

Organizing the Young Workers

By HERBERT ZAM

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It became very obvious that the real purpose of Mr. Saposs was to disrupt the conference. This the Young Workers League was not willing to tolerate, and rather than see the conference disrupted, withdrew its delegates with the statement, however, that the Young Workers League as the only organization representing the interests of the working youth was interested in their organization, and would continue this work regardless of the efforts of Muste, Saposs and similar individuals. They furthermore condemned such activities as that of Mr. Saposs and declared that it would be necessary for the young workers to combat very vigorously such attempts at those which have been seen at the conference, to hinder the activities of the young workers.

The conference then proceeded. However, Mr. Saposs was not to have peace.

Delegates Angered at Exclusion of Y. W. L.

During the discussion which followed, delegate after delegate in discussing some of the subjects on the agenda, expressed his indignation at the procedure and declared that such procedure and such activities were sufficient reason for keeping the young workers out of the trade unions; out of labor organizations,

Even the agenda of the conference indicated that the little consideration was given to the young workers themselves, very much consideration

was given to labor bureaucrats. Of all the reporters, only one was a young worker, namely, Clarence Miller, who reported on the unionization of the young workers in mass industries, such as textile, steel, automobile. Other reporters, including A. J. Muste himself, Mr. Lefkowitz, Tom Tippet and Rose Schneiderman, it is needless to say, contributed very little towards the knowledge of the young workers or towards the unionization of the young workers. The only substantial talk was made by Clarence Miller who took up the basic problems dealing with the activities and the problems of the young workers.

After the report of Tom Tippet on "Facts about young workers in industries," and of Abraham Lefkowitz, about "Legislation effecting conditions and status of young workers," a general discussion was to take place.

Herbert Zam, representative of the Young Workers (Communist) League, immediately asked for the floor stating that he had something specific to present to the conference which he would like to have discussed. Mr. Saposs made every effort to refuse him the floor, although he had himself promised that even if the Young Workers League delegates were not seated as regular delegates, they would be given every privilege to participate in the discussion. He maneuvered for almost an hour and finally was compelled to give the Young Workers League representative the floor.

Y. W. L. Delegate Reports

Herbert Zam pointed out that the report of Abraham Lefkowitz was nothing but a eulogy of the demo-

cratic administration of New York City and of the child labor laws of New York State. He gave facts and figures showing the extent of child labor in the United States including New York City, showing that the average wage of young workers in this country was less than \$14 a week, and finally he read a resolution on "Legislation for the young workers," (which was already printed in the DAILY WORKER) and which he asked the conference to adopt. When he was thru, he received an enormous ovation. This made Mr. Lefkowitz somewhat hot under the collar and he immediately launched into a tirade against the proposals of the Young Workers League, claiming that they were impractical, utopian, etc. etc., and even resorted to personal muckraking and name-calling.

However, by this time the conference had already reached the point where the efforts of Lefkowitz, Saposs, could not stop it from carrying on its renewed work. Practically every delegate who spoke supported the proposals of the Young Workers (Communist) League.

The character of some of the other reports may be indicated from the following: Rose Schneiderman was supposed to report on the "unionization of the Young Workers in Miscellaneous Industries." Her report started out as follows: "Youth is that period of life when hopes are high and nothing is impossible." Mr. Saposs, was supposed to report on "What the unions can do for the young workers." He spent practically all his time discussing "youth activities and plans;" in France, but in that period, quite by accident he failed to mention the

existence of the Communist youth League of France, the existence of the C. G. T. U., which is the trade union center that is really organizing the young workers.

The interesting part of the conference was the discussion from the floor. These discussions were very revealing of the state that exists in the trade unions. The discussion of the various youth delegates showed the following:

Bureaucracy Sell-Outs.

Not only are the trade union bureaucrats and their allies not interested in unionizing the young workers, but wherever the young workers themselves take steps to organize, the trade union bureaucrats do everything in their power to smash their organization. Four examples were given by the young workers: who were delegates to the conference. First, the Plumbers Helpers. The Plumbers Helpers went out on strike in support of the Plumbers, 4000 strong. Even during the strike they succeeded in organizing a union of Plumbers' Helpers. When the plumbers settled their strike, they sold the helpers out completely. Not only that, but the agreements were made with the building bosses that no member of the Plumbers' Helpers Union is to be employed at his job. Then negotiations were carried on. But all these negotiations did not result in the recognition of the Plumbers' Helpers, did not result in their inclusion in the union. The status now is that the Plumbers' Helpers have a union, a small union it is true, and this union is not even recognized by the Plumbers union.

(To Be Continued)