

Soviet Russia After Ten Years

Report of the American Trade Union Delegation to USSR

The following is the third instalment of the report of the first American Trade Union Delegation to Soviet Russia, in the words of the delegation. The report will be published in THE DAILY WORKER in successive issues until completed.

Trade Union Structure

There are only twenty-three national trade unions in Soviet Russia. All of these are organized on industrial lines. There is no such thing as a craft union, no carpenters' union, plasterers' union, pressmen's union or weavers' union. There is a building workers' union, a metal workers' union, a textile workers' union, a printers' union, and so on. The Russian workers told us that their unions have profited by observing the craft unions in other countries as well as in their own where, even after the revolution of 1917, a wide variety of small craft unions had come into existence. They modeled their unions on industrial lines, apparently a necessity where workers control industry. However, in some of the unions there are special craft or departmental groups associated chiefly for scientific purposes, such as the engineering and technical sections of practically every national union.

The Factory Committee.

The foundation stone in the trade union structural organization is the factory committee. These committees consist usually of three union members in a factory having from 25 to 300 workers, five members for those with 300 to 1,000; seven members for those from 1,000 to 5,000 and nine for all those having more than 5,000. The number is much greater in some unions, the Central Committee fixing the size. They are elected usually at general meetings of the factory workers where every worker, union or non-union, if he is eligible for the union, has the right to cast a vote. Voting is not by secret ballot but by a show of hands. Only union workers may be on the committee.

The factory committee has members, chosen by the committee itself, who devote their full

time to the work, their regular wages being paid to them while engaged in this service. In a typical factory of more than 1,000 workers there is a factory committee of three, one member of which is usually called the president, another the secretary and the third usually the chairman of the sub-committee on the protection of labor.

The committees hold office for one year. However, their work may be reviewed and a new election held at the end of six months if the workers demand it. And in most unions the committee, or individual members of it, may be recalled and a new election held on request of one-third of the members.

In every factory having a factory committee we found the following sub-committees at work: protection of labor, culture, standardization-conflict, and production. A member of the committee usually heads each sub-committee. The other members are either from the committee or are appointed by it from the ranks of the workers.

The chief functions of the sub-committees are the following: The protection of labor committee carries on all the work connected with the protection of the worker against ill health and industrial accidents. It sees to it, for instance, that laws relating to sanitation and the guarding of machines are carried out to the letter. It directs the sending of workers to hospitals, rest homes and sanitariums; the erection and maintenance of communal baths and laundries; supervises children's institutions operated in connection with the factory; and interests itself in the establishment and maintenance of cooperatives and workers' apartment houses.

The culture (or education-culture) committee carries on a wide variety of activities intended to raise the cultural level of the workers, to increase their industrial qualifications and to enrich their lives, during work and leisure. It organizes classes, circles, lectures, concerts, movies, libraries, schools, clubs, sports and physical-culture activities, excursions, reading rooms, choirs, and theatricals. It takes charge of the expenditure of the money paid by the industry to the union for

culture purposes under the collective agreement.

The standardization-conflict committee is usually represented on the workers' side by two or three of the most intelligent men in the factory. Upon it falls the heavy responsibility of bargaining for wage rates and settling disputes, either individual or collective.

Production committees are now at work in practically every industrial and transportation unit. They are usually composed of from 3 to 15 members chosen by the factory committee. They include active workers, representatives of management and the technical personnel. They carry out the production work described hereafter.

The factory committee plays a very important role in the workers' lives. It is subordinate to the higher trade union organs, but within its sphere it is the free and powerful agent of the workers, defending their rights and representing their everyday interests. Because of the nature of the Soviet state and the organization of economic life in Russia, factory councils in no other country have as much power or perform more vital services. They have no direct control or responsibility in management, but they operate in various ways to check those tendencies toward bureaucracy, which are especially dangerous in a socialist state.

Factory Delegates.

To keep the rank and file of the workers better informed concerning the activities of the factory committees and to bring forward more effectively the desires and demands of the workers, factories with more than 200 workers have factory delegates. These are chosen every six months by the workers—one delegate to about 10 workers. The delegates make formal written reports to the workers whom they represent and hold a general delegates' meeting twice a month. But the chief service of the delegate is to speak for his small group of workers and to make their influence felt on the factory committee and in

its activities. He also interprets the acts and decisions of the factory committee to the rank and file. On January 1, 1925, there were 200,000 of these delegates in the U. S. S. R.; a year later there were over 870,000.

"Actives."

The active workers, or the "actives" as they are called, are those union members who hold some position of responsibility, no matter how low in the trade union system. They are not the hired employees and elected officials of the trade union, but only those who are working in the plant. Most of them do full time work at their regular jobs and give their spare hours to union activity.

The number of those "actives" varies from union to union. Some unions claim as high as 13 per cent of members in the ranks of the factory committee members, sub-committee members, dues collectors, delegates, club leaders, and others who make up the list of the "actives." The sugar worker's union, for example, claims 35,000 out of less than 100,000 members. There are nearly 2,000,000 "actives" in the whole U. S. S. R.

Separate Industrial Unions.

Before estimating the character of the work carried on by the inter-union organizations we may note the structure of the 23 separate unions whose combined jurisdiction covers all those who work for hire on Soviet territory.

The factory committee, as we have noted above, is the primary organ of the union. The next highest organ varies in different unions. In Central Russia where the gubernia (province) is the larger geographical division, the uyezd is the next highest organ above the factory committee. (The uyezd might be said to correspond roughly to an American county, while a gubernia or province could be compared to a state.) The order of importance, then, would be—factory committee, county conference, provincial congress, and finally, the national or federal congress of the industrial union.

At its general meetings of workers each factory elects delegates to a county conference of the union. This conference, in turn, elects the county administration of the union. Above the county is the more important provincial administration, organized at annual congresses of delegates elected straight from the general meetings of the workers in the factories. These provincial congresses also elect delegates to the bi-annual congress of the national industrial union. The national congress in its turn chooses a Central Committee which is the supreme power in the union between sessions of the congress. A full meeting of the Central Committee elects a presidium or group of officers who direct the work of the national union between sessions of the Central Committee.

The provincial department of the separate union has very important functions. In addition to receiving the dues from the factory committees, it directs all the work of the county under it as well as the work of the factory committees. It has the right to change or annul the work of these lower organs, just as the Central Committee of the national industrial union has the right to overrule the decisions of the provincial organizations if their decisions run counter to the lines of policy laid down at the national congresses. These provincial offices create their own cultural, wage, economic and organization departments. They also set up special unemployment registration bureaus, information bureaus, book distribution departments and libraries, statistical departments, legal aid bureaus, engineering and technical sections and similar bureaus on a gubernia-wide scale.

The national industrial unions, likewise, have the same departments and bureaus in operation, only they serve the whole U. S. S. R. and supervise the lower union organizations, including the provincial administrations. All the national unions have their headquarters in the Palace of Labor in Moscow, along with the offices of the Central Council of Trade Unions.

(To be continued in tomorrow's Daily Worker.)

Two Army Officers Get Posts in Nicaragua to Ensure U.S. Domination

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Oct. 23.—American domination of Nicaragua was further ensured with the appointment of Major Robert J. Jordan as collector of Customs at the Port of Corinto and of Captain Alton A. Gladden of the Marine Corps to head the Federal penitentiary in Managua.

Gladden was appointed a Major in the Guardia Nacional.

Bishop Damns His Accusers.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Oct. 23.—A decision under date of October 20 by Cardinal Gasparri, papal secretary of state, gives Wm. A. Hickey, the bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in Providence the right to excommunicate from the church anybody who hales him before the state courts on charges of misuse of funds. Four or five members of the Bishops diocese allege they caught him in the act, and sued him.

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Accused Disappear In Trial of German Communist Leaders

BERLIN, Oct. 12 (By Mail).—The trial of the members of the Central Executive Committee of the German Communist Party, charged with "high treason and preparations for an armed uprising," has been indefinitely postponed, while a search for the accused is being conducted.

The trial which was scheduled to have taken place at Leipzig on October 4th, two days after the monarchist celebration of Hindenburg's birthday, was adjourned when none of the accused appeared.

Several thousand workers have already been convicted on similar charges; but the trial of the members of the Central Executive Committee has been postponed since 1923 because many of them were in the Reichstag and had parliamentary immunity while the others disappeared. The Reichstag had granted the Court, headed by the counter-revolutionary Niedner, permission to try its Communist members, but it had not taken away their right of parliamentary immunity. The Communist members of the Reichstag were not therefore liable to arrest.

No Victims—No Hanging. The Court is making every effort to bring the members of the C. E. C. to trial—but not even a German Niedner Court can hang persons unless they find them—and the trial of the accused has been postponed.

British Miners Plan March on London for Parliament's Opening

LONDON, Oct. 13 (By Mail).—The proposed march of South Wales miners to London on November 8 when parliament opens will be considered by the Executive of the South Wales Miners Federation at its next meeting.

W. Hammington, national organizer of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, in conjunction with miners' representatives, is making arrangements for the march. The Bristol Trades Council has already offered the marchers its hospitality.

The purpose of the march is to focus attention on the distress and unemployment in the coal fields. A. J. Cook, secretary of the Miners' Federation, is acting as treasurer of the committee in charge.

White Guard Groups Outlawed in Soviet Persian Peace Pact

MOSCOW, Oct. 10 (By Mail).—The Soviet-Persian Guarantee of Neutrality Pact signed in Moscow on October 1st provides for the maintenance of neutrality between the two countries. White Guard organizations, operating in Persia, are outlawed by the terms of the pact.

The article barring Russian White Guard groups from Persia states, that "the parties undertake not to support or allow in their territories the creation or activities of organizations or groups pursuing the object of struggling against the government of the other party thru violent methods."

Provisions for a peaceful settlement of "such differences as may exist between" the two countries and for the "full liberty of international relations aside from obligations undertaken in the treaty" are also made in the treaty.

The pact is signed by Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, and Ali Coli Khan Ansari, Persian foreign minister.

British Grab Rich Mineral Concession

LONDON, Oct. 23.—Fruits of the British mandate in Palestine were picked by the Brunner and Mond chemical interests with the award of the rich Dead Sea mineral concession to the Imperial Chemical Company.

Referring to the concession, the London Times declares: "Thus ends the prolonged struggle of powerful interests—British, American and European, for the most coveted prize in the way of development concessions which has been competed for in modern times."

"Faith Cure" Man in Hospital. SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Oct. 23.—"Brother Andre," Montreal's "miracle man," who has been conducting "faith cures" here, became ill from indigestion and is now in a hospital. Andre has held forth for years among the French-Canadian Catholics in the vicinity of Montreal.

BUY THE DAILY WORKER AT THE NEWSSTANDS

British Trade Drops; Result of USSR Break

LONDON, Oct. 13 (By Mail).—British exports have dropped almost \$300,000,000 and imports approximately \$17,000,000 in the last year.

according to figures made public by the Board of Trade yesterday. The slump in British trade is attributed to a great extent to the break with the U. S. S. R. and the Soviet boycott against Britain.

GET A NEW READER!

British Unemployment Grows.

LONDON, Oct. 12 (By Mail).—An increase of 25,873 in the number of jobless workers for the week ending October 3rd is reported by the Ministry of Labor. The total number of jobless workers was reported as 1,075,900.

GREETINGS TO SOVIET RUSSIA

On the

Tenth Anniversary OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION



IN the special issues of THE DAILY WORKER to be printed on November 7, the opportunity to send personal greetings to Soviet Russia is given to American workers. These names will appear in the celebration proceedings—they will be published in THE DAILY WORKER in a special honor roll. To cover the expense of printing, all names will be published at 25 cents a name. Send your name—send the names of others—

greet the Russian workers on the Tenth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

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