

In the Labor Unions

By B. J. WIDICK

Fisher Body

CLEVELAND, OHIO - An auto worker on the picket line told me the story of the role of Homer Martin, president of the A. F. of L.-U. A. W., in the strike at the Fisher body plant of General Motors.

When the CIO called the strike, and the great majority of tool and die men walked out, Martin rushed into this city with a thunderous roar that "No CIO minority is going to keep the AFL majority out."

Martin announced a big mass meeting for the AFL. Exactly 20 workers from Fisher plant attended. Stung by this rebuke, Martin left town.

Incidentally, one of his chief assistants in Cleveland is scabbing during this strike, and was in the plant when the pitched battle was on.

Gratifyingly enough, Martin and his Cleveland assistants are hardly less unpopular with the AFL rank and file and even some leaders, than they are with the CIO.

Strike Issues

The radio speech of William J. Schwed, member of the executive board of the Fisher local of the CIO-UAW, besides blasting the city administration, did a good job of explaining the real strike issues.

The strike was called, he declared, because General Motors refused to negotiate on demands by skilled workers at Fisher body, for a wage increase of 15 to 25 cents an hour so they would receive the same standard of pay as prevailed in the Detroit plants; for more job security and for a proper apprentice system.

General Motors made \$100,000,000 profit for the first half of 1939, or three times as much as the profit for the first six months of 1938.

"Who produced this profit?" Schwed asked. "We General Motors workers. Are we entitled to a share of this huge profit in the form of higher wages? Certainly we are, and no one but the heads of the corporation will say 'no'."

"The newspapers try to make grown-up Cleveland citizens believe that we go out to create violence on the picket line—that we want to fight the police. What could be more insane? "Does any worker in his right mind want to fight 450 armed police? Does anyone believe we enjoy getting our heads cracked by the clubs of Mayor Burton's police?"

"The police provoked violence!" he emphasized, and told how they began slugging pickets. The struggle of the workers was purely a defensive one to protect their rights against police terror.

Riot Zone

"We find that Safety Director Elliot Ness has illegally established what is called a riot zone around the plant," Schwed continued. "He has ordered that the only Clevelanders who dare enjoy American liberties within the now extended empire of General Motors—that is, the streets of Cleveland around the plant—are strikebreakers and scabs."

While the union maintains a minimum picket line at the plant gates and scattered forces usually stand nearby, the device of picketing the homes of all prominent scabs has been added to put heat on the company.

At a special meeting of the strikers, following the battle, a union official read off the names and home addresses of 37 of the leading scabs, much to the dismay and chagrin of the company and the police, not to mention the rats themselves.

Since the settlement will be negotiated on a nation-wide basis, each local unit of strikers has as the main task keeping the plant shut down. Negotiations are out of the hands of local committees.

AFL Feeling

An attempt to obtain support of the Cleveland AFL movement against the brutality of the cops met with official rebuff, although all progressive AFL leaders are in strong sympathy with the strikers.

Antagonism of the AFL building trades leaders is the reason given for the failure of the AFL to aid the CIO. "These CIO guys are out to get us, why the hell should we help them?" trades leaders later on.

Not a Preview of the Coming World War!



Tear Gas Barrage laid down by the Minneapolis police against strikers at the WPA Sewing Project. Emil Bergstrom, unemployed worker, was killed by a police bullet in this melee. As reported in the last issue of the APPEAL, disguised federal agents acted as agents-provocateurs among the demonstrators.

Streator WPA Strikers Get Jobs Back in Settlement

Strike Was Most Militant in Illinois - Federal Workers League Recognized

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) STREATOR, Ill., July 29 - After 17 days of militant protest against the Slave Relief Act, the WPA strikers, organized under the Federal Workers League, voted to return to work "under protest" at a well-attended membership meeting last Thursday evening.

The basis of the settlement was gotten in meetings between F.W.L. officials and Mayor Halfpenny, City Engineer Renz and the township relief supervisor Shiebel, and in another conference with State WPA Administrator Chas. E. Miner.

The settlement consisted of return of all strikers to their jobs without any discrimination, immediate relief for the strikers, full relief for all men laid off on account of 18 month employment, an arrangement whereby laid off WPA workers will return to their jobs as soon as their 30 day layoff is up, and recognition of the Federal Workers League as the bargaining agent for the WPA workers of Streator and the surrounding area.

The Streator WPA strike has been acclaimed on all sides as the most militant and successful strike in the state of Illinois; in contrast to most of the Illinois WPA strikes the LaSalle County strike came out with flying colors and reinforced for the future. In many sections of Illinois strike leaders have been discriminated upon, denied relief, and saw the projects working with skeleton forces.

Here in Streator the projects were closed 100% and the WPA big shots, seeing that they would not be opened until the strikers decided to go back as a group, laid off the foremen and timekeepers. It is very interesting to note that when in conference with WPA administrator Miner, he informed F.W.L. officials that "Streator had a pretty strong labor situation."

Several weeks ago, Ben Martin of the Federal Workers League approached the Illinois Workers Alliance leaders with the proposal that a statewide strike committee be set up for the purpose of obtaining a conference with Miner in order to get favorable settlement for the WPA strikers. It was unanimously agreed that this should be done and the IWA set up a committee consisting of Norman, Hackleman, and MacDowell, and Trojar, MacDowell to arrange the conference with Miner. The FWL leaders agreed to have the conference arranged by the IWA and to be informed of the date.

After waiting for over a week and a half during which time the IWA leaders unsuccessfully sought to arrange the conference, the FWL decided to take matters in their own hands; Thursday morning a telegram was dispatched to Miner informing him of the arrival of a delegation from the FWL, the Streator delegation walked into Miner's office that same afternoon and had a conference with Miner which lasted over an hour.

The Illinois Workers Alliance AFL building trades leader snarled.

Actually, smart strategy would dictate that even from a selfish point of view the AFL building trades should go to bat for the CIO. Then they would have a case against the CIO invasion of the building trades later on.

(not an affiliate of the Workers Alliance) carried on a militant strike in southern Illinois, Perry and Randolph counties, where most of the strikers received reinstatements to return to work but are still carrying on a fight to obtain relief for their strikers.

A joint meeting of representatives of the IWA and the FWL with State Administrator Miner has been scheduled for Wednesday morning at which time the question of discriminations against WPA strikers will be taken up.

Plans are already underway to set up project committees and relief committees on the projects. The morale of the WPA workers of the Streator area is still high, for they have learned their lesson well. Friday morning on the sewer project, which employs 300 men, a foreman who thought that the workers had forgotten all about workers' solidarity attempted to demoralize the workers ranks by firing one of the active FWL members.

As soon as the workers learned of this, a delegation approached the foreman and threatened to immediately go out on strike if the fired worker was not reinstated. Seeing the workers enraged by the highhanded action of the boss, steps were immediately taken to reinstate the fired worker; so that within two hours the WPA bosses fired a sewer worker and were then forced to reinstate him. The workers of Streator have indeed learned the lesson of solidarity well and many of the WPA straw bosses have been taken down quite a few inches.

The workers of Streator have adopted the slogan, "Only 34 cents work per hour, that's what they're paying us". As a result the WPA workers have spontaneously started a slowdown movement on the job. They are determined to keep this up until they receive the prevailing wage once again.

Since the organization of the Federal Workers League, a new and militant spirit has developed among both WPA and privately employed workers. The WPA workers have started the ball rolling and many are responding; the slogan today is "Make Streator the best labor town in the country"; tomorrow the slogan will be "Make LaSalle County the best labor county in the country."

The second part of the Murray Amendment, dealing with Administration discretion, regarding the job-hunting activities of WPA workers, hardships resulting from dismissals, etc., is also so much dust in the eyes of the WPA workers. Let the workers put their faith in the "discretion" of Roosevelt, Harrington, Murphy, Woodrum and Co., union busters and strike breakers all, and they'll find themselves out in the streets—jobless. The past five weeks have shown the true nature of the "you can't strike against the government" regime of Roosevelt.

AMENDMENT TO RELIEF ACT SOLVES NOTHING

(Continued from Page 1)

"Employable persons who have been certified in need of employment for a period of three months or more shall have preference in employment status on such works projects continuously for 18 months or more."

"Provided, that this shall not result in the discharge of a person employed on Works Projects where he has made a reasonable effort to find suitable private employment nor where project operations would suffer from his discharge nor where unusual hardships would result from such discharge."

18-Month Principle Stands First of all, the Murray amendment retains completely the principle that WPA workers who have worked for eighteen months are subject to removal from WPA.

The first change the Murray amendment would effect in the original plans for mass and continuous layoffs of the "eighteen months" is that before a WPA worker can be fired there must be a replacement on the relief rolls who has been certified as eligible for WPA for three months.

According to the report issued by the American Association of Social Workers on May 21... there are seven million families on relief. These families comprise some 23,000,000 people. Surely there are among these millions of workers, 3,000,000 adult workers eligible for WPA employment.

The argument that "eighteen months" will be laid off only when there are eligibles on the rolls to replace them is, therefore, only a smoke-screen, for there are replacements galore for the relief rolls.

Merciful Officials? The second part of the Murray Amendment, dealing with Administration discretion, regarding the job-hunting activities of WPA workers, hardships resulting from dismissals, etc., is also so much dust in the eyes of the WPA workers. Let the workers put their faith in the "discretion" of Roosevelt, Harrington, Murphy, Woodrum and Co., union busters and strike breakers all, and they'll find themselves out in the streets—jobless. The past five weeks have shown the true nature of the "you can't strike against the government" regime of Roosevelt.

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War Referendum Campaign Notes

WAR REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN OFF TO FLYING START IN NEW YORK

Outdoor Rallies Called in Four Boroughs—YPSL, Party Sections Plan Activities

By HAL DRAPER Secretary Campaign Committee

New York strikes the first blow in the campaign for a War Referendum!

Eight outdoor rallies, spread over four boroughs, launches the New York drive on Friday, August 4, on the anniversary of the outbreak of the World War. Attention, all branches, to the preparations that went into this action:

Printed leaflets, 25,000 of them, dressed up with two cuts, have gone out. Each rally will have a row of slogan placards flanking the speaking stand. On Wednesday, both the Bronx and the Brownsville branches mobilized their forces to hold preliminary "roving street-corner meetings"—which means a series of five-minute stands at different corners for a brief rally, and then away to the next corner.

In the Bronx, the preparations have been more feverish. Here the use of a small printing plant made it possible to put out special printed stickers and posters advertising the rally...

"We're two days out from the launching of the campaign, as this is written, and the first of the branch Weekly Report Sheets are still to come in. Re-member—keeping the score-board up-to-date depends on prompt submission of the reports. Keep regular!

Diagramless Puzzle The first story in the Workers Forum on page three served me as a good substitute for the diagramless cross-word puzzle which used to occupy my idle time. I am convinced it refers to Local B-1019 of the Electrical Workers but I'm damned if I have been able to locate it in any city, county, state, or country. It is a clueless mystery.

Also the "continuous string of sell-outs". I suppose it is up to the reader to furnish his own proofs. Also to determine for himself whether it means bribery by cash payment, concession to the bosses in return for indirect favors or promises, or simply cowardice, fear of strikes or bad judgment. It is only a miserable pedant who wants precision in these little matters. And if we demand precision from our correspondent it might teach him a little prudence and responsibility in his speeches in the union and thus cramp his free-flowing style.

Mystery Deepens Also if Katz and Sullivan can't be trusted and have been "too long associated with Beedie and done the dirty work for him", it puts it up to the reader to prove why they were both suspended from office by Beedie and why "the fight between Katz and Sullivan on the one hand and Beedie on the other was smouldering for almost a year."

If it wasn't enough to throw the reader off the track—as every well-constructed mystery story should do—your correspondent adds: "Katz and Sullivan, very popular with the rank and file, represented the healthy sentiment of the rank and file for trade union democracy." After that I am completely convinced that "members have to doubt the sincerity of Katz and Sullivan"—but I don't know why. Is it going to be cleared up in the next chapter?

Fraternally, J. P. CANNON

SILVER SHIRTS OPEN DRIVE IN NEW YORK

Recent reports from New York State indicate that the Silver Shirts, headed by the notorious fascist leader William Dudley Pelley, have established headquarters in this area.

This is the first time headquarters have been set up east of the Alleghenies, in Newburgh, N. Y. The report also states that an intensive recruiting drive has been begun both

Newark Takes Lead in Drive to Build Appeal

Akron Outlines Methods by Which It Hopes To Do Its Part in War Referendum Campaign

Newark, New Jersey, has been the first local to respond with a substantial increase in its regular Socialist Appeal bundle order, in the Appeal section of the War Referendum campaign. George Brettman, literature agent, has placed an order increasing the regular bundle from 100 to 125 copies. The quota assigned to Newark is an increase of 40, so local Newark has still six weeks to go in order to realize the additional 15 to complete its quota. The Newark comrades are also all set to go, Comrade Brettman reports, to fill its quota of 20 additional subscriptions. Several cities have placed

extra copies of recent issues in recent weeks. The Minneapolis local ordered 200 and 500 extra copies of recent issues and local Cleveland, writes Art Preis, has now realized that systematic utilization of open air meetings and of a full-time literature agent will bring results. Two open air meetings several days ago brought sales of 50 and 75 copies of the Appeal, and an extra order of 600 copies was placed for a recent issue.

Special Leaflets Several units in New York and elsewhere have been getting out special leaflets advertising the Socialist Appeal and the New International, as well as other Party literature, which could be obtained at open air meetings, newsstands, etc. The Bronx Branch of the Socialist Workers Party has utilized this method to help develop their Anti-Coughlin Campaign.

Akron Methods B. Donaldson, literature agent of local Akron, in a letter to the Socialist Appeal, outlines the methods by which the Akron organization of the Party and Y.P.S.L. hope to achieve their War Referendum Campaign quotas for new subscriptions and bundle orders for the Socialist Appeal. Comrade Donaldson says among other things:

"We are now facing the masses, and each of us must realize that a new task confronts us. It will require that we explain what we stand for not only to friends and sympathetic contacts, but also to strangers in their homes and on the streets. "With this in mind, the committee, composed of Martell, Marsh and myself as chairman, met last Sunday and drew up a rough outline for the campaign. The plan is as follows: "1. Branch divided into three squads for canvassing. "2. Five working class neighborhoods selected. "3. All three squads will canvass in one neighborhood for an entire week, getting signatures for the petitions, selling the pamphlets and announcing a neighborhood meeting at the end of the week. On Friday we will hold the meeting, sell Socialist Appeals, the New International and pamphlets, take a collection and announce and sell or give away tickets to the general mass-meeting closing the campaign. "4. Same procedure will be repeated in all five neighborhoods. "5. One comrade will be stationed on an important corner in the neighborhood to sell the Socialist Appeal. "6. During the final week we will concentrate on street sales in the downtown section and in front of factory gates. "7. Those who cannot appear openly have been assigned the following tasks: a) To collect funds from sympathizers; b) follow up contacts for donations, membership and subscriptions. c) Get resolutions passed in organizations where we have comrades or contacts. "8. Grand finale will be a public meeting. "9. Together with the above, the regular house to house canvass and street sales of the Socialist Appeal will be carried on. "And on Friday I'm presenting a motion to the branch to increase the Socialist Appeal bundle order immediately."

Nothing New And this addition was not to go to creating direct jobs for the unemployed. Nor was it an addition; it amounted to little more than a bookkeeping change from previous practices, merely continuing the already functioning activities handled under Rural Electrification, Home Owners Loan Corporation and P.W.A. The only additional item was to make \$500,000,000 available for loans to foreign nations, chiefly aimed to further the administration's Pan-American policy.

The mass of the unemployed, the ten million or more able and willing to work, have neither gained nor lost by the end of this Bill. It offered them nothing. Its end deprives them of nothing.

Relief Needed Far more important to them is the cutting of WPA and relief rolls under the terms of the Roosevelt-Woodrum Starvation Relief Bill. Phoney lending-spending plans are of no use to the hungry jobless. Jobs and cash relief are.

Roosevelt has deprived them of the opportunity to work by slicing relief appropriations to the bone. They consequently have the right to ask: very well, Mr. President, if the failure to pass the Bill indicates, as you said in your press conference, higher relief rolls, then how about introducing a bill adding the billions you are now spending for war preparations and business appeasement to the relief appropriations. How about restoring the PWA? How about cancelling WPA pink slips? You, Mr. President, are responsible for the misery in the homes of jobless workers cut off relief and WPA. You, Mr. President, are now asked to act!

NEGRO DEPARTMENT Comrades and friends interested in giving some time for research work, please communicate with J. Johnson, 116 University Place, New York City.

ANNOUNCEMENTS HOLD AUGUST 27 OPEN!!! The Friends of the Russian Bulletin will hold an all day outing on Sunday, Aug. 27 at Rye Beach. The boat will leave the Battery at 10:15 A.M. The entire day will be spent at Rye Beach and the return trip will be made by boat, leaving in the evening. The arrangements committee is preparing a varied and interesting program of games, music, swimming, etc. There will be dancing to the music of a first-rate orchestra on the boat, with a Broadway show on the return trip. Tickets are available at the office of the New International at the nominal rate of one dollar. Please make your reservations early.

A Concert of the Classics of Swing Drinks - Dancing - Refreshments SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, at 9:30 P.M. at 317 EAST 13th STREET, Apt. 4-a For the benefit of the Needle Trades Brigade of Anti-Fascist Union Guards Bulletin. Admission 25 cents

The Army Has a New Rapid-Fire Rifle... Just out— "Let The People Vote On War" By JAMES BURNHAM 3 cents per copy. Bundle rates: 60 cents for 25; \$1.00 for 60; \$1.75 for 100; \$16.00 for 1,000 Printed by PIONEER PUBLISHERS for the SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY and Y.P.S.L. (4th Int'l) 116 University Place New York City

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