

BUS WORKERS TRUDGE BACK TO WORK

Workers Boed Settlement as Leaders Pleaded, "End Strike Now!"

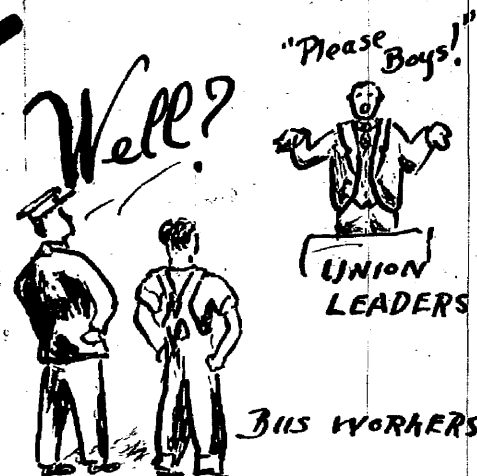
Last Thursday (Nov. 21) the "continuous union meeting" begun by the thousands of drivers and garage workers of Chicago Motor Coach Co. on Oct. 3rd, came to an unenthusiastic end. At a midnight mass membership meeting the workers, with much commotion and cat-calls, from the floor, voted 497 to 232 to accept a settlement. It took speeches by every member of the executive board to get the workers to call off the strike. Hearing the details of the settlement there were loud boos until finally Robert Stack, International representative, pleaded, "It makes me feel bad to hear that dissent out there." Certainly the settlement did not reflect the determination of the rank-and-file in this strike.

The most important demands and settlements were: 45¢ an hour raise which would have given the drivers \$1.50 an hour and the garage mechanics \$1.60; the union men settled for 20¢ an hour increase. An increase in the retirement pension from \$30 to \$75 a month; they settled for \$40. Top wage rates after one year of service; they settled for 18 months. Reduction of the work day from 11½ hours to 10 hours; they settled for 11 hours now and 10½ hours beginning July 1st. Night premiums settled at 3¢ an hour for work between 8 PM and 2 AM also to be begun on July 1st. The workers won a 20 minute lunch period and sick benefits at \$3 a day were extended from 13 to 26 weeks. They lost their demands for six instead of four paid holidays - for pay for uniforms, licenses and tools, 3 weeks vacation after 5 years of service, 10¢ an hour premium for operating double-deck buses and double time for Saturday, Sunday and holidays in the central repair shops.

Thus the workers won enough of their demands to show what they could have won had the determination of their leadership matched the workers' militancy.

The company claimed that the original demands would have cost \$2,500,000 a year; that in the past 5 years the average profit was \$574,836. The union pointed out that the Chicago Motor Coach Co. is owned outright by the Omnibus Corp. of New York which originally invested \$3,750,000; that now the Chicago company was worth between \$15,000,000 and \$18,000,000 and that to these profits must be added a steady 5% dividend.

Negotiations have brought down the wage demand to \$.20 per hour, and weeks ago the union was willing to return to work if the demands other than the 20¢ wage increase were submitted to arbitration. Weintraub, who heads the company, absolutely refused. The US Conciliation Service, the Illinois Commerce



Committee, Mayor Kelly, City Council, Special Aldermanic Committee and the International secretary and president of the strikers all tried unsuccessfully to influence the company to submit the dispute to arbitration.

Said Alderman Keenan, chairman of the special Aldermanic Committee, on this situation, "We will place all blame for this prolonged strike upon the Chicago Motor Coach Co."

The shuttling of the 300,000 passengers who normally use buses
(to page 2)

"L" WORKERS SEE RED

"L" Co. Policy to Work "Extras" Any and All Hours, 7 days a Week Arouses Anger

A new note of militancy is being sounded by the Chicago Rapid Transit workers. An incident occurred on the Metropolitan Branch of the company that so incensed the workers that there was talk of strong action or even a strike to impress the company that workers are human and demand human treatment. As is so often one of the prominent sore spots, this occurrence had to do with men working the "extra" list.

Three men were approached by a yard foreman who was seeking a man to work an eight hour conductor run. The first man was working his first day back after an 8 day illness. He had already worked eleven hours. He refused the additional work. The foreman bellowed, "You're out of service (fired)". A second man was approached. He had also worked some 8 or 10 hours. He refused and got the same answer from the foreman. A third man was approached. He hesitated in considering his

answer (later he said he would have taken the run, he needed the money), but because he was a bit halting in his answer, Boom! he got the same dose. Incidentally, additional work such as this is worked at regular rate, even if it is Sunday work. Neither this company nor the union leadership evidently seem to believe in overtime on Sunday.

"Knowing that they were due for a stiff session "on the carpet", the men contacted the union and informed the leadership of their problem. They then made a concerted effort to inform as many of their fellow-workmen of their situation as possible.

In the office of Mr. Art Heidecke, the boss of this division of the L line, the three men were told that if they filled out reports which included apologies for their action, they would be rehired. They refused. The boss blew his top when they
(to page 2)

NO ATTEMPT MADE FOR UNIFIED TRANSIT STRIKE TO BEAT STUBBORN BUS CO.

(From page one)

to the Surface Lines and L placed a severe strain on Chicago's limping transit system. 175,000 of these passengers were riding street cars and 75,000 the L. A further complication was produced by the thousands of extra autos driven into the loop.

Originally, although "deploring" the stubbornness of the company, Mayor Kelly asserted he was helpless. The Motor Coach got its franchise from the state and the city was therefore left out of the picture. As long as it was only the workers on strike and the hundreds of thousands of other workers who suffered through this horrible transit mess, the Mayor said no more. But soon the merchants along fashionable Michigan Ave. began to wail. Shopping had taken a serious dip. One of them started a petition going and soon a long list of complaining merchants was plunked on the Mayor's desk.

Said Mayor Kelly then, "... The city may have to put City owned buses into operation under provision of the Chicago Transit Authority authorized by state legislation."

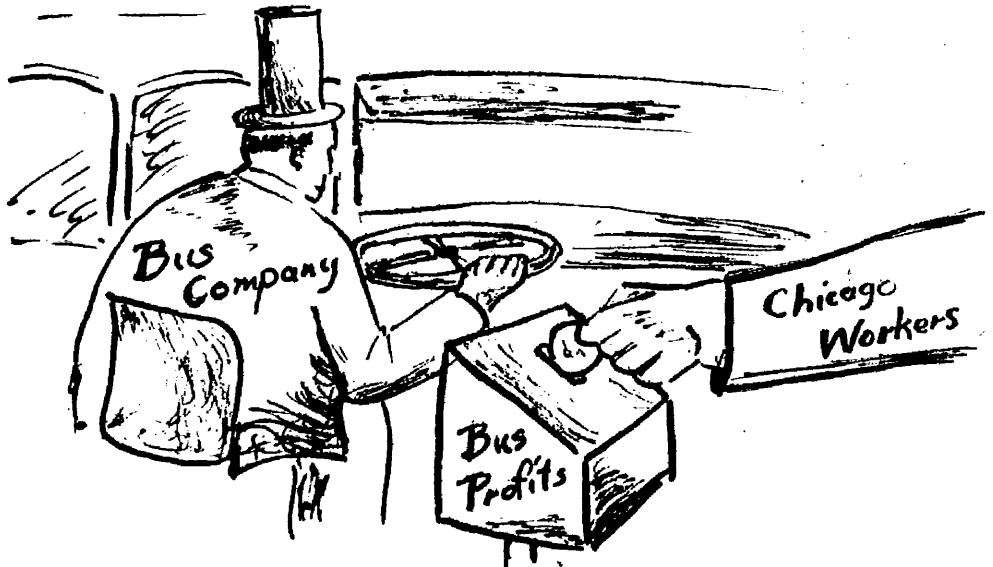
It now comes out that the Chicago Motor Coach Co. has a monthly lease to use the city boulevards and that this lease can be terminated. This past week the Mayor threatened to use 200 buses ordered by the city two years ago as the first step in replacing the Motor Coach's 500 buses. Also afoot is the attempt to purchase the Chicago Motor Coach Co. But commissioner Philip Collins of the Chicago Transit Authority said that the Coach Co. officials would not deal with the city until it has acquired the Surface Lines and Ls. The attempt of the city to take over the Surface Lines and Ls is now being delayed in the US Circuit Court of Appeals by an appeal of minority stockholders in these companies. This appeal might be cleared up by spring and if these stockholders wish to carry the case further to the US Supreme Court, the affair will drag on for at least another year.

It appears that the growing conflict between the Motor Coach Co. and the Chicago merchants exerted enough pressure to compel Weintraub to deal with the union through the State Commerce Commission. After the 18 hour session which settled the strike, Commissioner Parillo pointed out that the Commission

is ready to "sympathetically consider the company's financial difficulties in proceedings now pending or which may be instituted before it." In plain language: proceedings for possible fare increases.

The determination of the strikers had survived the general howl of the Chicago capitalist press that the tie-up be ended on the basis of the 20¢ an hour increase, yet

the bus workers' leadership refused to meet the stubborn boss class stand by attempting to spread the strike to other transit workers in the city. If the other locals in the Amalgamated here, consisting of the Surface Lines and the L workers, had joined the struggle the bus workers would probably have won more of their demands more quickly. But the leadership of these brother locals have shown no real spirit of solidarity. In part, the leadership of local 1381 must assume responsibility, for in visit-
int these locals they had made a point of requesting only money and had stated that strike support was not needed.



STILL IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

"L" WORKERS (from page one)

said they had decided to take up the whole matter through the union. They were called "communists" and told that the union president didn't run this company.

As it became even more obvious that they were going to stick to their guns, Mr. Heidecke's right hand man, Mr. Loughery, tried to use the old soft-soap method - the old "I'll soothe this over for you with the big boss. You'd better do as I suggest, boys, or Art will really get mad and you'll be out for good." (All you've got to do is kiss the company's foot.) Apologize? They work you eleven hours, they fire you when you refuse the demand that you work eight more assigned to you when you think you can finally start for home, and you should apologize.

The indignation of the workers over this "Gestapo style of pushing around", as one man put it, is a healthy sign. This feeling was put into action at the union meeting when the rank-and-file demanded,

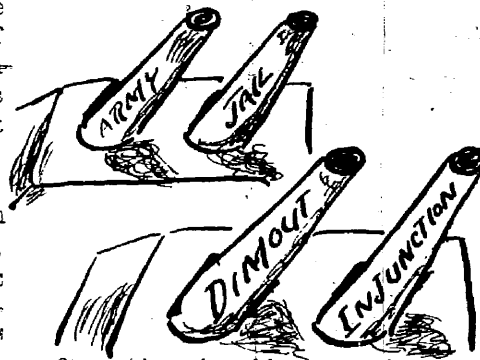
through formal motion, that the executive board bring back to the next union meeting a favorable settlement of this grievance. This type of action is rather rare in the union. More of this insistence that the executive board act - and act promptly is what is needed. The men are showing signs of impatience with the usual procedure of dragging out grievance settlements instead of hitting them when they are hot. A motion was also made that this settlement must include full pay for these three men for all time lost because of this lay-off.

Often when struggles like these occur, the cry goes up by the company that they are short of men, yet they are not hiring, but indeed firing some. The company "gently" hints that if the men want it, they'll hire...hire so many that they'll all go begging for enough work. But this is another problem. The fact remains that the policy that "extra" men can be worked at any time of the day or night, 2 hours or 24 in a day, 7 days a week, has got to be not only fought, but beaten down by the militancy within the union.

Expressing the fury of the whole ruling class machinery, four of the weightiest departments of government, the courts and the daily press have turned all their guns against the striking soft coal miners.

President Truman, sitting in his plush vacation spot in Florida, issued the dictum to the miners last Monday, "Work!" Krag, Secretary of the Interior echoed, "Work!" The attorney general's office informed the miners that they were not allowed by law to end their contract with the government. The war department pronounced itself ready to send the army to guard the mines. The navy department announced that it will sell electric power and coal to the public. The Federal District Court issued an injunction against any work stoppage in the government operated mines.

"The law must be upheld!" is the battle-cry radioed from Washington and echoed by every organ of boss class propaganda. The law is here shown to be peculiarly partial in this great "democracy". According to the Smith-Connally War Powers Act, the leaders of any strike in a plant seized by the government are punishable as common criminals. This law, so convenient to the boss class has been retained 15 months



after the shooting war is over.

As a first step toward invoking this law the INJUNCTION against a strike has been ordered. John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers Union are subject to contempt of court punishment. The daily papers inform us that there is no limit to such punishment; it is up to the discretion of the court!

On the other hand, there is a law, the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which forbids this very use of court injunctions against strikes.

This law now remains forgotten!

The comic part of this whole drama is the role of Lewis. He has done his best to prevent the mine walk-out. Plagued by wild-cat strikes for the last three months this skillful faker finally yielded

GOVT. GUNS AIMED AT MINERS

to the mine workers' pressure for a new deal on wages and hours. A month ago a faithful Lewis lieutenant radiogramed headquarters that the union was doing "all it could" to prevent the spread of a West Virginia mine walk-out.

On Friday of this week (Nov. 22) Lewis' fakery was performing the same act: UMW officials ordered the thousands of hard coal miners who have walked out in sympathy with the soft coal men to resume work immediately. 7,000 anthracite miners in Pennsylvania were still out in spite of this order.

Lewis may or may not appear as the martyred leader of the miners. But the mine workers have already learned that a strike "against the government" is merely a strike against the big stooge of the ruling class.

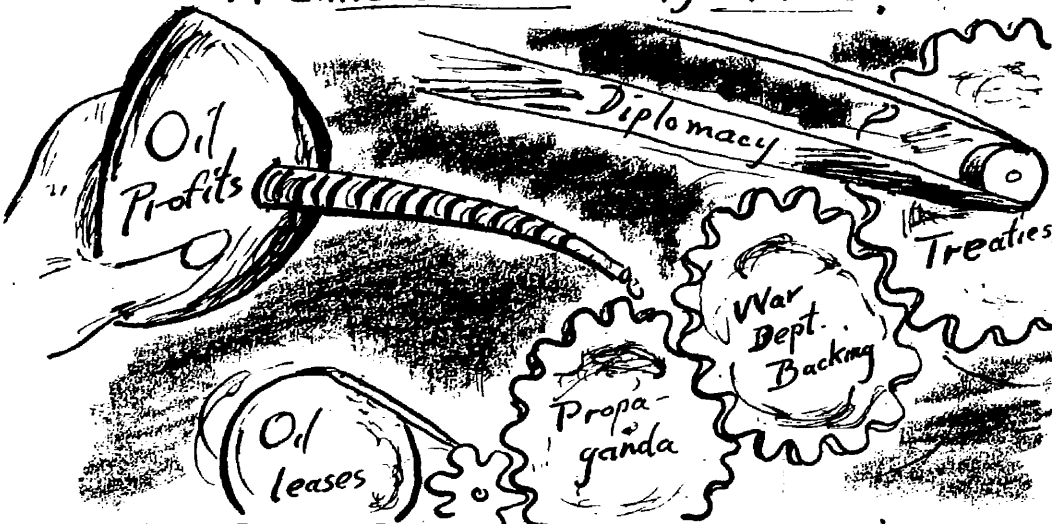
Boyd was up in arms against government controls, one would imagine that the oil industry had wiped its hands of Washington. But not so. Boyd stated that American businessmen wanted to conduct their business in foreign countries with the governments of those same countries, but that they expected the State Dept. to be behind them with "diplomacy".

In other words the oil men want the right to barge all over the world, leasing whole countries: Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia are two examples. However, they don't want their style cramped by government controls until they get in trouble. Then they expect the State Dept. and the War and Navy Dept. to back them up.

In order to enlighten the American people as to the wisdom of the Petroleum Institute, between \$800,000 and \$1,250,000 has been appropriated annually for publicity purposes.

The oil kings don't mind the government stepping in against the oil workers (that's what happened last fall) or pushing a small nation in the face when it asks too much from the oil pirates for leasing its territory. After that they then become opposed to government intervention. What rotten hypocrites! It's about time the workers put them and their government over the barrel and end this shell game called capitalism.

A Little Oil in the Right Places!



U.S. OIL BARONS MEET IN CHICAGO

The American Petroleum Institute meeting in Chicago for its 25th convention came out flatly against government controls over domestic and foreign production of oil. Said William R. Boyd, Jr., president of the Institute, "I don't want to see any group of nations including both those who have oil and those who have not, showing us how to run our business." Boyd fears that government control will lead to international control.

It is obvious why the American

petroleum kings want a free hand in the oil field. Out of approximately 2,500,000,000 barrels of oil produced in the world each year the US accounts for about 1,500,000,000 barrels within its own borders. The state of Texas alone produces more oil than all of US competitors combined. American oil interests also control millions of barrels of oil throughout the world.

These fellows are really playing both ends against the middle. Since

OWN LAWYERS TELL VET SQUATTERS, "LEAVE!"

60 Veterans' families in desperate need of housing who on Nov. 5th moved into a government housing project at 60th and Keeler which had been standing vacant for six weeks have lost their fight to keep their new homes.

The reason they have lost their fight is simple.

The action of these 60 veterans presented the threat that thousands of other workers would follow their example: workers could organize a general squatters movement into all vacant and near-vacant government and privately owned housing. To put this idea in the words of one of the lawyers acting against the squatters,..."public and private housing alike face collapse if these veterans get away with it." In the present housing emergency the rich might thus be forced to share their sumptuous dwellings.

The government, acting in the interests of the ruling class, its private property and its princely living standards, could not allow the possibility of any such movement getting under way. Three concerted court actions were brought against the squatters. One pressed by the Chicago Housing Authority

HOUSING PROJECT BLUES...

Government housing, like most other social welfare measures under capitalism, is but a crumb from the rich-man's table. And, brother, it's a stale crumb at that!

If you happen to live in the Robert Brooks Housing Project, (between 12th and 14th, Racine and Loomis) you'll soon learn the doubtful pleasures of being among the "lucky ones" who get into a government project.

You'll have hot water - yeah, plenty of it - the only trouble is that you better take that bath between midnight and six AM. For, as the authorities readily admit, the water system was built hastily and poorly, and people washing during the day just drain off rapidly the little supply that there is. And if your plumbing leaks,



against six of the families for trespassing; the second pressed by six other veterans who have been given leases by the CHA; and the third a circuit court petition for eviction of the squatters.

The prostitute press playing up the story that other vet families have more need of the houses than the squatters; the veterans organizations urging compromise; the government agency (CHA); the courts; the threat of police force: against

this array of capitalist forces there has been absolutely no movement to defend the vet squatters on the part of mass worker organizations. There is no growth or organization of a general mass squatters movement by the thousands of other homeless workers...

Thus, the 60 vet families were left alone to face the full weight of the ruling class government and agencies...Last Wednesday (Nov. 20) their own lawyers advised the squatters to move out of their new homes.

sister, don't send that little household genius oldest son to the "Five and Ten", for the equipment ain't standardized - and you just can't find the plugs so readily to mend it.

And if it's cold, you better stay away from that window, and stop yelling at the kids that they always forget to close it. It is closed...just the putty is missing, and the wind blows in anyway.

And if it rains, mother, you'd better have those rugs handy to plug up the kitchen door...

And if your radiator does not work...well, there's always the gas stove which leaks plenty!

For all these pleasures (?) you'll have to pay \$45 for 4 1/2 and \$53 for 5 1/2 rooms, modified somewhat by your income. Your lease is from month to month and can be terminated upon notice given. And if you are very militant about getting some of these things straightened out and don't have the other people well with you, you better be careful, brother. For, there is a

little clause in your lease which says that you are responsible for the continuous upkeep of the house, the lawn, the flowers, etc. And I bet you ten-to-one that authorities will invoke that clause to find some fault with what you are doing and to get you out of there real fast.

And all this we have, brother, because we are not smart enough to learn that government housing under capitalism is just a crumb from the rich man's table. We need an economy owned by the working people and a government run by the working people to get the type of houses which we are now smart enough to build - but not smart enough to own. But will we get this without a knock-down, drag-out fight?

Attend!

CURRENT EVENT CLASSES

Every Tuesday evening
8:15 PM

LABOR VIEWS OFFICE
333 W. North Avenue