

Official Organ Central Labor Union; endorsed by State Federation of Labor

The Charlotte Labor Journal

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YOUR ADVERTISEMENT IN THE JOURNAL IS A GOOD INVESTMENT

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1936

JOURNAL ADVERTISERS DESERVE CONSIDERATION OF THE READER

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"STRENGTH OF WORKERS LIES IN UNION ORGANIZATION," SAYS PAUL CHRISTOPHER, OF SHELBY

To Editor, Charlotte Labor Journal:

Much has been said about the many and unlimited accomplishments of a bona fide labor union, intelligently applied, for the workers composing the membership of the union. And I for one am a staunch and firm believer in unions of workers—so much so, in fact, that I am irrevocably convinced that the salvation of the working classes lies in the strength of union labor organizations.

However, I should appreciate space in your paper to describe a sad turn of events as affects the textile workers in the Cleveland Cloth mill in Shelby which have culminated in what is now a tragic state of affairs. The present conditions are a result of the workers' decisions (a great majority of them) to sever their relationships with the union and stop paying dues.

I would like to go into detail in explaining how it all came about. Space will not permit. Suffice to say, things were going pretty well for the workers before the Supreme Court declared the NRA and the Codes unconstitutional, but the wages and work loads had been improved by endless negotiation between the union representatives and the management and because the workers in the plant were almost solidly organized and paying dues, attending and actively participating in the Local Union meetings. After the NRA's death, the management told the workers the mill company would do more for them than the government or any other organizations, and many fell for it and began dropping out of the union and encouraging others to do the same.

Well, now the workers realize their mistake in withdrawing their support to the union, but few are doing anything about it. Of course the mill is closed down completely now and the workers haven't much money. The management increased the house rent from 25c per room per week to 50c per room per week (we paid 50c when we organized back in 1933, but got it reduced) and now the workers occupying company houses pay light bills to the City, and some of them are as much as \$4.00, \$5.00, and \$6.00 per month. A little arithmetic here will show how much money the worker has in his pocket at the end of the month by not being a member of a strong union, when the dues are only 75 cents per month. A worker living in a four-room house realizes a loss of about \$7.00 and more per month, considering the rent and light increase alone.

This is not the only difference in wages that has come about since the workers decided the mill company would do more for them than the union. Every day, almost, workers tell me of the changes for the worse. Back when the union possessed economic power to bargain with the management through its Shop Committee the weavers were able to make the bonus of \$2.00 and \$3.00 per week, and when the grading of cloth became so strict that workers encountered difficulty in making a quality cloth meeting the bonus the Shop Committee was able to persuade the management to buy better yarn, or to decrease the work loads, or grade the cloth along specified lines, or whatever was necessary, so as to enable the weavers to make the bonus. Loom fixers benefited likewise. Too, the Shop Committee was able to negotiate agreements which made sure that the "seconds" for which the workers were docked were actually second grade rolls of cloth, and established a deadline and certain amount for which the weaver could be docked per yard. And a veritable volume of other things which gave the workers a sense and feeling of genuine freedom; in fact an agreement was negotiated in 1934 which established seniority rights and other things. The workers in the Cleveland Cloth Mill, in my opinion, when strongly organized, made so many or more real substantial gains than the workers of any other single mill in the South. Practically all of these gains have been lost now, and only a militant, intelligent, powerful organization will be able to regain them. However, unless the workers do reorganize strongly—and quickly—conditions are going to grow worse. History repeats itself. Who knows but what the weavers on the automatic super silk shuttle change looms won't be running 20 looms per set for \$18.00 and \$20.00 as the unorganized weavers in the Stonecutter mill at Spindale are doing, instead of the eight looms they are now running at the Cleveland Cloth Mill on this model loom?

Who knows but what he weavers in the Cleveland Cloth Mill will be stretched out from 6 looms on the hand change shuttle looms to 8 per set and wages decreased so that the weekly amount will be no more than the present income, if the workers remain unorganized?

Weavers tell me now that it is almost impossible to make the bonus and there is nothing they can do about it. They tell me they are docked as much as \$1.00, \$2.00, and \$3.00 per week. Without the union they can no send the Shop Committee to the office to straighten a few things like this out.

Every wise worker knows the cost is less to belong to a union than not to belong. Union workers know the exhilarating sense of FREEDOM that comes from being a member of a strong union organization.

Textile Workers—Join your Local Union today!
Sheyby, February 13.

PAUL R. CHRISTOPHER.

COMMISSIONER LABOR FLETCHER IN GASTONIA TO INVESTIGATE CASE OF THE AMERICAN MILLS

Special to Labor Journal

GASTONIA, Feb. 18.—Commissioner A. L. Fletcher of the North Carolina Department of Labor at Raleigh is to come to Gastonia on Thursday of this week to investigate the complaints against the America Mills No. 1 and the Gahriell-Melville Mills at Bessemer City, alleging violation of

a state labor law governing the working hours of women.

This announcement was made here today by R. C. Thomas, district organizer for the United Textile Workers of America.

Mr. Thomas said the complaints, which charge that women are working more hours per day in the two mills than the law allows, have been filed with the Department of Labor for some time.

Atlanta Still Has Steinerbru On "Unfair List"

Recently the Atlanta Federation of Trades and the City Federation of Trades of Chattahoochee, Tenn., placed Steinerbru Beer on their unfair lists. In reply to our inquiry as to this action the Atlanta Federation of Trades writes, in part, as follows:

"The Southeastern Breweries and the Atlanta Ice and Coal Company (makers of Steinerbru Beer) have done considerable building and construction work in Atlanta, all with non-union labor, despite our efforts to

have union men employed, and the Atlanta Federation of Trades placed them on the unfair list, and have never rescinded that action to this date; and they are still unfair to organized labor as far as the Atlanta Federation of Trades is concerned."

The communication is signed by George F. Haney, Secretary of the Atlanta Federation of Trades.

The public pays the bill. Why not buy Union-made, American products which will increase our payrolls, instead of buying non-Union, foreign-made goods which will increase our relief rolls?

Union-made products are always American-made.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS AND BUSINESS MEN

A resolution adopted last year as to The Labor Journal and solicitation of funds in the name of Central Labor Union was brought out of the minutes and republished as information. The resolution reads as follows:

"Resolved, That we publish in The Charlotte Labor Journal, that we do not condone any solicitation of advertising except for The Charlotte Labor Journal, purporting to represent labor, unless over the signature of the secretary of the Charlotte Central Labor Union.

PERTINENT COMMENT ON TIMELY TOPICS CHATting BY HARRY BOATE

—Mrs. Huey P. Long, wife of the lately-assassinated Senator from Louisiana, has been sworn in as a U. S. Senator, to fill the unexpired term of her lamented husband. Huey Long was a man whose voice was heard all over this broad land, and although the country was not behind him to the limit, yet he had his ardent followers and he wielded a powerful influence in public affairs prior to this time, may make a thoroughly capable public legislator, but it does seem that such appointments, in the way of honor to a deceased one, is making more or less of a joke of a body of citizens who until recent years were rated as little below that of the United States Supreme Court. It would be far better if persons filling such positions of enacting laws for the government of our country were forced to go through a period of training such as is required for those who are filling places in the skilled crafts, or those who are our foremost physicians and medical guides and our legal advisers, and there are many such who are a real credit to the country. The United States as a member of the family of nations is now more than 150 years old, but it seems it has not yet learned what is best in matter of filling its places of high trust and honor. Let us take mental stock of what we have been doing all these years and put people in office who are known to be capable of performing the duties devolving upon them, and quit experimenting every two or four years with apprentices in our governing and legislative bodies. We do not mean we think Mrs. Long incapable of filling the place to which she has been appointed, but she won the heart of Huey Long because of her skill as a baker, and we presume that is where she may be able to win her highest prize. Let us quit experimenting with public offices and get down to real business. What the Supreme Court has been doing with important laws in recent months would indicate we have entirely too many apprentices in Congress now, or perhaps the apprentices are in the Supreme Court. Who knows? This writer confesses his ignorance on the subject.

—A new note has been sounded in Congress, and there is no doubt much truth in what has been said. Last week during a recent discussion of the War Department appropriation bill in the House of Representatives, William P. Connery, Jr., Democrat of Massachusetts, and chairman of the House committee on labor, assailed that section of the bill which would increase the appropriation for the National Guard. He stated: "The majority of the Governors of the States are today using the National Guard against organized labor. Any time there is a strike anywhere in the State, the Governor calls out the National Guard to put down the strike and to guard property against the interests of organized labor. The fact has become notorious."

This Congressman must have been reading the papers in recent months. The entire country knows that the National Guard has many times been called upon to protect property which may or may not have been in danger because of labor difficulties. Many members of these troops may have been workers on strike, but when called to arms there was nothing to do but go. Result, lack of interest in their soldier duty, for which court-martial may follow should certain events take place. Again, because of such strike service, he frequently loses friendships because of loyalty which he was forced to acknowledge. A strike is a miniature war. True it is that riots sometimes occur and property is damaged or destroyed. It is a pity such conditions arise. But when a strike is ordered and the National Guard is called out to protect mills against picketing, the Guards should not be posted in order to allow safe access of strike-breakers, but their duty should be to see that the establishments are closed tight and kept closed while contending parties sit about the counsel tables and talk over their differences. Should these places be kept closed and no attempt made to operate, there would be no rioting with consequent loss of life, and peace would not be long delayed, for when invested money is lying idle the investors waste little time in getting it to work. Dividends is what are wanted and must be had at all costs.

THE STORY BACK OF ALMA MILL STRIKE, WHICH BEGAN FEB. 10TH AS TOLD IN JOURNAL DISPATCH

(Special to Charlotte Labor Journal)

GAFFNEY, S. C.—The daily newspapers have so far failed to tell the real story back of the Alma Mill (one of the Hamrick chain) strike which began Monday, February 10th. Why it is that the papers do not assign a reporter to cover the strike and print the facts is obvious to those who have seen pseudo news descriptions of other strikes of workers in protest to various conditions imposed or attempted impositions on the workers.

The Alma mill is closed down completely. The workers decided to strike on Sunday afternoon preceding February 10th in preference to submitting to a stretchout of the weavers. The management planned to stretch out the weavers on the wide sheeting looms from 18 to 44 per set, and on the looms weaving print cloths from 28 looms to 55, all with a corresponding reduction in pay.

The employees are well organized, but it is true that every worker does not carry a paid up card. There are some of the Union members we would not allow affiliation even if they wanted to join. The management of the Hamrick mills lately has tried to institute wage reductions, stretchouts, and other deproved working conditions, but so far the workers have successfully resisted any added oppression or exploitation.

Reports have come to the writer recently that the Hamrick mills have discontinued the third, or graveyard shift, in the other mills in Gaffney and told the employees laid off thereby that they could get jobs in the Alma mill. So far the now idle third shifts, most of whom are Union members themselves, have wisely declined to act as strikebreakers in the Alma mill dispute.

The Alma mill workers deserve the commendation and assistance of all textile workers. Whether or not workers in other mills are affected now, the outcome of this strike is bound to have an indirect effect on all textile workers in all mills producing sheetings and gray goods and print cloths, either favorable or unfavorable.

Origin of Olympics

It is very popular to apply the word Olympic to any great celebration of sport. The word is derived from the name of the plain, Olympia, where the ancient Greek games were held. In those pagan days the ancients credited the gods with being human, and accordingly did all they could to please them. One of the ideas of their games and entertainments was to entertain the deities who dwelt on Mount Olympus. The most famous of the games were those specially arranged for that purpose, and they were named Olympic. A period of four years elapsed between the games. That period was called the Olympiad, and from the year 776 B. C. was used to measure time. The Olympic games thus denoted a very special exhibition, and that is why the word applies to the greater festivals of sport.—Montreal Herald.

If Union workers will prevail upon the buying public to purchase only Union Label products, they will have the best assurance of prevailing wages.

Self-preservation is the first law of man. Buying Union-made goods and Union services is the first law of a Union man.

Boiling Mineral Water

From Lava on an Island

The topography of the island of Ischia in the Mediterranean sea has been shaped to an extent by Monte Epomeo, once an active volcano, but silent now for seven centuries. Throughout the island, observes a writer in the New York Times, the signs of its last eruption are found in hardened lava, and underlying the region of Porto d'Ischia are deposits of boiling mineral water, which are pumped up when natives desire a bath. Crude baths, which the islanders hold have therapeutic qualities, have been hewn in the rocks.

The grapes of Santorini are its principal product. Its steep cliffs are mounted by way of terraced stairways and arches hewn in the stone. On the sacred cliffs of the Prophet Elijah, 1,400 feet above the sea, stands a great white monastery, surrounded by a dozen churches, which, in turn, are edged by vineyards. Hundreds of donkeys carry the people to the cliff villages or to the vineyards, where island neighbors gather annually to participate in Santorini's wine-making

The Union Label is the insignia of the great army of American Labor.

CENTRAL LABOR UNION COMMITTEE INVESTIGATES RELIEF CONDITIONS AND MAKES INTERESTING REPORT

The committee appointed by Central Labor Union to investigate complaints made by workers on the different government projects of relief reported its findings to that body last week. While all ground was not covered, enough light was thrown upon the subject to make it clear that many complaints were unjustifiable, while there was some foundation of fact for others.

The report follows:

After receiving and hearing many complaints and unfavorable reports, along with requests for information and assistance regarding unemployment relief of the Local State Labor Office and the WPA and PWA, a committee was appointed by the Charlotte Central Labor Union, to investigate such reports and when found to be justified, confer with the proper authority with the purpose of bringing about an adjustment if possible. While only a very few reports came from members of organized labor, due to the fact that all organized labor makes every effort to take care of its own members. Yet as our duty is to and in sympathy with all who toil regardless of their station in life or labor affiliation, therefore, these unorganized workers who are helpless to cope with the situation appealed to the only group they knew of who might understand and assist and advise them.

Our committee has for several weeks investigated these complaints and when found justifiable, arrived at satisfactory adjustments, though there are several which have not yet been taken up.

While we have found some justified complaints, we find by a great majority there is a great misunderstanding of the set-up and working units of the Federal Relief Program, by the workers and the public, which is the greatest cause of complaint.

After going through detailed inquiry, in the Labor Office and the WPA Offices, in a spirit of co-operation and criticizing when justifiable in a constructive way, we submit the following information to all workers on relief projects and others seeking relief employment.

When the WPA took over relief activities, they had to begin where the FERA left off, and had to give employment first to those only who were registered and certified prior to August 1st, 1935. They cannot employ any who have become unemployable since that time, excepting that the rules allow them to employ up to 10 per cent of the total relief workers from Non-Relief, these 10 per cent, we find, receive practically all the supervisory and executive jobs, or the better paying positions, leaving the registered workers the laboring jobs.

We had numerous complaints that the women, who were working in the Sewing Rooms in some cases were requested and required to take up a collection to pay the rent and furnish the fuel for heat in some of these rooms. After investigation, we found this to be a fact in one or two places though was unable to find anyone responsible for this condition.

Taking up the matter with the WPA officials, we were informed that such a condition was positively wrong and contrary to the rule of the WPA policy, and were assured the matter would be corrected immediately, as it was done without their knowledge.

'Baby Bonds' Raise Campaign Fund For McDonald Program

WINSTON-SALEM, Feb. 17.—The Committee For McDonald Program, an organization set up for the purpose of raising campaign funds for Dr. Ralph W. McDonald and the program he is championing, reports that much interest has been manifest in the sale of McDonald "Baby" Bonds, and that persons in a large number of counties throughout the state have written in to the committee's State headquarters here, sending their dollar for a bond or else requesting a book of bonds be sent to them in order that they might supply them to friends of the popular gubernatorial candidate.

It has been pointed out by the committee that Dr. McDonald has no funds of his own or any means to finance his campaign, and if the necessary money is to be raised to properly conduct essential activities it must come from the "little man." The committee explains that money is needed to purchase printing, pay office help, traveling, hotel expenses, etc.

Mr. Virgil A. Wilson, chairman of the committee, expressed appreciation to those who have already purchased bonds. He further emphasized that every penny received in this manner will be spent for the purposes intended. He explains that any reliable person who desires to help in this cause would be mailed a book containing twenty bonds, if they will comitularily described as follows: communicate with the committee. Address: Committee For McDonald Program, P. O. Box 140, Winston-Salem, N. C.

The Union Label assures the purchaser that he is putting his money into the best investment on earth—Trade Unionism.

Therefore, we call attention to all sewing room workers, that they are not expected to take up collections or donate to payment of rent or buy fuel for any sewing room of the WPA where you may be working, and anyone asking you to do so is violating the rules and policy of the WPA.

We found one case where the workers were told by a supervisor that if they made any complaints about their conditions of employment that they would be cut off from relief and their work cards taken away from them. In this case, also, the WPA officials informed the committee that such talk was also against the policy of the WPA and that supervisors could not take the work cards from any workers; that this action could be taken only by the officials of WPA.

Many relief workers were afraid to do their work, being afraid they would be cut off from WPA work. We are requested to tell all relief workers that it is all right for them to do their work when they are not employed on WPA work, but also the WPA officials want the workers to do their work when they can do so on days they are not employed on WPA work. But—workers must not leave their jobs on WPA projects to do other odd jobs.

When a relief worker gets a chance to take another job, for a week or more, he can come back on the WPA again the same as before, without any trouble. But before taking the other job, the worker must tell his foreman that he is doing so, and when or if he comes back on relief again, by doing this, he will have no trouble returning to WPA.

As previously mentioned, we find the greatest cause of complaint is misunderstanding of the WPA rules by the workers, also that where complaint were justified we were assured these would be corrected at once.

We find also in our investigation that social uplift and educational work is being carried on other than relief in the sewing rooms.

As well as many who have been taught to sew, classes are held among the workers to teach writing, reading and home-work. Also visiting nurses call on those who are reported sick, for their own well being as well as that of the other workers, and where necessary medical attention is provided.

While we find some objectionable features of the WPA, yet this objection is greatly in rules governing the set-up, and not the local administration of the work.

We ask all workers on relief to cooperate; do their work right, and if there is just cause for complaint, make your complaint honestly and have no fear of your work card being taken away from you.

J. H. FULLENTON,
W. M. WITTER,
HARRY BOATE,
Committee Charlotte, N. C., Central Labor Union.

THE UNION LABEL DEPARTMENT THANKS LABOR PRESS

The following resolution was adopted at a recent meeting of the Executive Board of the Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor:

Whereas, the weekly labor newspapers and the monthly labor journals have generously given space to display editorials, short paragraphs, cartoons and facsimiles of Union Labels, Shop Cards and Buttons, thus promoting Union-made goods and Union Services; and

Whereas, the American Federation of Labor's Weekly News Service and the International Labor News Service have gratuitously carried the message of the Union Label, Shop Card and Button, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Board of the Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor hereby expresses its deep appreciation of the hearty support and labor news services and the loyal co-operation of these labor press.

NATION TO HEAR THOMAS AGAIN

NEW YORK.—On Friday, Feb. 28, Norman Thomas will be interviewed by Boake Carter, news commentator, over the Columbia broadcasting system at 10:45 p.m., eastern standard time.

The Union Label is the greatest ASSURANCE of quality and the best INSURANCE for Trade Unionism.