

Labor Purged by Racketeers



(Acme photo.)
Labor purges have been responsible for four deaths in Minneapolis since 1934. In the riot in Minneapolis' Central market pictured here a citizen was beaten to death.

How Bosses Further Their Ambitions

AN EXCITED voice blared out of the big loud-speaker. About a thousand angry men stood in the street listening and muttering. Many of them wore overalls. Their hands were grimy.

● Before them stood the headquarters of a C. I. O. union. Behind them and across the street rose a huge automobile assembly plant. For it was Flint, Mich., on the afternoon of Jan. 7, 1937, and one of the most significant labor battles in all history was at its height.

● "Join here now!" continued the loud-speaker at the union building. "Join the auto workers and build a union that will fight for you."

● The mass of men, most of whom belonged to no union and who faced the loss of their jobs because of a strike called by the C. I. O., surged resentfully toward the funnel-shaped instrument. Three men seized it, tearing it from its position and hurling it into the street. Other men, who were members of the C. I. O., tried to stop them. Fists swung and heads were cracked. A few of the men crumpled up and fell groaning to the pavement. Police and deputy sheriffs finally waded into the mêlée and arrested the more vicious battlers and took them off to jail.

● Soon the battle flared up in front of another automobile plant. This time the strikers succeeded in



(International photo.)
The "big stick," symbol of the illegal sit-down strike. At left, Homer Martin, who uncovered communism in auto union ranks, and John L. Lewis, a leader in two labor purges.

locking up three private company policemen in the plant before city police dispersed them with fire hoses and tear gas. The battle continued all night, however, and there were nineteen casualties. The next day saw the mobilization of the Michigan

Foreword One of the significant devices of modern civilization is the so-called purge. With this weapon the twentieth-century dictator justifies a thing which as indulged in by primitive people is commonly known as savagery. In modern America the purge has become a favorite device of political dictators. It has for years been the weapon of labor racketeers to further their unlawful ambitions. In the accompanying story is presented a record of labor purges in this country.

National Guardsmen.

● The magnitude of this struggle between union men, who wanted to strike, and non-union workers, who wanted to keep their jobs, cannot be appreciated without considering the forces behind each faction.

A Favorite Weapon of the Dictator

Behind the unorganized, relatively contented non-union men stood the world's largest automobile manufacturer, the General Motors corporation.

● Behind the newly regimented union stood the Committee for Industrial Organization, an organization of vast potentialities led by John L. Lewis, whose ambition was to make himself master of a united industrial working class.

● On the nonunion side about 350,000 workers, or more than three-fourths of the industry's employes, ranged themselves to resist the looming menace. Approximately 100,000 workers had joined the C. I. O. unit and had been assured the militant support of other C. I. O. unions all over the nation. Because of the interdependence of G. M. production plants, the strikers already had succeeded in shutting down twenty-eight plants and making 93,000 out of a total of 135,000 production employes quit work.

● The C. I. O.'s greatest weapon was the newly developed sit-down strike, with which a few discontented and rebellious workmen could cripple their plants by dog-in-the-manger tactics in violation of the basic law of property rights. Its deadly effect was evidenced by the fact that the strike was launched by only fifty key C. I. O. workers who had "sat down" in Fisher Body No. 2 plant at Flint. Their stopping of (Continued on page eight.)