

Organizer Kills Brown In Insane Fit

President Of Minneapolis Drivers' Union Shot
By Demented Union Employee; Great
Crowd Honors Him at Funeral

MIDWEST LABOR MOURNS LOSS

Tragedy and grief descended upon the Minneapolis labor movement when the terrible news was made public that Bill Brown, president of General Drivers Union, Local 544, and one of the most popular figures of the Northwest working class, had been shot and killed on May 28 while driving around in his car with a fellow-unionist who was a friend of long standing.

The man who fired the fatal shots was, according to his own statement to other union officers and to the police, Arnold Johnson, an organizer of the union.

Statement by Union

"The tragedy is enhanced by the fact that the man who killed him was his friend," reads a statement of the union's Executive Board. "They were both transfer truckmen, had been acquainted for years, and in the last eighteen months since Johnson went to work full time for the union, had worked together closely. Outside of working hours, they were often in each other's company. As Johnson told Police Chief Forestal, 'I had no reason to kill him. He was my best friend.' During the past week, several of our organizers, working daily with Johnson, had noticed that he was morose, depressed, uncommunicative, unlike his usual self. He had been unwell and recently under a doctor's care. A conscientious organizer, he had been driving himself beyond his power. His associates attributed his attitude to overwork, and advised him to get more rest. Then came this terrible deed."

After the fatal shooting, Johnson left the death car and, after locating a number of other union officials, told them in an obviously unbalanced state of having killed Brown. Amid general unbelief, several officials finally proceeded to the car, and found the slumped-over body of the union president. Johnson, still in a dazed condition, was finally taken into custody by the police and lodged in a cell.

Sinister Possibility

While the shooting seems to have been committed by Johnson in a moment of dementia, and to have no further significance beyond that, the possibility of other hands of a political character having played a part in the tragedy is not entirely excluded. It is known, for example, that the most sinister efforts have been made in the past by interested elements to strike at and discredit the militant leadership of the Drivers Union, and the possibility that the same or similar forces are involved in the present case is being probed.

The funeral of Bill Brown, attended by thousands of workers and representatives of the whole Minneapolis labor movement, was a solemnly impressive ceremony, attesting the esteem in which the courageous and militant fighter for labor was held by the class to which he devoted his entire life.

Firemen Back Progressives; Vote Merger With Sailors

SAN FRANCISCO.—Final tally on the membership referendum conducted by the Marine Firemen's Union on the West Coast showed overwhelming support by seagoing firemen for the proposal to amalgamate the unions of the unlicensed personnel into one industrial union of seamen.

The vote on amalgamation was 1,015 for and 117 opposed. Other propositions, calling for control of union officials by the branches as well as the headquarters in San Francisco, and maintenance of the union's independence of either the C.I.O.

Minneapolis Labor Pays Final Tribute To Brown

Thousands Gather at Headquarters of Drivers' Local 544 for Last Rites Honoring
Murdered Union Leader

By CARLOS HUDSON

MINNEAPOLIS.—Bill Brown dead! Still stunned by the dreadful news, ten thousand union men and women silently wound their way to the Teamsters Headquarters on Saturday to pay their last respects to the fallen president of the General Drivers Union, as brave a man as ever wore a union button and led his men in battle.

All day Saturday working men and women climbed the three flights of stairs to the big third-floor auditorium where the body lay, banked by 300 great wreaths sent by unions, by various sections of Local 544, and individuals. Squads of union stewards with white arm-bands acted as ushers, directing the flow of mourning men and women.

When the last rites got under way at three P. M., all the halls on the three floors of the building were filled, and thousands stood bareheaded in the streets outside. A dozen loudspeakers carried the proceedings to the halls and the streets.

Dunnes Speaks

Carrying out Bill's oft-expressed wish, Miles and Vincent Dunne spoke at the last union meeting Bill was ever to attend. Silence enveloped the union headquarters and the streets as Miles Dunne, secretary-treasurer of the Teamsters Joint Council, began:

"I want to say that of all the difficult assignments I have received in the labor movement, this is the most difficult of all. I am almost at a loss to convey the sense of personal loss. Men of the calibre of Bill Brown come but seldom."

"Bill was born in the direst poverty. As a child, he knew nothing but want and hard knocks. At the age of thirteen he went out in the world and took the burden of supporting his family. He started driving a team of

or the A. F. of L., were passed by corresponding figures. The propositions on the ballot represented policies advocated by the West Coast Fireman, organ of the progressives within the union, and the results of voting were a severe blow to the Stalinists. The vote was carried out despite the active opposition of the Stalinists, and the almost unanimous vote for the propositions revealed the extent to which the rank and file are rejecting the splitting policies of the Communist Party.

BILL BROWN



Bill Brown, President of Minneapolis Drivers' Union, was shot and killed on May 28 while driving around in his car with a fellow-unionist who was a friend of long standing.

Harlan Miners Accuse Bosses Of Thug Rule

Court Hears Stories Of
Terror From Union
Witnesses

By CARLOS HUDSON

The men that work the rich coal mines of Harlan County leveled accusing fingers at the mine-owners and operators and their hired thugs last week, as union members revealed the planned brutality and intimidation used by the Harlan County Coal Operators Association against union men.

Beatings, bribery, kidnapping, the blacklist and even murder were the weapons of the mine operators in their ruthless struggle against all attempts of the exploited workers to organize, according to witnesses appearing in the courtroom where 19 corporate defendants, together with 44 individuals, are on trial for plotting to nullify the Wagner Act by force and violence.

Sheriff Heads Thugs
Under orders and on the payroll of the operators' association was the entire force of former Sheriff Theodore Middleton. Chief thug and actual director of the campaign against union organizers and members was Ben Unthank, deputy sheriff who figures largely in the testimony of the government witnesses.

Eb Lewis, witness for the government, revealed the methods employed by Unthank in recruiting his force of deputies, when he testified that Unthank cross-examined him on his marksmanship and then offered him a job on behalf of the Harlan County Coal Operators Association.

Timothy Huff, a Negro mine worker, blacklisted and unable to obtain work, was offered \$150 a month to act as a labor spy for the association. Huff had kept silent about the incident during the National Labor Relations Board hearings because of the terror practiced by the authorities. He had already been put in jail on an old debt charge and kept there 83 days, only to be released later without the formality of a trial.

Blacklist At Work
The effectiveness of the blacklist was revealed by Lee Ellis, married and the father of two children. Ellis was one of the five workers of the Creech Coal Company who walked out Sept. 22, 1935, in response to a nationwide strike call of the United Mine Workers. He swore that since then he had been unable to obtain work in Harlan County and had been forced to leave the territory in order to earn a living.

When the United Mine Workers held a meeting to celebrate the validation of the Wagner Labor Act by the Supreme Court

horses, at six dollars a week. From then on, Bill Brown knew no rest.

"Bill was not a saint. He was a very human and a very kindly person. His virtues outweighed whatever faults he had. Once you knew him, you saw in him the real man he was underneath."

Bosses Hated Him
"In this life there are people who walk through it and see the hard life of the workers. Some there are who see the truth and are resentful; but they take out their resentment in muttering in the darkened rooms. A minority of those who see have courage and a divine spark and principles. Instead of shedding tears, they deem it their task to go out in the arena of struggle and right the wrongs they see about them. There is a tiny minority of men like this, and Bill Brown was such a man. He saw the terrible inequalities of life and felt it was his task to help correct and change things."

"The bosses hated Bill Brown. The workers loved him. Bill Brown fought the best kind of a fight he knew how. The General Drivers Union and the whole trade union movement took great strides forward because of Bill's work. He did the things he wanted to do. He brought a measure of comfort and security to thousands of workers. If there were a Valhalla where the great fallen champions of the working class gather, there Bill Brown would occupy one of the highest seats among those who have fought and died for the cause."

Vincent Dunne's Tribute
Vincent Dunne then spoke as follows:

"Brothers and sisters of the trade union movement, friends of Bill Brown and his family: I want to speak about what I know Bill would want me to deal with at a time like this. Bill is attending with us today his last union meeting with his brothers and sisters, with the people he lived for and fought for. All of his grand life was spent in the struggle of the workers' movement, and for the men and women exploited by a cruel, unjust and horrible economic system. Bill always spoke, thought and acted for the movement as he understood it."

"He said many times that his main object in life was the movement, and he wanted to serve it as best he could. Long ago he indicated how he viewed that service. Years ago Bill Brown pledged me that on every occasion when I spoke I was to emphasize the broader aims of the movement. He asked me to articulate these broader aims."

(Continued on page 3)

Quick Action Checkmates Gen. Cedillo

But Fascist Danger In
Mexico Continues
To Be Acute

By R. FERGUSON

Vigorous action by President Cardenas, who moved Federal troops into action in the state of San Luis Potosi, has broken the back of the revolt staged by the reactionary Mexican warlord, General Saturnino Cedillo, who, hoping for and possibly receiving the backing of the foreign oil interests whose properties were recently expropriated, had raised the banner of the fascist coup d'etat south of the Rio Grande.

With his supporters surrendering on first encounter with Federal troops, Cedillo himself has been forced into flight to the deserts and mountains of northern Mexico and his capture seems inevitable unless he succeeds in reaching the United States.

Imperialist Pressure Continues
Thus the counter-revolutionary danger in Mexico, so far as the near future is concerned, has been removed. But the most formidable enemies of Mexico's efforts toward liberation are far from being crushed, although Cedillo's defeat has given them a setback. The British and American imperialists continue to exert tremendous pressure on Mexico's economy.

Even the New Republic admits that "the United States has helped to cripple the Mexican government financially." This casual comment embodies the core of Washington's strategy. Since the method of bold offensive adopted during the early days of the oil conflict, has failed, the New Deal government has resorted to the "mild" but far more effective tactic of silent economic strangulation.

Cedillo, although the most powerful, was not the sole partisan of a new course of "moderation" towards foreign capital, to be pursued over the corpses of the Mexican masses. Moreover, as examples of other countries have shown, it is possible with money and arms to transform any clown into a fascist robot-hero.

And it is not necessarily a fascist power which hires such robots. The New Republic lets fall the remarkable confession that "our government might conceivably itself take the function of Hitler and Mussolini by active support to the Mexican rebels."

And how do these champions of liberal hypocrisy propose to fight a government which by their own testimony is so democratic that it might "conceivably" assume the function of fascist hangman of the Latin American masses? By imploring the government to flee from this satanic temptation with a "timely proclamation" of an embargo against the rebels. And that is all! About ceasing the economic strangulation—not a word.

The appraisal of Roosevelt's democratic consistency by his voluntary advisors of the New Republic must be a lesson for every worker. The cause of the Mexican people can be defended not in collaboration with, but in open and irreconcilable opposition to, the imperialist government and its liberal attorneys.

Smash Economic Blockade
The organized workers of the United States must throw all their forces into the balance to smash the economic blockade of Mexico by the oil magnates and their governments.

Down with the economic sanctions! Down with the foreign capitalists' demand for compensation! (Note: We must apologize for an unfortunate typographical error in last week's comment on the Mexican situation. Speaking about the tasks of the Fourth Internationalists in Mexico, our article calls for "all national support" to Cardenas' military struggle, instead of "all practical support.")

Internal Meeting
An internal membership meeting to discuss the situation in the Fourth International will take place on Monday, June 6, at Beethoven Hall, 210 East 5th Street, at 8:30 P. M. Comrade James P. Cannon will report. Admission will be by red card only.

Striking Goodyear Workers Fight Police Terror, Score Gains

Akron Militant Tells Of
Big Picket Line Battle
Police Brutally Attack Goodyear Pickets With
Gas Bombs; Workers Make Heroic Defense
Against "Law and Order" Thugs

By R. FERGUSON

AKRON.—At 10 minutes before midnight May 26 the workers in the front ranks of the huge crowd of unionists gathered before the main gate of Goodyear's Plant No. 1 began to circulate about, forming a thin picket line. The line grew rapidly to hundreds of men, and just before the midnight change of shift moved across the street and towards the gate, bent on firmly establishing itself peacefully under the noses of scores of cops. No sooner had we advanced a

few yards along the sidewalk than hell seemed to have broken loose. A raving cop shouted, "They asked for it, goddamit, now let 'em have it," and charged into the unarmed line, flailing his night stick and followed by dozens of savage blue-coated beasts.

Battle Is On
The line faltered, men raised their arms to ward off murderous blows, fought back with fists, and finally, feeling the full weight of the brutal assault, fell back. The line broke, terror-stricken, amidst the screams of the wounded and the curses of thousands of unionists and sympathizers still gathered across the street.

Running down the street, we heard a steady klop-klop-klop—nightsticks raining on the heads of men, women and children. Then cries of further terror: company dicks dashed out of the plant pumping tear and nausea gas into the retreating throng. Gas shells plunged against ribs, sizzling and ricocheting off the streets and buildings.

We dragged along our wounded, or made hurried forays into the street to pull them out of the clouds of settling gas. We carried an unconscious worker, his head and clothing covered with blood, down a side street to a doctor. The cops had won the first engagement.

Workers Unprepared
Around the corner in Goodyear Boulevard the workers stopped their flight, pondering what to do. The unanimous mutter between clenched teeth was, "Oh, if we'd only been prepared for this." And when word spread of the scores injured and gassed, the shooting of a woman, everyone agreed that the next time the cops and company thugs would be met with their own weapons. But for the rest of the night, the workers' ammunition consisted only of stones, bolts, and anything throwable.

Seeing that our position in Goodyear Boulevard would be immediately advanced upon by the Cossacks and that it could not be successfully defended for any length of time, I edged around into Market Street towards the union hall, followed by a bounding tear gas projectile. The hall stairs were jammed with workers coming and going and room was cleared to take the dozens of wounded away in waiting ambulances.

The cops proceeded down the street towards the hall, (Continued on page 2)

DETROIT.—Tear gas and clubs were used by police against Detroit pickets last week, resulting in the injury of over 50 unionists, as members of several C.I.O. unions came to the aid of their striking brothers of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union.

On strike since April 19 against the American Brass Company, the union was unable to stop production after sit-down strikers were evicted from the power plant by police May 9. The strikers, aided by the United Automobile Workers and other C.I.O. unions, threw a mass picket line about the plant to stop the movement of strike-breakers.

Two blocks from the plant 600 unionists built a barricade to halt cars carrying the scabs from the plant. When the cars were stalled by the obstruction pickets jumped the strike-breakers and pummeled them thoroughly.

Police opened fire with tear gas guns and, as the choking fumes blinded the workers, advanced upon them with clubs swinging. The police did not escape unscathed, as four required hospital treatment.

As union members were attempting to remove their bleeding, unconscious brothers from the street, a detachment of mounted police, held in readiness nearby, charged through the street in true Cossack style.

Police Attack Suddenly
Over 4,000 Goodyear strikers and sympathizers were cheerfully picketing and razzing the cops when suddenly a police captain gave the order to "let them have it." The all-night reign of brutality and terror, as described by another eye-witness in this issue of the Socialist Appeal, followed.

The situation in the labor movement on Friday morning was critical. The Thursday night defeat had to be turned into a victorious counter-offensive. Early that morning, Redmond Greer, secretary of the C.I.O. industrial council, spoke over the radio, analyzing the Thursday night events, exhorting the police, the mayor and Goodyear, and issued a call to all union leaders, both C.I.O. and A. F. of Labor, to meet that noon.

Unity In Defense
Over 75 A. F. of L. and C.I.O. union leaders responded. A United Labor Defense Committee of 14—seven from each section of the labor movement was established.

This truly remarkable exhibition of labor solidarity against the common enemy—Akron's bosses—changed a critical defense into an offensive. A sharp protest against the police brutality was made by the Defense Committee.

The A. F. of L. truck-drivers union, 2,300 strong, and the C.I.O. bus drivers and transportation workers union, threatened an immediate strike unless the police were removed from the scene at Goodyear by nightfall and picket lines permitted to function. A demand that Goodyear shut down completely also was made.

Since the city administration (Continued on page 2)

Striking Goodyear Workers Fight Police Terror, Score Gains

Akron Militant Tells Of
Big Picket Line Battle
Police Brutally Attack Goodyear Pickets With
Gas Bombs; Workers Make Heroic Defense
Against "Law and Order" Thugs

By R. FERGUSON

AKRON.—At 10 minutes before midnight May 26 the workers in the front ranks of the huge crowd of unionists gathered before the main gate of Goodyear's Plant No. 1 began to circulate about, forming a thin picket line. The line grew rapidly to hundreds of men, and just before the midnight change of shift moved across the street and towards the gate, bent on firmly establishing itself peacefully under the noses of scores of cops. No sooner had we advanced a

few yards along the sidewalk than hell seemed to have broken loose. A raving cop shouted, "They asked for it, goddamit, now let 'em have it," and charged into the unarmed line, flailing his night stick and followed by dozens of savage blue-coated beasts.

Battle Is On
The line faltered, men raised their arms to ward off murderous blows, fought back with fists, and finally, feeling the full weight of the brutal assault, fell back. The line broke, terror-stricken, amidst the screams of the wounded and the curses of thousands of unionists and sympathizers still gathered across the street.

Running down the street, we heard a steady klop-klop-klop—nightsticks raining on the heads of men, women and children. Then cries of further terror: company dicks dashed out of the plant pumping tear and nausea gas into the retreating throng. Gas shells plunged against ribs, sizzling and ricocheting off the streets and buildings.

We dragged along our wounded, or made hurried forays into the street to pull them out of the clouds of settling gas. We carried an unconscious worker, his head and clothing covered with blood, down a side street to a doctor. The cops had won the first engagement.

Workers Unprepared
Around the corner in Goodyear Boulevard the workers stopped their flight, pondering what to do. The unanimous mutter between clenched teeth was, "Oh, if we'd only been prepared for this." And when word spread of the scores injured and gassed, the shooting of a woman, everyone agreed that the next time the cops and company thugs would be met with their own weapons. But for the rest of the night, the workers' ammunition consisted only of stones, bolts, and anything throwable.

Seeing that our position in Goodyear Boulevard would be immediately advanced upon by the Cossacks and that it could not be successfully defended for any length of time, I edged around into Market Street towards the union hall, followed by a bounding tear gas projectile. The hall stairs were jammed with workers coming and going and room was cleared to take the dozens of wounded away in waiting ambulances.

The cops proceeded down the street towards the hall, (Continued on page 2)

DETROIT.—Tear gas and clubs were used by police against Detroit pickets last week, resulting in the injury of over 50 unionists, as members of several C.I.O. unions came to the aid of their striking brothers of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union.

On strike since April 19 against the American Brass Company, the union was unable to stop production after sit-down strikers were evicted from the power plant by police May 9. The strikers, aided by the United Automobile Workers and other C.I.O. unions, threw a mass picket line about the plant to stop the movement of strike-breakers.

Two blocks from the plant 600 unionists built a barricade to halt cars carrying the scabs from the plant. When the cars were stalled by the obstruction pickets jumped the strike-breakers and pummeled them thoroughly.

Police opened fire with tear gas guns and, as the choking fumes blinded the workers, advanced upon them with clubs swinging. The police did not escape unscathed, as four required hospital treatment.

As union members were attempting to remove their bleeding, unconscious brothers from the street, a detachment of mounted police, held in readiness nearby, charged through the street in true Cossack style.

Police Attack Suddenly
Over 4,000 Goodyear strikers and sympathizers were cheerfully picketing and razzing the cops when suddenly a police captain gave the order to "let them have it." The all-night reign of brutality and terror, as described by another eye-witness in this issue of the Socialist Appeal, followed.

The situation in the labor movement on Friday morning was critical. The Thursday night defeat had to be turned into a victorious counter-offensive. Early that morning, Redmond Greer, secretary of the C.I.O. industrial council, spoke over the radio, analyzing the Thursday night events, exhorting the police, the mayor and Goodyear, and issued a call to all union leaders, both C.I.O. and A. F. of Labor, to meet that noon.

Unity In Defense
Over 75 A. F. of L. and C.I.O. union leaders responded. A United Labor Defense Committee of 14—seven from each section of the labor movement was established.

This truly remarkable exhibition of labor solidarity against the common enemy—Akron's bosses—changed a critical defense into an offensive. A sharp protest against the police brutality was made by the Defense Committee.

The A. F. of L. truck-drivers union, 2,300 strong, and the C.I.O. bus drivers and transportation workers union, threatened an immediate strike unless the police were removed from the scene at Goodyear by nightfall and picket lines permitted to function. A demand that Goodyear shut down completely also was made.

Since the city administration (Continued on page 2)

Compromise Settlement
Accepted; Showdown
Is Postponed

100 ARE HURT

AKRON, Ohio.—The turbulent Goodyear strike ended last Tuesday when the workers accepted a company compromise proposal which granted some of the demands for which the strikers fought in the face of brutal violence by police and company guards.

The agreement left the door open for negotiation of a signed contract, although the company immediately hedged on this point.

Although many union progressives were dissatisfied with the accord because of its inferiority to the Firestone and Goodrich signed contracts, it was endorsed because it offered the union a breathing spell in which to build up its strength.

The real showdown was postponed and the workers have a chance to put themselves in a better position to prevent any repetition of the police brutality which sent more than 100 workers to the hospital and tear-gassed hundreds of others.

The Akron labor movement emerged more solidified than before thanks to the remarkable achievement of C.I.O. and A. F. of L. unity—whereby Akron's workers took a long stride forward.

Events of Strike

AKRON, Ohio.—The Goodyear strike developed because of the failure of the company to settle major grievances. Sit-downs in the plants and picket lines at the main gates grew Thursday night when the union negotiating committee reported that Goodyear refused to negotiate satisfactorily.

Since the Goodrich strike had been won and it had been entirely peaceful—the cops made no attempts to prevent the union from establishing its picket lines—trouble at Goodyear was not expected. The labor movement was caught off guard.

Police Attack Suddenly

Over 4,000 Goodyear strikers and sympathizers were cheerfully picketing and razzing the cops when suddenly a police captain gave the order to "let them have it." The all-night reign of brutality and terror, as described by another eye-witness in this issue of the Socialist Appeal, followed.

The situation in the labor movement on Friday morning was critical. The Thursday night defeat had to be turned into a victorious counter-offensive. Early that morning, Redmond Greer, secretary of the C.I.O. industrial council, spoke over the radio, analyzing the Thursday night events, exhorting the police, the mayor and Goodyear, and issued a call to all union leaders, both C.I.O. and A. F. of Labor, to meet that noon.

Unity In Defense
Over 75 A. F. of L. and C.I.O. union leaders responded. A United Labor Defense Committee of 14—seven from each section of the labor movement was established.

This truly remarkable exhibition of labor solidarity against the common enemy—Akron's bosses—changed a critical defense into an offensive.

A sharp protest against the police brutality was made by the Defense Committee.

The A. F. of L. truck-drivers union, 2,300 strong, and the C.I.O. bus drivers and transportation workers union, threatened an immediate strike unless the police were removed from the scene at Goodyear by nightfall and picket lines permitted to function. A demand that Goodyear shut down completely also was made.

Since the city administration (Continued on page 2)