

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. I. - No. 17. Saturday, Dec., 4, 1937

Published every week by the
SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASS'N.

Published at 116 University Place, N. Y.

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for 6 months. Foreign: \$2.50 per year. Bundle order 3 cents per copy. Single copies 5 cents.

All checks and money orders should be made out to the Socialist Appeal.

Entered as second-class matter September 1, 1937 at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

WHO KILLED PATRICK CORCORAN, AND WHY?

(Continued from page 1)

Wages: the great truck strike of July 1934 was settled on the basis of 42½ cents per hour minimum and 52½ cents maximum. Today the standard scale for drivers in the Twin Cities is 70 cents per hour, with time and one-half for over-time, and paid vacations!

These figures—of membership and wages—tell the real story. Call it "Trotskyism" or what you will—with its ruthless militancy and its unceasing pressure for more wages and better conditions, it has cost the once-arrogant bosses tens of millions of dollars since 1934 and driven the once all-powerful Citizens Alliance underground! No wonder they holler blue murder and denounce the Minneapolis union system as a "racket"! But in truth cleaner, more democratic and more scrupulously honest unions do not exist anywhere. That is no small part of the secret of their power and of the unchallenged authority of the leadership.

2. Pat Corcoran:

The martyred labor leader was a representative of the old school of trade unionism who, like not a few others, adapted himself to the spirit and methods of the great organizing campaigns inaugurated in 1934, and played a significant part in their further development. In the bitter inter-union struggle which followed the revocation of the charter of Local 574 in the summer of 1935, and lasting for one year, Corcoran, then head of the milk drivers, stood on the side of the A. F. of L. group and was bitterly and justly assailed by the leaders of Local 574 for his part in that reactionary jurisdictional war. But it was Corcoran who initiated the peace negotiations which led to the truce, then to the reinstatement of the "outlaw" union, and to the union of forces which led to the past year and a half. A Farmer-Laborite in politics, a Catholic and a man with a background of traditional, conservative unionism, Pat Corcoran nevertheless made a real peace with the terrible "Dunne brothers" and other leaders of Local 574 (now Local 544), found a common line with them in union policy and in building up the unions and making the bosses pay more wages. All hands testify to the admirable personal collaboration in the new set-up after the peace. How else account for the great gains, the expansion of union organization to St. Paul, Duluth and all points in the North Central District, the solid strength of the expanding unions, the firm unity, discipline and morale?

Pat, a stalwart figure, a distinctive human personality and a militant unionist, won the confidence and esteem of the rank and file. He was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Teamsters Joint Council of Minneapolis, and Chairman of the North Central District Drivers Council. Denounced habitually by the Stalinist wrecking crew as a "Trotskyite," he made no denials or apologies. When he was assassinated in the line of duty, ten thousand workers turned out to his funeral, stopping all trucks for the occasion. That silent testimony of the rank and file is a powerful answer to the slanderers of Corcoran, to the blackguards who defame his memory.

3. Attitude of the Labor Movement:

The labor movement of Minneapolis does not follow the national pattern. The bona-fide labor movement here consists of a powerful group of A. F. of L. unions, revitalized by the organizing campaigns of the recent years and generally progressive in their policies. The C.I.O. movement here—so-called—outside the textile and clothing unions, consists for the most part of Stalinist paper organizations and split-offs from progressive A. F. of L. unions—split-offs criminally engineered by these buzzards of the labor movement. The C.I.O. as a national movement speaks in the name of millions of organized workers, but in Minneapolis it is only the Charlie McCarthy of the Communist party, the stooge for its crooked maneuvers and the scapegoat for its crimes.

The A. F. of L. unions, that is, the bona-fide labor movement as far as this section of the country is concerned, reacted militantly to the assassination of Corcoran. A flood of statements, letters and telegrams poured into the office of the Teamsters Joint Council and all struck the same note: sympathy and solidarity with the driver's unions, denunciation of the murder as a blow inspired by labor's enemies, esteem for the martyr. The honorary pall bearers at the funeral were a virtual roster of the officials of the trade union movement. The rank and file turned out ten thousand strong to honor the memory of the assassinated leader. Grief and rage and the militant will to carry on—these were and remain the sentiments of the Minneapolis labor movement as a whole, and of all that is honest, genuine and decent in it.

4. The Bosses and Their Press:

Who killed Pat Corcoran and why? Well, at any rate, you can say the bosses didn't shed any tears about the killing. They—or rather, their dirty tools—killed Henry Ness and John Belor in the 1934 strike and another union man's blood wouldn't make their union record any blacker. Beaten by the drivers in every test of strength since 1934, obliged to witness—and pay for—the consistent spread of unionism to other industries, discredited before the public and obliged to resort to various disguises and subterfuges—on the order of the Communist Party "innocent clubs"—the black gang of the Citizens Alliance sought to utilize the killing of Corcoran to cast discredit on the trade union movement. They began to moan and sigh about "racketeers" and "gangsters". If they displayed not the slightest interest in the apprehension of the murderers, they were ready to join a movement to start an "investigation" of the trade unions, out of which might come—who knows?—a "purge" of the movement and, perhaps, also a neat frame-up of its most authentic leaders.

Here, like a troupe of actors getting the cues, the agency of the G.P.U., the American contingent of the international frame-up and murder machine, otherwise known as the Communist party, and sometimes in Minneapolis as the "C.I.O.," took a hand in the game.

5. Enter the G.P.U.:

Who killed Pat Corcoran and why? Well, you can say one thing without fear of going wrong. The G.P.U. gang was ready—too ready!—to point the accusing finger at the unions represented by Corcoran and to his co-workers in the leadership. They didn't need any evidence and they didn't wait for any investigation. As for evidence they have a ready formula employed with such proficiency in Russia, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia, China and other places: frame it up! As for investigation, they have already finished it beforehand and have the verdict ready.

Nevertheless, Minneapolis is not Moscow. One must proceed more cautiously and deviously here. The adopted formula is: first smear the unions, slanders, and discredit the leaders, malign the dead man's memory and then—who knows?—something can be cooked up in the way of a legal frame-up.

The Minneapolis "C.I.O."—no relation to the national C.I.O.—bobs up with a statement batted out in the Communist party office to the effect that labor "gangsterism" is behind the assassination. The daily press and the press associations grab that up—it is right down their alley and turns attention and suspicion away from the forces which killed Henry Ness and John Belor. The Daily Worker manufactures "news" about the rising popular indignation against "gangsterism" which is "linked," of course, to the omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent "Dunne brothers"—the Stalinist name for militancy, courage and incorruptibility in the Minneapolis labor movement.

The G.P.U. agency are past masters at the art of frame-up and other dark and bloody devices, and I don't for one minute wish to underrate their resources in this respect. At first glance it may appear that they have a good set-up here. They have the natural interest of the bosses to divert suspicion from themselves and deal another blow at their hated enemies—the leaders of the teamsters' unions. They have "church, social and civic organizations," to say nothing of "leading persons of the community" and "public spirited persons" in general, to whom they are now appealing in public statements and circulars and who can always be relied upon when an opportunity presents itself to stooge for the bosses and stab labor in the back. The Stalinists have money in unlimited amounts, vast agencies for slanderous publicity, and a retinue of conscienceless scoundrels ready for any infamy. They have what is known here

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C.P. Faking of Signatures Hit by Mpls. Unionists

MINNEAPOLIS. — That agents of the Communist party attached the names of Minneapolis labor union officials to a leaflet, without the knowledge or consent of the union officials listed, was revealed at the Wednesday morning session of Coroner Seashore's inquest jury's investigation.

One after another, officers of local unions took the stand and testified that the vicious leaflet, issued by an anonymous "volunteer committee", had listed their names as "A. F. of L. sponsors" without their ever having been approached for authorization.

Among those testifying to this were Lewis Benecke, carpenters; Herman Osland, carpenters; W. H. Hackett, electricians; Ray Steffens, sign writers; Peter Murck, sheet metal worker; Carl Hagland, Building Trades Council; D. F. Desmond, floor layers local; F. J. Spitzberger, cabinet makers; J. O. Johnson, carpenters; Ture Hendrickson, cement workers.

Meeting of Business Agents Denounces Daily Worker Lies

MINNEAPOLIS. — More than 150 officials of the Minneapolis labor movement assembled Monday night at the call of the Minneapolis Board of Union Agents voted almost unanimously to adopt a resolution on the murder of Patrick J. Corcoran which is a slashing condemnation of the fake "anti-gangsterism" meeting called by the Stalinists and their stooges and an exhortation of the foul slander campaign conducted against the best elements of the Minneapolis labor movement by the Daily Worker.

The stinging blow at the professional liars of the American G.P.U. organ, voted against by a tiny minority of the union officials led by the Stalinist Harold Bean, reads as follows:

"WHEREAS, The brutal murder of Patrick J. Corcoran, Secretary-Treasurer of the Teamsters Joint Council, was a blow at the labor movement of Minneapolis, obviously inspired by the enemies of organized labor, and

"WHEREAS, The Teamsters Joint Council has offered \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the assassins, and

"WHEREAS, In order to protect the labor movement and its chosen officers from a terroristic murder campaign, the most relentless efforts must be made to bring the assassins to deserved punishment, and

"WHEREAS, Every attempt to attribute the murder of Corcoran to forces inside the labor movement, and to besmirch the trade unions with the accusation that "gangsterism and racketeering" inside labor's ranks is responsible for the murder, constitutes a foul slander on the bona-fide labor movement and its martyred officer, and shields the real murderers and the dark forces behind them, and

HIT "DAILY WORKER"

"WHEREAS, the daily press controlled by the employers, and

the Daily Worker published by the Communist Party have joined in a campaign to smear and discredit the martyred Corcoran and the trade union movement, with the charge that his assassination was caused by "racketeering and gangsterism" in the trade unions, and

"WHEREAS, a public meeting has been called for Wednesday, December 1, at Eagles Hall, by an anonymous "Volunteer committee" under the announced slogan, "gangsterism in the Minneapolis labor movement resulted in the murder of Patrick J. Corcoran,"

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The assembled official representatives of the A. F. of L. unions of Minneapolis hereby call for the full concentration of all efforts in an unrelenting campaign to bring the murderers to justice,

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

We condemn the mass meeting announced for Wednesday, December 1, at Eagles Hall, as in no way representative of the attitude of organized labor, as being an aid to the mortal enemies of organized labor, and further evidence of an unscrupulous campaign by irresponsible elements to discredit and split the labor movement of Minneapolis."

Christmas Eve Dance

Friday, December 24th, at 9 P. M.

IRVING PLAZA

15th STREET AND IRVING PLACE

Tickets: In Advance 55 cents — At the door 75 cents

For Sale at: Labor Book Shop, 28 East 12th St.

AUSPICES: Convention Arrangements Committee
Socialist Party (Left Wing)