

Denounce the Lewis Lynch Law Tactics

By Max Shachtman

(Special to THE WORKER.)

CHICAGO.—The wave of condemnation of John L. Lewis in expelling Joseph Manley and Mr. and Mrs. J. P. McCarthy from the Tri-District Anthracite Conference of the miners at Scranton, Pa., is rising every day in the ranks of the coal miners. A survey of the opinions of various delegates to the Farmer-Labor conference, here, who happen to be members of the United Mine Workers of America, did not reveal one with a word of excuse for the vicious action of the Lewis machine.

The statements of a few of the miners' delegates are given here without any comment. They speak for themselves.

ALEXANDER HOWAT (former president of the Kansas district and one of the most popular leaders in the U. M. W. of A.): "One can criticize the President of the United States, and the Senate from the Congressional galleries without being thrown out. There was absolutely no justification for Lewis' act, for, so far as I could learn, there was no disturbance created by Manley. Lewis' statement that Manley was an enemy of labor is false. I know Joe Manley as one who is fighting every day to make the labor movement bigger and stronger than it is today. The main reason for his expulsion was undoubtedly the fact that he had taken the liberty to criticize Lewis' policy. It was only another grandstand play by Lewis, and the only question is how long the miners are going to fall for that sort of bunk."

THOMAS MYERSCOUGH (Secretary of the International Progressive Committee in the U. M. W. of A.): "We expect these incidents to happen from time to time. They are just incidents in the fight. The only tendency they have is to improve our stand for the Progressive platform. To inflict bodily injury on a person does not mean anything. This is not a personal fight but a struggle for principles. They may do their damndest—we are here to meet them. The miners are with us from Washington, on the Pacific coast, to Pittsburgh and Nova Scotia."

DUNCAN MACDONALD (Secretary of the Illinois district of the miners for seven years, ex-President of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, and now rank and file member of Local 448, Springfield, Ill.): "When anyone who attempts to be a leader has to resort to force, especially when he says he has the majority with him, his argument is too weak to be substantiated by right-thinking people. In this respect they resemble the coal operators when the latter attempt to get rid of the organizers for the U. M. W. of A."

FRED MERRICK (a member of the Executive Committee of the Pittsburgh Miners' Relief Conference): "These tactics are nothing new to us. I personally was slugged and ejected from a hall in Smithton, Pa., while holding a receipt for the rent for this hall, the meeting having been called for the relief of the Fayette miners. Later the same day, the same gang of U. M. W. of A. thugs threatened my life on board a B. & O. railroad train if I do not stop activities for these stranded miners. Because we dare to help these miners, the Lewis machine is embittered, and the Manley episode is but one incident in the desperate struggle of the bureaucracy to hold power against the overwhelming sentiment of the rank and file against them."

EDWARD JOHNSON (Recording Secretary, Local 2376, Christopher, Ill.): "It was an outrage—something that has never happened in the history of the United Mine Workers before, to my knowledge. From indications in our locality, Southern Illinois, great numbers of our members are opposed to any such tactics being used in the Miners union. I believe that such action will serve no good purpose for the miners, and will bring only condemnation and defeat to the Lewis machine. The United Mine Workers, so far as I have come in contact with them, are 100 per cent for Howat and the progressives."

ALBERT J. ZIOMEK (Financial Secretary, Local 5302, Rural Bridge, Pa.): "It is a disgrace to the U. M. W. of A., not only in the 2nd District but also all the districts in the country. To have a leader such as Lewis acting in such a manner is a blot, a stain, on our union, and the progressives are out to remove that stain in double-quick order."

NICK SEMON (President, Local 2468, Christopher, Ill.): "It was an injustice to Manley and the McCarthys, and a question that the rank and file should settle. Our local union believes in the progressives both on the industrial and the political fields. If we want to get anywhere in the fight against Capital in this country we must put up a united front; and the action of Lewis at the Scranton Conference was certainly not calculated to attain any such thing."