

Meeting of Chrysler Executive Boards
and Shop Committees

November 7, 1939 - Schiller Hall

Zarembka
Box 4

The meeting was opened by Chairman Frankenstein at 7:40 P.M. Brother Frankenstein stated that the purpose of the meeting was to work out a definite program to counteract the propaganda and the back-to-work movement carried on by the Chrysler Corporation. Brother Frankenstein stated that it is necessary to start a strong offensive.

Brother Frankenstein read the agenda, which was as follows:

1. Report on negotiations.
2. Report by Brother Addes on the position of the International.
3. Report by Ernest Goodman on the possibilities of compensation.
4. Report on welfare by Brother Pagano.
5. Discussion on setting up one general strike fund.
6. Setting up of a finance committee to pass on expenditures.
7. Radio broadcasts.
8. Reports from local unions.
9. Mass meeting to be held in Cadillac Square.
10. Discussion of solicitation of funds for welfare.
11. City-wide distribution of literature -- Publicity.

Motion made and supported that the agenda be accepted as read. Carried.

Brother Fields reported on the progress made in negotiations. He stated that the negotiations have been going on for four weeks, and that very little progress has been made; that practically no progress on grievance procedure, standards of production and union shop has been made. On the question of seniority some progress has been made. The clause on foremen has been accepted. Regarding the people who have lost seniority due to sickness or accident, there is a good chance to get them back their seniority. The Corp. has asked the union to submit all information on these cases. The question of transfers was discussed and the question of transfer of operations was discussed and accepted. On the 32 hour week quite a bit of progress was made. The question of the union label being used on work that must be contracted outside the Corp. was discussed. Two weeks vacation with pay was asked for. The Corporation's argument was that no other large automobile manufacturer gave vacations with pay. The union label on Chrysler products was asked for. This they refused to give. Arguments were raised on punching the time cards during lunch hour. Question of piece work was raised. The question of at least 15 minutes relief period on each shift was raised. Bulletin boards for the union's exclusive use was asked for. The Corp. said they would give this consideration. Collection of dues on company time was asked for, also an outside doctor mutually agreed to by the union and the Corp. in case of a dispute. The Corp. insists on a no-strike clause. We insist our constitution will not permit us to sign a contract with such a clause in it. The skilled workers proposals were submitted. This question has not been discussed yet.

Brother Fields stated that the Corp. made the highest profit of any Corporation in the industry for the amount of money invested. The Corp. is making 50% on every dollar invested. Brother Fields stated that the negotiating committee will do everything possible to come out of this agreement with the union shop.

Discussion followed Brother Fields report. A motion was made and supported that the report of Brother Fields be accepted. Carried.

Brother Pagano, Assistant Director of WPA reported on the welfare situation. He stated that the Chrysler welfare committees have been functioning very well. In Wayne County, Mr. Harris is cooperating quite a bit, and he has assured us that our people will get direct relief in the form of food, fuel and clothing. In Macomb County the situation is different. According to their Welfare Commission Macomb County is almost broke. They have refused to give our people anything except surplus commodities. Brother Pagano stated that he feels that it is necessary to hold a demonstration in Macomb County and asked that this question be discussed by the meeting tonight. In Oakland County the situation is just as bad as Macomb County. Brother Pagano requested the locals do not give direct relief to their members, because if they do that, these people find it difficult to get relief from the Welfare Dept.

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Motion was made and supported to accept Brother Pagano's report. Carried.

Roll Call was then taken:

Local #3 - Trexler, Zaremba, Fecker, Delenko, Schumaker, Miller, Gruzen, Hill, Currie, Crenshaw, Addis, McIntyre, Sturm.

Local #140 - Claire, Clark, Zimmerman, Tuttle.

Local #7 - Adams, Clave, Blake, Doherty, Broletto, Wright, Dornazzio, Ralph, Newhouse, McGinis, Kline, Smith, Valle, Hoggins.

Local #490 - Jenkins, Terraine, Murphy, Ratke, Stoebel, Douglas, McCormick, Barba, Hughes, Pruett.

Local #51 - Edalen, Bethel, Erbe, Duletsky, Jackson, McDonald, Crump, Levine, Jenkowski, Federonchick, Andres, Tennyowski, Novack.

Local #227 - Leonard, Dawson, Pody, McMann, Moore, Gilner, Andrews, Dodge, Crock, DeBussey, Kennedy.

Local #371 - Heneburger

Local #195 - Sid Moore, Gillette

Int'l. Board Members - Lamotte, Case, Leonard.

Int'l. Representatives: Anderson, Hutchinson, Edwards, Dragon, Pagano.

Brother Frankenstein reported that the the Walsh-Healy Bill is not applicable to a Corp. like Chrysler. It merely deals with minimum standards and would not apply to any industry which meets minimum requirements.

Brother Frankenstein introduced Brother George F. Addes, Int'l. Sec'y.-Treas. as the next speaker.

Brother Addes stated that the Int'l. is concerned with one important thing at this time in the situation, and that is the back-to-work movement prevalent. He stated that the publicity that is being put out by the Corp. indicates that if the union does not go into action that the Corp. will endeavor to start a back-to-work movement. Brother Addes stated that information has been received from reliable sources that the Chrysler Corp. has an employment agency in Virginia where they are hiring a number of Merchant Marine sailors and are attempting to bring them to Detroit in an attempt to break the lockout. Brother Addes stated that in the past we have been on the defensive as far as publicity is concerned, and the average public is at a loss as to what a union shop means. He stated that we must take an offensive position in regard to publicity now. Brother Addes stated that one means of combatting the propaganda of the Corp. was the radio and the Int'l. has signed a contract for one week with WJMK for nightly programs. Another means of counteracting this propaganda is leaflets. Brother Addes stressed the importance of contacting union people who are not active thru leaflets, etc. He stated that the Chrysler Corp. has started a house to house canvass--people pretending to sell soap and electrical appliances, as an excuse to enter the homes of the workers, and pointed out that we must use the same tactics, with the exception of not selling merchandise, but have committees go out and visit people, small merchants, dealers, etc.

Brother Frankenstein introduced Ernest Goodman from the Union's legal staff, who spoke on the problem of obtaining Unemployment compensation for our people.

Mr. Goodman stated that the big problem in obtaining compensation was in convincing the commission that this is a lockout and to further convince them that a lockout is not a labor dispute. Mr. Goodman stated that the decision will be down in a day or two and in the commission itself there probably is a great deal of argument and there probably is a great deal of pressure on them by the Corp. The Corp. is doing everything they can to keep the men from getting compensation. Mr. Goodman stated that it is a question of power, strategy and politics as much as law. The law states that if workers are not directly involved in a dispute, but if they contribute to that dispute they are involved. Mr. Goodman stated that the question of raising funds must be well considered and done carefully so as not to jeopardize the receiving of compensation by the men.

The suggestion was made that a fund be raised and this fund be called a defense fund and that it doesn't have to be on record.

Brother Frankenstein made the suggestion that each local (Detroit locals) Dodge, Dodge Truck, DeSoto, Plymouth, Chrysler H.P., Chrysler, contribute \$1000.00 a piece to the International Union that would be an outright contribution. A representative from each local union would become a finance committee. That committee would authorize all payments of that \$6000.00. Such a plan is practical, because when you purchase anything in quantity you can get cheaper. Also if that setup were put into effect we would have a much stronger centralized publicity dept.

The suggestion was made that we contribute this money to some other union in the CIO and have that union contribute it back to the Int'l. Union.

Brother Frankenstein asked that each local express itself on their willingness to go ahead with such a proposal.

Local #51 stated that they would be willing to contribute.

Local #140 stated they will recommend this proposal to their local.

Brother Addes stated the Int'l. will loan Local #51 \$1000.00 if the other locals will all contribute.

Brother Daletsky of Local 51 pointed out the great importance of contributing to such a fund.

Local #490 stated they will do what the other locals will do. The suggestion was made to make the contribution on a percentage basis.

Local #7 stated that they are ready to make their contribution.

Local #227 stated they will recommend it to their body. (Later in the evening Local #227 announced that they will make their contribution).

The suggestion was made that all locals call special board meetings this week to take up this question and to make their recommendations to their local unions as quickly as possible.

A proposal was made that the finance committee decide whether it should be on a percentage basis or otherwise.

The suggestion was made that we attempt to get donations from locals outside of the Chrysler locals.

Discussion on the great importance for quick action to be taken ensued. In the discussion it was pointed out that there is every indication that the Corp. is attempting to introduce the Mohawk Valley Plan here, and that it was this plan that defeated the strike in steel. Brother Addes again took the floor to speak on this issue. He stated that as far as the International was concerned they don't want to lay their hands on any of this money, and that if the Int'l. was in the financial position now that it was in 1937, it would not even make this proposal here tonight. Brother Addes stated that if anyone believes that public opinion is not important in this strike they are badly mistaken. He stated that it is not impossible for the Governor to send in troops, and it is not impossible for the mayor to send in Pickart. Brother Addes stated that the Governor indicated that he might even call a special session of the State Legislature. Bro. Addes stated that he believes that the Chrysler Corp. is the spearhead to attempt to break the union. He stated further that all sorts of pressure is being put on our members, and that the average dues paying member does not understand the fight. Brother Addes stated that this money will bring about a settlement in this controversy much sooner than if we just sat back and did nothing.

Brother Frankenstein read an editorial from the Nov. 8th issue of the Detroit Free Press which was a further indication that the Mohawk Plan is beginning to operate. Brother Levinson of the Publicity Dept. gave a short talk on the great importance of proper publicity. He stated that not only the Chrysler Corp. was interested in breaking this situation, but the newspapers were also vitally interested, because the newspapers look forward to two periods of the year, Christmas and new models, because they get their greatest amount of advertising during those periods. Bro. Levinson stated that reports have been received about stock manipulations by the Chrysler Corp. Brother Levinson stated that the Corp. has engaged another publicity firm called the Devine Associates to stir up the back-to-work movement. Bro. Levinson stated that with \$6000.00 we can be on the radio every night for a period of 3 or 4 weeks - we can place two or three large ads a week in the newspapers; we can put on a mailing to dealers; we can put out one city-wide leaflet--we can put out daily mailing service to active members of the locals.

Motion made and supported that this fund be put in effect as soon as possible.
Carried.

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Proposal was made that Brothers Lamotte and Leonard be placed in charge of coordinating the work of the publicity and finance committees and to work with Brother Levinson on publicity. That Brother Lamotte and Leonard take the responsibility of getting in touch with the locals and seeing to it that they get their contribution in at the earliest possible moment.

Motion was made that Lamotte be placed in charge of publicity to answer all anti-union charges which have been doing us great harm. Supported.

Amendment to the motion. That Brothers Lamotte and Leonard serve on the coordinating committee. This committee to coordinate with the negotiators and the Int'l. Union. The publicity committee and finance committee to function under the direction of Brothers Lamotte and Leonard in cooperation with Brother Levinson. Supported.

Amendment carried. Motion as amended carried.

Local #3 stated they will attempt to sell the proposal for a contribution of \$1000.00 to their local. The Dodge local representatives are all agreed on it.

Brother Frankenstein stated that the next point on the agenda was to call a mass meeting for Monday, Nov. 13th at 3 PM in Cadillac Square. Monday was selected in order to give us sufficient time to get before the Council to secure a permit; to get leaflets out inviting all unions and other organizations to participate. The proposal was made that arrangements for this mass meeting be left to the committee under the direction of Brothers Lamotte and Leonard.

Motion made to concur with the proposal. Carried.

Brother Frankenstein summed up the meeting as follows:

1. Each local must elect one member from each executive board to serve as a finance committee member on the spending of this fund.
2. Locals are to get their publicity committees in touch with Brothers Lamotte and Leonard.
3. The president of each local is to meet with Lamotte and Leonard tonight after this meeting.
4. Mass meeting Monday, Nov. 13th, Cadillac Square.
5. Radio Broadcasts @ WJEK - Wed., Thurs & Fri - 8:30 - 8:45 PM
Sat. 9:15 - 9:30 PM
Sun. 11:45 - 12:00 noon

Brother Frankenstein announced that Brother Bolds, President of the Foremen's Union, CIO would speak on the radio Friday and will refute charges of slow down in the name of the foremen of the Chrysler Corp. Brother Bold's was given the floor and he spoke for a few minutes on the situation.

Motion made and supported that we hold these meetings every week. Carried.

A brother raised the question of welfare. Motion made and supported to support the suggestion of Brother Pagano regarding a demonstration in Macomb County, and that this motion be referred to Lamotte and Leonard. Carried.

Brother Frankenstein thanked the officers of the Chrysler locals for their cooperation.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 P.M. with the singing of "Solidarity Forever".

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