

WORKERS
OF THE
WORLD.
UNITE

THE MILITANT



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The I.L.D. «Acts» on Mooney

The Appeal for a United Front Evaded by the Stalinists

In his appeal to all militant and revolutionary labor organizations and groups, published in the last issue of the *Militant*, Tom Mooney wrote from his prison cell in San Quentin: "The time for action has come. Let this appeal be the spark which will start an unparalleled conflagration—agitation that will arouse the masses to demand my unconditional pardon and the release of all class war prisoners. I ask for a genuine united front." In this request, entirely correct in every respect, Mooney very specifically named the organizations and groups which, in his opinion—and we endorsed it—should be called upon to join in the united movement.

A Significant Appeal
The appeal by Mooney has a tremendous significance from every point of view. For years, those who spoke in the name of this splendid militant buried for more than 15 years in the dungeons of capitalism, frittered away their energies and sowed disastrous illusions in the minds of Mooney's supporters in the working class, by limping hopefully behind the lightly-given and lightly-be-trayed promises of aid by capitalist politicians. The Mooney appeal to the revolutionary movement for the organization of a vigorous mass protest movement, with all its implications, definitely put an end to this miserable and unworthy policy of appeals behind the scenes, "seeing the right man", quiet conferences with liberals, and the rest of the futile, nonsensical truck-freight imported into the labor movement by well intentioned and evilly-intentioned petty bourgeois "friends".

Furthermore, the appeal opened wide the doors to the organized militant movement, without which the united front is inconceivable, to take the initiative in carrying out the provisions of Mooney's appeal. We wrote and repeat that an excellent opportunity offered itself to the International Labor Defense, as the most prominent and militant national working class defense organization, to take the first step in calling a genuine united front conference of all the organizations mentioned in Mooney's appeal—however conservative or reactionary their leadership might be—to work out the plans necessary for the execution of the provisions in the letter from the world renowned prisoner of American capitalism.

How has the leadership of the I. L. D. approached the problem of the united front? By a cheap and disgraceful evasion of the central issues so correctly raised by Mooney.

In the first place, the "Call for United Action" by the I. L. D. (Daily Worker, 9-5-31), indicates that it is its intention to bury the Mooney case in the midst of half a dozen or more other labor defense cases that are pending in the country today. It is obvious that a united front movement for Mooney would be recreant in its duty if it failed to conduct a struggle also for the other class war fighters. No man in the claws of the capitalist jailors is dearer to the working class than any other. All our class war fighters who have been captured by the enemy stand on an equal footing. But in this specific campaign, the whole point is missed by failing to concentrate the whole issue around Mooney as the outstanding symbol of the capitalist system of anti-working class frame-ups, and using the example of Tom Mooney as a point of departure—once the movement is really under way—for a nation-wide fight to release all the class war prisoners. This desirable end is not accomplished by the mechanical lumping together of all the conceivable cases under the title of a "united front for Mooney".

A Radical Mistake

The second blunder of the I. L. D., however, is far worse than the first, and bids fair to nullify all the efforts made to organize a genuinely united movement. As we said above, Mooney referred specifically in his appeal to various organizations and groups to form component parts of the united front movement. We cannot conceal the fact that we have not a penny's worth of faith in the good will or the genuine desire to cooperate that the leaders of some of the mentioned organizations have professed for Mooney in the past. The heads of the socialist party, the corruptionists and employers of gangsters who have looted the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and those similar to them—these are hardly the people who are concerned very vitally with the freedom or imprisonment of Mooney and other class war prisoners. We know them from the past, and their heavy hands have rarely if ever weighed in the scales in favor of the workers' side. But that is not the crux of the problem. The crux lies in the ranks of the organizations over which they rule, in the ranks of the workers who are heart and soul with

Mooney but who do not yet understand thoroughly who must be won to a real struggle for Mooney's liberation. And they can be won for this goal, they can convince themselves in the light of incontestable and eloquent experience as to who will best be able to organize the fight, and what program of action offers the best means for victory, only if the class conscious militants declare, as Mooney has done: Let all these organizations get together. Let them pool their resources. Let them show where they stand on the touchstone issue of a real fight for Mooney's freedom.

When such an appeal will be made, the workers everywhere will be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. Otherwise, the Hillquits and Hillmans and their kin will be able to continue to muddy the waters and protect themselves by promises and phrases which cost nothing and obligate them to less.

That is precisely where the call issued by the I. L. D. for a "united front" falls down completely. Where Mooney was specific and open, the I. L. D., bound hand and foot by the dogmatic sectarianism imposed upon it, is vague and thoroughly wrong. It does not appeal to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, but to the "rank and file members of the A. C. W."; not to the socialist party, but to the "working class members of the S. P." The various other organizations mentioned by Mooney's appeal are simply omitted: The I. W. W., the Proletarian party, the Left Opposition, the Lovestone group, the Welsh group, etc., etc. Why? For one reason only: The policy of the official party, which dominates the I. L. D., as stupid as it is blind, legally prohibits anything but a "united front from below" and even that to the exclusion of all species of "renegades". The "united front from below" means, in practice, and has meant in the past, no real united front at all. It is generally equivalent to a mere recruiting drive under the banner of the party, the T. U. U. L. or the I. L. D. It is the reverse of the "genuine united front" for which Mooney calls. It is not the way to fill the movement with life and vigor. It is the swiftest and surest way of strangling it when it barely born.

Change the Course!

The I. L. D., and in its name, the official Left wing and Communist movement, have started the Mooney campaign with the wrong foot forward. It must pull back and start anew, start correctly.

Demand Trotsky's Return

French Red Union Congress Votes for Appeal to the Soviets

At the national convention in Limoges of the "Federation de l'Enseignement Unitaire", the revolutionary teachers union affiliated with the Red trade union center of France, the following significant resolution was adopted on August 6:

"The national Unitary teachers' convention affirms its absolute solidarity with the proletariat of the first socialist republic in the world, the U. S. S. R., which, at the cost of immense efforts and heroic sacrifices, is strengthening and developing the foundations of socialism over one-sixth of the globe.

"It proclaims the unconditional duty of the revolutionist of every country to rally by revolutionary struggle against their own bourgeoisie to the defense of the U. S. S. R., fortress of the world proletariat.

"It demands of the Soviet government the recall of the measures of exile, of deportation and of imprisonment against

2nd National Conference, Sept. 24

Arrangements are being completed for the holding of the second National Conference of the Communist League of America (Opposition), whose sessions will open in New York on Thursday, September 24 and run for four days until Sunday night, September 27. More than thirty delegates, regular and consultative, are expected to attend the sessions which will be held in the hall of the national headquarters, at 84 East 10th Street, where all visitors and delegates are requested to report. Discussion of the theses submitted by the National Committee is still being conducted throughout the organization, and the reports to the conference are being prepared to insure the most fruitful results from the sessions.

As part of its welcome to the conference delegates, the New York branch is arranging a banquet to which all New York friends of our movement are being invited. A mass meeting in one of the large halls of the city is also being planned for September 23. Branches are urged to send an immediately information concerning their delegations so that adequate provisions may be made by the national office for their maintenance during the period of the conference.

Steel Wage Cuts Forecast

Analysis Shows Steel Barons' Plans to Slash at Workers

The steel industry entered the crisis of 1930 with too much capacity, deliberately installed a peace-time record-breaking amount of new capacity in the face of violently shrinking markets, and is preparing an assault on wages to enable it to operate at a profit on the small percentage of capacity which is now feasible to operate at all.

At the beginning of the boom year 1929 steel ingot capacity was 63,067,000 tons. Only in May and June of that year was it necessary to call on this capacity to the extent of 100%, and then it was the first time since March 1926 that the steel ingot capacity of the country has been taxed to its full extent. During 1929 there was an addition of 1,308,000 tons to the ingot capacity, which would have seemed amply sufficient to take care of the requirements of the country during the crisis which was plainly in sight by the end of the year.

At this point, however, a typical capitalist contradiction set in. Production of steel ingots declined from 54,312,000 tons

in 1929 to 39,648,000 tons in 1930. Ingot capacity, however, increased from 63,067,000 tons at the end of 1929 to 66,897,000 tons at the end of 1930, an increase of 3,831,000 tons, the largest amount of new capacity installed in any one year in the history of the industry, except for the war-boom year 1915.

As a result, while the industry had operated at an average of 89% of capacity during 1929, it operated at an average of 64% during 1930, an average of 46% during the first half of 1931, and at present and for the last three months has been operating at from 30% to 34% of capacity.

In view of the enormous investment in constant capital which is a technical characteristic of the industry, relatively small fluctuations in percentage of operations are reflected in relatively large fluctuations in profits, as pointed out in a previous article in this series. In the "normal" years 1925-1928, steel companies reported profits of 5 to 6% per annum on their capitalization, operating at an average of 83%. In 1929, at an average of 89%, profits jumped to 10 1/2% in 1930, with operations at 64%, profits were 3.71% on capitalization, the lowest since 1925. For the first half of 1931, profits of U. S. Steel Corporation were at the rate of 1.3% on its capitalization, against 7.1% for the first half of 1930; for thirty-two other steel companies, profits for the first half of 1931 were at the rate of 0.1% against 6.4%. The basic reasons for these sharp declines in profits were (1) shrinking markets for steel, (2) increasing capacity for making steel leading to higher costs per ton of steel made.

The reason for the huge increase in steel-making capacity in the face of an unprecedented crisis in industry was the increasing acuteness of competition within the steel industry, intensified by the crisis itself with its narrower markets, lower prices and higher costs of production due to low rate of operations. The two leading factors of industry, U. S. Steel and Bethlehem, face each other competitively in every important steel-making district in the United States except for U. S. Steel's dominating position at Birmingham and Bethlehem's at Philadelphia and Baltimore. U. S. Steel's strategy is based on access to controlled ore deposits at Lake Superior and Birmingham; Bethlehem's is based on locating its plants to be able to ship ore cheaply by water transportation. Bethlehem in 1929 tried to entrench itself in the important mid-western district through mergers with Youngstown and Inland, two big "independent" steel companies. It was driven off by Eaton, representing Cleveland and New York capital, who has since been financially wrecked. U. S. Steel, however, seeing the danger, strengthened itself in Chicago and put under construction 21 new fur-

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Jobless Spurned by Roosevelt, Hoover

Unemployment Insurance Must Be Won

With the gaunt specter rising of a winter of misery and starvation for the millions of unemployed, the two leading contenders for the capitalist nominations for president in 1932, Hoover the Republican and Roosevelt the Democrat, are racing against each other to the goal of their ambitions with the plight of the unemployed as the football they kick around as they proceed. The latest act in this criminal play with the lives of millions of victims of "prosperity", has just been unfolded at the jubilee celebration of the founder of the Red Cross in this country. Each of the tacitly avowed presidential candidates delivered a radio address on the occasion which was concerned far less with the Red Cross than with a pronouncement of their respective positions on the most burning problem before the working class of the United States today: What measures shall be taken to mitigate the body-breaking misery which the ten million unemployed and their families are subjected to?

Hoover's "Plan"

Hoover's contribution to solving the problem was the advocacy of "individual and local initiative to aid the distressed". In other words, the government intends to take no steps towards alleviating the unspeakable horrors of unemployment. It is too concerned and occupied with rebates on income taxes in the higher brackets, which flow back to the pockets of the multi-millionaires of the country to the tune of tens of millions of dollars. To take governmental measures for the relief of the unemployed—to say nothing of the establishment of a system of unemployment insurance—would evidently be a blow struck at the foundations of American liberty which, at the present moment, means the liberty to starve without molestation by the state.

Roosevelt, playing the softer music of the "liberal" harp, is more pleasant to the ear, and infinitely more deceptive. With Hoover, one can tell just where the man stands. He is distinctly opposed to the "dole" and to any state assistance for the jobless. Hoover is the living incarnation of all that is reaction-

ary in capitalist society. Roosevelt, however, who is angling for the Democratic presidential nomination, with the hope that the discreditment of the Hoover regime in the crisis period will swing him into the White House, plays the classical game of all the bourgeois politicians under such circumstances. His promises and assurances are as vast as the votes he hopes to catch with them.

Roosevelt is not against "state aid". Not at all. In fact, he has advocated the setting up of a \$20,000,000 fund for the relief of the New York state unemployed—and every small time politician in his party is already slavering at the mouth at the idea of "administering" this juicy sum. How much the unemployed will get out of the fund is not so problematical as it would seem.

The Crux of the Problem

And there lies the real crux of the problem which neither Hoover nor Roosevelt—the latter, in fact, less than the former—is willing to mention. First: It is not "relief for the unemployed" that the workers want. They want an organized system of unemployment insurance, and not one administered by and for corrupt capitalist politicians. Second: It is not simply an insurance fund they want, a fund which "both sides", the boss and the worker he exploits, contributed towards. They want unemployment insurance which is an obligation on industry and the state, and not an obligation upon the workers who are the only real sufferers from the capitalist production system.

The bourgeois politicians are not concerned with the tribulations of the workers and the unemployed, except to the extent that they furnish a political football and a basis for demagogic arguments with a capitalist opponent. They will grant the workers nothing that they do not win by struggle. That truth holds good for unemployment insurance today. The fight for it must be organized, strongly founded, spread to national scope, and driven home with a force that compels the self-satisfied demagogues of the ruling class to grant the relief so imperatively needed by the starving millions.

Split Threatens A. C. W.

Cliques Expose Each Other While Left Wing Marks Time

The removal of the officials of the Cutlers Local 4, A. C. W. by the G. E. B. of that organization, on charges of graft and racketeering, and the fight that has ensued between Hillman and the Beckerman-Orlofsky clique, have held the center of attention of the unions and labor press in the last two weeks. These events have created a sensation in circles unfamiliar with the situation that has prevailed in that graft and racketeer-ridden organization which, curiously, has been masquerading as the most progressive labor union in the country. The readers of the *Militant* had the opportunity to see the A. C. W. officialdom in their true light, with their masks off and their practices unveiled. To them, the recent developments will not be surprising. We have foreseen these events as a result of the fermentation going on in the A. C. W. bureaucratic machine, a fermentation whose process had been

held in check and prevented from coming to a head earlier by strategical maneuvers of the officialdom.

In the *Militant* of August 15, we pointed out the causes which were leading to a break between Hillman and the Orlofsky-Beckerman gang, and the perilous consequences an inevitable split in the New York organization held for the clothing workers. We urged the Left wing workers in the A. C. W. to raise the slogan of unity between the tailors and cutters in order to frustrate the sinister designs of their officials. The Left has been unable to develop any considerable agitation and has therefore been a negligible factor in the situation. The scene is entirely held by Hillman and those loyal to the Amalgamated on one hand—and the Orlofsky-Beckerman forces which openly defied the A. C. W. and are preparing to launch an opposition union, on the other. Hillman's victory in this fight is virtually secured. The Left wing, due to its inactivity, lack of understanding and the absence of a correct policy, has missed another opportunity to gain ground in the Amalgamated and confidence of the exploited and many times betrayed masses of clothing workers.

Hillman's Maneuvers

Hillman's clever maneuvers made him the hero of the day, not only in the eyes of the general public as a valiant fighter against gangsterism and racketeering, but also to the labor world, to whom he appears as the great uncompromising leader of the great Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. In removing Orlofsky and Beckerman from their offices and suspending them from the organization on charges of racketeering and scabbery, Hillman has consciously endeavored to reach directly to the hearts of the tailors and cutters who have been victims of those officials and their evil practices and cherished dim hopes for their elimination. Hillman, the great conjurer, has succeeded in turning the tables and appearing himself as a champion of clean unionism. In his latest action, Hillman found

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COMPLETE THE EXPANSION FUND PROGRAM!

Our Weekly *Militant* is so manifestly superior from every point of view to the semi-monthly—and the reception with which it has met in the movement attests the fact—that no effort can be spared to maintain it and even more, to put a solid and unshakable foundation under it. We started the Weekly *Militant* again in what appeared to be a "bad period"—the combination of a crisis with the laxity of the summer months. In spite of that, the paper has been so well received that we have been able to get out every issue thus far without interruption.

This is not to say that the job has been an easy one. It was accomplished to a certain extent by the contributions made in the preceding period to our Expansion Program Fund. It will continue to appear regularly and with assurance if the Fund is brought to its conclusion in a swift spurt of energy on the part of all our comrades and sympathizers. A few hundred dollars are still needed to reach the goal of two thou-

sand dollars which was set originally. That it can be done and done quickly has already been demonstrated by the recent action of the New York branch which, in one evening, following an appeal, raised closed to another hundred dollars towards fulfilling its quota. The other branches, and friends of our movement who are not in the League itself, can do at least as well if every nerve is strained to complete the Expansion Program Fund quickly.

The extra effort can and should be made. The *Militant* is our most valuable instrument in building our movement for the purpose of clarifying and strengthening the revolutionary labor movement as a whole. It cannot fulfill this enormous task without the assurance of its regular, guaranteed appearance every week. A long step in this direction will be made if the comrades everywhere put their shoulders to the wheel to finish the campaign for the \$2,000

PICNIC

For the Benefit of Conference Fund

on Sunday, September 20, 1931, all day

at TIBBETTS BROOK PARK. Plot 8

Directions: Take the Woodlawn-Jerome Avenue subway to the end of the line. Then take street car or bus to Tibbetts Brook Park. Short walk to Plot 8, reserved for our picnic.

Auspices: New York branch, C. L. A.

All Invited

fund. A stronger *Militant* means a stronger foundation for the movement. A stronger *Militant* means an invincible weapon in our hands for the struggle we are conducting. The speedy and generous contribution of every comrade and friend is imperatively required.

Since the contributions listed in our last issue, we have received the following sums:

NEW YORK: H. Capella—4.00; M. Sterling—14.50; H. Stone—5.00; E. Field—10.00; A. Glotzer—2.00; G. Clarke—2.50; H. Milton—2.50; N. Berman—5.00; Wm. Edwards—2.00; LOS ANGELES: T. Boismert—5.00. MINNEAPOLIS BRANCH—10.30. PHILADELPHIA BRANCH (L. S.)—2.00. CHICAGO BRANCH—3.75. KANSAS CITY BRANCH—20.00. NEW HAVEN BR. (G. D.)—3.00. Total: \$89.55.

Total each reported in last issue from New York: \$27.00. Total previously reported: \$1,252.59. GRAND TOTAL TO DATE: \$1,369.14