

Local 544 Victory Over Wholesale Grocers Hailed by Minneapolis Labor

MINNEAPOLIS.—Local 544's victory over the wholesale grocery bosses, sealed by an agreement unanimously accepted by the strikers at their meeting of December 13, has been hailed by the whole labor movement here.

"Drivers 544 Victory Marks Big Advance. Blueblood Aristocracy of Citizens Alliance Loses in Short, Effective Strike." These headlines from the Minneapolis Labor Review, organ of the Central Labor Union and by no means too friendly to the Teamsters' Progressive leadership, testify to the universal recognition of the importance of this victory.

"Labor Review's" Estimate of "C. I. O." Stalinists

The December 17 issue of the Minneapolis Labor Review also marked the acceptance by that organ for the first time of the progressives' estimate of the Stalinist-controlled CIO office here: "Tactics of the CIO in the Twin Cities are not helping the CIO and it is a certainty that they are not helping the labor movement in general," declared the Review in its leading editorial. "It does not seem possible national CIO leaders are aware of Twin City CIO policies." Thus officially the entire labor movement here stands opposed to the union wrecking and frame-up policy of the Stalinist machine. The Minnesota State Electrical Workers Council, composed of all the electrical workers' unions of Minnesota, last week adopted a resolution declaring that the boss-Stalinist slanders against Pat Corcoran "constitute a foul slander on the bona-fide labor movement and its martyred officer and shield the real perpetrators of this dastardly crime."

An Act of Despair

As the whole labor movement moved to isolate and condemn the Stalinist frame-up artists, the Stalinists resorted to a desperate measure to keep their forces together. A special Minnesota edition of the Daily Worker dated December 16 devoted more than two solid pages to the most insanely slanderous attack on the Teamsters' leadership which has yet appeared.

The Stalinist staff is on about the intellectual level of a shot of dope. Apparently the stuff is really written for people outside of this area who might not know any of the facts. A few examples will suffice:

1. Faked pictures: Pat Corcoran with a sinister scar drawn across his face; Bill Brown with hard lines put on his face, and a leering Vincent Dunne.
2. A big picture of a sign of the Northern States Power Co. under the heading "A Power Behind Leach," under which is written: "Public utilities in Minneapolis were the main backers of Mayor Leach's campaign, but the Dunne brothers, Trotskyists, had their hands in it too." All that is wrong with this amalgam is that the Northern States Power Co. was licked in a strike and its employees organized 100 per cent by the same progressive leadership which the Stalinists are attacking!

The Firotto-Bellini Amalgam

3. The Stalinist amalgam has as its link Ed and Al Firotto and Joe Bellini, all of whom long ago separated from Local 544—they were part of the Local 500 offi-

cialists who came over as part of the agreement from which resulted the present Local 544. By unanimous decision the Executive Board of the Union discharged the Firottos, Bellini was also gotten rid of and came into sharp conflict with Local 544 when it took jurisdiction over all the gasoline drivers. Previously these drivers had been divided among a weak CIO local, Bellini's gasoline station workers' local, and no union at all.

How get around these facts and justify the amalgam between the Firottos, Bellini, and the Dunnes? Very simple—for the Stalinist lie factory. They simply ignore the facts and state the opposite. "After the merger (by which 544 was established) Ed and Al Firotto, now awaiting trial for assaulting another union man with a gun, and another alleged Chicago mobster, Joe Bellini, became firmly entrenched in Local 544 as 'organizers' and part of the Trotskyist machine." Not a single mention of the ousting of the Firottos and Bellini!

4. The screaming absurdity of the article signed by "A Truck Driver" which obviously was written by Harry Raymond in New York. The "Truck Driver" proves his thorough familiarity with the internal mechanisms of Local 544 by saying, "They control Local 544 without democratic procedure. The Executive Board appoints the stewards; the stewards elect the Executive Board." Imagine handing this stuff out to Minneapolis workers at the moment when the election campaign is in full blast in the union, the membership meeting having made nominations last week!

Queer Allies

5. Having no friends in the labor movement, the Stalinists find like-minded allies among the preachers. It is almost impossible to convey to outsiders how mad the Stalinists are when they publish an article quoting at length the Reverend George Mecklenberg as supporting their proposal for a judicial investigation of the trade union movement. Mecklenberg is perhaps the most no-

torious enemy of decent workers' standards of relief in this community.

6. "A Truck Driver" says: "We say emphatically that the Trotskyite Dunnes are agents of the Citizens' Alliance and the forces of reaction in Minnesota. This can be supported by a mass of evidence with which every working man in Minneapolis is familiar." On the ground here in Minneapolis people rub their eyes to read such ravings. It is a matter of public record that the Teamsters' leadership drove the Citizens Alliance underground. The wholesale grocery bosses who were beaten last week were the bluebloods of the Citizens Alliance.

7. Hard put to build up any kind of an amalgam, even a putrid one, the Stalinists again dig up the notorious letter sent by the late Mayor Latimer to the Department of Justice, asking for aid in smashing the Teamsters' union. That letter was the most flagrant strike-breaking action ever taken by Latimer—but the Stalinists vouch for its accuracy!

"Explaining" Thugs

8. The Stalinist conception of the united front: "the public, labor, civic organizations, church people, merchants"—class treachery!

9. The Stalinists can't quite make up their minds how to explain the fact that, despite three years of systematic slander and attempted frame-ups, the Trotskyites remain the leadership of the Teamsters. On the same page they give three different explanations: (a) gangster terrorism; (b) wildest demagoguery and radical talk; (c) undemocratic regime in the union. The one thing they can't even mention, however, is the enormous growth of the union and the five-state North Central District Drivers Council and the perfect record of winning strikes.

This will give a picture of the new Stalinist frame-up here. Needless to say, the Daily Worker did not publish a single word about the wholesale grocery strike.

WAA Workers Fight Ousting of N. Harrison

Three Hundred Workers Storm Alliance Office And Demand Open Hearing; Force Lasser To Adjourn Session

NEW YORK.—Over three-hundred workers, militant members of the Workers' Alliance, who will not tolerate the Stalinist expulsion and disrupting squad heading the Alliance, stormed the City Office at 781 Broadway last Tuesday, demanding an open hearing on the case of Neil Harrison, Chairman of Local 15.

Seeing an aroused rank and file, the leadership, all the way up to Benjamin and Lasser, who were called in from Washington, found that they were treading on very thin ice and backed down momentarily on their rule or ruin policy.

Lasser's Offers

The local bureaucrats were completely cowed. Lasser, national Chairman of the Alliance was put forward as the spokesman. Evidently, not wishing a repetition in New York City of what has occurred elsewhere in the country, with rank and file members dropping out by the thousands, and major splits occurring against the bureaucratic domination of the Alliance by the Stalinist purges, Lasser offered what he thought was a compromise.

First he offered that the frame-up charges against Harrison be heard before the entire City Central Committee, which was shouted down by the rank and file present as being unconstitutional. He offered another proposal to be taken back and considered by the group concerned, the Progressive Group of the Alliance and Local 15, to the effect that Brother Harrison and those (the rank and file) supporting him choose 50 and those (the bureaucrats) bringing the charges, choose another 50, and the trial be held before these combined 100 representatives. Again this was shouted down by the militants present, who demanded an open hearing at which no rank and filer would be excluded.

With this, Lasser demanded that Harrison clear the hall, since he (Lasser) obviously had no influence over the unemployed assembled, and he then declared the session over.

Accusers as Judges!

The Adjustment Committee which is to hear the charges, is composed exclusively of Stalinists since the resignation of Brother Charles Mack, who recently resigned from that committee in protest against the frame-up and expulsion campaign being conducted against the mi-

litanis. This Adjustment Committee is composed of members on the Executive Committee who themselves preferred the charges.

"No Moscow Trials Here!"

The "charges" are not based on fact at all, but are mere blanket accusations with no bill of particulars attached to any one of them. Thus the ire of those present at this so-called hearing can readily be understood when they shouted "No Moscow Trials here!"

The demands of the rank and file are simple:

1. An open hearing.
2. A Bill of Particulars, itemizing in detail, what, when, where, how these things, with which Harrison is charged, occurred.
3. An adjustment committee that is not stacked. That excludes people who have themselves brought the charges, which is elementary working class procedure.

These demands are what the Progressive Group is fighting for, for all who are facing and have faced the bureaucratic fist of the Stalinists of the Alliance, in so far as expulsions are concerned.

Disregards Needs of Jobless

With thousands and thousands of unemployed recently removed from industry because of the new business "recession," with thousands waiting weeks on end to get on relief; with mass misery facing the unemployed, the leadership is more concerned with disrupting the organization, with expelling militant elements, than fighting against the administration at the relief bureau, who hold the life and death of the unemployed in their hands. They, the bureaucrats, are more concerned with not embarrassing LaGuardia, than with seeing that the unemployed are properly fed, housed and clothed.

Only an aroused and vigilant membership can stem the shameful and disruptive activities of the leadership. The record of these misleaders must be made known to every unemployed worker in the United States. A record of constant ruin of every movement which they head. A record of playing political football at the expense of the unemployed.

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