



MINNEAPOLIS SHOWS THE WAY

Learn From Minneapolis!

TODAY the whole country looks to Minneapolis. Great things are happening there which reflect the influence of a strange new force in the labor movement, an influence widening and extending like a spiral wave. Out of the strike of the transport workers of Minneapolis a new voice speaks and a new method proclaims its challenge.

It was seen first in the strike of the Coal Yard Drivers which electrified the labor movement of the city a few months ago and firmly established the union after a brief, stormy battle of unprecedented militancy and efficiency. Now we see the same union moving out of this narrow groove and embracing truck drivers in other lines.

Behind this, as was the case with the Coal Drivers, there are months of hard, patient and systematic routine work of organization. Everything is prepared. Then an ultimatum to the bosses. A swift, sudden blow. A mass picket line that sweeps everything before it. The building trades come out in sympathy. The combined forces, riding with a mighty wave of moral support from the whole laboring population of the city, take the offensive and drive all the bosses' thugs and hirelings to cover in a memorable battle at the City Market.

The whole country listens to the echoes of the struggle. The exploiters hear them with fear and trepidation. Weaving the net around the automobile workers with the aid of treacherous labor leaders they ask themselves in alarm: "If this spirit spreads what will our schemes avail us?"

And the workers in basic industry, vaguely sensing the power of their numbers and strategic position, can hardly help asking themselves: "If we should go the Minneapolis way could anything or anybody stop us?" The striking transport workers are a mighty power in Minneapolis today. But that is only a small fraction of the power of their example for the cheated and betrayed workers in the big industries of the country.

THE MESSAGE OF MINNEAPOLIS

The message of Minneapolis is of first rate importance to the American working class. A careful examination of the method from all sides ought to be put as point one on the agenda of the labor movement, especially of its most advanced section. A study of this epic struggle, in its various aspects, can be an aid to their application in other fields, and, by that, a rapid change of the position of the American workers.

There is nothing new, of course, in a fight between strikers and police and gunmen. Every strike of any consequence tells the old familiar story of the hounding, beating and killing of strikers by the hired thugs of the exploiters, in and out of uniform. What is out of the ordinary in Minneapolis, what is most important in this respect, is that while the Minneapolis strike began with violent assaults on the strikers it didn't end there.

In pitched battles last Saturday and again on Monday the strikers fought back and held their own. And on Tuesday they took the offensive, with devastating results. "Business men" volunteering to put the workers in their place and college boys out for a lark—as special deputies—to say nothing of the uniformed cops—handed over their badges and fled in terror before the mass fury of the aroused workers. And many of them carried away unwelcome souvenirs of the engagement. Here was a demonstration that the American workers are willing and able to fight in their own interests. Nothing is more important than this, for, in the last analysis, everything depends on it.

Here was a stern warning to the bosses and their hirelings, and not only those in Minneapolis. Transfer the example and the spirit of the Minneapolis strikers to the steel and automobile workers, for example, with their mass numbers and power. Let the rulers of America tremble at the prospect. They will see it! That is what the message of Minneapolis means first of all.

MASS ACTION

A second feature of the fight at the City Market which deserves special attention is the fact that it was not the ordinary encounter between individual strikers and individual scabs or thugs. On the contrary—take note—the whole union went into action on the picket line in mass formation; thousands of other union men went with them; they took along the necessary means to protect themselves against the murderous thugs, as they had every right to do. This was an example of mass action which points the way for the future victorious struggles of the American workers.

It is not a strike of the men alone, but of the women also. The Minneapolis Drivers' Union proceeds on the theory that the women have a vital interest in the struggle, no less than the men, and draws them into action through a special organiza-

tion. This policy, employed so effectively by the Progressive Miners, is bringing rich results also in Minneapolis. To involve the women in the labor struggle is to double the strength of the workers and to infuse it with a spirit and solidarity it could not otherwise have. This applies not only to a single union and a single strike; it holds good for every phase of the struggle up to its revolutionary conclusion. The grand spectacle of labor solidarity in Minneapolis is what it is because it includes also the solidarity of the working class women.

THE SYMPATHETIC STRIKE

The strike of the transport workers took an enormous leap forward and underwent a transformation when the building trades union declared a sympathetic strike last Monday. In this action one of the most progressive and significant features of the entire movement is to be seen. When unions begin to call strikes, not for immediate craft gains of their own but for the sake of solidarity with their struggling brothers in other trades, and when this spirit and attitude becomes general and taken for granted as the proper thing, then the paralyzing divisions in the trade union movement will be near an end and trade unionism will begin to mean unity.

The union of the truck drivers and the building trades workers is an inspiring sight. It represents a dynamic idea of incalculable power. Let the example spread, let the idea take hold in other cities and other trades, let the idea of sympathetic strike action be combined with militancy and the mass method of the Minneapolis fighters—and American labor will be a head taller and immeasurably stronger.

Those who characterize the A. F. of L. unions as "company unions" and want to build new unions at any price will derive very little consolation from the Minneapolis strike. We have always maintained that no form of a labor organization, while important, is not decisive. Minneapolis provides another confirmation, and a most convincing one, of this conception. Here is the most militant and, in many respects, the most progressively directed labor struggle that has been seen for a long time. Nevertheless it is all conducted within the framework of the A. F. of L.

The Drivers' Union is a local one of the most conservative A. F. of L. internationals, the Teamsters'; the building trades, out in sympathy with the drivers, are all A. F. of L. unions, and the Central Labor Union backing the drivers' strike and the possible organizing medium of a general strike, is a subordinate unit of the A. F. of L. The local unions of the A. F. of L. provide a wide field for the work of revolutionary militants if they know how to work intelligently. This is especially true when, as in the Minneapolis example, the militants actually initiate the organization and take a leading part in developing it at every stage.

THE BOLSHEVIK MILITANTS

Further development of the union, and perhaps even of the present strike, on the path of militancy may bring the local leadership into conflict with the reactionary bureaucracy of the International and also with conservative forces in the Central Labor Union. This will be all the less apt to take the local leaders of the militant union by surprise, since most of them have already gone through the school of that experience. In spite of that they did not turn their backs on the trade unions and seek to set up new ones artificially.

Even when it came to organizing a large group of workers, hitherto outside the labor movement, they selected an A. F. of L. union as the medium. The results of the Minneapolis experience provide some highly important lessons on this tactical question. The miserable role of the Stalinists in the present situation, and their complete isolation from the great mass struggle, is the logical outcome of their policies in general and their trade union policy in particular.

The General Drivers' Union, as must be the case with every genuine mass organization, has a broad and representative leadership, freely selected by democratic methods. Among the leaders of the union are a number of bolshevik militants who never concealed or denied their opinions and never changed them at anybody's order, whether the order came from Green or from Stalin.

The presence of this nucleus in the mass movement is a feature of the exceptional situation in Minneapolis which, in a sense, affects and colors all the other aspects of it. The most important of all prerequisites for the development of a militant labor movement is the leaven of principled communists. When they enter the labor movement and apply their ideas intelligently they are invincible. The labor movement grows as a result of this fusion and their influence grows with it. In this question, also, Minneapolis is showing the way.

—JAMES P. CANNON.

Non-Partisan Labor Defense Protests Police Attack on Workers

(Times Service of Non-Partisan Labor Defense)

New York—Charges against the New York police will shortly be laid before Police Commissioner O'Ryan as a result of incidents which occurred Thursday night in the West Side Night Court. Spokesmen for the Socialist Party, the Communist League of America, the Young Peoples Socialist League, and the Spartacus Youth Club which led Thursday night's counter-demonstration against the pro-Hitler Madison Square Garden Meeting

and the Provisional Committee for Non-Partisan Labor Defense which represents several individual complainants, announced today that they have sent a letter to the Police Commissioner requesting an appointment.

The letter charges that police on duty in the court attacked spectators and bystanders without provocation, beat them with weapons and fists, restrained them illegally from leaving the court, and in one case drew a pistol on Dave Schwartz of 1463 Ocean Avenue,

Brooklyn, a member of the Y.P.S.L.

The attacks occurred in the lobby of the courtroom presided over by Magistrate Burke, where a number of persons were to be tried for participating in an anti-Nazi street meeting in Times Square. When the cases came up, some fellow-demonstrators in the courtroom incurred the wrath of the Magistrate by voicing their objection to the proceedings. A number of skirmishes between the police and spectators ensued.

Militant Mass Picket Line Routs Scabs, Cops, Special Deputies and Thugs and Stops All Commercial Transport

Building Trades in Sympathy Strike; Womens Auxiliary Active in Fight; General Strike Sentiment Growing; Workers' Spirit Soars

(TELEGRAM TO THE MILITANT)

MINNEAPOLIS, May 22.—In the most imposing display of labor solidarity and militancy Minneapolis has ever seen, a mighty picket line of the General Drivers' Union, five thousand strong, swept through the Wholesale Market today, clearing the place of every scab, cop and deputy and putting a complete stop to every attempt to move commercial trucks except those authorized by special permission of the union.

Today's action followed daily pitched battles on Saturday and Monday in which the cops and special deputies slugged and arrested men, women and children on the picket line. With the entire labor movement roused to fury by these attacks the striking drivers, reinforced by other unionists, returned to the scene of conflict today and took back to union headquarters the badges of all the rats serving as special deputies who failed to get out of the market in time.

Tonight the strike is one hundred percent complete. Not a truck is to be seen on the streets that does not carry the special authorization of the union.

On Monday 35,000 building trades workers declared a strike in sympathy with the drivers. The Communist League has raised the slogan of general strike throughout the twin cities and sentiment for it is spreading like wildfire.

After today's battle a 24-hour truce was accepted by the union under the terms of which the employers agreed "that all transportation in so far as it concerns those represented by the employers' committee shall cease." Meanwhile negotiations are under way. The union is demanding recognition and wage increases. If the negotiations fail a general strike of sympathy with the drivers may result.

Class lines are tightly drawn. Over two hundred pickets have been arrested. The union is organized for all emergencies, even to the extent of removing injured pickets and providing medical attention for them away from the hospitals where pickets previously taken for treatment were arrested. "Cruising squads" of militant pickets cover every strategic point. The appearance of a truck on any street brings immediate action.

A great feature of the strike is the militant participation of the strikers' women on a mass scale. On Monday seven hundred women, members of the Drivers' Union Auxiliary, marched on the mayor's office demanding the withdrawal of the special police. They carried banners reading "Take away your hired thugs" and similar slogans. Mrs. Grant Dunne, president of the auxiliary and Mrs. Farrel Dobbs, secretary, led the demonstration.

In a move to head off the general strike the Regional Labor Board, on direct orders from Washington, is attempting to bring about a settlement. Dunne, Skoglund and other militant leaders of the union have consistently explained the strike-breaking role of this agency and are warning the strikers now to watch out for any trap it may set for them.

Everything the union has gained, since its inception with a small nucleus of Coal Yard Drivers, has been the result of its own strength and militancy and the direct mass action of its members. These workers have been steeled in heroic battles for their rights. They have learned some lessons. It will not be easy to fool them. It can be said with assurance that the "Automobile settlement" cannot be put over here.

Youth Demonstration Against War And Fascism on May 30th

New York City.—Challenging the bosses' "Memorial Day", imperialist war preparations and the growing wave of Fascism, the United Youth Committee Against War and Fascism calls upon the young workers and students of the city to demonstrate under its banner on May 30th.

Despite efforts to achieve a common demonstration with the youth conference called by the Youth Section of the American League Against Fascism, there will be two demonstrations in the city. The Stalinists have rejected the most elementary conditions for such a united front: a common acceptable name for the demonstration, a common leaflet, a joint committee representing both conferences.

Stalinists Force Split
Every possible concession was made by the United Youth Committee to achieve this common action. To no avail! The Young Communist League in essence proposed that this Committee either join their National Youth Day or no united front would be achieved. Even while the United Youth Committee was still considering, with the knowledge of the Stalinist committee, ways of overcoming the obstacle in the road toward unity, the Daily Worker already contained an attack on the Committee as splitting the united front.

Notwithstanding this attack the United Youth Committee continued to approach the American League conference for common action. The letter of the Committee was "answered" by the Youth Section of the American League addressing itself, through the Daily Worker, not to the Committee itself, but to the members of the Y.P.S.L., Young Circle League and the Student League for Industrial Democracy! The terms stated in this letter omit any mention of the decisive questions—a common leaflet and a common name other than National Youth Day—N.Y.D. is not even referred to—although it is clear from representatives of the Stalinists that they will not retreat from this position.

Mobilize for May 30

This unscrupulous attempt to place the responsibility of the split on the United Youth Committee is a piece of arrogance that must be exposed. The Committee will issue a public statement on the negotiations. (The next issue of the Militant will contain the statement of the Spartacus Youth Clubs.) All militant youth must be mobilized in full force for May 30th. Under the slogans of: Against Im-

(By Mail—Special to the Militant)

Minneapolis, Sunday, May 20th.—Against the combined forces of the bosses, their legal thugs in the police department, augmented by thousands of deputies and imported gunmen, together with the American Legion and the yellow press, the General Drivers' Union, Local No. 574 is heroically defending the very right of the workers to organize. This struggle is the result of the intolerable conditions forced upon the workers by the truck-owners, produce companies and all commercial delivery bosses. The issue of unionization of Labor has been so sharply raised that the fate of the entire trade-union movement hangs on the balance. Never before has Minneapolis seen such a battle. The members of the Communist League are in the vanguard of the fight, in the union and its leadership, on the picket line, in the militant Women's Auxiliary—they are everywhere, permeating every aspect of the struggle with the spirit of Bolshevism.

The strike was called Tuesday, May 15th at 11:30 P.M. It came as a result of the failure of the bosses to grant recognition of the union and an increase in wages. The strikers massed five thousand strong at the large garage that served as a strike Headquarters and dispatched pickets to strategic points throughout the city and brought all trucking to a stand-still, with the exception of the milk, ice and beer drivers who are organized and have permission to operate. Flying squads of pickets, toured the city pulling out all gas station attendants.

All Transport Stopped
The city was isolated from all truck traffic, in an out, by mass picketing on all highways. The market was closed like a tomb. Like-wise the oil tank yards, truck terminals and ware-houses. Over-shadowing this all was a constant threat of the street-car men going out to get the reinstatement of men discharged for union membership. The strike was so effective that workers in the factories gave it a hearty cheer and began to talk organization and strike in the most practical manner. The frightened small middle class people began to deplete the shelves of the retailers by stocking up with supplies. The bosses and bankers and all reactionary forces began to scream at the strikers in their yellow press.

Under the leadership of their central class organization, the Citizens' Alliance, the leading business men of the City called a mass gathering in a huge hotel, at which they cornered the small independent business men for a frenzied struggle against the labor movement, beginning with the General Drivers' union. This meeting elected a committee to conduct this struggle. It was composed of the largest bankers, industrialists, utility and commercial leaders of the city. This move was made because they were confident that they had the support of the Mayor's Office and the Police Department. The trump card they decided to play was to be the farmers and truck gardeners' use of the City Market, together with the movement of bread from the bakeries. Bread trucks were loaded and lined up to go out on Wednesday

perialist War and Fascism, Protest the May 31st Naval Maneuvers in N. Y., Defend Thaelman and Torgler, Defend the Four Deported German Youth, Protest the Murder of the Cuban Masses by the Agents of American Imperialism, Remember the Reactionary Attack on the 6 Yipels last Memorial Day, Smash Fascism by forging a United Front of Workers and Students' Organizations, the demonstration will be a great step toward genuine united front. The young Socialist, Communist and Student groups represented in the United Youth Committee are determined to begin the united struggle against capitalist reaction, imperialist war and Fascism.

Assemble at 139th St. and St. Nicholas Ave. at 12:30 P. M. March in solid ranks to 110th St. and 5th Avenue for the mass meeting! All out on May 30th!

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