

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

Official Organ of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE: 257 PLYMOUTH AVE. N.
GENERAL OFFICE: 286 E. 6TH ST.
St. Paul, Minn.

As from this hour
You use your power,
The world must fol-
low you.

Stand all as one
Till right is done!
Believe and dare
and do!

VOLUME 1, NO. 45

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1936

PRICE 5 CENTS

COURT AID FOR STRUTWEAR

FEDERAL MEET PLANS DRIVE FOR MEMBERS

Organizational Campaign on
All WPA Projects
Planned

Federal Workers Section to
Stage Another
Rally

The specially called meeting of the Federal Workers section of Local 574 held Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock was one of the best attended and most enthusiastic gatherings of WPA workers that has been held for a long time. The recently concluded State-wide WPA and Relief Conference, recently held in General Drivers Hall brought forcibly home to every WPA worker the necessity for organization on the job.

The special meeting was called to lay plans for an organizational campaign which will start at once and conclude on March 15. The slogan of the Organizational committee is: "A majority of workers on every project in the Federal Workers by March 15."

The meeting occupied its time with laying plans for the organizational campaign. It was decided to set up an organizational committee on every project headed by the job steward. Despite the fact that several organizations of WPA workers are competing for membership on all city and rural projects a vast majority of the project workers are still unorganized, outside of any organization. The Federal Workers, believing that their organization has the most correct policy and program for WPA and relief workers, is determined to bring into its fold a majority of these workers.

From now until the end of the campaign the NORTHWEST ORGANIZER will be distributed on all projects. This paper will contain notices of all meetings and the latest news of the organizational drive. It was decided that on February 6th, approximately the middle of the campaign, a special mass meeting will be called and there, a special report will be made on the progress of the campaign.

Notice

There will be a special meeting of all Federal stewards Thursday, February 27th, 8 p. m. It is extremely important that every Federal steward attend this meeting.

Plans for the special organizational drive will be completed at that time and it is imperative that everyone interested be on hand in order that the campaign may get underway with the solid support of all of the job stewards.

Strutwear Knitting Company Seeks Injunction in District Court; 574 And Central Labor Union Named

Mayor, Governor, Chief of
Police Are Restrained
Under Order

Monday, the Strutwear Knitting Company, through its attorneys, sought an injunction to prevent picketing and "violence" at its plant, 1015 South Sixth street. Filed in the Hennepin County District Court, the injunction names half a score of persons and organizations.

Local 574 Named

The action names as defendants Mayor Latimer, Chief of Police Forestal, Sheriff Wall, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, Local No. 38; Alexander McKeown, international vice president, and Cleo Casebeer and Carl Linker, international organizers; General Drivers' Union, Local No. 574; the Central Labor Union; the United Relief Workers' association; the federal section of Drivers' Local No. 574; the officers of each of these organizations and some 70 former employes identified with or sympathetic with the Hosiery Workers' union.

Sweeping Order Sought

Among other things the Strutwear Company would have the court enjoin the defendants from were:

29 Instances Listed

Filed through the law firm of Guesmer, Carson and MacGregor, the action sets forth 29 separate instances of intimidation and violence occurring at the plant as the outgrowth of a strike called last August 16. It is to be heard by

Railroad Council to Meet Sunday A. M.

The Minneapolis Railroad Council, an organization composed of delegates from various railroad unions, will meet Sunday, March 1st, 9 a. m. at 631 Third Ave. S. This is one of the most important meetings of the Railroad Council that has been held for some time.

At this meeting a report will be made of the February 22nd conference of progressive railroad organizations that met in Minneapolis last Saturday. All railroad workers who are interested in building better union organizations of railroad workers should attend and take part in this Council meeting. All rail workers are invited.

Meter Readers To Meet Friday

All meter readers of the Northern States Power Company are urged to attend a meeting which will be held Friday, Feb. 28, 8 p. m. The meeting will be held at Drivers' Hall, 257 Plymouth Ave. N.

Liberty

With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men's labor.

Here are two, not only different, but incompatible things, called by the same name, liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names—liberty and tyranny.

—Abraham Lincoln

the members of any employe's family or damaging their homes.

(6) Congregating in groups near the plant or elsewhere with the intention of committing violence.

(7) Hurling any missile at or into the plant or interfering with the company's business or its customers.

(8) Addressing any employe or the court March 5. It asks that the court enjoin the defendants from

(1) Congregating at or near the Strutwear plant.

(2) Preventing or attempting to prevent by violence or threats, any one from being in the employ of the company.

(3) Singly or in combination preventing or trying to prevent any employe from doing his work.

(4) Attempting to coerce any employe.

(5) Molesting or threatening

Workers Alliance Meeting March 14

As a preliminary to the setting up of a State Committee of the Minnesota Workers Alliance as called for in the majority report adopted at the February 8th and 9th conference delegates of Hennepin County WPA, Relief organizations and other economic organizations of the workers will meet in General Drivers Hall March 14, 8 p. m.

The temporary organization committee recommends five delegates be selected by each organization who will attend the county meeting. According to the decision of the State-wide conference representation on the State Committee will be one from each county. At the county conference, the delegate who will represent the county on the State Committee will be selected.

It is important that every organization have representation at the Hennepin County meeting on March 14. Further information can be secured by addressing the Temporary State Organization Committee.

members of his family with vile, indecent or insulting epithets.

(9) Conducting themselves in any manner as to place the employes in fear of bodily harm.

Officials of the Central Labor Union and those of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers could not be reached but Governor Olson said: "The real plaintiff in this action is the Citizens Alliance. I always welcome a fight with them."

Plot to Open Plant

There is little doubt but that seeking of an injunction is the first move on the part of the Strutwear Company to again attempt to open the struck plant. The Minneapolis labor movement must be prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder to resist this union busting campaign. The Strutwear plant, with the aid of the courts, will reopen—unless Minneapolis labor, organized and unorganized, masses on the Strutwear picket line.

Local 500 'Mass Meeting' Is Sour

Friday night, February 21, at 24 North Eighth Street, Local 500 held another one of its justly celebrated "Mass Meetings." This affair which had been heralded far and wide among truckdrivers and helpers drew an attendance that almost staggers the imagination. When the meeting was called to order by Cliff Hall, organizer Minneapolis Teamsters' Joint Council, and his body—, beg pardon, we mean his assistant organizer, no less than 12 people crammed and crowded their way into the hall that had been provided.

After listening to the siren song of that champion organizer of drivers, Clifford Hall, the meeting was thrown open for questions. It was immediately indicated that at least half of the people in the room were not in sympathy with the program that was aimed at the destruction of 574. In the question period that followed Hall's appeal for members several of those present logically showed that a dual drivers organization had no place in Minneapolis. It was shown that Local 574 has organized the driving crafts, secured union wage scales, and gained union contracts for its members.

The meeting almost broke up in disorder when Cliff Hall and his stooge, Bruce Vincent, again made those vague and oft refuted charges of "racketeering" against Local 574. That is about all that happened.

Oh, yes, we forgot, no one joined their union.

RAIL WORKERS MEETING ASKS AMALGAMATION

Three Progressive Railroad
Groups Discuss Common
Program

Minneapolis Railroad Council
Sponsors of Satur-
day Meeting

The Conference of progressive left wing railroad organizations convened in Room 272, West Hotel, Saturday, 10 a. m. Present in the meeting was W. E. Jones, South Cle Elum, Washington, of Amalgamated Transportation Employees; H. L. Monaghan, President, J. H. Anthony, Secretary, Amalgamated Locomotive Engineers, Toledo, Ohio, and I. Nelson, C. R. Hedlund, R. F. Yeagher and Frank Glaser, Minneapolis Railway Council. The representatives of the Minneapolis Railway Council are all members of Railroad Brotherhood unions.

By unanimous vote Brother I. Nelson was made Secretary of the Conference, Brother Callan, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, was elected Chairman.

C. R. Hedlund, well known figure in Minneapolis Railroad labor circles made the principal report. He outlined the background of the Railroad Councils, and showed the need for an educational program in the railroad unions that would show railroad workers the necessity for a more efficient form of union organization than exists at the present time.

Brother Monaghan reported for the Amalgamated Locomotive Enginemen. He said that the movement had been formed outside of the brotherhoods in order to show the way to amalgamation. He stated that they had seven local lodges with about 500 members.

Brother Jones spoke for the Amalgamated Transportation Employees. He said their union had come into being because of great dissatisfaction that existed with the old railroad organization. He stated that his organization, which at one time only took in workers in the engine service, had recently voted to accept dispatchers and operators.

V. R. Dunne, official of General Drivers' Local 574, pointed out the necessity of progressives

(Continued on page 3)

Musicians Notice

Tuesday evening at 8 p. m. in the union hall there will be a meeting for everyone who is interested in forming a band. Bring your instrument. There has been a great deal of interest in the proposed union orchestra, so be on hand and take part in the first meeting.

Make Minneapolis a Union Town

Company Union Holds Sway On Vocational High Project

Women Workers There Are Now Forming a Real Union

At the Vocational High, which houses a WPA project exclusively devoted to giving employment to women, a situation exists, in regard to organization, that is almost impossible to believe. This project, which is devoted to turning out garments, bedding, and other commodities that are ordinarily produced in a garment factory, is, perhaps, the only place in the U. S. where a company union of WPA workers exist. Like all company unions, this one was not brought into being by the workers themselves nor has it their support.

This project which employs approximately 500 women is one of the largest WPA undertakings of its kind in this part of the country. Engaged in the production of the commodities at Vocational High are many women who were formerly members of the Garment Unions. Many of them have a keen realization of the value of a real militant organization of workers. The company union that now holds sway there has been deliberately foisted upon the workers there by the supervising force. The management has indicated many times to the workers that any form of independent outside organization would not be tolerated and that any agitation for the formation of such an organization would result in disciplinary action. As a result of the coercion that has been used on the workers there, their organization has all the earmarks of a company dominated setup.

Various complaints, from workers there, have been lodged with the Federal Workers. Finally, at noon Wednesday, February 19, two Federal Workers representatives called a meeting of the shop committee and the officials of the project. At this meeting the representatives of the Federal Workers, G. J. Dunne and E. Palmquist demanded that the project officials cease their program of coercion and intimidation directed against organizational activities on the project and, at this meeting, the fight was won to have a Federal Workers organizer on the project and to distribute literature and meeting notices throughout the plant whenever necessary.

The workers there should come to the realization that the present organizational setup there can never function in their interest. An organization whose outlook is the conduct of a fight for the betterment of the living conditions of its members is the only kind that is worth their while to join. Great credit must be given to two women whose activity and interest in organization has made the new setup there possible.

On WPA Projects

This week sees the opening of a new column in the Organizer. This space, each week will be devoted to the news of the various Hennepin County WPA projects. The column will attempt to give honest account of what is taking place on the projects that may be of interest to the WPA workers.

The column will open with a contest to select a name under which it will appear. The heading which appears this week will be replaced by the name which will be selected by the judges who will have charge of selecting the name.

Any member of the Federal Workers section is eligible to submit one or more names. The proposed name should not contain over 10 words. It should be something to indicate the nature of the column. It should be written on a single sheet of paper signed with the name of the sender.

The contest will close March 4.

The Vocational High project is proceeding rapidly with plans for a real organization that can serve the needs of the workers employed there.

Federal Stewards will meet Thursday, Feb. 27, to complete plans for their organization drive.

Independent Truck Owners cooperated splendidly with the Federal Workers in staging their Friday mass meeting.

Delegates from the Hennepin County Workers' Alliance will meet in our halls March 14.

Project workers are urged to send news to this column. Address editor, Northwest Organizer, 257 Plymouth Ave. N.

Resolution Demands Freedom for Mini

San Francisco—A resolution calling upon the California parole board to release Norman Mini and his seven fellow-prisoners was passed unanimously by the Central Labor Council last week.

Norman Mini, overworked in the jute mill at San Quentin, collapsed on the job last week. Latest reports indicate that his condition is not critical.

The eight Sacramento criminal syndicalism prisoners, sentenced from one to 14 years, come up before the parole board on February 25 to have their sentences set. They have been in jail about a year. San Francisco's Labor Council called upon the board to set the sentences at the minimum.

The action of the central body was taken in labor circles here as a repudiation of Paul Scharrenberg, reactionary secretary of the state federation, who recently attacked the National Sacramento Appeal Committee's fight for the prisoners.

Socialist Party Will Hold Open Meetings

The Socialist party will conduct public meetings at the party headquarters, 418 Globe building, corner of 4th and Cedar. The meetings will start at 8 p. m. every Wednesday night. Speakers will explain the position of the Socialist party on various questions, and will be glad to answer questions. **Clark Pemble, Secretary**

Bill Brown Says—

MOST PITIFUL POLITICAL FIGURES—S. K. DAVIS, NAT ROSS. Can you remember way back one year ago when the Communist Party said hang all the Farmer-Labor and A. F. of L. leaders as the betrayers of labor. Now when the real betrayer, Tom Latimer, comes along, the Stalinists are his staunchest defenders. Do you remember what 574 said, "Defeat Johannes and his murder band"? The Communist leaders said, "Defeat the machine-gun aldermen." Keep swinging, Nat and Sam, on your trapeze.



BILL BROWN
President of 574

Withdrawal Card System Explained For Benefit of Coal Yard Workers

The time of year has arrived when every worker in the coal industry should be thinking about a withdrawal card. It is unfortunate that the coal industry is a very seasonal business. During the next two months there will be about 500 coal workers, drivers, helpers and yardmen leaving the coal yards and going to other jobs. It is imperative that these workers secure proper withdrawal credentials from the union when they leave their employment.

What is a withdrawal card? A withdrawal card is a credential from the union that allows the member to cease paying dues during unemployment or while he is working at some occupation that is not covered by the jurisdiction of our union. When can a member secure a withdrawal card? A member can get a withdrawal when he is unemployed or when he is working at some other occupation. How can a withdrawal card be secured? By making application to the job steward or to the union office. Does a member pay dues when on withdrawal? The member does not pay dues while on withdrawal. Members on withdrawal card may attend meetings, take part in the meeting and has all the rights of a dues paying member except that of vote.

When returning to work after being on withdrawal the member simply turns in the card to the job steward or the union office and pays the current months dues. This returns him to good standing at once.

In case the member does not secure a withdrawal card when leaving employment and ceases to

J. L. Lewis Wants Real Steel Unions

John L. Lewis, head of the Committee for Industrial Organization, seems to have the happy faculty of putting Wm. Green in the nine hole. Last week he almost struck the worthy president of the A. F. of L. dumb with his offer, backed by the committee, to contribute \$500,000 and a staff of trained organizers if the A. F. of L. would agree to start a campaign in the steel industry that would lead to the organization of the workers on an industrial basis.

In his letter making the offer to Green he said that the committee would continue to refuse to disband. Lewis said, "We are forced to the conclusion that many of those who are trying to brand us falsely as dualists are themselves non too eager to see the unions in the mass production industries grow in influence."

In regard to the recent difficulties encountered by the radio workers Lewis urged the executive council not to continue to ignore the needs and desires of affiliated radio workers who have built their organization in an important mass production industry where craft unions never succeeded. From the foregoing it is clear that the rift between the craft and industrial unionists is deepening and widening.

Coal Haulers

The Independent Truck Owners section of Local 574 wishes to call the attention of Independent Truck Owners who are employed in the coal industry the necessity of securing the Independent emblems for their trucks.

This emblem not only identifies the owner as belonging to the independent section of 574 but it also identifies him as being a member of organized labor. Many of the coal truck owners who are members of the Independent Owners section have not provided themselves with the insignia of their organization.

If you are a member in good standing you are entitled to an emblem. They can be secured only at the Thursday meetings of the Independent Truck Owners section.

pay dues, he is dropped from the union rolls and becomes subject to a \$10 reinstatement fee when he wishes to return to good standing. No withdrawal card will be issued to a member merely because he changes his place of employment. If a member wishes to continue to work at his trade he must pay dues and be a member in good standing. For an example: A coal truck driver who leaves the coal yard to drive a truck on an ice route is not entitled to a withdrawal card.

Do not delay. See your job steward at once.

Independents Elect Section Committees

The recently concluded elections in the Independent Truck Owners section of Local 574 resulted in no great change of the leading personnel of that section. The only real upset was the election of Curt Zander over Thomas McCue, incumbent, by a majority of 3 to 1.

Following are the successful candidates: Curt Zander, Chairman; Axel Soderberg, Vice Chairman; Eugene Lundholm, Recording Secretary; Milton Hodson, Assistant Secretary; C. Quick, Sergeant-at-Arms.

The Ways and Means committee will consist of the following: Milton Hodson, Lary Hagen, B. G. Ambrose, Axel Soderberg and Curt Zander. With the exception of Zander and Hagen, there was no change in the Executive staff of the Truck Owners section.

The Executive committee that will function during the coming year consists of the Ways and Means committee of five with the addition of the elected Executive officers.

Akron Tire Strikers Hit by Injunction

The rubber strikers at the Good-year Tire and Rubber Company, Akron Ohio, have been hit by the usual weapon of the bosses. An Injunction was served upon the striking workers Saturday restraining them from picketing the plant or interfering with its operations. The pickets announced that they would resist the enforcement of the order.

Truckers Hold Special Meeting

The election meeting of the Independent Truck Owners section of Local 574 was one of the best attended gatherings of the year. Notices had been mailed out to over 400 members of the organization. Intense interest had been shown by the members between the nomination meeting and the one in which the officers were to be elected.

The balloting was conducted in the Conference room on the second floor and the meeting took place in the Auditorium on the third floor. The election committee were on hand early in the evening arranging the ballots and setting up the machinery for the election. Owing to the large number of members that balloted the business meeting did not get under way until after 9 o'clock.

The meeting was addressed by Miles Dunne, Editor of the Northwest Organizer, who pointed out the tremendous accomplishments that had been achieved by their organization. Dunne pointed out that for the first time in the history of individual truck owners, an organization was now functioning that had been able to secure a uniform standard of prices for their work. He urged the members to show loyalty to their union and said that it was their duty to fight any individuals or organizations that threatened to interfere with or destroy their union.

A letter was read that is to be presented to the Good Roads Committee of the City Council calling their attention to the abuses that exist in the payroll list of the City Engineer's Office. The newly elected Ways and Means Committee will meet sometime this week to decide on the method of procedure that will be used in laying this matter before the Council Committee. A preliminary survey of the payroll list has indicated that many discrepancies occur that have not been corrected for over five years. It is indicated that a thorough overhauling of the list will result in the work being more equitably distributed.

Letter of Thanks

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore De Sautelle,

2315 Walton Place North.

As a demonstration that our Union, Local 574, pursues a different course in the matter of aiding and helping its members, we are reprinting at this time a letter received at the union office, expressing thanks for aid that had been given by the local union to a member in distress.

February 7, 1936

General Drivers Union, Local 574
257 Plymouth Ave. N.
Minneapolis, Minn.

Brothers: We wish to express our hearty thanks for the donation we received during Mr. Theodore De Sautelle's severe illness, during January. It was greatly needed and we certainly appreciate it very much. Thanks a lot, to Local 574.

Meeting Schedule Local 160, N. S. P. Co.

Wednesday, February 5th, full membership meeting.
Thursday, February 6th, Executive Board.
Wednesday, February 12th, Organization Committee.
Thursday, February 13th, Executive Board.
Wednesday, February 19th, full membership meeting.
Thursday, February 20th, Executive Board. Wednesday, February 26th, Organization Committee.
Thursday, February 27th, Executive Board.
All meetings at 257 Plymouth avenue north, second floor.
Members may present grievances at any of the above meetings.

MEETING SCHEDULE LOCAL 574

Monday, Feb. 3: Coal Workers.
Thursday, Feb. 6: Independent Truck Owners.
Friday, Feb. 7: All Stewards; Federal Workers.
Monday, Feb. 10: Full Membership.
Wednesday, Feb. 12: Market Workers.
Friday, Feb. 14: Coal Stewards; Federal Workers.
Monday, Feb. 17: Coal Workers.
Thursday, Feb. 20: Independent Truck Owners.
Friday, Feb. 21: All Stewards; Federal Workers.
Monday, Feb. 24: Full Membership.
Tuesday, Feb. 25: Taxi Drivers; night drivers, 1 p. m.; day drivers, 7 p. m.
Friday, Feb. 28: Coal Stewards; Federal Workers.

Mankato Vigilantes Threaten Meeting of 574 Drivers Union

Saturday afternoon, February 22nd, the Mankato section of Local 574 held a meeting which abounded in exciting happenings. Carl Skoglund had been sent down from Minneapolis to assist in conducting the meeting.

At 2 p. m., 311 Front Street, the meeting got under way. It had scarcely been called to order by the chairman, Charles Beck, when an official of the Mankato police department, entered the hall and announced to the 75 members assembled there that a band of vigilantes had been organized whose purpose was to break up the meeting. The police told the union members that they would remain and protect the meeting. The workers rejected this offer and said that they were fully able to protect their own meeting without the aid of the police department.

A new set of temporary officers were elected at this meeting. They are as follows: Chairman, Charles Beck; vice chairman, Leo Ayers; secretary, Roy Kegley; treasurer, Howard Schuer; recording secretary, Hugo Muetzel; trustees, Elmer Comers, Emil Byers, and Rudolph Wofohn. The meeting was addressed by Skoglund who complimented the Mankato union-

ists on the fine showing they had made and the determination they had shown in building their organization under adverse conditions.

Many of the workers spoke telling of the difficulties and discriminations that were encountered on various WPA projects. The new chairman announced there were now 42 paid up members in the local. Most of the workers who attended the meeting who were not members joined before the meeting adjourned.

It is expected that great strides forward will be made by the organization under its new local leadership. The date for the next meeting has not been set.

Celebration Dance Success for Union

The Celebration dance given by Local 160, Northern States Power Co. Employees' Union was a very successful affair. This was the first attempt of this Local Union to give any sort of a social affair. The members responded in grand style and, as a result a very pleasant evening was had by everyone who attended.

Good music had been provided

Laundry Dance

The joint local Cleaners, Drivers and Laundry Workers Union No. 18005 and 183, will give a hard time dance at De Sota Hall, third floor, 703 Third Avenue South Wednesday night, March 11, 1936. Both old time and modern music will be played. Admission is 10 cents.

All workers in the Laundry and Cleaning Industry, and their friends are invited to attend. A good time is assured for all.

Operators to Meet On March 5, 8 P. M.

Operators of the Northern States Power Company will hold an organization meeting March 5 8 p. m. at 15th Ave. and 2nd St. N. E. All Workers in the Operating Dept. union and non-union, are invited.

and the committee in charge did a very good job in arranging the program and seeing to it that it was carried out. No doubt the union will feel encouraged to give similar affairs in the future.

The golf course lies close to the mill
And almost every day
The little children working there
Can watch the men at play.

RAIL WORKERS MEETING ASKS AMALGAMATION

(Continued from page 1)
among the railroad workers joining together to attempt to bring about a more correct form of union organization on the American railroads.

Brother Nelson raised the question as to whether or not the Conference could achieve its objectives, that is, the calling of a future and larger conference for the purpose of working out a program for all progressive rail workers. Brother Hedlund urged the representatives of the A. L. E. and A. T. E. to return to their respective organizations and urge the merging of their respective organizations. Brother Hedlund explained that the Minneapolis Railroad Council was not properly an organization but was merely a delegated body whose membership was still in the old unions.

He suggested then a three point program for the Conference: 1. Merger of the two independent unions. 2. The selection of an official publication. 3. The election of a secretary who would serve

between now and the next conference. Representatives of both independent organizations agreed that they would recommend merger to their membership. Brother Jones moved that the NORTHWEST ORGANIZER be designated as the official publication. Motion carried. Motion that a larger conference be called at a later date. Motion carried. Motion that all ritual and secret work be abolished in all labor unions. Motion carried. Motion that the outline of this conference be given to the NORTHWEST ORGANIZER for publication. Motion carried.

As the meeting adjourned a feeling of optimism was expressed by the delegates in attendance. It was felt that this conference had been a great stride forward in furthering the program of industrial union organization on the American railroads. The informal opinion of most of the delegates was that the national conference would not be called until after the B. L. E. convention this coming summer.

News from the American Bankers Association meeting: "When the chairman announced there would be no speeches, the austere and dignified bankers shattered all decorum and roared with yells of 'yea-ay' 'yea-ay'."

We don't blame 'em.

RAIL WORKER WRITES "LABOR"

Editor's note: The following letter, written by a local Railroad worker to Labor, official publication of the Railroad Brotherhoods, is so apt and to the point, in view of the struggle now going on in the A. F. of L. that we print it herewith.

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN AND ENGINEERS

Minneapolis, Minn.
February 15, 1936

Mr. Edw. Keating,
Editor of LABOR,
Labor Bldg.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

The attached letter expresses my individual opinion on the controversy now raging within the A. F. of L. as regards craft vs. industrial unionism. Having had the privilege to see what unions, organized on an industrial basis, have accomplished for their members in this community, as compared to what was accomplished under a strict craft union setup, and also seeing the attempts which have been and are now being made by the A. F. of L. leadership to dissipate the gains made and prevent further efforts along this line, I could not let LABOR'S position on this controversy stand unchallenged. While I realize my letter is quite lengthy, I trust you can find space in LABOR for publication of same. As the leaders of our organizations are getting unlimited space for expression of their opinions, I hope you will give a rank and file member the same privilege.

Will be waiting to see my letter published in LABOR without editorial censorship.

Fraternally yours,
I. NELSON,
Member, Lodge 510, BLF&E
2822 Taylor St. N. E.
Minneapolis, Minn.

Minneapolis, Minn.
February 12, 1936

Mr. Edward Keating,
Editor of LABOR,
Labor Bldg.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Since the organization of the

Committee for Industrial organization by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers and the presidents of seven other A. F. of L. unions, LABOR has seen fit to launch editorial broadsides against this movement, contending, as in your issue of December 10, 1935, that Mr. Lewis "pursues a course calculated to impede the progress of the American Labor movement." In other words, you charge that Mr. Lewis and his associates, in their fight for industrial organization of the workers, are doing so with the deliberate intent of making the American labor movement as ineffective as possible.

Realizing that your statements are but an echo of your master's voice and expresses the policy of the editorial board of LABOR, I have been able to read your articles with a certain sense of humor, particularly so since, as a resident of Minneapolis, I have had the privilege of observing the tactics of A. F. of L. craft union leadership in the labor struggles in this city in the last two years. And as the questions of industrial vs. craft unions are also being discussed by an ever increasing number of members of the railroad labor organizations, I presume your editorials are written with the idea also of doing everything possible to discourage thoughts of industrial organization of the railroad workers.

Knowing from past experience the impossibility of having articles published in LABOR, that dares to advocate a departure from the present narrow groove of craft union policies, I have read your articles with a smile and passed on. However, the cartoon and article accompanying same on the editorial page of LABOR for February 11th are so disgusting and such a perversion of facts, that I feel compelled to enter a protest. When you state that Mr. Lewis is apparently determined to expend his \$2,000,000 war chest "in an effort to disrupt the labor movement," I believe, to quote your own words "the time for soft words has passed." I also feel, as a member of the B. of L. F. & E., and as such being assessed for the maintenance of LABOR, I have

the right to protest when I become convinced that the policies of the paper are detrimental to my best interests as a worker and I have the further right to request publication of my protest in the paper I am supposed to be part owner of. Therefore, this letter.

It should be evident, even to the most rabid advocate of craft unionism, when after 55 years of existence, the A. F. of L. has only been able to organize less than four million out of nearly 40 million organizable workers, that it is high time to discuss and adopt organizational policies that will bring better results. With ownership of industry and capital highly centralized as today, the necessity for strong workers' organizations with a leadership that understands the problems the workers are facing and what must be done to solve them, should be evident to anyone who looks at it from a worker's point of view. That being the case, are the organizational results so far obtained the best our labor leadership can offer? If it is, they are a hindrance to the development of a strong and militant labor movement and should be ruthlessly swept aside.

The advantages of industrial organization over craft organization are so evident that any labor leader should be able to see it. If they do not, it is simply because their personal positions and fortunes are better protected by not seeing it. The impotence of the craft union set up has been so thoroughly demonstrated in later years that the workers in the mass industries, such as rubber, steel, auto and others, simply refuse to enter such unions in large numbers. Yet when a movement is organized within the A. F. of L. to work for better organizational policies, LABOR, the railroad workers' paper, sees fit to use its columns to brand such efforts as tactics that "delight the National Association of Manufacturers and other enemies of the workers, but no one else." (LABOR 12-10-35.) The words have quite a familiar sound. LABOR is simply using the old, outworn charges of every inefficient labor leader who visions his well paid position slipping away as the result of the awakening of the work-

ers and is determined to do what he can to prevent it. In connection with this controversy, LABOR'S statement is so preposterous and untrue, that its only importance is in showing the tactics and to what length supporters of craft union policies will go to prevent a change.

The sorry record of craft union helplessness has been before us in the last few years when opportunities for organization were of the best, especially in the mass industries. Looking at this record, Mr. Lewis and his associates are intelligent enough to understand, that if the workers in these industries are to be effectively organized, a change in policy is absolutely necessary. Mr. Lewis has his ears to the ground, so to speak, he understands that these workers are hungry for organization, but insist on being organized in unions that will really unite them for their struggles, instead of splitting up into small, impotent crafts where one can be used to help defeat the other, and, best of all, he has courage enough to do something about it. Instead of condemning such efforts, LABOR could render a great service to the future of the labor movement by giving them all the help and encouragement possible.

In your editorials in LABOR of December 10th and 17th, 1935, you state that both industrial and craft unions are recognized by the A. F. of L., that both are operating harmoniously within the federation and that there is no reason why this can not continue if only Mr. Lewis will "check his guns at the door." You state further that "No one is trying to drive the industrial unionists out of the A. F. of L." Living in Minneapolis, I do not have to go away from home to find proof that the last quoted statement is far from the truth. The bitter struggles of General Drivers Local 574 in the last two years and the position taken by leaders of the A. F. of L. towards this union should furnish abundant proof that industrial unionists are not welcome in the federation.

The struggles of local 574 in the last two years has become nationally known and as editor of a national weekly labor newspaper,

you, Mr. Keating, should be somewhat familiar with what has taken place. Here was a local union, chartered by the Teamsters' International and by the summer of 1935 had been in the field for about 18 years. Up to that time, this union was a shining example of craft union policies at their worst. With a membership varying from 50 to 250 in a city of nearly half a million people, no organizational activities and at the same time wages and working conditions in the industry intolerably bad, about all there was left of the local was the charter and a secretary to collect per capita tax for the International. In 1933 a handful of progressive and militant members of the union, seeing these conditions, decided it was about time to do something to improve them. They began a drive for organization, accepting not only drivers, but platform men and inside workers as well, the membership increased by the thousands and their activities resulted in three hard fought strikes in 1934. During these struggles, Mr. Tobin, president of the Teamsters' International, saw fit to join the employers in denouncing the efforts of the union and its leaders, his statements were eagerly taken up by the employers and the reactionary press in their efforts to defeat the strikers. But in spite of the employers and the sabotage of Mr. Tobin, these strikes were fought on to victory for the workers, with large increases in wages and great improvement in working conditions. Local 574, by their correct organizational policies and militant leadership, has done more in the last two years to make Minneapolis a union town than all the craft union leaders combined has dared think of doing in a generation.

Continued next issue

160 Has Meeting for Kelvinator Workers

Workers in the Kelvinator Department of the Northern States Power held two meetings in 574 hall. Attendance at both meetings was good and it is almost assured that this department will soon be 100 per cent union.

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

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"When I ply my needle, trowel or pick,
I'm a decent Sheeney, Wop or Mick,
But when I strike, I'm a Bolshevik,
I'm labor."

Workers Beware!

We are glad to join hands with the LABOR REVIEW this week in its forthright denunciation of the Minnesota Law and Order League. This semi-fascist organization merits the strongest condemnation of every thinking person in the labor movement. Let no one be deceived in regard to the purposes and activities of this anti-union group.

In this country where democracy, in theory, still reigns, the roots of fascist repression are beginning to sprout. As history has recently demonstrated, such organizations always direct their first activity to repression of unions and radical groups. Such an organization as the Law and Order League is an active, militant expression of ruling class physiology.

When capitalism begins to tremble under the blows of the working class, it calls in all the agents of working-class repression. When employers, under the present social order are faced, with the necessity of giving concessions to powerful unions of their workers, they also resort to the forces of darkness. The foster father and sponsor of the Minnesota Law and Order League is the organized bankers and employers of this state. The real objective of this organization is to break the power of the labor unions. Frameups, strikebreaking and workers' repression are the weapons they use.

Workers beware! Such organizations are your enemy!

* * *

Scandalmongers

Of late, it has come to the attention of our union that various alleged labor leaders are actively concerning themselves with circulating vicious, lying, and scandalous rumors about Local 574, its members and its leadership. We recognize this as part and parcel of a subversive underhand campaign to attempt to discredit our organization in the eyes of the rest of the trade union movement.

The words "racketeer," "chiselers," and other terms having an equally unsavory meaning fall freely from the lips of these people. These rumors that lack names, places, and dates, are being circulated widely by elements in the labor movement whose only recommendation is a glib and unscrupulous tongue and who have only been saved from committing colossal blunders by the fact that they have done nothing. Local 574 cares little about the opinions of people who stoop to the lowest depths of trade union infamy, but we are concerned with the good opinion of our thousands of friends in the movement that we have won by our honesty and devotion to the working class cause.

We serve notice on those unscrupulous defamers of character that whenever and wherever we can establish evidence that we have been slandered we will bring the slanderers into the courts and give them a full opportunity to prove their vile charges. The scandalmongers who expect to profit by trading in lies and abuses generally find that they have defeated their own aims. The world hates a liar.

* * *

The General Hospital

A Minneapolis institution that is in dire need of a thoroughgoing investigation by those interested in the cause of labor is the Minneapolis General Hospital. The pitiful inadequacy of the General Hospital has been thoroughly demonstrated the last five years.

Prior to the advent of the great wave of unemployment in 1929, the Minneapolis General Hospital, more or less efficiently, served the needs of this community. But when the time came when 15,000 Minneapolis families were thrown on the relief rolls and were made dependent on the General Hospital for medical and dental care, its inefficiency and mismanagement was brought to light in a forceable fashion.

No one can deny that the resources of the hospital have been strained to the utmost. The demands upon it for service was greater than the personnel could supply. Lacking space, understaffed, and mismanaged, the Minneapolis General Hospital is a monument to capitalist greed and is a demonstration of capitalism's callous disregard for human suffering. Not later than last week the General Hospital was called to attend a relief client who was suffering from a severe heart ailment. Eleven hours after the call was received a doctor from the General Hospital arrived to minister to the sufferings of this unfortunate victim of economic disaster. Instances such as this could be multiplied by the hundreds.

It is high time that those officials in charge of the General Hospital give that institution a thorough going over. The WPA and relief workers have great need for a medical institution that can serve them. But it is obvious that the Minneapolis General Hospital can not perform that function. Let's have an investigation that will go to the bottom of this situation.

Keeping Step With 574

By Mickey Dunne

The Northern States Power Workers dance was really a grand affair.

Dobbs and Skoglund will see the Committee for Industrial Organization, in Washington, this week.

The Boyd crew are getting their seniority straightened out.

John, the Clubroom Host, is ill.

With the advent of warmer weather the Independent Truck Owners are back in the money.

The Mankato Local held an exciting meeting Saturday afternoon.

The Ferrin drivers met Tuesday evening.

Theo. DeSautelle is back on the job after a month's siege with double pneumonia.

It looks like the Vocational High Project was going to get organized at last.

The cold winds that blew for the past six weeks blew good for some workers. Yellow Cab drivers had the most prosperous month and a half in the history of the organization.

George Frosig, the Durable Dane, has been sick for two weeks.

That Local 500 "mass" meeting was a honey.

Although this may seem irrelevant and immaterial, our Mexican correspondent writes us that Irving Green local lawyer, got popped on the jaw by a native guide for speaking out of turn during his recent visit to Taxco.

C. Quick will again guard the portals of the I. T. O. meetings.

The Great Lakes Coal Company is moving to Midway this spring.

Dick Atherton reports that the Local 574 band outlook is good.

The City Council buried the Milwaukee Ordinance.

The editor spoke to the Socialist Party Local in Golden Valley Friday night.

The wage difference at the Fickel Coal and Oil Company has been adjusted to the satisfaction of the union.

Washington's birthday was a big night for trade union dances. No less than eight of them were held on that date.

The Bartenders' affair was probably the most successful. We understand that some of them are not home yet.

A special meeting for all transfer stewards will be held sometime this week.

Curious Fact Dept.

Do you know that Meyer Lewis used to be connected with the student band at the university? Is he well remembered there? I'll say he is.

Laundry Workers

The Laundry Workers section of the joint local of Cleaners, Drivers and Laundry Workers Union, affiliated with the A. F. of L., will meet Wednesday, March 4, at 703 Third Avenue South. Business of utmost importance will be transacted at this meeting.

A special order of business will be the selection of a defense committee to aid Brother Lee De Camp in the preservation of his rights.

Everybody must be on hand for this meeting.

Executive Board Instructs Stewards

Local No. 160 Northern States Power Employees Union at their last executive board meeting has issued instructions to all job stewards that their books must be turned in at the last meeting of each month.

It is important that all department stewards who are charged with the duty of collecting dues be prompt in remitting all dues payments to the proper union official in order that proper credit can be given to members on the union records.

Well Known Fact Dept.

Dan Tobin has never been on the bread line.

Boost from Ball

Robert M. Ball
Delta Kappa Epsilon
Middletown, Conn.

Feb. 19, 1936

General Drivers Union, Local 574
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Sirs:

Allow me to congratulate you on the success of your militant policy. I am a graduate student at Wesleyan University doing work on the current American Labor movement and would like very much to receive copies of your paper the "Northwest Organizer" regularly, if you would let me know how much it would cost.

Sincerely,

ROBERT BALL

Why don't Oscar Torgenson wear his union button?

Labor Looks at the Press

Columbia, South Carolina, news item: "Discharge of four students for running a cheating 'ring' was announced Friday by the University of South Carolina. . . The action follows closely a similar move at the University of North Carolina, where 43 students were suspended for cheating there."

The authorities oughta go easy—the kids are just learning to be good business men, that's all.

Easton, Pa., news item: "Twelve jurymen alleged to have decided a verdict by the flip of a coin were ordered Friday to appear in court and show why they should not be judged in contempt."

If juries decided in this way, then maybe a striker would have at least a fifty-fifty chance before the court. As things are now, such an innovation would be a decidedly progressive step.

Federal official, commenting on Senator Pittman's recent jingoistic outburst against Japan: "We have to have these jingoistic speeches every once in a while to counteract the influence of the pacifists. We are a peaceful people, but at the same time we won't be trampled on."—Christian Science Monitor.

Looks like you and I would soon have to send our army to China to protect our investments.

Major J. F. C. Fuller, testifying before the Nye munitions committee: "I would go to a state, dine the minister of war, produce the fairest of fair ladies, and then suggest that his country's army wanted a new machine gun. He would say, 'How much do I get?' I say, 'Ten per cent.' Then I go to Vickers or some other firm and say I want

500 M. G.'s at a price which will enable me to scoop 30 per cent—20 per cent for myself, 10 per cent for the minister."

Western hospitality, as indicated in a Los Angeles news item: "Forty-one men huddled in a box car clattered through the California desert today toward Yuma, Arizona. They were convicted vagrants, ordered out of California as undesirables."

It might be the profit-system that makes them vagrants that is undesirable.

Santiago, Chile: "Strikes and rumors of strikes have caused Finance Minister Ross to abandon the two per cent sales tax which has been in effect for two years."

It's the poor who get nipped by the sales tax. We'll fight it all along the line.

Dr. Bowman, chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, speaking: "We will never compromise our opposition to having 'free speech' mean that a man can do as he pleases under the university's protection—sneer at religion or bring in political propaganda."

There speaks a true American—of the same breed as Hearst and the American Liberty League. They stand for free speech — as long as nothing is said that they don't agree with.

New York item: "The A. T. & T. reported a 10.7 decrease in operating income and a 9.3 increase in net operating income and a 9.3 increase in net operating income for 1935."

Which is a bookkeeper's way of saying that wages went down and profits went up.

Overhead Department Committee Out to Settle All Grievances

The grievance in the Overhead department of the Northern States Power Company is rapidly resolving itself into a serious disagreement. The Union Grievance Committee in this department was rudely turned down by the department supervisor when they presented their grievances. The supervisor, Joe Hood, then took it upon himself to read the committee a lecture about their union, Local No. 160, going far out of his way in an attempt to intimidate the committee members. This action is one of the most flagrant violations of the legal right of workers to join the union without intimidation by the employer that has ever been experienced in Minneapolis. The union has answered the challenge very promptly.

The executive board of the union and their spokesman went with the department grievance committee to meet the heads of

the department. No satisfaction could be obtained so the committee then met with Mr. H. Grenacher, vice president in charge of operations, and Mr. T. D. Smith, general superintendent. They assured the executive board that they would see that the grievance committee in this department was given the proper recognition and fair treatment by the department heads. It was agreed that on this basis the department grievance committee would again meet the department grievance committee would again meet the department heads to discuss the wage question. As we go to press, we are informed that a meeting date has been set.

The executive board of Local No. 160 reports that the disputes over wages in this department is a fundamental question which will receive special attention until settled.