

A SHOW DOWN IN THE I.L.G.W. HITS SIGMAN

Called For a Test And Got Licked

Workers Did It

BY JOSEPH ZACK

THE bureaucrats in the Needle Trades Unions tell us that amalgamation would be a good thing, but the workers are not yet ready for it. This amalgamation would strengthen the unions against the bosses. But when it comes to fighting the left wing, the bureaucrats are quite ready to amalgamate their forces. Thus, they have organized in New York, a conference to "preserve" the trade unions—for themselves.

Recently, this conference, being in the good graces of the powers that be, got two armories for a mass meeting against the "reds". Nothing was left undone to get the workers to attend these meetings. The A. C. W. members were told if they didn't come, their jobs would be lost. The Sigman-Beckerman machine worked overtime to put things over.

The Great Test

It was more than a mere meeting. It was intended to be a stoppage, the workers were asked to quit work one hour early to attend. The bosses co-operated in stopping work. The capitalist press, even two hours before the meeting, appeared with flaring headlines and even pictures, announcing that 100,000 workers were storming the armories to slay the "reds". It was a bold stroke for the right wing, which had never before dared to rely upon the mass of workers. Will it ever dare again?

Who had the active mass, the right wing of the left wing? That was the issue the meetings would tell. Because the left wing challenged the right with a counter demonstration, called by the Cloak and Dressmakers' and Furriers Joint Boards. Half a dozen halls to hold about 12,000 against the 16,000 of the right wing's two armories were hired. Madison Square Garden was unavailable, though one hall would have attracted more than many small ones.

The Show-Down

At 4:30 P. M., half an hour after stoppage, the first six left wing halls were already jammed. Then the left wing kept hiring more and more halls until every hall available on the East Side of New York was taken, seventeen halls in all being hired by six o'clock. Thousands wandered about in the miserable rain, from hall to hall trying to get in, and many gave it up and went home.

The capitalist press admitted that 30,000 went to the left wing meetings. At least 23,000 got into the 17 halls. But the right wing had not more than 6,000 in their two big armories. It was a sad affair. Hugh Frayne of the A. F. of L. spoke. Unenthusiastic reaction. When Beckerman, the mimic Mussolini, began, a good part of the

(Continued from page 2)

Sigman Whipped In Call For Show Down

(Continued from page 4)

audience started to walk out. The chairman ordered the doors shut, but this caused such a row he ordered them open again. We said it was a sad affair.

Waterloo for the Right Wing

The right wing cannot defeat the left wing without the aid of the bosses. To get that, they must give the bosses privileges the workers will not bear. Now the workers are back in the shops and the season is beginning, they see conditions are not being lived up to by the bosses and union spirit revives.

The Joint Board and local offices (suspended) are teeming. Even some shops who registered under coercion are coming to the Joint Board for complaint adjustment. Sigman now announces that workers who have not registered will not be discriminated against. The slugger becomes almost a gentleman.

A Disgraceful Frame-Up

Recently, Sigman tried to frame up the strike leaders by trying to get some arrested strikers to give information against Joint Board leaders on alleged violence upon scabs and scab-nests in the strike. When these workers refused to turn stool-pigeon, Sigman con-



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trived to have them sentenced by Judge Rosalsky to savage terms in prison, from two to five years. Then he promises that if they turn informers he will have them pardoned by influencing Governor Smith.

In this case more than any, the bureaucracy is revealing its unity with the most outspoken enemies of labor for imprisonment of strike leaders, and in the measure that the right wing thus exposes itself, the most backward workers begin to understand that under no circumstances must they permit such traitors to pose as their leaders. A big movement is now rising for defense of these victimized workers.

Schachtman Uses Injunctions

Another glaring example is furnished by the injunction obtained by President Schachtman of the Fur Workers' International from a Newark, New Jersey, judge, known as the worst labor hater and anti-labor injunction judge in that district. This injunction restrains Local 25, in which the left wingers were elected to office, from functioning as a union and directs the officials to turn over all business to Schachtman.

The membership does not want Schachtman, but he uses the capitalist courts and police to oust elected officers and install himself. An injunction judge becomes the final arbiter as to who is to handle the business of the union.

We can say, in view of these developments, that time is working for the left wing, and that these are the very last gestures of a bureaucracy that is corrupt to the core and for which workers in the needle industry are certainly not going to stand.