept it. We were not out to prosecute anybody, we are not strong enough to discriminate against anyone who has any ability and is honestly carrying on the work, but the comrades refused to admit their mistakes and they therefore had to be criticized and criticized severely. Their attitude did not even change during the fight in the International. They failed to stress the economic demands and made it a fight for reforms but not for any economic demands. This struggle against the right wing deviations, however, will have its effect upon the membership. He cited the endorsement of Perlstein in the Joint Board of the ILGW as a manouver which did not take in consideration the membership. He also criticized

the attitude of some of the comrades on the Joint Action Committee who separated the struggle against the bureaucracy, from the struggle against the employers, the fight against the bureaucratic leadership of the unions cannot be separated from the struggle against the employers, it is one and the same thing. The attitude therefore to first settle the fight against the leadership in the International and then start a fight against the employers is wrong. He also criticized the tendency to withhold criticism of the actions of our allies in the organization.

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