

# THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

Official Organ of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE: 257 PLYMOUTH AVE. N.  
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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!

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## TOBIN AGENTS MEET LATIMER; PLAN BETRAYAL OF STRIKERS

### 574 ASKS WPA TO HELP CURB TRUCK SURPLUS

Truck Sales Agents Flood  
Industry, Disregarding  
Consequences

Large Number Independent  
Owners Creating Chaos  
in Transportation

The government records show that 85 per cent of the trucks operated in Minnesota today are owned by individuals. This circumstance is the result of an intensive, selfish, short-sighted sales campaign by the truck manufacturers. Since the beginning of the depression, one of the principal sales strategies of the motor companies has been to induce unemployed drivers to buy themselves a job by buying a truck.

An unemployed worker naturally seeks for a means of livelihood in the industry where he was formerly employed and where he is familiar with the problems and practices of the industry. He sometimes finds himself with a few dollars in reserve when he loses his job. The salesman induces him to use this cash for a down payment on a truck and encourages him to go back into the industry on a small business man basis. Again under the made work program cases have been uncovered where certain truck salesmen have made a hookup whereby they could guarantee steady work to anyone who could make a small down payment on a truck. But the buyer found that the job ran out shortly after he made his last payment. The company was using the control of this particular job to sell another truck; they had made the profit on the first sale and were no longer interested in the welfare of their old customer.

The General Drivers Union Local 574 has given this problem serious attention. A special section of the independent truck owners has been organized.

This section has just submitted to the officials of the WPA recommendations for a partial curb on the above practices. The men propose that the WPA refrain from encouraging the purchase of trucks by individuals, and that all truck owners put to work shall be able to show proof of ownership prior to January 1, 1935, by bill of sale.

### To All Union Men and Women

The danger signal must be raised! Again some of the outstanding figures in the Minneapolis trade unions are conniving with enemies of our movement! The Saturday meeting in the Mayor's reception room was an organized attempt to split the unions. Many of the union representatives who attended this meeting did not then understand its significance. They now have had the opportunity to read the public statement given to the press. ALL must now answer publicly: (1) Do they agree with T. E. Cunningham, Gene Spielman, George Lawson, Cliff Hall, P. J. Corcoran, Bert Mehaffy and so on that the members of Local 574 are "outlaws"? (2) Do they agree with these "leaders" that Mayor Latimer's police are to "protect non-union workers going into struck plants and jobs?" (3) Do they agree that a committee on which bosses sit will decide when "volunteer" pickets are "outlaws"? (4) Do they agree that the Trade Union movement is to be used as a strike-breaking agency, as was proposed in the case of W. F. Fruen and the union-baiting Glenwood-Inglewood Company? (5) Is it the understanding of the union men and women of Minneapolis that Daniel Tobin's union-busting methods are to be adopted by their leaders? That Tobin's fink Local 500 is to become the model for Minneapolis workers?

We insist that these questions and many more must be asked point-blank of those who seek to relieve the "embarrassment" of the Latimer administration by an assault on the rights of union men and women.

Why and how, may we ask, is Latimer "embarrassed" when low wages and miserable working conditions lead to industrial strife? Does he perhaps represent the employers as Farmer-Labor mayor?

Was he, the labor aldermen, and other Farmer-Labor candidates, elected to office for the purpose of giving comfort and aid to the Chamber of Commerce—with whom they now connive, while the Farmer-Labor police beat up pickets in front of struck plants?

Union "leaders" who lend themselves to this kind of secret conference are performing valuable service for the Citizens Alliance—"explanations" and "interpretations" will not do. Only forthright statements denouncing these methods and these "meetings" behind "locked doors" will satisfy honest trade unionists.

What brought about this meeting in the Mayor's reception room? How did it come into being? Was it a spontaneous action on the part of the so-called leaders of the

Trade Union movement? No, of course not. Such things do not happen by accident.

The Saturday meeting was planned at a much smaller meeting which was held in the same place Thursday. At the Thursday meeting were present a delegation from the Civic and Commerce association and officers of the State Federation of Labor. There it was planned to dress the stage Saturday with as many minor union officials as could be obtained.

We cannot and will not believe that even a majority of those who attended Saturday's meeting subscribed to the anti-union statement that was issued to the press and public. Among them are many honest trade unionists who have demonstrated in the past that they have the best interests of the union movement at heart. But even that does not suffice. Their names are besmirched and until such time as they are cleared—and this can only be accomplished by their denouncing the committee and its purposes—they deserve the contempt and loathing of every honest man and woman in the labor movement.

It should be the sacred duty and obligation of every member of every trade union in Minneapolis to inquire, at his or her next union meeting, if his elected officials were present at the Saturday meeting in the Mayor's reception room. Demand to know who gave them authority to attend such a meeting and who gave them the right to affix their names to the anti-union statements that came out of the meeting. These people who were at the meeting spoke in your name. Did they say what you wished them to say? Do you believe that non-union workers should be allowed to walk into a struck plant? Do you believe that the police should be used against strikers because they don't happen to belong to an A. F. of L. union? Do you think that it is wrong for unions to assist each other on the picket line?

One important matter raised at the Saturday conference must be cleared up. Behind locked doors in Latimer's reception room, the insinuation was made—later to be given "unofficially" to the capitalist press—that the leaders of General Drivers Local 574 are "irresponsible" and "racketeer" elements.

We propose that a conference of Trade Union delegates organize an open mass meeting at which the participants in the Saturday conference will be asked to publicly state their position on these and other questions dealt with at the secret Latimer meeting.

### FAVOR STRIKE BREAKING BY POLICE FORCE

Citizens Alliance for Plan;  
Asks Mayor Open Closed  
Plants at Once

Seek to Brand Local 574 as  
'Racketeer' Union of  
'Incorrigibles'

The workers of Minneapolis went to the polls in June of this year to elect what they thought was to be an administration which would support them in their struggle for decent living conditions, a Farmer-Labor administration. A series of events, culminating in a conference behind locked doors in the mayor's reception room last Saturday, indicate clearly that a deliberate betrayal of the union movement is being planned.

This conference, attended by Mayor Latimer, T. E. Cunningham, George Lawson, P. J. Corcoran, Gene Spielman, John Geary, Cliff Hall, Bert Mehaffy, and about 20 other union business agents, was to "curb activities of labor racketeers in Minneapolis." Representatives of General Drivers Local 574 were not invited to the conference. Rubin Latz, business representative of the laundry workers and dry cleaners, who entered the reception room seeking to keep an appointment with the mayor's secretary, Andrew Cooper, was asked to withdraw by vote of the conference. Latz is known for his progressive policies and has been a staunch supporter of Local 574.

After the conference a statement was given to the press in which the "recent small deluge of industrial controversies" was deplored, "labor racketeers" were condemned, Mayor Latimer was assured backing in giving all possible police protection to employers, the mayor was asked to select a trade union committee to meet with the employers to remove industrial strife, and the workers were called upon to refrain from joining organizations with "irresponsible" leadership.

The statement made no mention of Local 574, but the spokesman informed newspaper reporters that the move is aimed at that union which they termed an "outlaw." Mention of the controversy between Local 574 and the Glenwood-Inglewood Company was

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## ALL WORKERS INTO THE UNIONS ALL UNIONS INTO THE STRUGGLE



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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."

### A Question to the Farmer-Labor Party

The time has arrived when the Farmer-Labor Party can no longer avoid answering a question that will have a direct bearing on its future success or failure in state and municipal election campaigns. The question is this: Does the Farmer-Labor Party desire the support of all labor organizations, or is it seeking the votes of only mem-

By your statement of last Saturday, you "labor chiefs" on thousands of workers (who are also voters) because by accident or design, they happen to be organized into unions outside of the A. F. of L.?

If it can afford to flout and insult these workers, then the Saturday meeting in Mayor Latimer's office can easily be understood. If it is the intention of Mayor Latimer to shut his eyes to the fact that in Minneapolis there are over 10,000 workers organized into independent and semi-independent unions, that is his right. But the importance of his action goes beyond that.

Mayor Latimer is not the Farmer-Labor Party. He neither makes nor controls the policies of that party. Who is Mayor Latimer to say that the Farmer-Labor Party does not want the support of workers outside of the American Federation of Labor? His memory is indeed short if he does not recall that it was the votes of ALL the Minneapolis workers that put him in the Mayor's office. In the election campaign we do not recall him saying that he wanted only members of A. F. of L. unions to vote for him.

The statement that was issued by the committee set up at Saturday's "conference" (to which Mayor Latimer apparently subscribed) said in effect: the administration will use the police against striking workers if they are not members of A. F. of L. unions. In all fairness we can ask Mayor Latimer this question: Is this the future accepted policy of the Farmer-Labor Party? Was this a part of the platform on which he was elected? When and where was this said before the election?

The condemnation of independent unions sounds strange coming from the mouth of Thomas Latimer. He for years was active in the organization of the Western Federation of Miners. This union was bitterly opposed to the A. F. of L. and was controlled by the I. W. W.

At this time we demand that the Farmer-Labor Party clarify its position in regard to so-called "outlaw unions." If they do not want the support of workers in these unions then let them say so plainly. Our future political course will be largely guided by their actions.

\* \* \*

### Reactionaries Condone Police Violence

Not the least outrageous of the positions assumed by the "responsible labor leaders" in their Saturday afternoon tea was that dealing with the use of police violence in strikes.

"The conference had agreed to uphold Mayor Latimer if he finds it necessary to use firm police measures to prevent illegal picketing in the near future," says the Minneapolis JOURNAL.

On whose side are you, gentlemen—on the side of labor or on the side of the employers? As though the bosses don't always cry that ALL militant picketing is "illegal." And though you are kind enough to differentiate between "strikers" and "non-strikers," did you ever see a cop choose between "bona-fide" and "volunteer" pickets? No, the cops club indiscriminately.

Think back over the local labor history of the last twenty-five years. The milk strike before the war, the street car strike of 1916, the newsboys' strike, the shopmen's strike of 1922, the Upholsterers' strikes of 1926 and 1932, the Block 20 strike—not to speak of the strikes of the past two years. Have you forgotten the irresponsible savagery of the police in every one of these strikes?

By your statement of last Saturday, you "labor chiefs" are now putting your seal of approval on every vicious act of the labor-haters against the workers of Minneapolis. You have dipped your pen in the blood of Ness and Belor.

# Tobin Henchmen Meet Latimer—Pave Way For Betrayal of Militant Strike Pickets

(Continued from page 1)

made in discussing the promise of police protection.

Ostensibly this is a beautiful gesture of peace, solely in the interest of the Minneapolis workers. Actually it is a sinister and dastardly scheme of selfish betrayal, a deliberate misrepresentation of fact in an effort to discredit honest unionism for the benefit of the labor bureaucrats who attended this conference.

The statement makes reference to "a small deluge of industrial controversies." The unions on strike today are the ornamental metal workers, lathers, Strutwear, fur workers, and the garment workers. All of these are A. F. of L. unions, and in most cases a representative of the International Union is on the scene directing the strike. Local 574 is not directing these strikes. It has assisted, however, as best it could, when officially asked to do so, and has given its services under the direction of the leaders of the striking unions. The truck drivers believe this action to be in keeping with the principles of labor solidarity, and they gladly render this service as a token of appreciation for the splendid assistance they received in their own struggle last summer.

Ray Dunne, an officer of Local 574, was severely beaten by the police while trying to help out on the picket line at the Strutwear plant. This assault was done deliberately, without provocation. He is now out on bonds, with three fractured ribs, on charges filed by the police. The conference might well have made plans to defend Ray Dunne in the courts, but they chose to vilify him instead. Much ado is made because he is on relief. With a family of five, he has no income from any source whatever. He must therefore choose between relief and starvation.

The implication is that Local 574 is behind all industrial controversies which occur in Minneapolis. Local 574 deals with more than three hundred individual employers, and yet it has called only five minor strikes since August, 1934. The shortest strike lasted twenty minutes, and the longest, three days. The last strike, which lasted two hours, was against the Mac & Biff Ice Company, which has consistently attempted to thwart the efforts of the union to establish a living wage in the ice industry. This action met with the full approval of all parties engaged in the ice industry. In all cases the strikes were conducted without violence. All channels of negotiation were exhausted before the strike was called, by vote of the men involved. The jobs were picketed by the striking employees and the officers of the union. Continued negotiations, forced by the strike, brought a quick settlement in each case.

On the New England job, Local 574 aided the building trades unions by refusing to deliver materials to scab workmen. In a few cases the union bannered concerns which were violating the terms of the agreement.

The controversy with the Glenwood-Inglewood Company has been a matter of long standing. A strike date was set, by vote of the employees, when a settlement appeared to be otherwise unobtainable. The strike was to be called on Friday, August 23. Late in the afternoon of the 22nd, Mayor Latimer called the union and asked that action be withheld for negotiations on the 24th. The union complied with this request. On Saturday, the 24th, instead of aid-

ing in the negotiations as he promised to do, Mayor Latimer attended the conference in his reception room from which emanated the vicious attack upon Local 574 and the other progressive elements in the labor movement. He did not even grant the union the courtesy of a call, and efforts of the officers to reach him were unavailing.

On Sunday, August 25, a representative of the company contacted officers of the union, and negotiations were opened which indicated that a settlement was possible. The results of the negotiations were reported to the men in a special meeting called at the union headquarters and were found acceptable by them. The controversy was closed without a strike.

This factual account of the activities of Local 574 indicates clearly that none of the officers or members of the union are incorrigible, unreasonable or racketeering. Yet there are industrial disturbances in Minneapolis, and very few of them are caused by Local 574.

The Farmer-Labor administration was elected to office on a platform of aiding the workers to secure better living standards, with the promise that the police would not be used against them as they were used by Bainbridge and Johannes. The reaction of the workers to the brutal attacks on the truck drivers in the 1934 strike contributed heavily to the victory of the Farmer-Labor party.

Still remembering these promises, and spurred into action by low wages and long hours of work, the workers in all the unions are making demands for action upon the union leaders. In some of the unions the workers have broken the traces and gone into action. Many of the other unions are at the boiling point, anxious to collect on the promises of the Farmer-Labor candidates and the bureaucrats in the trade unions. This of course is not wanted by people who are perfectly content to draw their pay for doing as little as possible and who feel they should be permitted to bask in the light of labor victories of long ago, disregarding the plight of the members of the unions which they pretend to lead.

If they are to maintain that leisurely posture of a "safe and sane" leader, they must do something quickly about the rising sentiment for concrete accomplishments. They must scare up bogeymen to frighten the workers, attempt to discredit the progressive elements, and find a convenient substitute for union action.

They attempt to frighten the workers by endorsing the use of the police against "incorrigible, unreasonable, racketeer elements." And this sweeping characterization includes any group of workers who may feel impelled to strike to bring about an improvement in their working conditions. The police have already been used against the strikers at the Flour City Ornamental Iron Works and the Strutwear Knitting Company. To sanction the use of police as strikebreakers is to approve the murder

### Meeting Schedule Local 574

Wednesday, Sept. 4: Ice Drivers.  
Thursday, Sept. 5: Independent Truck Owners.  
Friday, Sept. 6: Stewards; Federal Workers.  
Monday, Sept. 9: Full Membership.  
Wednesday, Sept. 11: Market Workers; Ice Drivers.

of Henry Ness and John Belor, to sanction the terrorizing of pickets as was done in the upholsterers' strike, the Northwestern Bank strike, the shopmen's strike, and every other labor struggle is treachery.

This is an outright repudiation of the campaign promises of the Farmer-Labor party. And yet such approval is now a matter of record, chronicled in the daily papers, and gloated over by the Citizens Alliance.

Stopped in their tracks in their previous attempt to substitute a Committee of One Hundred for union action, the "safe and saners" now approach this matter in a more cautious manner. They call upon the mayor "to select a committee of trade union leaders to meet with a committee of the employing and business interests of the city in an attempt to remove this industrial strife . . ." This is the same old program dressed up in new clothes. Frighten the workers away from union action by threatening to use the police against them, and then lead them into the endless and treacherous labyrinth of a phoney "good will" committee.

The "good will" artists have yet to discredit the progressives before their Machiavellian formula is completed. They decide that they must begin with Local 574. Here is a strange union in which not only the members, but also the leaders feel that the workers' standard of living should be improved and intend to do something about it. Here is an "incorrigible, unreasonable, racketeer element." Here are a group of "irresponsible" leaders who take seriously their obligation to the membership of the union. Local 574 is branded as an outlaw, and the conference appeals to its members to desert its ranks. The workers are asked not to join organizations with "irresponsible" leadership.

Local 574 believes that the A. F. of L. is the proper organization for the American workers, it supports the A. F. of L. in every manner possible, it believes that its expulsion from that body was unjustified and is fighting vigorously for reinstatement. But it does not believe that insincere bureaucrats can cloak themselves in the robes of righteousness just by waving the banner of the A. F. of L. and shouting "racketeer" at those who have been unjustly expelled.

A large part of this whole attack upon the militant unions is the result of the efforts of the lackeys of Tobin to saddle Local 500 upon the truck drivers. Thwarted in their attempts to seduce the members of Local 574 into their paper union, Hall, Corcoran and Co. watched for every possible opportunity to play the role of strikebreaker against 574 through their dual organization. They failed to succeed in this just as they also failed in their efforts to induce the employers to risk the breaking of their agreement with 574. The Latimer conference is therefore inaugurated to open the attack on a different and bolder front. And in the process they open an attack on not only 574, but also every other progressive force in the movement.

It is obvious that this entire program is merely a scheme to scotch the growing unrest among the members of the unions who are becoming anxious to collect on the promises of the Farmer-Labor party and the trade union bureaucrats. It must be recognized for what it is, and the bluff called.