

Shameful Spectacle-- Nagler Role at AFL

By Rose Wortis

IV.

In concluding his statement on international labor unity, Matthew Woll speaks about the role of free trade unions as a magnet to the workers in the occupied countries. He expresses the hope that the day will come when they will be free again. What sort of magnet is it that would not come anywhere near the object which it seeks to attract and speaks sneeringly of these movements as paper organizations?

Matthew Woll's wish is an idle phrase. It is not good wishes but concrete help to the trade unions of the occupied countries to throw off the yoke of fascism, to rebuild their trade unions, close contact and cooperative, comradely help, which will accomplish this objective, but Matthew Woll opposes such help most vociferously. It is now, when the underground unions are still struggling under Hitler's rule, that contact with the free trade union movement of the world will be most helpful, most encouraging. This help is denied to them because the AFL leadership fear that they may be influenced or contaminated by contact with the Russian unions.

A STAB IN THE BACK

Matthew Woll's hope that the "Russian people will some day be rewarded for their sacrifices with the blessings of free unions" is the most insidious attack on our most powerful ally, whose people through their heroic struggle have saved world civilization. It is a crime against the unity of the United Nations. It is open sabotage of the war, in which our nation together with our allies are fighting for our lives. It is part of the anti-Soviet conspiracy initiated by the anti-Soviet Social Democratic clique of the Jewish Forward, the Chanins, Dubinskys and their defeatist allies, the Hearsts and McCormicks, who hope for the overthrow of the Soviet regime. The decision of the 63rd AFL Convention on international labor unity must be decisively repudiated by the AFL membership.

For it is clear that only through the overthrow of the Soviet government can the Russian workers lose their present rights, guaranteed to them by their socialist government. Only under a Soviet government can the type of trade unions built and nurtured by the Soviet workers continue to grow and flourish.

This vicious and slanderous attack on the Soviet trade union movement, on the Soviet Union, must not remain unanswered. It is the duty of responsible AFL workers and leaders to repudiate the dangerous and insulting pronouncement of the AFL Convention on international labor unity.

NAGLER'S ROLE

Now, a few words about Isidore Nagler, the trigger-man of Matthew Woll. He is really beneath contempt. The leadership of the convention went out of its way to show how little regard they had for him, once he had carried through the dirty job for which he was sent to Britain. Contrary to custom, he was not given the floor at the convention to make his report. No banquets, such as are usually tendered to retiring delegates, were arranged. Dubinsky's stooge Nagler, came to the convention like the conquering hero with a long report about his great exploits in Britain.

Much to his disappointment, Green announced that the report would be included in the minutes, and it was. In a few brief sentences, the minutes reported that he traveled by plane, where he slept and ate, and that he made a 37-minute speech. No wonder Dubinsky ordered the New York organization to organize a joint Executive Board meeting. Nagler had to deliver himself of the undelivered speech at the convention. He took it out on the Cloak and Dressmakers at a New York meeting in a two-hour speech, but the officials made sure that no one of the Executive could challenge his slanders and misrepresentations. They adjourned the meeting the minute he was through.

The ILGWU was treated at the convention as unbidden guests. Less important organizations were given representation on the Executive Council, but Dubinsky—much as he may cringe before the reactionaries of the Executive Council of the AFL—still remains on the outside looking in. They were allowed to do all the dirty work (Yale Harrison, the Social-Democrat, was Woll's assistant in writing the resolutions), but still from the outside.

FINE BOOTLICKER

Basic questions came up before the convention during the two weeks it was in session, such as the Negro question, fourth term, readmission of Lewis, etc. On none of those questions did Nagler or any of the other Social Democrats take the floor, but during the closing moments of the convention Nagler threw aside the last vestige of self-respect and came to the platform to kow-tow and cringe before the powers that be, to show that the honor given him of stabbing a knife in the back of the Soviet workers was well earned, that on the matter of red-baiting, Soviet-baiting, rehashing the old "Communist-Nazi" stuff, he can outdo Matthew Woll himself.

As a Jewish worker, as a garment worker, I felt a burning shame to witness the spectacle that brought into such disrepute the splendid organization, the militant membership, of the ILGWU.

The AFL convention did not say the last word on international labor unity. The action of the convention must rouse the membership of the AFL to greater activity on a scale that will force the leadership of the AFL, much as it may be indisposed to do so, to abandon the discredited policy of isolation which has proved disastrous for our nation and for the world—and has no place in the labor movement.

The struggle for international labor unity has just begun. It will not, it must not, slacken until victory has been achieved.

BITTER STRUGGLE

Every advance of the American labor movement—industrial unionism, organization of the unorganized, mass production industries, unemployment insurance, independent political action, etc., was made over the most stubborn opposition of these same reactionary AFL officials. The AFL workers will not be deterred from fighting for international labor unity, especially now when such unity is demanded not only by the interests of labor alone, but by the interests of our nation struggling for its very life together with our allies.

It is the solemn responsibility of the AFL members, local union officials devoted to victory, to repudiate the action of the AFL convention on this matter, to develop anew on an even broader scale the demand for the AFL to join with the Soviet, British, Latin-American, Canadian, Australian trade unions, the CIO and Railroad Brotherhoods, in convening a world conference of labor.

A very important contribution in that direction has already been made by Philip Murray, President of the CIO. At the recent convention of the United Auto Workers Union in Buffalo, Murray announced that he will recommend to the coming CIO convention to issue a call for a world conference of labor. This proposal, although coming from the CIO, will meet with response from AFL workers as well. It should be taken up for action and approval in all unions.

The latest reports coming from the Moscow three-power conference brings encouraging news which promises greater unity and closer collaboration between the three leading nations of the anti-Hitler coalition for victory. This should serve as a stimulant to American labor to intensify its efforts, to strengthen the coalition of governments with a powerful all-inclusive unity of labor.

Wisconsin CIO Backs Aims of Lincoln School

(Special to the Daily Worker)

CHICAGO, Oct. 29.—A new indorsement of the principles and aims of the Abraham Lincoln School came today from the executive board of the Wisconsin State Industrial Union Council.

Thomas White, council president, and Mel J. Heinritz, secretary-treasurer, extended best wishes to Prof. A. D. Winspear, director of the school, for its valuable work in the interests of labor and its contribution to the war effort.

The board also voted to organize the school's extension courses and participate in the \$100,000 financial campaign recently launched by the school.



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