

BUILD A LABOR TEMPLE - A UNION RADIO STATION

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

Official Organ of the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council

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State Road Contractors Agree to Broad Union Pact

Agreement Awaits Ratification of Unions — Will Cover Highway Work Throughout State — Aimed to Standardize Wages and Conditions — Six Unions Involved

A working agreement covering wages and working conditions for six AFL unions on all city, county and state highway and heavy construction work has been reached with the Associated General Contractors of Minnesota after months of negotiations, and awaits only final ratification by the unions and their internationals to take effect.

Local 289 Puts Driver Back on Job

It took just three and one-half hours for the Bakery Drivers Union Local 289 to demonstrate its ability to enforce seniority at the Gladness Bakery on October 7th, after the company had laid off Roy Vigoren.

At 7 a. m. on that day, the fourteen Gladness drivers, instead of reporting for work, reported to the union hall. The holiday was in protest against the firing of Vigoren, a driver with five years' seniority at the company and one of the oldest members of Local 289.

The bakery claimed Vigoren's "sales were down." The union showed this wasn't so and demonstrated the strength to back its contention.

At 10:30 a. m. the company agreed to reinstate Vigoren on a new route, all drivers returned to work, and Minneapolis saw just one more demonstration of the value of unionism in giving job security to a worker who, alone, would have been defenseless.

Local 471 Is Sponsor of Daily Classes

Milk Drivers Local 471 this week initiated a comprehensive system of classes in economics, labor history and parliamentary law, organized in such a way that every single member of the union and his wife can attend.

Classes are held daily at 1:30 to 3:30 p. m., which is a time when every member can attend on his days off.

Local 471's executive board called particular attention to the fact that arrangements have been made whereby the wives of members can also attend the classes.

No expense is involved for those attending, the union underwriting the necessary costs.

Although the classes are not compulsory, the union urges every member to take advantage of this opportunity.

The teachers are Max Goldman, Arthur Seibert and Herman Erickson.

Furniture Council Pushes Work in Wisconsin Towns

William Engelbretson of Minneapolis, secretary of the Furniture Workers Council composed of furniture workers' unions in the North West, spent last week in Port Washington and Wausau, Wisconsin, meeting with the local unions and describing the Council set-up.

Engelbretson conferred with the executive boards and spoke at general membership meetings of the unions.

In Wausau the woodworkers union is now in a dispute with the employer over seniority rights, and there is a possibility of a strike in the near future.

This is the first time highway work throughout an entire state has been brought under the control of an agreement embracing six unions.

AGC Set-Up
The Associated General Contractors of Minnesota represent the contractors, sub-contractors, firms, partnerships, corporations, subsidiaries and companies engaged in general construction work in the entire state.

Six Unions Involved
The unions involved are the Drivers, the Carpenters, the Plasterers and Cement Finishers, the Hod Carriers and Building Laborers, the Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers, and the Operating Engineers.

Carl Skoglund and Arthur Hudson, presidents of the Minneapolis and St. Paul General Drivers' Union, represented all drivers' unions throughout the state in the negotiations. Two weeks ago representatives of all drivers' unions in the state met in the headquarters of Local 120 in St. Paul and ratified in principle the terms of the agreement being negotiated.

Scope of Pact
The new contract covers hours of work, overtime, seniority, hourly wage scales for all types of highway work, hourly minimum rental rates to be paid by the contractor for hired trucks, etc., and embodies substantial gains in wages and working conditions for many categories.

The chaos and anarchy that has prevailed on highway construction jobs will be abolished and working conditions and wages will be standardized, for the first time in the memory of man.

Next week the Northwest Organizer will run the complete text of the contract, together with a list of the contractors covered by the agreement. Extra copies of the issue containing the state contract can be obtained for 25¢ each, by writing to the Northwest Organizer, 253 Plymouth Avenue North, Minneapolis.

Judge Wright Convicts Two Union Men

Accepting the word of a rattled cop and a strikebreaker against the word of four unionists, Judge Wright last Thursday handed down a verdict of guilty of disorderly conduct against John Jonasco, Business Agent of Furniture Workers Union Local 1859 and Felix Morrow, associate editor of the Northwest Organizer.

Jonasco and Morrow were on the picket line at Christiansen's cafe, and were arrested by the policeman when he could not find another picket who allegedly had bumped a fink entering the struck cafe. A man named Flesher, accountant for Christiansen's, who last week struck a woman picket, testified for the policeman.

A moment after Jonasco, Morrow, and Don Penwell and Bob Tibbets, organizers for the Warehouse Union Local 20316 had completed their testimony, Judge Wright declared the pickets guilty and fined them \$15 each or ten days in jail.

Judge Wright is running for election as a District Judge.

Over-Road Strikers Meet Bosses Today

BULLETIN

After six weeks of effective picket lines, Nebraska trucking employers appear to have decided to come to a settlement, and this morning a committee from the drivers unions is scheduled to sit down in Omaha with an employers' committee to talk terms.

Meanwhile, in Des Moines, the union set this morning as a deadline, after which any employer refusing to sign the uniform over-road agreement, will be struck. A number of bitter-enders among employers in Kansas City finally came to terms this week, signing the over-road agreement.

2 of 3 Box Firms Sign With 1859

On September 29th, the Furniture Workers Union Local 1859 struck the Flour City and Co-operative Box companies, after negotiations had failed to win wage increases and paid vacations.

Strikers threw a picket line around both plants and kept them tied up. Last Saturday at 1 p. m. the Flour City firm signed up with the union. The new pact brings wage increases of 2½¢ hourly throughout the plant; the closed shop; the 8-hour day with time and one-half for overtime; and one week's vacation with pay. On Monday all employees were back on the job.

Tuesday night the Co-operative Box company signed, granting the week's vacation with pay, wage increases of 2½¢ hourly for two men, of 5¢ hourly for two men. Other conditions are the same as those obtained at Flour City. The men were back on the job Wednesday morning.

Glazer Strike Solid
The strike against the Glazer Box company, now in its fourth week, is firm as ever, with Glazer running around from the Associated Industries to the fink unions to the U. S. conciliator in an attempt to crack the union's ranks. In a recent meeting between the union committee, Glazer, and Wenig, a federal conciliator, the conciliator tried to make it appear that Local 1859 had broken its last contract with the company, which is certainly not true. When the union evidenced its willingness to negotiate in good faith, the management immediately showed its unwillingness to settle the strike.

Local 1859 will continue to stand on its demands, whether or not there is a federal conciliator present. If Flour City and the Co-operative Box companies can agree with the union on a new working agreement, there is no reason why the Glazer Box company cannot come to terms also.

Strike Threat Wins Demands

Employees of the Janney, Semple, Hill company met Monday night, October 10th, to take definite action against the company's disregard of seniority rights.

Tuesday morning the strike committee met with the company to inform it that it had either to live up to seniority on the job or face a strike. The management capitulated immediately when it saw the workers meant business, and agreed in the future to work with a union committee selected by Sears workers, to work out seniority as provided for in the union contract.

\$5 Initiation Fee Voted By Local 977

The October 10th membership meeting of Filling Station Attendants Union Local 977 voted to set the initiation fee for new members of the organization at \$5, the fee to take effect November 15, 1938.

With the steady organizational gains of the past few months, Local 977 now has well over 700 members.

The secretary asks that all special group meetings keep minutes and send copies to the local office for filing.

Pack Says It's All a Mistake

Robert F. Pack, President of the Northern States Power Company, didn't mean to cancel the contract with Electrical Workers Local 160. Anyway he didn't think that cancellation meant cancellation.

Such is the gist of a news item in the Minneapolis Tribune of Friday, October 14th. It says:

"Cancellation by the Northern States Power Co. of contracts covering 2,500 employees in St. Paul, Minneapolis and environs was announced Thursday by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Robert F. Pack, president of the power company, said the notice was a routine procedure required as a preliminary to the drafting of a new contract . . . William J. Heigel, business manager of Local 160, interpreted the cancellation to mean a refusal to further recognize the union. Pack said this was incorrect."

No Direct Word
Strangely enough, however, the unions involved had to learn of Pack's peculiar interpretation of his notice of cancellation by reading the Tribune. The unions have had no word directly from the company on this basic question.

When Pack's notice of cancellation was received by Local 160, the union informed Pack by letter that cancellation was not provided for in the existing agreement, it being subject only to modification and amendment. Pack never replied to this letter.

It was only when the union gave the Twin City dailies the text of Pack's letter of cancellation, together with a union declaration that the company would sign another agreement or face a shut-down, that Pack, notified by the newspapers, gave them the statement we have quoted above.

When one reporter called the union and was informed that the union stood by its original interpretation of Pack's letter until he would withdraw it, and the reporter so informed Pack, the company president said he would immediately contact the union. He has yet to do so, however.

Akron Drivers Union Attacked by Aubrey Williams, 'Liberal' WPA Head

Facts behind the WPA stoppage involving the Teamsters Union Local 764 of Akron, Ohio, were finally made public this week in the columns of the Summit County Labor News, AFL organ.

It appears that many members of Local 764, like drivers in other sections of the country, have been encouraged by WPA to purchase trucks under the promise of continuous employment. Instead of sticking to its promise, the WPA in Ohio recently instituted a new system of awarding contracts to the lowest bidders. A number of out-of-town non-union operators, together with various local fink drivers with make-shift trucks assembled from the junk yards, underbid the Akron truck drivers.

Local 764 drivers were thrown off the job, after which they established picket lines to prevent the scabs from hauling stone for the projects.

Charges Lock-out
According to J. D. Stanford, vice-president of the Teamsters Union, the situation is a lock-out, not a strike. "You can't strike after your job has been taken away from you . . . Many WPA employees have been needlessly thrown out of work by WPA officials on the pretext they could not work because of the pickets. Necessary supplies for a number of days are on hand.

Not Stopping WPA Jobs
"We're just seeing to it that these fellows who rigged up equipment out of junk yards and off vacant lots in order to grab off a WPA contract by bidding so ridiculously low no one could compete

with them, don't haul any more stone. We don't want to stop any WPA jobs and we haven't. There is plenty of material available.

A Workers Alliance Hero
It is well to recall that this same strike - breaker, Williams, was cheered to the echo by a delegation from the Workers Alliance one month ago when, in answer to their inquiry about a WPA white collar wage-out, he asked them to see that "their friends" were returned to office in November. Like so many other "friends of the unemployed," Aubrey Williams has wound up in the camp of the reaction. He is not only trying to break down union conditions in Akron, but he and the WPA officialdom are seeking to blame the union for the WPA administration's unwillingness to permit the WPA projects to operate.

Williams, in short, is following a reactionary policy directed squarely against unionism in the driving industry.

As from this hour you use your power, The World must follow you

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

On the National Picket Line

The news of Homer Martin's cordial reception when he called at the Ford River Rouge Plant last week has the labor world agog. Apparently Mr. Martin called at the plant without invitation but was received by Harry Bennett, Ford personnel manager. Henry Ford dropped into the office shortly after Martin's arrival. He and Martin "agreed that the fall weather was perfect."

After Mr. Ford went his lordly way, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Martin lunched together in a private dining room in the plant restaurant. When they left for a short inspection tour of the plant, anxious news reporters questioned them about their conversation. Mr. Bennett said that they had talked about the 32-hour week, unskilled labor, and working conditions.

When asked if Mr. Martin's call meant a union agreement between the Ford Motor Company and the UAW, Mr. Bennett said, "There never has been any trouble between organized labor and the Ford Motor Company (how about Kansas City, Mr. Bennett?) The only real trouble was when people tried to crash our gates . . . if our men want to organize that will be right with us . . . BUT the Ford Motor Company, so long as I have anything to say about it, as in the past, will not sign a contract with any labor organization."

Our employees may organize if they wish BUT . . .

Governor Murphy of Michigan was also a caller at the Ford Plant last week. He came, he told reporters, to discuss with Mr. Ford and Mr. Bennett a plan to absorb part of the present heavy load of workers enrolled with the Michigan State Employment Service into the auto industry.

Although neither the Chrysler Corporation nor the UAW will publicly admit its official existence, there is substantial evidence to support a news story to the effect that a verbal agreement between the union and the company has established the 32-hour work week in the Chrysler plants. It is believed that the verbal agreement will remain in effect until all the workers on the seniority list have been re-employed, or until about November 1. The plants will be operated in two shifts of four days each.

General Motors is at the present time re-employing men at a rapid rate and it is expected that all the men on the seniority list will have

Who Killed Him?

Patrick J. Corcoran was murdered by unknown persons on the night of November 17, 1937. The Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council offers a reward of TEN THOUSAN DDOLLARS for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of the murderers.

Make Minneapolis a Union Town

Northwest Organizer

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EDITORIAL BOARD MILES DUNNE, Chairman

Business Manager DANIEL BURKE Editor MILES E. DUNNE

When I ply my needle, trowel or pick I'm a decent Sheeney, Wop or Mick,

Stassen's Real Program: War Against the Unions

Use of the National Guard against the labor movement, revival of the infamous Criminal Syndicalism Law as a strikebreaking weapon,

What Stassen's real program is cannot be learned from his speeches; with the usual hypocrisy of boss-politicians he is peddling a wordy and fake liberalism publicly.

Issued by the Minnesota Republican Volunteer Committee in the form of "Questions and Answers," "prepared and indexed for the information and convenience of Republican workers"

Typical Stassen Statements "Question 86" reads: "What evidence is there that the Bensonites are exploiting the farmer?"

"Question 90" reads: "What are the labor racketeers doing now to hurt the farmers?" The answer: "Their latest drive is on the cooperative creameries of the state."

Stassen for Using Criminal Syndicalism Law Questions 107-109 deal with the Criminal Syndicalism Law, which has fortunately fallen into disuse,

What Stassen Would Have Done in 1934 Questions 31-32, revealing that the Republicans plan to use the National Guard to break strikes,

"QUESTION—Could the Governor put a stop to labor violence if he wanted to?"

"ANSWER—Certainly. He has both the authority and the prestige to maintain industrial peace in Minnesota."

"QUESTION—Has he said anything on the subject?"

"ANSWER—He publicly stated in his Lincoln Day address, February 12, 1938, that 'The worker in Minnesota under the Farmer-Labor Administration need never fear that state troops will ever be used either directly or indirectly as strike-breakers.'"

No Jobs for Youth, Says Stassen What the hundreds of thousands of jobless youth in Minnesota can expect at the hands of Stassen—who has the effrontery to run as a representative of the "younger people"—is revealed by the Republican handbook's vicious attack on the American Youth Act

We need not quote any more. In these questions from the official Republican handbook are revealed a program for smashing the labor unions, by criminal prosecution, by military force, by slander.

Elect Benson, Defeat Reaction! Every worker, every friend of labor, every farmer who knows the real ties that join him with the worker—every enemy of fascism and reactionary rule—should not merely bring his own family to the polls on Election Day,

"Democracy" Is Only for the Masters



Carlo

Unless twice the number of union men and their wives who voted for Governor Benson in the primaries now vote for him in the election, he will be defeated.

Get Out the Vote for Benson! Stassen, Enemy of the Unions, Must Be Defeated!

What's Behind the Spy Scare

Spying is a regular part of international relations among the great powers. All nations maintain at great cost permanent espionage systems to ferret out military and commercial secrets of all the other nations.

When, therefore, a government begins to whip up sentiment against a "spy menace" you can be sure that something fishy is in the wind. The present trial of German spies which opened recently in New York City is a case in point.

Remember 1916 Have the American people forgotten that almost identical spy scares were used back in 1916 to whip up a war spirit in the first World War

Spy scares have a way of turning very rapidly into witch-hunts against all those who oppose militarization and war. Above all, they are eventually directed against the labor movement, for it is from the workers that the greatest opposition arises against the war-makers.

The administration in Washington, through the present spy scare, and the future scares it is preparing, is seeking to psychologize the nation against the militant opponents of war, and to justify the senseless and wanton expenditures of stupendous sums on armaments.

WHEREAS organized labor is aware of the cruel deception practiced upon it in the last "War to Make the World Safe for Democracy," which destroyed millions of lives and brought about reaction instead of democracy; and

WHEREAS the world is threatened with another such war, in which the workers and farmers will once more be called to lay down their lives to protect and expand the imperialist interests of the big bosses; and

WHEREAS the employers' press is engaged in a systematic campaign to create a jingoistic war spirit, and the radio and motion pictures are being utilized to whip us up to accept war; and

WHEREAS the government's preparations for war are a mortal danger to organized labor, as is revealed by the plans for a military dictatorship in the Shepard-May Bill, with its provisions for compulsory conscription, arbitrary fixing of wages, prohibition of strikes, punitive discipline of unions and labor leaders, and governmental control of press and radio.

Rid the City of Loan Sharks

One of the most despicable species that preys on the working class is the loan shark who waxes fat off the misfortunes of the poor.

Independent Truck Chatter

By R. F. Hornig

The Ways and Means Committee will have an important meeting this week. Curt will report the results of a series of conferences with the WPA officials.

Our by-laws committee has commenced to function. Meetings will be held Tuesdays and will be divided evenly between one forty-five minute open session for members to submit their suggestions

All unemployed should call the operator at the Union if only at leisure for a day or so.

Remember, you coal haulers! November 1, is the deadline. You must get a leave of absence.

Everybody out for the next regular meeting, Thursday, November 3, 8:00 p. m.

We will have some dope on the Minnesota Hospital Service Association for you soon.

On the National Picket Line

(Continued from page 1)

According to Mr. Harry Bennett, "the 32-hour work week would be fine if it weren't for the fact that most employers would force the workers to do 48 hours work in 32." Of course the Ford employees have never heard of the speed-up. Or have they?

The Fact Finding Committee appointed by President Roosevelt to sift the railroad wage cut question is still hearing the testimony of the Railroad Brotherhoods. William Harrison, spokesman for the Railroad Labor Executive Association testified late last week, and supported his facts with the various railroads' own figures.

Over-capitalization, watered stock, exorbitant dividends paid to Wall Street bankers who control the industry, all were given as the causes of the railroads' present dilemma. Mr. Harrison also used figures gathered by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Said Mr. Harrison, "If the railroads of the United States had applied their profits in prosperous times to the scaling down of the bonded indebtedness they would not be crying for help today. Certainly labor should not be made to pay for these mistakes." In 1920 the bonded indebtedness was \$20,000,000. In 1938 it is \$26,000,000.

Mr. Harrison testified for more than four hours Friday. During the course of his questioning he brought out the fact, supported by the figures of the railroads themselves, that each employee of every road in the country is now forced to work hard enough to earn for their employers \$700 more than they did in 1920.

In testimony brought out previously it was proven that the present scale of wages for railway workers is the same as was paid in 1920. During that year a commission worked out a set of standards whereby the wage scale could be regulated to comply with the cost of living.

It has also been brought out that the freight handling in the first period in 1938 is a million dollars over the same period for 1937. The same number of employees have handled this freight, thereby taking an actual cut in wages of more than 38 per cent. During the same period the cost rate to the shippers has dropped only 10 per cent.

Folk School Wants Your Labor Songs

The Textile Workers Organizing Committee has asked the Highlander Folk School to compile a song book to be published by the TWOC for southern workers. The editor appeals to all workers to send at once to the Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tenn., all songs they have written, new words they have penned to familiar tunes, or any song they would like to have included in a workers' song book.

Today Makes 8,759 Days in Jail



Keeping Step With 544

By Micky Dunne

Our Advice—Take It Or Leave It The best move that could be made by the newly elected By-Laws Committee would be to change the old 544 by-laws to conform to the International by-laws and call it a day. It would be a sound job.

I will prove (if I have to) that one of the senior officers of 544 is seriously thinking of Walking the Plank.

None other than H. (Harold) Seavey is second in command at the County F.L.P. campaign headquarters.

W. Flanz is back after a two-week sick leave.

Labor Drama At Its Best Anyone who is doubtful of the educational value of the labor theatre would have been convinced had they witnessed the audience at Pins and Needles leaving the playhouse at the end of show and flocking into the struck Christenson's Restaurant which was surrounded by a picket line of strikers. They evidently believed the light tune of the show "It Isn't Cricket to Picket."

A northside Farmer-Labor Rally filled the third floor two weeks ago. Governor Benson spoke, the writer acted as chairman and the hall was donated by the Teamsters Joint Council.

Morris Olson, 544 steward and long-time ITO member, is now one of the city fathers.

Local 977, Filling Station Attendants and Helpers Union is climbing towards the thousand membership mark.

Do You Know? That there are still plenty of non-union drivers operating on the streets of Minneapolis. It is your duty to report all such drivers to the office. We will do the rest.

The Auto Salesmen may be on a rampage before the week is out.

This week's bow goes to Dan Tobin for his fine stand on the A. F. of L.-C.I.O. question in the Houston Convention.

Ed Goff sure deserves a nod for his fight on the loan shark blood suckers.

F. Dobbs is still on his back and plenty sick, too.

Ask G. Dunne why he stood instead of sat on the witness stand last week.

I've Got A Pocketful of Dreams Dept. Noot still thinks he will beat Scott November 8.

The Martins and the McCoys are a shouting again in the Steno's union.

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A. T. J. C. committee is going to look into the 221 situation.

H. DeBoer is on a belated honeymoon.

Prediction Look for the local C.I.O. to do a crawl soon.

temptible creatures is a glaring index to the cruel insecurity to which the masses of people are subjected.

Whereas the wealthy usually have large funds in reserve to tide them over in case of unlooked-for expenses, or can turn to friendly banks and bankers for loans at reasonably low interest rates, the poor have no reserves and no wealthy friends or institutions to turn to. Every personal misfortune sends the worker, who is forced to live on a hand-to-mouth basis, dragging off to the loan shark to be victimized by ruinous interest rates.

So long as capitalism exists, condemning the millions to poverty, so long will the workers know insecurity. But the worst practices of the loan sharks CAN be curbed today.

The recent action of County Attorney Ed Goff against the Metro Loan company of Minneapolis is a praiseworthy step in the direction of curbing the blood-suckers who fasten themselves on the poor. After hearing the stories of scores of persons who had been victimized by paying interest rates from 76 per cent to 1,000 per cent on small loans, the County Attorney launched a drive to stop such unfair practices by injunction. His action against the Metro concern has been upheld by the judge, and paves the way for a clean sweep of the loan sharks in this town.

So lax has the government been against loan sharks that usury is not considered a crime in Minnesota. The County Attorney had to go outside the usual field of action to which his office is limited and bring motion against the sharks under statutes other than criminal. Mr. Goff is to be congratulated for his initiative in this fight. Organized labor will give its wholehearted support to the campaign to drive the loan sharks out of the city.

On Wednesday a second loan firm, the North Star Loan company, was closed down at the instigation of County Attorney Goff, who had affidavits showing the company charged interest rates up to 355 per cent. Goff states he will continue the fight against loan sharks.

UNION MEETING SCHEDULE

Table with columns for Local Union Number, Meeting Day, and Description of Meeting. Includes Local 471, 131, 259, 664, 1086, Petroleum Drivers, 977, Federal Workers, 289, 346, 1859, 20431, 221, and 20316.