

HOW FOSTER AND HIS COMMUNISTIC OUTFIT LAID PLANS TO "ABSORB" THE MINERS UNION

Another of a series of articles prepared by the United Mine Workers of America disclosing the attempt that is being made by the red forces, under the direct supervision of Moscow, to seize control of the organized labor movement of America and use it as the base from which to carry on the Communist effort for the overthrow of the American Government. These articles are the result of an independent searching investigation on the part of the United Mine Workers of America which led directly to original sources.

In a collection of the money from the American people for the by the of the revolutionary movement in this country has been up organized industry in the last two years.

From which is being annually derived in this manner runs made from of dollars, with only an approximate idea as to its and ended. In addition, millions of dollars are being sent over This row and other Bolshevik centres in European capitals. Fondly the United Mine Workers learns from an authentic source that the money from abroad is coming in through the usual international banking channels, originating in Moscow, Berlin, or Stockholm, and that it is distributed to the accounts of various individuals in different banks after it reaches this country.

Part of the money with which the Communists have attempted to get control of the United Mine Workers has been collected from the miners themselves in the belief that it was to be used in the upbuilding and strengthening of their organization, and from entirely legitimate sources.

One such collecting agency as this is known as the Miners' Relief Conference, a Communist enterprise that has been operating in the Pittsburgh region since last August. The Conference has been one of the most important channels through which money has filtered into the Communist organization for destructive work within the miners' organization.

Efforts of the Communists to get control of the United Mine Workers have continued without interruption since the strike of last year came to an end with the agreement at Cleveland. In the first two months of this year these efforts centred on the proposition of bringing about an "outlaw" strike on April 1; later, to drive a wedge into the United Mine Workers through advocacy of the expedient of government ownership of mines.

The strongest efforts of the Communists to get control of the miners' union have been exerted in the last eight months. William Z. Foster, industrial organizer for the Communist International, has been at the head of the enterprise. The principal scene of action has been in southwestern Pennsylvania. The vehicle of the movement has been the Miners' Relief Conference, and the magnet for attracting the miners has been that of government ownership of the mines.

The United Mine Workers have not approved or adopted any plan of nationalization of the mines. At the international convention two years ago, a committee was appointed to make a study of the subject, and submit a report, with recommendations, at the next convention, to be held next January.

Notwithstanding the fact that the miners' union is seeking to reach a conclusion on this proposition in an orderly way, the Communist organization has concentrated all of its resources to the end of forcing the union to acknowledge it as the chief objective of the mine workers of the country.

The "drive" this year for the absorption of the miners by the Communists was launched by Foster and his assistants at Pittsburgh on February 10. A conference was held there at that time which was attended by Foster, with Fred Merrick, Communist organizer at Pittsburgh; Thomas R. Sullivan, Communist organizer at St. Louis; Norman Tallentire, Communist organizer at Chicago; Freeman Thompson, of Springfield, Ill., and delegates from mining fields in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The purpose of the conference was to extend the Communist movement into all of the districts and locals of the union, and engulf it in a wave of ultra-radicalism.

Two delegates from the anthracite region were present, and they gave assurance that the hard coal mines would be shut down on April 1 in connection with the proposed strike. But this proposed "outlaw" strike did not occur.

Three things were decided at this conference:

1. Establishment of headquarters for organizing activities at Pittsburgh, and the carrying on of an aggressive campaign to reorganize the miners' union in accordance with Communist doctrine.
2. An effort to bring about a general strike on April 1.
3. The holding of a convention of miners' delegates of the United States and Canada in Pittsburgh during the first week in June, and launching a new international organization within the union which would gradually absorb it and eliminate its international and district officials.

Foster said at this conference that "wonderful progress" had been made among the miners in the Pittsburgh region, and that with the international convention in June he expected to arouse sufficient support in the union to enable him to control the policies of the next biennial convention in January, and establish himself as the dominant factor in the union.

Although a working agreement for the coming year had been made by the union and the operators two weeks before in a wage conference at New York City, plans for an "outlaw" strike on April 1 were frankly discussed by Foster and his associates at the conference.

"We must have no settlement of this strike until an agreement can be negotiated, under the charter of a new union having one of our own men as its leader," said Merrick.

The scheme by which it was proposed to set this strike going was to induce President Lewis to reestablish the strike of 1922 in the coke producing region of Pennsylvania. Under the agitation of the Communists it would be spread to the other coal fields by April 1. Behind this plan was a scheme of Foster's to spread the strike to other industries and bring about a general tie-up of industry during the summer.

Simultaneously with the conference at Pittsburgh the Communist publications started a campaign to discredit President Lewis among the miners of the union, and to force him to reestablish the strike in the coke region as a means of protecting his influence with the miners there. J. Lewis Engdahl, member

of the Central Executive Committee of the "legal" Communist Party, and editor of the "legal" Communist organ, The Worker, said:

"Every militant trade unionist must stand aghast at the tyrannous measures used by the big officialdom of the United Mine Workers of America in driving the Fayette County strikers back under the slave whips of the Standard Oil Company and of the U. S. Steel Corporation."

Nationalization of the mines was decided upon at the conference as the principal issue of the Communists in driving their wedge into the miners' union. In the official platform which was adopted there, nationalization was made the chief issue. On this question the platform says:

"To meet this situation of demoralization a radical change must be made in the coal industry. There is only one solution at this moment that is possible, and that is NATIONALIZATION OF COAL MINES."

"Against this plan will be marshalled all the forces and resources of plutocratic America. The capitalistic press and its journalistic hirelings, together with an army of retainers composed of the intellectual and political prostitutes of Wall Street, are flooding the country with an avalanche of lies, slander and misrepresentation against NATIONALIZATION. Corrupt and reactionary labor leaders are also opposing this plan, and every honest trade unionist who espouses the cause is marked for persecution."

"In advocating NATIONALIZATION OF COAL MINES the Progressive Coal Miners mean the operation of the coal mines under the direction of competent union miners and not under a commission composed of the usual lawyers, bankers, and politicians. A political bureaucracy sitting at Washington as directors of the coal industry would be a monstrosity worse even than the abortion known as the "Railroad Labor Board," and would never be tolerated by the rank and file of the United Mine Workers of America."

"NATIONALIZATION OF COAL MINES, as a political program, will be a failure unless it includes democratic management of the mines. Since the efficient operation of the coal mines is only possible by those who have had experience in digging coal, we demand that the program of NATIONALIZATION OF COAL MINES shall provide for the operation of the mines entirely under the direction of union miners, who alone are possessed of the technical, mechanical and manual skill necessary for the successful operation of the mines."

Foster and Merrick started their campaign in south-western Pennsylvania with a bang. Alexander Howat, deposed president of the Kansas miners, was brought into the region as the chief speaker and missionary. Meetings were held in Fayette, Westmoreland and other counties in the interests of the movement. Speakers appeared before local unions, and under the pretense of reorganizing them along "militant" lines, a Communist nuclei was established in many of them.

Efforts were also made to extend the movement to Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, central and eastern Pennsylvania, and to Nova Scotia and Alberta. Contacts were established with local union officials and state board members in Illinois; with H. E. Keas, a Communist agent in Ohio; E. R. Fay and R. P. Alcock in Alberta; and with J. B. McLachlan, Alexander McKay and Angus McLennan in Nova Scotia.

Arrangements were made through McLachlan and McLennan for Howat to invade Nova Scotia in April and May to promote a Communist organization there in conflict with the authority of the international officials of the United Mine Workers. McLachlan sent \$200 to Merrick to defray Howat's travelling expenses, but Howat insisted on Thomas Myerscough, an aid of Merrick, accompanying him, and McLachlan was asked to contribute \$600 more.

Howat failed in his efforts to gain entry into Canada because Canadian immigration authorities kept him out, and he returned to Pittsburgh. There he continued his campaign to overthrow the leadership of the miners, and to carry out the program of the conference of February 10.

In the files in Merrick's office which were seized at Pittsburgh was a letter written by E. R. Fay, of Newcastle, Alberta, Canada, who wrote to Myerscough, asking for a program of the insurgents, "and all necessary information to start the ball rolling to get rid of John Liar Lewis and his gang of skunks." Fay said, "he acted on the recommendation of Tim Buck, the national industrial organizer of the Workers Party of Canada."

Merrick's first move for the seizure of the miners' union at Pittsburgh was to initiate a demand for a recount of the votes in the district election on December 12. He described his faction as the "Progressives" and announced that "it has been decided to circulate petitions at once to recall all of the present officials of District Five for improper conduct, especially in connection with Fayette strike."

When the strike was settled at Cleveland last fall the Communists bent their efforts on persuading the miners in southwestern Pennsylvania to refuse to return to work. The Miners Relief Conference was organized early in the fall on pretext that it would provide a means of subsistence for the men and their families who refused to go back to work. J. A. Hamilton, a former school teacher was selected as secretary. Hamilton had direct business connections with Foster, and was known, as his representative in the Pittsburgh region.

Scores of miners in southwestern Pennsylvania followed the prompting of Merrick and his side not to return to work. Limited sums of money were supplied to them by the Miners Relief Conference, although an examination of such records as were kept show that in virtually every case the relief donations were confined to miners who were either Communists in principle, or were agents in their neighbourhoods for the Communist organization.

Inspection of the records of the Conference fails also to show even the simplest forms of bookkeeping in accounting for the moneys and supplies that were received. While considerable sums of money were contributed by sympathetic men and women who heeded the appeals that were broadcasted over the country, the records of the contributions are either on scraps of paper or found in the original letters of the donors.

The kindly heart of Mrs. Sarah Hyams, 252 West 76th Street, New York City, responded to the "touching" appeal of Hamilton for money, and on October 9 she sent her check for \$500, saying:

"I had some money which had made up my mind to use where it would do the most good. When your letter came I felt that this is where it should go. It does not seem possible that the conditions stated by you, and by so many others could exist in a country as rich as ours, or that people could be so heartless. I only hope that you will get all of the help you need, so that some of this awful poverty may be relieved."

Hamilton sent Mrs. Hyams a statement on November 3, which purported to cover the expenditure of \$125 of the \$500. He explained that \$50 had been given to George Letz, an idle miner at Republic, Pa. Lutz was one of the most active agents of Merrick and Hamilton in that region, and recognized as aiding them in their movement.

Miss Maude Tollefson is a teacher in a private school at Peekskill, N.Y. She was the recipient also of one of the "touching" letters of Merrick and Hamilton, and on November 17, sent in a donation. Hamilton in his reply so impressed Miss Tollefson with the worthiness of this enterprise that she appealed to her friends to join with her in making contributions. In writing to Hamilton on November 16, she said:

"By the middle of next week I will have some clothes collected from the teachers here, and possibly from friends in New York City. Will you let me know whether to send them to you, or to J. M. Geisel, whose picture you sent me with the address on the back. Also, I have sent word to my mother in South Dakota to send what she can find. I am sure she will do so."

Hamilton was the recipient also of considerable sums of money from Louis Gruss, alias "Willard," formerly of the Friends of Soviet Russia, and secretary of a so-called Miners Relief Committee in New York. Gruss sent to Hamilton, according to the records of the latter, a total of \$1,450, but later begged Hamilton for a loan of \$100 to defray the expenses and hall rent of a meeting in New York City where Howat would speak.

Appeals were sent by these Communists to local unions of the United Mine Workers in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and West Virginia, asking that arbitrary assessments for "relief" purposes in the coke region be laid on the memberships, and the money remitted to Merrick and Hamilton. Some of the local unions were induced to do this, with usually an assessment of 25 cents a member. Local unions in Franklin and Williamson counties, in Illinois, and in the vicinity of Bellaire, Ohio, sent sums of as much as \$300 each.

The relationship between Merrick and Hamilton and the Communist organization, is shown in their connections with the Labor Defence Council at Chicago. A few days after the raid upon the Communist convention at Bridgman, Mich., last August, the National Defense Committee, a Communist agency, was reorganized into the Labor Defence Council.

The council launched on the task of raising \$200,000 for bail purposes at Bridgman, and to employ lawyers and provide funds for the trials of the individuals who had been caught in the sheriff's drag net. Explicit instructions were sent to every Communist agency in the country to "get busy" at the task of raising money for this purpose. Organizers and district officials were told by the Communist central organization to give unqualified support to the demands of the Labor Defence Council. As far as possible donations were to be sought from labor unions on the claim that the raid on the revolutionary gathering at Bridgman imperilled the cause of organized labor in this country.

Moritz J. Loeb, secretary of the Labor Defence Council, wrote to Merrick and Hamilton, on December 6, as follows:

"Comrade Ruthenburg has assured us that the Workers Party organizers will be held responsible for activity toward the organization of Labor Defence Councils in their districts. We have seen a copy of the letter at the national office of the Workers Party sent out in this respect. It is our understanding that you are the district organizer of the Pittsburgh district and we would very much like to have you take responsibility toward organizing the Labor Defence Council in your district, seriously."

A week later Loeb wired to Merrick as follows: "Five men remaining in Berrien jail can all be released for \$15,000. Exert every effort. Raise everything possible, cash or Liberty bonds. Send us what you have immediately. We must get men out by Christmas. Put on small drive. Do your part and we succeed."

Early in January the Labor Defence Council sent Tom Tippet, business manager of the Federated Press, into the Pittsburgh district as its special agent to assist in the money raising. Merrick and Hamilton were told to give their support to making the Tippet meeting a success. On this point, Loeb said:

"Please do not be too economical in your advertising of the Tom Tippet meeting. We are particularly anxious that you should get out a good crowd, even though the financial returns on the investment are not of the best."

Advertising matter were sent to Merrick by Loeb which stated that "the reporter for the labor press on the Herrin trial will come to Pittsburgh to tell of the nation-wide attack on labor, the open shop drive of which Herrin, West Virginia, and the Bridgman raids are only the outstanding examples. No better representative of the working class can tell this story, as Tippet has been an actual observer of the major campaigns which have been calculated to destroy the labor movement."

The extent to which money was diverted from the Miners Relief Conference at Pittsburgh into the coffers of the Labor Defence Councils for use at the Bridgman trials, or into other Communist channels, cannot be definitely ascertained from the records in the office of Merrick and Hamilton. However, Hamilton in a letter on January 7, said:

"This relief work has succeeded much beyond expectations, as we have sent into Washington, Allegheny, Westmoreland, Fayette, and Greene counties, nearly \$9,000 worth of various kinds of relief. Besides we have thrown some hot shot into the contemptible official circles, and in this way helped considerably

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OUR OVERSEAS COLUMN

THAT 50 MILLION NOT TO BE SPENT

Mr. Henderson Charges Premier with Making Untrue Statement

SCANDAL OF WORK PLANS

A charge of serious misstatement on the Government's employment plans was laid against the Prime Minister by Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., Chief Whip of the Labor Party. Mr. Baldwin had said at Plymouth that by far the greater proportion of the 50 million pounds (the estimated cost of the schemes announced by the government) would be spent this winter.

Mr. Henderson's reply to this was that it was quite clear from the announcements made by the principal parties concerned in the schemes that "not half, probably not more than a third of the money could possibly be spent so as to provide employment between November and April.

Referring to the appeal made by General Smuts, Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., said that it was for them to do all they could to make it a success. He pointed out that a similar appeal had been made by Labor in the Commons, and said that had the plea been listened to the chaos that existed might have been avoided.

Mr. Henderson said the statement quoted above, was a grave one, to make, and he would be glad indeed if he could be authoritatively informed that his apprehensions were not well founded.

Mr. Henderson was presiding at a great meeting at the Holborn Empire London, one of the series of demonstrations organized under the auspices of Labor's National Joint Council on the subject of unemployment.

In view of the inadequacy of the Government's proposals, they were bound, said Mr. Henderson, to insist upon bolder, more comprehensive and bigger schemes to provide work and wages this winter.

Tariffs No Cure

It had been told by the Prime Minister that he had come to the conclusion that the real cure for unemployment was "protection and emigration."

But it was known that unemployment existed in high tariff countries. It was also known that Imperial Preference had not given us an enlarged market in the Dominions for our exports, which had, on the contrary, maintained the same proportion to our total overseas trade that we had before the Dominions gave us a preference in their tariffs.

Further it was known that the trade of the Dominions in our market had been increasing despite the fact that they had got no preference, or only recently a small preference, of one-sixth of the customs duties we impose upon some classes of imports for revenue purposes.

And it was known, too, that unemployment existed in the Dominions. Which would be intensified enormously by the adoption of a policy of large scale emigration, which transferred population to the countries overseas faster than those countries could absorb them into productive industry and agriculture.

We should continue to have an enormous amount of unemployment until the harm done by the peace treaties was undone and Europe was restored to political stability and economic sanity.

Mr. Henderson said he recognized that even if we had the most perfect peace and the completest freedom of international trade we should still have with us the problem of the unemployed so long as the capitalist system of industry remained.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain said that at last we were going to adopt his father's policy, and incidentally regretted that it had not been adopted before.

Sir William Joynson-Hicks apparently forgot that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain made it perfectly clear that protection was useless unless you have a tax on food.

To summarize the situation, Mr. Baldwin said: "The winter is here, unemployment is here, our immediate remedy will not cure unemployment, but, thank God, we can give you a General Election next year."

"That, of course," said Mr. Thomas, "will be a great consolation, in the coming months, to the unemployed! We accept the challenge. But if the problem is so urgent as Mr. Baldwin says—and we agree—the prospects of a threatened election help trade or stimulate in-

dustry? Why not apply the real remedy at once! Why delay?"

"Played With." Mr. Rhys Davis, M.P., said that to the people of Lancashire Imperial Preference and Tariff Reform as proposals to solve the unemployment problem were like using purgatives for cancer.

The Labor Ministry was playing with the subject when it included, for the second or third time during the last two years, the Manchester Liverpool road as a scheme to alleviate unemployment.

There was no indication anywhere that the proposal would mature for at least another 12 months.

Mr. Herbert Morrison declared that while unemployment was agreed to be essentially a national problem, the main responsibility had been foisted on local authorities by successive Governments.

The problem could never be dealt with on a local basis, and yet the Cabinet refused to face the matter. The proposals for work in Greater London, which the London Labor Party had submitted to the Prime Minister had been played with and avoided.

A resolution that the proposals of the Government were totally inadequate to meet the existing situation was carried with acclamation.

200,000 HOUSES A YEAR

HOW A LABOR GOVERNMENT WOULD SET TO WORK

The Independent Labor Party is conducting a housing campaign this week.

As a prelude, it tells the Government openly what a Socialist Government would do.

It gives three facts. The houses required, numbered 750,000. The Minister of Health in April promised 120,000 in two years. In six months 8,000 have been built.

Although so many houses are required 85,000 unemployed builders are prevented from starting on them. Yet unemployment does to the amount of £5,000,000 a year are being paid to unemployed builders which might be spent in erecting the sorely needed dwellings.

On health grounds alone the need of adequate houses is pressing. Overcrowding has appalling results in tuberculosis and loss of child life. Yet the taxpayer has to find £14,000,000 a year for the treatment of tuberculosis.

National Factories

Under a Socialist Government national factories would be established, and private factories would be commandeered for the purpose of producing housing materials.

The power of the profit-making ring which controls the supply of raw materials would be destroyed by substituting control for the common good. Grants would be made to local authorities, and they would be encouraged instead of being hampered, in the development of adequate housing schemes.

The minimum standard of houses would be raised and the relegation of the workers to hatches without showers and bathrooms would be impatiently brushed aside.

Twelve to Acre

In any new town planning scheme, not more than twelve houses would be built to the acre, and each would have a garden. Women's Advisory Committees would be set up to ensure a maximum of labor-saving and comfort.

The whole-hearted co-operation of the workers in the building trade would be secured by giving them representation upon the bodies responsible for carrying out all housing schemes pending the development of Building Guilds.

On these lines a Socialist Government would seek to build at least 200,000 houses a year.

A Socialist Government would prohibit all luxury building, until the housing needs of the people were met. It is intolerable that wealth should be spent and labor employed in erecting places of pleasure and empor-

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