

# Presto, Pie-card to Bosses' Stooge

By Rose Wortis

A news item in the New York Times last Friday was headed: "Union Official 12 Years Is Now on the Other Side."

This item referred to Mack Gross, who until a few days ago was treasurer of Local 42, Millinery Workers Union. He resigned from the union to become executive-director of the Eastern Headwear Association, an organization of manufacturers.

Accepting his new post, Mr. Gross said that years as a union official in the same industry is no deterrent to rendering efficient service to the manufacturer (we may add for men such as Mr. Gross it is an asset). The bosses selected him for this very reason.

To Mr. Gross this is a simple matter. Until now he was in the union business. Now that the employers have offered him a more lucrative job he accepted it as would any other man who had an opportunity for more money.

Lest there be any suspicion that the former union official may show an inclination in the direction of the workers, Mr. Gross makes haste to state that in his new capacity he would resist any demands of the union in excess of the provisions in the collective agreement.

It would be interesting to know just how strictly he interpreted the same agreement when supposedly working for the union.

## OFFICIALS NOT SHOCKED

For liberals who stand on the sidelines and write glowing articles about the democracy and progressivism of unions led by the likes of Alex Rose and David Dubinsky, it may be well to know that the action of former union treasurer Gross is not at all as shocking and abhorrent to the leaders of the union as it is to the rank and file.

One such individual, Percy Ginsberg, left his post in the union in Chicago to become leader of the bosses' association and put through a wage cut in the cap branch of the industry there.

When Ginsberg failed to make

a success as a representative of the employers, he came back to the union and at the last convention of the Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers he was rewarded with membership on the General Executive Board, the highest policy making body of the union.

Who knows—perhaps Mr. Gross, inspired by Mr. Percy Ginsberg's example, is going through a preparatory course for membership in the GEB.

## WORRY ABOUT DEMOCRACY

Alex Rose and his colleagues, who spend sleepless nights worrying about lack of democracy in the Soviet trade unions, would do well to spare some time to see what is happening in their own backyard.

Desertion to the camp of the enemy, a frequent occurrence in unions under reactionary leadership, is no accident. It is a direct result of the bureaucracy which characterizes the day to day life of such unions.

In a union which systematically bars the rank and file from union activities, stifles democratic expression, persecutes workers for differences of opinions on union policy, removes opponents from the ballot and carries through fraudulent elections as in the case of the Millinery Workers, betrayal is the usual consequence.

In the last elections in Local 42, Mr. Gross, Mr. Mandelovitz and other officials still in office did such a raw job that they are now being challenged in the courts by rank and file workers. The suit charges that the elections were conducted in a manner contrary to the provisions of the constitution, union funds were misappropriated and no financial reports were given for a number of years.

In Local 24, numbers of workers who don't see eye to eye with officials on union policy hold "temporary books" which deny them every union right except the payment of dues. The last convention of the union institutionalized this discrimination by adopting an amendment to the constitution which gives locals the right to limit the membership of individual workers.

Unions such as these which violate the most elementary principles of democracy are breeding grounds for the treachery and corruption that Gross exemplifies. The millinery workers who want to "keep out of union politics" and "leave well enough alone" must learn from such incidents as the desertion of Mack Gross that indifference and passivity may endanger the life and morale of their union.

## Worth Repeating

GEORGE PIRINSKY, executive secretary, writing in News of the American Slav Congress, blasted non-recognition of Bulgaria by the U.S. and Britain:

Nothing good will come out of our support of the opposition to the Bulgarian government. The Bulgarian people, having gone through the hell of a 21 year fascist rule, are fully determined to wipe out the last vestiges of fascism and to block any attempt to restore the old reactionary rule that betrayed their country to Hitler, and to the Kaiser in the first world war. Our backing of the opposition will not change the resolve of the Bulgarian people to march forward as a free and independent nation in closest cooperation with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and other Slav countries, as well as the countries of western Europe and America. All that our present course of hostility and non-recognition can be expected to accomplish would be to make the advancement of Bulgaria more difficult and more painful and to leave in the minds of the Bulgarian people a bitter memory of United States enmity.