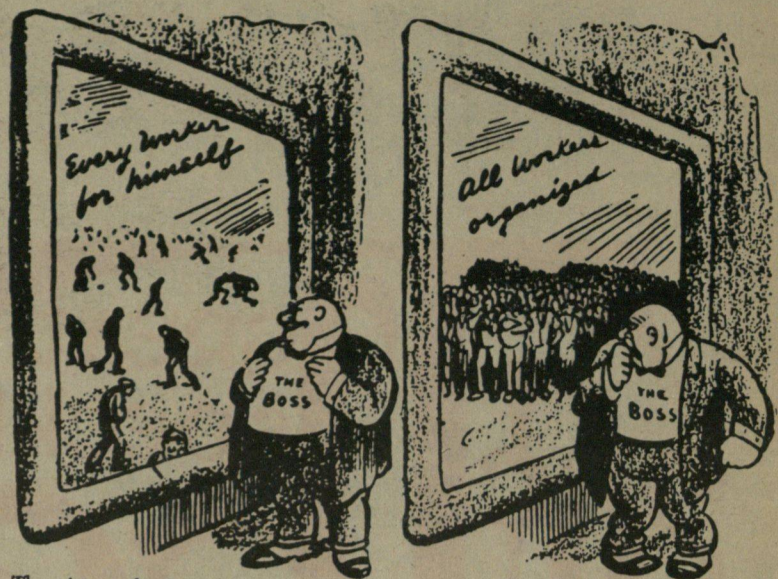


mead settlement



The picture the Boss likes . . .

. . . and the one he hates.

Last week a temporary settlement of the strike at the Mead Corporation was reached. The Mead Caucus of Rank and File Workers returned to work Sunday, Oct. 8, under the assumption that the settlement program agreed to by the workers and Mead management will be carried out by Mead "forthwith and in good faith."

Some of the major parts of the settlement are:

1—Establishment of a mechanism to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination in hiring, training, and promotional opportunities.

2—Replacement of an old repressive grievance system that worked against employees with one that is protective of the workers' rights.

3—Establishment of a Union-Management Committee that meets monthly to allow employees to address their problems directly to Management.

4—\$20,000.00 will be spent immediately for additional equipment to cut down on dust in the finishing area to further protect the health of workers.

5—Employees will receive an increase in pay whenever assigned additional responsibilities.

6—The company will take whatever steps are necessary and at its disposal to investigate and eliminate any and all acts of discrimination for

reasons of race, sex, age, or national origin. Nor will management tolerate the use of racist language.

7—The company will make one non-interest bearing loan of \$200.00 to any employee during the next 30 days.

8—With the concurrence of the union, the company will submit the cases of the discharged and suspended employees to a panel of arbitrators selected by a federal mediation board from a panel of arbitrators nominated by the Community Relations Council.

9—Based on the company future manpower requirements, qualified and interested employees, both white and Black, will be selected for pre-supervisory training and development and for other salaried positions.

Although the agreement does not represent a total victory for the strikers, most felt that at this time it was in their interest to return to work. The workers went back in the plant with a clear understanding of their own strength and power, and a militant attitude toward the oppressive attitudes and excesses of the profit-making bosses at Mead. If the company does not truly carry out its part of the bargain, more action by the workers will surely follow.

OCTOBER LEAGUE & MEAD

Last Friday, Oct. 6, Chairman of the October League Michael Klonsky held a press conference in Atlanta. At this conference Klonsky made the October League's position clear after the attacks and slanders directed at the O. L. in recent weeks by the Atlanta Constitution and other bourgeois mass media, attacks which claimed the October League caused the wildcat strike of over 600 workers at the Mead Corporation.

Klonsky correctly pointed out that the attacks against O. L. were an attempt to take the heat off Mead and were in reality directed at the heroic striking workers. By attacking the October League, a national communist organization dedicated to supporting and leading the struggle of the working class, and by linking that organization to others in the city that supported the strike, the Mead Corp. hoped to cloud the real issues and weaken support for the strike by red-baiting. But the strikers saw through this low tactic (see Bird, Oct. 2), as did all other honest people in Atlanta.

To quote Michael Klonsky:

"The truth is that Mead and the companies like them are to blame for this unrest—unrest which will never cease until the real causes are changed. It is not the October League which has been forcing workers to work in air that is so filthy and polluted with dust that several women have passed out, only to be immediately sent back on the line when they were revived. This crime has been done by Mead.

"It is not the October League which has practiced racial discrimination in their policies of hiring and promotions, reserving all or most of the better-paying, skilled jobs for the white workers, while Black workers are kept in the dirtiest, lowest-paying jobs."

"It was Mead and not the October League who directed the Atlanta Police Department to attack the Mead workers on September 21, jailing more than 100 workers and brutally clubbing the arrested workers to the ground, possibly blinding one Black worker. . . . To the charges of fighting to put an end to these conditions and to this oppressive system, we in the October League plead 'guilty'!"

Klonsky stated that the O. L. will remain constantly vigilant to the oppressive conditions under which workers at Mead and other plants in Atlanta are forced to work. Until these conditions are completely rectified, the O. L. will continue to lead and support the struggle of all working people against the injustice and exploitation of the capitalist system.

—carroll crawford



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