

«Local 574 Is Invincible!»

By JAMES P. CANNON

MINNEAPOLIS, Nov. 26.—The union-wrecking racket which used to work so smoothly under the guise of the "Red purge" is not what it used to be. Not in Minneapolis at any rate. And union militants all over the country can learn something from the manner progressive labor in the northwest,



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In which Local 574, spearhead of has beaten off the latest attack directed by William Green's personal representative and gained ground steadily in the four weeks since it was first announced in the nation's headlines. As things stand

now it is conceded on all sides in the labor movement that Local 574 has the upper hand over the union wreckers. The impression is widespread—and strongest of all in the ranks of its own membership—that Local 574 is invincible. The name, or rather the number, has become a legend.

Bosses Wary of 574

It is highly significant that the bosses, who tried their hands at breaking the union in the great strikes of 1934, have nowhere ventured to come out in the open to support Tobin and Meyer Lewis. To be sure, this cautious attitude has not been directed by sympathy for the union under attack and its outspokenly radical leaders. Their hearts were with Lewis, but they didn't trust him to make good his boasts that he would break up the "outlaw" union. They told him frankly in more than one private conference, the reports of which found their way into local labor circles, that they had had their share of expensive trouble last year and had become convinced that their trucks could not operate without 574 drivers. The union has signed new contracts with several new groups of employers, and renewed its contracts with others, since the formal revocation of its charter by Tobin last summer, and has even made new gains since the formal launching of the ill-starred "Red purge" by Meyer Lewis on Oct. 30.

THE MILITANCY THAT SCARED GREEN



Local trade union leaders of the traditional non-militant type, despite their entanglement with and dependence upon the official A. F. of L. machine and their lack of any real affection for the "wild men" of Local 574, have likewise shrugged their shoulders at the appeals of Green's special union-buster. The action of the Central Labor Union in shouting Lewis down and then instructing its executive board to confer with Local 574 with a view toward a peaceful settlement of the difficulties was a remarkable tribute to a so-called "outlaw" union. It bears testimony to the strength of Local 574 and to the respect in which this strength is held by the local leaders of the official trade union movement of the A. F. of L.

The Grand Strategy

In its reply to the Central Labor Union the executive board of Local 574 reiterated the position which it has maintained throughout the long struggle: As point one, it declared the desire of the union to remain a part of the general labor movement represented by the A. F. of L. and asked the aid of the Central

Labor Union in securing the restoration of its charter in the Teamsters' International; it disclaimed any quarrel with the other unions, pointed to the record of its cooperation with them in the past and expressed the desire to continue this cooperation in the future; and, finally, the leaders of Local 574 restated the firm determination of the union to maintain its organization and to defend itself against all attacks.

In these three points is contained the gist of the policy of Local 574 which has brought it such brilliant success: a policy of militancy, plus cooperation with all other legitimate unions; a deliberate policy of affiliation to the A. F. of L., and of unceasing struggle for reinstatement, plus a refusal to sacrifice its organization or to capitulate to union wreckers masquerading as labor leaders. This policy, in my opinion, is a model for the internal union strategy of the trade union militants everywhere, just as the policy exemplified by Local 574 in the great strikes of 1934 can serve as a model of strike strategy.

Meticulous attention to every detail of organization is another one of the secrets of Local 574's astounding success. For the strike battles of last year the union set up headquarters in a big garage, equipped it like a field headquarters for the rapid mobilization of the picket "cruising squads," and hurled them like a militant army into action. The bosses, accustomed to dealing with horse-and-buggy unionism, represented so pathetically by a dickering business agent, were knocked out of the water by these militant mass tactics. These tactics prevailed eventually even against the police and the militia and wretched settlements which made it possible for the union to consolidate itself, heal its many wounds and begin to grow as a day-by-day organization. For that a different technique was needed. Grand strategy had to make way for detail and routine.

THE BATTLE OF «DEPUTIES RUN»



The spacious new headquarters on Plymouth Avenue North present a picture of Local 574 in this stage of its development as a full-blown union, taking care of the daily business of its membership, but poised for action all the time. Occupying two large floors, with two or three times the space of the headquarters of the Central Labor Union, with an auditorium seating 1,500, adequate office space, several conference rooms and a bar, Local 574 is equipped for business and does plenty of it. As many as six different meetings of separate categories of workers, including those employed on relief projects, take place on a single night. Over three thousand people were packed into the halls on the night of the demonstration against the Green-Lewis "Red" drive, with a large overflow crowd in the streets listening to the loudspeaker. In addition, the headquarters serve as a social center for the membership. Every week there is one kind of an affair or another, dances, smokers, lectures, frolics. Sports are organized around the union—baseball, football and

soccer teams compete with amateur rivals in the uniform of Local 574. All this is reflected in signs, announcements and gatherings at the headquarters. Local 574 is a mass movement, drawing its people ever closer to the union, taking hold of their work and in their hours of recreation, welding them together. A formidable, new movement. A really inspiring union, the pride of the whole northwest, strong in the affection of the working masses. A hard union to bust, as the bosses of Minneapolis know, and as Tobin, Green and Meyer Lewis are learning. Local 574 is strong in itself, but its great advantage in every struggle is the enthusiasm and devotion with which the rank and file of the other unions rally around it. Local 574 has won this devotion by the inspiring example it has set before them and by the ready and effective cooperation in time of trouble. From a formal standpoint Local 574 is an "outlaw." They have revoked its charter and declared it "outside" the general labor movement. But in the real essence of the matter Local 574 is "inside"—in the hearts of the rank and file of all the other unions.

These things are the real capital of Local 574 in the struggle. In spite of all, it is conceivable that the united forces of reaction in the labor movement could crush and destroy it as they have crushed other isolated unions before. But the tide is not running that way at present. The workers are in a more militant mood. They are clamoring for industrial unionism, sick and tired of the policy that brings nothing but defeat. Craft unionism is cracking at the seams in the A. F. of L. The reactionaries have too many fights on their hands to concentrate on Minneapolis alone. The ardent sympathy of progressives and militants everywhere is on the side of Minneapolis, and that helps in various ways. For all these reasons it appears to me that the militants of Local 574 have a fighting chance for victory again. That's all they ever asked for.

COPS GET A SHELLACKING



Who Are the Progressive Leaders of the A.F. of L.?

(Continued from Page 4)

Chas. P. Howard's position in the "progressive" bloc to promote industrial unionism is somewhat unique. His organization, the typographical union, is distinctly craft-conscious. But Howard does understand the importance of organized groups functioning inside the unions. He was elected President of the union on the slate of a faction calling itself the Progressive Party, which for years fought the more reactionary "Wahnitans."

Strangely enough, Frank Morrison, the eternal Secretary of the A. F. of L. and ardent supporter of Green, comes from this same typographical union. Or maybe this is not so strange after all. Howard genuinely fears that if the A. F. of L. becomes immune to necessary progress, somebody else will take over the job of organizing the workers. This was the tenor of his support of industrial unionism at the San Francisco convention last year, and he made no bones about whom he feared. At the Atlantic City convention he repeated almost word for word his previous speech on this particular point, saying: "Now, let me say to you that the workers of this country are going to organize, and if they are not per-

mitted to organize under the banner of the American Federation of Labor they are going to organize under some other leadership or they are going to organize without leadership. And if either of those conditions should extenuate, I submit to you that it would be a far more serious problem for our government, for the people of this country and for the American Federation of Labor itself than if our organization policies should be so molded that we can organize them and bring them under the leadership of this organization."

It would thus be absurd to assume that there is a real distinction between the Lewis forces and the Green forces in questions of basic class ideology. Nevertheless, the present situation is clear to militant and to revolutionary workers in the trade unions. Around the issues that stand out today—an aggressive policy of organization and industrial unionism—they must make common cause and a common struggle with the Lewis "progressive" bloc. This struggle, once it takes real hold, will rage primarily

In the mass production industries. And this is also where the real future lies for unionism in America. From these industries the basic cadre of the movement must be recruited.

To the revolutionary workers the movement and its objectives are the fundamental question. They must draw a clear line between this movement and individuals who may be there by chance. Basically the rank and file will unquestionably gravitate more and more toward the support of the "progressive" bloc on this issue. It has raised. Such support, however, this bloc will receive as an opponent of the bosses and as an opponent of reaction. The center of gravity of the masses is now shifting in a leftward direction and the logic of the position of the "progressives" will make it difficult for them to draw back. Even the issues of trade union democracy as a prerequisite to the accomplishing of any change of policy of organization will tend to drive them toward a defense of this principle. Other progressive issues will emerge. They will also tend to coalesce into a serious movement in which the genuine progressives will take their rightful place. The fundamental question will then also arise more clearly as to where the various elements stand on issues of the class struggle.

A beginning toward a movement is made, and with all the qualifications necessary in estimating the personnel now in the lead, a real opportunity is presented for militant workers. Pursuing the tactic of common struggle around the progressive issues of today, critical of all attempts of deception, compromise and capitulation to reaction, courageous and audacious, the militant workers can become the leaven for a strong and genuine progressive movement of tomorrow.

DASCH SPEAKS ON OLYMPICS
Friday, December 6, 8 P.M. at 320 East 14th Street, Al Dasch, former Metropolitan A.A.U. 147-lb. boxing champion, will speak on whether the Olympics should be held in Germany. Admission free.

Fred Zeller, Leader of the Paris Socialist Youth Declares for the Fourth International

(Continued from Page 1)

day under the white heat of the class struggle that political values are brought into sharper, boldest relief. It is the showdown—a time when no ambiguity is possible.

Days of Decisive Struggle

These are the days in France when the class struggle itself rips every shred of pretense and hypocrisy from those who stand in the van of the working class. In the decisive struggles to come the workers will learn who are their leaders—and who their betrayers.

It is at a time like this that comrade Zeller—only a year ago an avowed opponent of "Trotskyism"—has come forward with the call for a fight for the Fourth International, for a new party, as the only way out for the French proletariat. The youth organization of the Seine and whole federations and parts of federations elsewhere in France will follow his fighting lead.

Through what experience did Fred Zeller pass to arrive at this conclusion? That is what every young Socialist, every Young Communist, if he really counts himself a fighter against capitalism, will want to know. Comrade Zeller has himself written the answer. In one of the most valuable documents of the present-day revolutionary labor movement—a pamphlet of a few thousand words—Fred Zeller describes the evolution of the Youth during the past year in terms of the political developments which have brought the fight against Fascism onto the order of the day in France.

Addressed to his own comrades in the Socialist Youth of France and to comrades throughout the world, the pamphlet gives, with all the authority of a leading participant, a picture of what has been happening in France, a picture of the Front Populaire in action, a pitiless picture of the social democracy and Stalinism in their final, social-patriotic, class-collaborationist phase. He gives a living and striking demonstration of the result of the impact of events and the influence of firm Bolshevik ideas. Firm attachment to the interests of the proletariat led him relentlessly from the bosom of the social democracy in which he was nurtured into firm solidarity with the Bolshevik-Leninists whom upon first meeting he distrusted and fought.

He describes the growing sentiment among the Socialist Youth of France against the social democratic bureaucracy of the S.F.I.O. He relates how into this leftward moving current came the Bolshevik-Leninists. At the beginning Zeller and his comrades were alienated.

Hatred for Bolshevism

"Despite our desire to take a progressive road, it seemed to us that between them and us there was an unbridgeable gulf." As young Socialists "we had been brought up in the party with a hatred for Bolshevism."

The vigorous activity of the young Bolsheviks—all too vigorous, it seemed to their Socialist comrades—led Zeller and his associates to unite in an organized faction under the name of Revolutionary Socialist Youth which was formed to combat, as they saw it at the time, "both the reformists and the Trotskyists."

But it was not long before this faction, under the pressure of events, began to itself move in a

clearer leftward direction. "One part, the most progressive, entered into collaboration with the Bolshevik-Leninists."

In this period, early 1935, the young revolutionary Socialists fought the S.F.I.O. bureaucracy, above all on the question of national defense versus revolutionary defeatism. This period coincided with the new turn of the Stalinists, particularly in the matter of national defense, as Franco-Soviet negotiations for a military pact proceeded.

Stalin's Missionaries in France
In April, Zeller relates, two representatives of the Y.C.I. came to Paris, Kossarov and Chemedanov, and approached him with a demand that he and his comrades take a sharp position against the Trotskyists, and for adhesion to the Third International.

Lengthy extracts are given from

Not Hollow Preaching - But Clear Cut Slogans!

(From Leon Trotsky's Preface to Fred Zeller's Pamphlet)

"In the ebb and flow of our epoch, amid great defeats and disillusionments, in the growth of the conservative Soviet bureaucracy, the oldest generation of both Internationals has largely spent itself, become a hollow shell and fallen prostrate. The building of the new International fails with its main weight upon the young generation. The obstacles are great, the tasks colossal. But it is precisely in the struggle against great obstacles that fighting cadres are formed and steeled. The Seine Federation of the Youth and after it the provinces as well can and should take an honored place in this work. More faith in ourselves, in our forces and in the future! Let the philistines howl about the tactlessness, the brassiness and exaggerations of the youth. Cadres of the revolutionary party have never yet been educated either in the ballet schools or in diplomatic chancelleries. The revolution is not only 'tactless' but it is ruthless when need arises. That is why Messrs. Bourgeois hate Leninism (with Stalinism they get along not so badly). The social-patriots translate the bourgeoisie's fear into the language of sanctions, expelling young Bolsheviks from the party, while the centrist philistines curse on this account—the Fourth International. This need not worry us. All those processes take place in the thin layer of the bureaucracy and the workers' aristocracy. One must look deeper into the masses that languish in the chains of the crisis, hate their slave owners, desire struggle, are capable of struggle and in Toulon and Brest have already made their first assault. These masses do not need hollow preaching on unity, not the false 'tactfulness' of the salon, but clear-cut slogans and courageous leadership. Let us hope that Zeller's pamphlet will perform a service in the cause of the education of the young cadres of the new International!"

Written on Nov. 7, 1935.

the stenographic record of Zeller's meeting with the Y.C.I. representatives during which the now famous injunction was given them: "If in this period you make your revolution you are traitors!" The Stalin-Laval declaration in May completed the education of the young Socialists.

"They hoped to use us to betray the supreme interests of the international proletariat. We indignantly refused. Chemedanov came not to win us from reformism but to push us into the arms of our bourgeoisie under the falacious pretext of defending democracy against the principal enemy, Hitlerite Fascism. To serve the needs of a poor cause, they wanted to yoke us to our General Staff. Strongly opposed, we took up the struggle fiercely."

The brochure develops in detail the relations between the S.F.I.O. and Stalinist leaderships and the revolutionary wing of the Seine party and describes the expulsions perpetrated at Lille, their sequel, the role of the S.A.P.ists (followers of the Socialist Workers Party of Germany) in the French youth, their capitulation and the proudly developing fight of the main body of the youth on a developing revolu-

Expulsions, War Crisis, Toulon

The expulsion of revolutionists, the events at Toulon and Brest, the growth of the war crisis, and the swift drop into foul betrayal by both bureaucracies hammered home, with Bolshevik-Leninist help, the real issue:

"Seeing that the policy followed by the Second and Third Internationals were nothing but a reflection and an echo of the League of Nations and that there was no longer an independent working class policy on a world scale, and that in fact we were witnessing the bankruptcy of the internationals and the decomposition of their national sections, we concluded that with relentless inevitability, today or tomorrow, the indispensable regrouping of the whole proletarian vanguard would take place on the basis of

revolutionary program.

"We have deep roots in the youth and that is important. Only those who in the days to come will know how to be the faithful interpreters of the will of the youth, who will offer it an unstained flag and clear perspectives, will win the victory in France."

"We are forging in the daily struggle the cadres of the great revolutionary party of tomorrow. From now on we call loudly to the working class youth of France: The Young Socialists of the Seine have had a series of experiences in the struggle. Now they have definitely broken with the policy of bankruptcy and of treason of the two Internationals. In the face of the bourgeoisie which is showing its teeth they do not want to bend the knee but to fight!"

"They want a party and an international of struggle which will be faithful to revolutionary Marxism, to the ideas of Lenin and the glorious tradition of the Bolsheviks of October, 1917!"

"The Second and Third Internationals are nothing more now than decomposing corpses."
"Henceforth, for the grouping of all the exploited of the earth under the banner of the Fourth International."

"Love live the French Revolution!"
"Long live the world revolution!"
To comrade Zeller and all his fellow-fighters among the revolutionary youth of France we extend the hand of comradely greeting. Welcome, fellow-fighters for the Fourth International!

Fred Zeller's pamphlet, with a preface by L. D. Trotsky, will be published by the Workers Party in the very near future. Send in contributions to insure the speediest publication to 55 E. 11th St., New York City. Place your bundle orders now!

He describes in some detail the evolution of the heterogeneous "Revolutionary Left" led by Marceau Pivert who, he writes, was forced by the leftward political development of the rank and file in the adult party to solidary with the expelled leaders of the Seine youth. But Pivert "stopped in the full middle of the road." "Neither to the right nor to the left—that is the constitutional formula of Pivert." He describes how they took part in the organization meeting of the Revolutionary Left but have constantly sought to warn and win Pivert and his comrades to a rev-

olutionary position. "Carry out the indispensable rapprochement with the Trotskyists." This was Zeller's advice to Marceau Pivert, who remains so far, with many of his comrades, under illusions concerning the "democracy" in the Socialist Party which they think will enable them to seize its apparatus and introduce a revolutionary policy from the top.

The Two Roads

"It is clear," says Zeller, "that such a tendency will not go far. Under the pressure of circumstances and the pressure of events, it will automatically differentiate, just as the Revolutionary Socialist Youth did. The soundest and most active wing will come near to the Bolshevik-Leninists. The other will return to the shirt-tails of the reformists, to the shorn-tails of the bureaucracies."

What perspectives does Zeller open up?

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