THE NORTHWEST ORGANIZER

Official Organ of the Northwest Labor Unity Conference

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE: 257 PLYMOUTH AVE. N.
GENERAL OFFICE: 286 E. 6TH ST.
St. Paul, Minn.

VOLUME 1, NO. 19
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1935

PRICE 5 CENTS

TOBIN AGENTS MEET LATIMER;
PLAN BETRAYAL OF STRIKERS

574 ASKS WPA
TO HELP CURB TRUCK SURPLUS

Truck Sales Agents Flood Industry, Disregarding Conferences

Large Number Independent Owners Create Losses in Transportation

The government records show that 85 per cent of the trucks operated 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 who induces him to use this cash for a down payment on a truck and takes him to go back into the industry on a small business man basis. Agents under the made work program cases have been uncovered where certain independent truck owners made a hookup whereby they could guarantee steady work to anyone who could make a 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 us some serious attention. A special section of the contract with truck owners has been organized.

This section has just submitted to the officials of the WPA their recommendations for a partial curb on the above practice. The men propose that the WFA 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, 1936, by bill of sale.

Favor Strike Breaking by Police Force

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

Seek to Brand Local 574 as ‘Redgang’ Union of ‘Incorrigibles’

The workers of Minneapolis went to the polls in June of this year to elect what they thought the best form of government which would support them in their struggle for decent living conditions, a Farmer-Labor administration. A series of events, culminating in a strike of the drivers in the mayor’s reception room last Saturday, indicate clearly that a deliberate betrayal of the movement is being planned.

This conference, attended by Mayor Latimer, T. E. Cunningham, General Lawson, John Geary, Cliff Hall, Bert Meahy, and about 20 other union business agents, was to settle the question of the curbing of activities of truck drivers in Minneapolis.” Representatives of General Drivers Union did not invite to the conference. R. Lats, business representative of the Minneapolis Chamber of commerce and dry cleaners, who entered the reception room seeking to keep an appointment with the mayor, was not invited to the conference. Lats 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 degli of industrial controversies was de
described. Mayor Latimer was said to be working in giving all possible police protection to employers, the mayor was asked to select a trade union to work with the employers to remove indus
trial strife, and the workers were called upon to refrain from joining organizations with “irrespon
dible” 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 a meeting between Local 574 and the Glencoe-Wood Company was (Continued on page 15)

To All Union Men and Women

The danger signal must be raised! Again one of the outstanding figures in the Minneapolis trade unions is convulsing with exultation 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 may 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 Spiegelman, George Lawson, Bert Meahy 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 the Trade Union movement is to be used as a strike-breaking agency, as was proposed in the case of W. F. Fellen and the union-busting Glendon-Inglewood Company? (4) 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 link Local 590 is to be used for the model for Local 574?

We insist that these questions and many more must be asked point-blank of those who seek to relieve the "embarrassment" of the non-union movement 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 their 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 Thurs
day 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 portion 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 smeared and unclean 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 hatred 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 that they and their 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. Those 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 Sat
day conference must be cleared up. Be
hind 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 "rack-
eteer" 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 pub
lcly 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 ‘Redgang’ Union of ‘Incorrigibles’

The workers of Minneapolis went to the polls in June of this year to elect what they thought the best form of government which would support them in their struggle for decent living conditions, a Farmer-Labor administration. A series of events, culminating in a strike of the drivers in the mayor’s reception room last Saturday, indicate clearly that a deliberate betrayal of the movement is being planned.

This conference, attended by Mayor Latimer, T. E. Cunningham, George Lawson, J. F. Cortor, Gene Spiegelman, John Geary, Cliff Hall, Bert Meahy, and about 20 other union business agents, was to settle the question of the curbing of activities of truck drivers in Minneapolis.” Representatives of General Drivers Union did not invite to the conference. R. Lats, business representative of the Minneapolis Chamber of commerce and dry cleaners, who entered the reception room seeking to keep an appointment with the mayor, was not invited to the conference. Lats 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 déjoue of industrial controversies was described. Mayor Latimer was said to be working in giving all possible police protection to employers, the mayor was asked to select a trade union to work 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 a meeting between Local 574 and the Glencoe-Wood Company was (Continued on page 15)
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决定ing influence on the whole course of political life 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 members? 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 coming from the mouth of Thomas Lathem. He is not telling the truth about the condition of that party. Who is Mayor Lathem to say that the Farmer-Labor Party does not want the support of workers outside of the American Federation-of-Labor? He did not even have the courtesy to see if he does not recall that it was the votes of ALL the Minneapo lis 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 Lathem apparently subscribed) said in effect: the administration will use the, "police" as a preventive measure if they are not members of A. F. of L. unions. In all fairness we can ask Mayor Lathem 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? And where and when was this said before the election?

The condemnation of independent unions sounds strident, it is a direct threat to the independence of the "liberal" 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. And what is this Farmer-Labor Party trying to 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 these admissions.

Reactionaries Condone Police Violence

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

The conference had agreed to uphold Mayor Lathem if he finds it necessary to use police measures to prevent illegal picketing in the near future," says the Minneapolis JOURNAL. How can he say, 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 if he does not want to know the kind enough to differentiate between "stickers" and "non-stickers," 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 shop men's strike of 1922, the Upholder's strikes of 1926 and 1923, and the railroad strike of 1919. What have been the results of these 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 condoning, if not condoning, the very worst act of the labor-haters against the workers of Minneapolis. You have dipped your pen in the blood of Ness and Belor.