

Zimmerman Shows True Color

ILGWU LEADER DISCARDS PROGRESSIVE ROLE AT AFL PARLEY

By Rose Wortis

Charles Zimmerman, the white-haired boy of the Dubinsky clique, showed his real colors at the recent executive board meeting of Local 22, it was reported in Justice of Nov. Nov. 1. He gave an enthusiastic report of the recent Convention of the AFL (generally accepted as the most reactionary in its history). "It was one of the best conventions I have attended for a long time," he reported, to the dismay even of his own supporters.

Zimmerman for a long time played a unique role in the leadership of the ILGWU. Coming from a local consisting of the most advanced, progressive workers of the union, he played the role of a "progressive" and even intimated that he was not in full agreement with the policies of Dubinsky. Under pressure of the workers, he at times gave lip service to progressive causes such as the Freeport Case, OPA, Russian Relief, etc. These demagogic maneuvers and the fact that he was formerly associated with the left wing created illusions among some workers that Zimmerman is somehow different from the rest of the leadership—not really a part of the Dubinsky machine. Zimmerman, on his part, exploited these illusions. When asked by some of these workers why he did not speak up on important issues, he would answer that it was best for him to work from within and to use his influence on the inside in a progressive direction.

At the AFL convention, however, he showed that all his impartiality and progressivism was but a mask to cover up his role as part of the reactionary splitting Matthew Woll-Dubinsky-AFL clique at home and abroad.

TRIES TO COVER UP

Aware of the shameful role of the ILGWU delegation in initiating and supporting reactionary policies he tried to explain away his failure to speak up against the resolution for the elimination of all price control by stating that he fought behind the scenes. There was no opposition to the OPA resolution on the convention floor. Zimmerman, who is always ready to attack the progressive forces for the least disagreements with his lengthy reports at membership meetings, lost both his courage and his voice when it came to speaking in behalf of the continuation of price controls. This was in direct violation of a decision of the membership of Local 22 which shortly before his departure to the AFL convention unanimously adopted a resolution for the continuation of OPA.

He also failed to report to the businessmen that he kept mum when the convention adopted a resolution denouncing the CIO for its successful struggles which secured 18½-cent increase for millions of workers and when the convention went on record against wage increases as "inflationary" and instead called for increased production as the answer to inflation.

ANOTHER FRAUD

Zimmerman sang high praise for the convention because of its action on the Negro question. He reported that the convention went on record to abolish race discrimination in the AFL unions. This is a fraud. Nothing of the sort happened in Chicago. The convention did nothing about removing discriminatory clauses of the Constitution and practices of 18 international unions affiliated with the AFL. It did not lift a finger to eliminate Jimcrow auxiliary unions which deprive Negro workers of all union rights except payment of dues. All that the convention did was to reaffirm a meaningless resolution adopted at previous conventions expressing the pious hope that somehow, sometime in the distant future, discrimination against Negro workers in the AFL will cease.

Zimmerman and his colleagues make much ado of the adoption of

the resolution recommending admission of displaced persons to the United States under the unfulfilled

quotas of the various European countries, but fails to tell the dress-makers that the convention ap-

proved the constitution of the Executive Council against relaxing the immigration laws in behalf of homeless Jews without one word of protest from Mr. Dubinsky (who is also an executive council member), Zimmerman, or any of the other "professional spokesmen" for Jewish labor, (Zaritsky, etc.).

Zimmerman reported that the AFL convention was marked by a "definite orientation for international cooperation among the different labor movements throughout the world." Yes, there was such an

orientation but not with the European and Latin American trade union movements or with the World Federation of Trade Unions embracing 70 million organized workers in every corner of the globe. The foreign relations department established by the AFL Convention on the recommendation from the delegates of the ILGWU will become an international center of disruption to lend aid and encouragement to every discredited reactionary outcast of the labor movement.



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