

Organized Labor and the Corcoran Case

Answers Slanders of Boss Press and C. P. With Counter Attack

(Continued from page 1)

ism in the Minneapolis labor movement which resulted in the murder of Patrick J. Corcoran." Incredible as it may seem, this is a literal quotation of the Stalinist leaflet! Despairing of getting any attention by further parading under the name of the paper C.I.O. office here, which they control, the Stalinists issued this leaflet over the name of a "Volunteer Committee for driving gangsterism from Minneapolis."

Like the boss press propaganda, its Stalinist echo serves to exonerate in advance all enemies of the labor movement and to brand the labor movement as Pat Corcoran's murders. Like the boss press, the Stalinists are slandering a prominent leader of the trade union movement and shielding his assassins! The Stalinists are giving a blank check to all enemies of labor. If the Stalinist line prevails, any labor leader killed will not only be killed with impunity by labor's enemies, but dishonored in death!

Bosses Utilize C. P. Slander

The Minneapolis Star, less bold in its anti-labor moves than the other sheets here, found in the Stalinist charges a heaven-sent opportunity to stab labor unionism in the back. Concentrating its stories about the Corcoran murder around the Stalinist frame-up charges of racketeering in the unions, the Star puffs up the "charges made by union leaders"—meaning the Stalinists—as the issue of most importance.

As a result of labor's rising indignation at the way in which the Stalinists are joining the bosses in linking Corcoran to gangsterism in the unions, the Stalinists are trying now to get out from under, by claiming that it was the A.F. of L. here, and not the Stalinists, who first suggested the possibility that Corcoran's murder was the result of inter-union warfare.

In its only editorial so far on the Corcoran case, the only Stalinist-controlled labor paper in the state, Midwest Labor of Duluth, now tries to accuse the A.F. of L. here of first intimating "that the murder was an outgrowth of friction between the AFL and CIO."

The Stalinists lie, and they know they lie. Not a single A. F. of L. leader here has ever made that charge. But before Corcoran's body was even in the earth, the Stalinists had run to Mayor Leach: not to demand a search for Corcoran's murders, but to declare that Corcoran's slaying was the work of gangsters imported by the AFL and to dally upon Leach to investigate the "gangster and racketeering elements in the Minneapolis labor movement."

Labor Indignant at Tactics

Who is Mayor Leach! In a resolution of the Minnesota C.P. of July 10, 1937, Leach is characterized as "this ambitious Republican faker and fascist-minded general, who is the agent of the trike-breaking Citizens Alliance." It is to this man and his police that the Stalinists run "to clean gangsterism out of the Minneapolis labor movement." While the bona fide labor movement is demanding of all governmental agencies that they concentrate on finding Pat Corcoran's murder, the Stalinists provide the bosses and the "fascist-minded general" with a way to shield Pat's murderers.

Local trade unionists are recoiling with bitter indignation against the attempt of the Stalinists to link up alleged union gangsterism with the foul murder of Pat Corcoran, and their appeal to Mayor Leach for a police assault on the labor movement.

What the boss press is really after is revealed by the alleged acts, which the St. Paul Daily News lists under the slogan, "terrorism, not unionism." One of these is: "The Daily News knows of dozens of cases where out-of-town truckers were stopped at the city limits, threatened, forced to return to the town from which they had started." What are the facts? The North Central District Drivers Council is conducting a unionization campaign. Unorganized drivers are constantly hailed on the highways and urged to cease playing the game of the bosses. This is the most elementary, most traditional, and most fundamental method of building unions. To stop this, as the Daily News demands, would mean the end of the unions. And that is just what the capitalist press want. It is positively revolting to read these attacks on the North Central District Drivers Council, brazenly "linked up" by the kept press to the murder of Pat Corcoran, who was chairman of that Drivers Council! Thus the prostitute press seeks to make its own filthy capital out of the death of a union man. Every worker in the labor movement must help to combat this poison by pointing out to his shop-mates, to his neighbors, to all oppressed by the bosses, how the kept press does the work of the enemies of labor.

Executing G.P.U. Orders

But to do that job thoroughly, every decent union man must point out, too, how the Stalinists play the game of the bosses. Blind to all aims except the task dictated to them by the G.P.U.—get the Trotskyists by hook or crook!—the Stalinists have tarred the Minneapolis trade unions, have slandered a fallen leader, have seconded the boss propaganda, have made it possible for ene-

mies of labor to assassinate other labor leaders and blame it on labor! The clumsy stupidity with which the Stalinists have moved, in their desperate determination to frame-up the militants who lead the Minneapolis labor movement is simply an indication that they rush to obey their G.P.U. bosses at the crack of the whip, without daring to take the time even to make a good job of it. That servile obedience to their masters is the root of many of the blunders of the G.P.U.

The most notorious of all reactionary American papers, the Chicago Tribune, seizes upon the Stalinist charge of racketeering in the labor movement to draw the conclusion, in an editorial, "The Trouble with Minnesota," on November 27, that the "unprincipled racketeers" in the labor movement who "caused Corcoran's death" flourished because "Minnesota became the field of radicalism"! The Tribune concludes:

Reactionary "Tribune" Gloats

"The radical government of Minnesota has set up the principle that lawlessness used in disputes of employer and employees is a proper method of adjustment, and from that established principle it would follow that in any dispute crime may be the easiest and most conclusive method of gaining success. Of course, all other forms of lawlessness and vice, including kidnapping, take encouragement from such conditions, and Minnesota is a distressed state."

The strike weapon, say these Bourbons, leads to crime. Therefore? The remedy proposed by the Tribune on other occasions is: outlaw strikes. The absurd lengths to which the Tribune goes would be laughable—were it not for the protective-collaboration provided it by the identical Stalinist assertion that Pat Corcoran's death was caused by union gangsterism.

Has International Source

Only a clear understanding of the international plight of the Stalinists helps one understand what mad desperation drives them to such moves. The Moscow trials are universally discredited; their attempted Trotskyist frame-ups in Spain have not materialized; four G.P.U. agents seized red-handed are soon to be tried in Switzerland for the murder of Ignace Reiss; their attempt to frame up Grylewicz in Czechoslovakia as a Nazi agent was quickly exposed; the whole European labor movement charges them with having kidnapped and transported from Spain to Russia, Mark Rein, son of a leader of the Socialist International.

The police minds of the G.P.U. can think of only one kind of solution for their plight: try some more frame-ups. Europe hasn't been so good, let's try America. And in America, they are constantly plagued by the fact that "Trotskyist-Fascist assassins" are the acknowledged leaders of militant Minneapolis labor unionism. Orders go out from the G.P.U. The local flunkies rush to obey. Clumsily, stupidly, insanely, but obey they must. Another bungled job of the G.P.U. But we must make every worker understand the frame-up methods of the G.P.U., now exposed to sight in Minneapolis.

Union Militants Meet To Map Campaign For Investigation

A few hours after Pat Corcoran was found murdered, the labor unions of Minneapolis launched a most vigorous campaign to get Pat's murderers.

The first action of the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council, meeting on Thursday morning, November 18, twelve hours after Corcoran's death, was to post a cash reward of ten thousand dollars for information leading to the arrest and conviction of his slayers.

The special edition of the Northwest Organizer, organ of the teamsters' council, which now has a paid circulation of twenty-five thousand, on November 18 called upon the Farmer-Laborite State Attorney General, Ervin, to appoint immediately a Special Investigator to be assigned to uncover Corcoran's murder.

Offer \$10,000 Reward

In radio speeches delivered the same day, Miles Dunne and other drivers' officials, in announcing plans for the city-wide cessation of work during the morning of Corcoran's funeral, broadcast to the country the offer of the ten thousand dollars reward.

Daily since then, General Drivers Union Local 544, the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council, the Minneapolis Board of Union Business Agents, and the Central Labor Union, have demanded of the authorities that they activate all possible agencies in the search for the assassins.

Spur Coroner to Act

On Tuesday, November 23, Miles Dunne presented to the County Coroner a resolution passed by the executive boards of Local 544 and the Teamsters Joint Council, demanding that Coroner Gilbert Seashore summon immediately a coroner's jury and proceed with an inquest into Corcoran's murder. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the Board of Business Agents also, and as a result Seashore has announced that the jury will be called and the inquest gotten under way, on Tuesday, Nov. 30.

General Drivers Local 544 and the Joint Council continued pressing the Attorney-General to appoint a Special Investigator, who would have the confidence of organized labor. On Tuesday a Council representative introduced a resolution to this effect before the Board of Business Agents, which unanimously approved it. Finally, the state's Attorney General, Ervin, granted an interview to a delegation from Drivers Local 544.

Press For Special Investigation

Pleading lack of funds, at the interview on November 24, Ervin refused to appoint a Special Investigator. Instead, Ervin referred the drivers' committee to the chief of the State Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Melvin C. Passolt, a former member of the Minneapolis police force. Passolt assured the delegation that his office was active in seeking a solution to the crime, as part of the bureau's regular activities.

The drivers' unions, however, continue to press the need for a special staff which could undertake to concentrate on finding Corcoran's slayers.

Dissatisfied with the reaction of the authorities to the assassination, on Monday evening, Nov. 29, a special meeting of all officers and business agents of all AFL local unions in Minneapolis will be held at the Pioneer Hall, where the present status of the investigation will be reviewed and plans laid to bring further pressure to bear to intensify the search for the murderers.

In its issue of November 25, the Northwest Organizer, weekly organ of the Teamsters Joint Council, reiterated its demand that a Special Investigator from the Attorney-General's office be assigned to the Corcoran case. In calling for a Coroner's Jury, the Northwest Organizer said: "Every agency which can throw additional light on the cowardly and brutal murder of Patrick C. Corcoran must be made to function immediately so that all facts may be obtained... There must be no delay. No possible agency must be permitted to withhold its powers... Labor demands an inquest by Coroner's Jury into Pat Corcoran's murder."

Benson Asks U. S. Help

Governor Benson, reacting to the union pressure to draw the state Attorney-General's office into the investigation, called upon the Federal Bureau of Criminal Investigation for aid in the search. After stalling for a few days, Attorney General Homer S. Cummings announced that the U. S. Department of Justice would not enter the case "unless evidence is produced that a federal crime was committed." As it is not a federal crime to assassinate progressive labor leaders, there seems but a slight chance that the G-men will be brought into the case.

From day to day, the Minneapolis police, according to the employer-press, anticipate a "break" in the case, only to confess at the end of each day that they are right back where the case started.

Whereas local authorities and the boss papers are showing an increasing disposition to drop the case and shunt it aside, the progressive labor movement is determined to press with the utmost energy until the murderers are discovered. The Teamsters Joint Council, and General Drivers Local 544 are determined to leave no stone uncovered until the brutal and cowardly murder of the martyred union leader is solved. Everything possible is being done to make the coroner's inquest a serious investigating body, to uncover new angles to the case.

It is hoped and anticipated that the special meeting of all AFL union officials and business agents to be held Monday evening, Nov. 29, will give new impetus to the search for the slayers.

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