

# Twin Cities Progressives Score Smashing Victory

## Splitters Swept From Top Bodies Minneapolis Teamsters Sue "Daily Worker" for Libel

### Elections Drive Them From Central Labor Organs in Midwest

MINNEAPOLIS.—With one clean sweep, progressive slates in the Minneapolis Central Labor Union and the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly last month drove out of office local Stalinists and their fronts who have long been striving to split and raid established unions in the Twin Cities.

A number of other progressive developments have occurred in the Twin Cities area during the past month, the effect of which has greatly strengthened the union movement in this section.

1. On January 7-8 the annual elections in the General Drivers Local 544 were held, resulting in the return of all officers to their previous posts. Bill Brown won the race for president, the only office which was contested, by a 3 to 1 vote.

**Miles Dunne Elected**

2. On January 14 the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council demonstrated the harmony existing in the ranks of the local driving crafts by unanimously agreeing upon the new executive board. Miles Dunne was elected to the post of secretary-treasurer, the office formerly held by the martyred Pat Corcoran.

3. On January 14 the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly, at the largest delegate assembly ever held, repudiated the anti-labor St. Paul Grand Jury report which, inspired by the Citizens Alliance, was intended to be a weapon against the drivers' movement in the Twin Cities. By this action the delegates emphatically reversed an earlier endorsement of the jury report made by the St. Paul Union Advocate and by a few conservative union officials in that city.

**Split Drive Defeated**

4. In Austin, Minnesota, the employers initiated a campaign designed to split and disorganize the union movement. The Austin Drivers Union and the C.I.O. movement, which in this town is directed by progressives, formed a united front, beat back the scabby schemes of the bosses, and through a strike won a 10-cent hourly increase for a Miscellaneous Workers Union of the C.I.O.

5. A committee of 150 Minneapolis union officials has been formed to draw up and present to Governor Benson demands calculated to return to the trade union movement the decisive voice in Farmer-Labor Party circles. Benson and a group of Stalinist stooges, backed by the Communist Party, are seeking to carry the F.L.P. far to the right into a People's Front stew of right-wing F.L.P.'ers, New Deal Democrats and "progressive" Minnesota Republicans, thus isolating in F.L.P. circles the progressive union movement of the state.

**Demands To Be Made**

The committee of unionists will demand of Benson that he return the coming F.L.P. state convention from Duluth to St. Paul, that he assure labor its proper dominant role in the F.L.P. councils, etc.

The net result of the above listed developments is to place labor in Minnesota in a stronger position than ever, and to assure the continued progressive development of the unions in this state.

## JOE LUBICH

With deep sorrow the Minneapolis branch of the Socialist Workers Party reports the death of Joe Lubich, 48, treasurer of the Janitors Union, for 20 years a member of the Workmen's Circle, an old socialist, and a sympathizer of the Left Opposition since 1928.

Joe Lubich was chairman of a committee which came to the General Drivers Union in the early hours of May, 1934, to offer its services to the strikers. This committee became one of the main props for food collections during the May and July strikes and represented an important section of the Northside labor movement which was thus placed behind the strike.

The executive board of the General Drivers Union, together with a large delegation of drivers, attended the last rites for their friend.



PATRICK CORCORAN

## Big Steel Signs Again With CIO Would Avoid Difficulties With Fat War Orders Coming Soon

NEW YORK.—Big Steel last week renewed its agreement with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee of the C.I.O., maintaining the basic \$5 per day and 40-hour week that has prevailed throughout United States Steel subsidiaries the past 12 months. The alacrity with which the steel company signed up reflected its unwillingness to invite labor difficulties at a time when fat war contracts are looming.

The contract signed February 9, differs from the 1937 agreement only in that it runs for an indefinite period. Negotiations can be opened by either party on ten days notice. If, after an additional ten days of negotiations, agreement is not reached the contract is null and void.

**Open Shop Prevails**

As before, the S.W.O.C. represents only its own members, and the companies still hold to the open shop. Union officials did not ask for a closed shop, it was reported.

While the contract was ostensibly negotiated between the union and Carnegie-Illinois Steel, it will apply to all subsidiaries of U.S. Steel. Union officials estimated that 500,000 steel workers will be under similar agreements before negotiations are concluded.

Union officials hailed the signing as a victory for the C.I.O. policy of maintaining wage levels despite price cuts, especially as U.S. Steel used the occasion to announce reductions in the price of steel.

**Murray Satisfied**

Expressing his satisfaction with the renewal of the former contracts, Philip Murray, chairman of the S.W.O.C., stated: "These agreements will definitely stem the tide of wage-slashing which has been in vogue throughout the country."

No provisions for the better handling of grievances in the shop, a matter of great interest to the workers actually in daily contact with foremen and superintendents, were discussed. Such details, dealing with the working life of union members, were ignored by the official negotiators.

No opportunity for the rank-and-file of the steel workers to discuss or vote upon the agreement as a whole was afforded.

## EVELYN GORDON

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of Comrade Evelyn Gordon, a member of the Brownsville Circle of the Y. P. S. L. Only 20 years old at the time of her death, which occurred February 8 after a brief illness, our comrade was already an old fighter for the cause of Socialism, her record going back to the days of the Spartacus Youth League.

## Complaint Lists Repeated Stalinist Slanders Against Union

Charging that the Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party published false, malicious and defamatory statements about them, five leaders of Minneapolis' largest union filed suit this week in the Federal Court of the Southern District of New York, claiming damages of \$335,000.00. The complaint is probably the longest on record in any libel suit, covering over 100 pages and 16 exhibits.

Local 544 of the General Drivers Union of Minneapolis, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, William S. Brown, the president of the Local, Farrell Dobbs, Grant Dunne, Miles Dunne and Vincent Dunne, all leaders of the Union, are the plaintiffs. Morris D. Forkosh of New York is the attorney cooperating with Albert Goldman, Chicago labor attorney and attorney for Leon Trotsky during the hearing of the Dewey Commission in Mexico.

**Malicious Slanders**

In the complaint it is alleged that on 16 different occasions the Daily Worker falsely and maliciously designated the plaintiffs as "Trotskyite racketeers, gangsters, gunmen and associates of the employers and the underworld." The plaintiffs assert that the Stalinist Communists are in a conspiracy to injure their reputation among the workers of the whole country and particularly of Minneapolis.

The suit is a direct result of the killing on November 17 of last year, of Patrick J. Corcoran, Minneapolis labor leader. Corcoran was Secretary of the Joint Council of the General Drivers Union and was closely associated with the plaintiffs. According to the complaint the Communist organ has in several articles insinuated that the plaintiffs were responsible for the murder. They are specifically charged with being behind the trigger-men who killed Corcoran.

**G. P. U. Methods**

Attorney Goldman stated that "the Stalinists are transferring their frame-up methods from Moscow to the rest of the world. The Moscow trials which have been designated a frame-up by the Dewey Commission have been followed by a wave of terror in France, Spain and now in the United States. The disappearance of Juliet Poyntz, a former Communist who broke with the Communist Party, and the obvious attempt of the Soviet G.P.U. to use the Robinson-Rubensens for the purpose of implicating anti-Stalinist elements in this country in some fantastic plot, are serious indications that not only Trotskyists but all honest trade unionists and opponents of the Stalin regime must be exceedingly careful."

"I hope that this suit will help defend all anti-Stalinist elements in the labor movement and will check the unbridled ferocity of the Stalinists in their campaign to rule or ruin the labor movement," Goldman declared.

## WAA Progressives Unfold Program

(Continued from page 1)

the boss class and its governmental institutions. On the one hand, the LaGuardia police break strikes so effectively that the New York Post was able to report February 1 that "praise for Mayor LaGuardia and Police Commissioner Valentine was voiced today by the New York Chamber of Commerce because of their efforts to enforce the law against illegal picketing."

On the other hand, LaGuardia's relief bureau break sit-ins of the unemployed. They display anti-union signs in the best manner of Ford and try to intimidate the workless from joining the Workers' Alliance.

As the depression deepens, the double attack will grow sharper. The bosses will try to keep profits up by cutting wages, laying off workers, and securing reduced taxes. For the coming war Roosevelt is preparing to spend close to two billion dollars, a fat slice of which will go directly into the pockets of the armaments manufacturers in the shape

## One In Six In N. Y. Depend Upon Relief

One-sixth of the population of New York City is dependent on some form of relief, according to the findings in a survey quoted February 13 by the New York Times.

Public assistance rolls embrace, according to the survey, 1,255,000 of New York's 7,470,000 men, women and children and the number is rising at the rate of 5,000 per week.

This revealing statistical picture of capitalism in decline points the urgent need for organization and militant action by the workers, both employed and unemployed, to prevent the capitalists and their government from loading the burdens of the crisis onto their backs—to fight for socialism as the only way out of the blind alley of capitalism.

## Rorty Gives Stinging Reply To "Writers"

### Tells Few Home Truths To Communist Stooze Organization

A stinging rebuff to a well-known Stalinist stooze organization, the so-called League of American Writers, has been delivered by James Rorty, prominent radical author and journalist and a member of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky.

Occasion for the rebuff was a circular letter issued in the name of the "League" to the writers of America over the signature of Donald Ogden Stewart, asking for answers to the following questions: "Are you for, or are you against Franco and Fascism?—Are you for, or are you against the legal government and the people of Republican Spain."

**What He Wanted**

"We desire," said Stewart, "to print your answers. We wish the whole country to know what is felt by the most sensitive instruments of the national life, you American writers. Your verdict has world importance."

On February 4, Rorty replied as follows: "Dear Mr. Stewart: "I take it my name got on your mailing list by mistake. Since I have never been asked to join the League of American Writers, I must assume that I do not come under your definition of the term 'writer' or 'American writer.'"

"However that may be, I think it is sufficiently well known that I am against Franco and Fascism and for the legal government and the people of Republican Spain in their struggle against Franco and Fascism."

**Against Fascist Methods**

"I am also for the legal government of Republican Spain when, as and if it opposes the unscrupulous policies and actions of the Communist Party of Spain, which uses fascist methods (murder and slander) and has already seriously disrupted and impaired the unity and the morale of the Spanish workers. I am, finally, against the League of American Writers, as now organized and led, because I regard it as a typical Communist Party 'innocent club,' and as such a fake and a nuisance."

"If you use this letter in any way, I must ask you to use it in full. Incidentally, does it not occur to you and your associates that when you adopt the name 'League of American Writers' and then exclude from your membership writers of recognized competence and integrity who have devoted for more years than you have to liberal and radical struggles, simply because they differ with the particular political faction that controls your organization, you are not merely dishonest, but guilty of a profound disloyalty to the high tradition of the writer's craft?"

"Truth and forthrightness are the very source spring of the writer's profession. You have fouled that spring, but frankly I doubt that you are enough of a writer to understand that."

"Sincerely  
(signed) "James Rorty."

lions of additional unemployed and their dependents he asks Congress to appropriate—\$250.

## Party Resolutions TRADE UNION MOVEMENT and the S. W. P.

The following is the third and last installment of the resolution on the trade union question adopted by the convention of the Socialist Workers Party.

Precisely because of the intensely political and polemical environment in which our party has developed, it is necessary to emphasize a number of fundamental, elementary guiding lines for our trade union work.

The party is the leader and guide of all the work of its members in the trade unions. Without party leadership and guidance, all trade union work inevitably degenerates into opportunism and becomes a hindrance to revolutionary progress. In his mass work, the party member must not become a "mere trade unionist," or forget the need of imbuing the trade union movement with a revolutionary political class consciousness. However, in order effectively to pursue his work in the trade union movement the revolutionist must understand keenly the importance of approaching his fellow unionists and their problems not so much on the basis of his own consciousness and experience, but rather on the basis of the level of consciousness and the degree of experience of the average trade unionist.

To approach the trade unionist, trade union problems or even the trade union leadership in exactly the same manner in which one political organization deals with a rival political organization, would result in self-isolation. The revolutionist must be conscious of his political role, but at the same time also of the fact that he is dealing, in the first place, with trade union problems and with workers who have not as yet developed beyond a trade union consciousness.

The excellent work which our comrades have already done in various unions shows the vast, untapped possibilities for participation in the class struggle and recruitment to the revolutionary party which are opened up before us by a serious and systematic work in the trade unions.

### Serious, Responsible Approach Needed

A serious approach to the trade unions and their problems, and not a hyper-critical one, is the need; a responsible attitude toward the work of building the trade unions and our influence within them, and not a lightminded, "experimental" one; an attitude of methodical, patient enlightenment of the politically undeveloped worker on the basis of his day to day experiences in the unions and in the class struggle, and not a supercilious, "high-political" approach to him.

The present period also calls for a highly responsible attitude in the key question of strikes in general, and particularly sit-down strikes. It is imperative to combat the defeatist, reformist propaganda that strikes are impossible in a period of economic crisis or decline. Strikes, and victorious ones, are possible even under such difficult circumstances; only, it is more important than ever that they be carefully organized, the moment and the place deliberately chosen, and the struggle conducted in the most militant and determined manner. In this connection it is important to be aware of the danger of strikes or other actions confined to small minorities, harmful in general, and always tending to degenerate into adventurist movements which only antagonize the bulk of the organized workers.

The sit-down strike is not a universal substitute for the classic form of strike action (quitting the plant, mass picket line, etc.), but it is indubitably a proved contribution to proletarian tactics and an effective weapon in their struggle. Its initiation and extension are a tribute to the resourcefulness of the proletariat in finding new and powerful methods of fighting its class oppressors. It has served, moreover, the important end of breaking down an awesome respect for bourgeois private property which the ruling class instills in the proletariat from its childhood onward. It is our duty to defend this weapon against all attempts to suppress, discredit or outlaw it. This does not signify that we advocate the indiscriminate use of the sit-down at all times and in all cases. We judge its feasibility on the same general considerations which determine our tactics in strikes: general objective conditions, the state of the union, mood of the membership, position of the employers and the state, possibilities of achieving the objective, etc., etc.

### Sit-Down Has Significant Future

The sit-down strike has, however, an even more significant future before it than the ordinary strike. Precisely because it challenges the fundamental tenet of capitalism, the inviolable right of private property in the means of production, the sit-down strike seems to be one of the main indicated means of mass action—by virtue of the seizure of the plants and their temporary control by workers' committees—for realizing in the coming period the slogan of: **Workers' control of production!** The deepening of the present crisis will push this slogan to the foreground and, properly directed by the revolutionary party, it may become the decisive popular slogan with the masses of the workers and above all the militant trade unionists.

We reject contemptuously the arguments against the sit-down strikes advanced by the government authorities, the employers and the trade union bureaucrats. On their lips, this opposition is simply one way of formulating their opposition to strikes in general, as well as to all militant mass action of the workers. At the same time, it is necessary to point out that, as a rule, any attempt by a small minority in a given plant or industry to impose a sit-down strike upon the big majority of the workers involved, without consulting them or obtaining their agreement, or at a time when the majority of the workers either have not acute grievances or are not as yet conscious of them—will lead inevitably to a reaction against sit-down strikes, ordinary strikes and even unionism in general on the part of the more undeveloped workers.

A serious and responsible attitude in this question is absolutely imperative. While we do not join in the reactionary chorus of condemnation of so-called "outlaw" strikes—the responsibility for which usually reposes upon the bureaucracy, which cynically ignores the legitimate demands and grievances of the workers—and while we remain steadfastly on the side of any group of workers once they are engaged in a struggle with the capitalist class or any section of it, we are conscious of the responsibility that reposes upon us as a vanguard force, and therefore counsel against the indiscriminate or promiscuous use of the sit-down

## 20,000 Storm Philadelphia City Hall

PHILADELPHIA.—Twenty thousand workers and small merchants stormed the City Hall on Saturday, January 29, to protest the two per cent sales tax passed by a vote of 15 to 7 in the corrupt boss-controlled city council. After months of fake promises, the workers got what they always get from "Pro-Labor" govern-

strike into which workers are often provoked by the brutal exploitation to which they are subjected by the employers.

### For Democratic Union Control

The same general propositions hold true of so-called "unauthorized" strikes. The left wing strives at all times to obtain the maximum amount of support, both from the officialdom of its own union and from working class organizations as a whole, for all the actions which it advocates, strikes included. We oppose the bureaucratic conception that the calling of strikes is the exclusive prerogative of the international officials of a given union, and we advocate the widest democratic control of the strike weapon by the rank-and-file, vested, in the first place, in the hands of the local and district unions and in the shop committees which must be set up everywhere and which must have the most immediate charge of protecting the interests of the workers and enforcing the provisions of any agreement entered into between the employers and the employees.

While taking proper cognizance of the fact that the rules of many trade unions require official permission from the international officials before a strike may be called, and orienting ourselves accordingly, we cannot ignore the fact that the international officialdom of the various unions are not only opposed, generally speaking, to the use of the strike weapon, but sabotage it when it is employed. Situations are therefore quite conceivable in which the only way the rank-and-file can obtain legal permission for a strike at certain times is by forcing the hand of the officialdom by what the latter often start by condemning as an "outlaw" strike.

### The Immediate Tasks of the Party

The party sets itself the following immediate tasks for its work in the trade unions.

The immediate registering of all party and YPSL members in order to have a complete record of the trade or profession of each member, union affiliation or eligibility, position in the trade union, etc. etc.

Every effort must be made immediately to have every eligible non-trade unionist in the party join the union of his trade or industry and take an active part in its life.

Wherever two or more members of the party and the YPSL belong to the same union, they are to constitute themselves a party trade union fraction, to work under the direction of the trade union department of the party.

Where no union exists for a given trade or industry, in a given locality, our comrades must take the initiative in organizing the unorganized.

The need of a nationally connected left wing in the American trade union movement is the most urgent problem in that field today. None exists at the present time, since the old left wing movement organized by the Communist Party has been completely liquidated and dissolved into the trade union bureaucracy. Without a left wing movement, standing on the militant platform of the class struggle, the trade union movement in this country is doomed to the demoralizing effects of class collaborationism and the dead-hand control of the reactionary union bureaucracy. Our party must take the leadership in organizing and integrating nationally the left wing movement.

Where such groups do not yet exist, we must take the initiative in forming them on the widest possible basis compatible with the formation of a genuinely progressive movement having a basically class struggle platform. Progressive groups should be conceived of not only as fields of recruitment for the revolutionary party, but as the means for setting in motion the largest number of workers at a given time for the advancement of a left wing position and a left wing leadership. It is not a precondition for our participation that from the outset we have the leadership of such groups, but it is an absolutely minimum condition that we have the right to advocate and defend our own position in the ranks of the general progressive group.

### Platform of the Left Wing

The left wing movement should stand on the following general platform:

Against class collaboration and for a policy of class struggle. For the fullest inner-union democracy for all members of the union and for all groups. Against the attempt to legalize and suppress all minority groups in the unions, such as has been done in the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and for the system of group rights in the union such as prevails, for example in the International Typographical Union.

For the normal functioning of all unions and against bureaucratically appointed organizers and leaderships such as prevail in most of the "Organizing Committees" of the C.I.O. For immediate holding of conventions, adoption of constitution and policies, and democratic selection of the leadership.

For the shop steward and shop committee system throughout the industries, integrated into the trade unions.

Against any attempt to "incorporate" the trade unions, against all "government regulation" of the trade unions, and in general, against all attempts to deprive the unions of their complete class independence by subordinating them to the apparatus of the government, which is only a machine for defending the interests of the capitalist class.

For the defense against the government, the employers and the trade union bureaucracy of the vital weapon of the strike, including the sit-in strike.

For the amalgamation of all craft unions in a given industry into industrial unions.

Against high initiation fees and prohibitive dues systems, especially in the present period of unemployment and crisis. Against the dropping of unemployed members from the rolls for inability to pay the regular dues required.

### Union Must Defend Unemployed

For the defense by the trade unions of the interests of the unemployed. For the organization of the unemployed by the trades unions themselves. For the affiliation in a body of the unemployed workers of a given trade or industry to the corresponding union, and for full rights of voice and vote for those workers on all questions directly affecting them and their specific problems (the system employed by project workers associated with the Teamsters' Union in Minneapolis).

For special attention to the defense of the rights and interests of the young workers and apprentices, and for the annulment of the exceptional legislation against them now existing in the unions, which prevents them from participating in the trade union movement and its struggles with full rights.

In order that these tasks may be carried out in a systematic, efficient and centralized manner, the convention instructs the incoming National Executive Committee of the party to establish immediately a regular Trade Union Department, with a responsible and functioning Trade Union Secretary. The National Executive Committee of the YPSL shall appoint a representative to function in the party's Trade Union Department.