

Labor Day Parades and Injunctions

Labor Day Parade Urged by A. F. of L.—President Fitzpatrick Shifts the Issue—How He Fought Injunctions—Foell and Friend—"Friends of Labor"—The Left Wing Program.

By ARNE SWABECK

LABOR Day parades were once accepted by the American trade union movement as an established tradition. It was a good tradition. It is therefore strange to record the fact that John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, a few weeks ago tried to do his part to finally discard this tradition.

AT the meeting on June 28th the Chicago Federation of Labor had before it action upon a letter from President Green of the American Federation of Labor urging that the various central councils organize Labor Day parades. Considerable discussion developed. Progressive delegates including those definitely known as left wingers, spoke in favor of organizing the parade.

THE left wing delegates proposed that a great labor day parade be organized as a prelude to fight the injunction menace, to protest the imprisonment of over forty members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, women, mothers, who were thrown behind the bars as a result of an injunction and to strengthen labor's ranks by organizing the thousands of unorganized. They emphasized the splendid effect of the great mass demonstration of some 140,000 workers organized by the initiative of the Chicago Building Trades Publicity Committee in 1922 in the fight against the Landis award. This magnificent demonstration resulted in giving the "open shop" campaign of the so-called citizens' committee, of employers and bankers, a severe setback.

AT the conclusion of the debate President Fitzpatrick made one of his so-called statements ridiculing the proposals for a labor day parade. He attempted to shift the issue by making a most bitter denunciation of the efforts of the left wing to urge the labor movement forward to fight the attacks of capitalism, filled with filthy attacks at a moment when the

issue for discussion was the unification of the ranks of the workers in a great labor day parade.

PRESIDENT FITZPATRICK pretended that he and others at the judicial elections in 1923 had proposed a method to defeat Judge Dennis E. Sullivan and said that those who now demand a demonstration against the injunction judges (literal statement—Swabek and his associates) at that time on the floor of this federation spoke in opposition to that method and therefore got the judge elected. He continued endeavoring to review the history of the labor party movement and the support given by the Chicago Federation of Labor to elect governors, senators and congressmen, etc., but accused the left wing of having destroyed everything which had thus been built up.

IT would perhaps be well to refresh the memory of President Fitzpatrick and those who may agree with his statement precisely as to what happened in connection with the points set forth by him. At the judicial elections in 1923 the committee on injunctions of the Chicago Federation of Labor under the pretense of defeating Judge Sullivan recommended a full slate of candidates picked from among the republican and democratic entries.

THE left wing delegates then stated unequivocally that this is no way to defeat injunctions and injunction judges, that the candidates appearing on the democratic and republican tickets are pledged to the program of these parties and are the candidates of the employers and the bankers always ready to do the bidding of their masters.

The left wing delegates proposed support of labor candidates and mass violation of injunctions.

THE correctness of this contention by the left wing was subsequently proven when Judge Dennis E. Sullivan, tired of issuing injunctions against the trade unions, left for a vacation and Judge Foell, one of those who had been recommended by the

Chicago Federation of Labor, took up the task of enforcing injunctions and persecuting the members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers. Just recently it was further reported in the Chicago Federation that Judge Hugo M. Friend also one of the so-called "good judges" recommended by the Chicago Federation, issue a sweeping injunction prohibiting picketing by the Cooks and Waiters' Union on strike against about 150 restaurants.

THE need of labor rallying its forces in mass demonstration against injunctions and not to rely upon any capitalist judges, no matter what friendliness they may profess is sufficiently proven.

As far as the labor party movement is concerned whatever support has been given in the past by the Chicago Federation of Labor, its officials or by any trade unions is distinctly to their credit. Deeds always speak for themselves.

However, while the left wing is not immune from mistakes it definitely showed its willingness to further strengthen and build the movement for a labor party, while the officials of the Chicago Federation of Labor refused to go along and have since repeatedly registered themselves in opposition to this movement.

THE issues facing the Chicago trade union movement today are clear. No denunciations, no attacks of the left wing will shift these issues and will certainly not contribute to the solution of the problems. The left wing delegates in the Chicago Federation of Labor have taken their stand proposing that the organized trade union movement demonstrate and rally its forces to defeat the injunction menace, to keep labor's militant fighters out of jail, to organize the unorganized and to enter the political field independent of the old capitalist parties. There have been plenty of experiences to show to the trade unions that this is the correct direction for the labor movement to travel.