

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

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Official Organ of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference

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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!

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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1936

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LOCAL 160 WINS AGREEMENT

INVESTIGATION PROPOSED ON WPA PROJECTS

House of Representatives
Votes for WPA Truck
Investigation

Resolution Claims Farmers
Were "Forced" from
Projects

Thursday, January 16, the Minnesota State House of Representatives adopted another outlandish and ridiculous resolution for which they are becoming famous.

This one called for an investigation of "suspected discrimination" against truck owning farmers on WPA projects.

Representatives Tighe, Wayzata, and Hartkopf, Osseo, were authors of the joint resolution. The resolution claims that farmers who own trucks in Hennepin County have been denied WPA work because "an organization of truck drivers to call a general strike on all projects in the state" was threatened.

Representative L. E. Brophy of Minneapolis, former scab trucking contractor, immediately took the floor and launched into a bitter arraignment of Local 574 and an attack upon all unions.

Representatives Wier, Bellman, and Bennett spoke against the resolution. It carried, however, by a vote of 106 to 18.

In a statement issued to the press by Local 574, January 17th, the following answer was made to publicity given the resolution that had appeared in the daily press:

Our organization, Local 574, represents a large majority of the independent truck owners in this district who are hired on the various projects.

When this WPA setup was initiated, we made inquiries regarding the classes of equipment that would be eligible for the various types of work. This inquiry was made for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not such types of equipment as had been allowed to work under the CWA and ERA would be permitted under the new setup.

We were informed by representatives of the WPA administration that a set of rules and regulations coming from the U. S. Treasury Procurement office would outline in detail various types of equipment which would qualify under this setup.

When the members of our organization were asked to submit bids on this type of work, it was necessary to list the type of equipment which they had for hire and proof of ownership of the same.

It might be said here that many of our members could not qualify for any of this work on account

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Chicken Pickers!

Under a Litchfield date line the following little interesting news article appears:

"A new union, Local No. 104, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers, with jurisdiction also over poultry and dairy workers, was formed here with installation of its charter by officials of the A. F. of L. There are 40 members.

What! Chicken Pickers, Mr. Tobin?

Building Laborers Strike Project

The Sumner Field Slum Clearance Project has been halted by a strike of the Minneapolis Common Laborers Union who demanded that their union scale of 67½c be paid for the labor on the wrecking operations that is a preliminary to the building of the so-called low cost housing.

Rose Bros. Lumber & Supply Co., successful bidders on the wrecking, were prepared to pay the wrecking laborers 40c per hour. As the wrecking operations got underway Friday morning, the site was surrounded by pickets from the Laborers Union. The few workers employed on the project left hurriedly.

Truck drivers, who had been sent to the job to haul the wrecked material, turned back when they learned that the job was being struck.

The Slum Clearance Project, which is a PWA venture, calls for all labor to be supplied through the Re-employment Office, 218 Second Avenue South.

This office reports that they are unable to supply labor for the job on account of the low wage and because of the strike condition.

The hours on this project are limited to 130 a month. At 40c per hour, the workers on this job would draw the magnificent wage of \$52 per month, \$8.50 lower than the subsistence wage on WPA projects. To date no settlement has been reached.

The Common Laborers Union members state that they will continue the strike until their demands are granted by the Rose Bros. Lumber & Supply Co.

WPA Fan Dancer Is Given the Air

The gyrations of the Minneapolis fan dancer have apparently wafled \$50,000 from the Minnesota WPA Artists' Relief appropriation.

Miss Ruby Bae, the dancer in question, who had been enrolled on the Theater Relief program, was reported to have put on her specialty in various CCC camps. Apparently fearing for the moral welfare of the young tree planters, the government WPA officials withdrew the funds and closed down the project.

Sub Committee Held Session Sunday

The committee selected by the Market Workers meeting Wednesday night met Sunday morning at ten o'clock in the Drivers Hall. The committee had been increased by several members of the union who are employed on the market and who volunteered their services.

The principal achievement that can be recorded for the committee meeting was the setting up of a sub-committee headed by G. Dunne who were to contact and get a meeting with the heads of the various wholesale grocery houses with a view towards straightening out the handling of produce by the grocery firms.

The sub-committee which consists of Lundberg, Ahlquist, Peterson, Schwab, and Pickman, were to meet with the wholesale grocery owners Tuesday morning.

Federal Workers Dance Is Success

The Federal Workers' dance held Saturday, January 18th, attracted the largest crowd that has ever attended a dance in 574 halls. Over 500 people were present.

So crowded was the program that the committee in charge of the distribution of the various prizes were unable to dispose of all the gifts that had been donated by various merchants. The prizes ranged from a half ton of coal to a toy balloon. Seventy-seven of these gifts were distributed during the evening.

Chermak's six piece union orchestra furnished music for the occasion. The committee in charge of this affair are to be congratulated for promoting so successful a social occasion.

Most of those present will look forward again to a repetition of this affair.

Northern States Power Men Get Recognition, Seniority, Wage Raises

River Terminal Uses Scab Drivers

At the River Terminal Coke and Coal Company, 29th and Aldrich Aves. South, a situation prevails that, while it is almost too fantastic to believe, is true.

General Drivers Union which has been striking and bannering this concern for over a week, is doing so because the owner of the plant has grossly violated his agreement with our union. Despite the fact that he signed a contract with Local 574 pledging himself to deal with no other labor organization he is at the present time employing and dealing with four members of Local 221.

Despite the protest of our organization he has continued in this violation. The 221 drivers who are hauling a few loads of coal a day from the River Terminal Company are doing it under police guard.

But that is not quite all. Three drivers, all members of 221, man each truck load. All of them have been sworn in as special police deputies; they wear badges and, in one case at least, carry a sawed-off shotgun. A carload of detectives accompanies each delivery.

Each time they go in and out of the yard, they drive past a banner which states that the River Terminal Coke and Coal Company is unfair to organized labor. We have it on good authority that their strikebreaking, scabbing labor is being paid for by the Minneapolis Teamsters Joint Council.

This is an example of A. F. of L. Trade Unionism at its lowest and rottenest ebb.

Power Workers End Long Hard Fight for Union Agreement

General wage increases, seniority rights, recognition of the right of the employees to hold union membership, and representation by union committees in settling grievances are among the gains which have been won for the employees of the Northern States Power Company by Local Union No. 160 of the IBEW. These conditions are guaranteed in writing over the signature of Mr. R. F. Pack, president of the company.

The terms of settlement were accepted by unanimous vote of the members of Local 160 in a special meeting held on January 15. The meeting had been called, by a previous decision of the union, for the purpose of taking a strike vote after the negotiating committee reported that the company refused to discuss a written agreement. With the announcement of the impending strike vote, the Latimer Employer-Employee Board attempted to step into the controversy. Meyer Lewis, not bothering to discuss the problem with Local 160, issued a long statement to the press demanding Pack's resignation from the board—he seemed to consider that this action would render the board "neutral." But Local 160 objected, with considerable emphasis. Having no confidence in the board as such, they felt that Pack's influence, on or off the board, would still be felt and would render the board even less capable of making a fair decision.

A few days prior to the January 15 deadline contact was established between the union and the company by Attorney Fred A. Ossanna, acting as a special mediator. On January 14 the union committee, with the Secretary-Treasurer of Local 574 as their spokesman, held a two hour conference with Mr. Pack and other high officials of the company. The discussion centered about the demands of the union for recognition, security guarantees and wage increases. After a lengthy debate, Mr. Pack agreed to raise wages and to recognize seniority and the right of the union to represent its members. He stated, however, that he would not put this in writing and that he could make no definite guarantees as to how long the wage increases would remain in effect. The union spokesman informed him that Local 160 had instructed the committee to insist that the terms be in writing and for a definite period of time.

No further meetings were held.
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The Central Labor Union Votes

The next meeting of the Central Labor Union will see officers elected who will guide the destinies of the Minneapolis Central Body for the coming year. Irrespective of how unimportant and impotent the Minneapolis Central Body appears to be, it is nevertheless supremely important that the guidance of the center of the Minneapolis Trade Union Movement be placed in progressive hands.

With the turn that is taking place in the A. F. of L. brought about by the division of the Green and Lewis supporters, every worker can be sure that reaction will ride high during the coming year unless the hands of the out and out Green supporters are in some way stayed.

There can be no doubt but that the whole organizational staff of the A. F. of L., under Green's direction, will spend the coming year not organizing workers but lining up unions, Central Bodies and State Federations on the side of the craft unionists.

This means that everywhere in the United States, A. F. of L. organizers will deeply concern themselves with the elections that take place in Central Bodies. The progressives must organize themselves to resist or theirs will be a still small voice during the ensuing year.

* * *

Make Minneapolis a Union Town

Northern States Power Men Get Recognition Seniority, Wage Raises

Continued from page 1

but the argument between the union committee and the management continued all day Wednesday through Mr. Ossanna. Finally, at 7 p. m., one hour before the time set for the strike meeting, Mr. Pack agreed to put the terms of settlement in writing over his signature, and he further agreed to make the wage increase effective for the entire year of 1936.

The company is now striving desperately to convince the workers that Local 160 had nothing to do with getting the wage increase. On the day after the union meeting, the department supervisors informed the men that they were to get a raise in pay, but the workers informed them that this was not news, that they had heard all about it the night before at the union meeting, and that they knew it was the union that had got them the raise. The company as further attempted to deny credit to the union by pointing out that the raise will go into effect throughout the entire system which includes many localities outside Minneapolis. This is mere "abc." If the company put the increase into effect in the Twin Cities only, the power of the union would become so obvious to all the workers that the entire system would be unionized in 60 days. This the company does not want; hence the system-wide raise.

As a matter of fact this action proves that the workers in Minneapolis and St. Paul, through Local 160, fought the battle for every employee of the Northern States Power Co. The battle could better have been fought and even greater gains made had the employees in other localities been organized to assist. However, this was not the case due to the failure of the officers of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to organize and direct the fight on a system-wide basis. Local 160, single handed, has broken the ground and planted the seed for the growth of a powerful industrial union in the power industry in the northwest. It is now up to the officers of the International to till this fertile field.

With the written statement that the company "will not discriminate in any way against any employee because of union affiliation," many timid workers, who did not have the courage to join the union, even though they knew that they should, have come forward to join hands with their more hardy brothers who had already taken up the cudgels for them and won the fight.

The wage increases will average around \$10 per month or the equivalent in hourly rates. All previous wage cuts will be restored, and in no case will the rate of pay be below the 1929 level. In the lower wage brackets some increases will exceed \$10 per month. All wages are to be based on the 40 hour week.

Local 160 will not make the mistake of resting on the laurels of its victory. The union will now proceed vigorously to the consolidation of its position through its day by day service to its members. A large organization committee has been elected and charged with the responsibility of organizing grievance committees in the various departments and crews, together with special committees to carry grievances to the higher officials when they cannot be settled satisfactorily with the immediate supervisor.

One of the first responsibilities of these committees will be to see that there is no discrimination

MEETING SCHEDULE
Friday, Jan. 24: All Stewards; Federal Workers.
Monday, Jan. 27: Full membership.
Tuesday, Jan. 28: Cab Drivers; night drivers, 1 p. m.; day drivers, 7 p. m.
Friday, Jan. 31: Federal Workers; Coal Stewards.

against union members in connection with the wage increases. Questions of seniority and general job conditions will be taken up by the union committees as the occasion may arise. On the matter of seniority the company expressed a desire to show preference to married men with families in certain cases; they agreed, however, to leave the final decision to the employees.

As it has in the past, the executive board of Local 160 will continue to receive the benefit of the experience of the officers of Local 574 in the day by day organization problems of the union.

Laundry Workers Hold Open House

Wednesday, January 29th, at 703 Third Avenue South, the joint local of Cleaners, Drivers and Laundry Workers, affiliated with A. F. of L., will hold public installation of officers followed by a dance, banquet and raffle.

A program of entertainment will be given during the evening which will include ballet, tap and acrobatic dancing. This entertainment will be furnished by the courtesy of Watson School of Dancing. A silverware set and \$20 in cash will be given away in prizes. A four-piece union orchestra will provide music for the dance.

The following officers will be installed: President, Clarence Mathews; vice president, Nathan Osborne; recording secretary, Kenneth Swanson; financial secretary, Joe Raekman; treasurer, Alvin Baldwin; business representative, Rubin Latz; sergeant-at-arms, Lee DeCamp; sectional chairman of dry cleaners group, Jack Nelson; trustees, Ross Plauda, Erland Elander, Bill Borchert, Margaret Mathews. The above officers also constitute the executive committee.

Leslie Sinton, international vice president of Hotel and Restaurant Employees, will conduct the installation.

All members and friends of the trade union movement are invited.

Mankato Unionists Hear Carl Skoglund

At a meeting held in Mankato attended by Carl Skoglund, Friday, January 17, at which over 100 workers were present, it was decided that WPA workers who are enrolled in the organization meet separately and conduct separate organizational activity as do the Federal workers and Local 574.

The Drivers and Helpers working for private employers decided to ask for a minimum scale of wages. A blanket agreement covering wages and working conditions for all drivers in Mankato is the present outlook of the union.

A meeting for all WPA workers has been called for Wednesday, January 22nd. A large turnout is expected at the Wednesday meeting as the feeling is running high for an organization among WPA workers.

Bill Brown Says—

Let's have all of the unions in Minneapolis get together and stop the noble experiment that the Government is trying out for the Benefit of Private Industry at Labor's Expense. One is the new Slum Clearance Project in North Minneapolis, that was struck the day it started by the Building Laborers Union with the help of Local 574. The Government allowed a bid of forty cents per hour to go through on the wrecking contract; even if they call that a Security Wage, I don't think the workers would feel very secure on top of one of those old shacks, when it is fifteen below zero, for \$12 a week. And where will these people live? You couldn't rent one of the shacks they are wrecking on \$12 a week.



BILL BROWN
President of 574

State-Wide WPA Conference Stirs Interest in Northwest

The State Wide WPA Conference, which will be held in General Drivers Hall, Minneapolis, on February 8th and 9th, is attracting intense interest in state labor circles.

The February conference, which was planned in Ortonville January 10th and 11th, will be the first gathering of WPA organizations, relief groups, and trade unions that has ever been held in Minnesota on a state basis. Organizations of relief clients and WPA workers, who have not previously attended conferences, are eagerly promising that they will be represented in Minneapolis February 8th and 9th.

Newly formed organizations in Wabasha, St. Cloud, and Mankato have indicated that they will be at the conference without fail. On the Iron Range, where organizational activity has been intense during the last few months, organizations have indicated they desire representation at the state-wide gathering.

From the southern part of the state comes the encouraging news that organizations of WPA workers are being formed purposely in order that workers from that part of the state will have a voice in the coming state-wide meeting.

Two delegates will be allowed from each organization. In case where there are various units of an organization each unit will be allowed two delegates.

Arrangements are being made to provide sleeping accommodations for as many out-of-town delegates as possible.

Organizations or individuals desiring more information in regard to the conference should address Miles B. Dunne, Chairman Publicity Committee, 257 Plymouth Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minn.

Willmar Man Writes Of Kandiyohi News

An interesting letter was received from J. M. Hawkland, Willmar, Minnesota. Hawkland, is one of the leaders of the Kandiyohi County Unit and has been very active in securing subscriptions for the Northwest Organizer.

He reports that Ed Ferry, who was injured on the auditorium project, is getting along nicely. He says that the protest meeting had a good turnout at the Court House but the situation in regard to holding meetings there is unchanged as it is still necessary to contact all the County Commissioners to get permission to use the free hall in the County building.

Hawkland said that it was too expensive a proposition to chase all over the county contacting commissioners in order to hold a meeting.

Local news item: "Cost of living in the Twin Cities in 1935 was 10 points higher than in 1932, a survey by Prof. Kozelka revealed."

And of course the boss take this into account when he pays your wages—yah!

Local Employers Challenge Olson

Once again Minneapolis employers are preparing, through the federal courts, to challenge the authority of the state government as it applies to declaring martial law.

The owners of the Strutwear plant in collaboration with a group of Minneapolis anti-union employers have gone into Federal court demanding that the Governor, Mayor Latimer and General Walsh show cause why the troops should not be withdrawn and the Strutwear plant reopened.

Passing over the question of whether the troops are good or bad for the striking Strutwear workers, the challenge that is being thrown down to the Governor is of peculiar and significant interest to all concerned.

Should the federal court rule that the Governor is unlawfully interfering with the rights of business to settle their labor difficulties as they see fit, such a ruling could also be used as a precedent by labor organizations, when and if their organizational or strike activities are interfered with by National Guard troops.

These is scarcely any doubt but that the courts rulings will sustain the power of the Governor to declare martial law when he sees fit. To rule otherwise would be to establish a dangerous precedent for the employers. In this case, if we can concede that the troops are an aid to the strikers, it would constitute only an isolated individual case. In nine cases out of ten the guard troops are used against the strikers and for the employer.

To establish a precedent, upsetting the right of the Governor to declare martial law, would be too dangerous an experiment for American capitalism to undertake. No doubt, Olson will be sustained.

The "application of sanctions" is a new and particularly ingenious method of turning opposition to war into sport of war. All you've got to do is to call the new war an "application of sanctions."

to recruit scabs so easily, and the scabs of today will become the union men of tomorrow. The unemployed of Wabasha must be organized around a fight for ample relief allowances. They must form a local organization, of which the striking button workers must become a part, and join with the other relief organizations in the state in the common fight for the union rate of pay for common labor.

The Wabasha workers readily accepted this advice and immediately elected a committee of seven to direct the work of building the organization. The first organization meeting will be held at the Wabasha City Hall on Monday, January 27, at 8 p. m. At this meeting a large committee will be elected which will have as its first task to see that every worker is placed on relief.

The new organization will send delegates to the Statewide WPA workers conference to be held on February 8 and 9 at the headquarters of Local 574 at 257 Plymouth Ave. N. in Minneapolis. They will join with the other relief organizations at this conference in the battle with the state officials for the union scale for all unskilled workers.

Proceeding on this basis, the unemployed workers in Wabasha will soon be earning a better living than the workers employed in private industry, and the button factory, the roller mill and every other establishment will have to raise wages to a level in keeping with human decency.

Wabasha Button Workers Strike at Scab Company

Slave Conditions Prevail for Workers in Small Town

The strike against the Pioneer Pearl Button Co., a New York concern which, among other things, specializes in the exploitation of the workers of Wabasha, Minn., is taking a new turn which will ultimately lead to victory. The management of the company may think itself victorious for a short time, but when the fight centers upon them it will be with the irresistible force of an avalanche.

Thirty-four workers were locked out of this Wabasha factory when they objected to having their piece-rate cut 10 per cent. Working under a terrific speedup, they were able to earn only \$10 to \$12 per week under the old rates, not even the NRA minimum. The scabs now working under the reduced rates earn on the average \$7 to \$9 per week.

Locked out on June 5, 1935, the workers turned the lock-out into a strike, and 20 of the 34 are still on the picket line. The A. F. of L. has organized them into a Federal Union, but it has been clearly demonstrated that a union of 20, even in a town of 2,000 population, where there is no other form of organization, is powerless. The bosses merely sneered at the Labor Board when it attempted to settle the strike, and the pickets have been subjected to the usual frameups in an attempt to intimidate them.

Defeated at every turn the strikers finally called on Local 574 in Minneapolis for help. Representatives of Local 574 and the Northwest Labor Unity Conference went to Wabasha to survey the situation. They found that the employers there had created a veritable slave market through the large number of unemployed. With 75 per cent of the workers unemployed there are very few on relief, that is what the local officials choose to call relief. Only about 50 are employed on WPA work. Some of the unemployed get as high as \$10 per month from the county. Most of them live by "getting by."

When the low wage standards for the WPA workers, the most fortunate in the community, are taken into consideration it becomes very evident that the employers have turned Wabasha into a slave market. To complete this proof it is only necessary to relate that when the strikers applied for relief they were told to go back to work in the button factory. To cap the climax the bosses argue that Wabasha is too small a town for the workers to organize.

The Minneapolis committee pointed out to the strikers that their first task was to eliminate the slave market. In so doing they will strike a double blow at the bosses. The bosses will not be able

INVESTIGATION PROPOSED ON WPA PROJECTS

(Continued from page 1)

of antiquated equipment or trucks bearing T licenses. In the event that some of our state representatives do not know, we wish to show that under the law in the state of Minnesota that trucks bearing a T license are not for hire. We can further show that farmers or others who have the proper licenses and equipment are now and have been employed on these jobs.

The reason that prompted our investigation was the fact that in eight districts in Minnesota there were approximately 2,700 trucks registered for work and in the Fifth District, which comprises Hennepin County, there were approximately 907 registered from this district.

We had reasons to believe that certain fleet truck owners and unscrupulous automobile dealers were having these trucks registered in the names of some individuals and thereby qualifying for work on these projects in an illegal manner.

We are not apologizing for any work that we have done in having an investigation made and the results to date have clearly shown that our investigation was entirely in order. We wish to state emphatically that we have not, at any time, intimidated or attempted to intimidate either the WPA officials or any individual worker on these projects. We are simply asking that all workers qualified to work on these projects be given their proper share of the work and we will welcome any investigation and furnish records and documents to support our contention.

GENERAL DRIVERS UNION NO. 574

Wm. S. Brown, President

The passage of the resolution offers definite proof that unformed legislatures can always be rallied to vote for resolutions or laws pointed at discrediting or attempting to discredit union organizations.

In this particular case, General Drivers Union not only welcomes this investigation but insists that it be carried out. We will show that nine out of 10 farmers who have applied for work on WPA projects, with trucks, are not on the job because of the state motor vehicle license laws, passed by the same legislative body that adopted the resolution calling for the investigation.

Whether or not these dignified solons know it, we can inform them that T licenses, issued only to farmers, prohibit the owner of a vehicle so licensed from offering it for hire.

If the proposed investigation accomplishes nothing more, it will, at least, demonstrate to the people of the state the small bore caliber of 106 members of the lower House.

And for a five-star final: We give you Farmer-Labor Mayor Latimer's Christmas card:

"Christmas! Twelve months of the humdrum of life melting into pleasurable anticipation, buoyancy of spirit, a feeling of kindness toward and of kinship with our fellow voyagers in the bark of life. (Are ya listenin', Flour City, Strutwear, 574). "No perversion of the season can nullify the blessings of the festive spirit, the touch of the Divine Presence; therefore better we cannot wish you than a "Merry Christmas, and may the coming year treat you very, very kindly."

Anti-Union War Chest Being Raised on Coast

A \$200 "war chest" is being raised by the Washington Industrial Council, an organization of anti-union business men, to finance a drive to make Seattle safe for "chiselers."

The first onslaught will be on unions in retail food stores. Seven large chain store associations will be the spearhead in the attack, according to information which has leaked out from the "open-shoppers" headquarters.

In a letter asking business men to donate funds, it is explained that the Washington Industrial Council will have to meet "heavy expenses" in paying for newspaper attacks on the unions, hiring "undercover operatives, contact men, guards" and strikebreakers.

WPA Workers Ask For Wages, Get Gas

Gasping and weeping, 200 men, women and children, who comprise the employables on Burbon County, Kansas, relief rolls, fled from the Court House as tear gas was poured into the building by the Kansas National Guard.

The WPA workers, who were striking for a wage scale of 30c an hour on County Relief projects, were in the Court House to protest to the County Commission.

The offer of the County Commissioners of \$1 a day, with two ways work per week, had been rejected by the strikers, prior to the gassing.

Officials reported that about a dozen were given first aid at the hospital after the gassing, "but none were believed seriously affected."

Market Workers Hold Mass Meeting for Chain Protest

The mass meeting for Market Workers called by hand-bill for Wednesday, January 15th, was the best attended meeting of these workers that had been held for over a year.

The downstairs hall was filled to overflowing when the meeting was called to order by Miles Dunne, at eight o'clock. Dunne made the suggestion that the group elect their own chairman and secretary for the meeting.

Joe Ellis, steward at Gamble-Robinson was elected chairman; G. Dunne was made secretary.

At the request of the meeting Miles Dunne made a long detailed report of the history of the Market Workers during which he showed that although there is almost 100 per cent union organization on the central market, there is a third less men employed there now than two years ago. He attributed this largely to the fact that fruit and produce business had been diverted, in part, to wholesale grocery houses who were supplying fruit and produce to the various chain grocery stores.

After considerable general discussion it was decided, by motion, that a committee would be elected who would lay plans to correct the situation that now prevails on the market.

The following committee was elected: Bearman Fruit Company, John Lund and Thure Ahlquist; Stacy Fruit, V. Bennyhoff and Ed Holmes; L. K. Stein Company, Gust Holm and Len Stetler; Maas Fruit Company, Ed Quick and C. Carlson; Brooks Fruit Company, McGrath and Cookie; Northwestern Fruit Company, Smith and Lowell; Gamble-Robinson Com-

Baltimore news item: "Arthur Taylor, 35, WPA worker, was knocked down and almost trampled to death in a rush of several thousand WPA workers for their Christmas pay checks."

The Railroad Brotherhoods

In its December 25th issue the Northwest Organizer extends an invitation to railroadmen to write their ideas and opinions for publication in the Organizer. The reason given behind the proposal is that the Organizer is receiving a growing number of subscriptions from railroad workers.

This idea is certainly a good one. And it offers a splendid opportunity to the progressive element in the railroad unions who read the Organizer to get their written opinions published and circulated. In the Railroad Brotherhoods progressive opinion is perhaps more systematically suppressed by gaglaws and censorship than in any other section of the organized labor movement in this or any other country. The constitutions and rituals of the railroad unions are littered with gaglaws designed to stifle and suppress membership opinion. There is a very definite reason for this. Contrary to the opinions of many, the organized railroad workers of this country have been saddled with the most antiquated trade union structure in the world and, therefore, with a most reactionary leadership. The kind of leadership the Brotherhoods have could not exist if it were not permitted to strangle membership opinion.

Therefore, we are sure that progressive railroad labor will hail and welcome the opportunity to have its ideas and opinions published within the columns of the Northwest Organizer. However, we must not forget that the progressive minority in the railroad unions have had very little experi-

Minnesota Emergency Teachers Form Union at Convention

ence in putting their opinion in writing. The pages of the Brotherhood Journals have been closed to them. The same is true of Labor, the official mouthpiece of the Brotherhood leadership. The progressives could not publish and circulate their own opinions because this was forbidden by gaglaws in their constitutions and further supplemented by sweeping obligations hidden away in the lodge rituals. So don't expect too much of the progressives to start with but keep on urging them to write. If the workers in railroad transportation in general and in the Railroad Brotherhoods in particular can establish an open forum for their opinions in the Organizer it will increase its circulation and will be a great help to the progressive wing of railroad labor.

Brother railroad unionists, let's hear from you through these columns on any question pertaining to the organized labor movement on the railroads and its problems.

Albert Lea Scene Of Union Meeting

Friday, January 17th, the Independent Union of All Workers, held an organizational mass meeting in Albert Lea, Minnesota. Speakers from 574 had been invited to address the meeting. William Brown and Miles Dunne were delegated by the Executive Board to speak in Albert Lea that night.

A splendid crowd of almost fifteen hundred people were present. Proceeding the speaking program a Labor Play was given by members of the Dramatic group of the union. It was a well written and well executed satire on the "justice" that workers can expect in capitalistic courts. Those who know the local situation recognized characters in the play that was built around actual happenings in the history of the Albert Lea local.

Dunne spoke on the value of the Labor Press and Brown talked on the necessity for workers organization.

About 11 o'clock to the surprise of those present, Frank Ellis, recently convicted in Minneapolis on a framed charge walked into the hall and was given an ovation by the crowd. He had been released on bail that morning. Frank Ellis and his attorney, Neil Hughes spoke on the Ellis frame-up. Hughes very correctly pointed out to the union the danger of having its leaders victimized and pleaded for financial support to appeal the case.

A collection was taken up which yielded a substantial amount. Following the speaking program there was dancing and refreshments.

N. Y. Tobin Union Runs Afoul of Law

Local 202, New York city, one of Tobin's holy non-racketeering organizations, seemed to have run afoul of the law.

Seven officers and members of this union, along with 11 employers in the trucking industry, have been indicted by federal grand jury for violation of the Sherman-Cleveland Anti-Trust law.

It is hard to believe that a "genuine bona fide A. F. of L. union" would engage in questionable practices but according to the information contained in the Grand Jury's indictment, this union had been engaged in a package delivery racket that netted them the paltry sum of \$300,000 per year.

How about charter lifting and expulsions, Mr. Tobin? Or do you only reserve that for honest people?

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 18.—The Minnesota Emergency Teachers association held its first annual delegated convention today in the Men's Union on the University of Minnesota campus. Sixty delegates, with practically every county in the state represented, were in attendance.

The convention adopted a constitution, declaration of principles, elected officers and an executive board of fifteen members, and laid down a plan of organization for the coming year. Officers for the coming year are W. W. Norris, Minneapolis, president, and Dorothy Holmes, St. Paul, executive secretary. The declaration of principles calls upon the M.E.T.A. to establish the closest relationship with those forces in Minnesota which are seeking to build a statewide WPA organization, and to help this new organization into being. (The next state-wide conference of WPA, relief organizations and trade unions, will be held in Minneapolis February 8-9.) The declaration also binds the M.E.T.A. to establish immediately fraternal relations with all other similar federal teachers' groups in other states, in order to work out a common program looking towards the establishment of a permanent adult education project by the federal government.

Teacher on federal adult, workers, recreational, nursery, arts and crafts, and National Youth Administration educational projects are eligible for membership in the Minnesota Emergency Teachers' association.

Matanuska Farmers Must Work or Leave

The sturdy "pioneers" who left the rock-ribbed, stump-grown wilds of Northern Minnesota for the promised land in the Matanuska Valley, Alaska, have found their new home not precisely a land of milk and honey.

Some of them, apparently tiring of the unending struggle to clear their new homes of stumps and trees, have declared a holiday. Their declaration was met by an ultimatum laid down by Ross Sheely, colony manager, who bluntly issued the order, "work or get out."

Sheely has ruled that each of the 160 families who comprise the colony must have 10 acres of land cleared by March 1st, "regardless of the winter weather now prevailing." He has threatened to take away from anyone who disobeys his orders their household equipment and other articles that have been obtained from the colony supplies.

Many of the settlers are wondering if the word colonist is a synonym for convict.

Reeves Coal & Dock 100% Union Concern

The Reeves Coal and Dock Co., who hold the contract for a large portion of relief coal, have entered into a new agreement with General Drivers' Local 574.

All their men have been put into the union and a check-off system has been established whereby each member's dues are deducted from his pay, monthly, by the company and are remitted to the union office.

The Reeves Coal and Dock Co. is now a 100 per cent union concern.

Another headline in the Tribune: "21 Railroads Report Higher Earnings."

But how about the 21 railroad brotherhoods. Did they report higher earnings?

THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

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

The Legislative Investigation

The threatened investigation proposed by the Lower House of the Minnesota Legislative Body is welcomed by the Drivers Union. Local 574 is happy that the Minnesota Legislature has taken recognition of the fact that abuses exist under the State WPA setup.

The proposed investigation which has been aimed at discrediting and crucifying General Drivers Union will prove to be a bomb shell in the hands of the investigators. The sponsors of the resolution, two rural Hennepin County legislators, were, no doubt, sincere and honest in their proposal. But sincerity and honesty are no excuse for ignorance and lack of information.

These two gentlemen, probably listening to the cries of their outraged constituents, who wailed that they had been unjustly deprived of an opportunity to place their equipment on WPA projects, listened so intently and acted so hastily that they forgot a section of the Motor Vehicle License Law which they themselves had helped pass.

X and Y licenses entitle the holder to offer his equipment for hire. T licenses, issued only to farmers for a low fee, permit the holder of that license to use the vehicle so licensed only for the hauling of farm produce and for use on the farm.

Local 574 has intimidated, threatened and coerced no one. We have merely insisted that the State WPA Procurement Offices live up to the rules that they themselves made in regard to proper license and proper equipment. If those farmers who are not now on the job had provided themselves with an X license they would now be working.

Contrary to the vicious and lying statements that were made on the floor of the House of Representatives by enemies of unionism, union membership is NOT one of the requirements for WPA workers. No matter how much we may desire it, there is not now and never has been a closed shop condition for truck drivers on WPA projects.

So we say to the Minnesota State Legislature — on with the investigation.

The sooner the better.

Slums and More Slums

The Sumner Field Slum Clearance Project which has been struck by the Building Laborers Union, Local No. 563, is a grand example of the stupid, vicious and dangerous policy of the Federal Relief Administration.

This project which is aimed to tear down existing slums and erect in their place modern, low rent, workers' homes, presents a contradiction that cannot be reconciled under capitalism. The Building Laborers Union, outraged at the starvation wage of \$12 per week that the wrecking contractor was prepared to pay, has justly and rightly struck for the union wage scale.

The forty cents an hour wage scale, proposed by the wrecking contractor, would bring the worker employed on the project \$52 per month for the one hundred and thirty hours he is allowed to work. This wage is \$8.50 lower than the subsistence wage paid on WPA projects.

In other words, the Federal Relief Administration is put in the position, on one hand, of setting a subsistence wage level of \$60.50 for relief clients, who have been put on WPA projects, and on the other hand, allowing private contractors engaged on Federal finance projects to pay \$8.50 less.

As has been often logically pointed out, the wage paid on such projects is creating new slums where these lowly paid workers will have to make their homes.

Tearing down one slum district and at the same time creating a new one is the only end that can be accomplished by such starvation wages.

A Victory

The victory won by the Northern States Power workers last week should hold great significance for the whole Minneapolis Trade Union Movement.

This union which at one time had a membership of over seven hundred was, less than a year ago, almost totally destroyed by a cleverly conducted red campaign initiated by the employer.

Weakened, dazed, and almost totally destroyed by the vicious red scare, the union for some months floundered about in a sea of despondency. But with the coming into power of a new, determined and militant leadership, the union took on new light and fought its way back to a place where it was at last able to wring from the company concessions that they have been unable to get before.

Their comeback should teach to every worker, organized and unorganized, the priceless value of determination and courage plus a correct program.

No achievement of the working class is impossible when these three attributes are present.

Labor Looks at the Press

Gen. Fang Chen Wu, at Cleveland Congress Against War: "A movement should be launched against aggressors or else all anti-war talk will be simply empty phrases."—Christian Science Monitor.

To "war against aggressors," the nations must withdraw financial credit, place embargoes on trade, and use various forms of boycott against the "aggressor." But to enforce these measures genuinely would require a blockade of the offending nation, and all history shows that the certain outcome would be—war.

Arthur Brisbane: "What is needed is a U. S. army bomber that would fly the Atlantic and the Pacific, if necessary."

To protect American womanhood in the Middle West, no doubt.

Prize headline of the week: "Coughlin Raps Townsend Plan." Talk about the pot and the kettle—.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt: "Peace is growing a mile a minute."

Growing into what, Mrs. Catt—another imperialist slaughter?

Local Headline — "Unfilled Needs to Be Bought in '36—Forbes."

We still ask—What with?

William Green, commenting upon the court's throwing out the Wagner Act: "I can't believe that the decision is based upon sound principles."

"They can't do that," eh, Green? And a few months ago you said it was the "Magna Carta of labor." You're sucked in too easy. You said the same thing about the NRA.

Too bad it wasn't one of those relief investigators who never thinks of you as a person, but always as a "case."

The men may be little all right, but they're the heads of the big corporations.

UTOPIA

"Say, Mr. Groins, I've worked for you 25 years, and living costs have gone up, and I haven't got back any of the three wage cuts I took. I wonder if you would raise my wages?"

"Sure, Bill—tell all the boys

No Medical Aid, Says New Federal Ruling

An important decision by WPA officials was handed down in Vancouver, Washington, last week. This decision affects the welfare and well being of WPA workers everywhere if it is accepted as a precedent by WPA officials elsewhere.

The decision says, in effect, that WPA workers are not relief recipients and therefore are not entitled to free medical aid, hospitalization or medicine.

This decision means that out of the meager budget, which in most cases is not sufficient for the needs of the worker and his dependents, medical care must be furnished by the worker himself. This ruling means that the various welfare boards disclaim all responsibility for WPA workers after they have left direct relief.

The wording of the decision is significant when it says "medical aid must be furnished from WPA wages just the same as other wage earners do."

they've got a 20 per cent increase in wages coming, beginning today."

"Good morning, sir. Are you the editor of this paper?"

"Yes, I am."

"Well, my union is on strike and I wonder if you'll give us as good publicity as you give the employers."

"Certainly, my boy. Just write up your side of the case, and we'll publish it just as you write it."

"You're the relief investigator in charge of my case, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir, I am."

"Well, my family simply isn't getting enough food—"

"All right, sir, don't say another word. I'll double your food allowance right now. No, don't bother—there's no need of me asking you a lot of silly questions."

Keeping Step With 574

By Mickey Dunne

One of the Independent Truck Owners was frantically trying to call his lawyer Monday. Which reminds us of the story of the couple who were walking down the church aisle to have the marriage ceremony performed. Behind them was a bearded, grim-faced man carrying a shotgun. The parson said "I suppose that you are the couple who are going to be married but who is that man behind you?" The groom piped up, "Who do you think he is, Daniel Boone?"

Why not call this place the Cvercoat Exchange?

The Sash and Door Factory workers are beginning to stir around.

On a 34th and North Bryant street car, the other morning, the car was involved in an accident. Among the riders were several members of 574. When the conductor went about in the car attempting to get passengers to sign for witnesses, someone asked him for his union button. He said that he did not belong to the union. One of the 574 men piped up: "No union, no names!" It was not until the motorman came back, showed his button and card that any names could be secured.

The 40 cent an hour wage scale proposed on the Sumner Field Housing Project amounts to less than \$12 per week.

Do the Milk Wagon Drivers know that they are paying the entire salary of the organizer of the Teamsters Joint Council, and also that of his bodyguard? The tune is \$300 per month.

I. E. Brophy who made the bitter attack on unionism when he spoke for the farmers resolution was formerly a non-union trucking contractor.—Get the idea?

Seventy-seven prizes were given away at the Federal workers dance Saturday night.

Vendell Phillips, LaBelle driver, is sick.

John Rogers is mowing them down at Colonial.

M. Dunne and W. Brown

Sash, Door and Mill Workers Form Union

Tuesday, January 14th saw a meeting of Sash, Door and Mill Work Employees who are attempting to form a union in that industry. This meeting, held at 310 E. Hennepin Avenue, was attended by about 150 workers.

Miles Dunne, Editor of the Northwest Organizer, spoke to those who were there. During the course of his talk he stressed the need of organization in this and similar industries and pointed out the splendid victory that had been won by the Clark Box Factory employees who are engaged in a similar line of work.

An organization committee was elected who plan on calling a mass meeting of all sash and door workers in the near future.

When the business meeting was concluded, free refreshments were served. There exists a splendid opportunity in this industry for union organization. Wages are uniformly very low for this type of work and working conditions are the worst.

were in Albert Lea Friday. F. Dobbs was in Wabasha. Skogland was in Mankato.

Guess who was what, when? Warner Day, Parker driver, was a grandfather early in January.

Ben Dankoski has crossed Nicollet Island off his list. Too drafty there, he says.

The Norman Carls will be able to form a quartet soon.

George Guider, former business agent of Local 221, and at present the operator of Guider's Inn, north side refreshment parlor, has been threatened with a banner by the Ice Drivers' Union because he takes ice from a 574 driver. George told them that he would help them carry the sign. It's a hard old world, eh, Bruce?

Cold weather closed all projects down Monday.

Cops drove into the River Terminal Coal and Coke Company Tuesday afternoon and bought two sacks of coal. Nice fellows!

Happy Holstein, last of the red men, has been in the General hospital for the past few days.

Fifty farmers made the Minnesota law makers turn handsprings. Forty thousand unemployed and dispossessed can't get a tumble from the same people.

Class in Advertising?

Despite the fact that we are told over and over that the United States is a country where classes do not exist, we submit the following.

The advertisement which calls the public's attention to Hamm's Keg Lined Beer shows the picture of three hands clasping each other.

One is the beautiful hand of a woman, one the well manicured hand of a male and the other the gauntleted hand of a worker.

However, in their ads which are displayed in the silk-stocking district of Lowry Hill and Hennepin-Lake, the gauntleted hand of the worker has been dropped from the display and only the lady and gentleman have been left to call the attention of the plutocrats to their product.