

**WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE**

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## The War in Manchuria

### Chinese Masses Develop Struggle Against Exploiters

Japanese imperialism continues to trench itself more strongly in Manchuria, and pushes her military operations persistently and sharply. From the Chinese there is little or no resistance to the aggressions by the invaders. The slaughter of the victims of capitalist war increases. Taitihar, center for the Chinese Eastern Railway, jointly operated by China and Soviet Russia, has been seized by the Japanese. The latter are now massing troops for an attack on Chinchow, center of the South Manchurian Railroad, owned by the Japanese. With the prospective occupation of Chinchow by Japanese troops, Japan will have direct control of every city of consequence in Manchuria, except Harbin.

Japan's position now in Manchuria is powerful and is reflected in her adamant attitude toward proposals for a cessation of hostilities and arrangement of terms between Japan and China. Japan has set out to dominate Manchuria, and to date is succeeding very well. The United States, though not a member of the League, and the powers dominant in the League of Nations—Great Britain and France—are having a trying time to save the face of the League, so obviously important in the present Far Eastern war. There is talk of invoking economic measures against Japan, America's attitude on this appears to be negative.

#### The International Commission of Inquiry

At the moment, the League of Nations Council is in session and is getting ready to submit another proposal to Japan and China; both turned down the earlier suggestions for a cessation of war. The draft resolution calls for an International Commission of Inquiry into the Sino-Japan war; it concerns itself also with the evacuation, to be started at once, of Japanese troops from China and immediate stoppage of military activities.

This Commission also has in mind an inquiry into the internal affairs of China, thus laying an additional base for the spoliation and dismemberment of China by the various imperialist powers. Thus far there is no indication whether any or all of the proposals in the League of Nations' draft resolution will be acceptable either to Japan or China. The latter, as matters stand today, really has little choice in the matter, though stressing the evacuation of Manchuria as a sine qua non for the settlement of disputed issues. The Militant has gone into these issues before in detail.

The relations between Japan and the Soviet Union remain the same, despite the provocation by Japan with its occupation of Taitihar. As a matter of fact, the other imperialist powers—the United States, Great Britain and France—actually encourage acts and gestures of hostility toward the Soviet Union, and continue to plan ways and means for a united front of the capitalist nations against the Workers' Republic. They hope in due time to be able to wage war upon the Soviet Union in an effort for the latter's destruction. The Soviet Union thus far has refused to allow itself to be provoked by the imperialist powers. She pursues a policy of peace.

#### Japan Achieving Objectives

In the main, Japan has achieved her objectives in Manchuria. Anti-Japanese elements have been removed from high post in Manchuria. Her economic interests, possessions and capital investments are on a more solid footing than ever before; Japan feels that any settlement of the disputes will be largely in her favor and that any existing or Chinese government of the bourgeoisie to be will be tolerant of Japan's "rights" and interests and treaties.

The Chinese National Government continues to do nothing to stem the Japanese aggressions. There is much talk, but it signifies nothing, for there is only wind behind it all.

Dr. Alfred Sze, Chinese delegate to the League of Nations Council at Paris, knowing the flabbiness of his government, tries to pass the buck and walls at the bourgeois League because the "League has not lifted a finger in defense of covenants they have pledged to defend." The Nanking Government, knees bent in supplication, complains before the League Council that the Japanese have expropriated Chinese lands, levied illegal taxes, disrupted Chinese communications, interfered with local municipal administration in Manchuria, etc. While China protests that she will not pay a political price for Japan's evacuation of Manchuria or again sign another treaty embodying the notorious 21 points of 1915, Japan and the imperialist nations only give a mocking answer.

#### Kuo Min Tang Uniting Bourgeoisie

From Chiang Kai-Shek, Chinese hangman of the proletariat, comes high talk about going to the war front to lead the

struggle against Japan. He exhorts the Kuo Min Tang Congress for unity of all shades of the Kuo Min Tang and achieves reinstatement of expelled elements, among them Gen. Fng Yu-Hsiang and Yen Hsi-Shan, now re-elected to the Central Executive Committee of the Kuo Min Tang. The Fourth Congress of the Kuo Min Tang—the association of Chinese bourgeoisie, land-lords and militarists—meets in a tense atmosphere, feeling and knowing the rising wave of indignation and protest of the Chinese proletariat and peasantry against them.

In China itself the situation has become more favorable for the Left wing labor and Communist movement. The Chinese masses are indignant and resentful at the almost total failure of the Chiang Kai-Shek government to resist the Manchurian invasion by Japan. They are beginning to feel more surely, and correctly so, that the bourgeoisie of China will capitulate before and compromise the historical interests of the Manchurian and Chinese masses to the Japanese. At the same time, they steadily receive the blows of the Chinese bourgeoisie.

#### Chinese Tollers Organizing Resistance

The Chinese masses sharply resent the efforts of Japan to make what amounts to a colony of Manchuria. The proletariat is compelled to carry the brunt of the battles, not only its own, but that of its enemies and exploiters. As pointed out in *The Militant* hitherto, demonstrations and the economic boycott were involved at the outset of the present struggle. These are now on the increase, and the historical weapon of the Chinese, the economic boycott, in this instance of Japanese goods, is being linked up more and more with political manifestations against the Chinese bourgeoisie.

Class forces are once again more closely aligning and realigning themselves, both internationally and in China. The bourgeoisie of other countries are compelled to condone the Japanese aggression because of their own imperialist objectives. They have not been able to find a way out of the world economic crisis; the Manchurian events are but an extension of this economic crisis on the political and military arena. The basic combination is that of the capitalist powers against the Soviet Union and the international working class which is gradually organizing its forces for the defense of the Soviet Union and against international capitalism.

In Japan there has been an increase of protest by workers and workers' organizations against the Japanese government and its depredations upon Manchuria. In China the Chinese bourgeoisie are already calling upon "Left" fronts to mask their schemes and exploitation, in addition to attempting, as pointed out, to unify the Kuo Min Tang. The Kuo Min Tang of Canton, South China, is pressing Wang Chin Wei to the forefront as the "Left" representative. These maneuvers are some of the internal dangers that the Chinese proletariat faces and must meet.

Basic tasks remain as before: Unification of all the forces of Communism in China and internationally; revival and reorganization of the Chinese labor movement, oppressed mercilessly by Chinese capitalism; integration of the Communist forces in the United States in order to be able to develop a common and wide front of the American working class in struggle against the American bourgeoisie, and to achieve a mobilization of all possible forces in support and defense of the Soviet Union from aggressions from any quarter and against the growing menace of world war.

—M. A.

## \* OPEN FORUM \*

### What Next in England?

Friday November 27, 1931

Lecture by  
**JAMES P. CANNON**  
at the  
**Labor Temple**  
14th Street and Second Avenue  
**QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION**  
**ADMISSION: 25 Cents**  
**Unemployed Workers Admitted Free**  
Auspices: New York Branch Communist League of America (Opposition)

## The Marine Workers Tortured in Jail

### Defendants Plead Not Guilty to Charges in the New York «Dynamite Plot»

On Tuesday, November 17th, the New York newspapers came out with sensational stories about an alleged plot for "the wholesale bombing of barges in New York Harbor" which, it was claimed, had been frustrated by the arrest of five members of the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union. From the very first we viewed the reports of the affair with the deepest suspicion, all the more so since it was being represented as a "Communist drive against capitalistically owned property and a campaign in a war of Communists against conservative labor." (*The Times*.) Since the opposition of the Communist movement—all of its factions and groupings—to methods of individual violence and terrorism is clearly established and well known, this attempt to pass the affair off as a Communist action threw discredit on the whole story of the police. The fact that it is directed at the Boatmen's union was another suspicious feature. It had the bad smell of another "plant" such as has been encountered time and time again in the experience of the labor movement in America. In common with all class conscious workers we watched for further developments with the most intense interest.

Since we have had no association or direct acquaintance with the accused men we did not feel that the initiative in arranging a legal defense for them belonged to us, although we were of the opinion that they were entitled to that much in any case. The fact that the revolutionary labor movement does not advocate or practice the method of individual terrorism or sabotage is no reason to fly into a panic when the police find some dynamite or plant it. Neither should we take a police accusation against a group of workers as proof of guilt. And finally we should not turn our backs on workers in the hands of the police and leave them defenseless under any circumstances. These elementary principles of labor ethics and solidarity—to say nothing of the Communist class point of view—which ought to be taken for granted, are mentioned here only because they seem to have been forgotten in this case.

Therefore, when it became clear, after two days had elapsed since the arrest without anything having been done, the National Committee of the Communist League decided to come to the aid of the prisoners and make provisions for their legal defense. This was promptly accomplished, thanks to the help and cooperation of Carlo Tresca, editor of *Il Martello*. Since Wednesday a competent attorney has been looking after the legal interests of the accused marine workers. The facts are now coming to light and the fog of police propaganda in the capitalist press is beginning to lift. Everything that has happened since our investigation began has tended to confirm the first suspicious about the case.

Every working class organization, and above all the entire left wing of the movement, is duty-bound to support the defense of the arrested marine workers. As we see it, this is a principle question. The accused men have entered pleas of **not guilty**. The letter of Soderberg, printed in another column, shows that the police claim of "confessions" is the confession of their own stool-pigeon and provocateur. Even bourgeois justice grants a presumption of innocence until guilt has been proven at a trial. Can revolutionary workers do less?

From this point of view the strongest protest must be registered against the

outrageous comments of the *Daily Worker* on November 18th. There, instead of a protest against the attempt to convict the prisoners in the capitalist press before trial, we read a denunciation of them. Without lifting a finger to investigate the facts, without appealing to the workers to at least suspend judgment until the facts are known, they take the police announcements for granted and abandon the helpless prisoners to their fate, giving them a kick on the way. Of men who at that moment were being beaten and tortured by the police, they had only this to say:

"Soderberg, secretary of the Tidewater Boatmen's Union, whom the capitalist press calls a 'Red,' was expelled from the Communist Party for being a suspicious element and also from the Marine Workers' Industrial Union for disruptive and anti-working class activities. Trieger, Reilly and Bunker were expelled from the Marine Workers' Industrial Union as bad elements." They do not belong to our faction—do with them what you will! Shame on such people! They are without honor, without sentiments of solidarity, without even the labor ethics of an ordinary union member.

More than that. In their panic, in their rabbit-hearted cowardice, in their fool's delusion that they can save themselves by pointing the finger at others, they approach downright provocation against the I. W. W. and the Lovestone faction.

Consider this: "Treiger in his confession (who said he made a 'confession') stated that he was a member of the I. W. W. and was not a Communist nor did he believe in Communist political action, but in direct individual anarchist action."

And this: "The men arrested are not members of the Communist Party, and their actions are unknown to it, with the exception of one of them, who was expelled from the Party as a suspicious character and who has been since very openly working against the Party with the renegade Lovestone group."

It is not we who harbor dynamiters—it is the I. W. W. and the Lovestone group. You are welcome to blame it onto them, but leave us alone. With such a yellow and treacherous attitude we can have nothing whatever in common. Our differences with both the I. W. W. and the Lovestone faction are many and serious enough. We have spoken of them before and we will speak of them again. But these organizations cannot be accused, even by the remotest implication, of the advocacy or practice of individual terrorism. It is not true. And even if it were true we would not say so in such a moment. We are revolutionists, not informers.

We cannot believe that the Communist workers will let the position of the *Daily Worker* prevail as the policy of the Party. It is indeed a terrific revelation of the political and moral degeneration in the upper circles of the Stalinist faction. These processes of decay expose themselves with devastating swiftness in times of crisis and danger, when leaders have to act quickly; when they have no time to dissemble; when they have to show at once the contents of their minds and hearts. On the other hand the time of crisis and danger calls out the deepest class impulses of the revolutionary proletariat and impels them to assert their will in irresistible terms. An upheaval in the Communist ranks against the cowardly and treasonable attitude of the *Daily Worker* in the case of the marine workers will be the best thing that can happen for the good

of the movement and the honor of the Party. That will facilitate the organization of a strong working class front against the new "dynamite plot" and similar conspiracies of the ruling powers.

The militant workers must be aroused and organized to fight. The Communist League sees no factional issue in the case which involves the lives and liberties of the marine workers and endangers the entire Left wing labor movement. The matter necessitates the cooperation of all elements in the labor

movement, regardless of the differences which divide them, who are willing to stand together on this common class point of view. The labor movement shall not be terrorized and broken up by dynamite plots. The arrested marine workers shall not be abandoned and left defenseless. They shall not be railroaded without a fight. We hope to see the labor movement, and especially its entire Left wing and militant section, united in this fight.

—JAMES P. CANNON.

## A Letter From One of the Defendants

The Tombs, City,  
November 20, 1931

My dear Cannon:

I have just received your special delivery letter and have also seen Mr. Sabatino, the lawyer retained by you and others on our behalf. All four defendants, Bunker, Treiger, Reilly and myself discussed your letter and arrived at the decision that I was to write informing you that we accept your choice of counsel, and I am further instructed by my comrades to express our unanimous appreciation to you and those others interested and associated with you in securing counsel for us.

Yours was the first and only offer of assistance received by us since our arrest. It is very gratifying to note that you and other comrades have done what you have in order to see what can be done in the matter.

All the defendants, except the agent provocateur Hoyle, have entered pleas of **not guilty**.

As to our case, I cannot go into it in detail due to the fact that the trial is still pending. I can, however, show the role of a stool-pigeon and agent provocateur of the first class. Contentedly eating a sandwich and drinking his coffee while the police were beating me unconscious in their endeavor to force me to plead guilty. All known tortures were used by the police (beating of testicles with blackjacks, punching and squeezing of same, etc.) Yet this specimen of human degradation could sit there and laugh. He could go to Hickey (owner of the O'Boyle Towing Co. and complainant in the case) in open court in front of us all, ask for and receive \$10, on account for sending four men up the river for 40 years or more. This rat could do this and feel no pang of remorse. To such an extent is it possible for a human being to sink under this system of society.

Who is this Hoyle? What is his record? A conviction in Providence for larceny—not from anyone that could afford it, but from a worker. Fired off his last three jobs, not for organization activities but on account of drunkenness. Unable to get a job in the harbor he hit

on the idea of making easy money by trying to involve his own union comrades in some tangle. He came to me months ago with all kinds of propositions, insane proposals. I already once stopped him from committing a certain act that I considered would not be the thing to do.

This skunk—and as I write this in my cell, he paces the floor above, alone, slumped and despised by his fellow-prisoners—went to the police on Sunday afternoon and told them a tale of terror about to break loose on the waterfront, involving many others outside of those now in jail. He was told by the police to go back to the office of the union and watch for my appearance there because "if I was not arrested first I may be warned by other arrests, etc." (This statement admitted by the police.) On Monday noon, upon my arrival in the office, he came in, said "hello", went out around the corner where the dicks were waiting and conveniently got himself "arrested". Half an hour later I was arrested and in less than one hour Treiger was brought in and shown to me just long enough for me to see his swollen and blood-smear'd face (which was shown me for effect). And shortly after that Treiger and Bunker put in their appearance.

There is nothing quite as low, as miserable and despicable as an agent provocateur. He would step on his own mother's neck for a few filthy shekels. He would stoop to anything for gain. Take part of this rat's story. He stated, among other things, that the office since my election had taken the form of an armed camp, with me handing out guns to various bodyguards, etc. Yet, as far as I know, the only gun ever carried in that office was the gun of this stool-pigeon himself. And when I saw the gun I told him to leave the office and get rid of the gun. He later complained to me that his gun had been stolen. I merely mention this to show the character of this specimen of human degradation.

You are free to use all or part of this for publication in *The Militant*.

(Signed) John G. Soderberg.

Secretary-treasurer, I. T. B. U.

## Swaback Starts On National Tour

A national tour for comrade Arne Swaback on behalf of the National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition) has just begun. Comrade Swaback will cover the principal cities of the country, as far West as Kansas City. Public mass meetings as well as organization meetings with the Branches of the League will be held in the various localities. The tour is a result of previous plans of the Second National Conference and of numerous requests from the Branches to undertake such a tour immediately. The tour will begin in Boston with a lecture on "The Rise and Fall of the MacDonald Government" and will conclude in Philadelphia

on January 10th. The schedule of the national tour follows:

Boston, Mass.....	Nov. 27, 28, 29
Toronto, Ont. Canada.....	Dec. 2, 3
Detroit, Mich.....	Dec. 5, 6
Chicago, Ill.....	Dec. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
Springfield, Ill.....	Dec. 14
St. Louis, Mo.....	Dec. 15, 16
Kansas City, Mo.....	Dec. 18, 19, 20
Minneapolis, Minn.....	Dec. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
Chicago, Ill.....	Dec. 31, Jan. 1
Youngstown, Ohio.....	Jan. 3
Cleveland, Ohio.....	Jan. 4, 5
Philadelphia, Pa.....	Jan. 10.

#### EL SOVIET CONFISCATED

The third issue of *El Soviet* (10-29-31), weekly publication of the Left Opposition in Spain, has been confiscated by the Civil Governor of Barcelona. Numerous difficulties have been encountered in the distribution of *El Soviet* due to the suppressions by the reactionary socialist-republican government. 3,000 copies of the third issue had been printed when the confiscation occurred.

The first and second numbers were also delayed in distribution by interference of the authorities. Various subterfuges are employed to prevent Communist propaganda, such as refusal to stamp the copies, as required by law; at other times the governor delays authorization definitely.

Upon receipt of knowledge of the confiscation of *El Soviet*, the Communist League of America (Opposition), New York branch made arrangements for an entertainment for the benefit of *El Soviet*. This local affair will take place on Saturday, December 5th at 84 East 10th Street, the League headquarters. Workers are cordially invited to attend. Refreshments will also be served.

## Rail Bosses Drive for Wage Cuts

Step by step the capitalist forces are mobilizing their heavy artillery to make certain of a wage cut on the railroads. This important industry is one of the remaining strongholds of the pre-crisis working class standard which now, in the view of the aristocracy of finance, must be battered down at all cost. Yet in face of this, there is no visible action whatever of the unions preparing to meet the onslaught.

Individually the railroad workers have long ago been gradually put on reduced rations by the "economies" effected by the roads. Increasing use of heavier material, heavier rolling stock and longer trains have brought about constantly reduced forces and a greater output per man. This is vividly substantiated by the reports of the unions. According to statements made by the president of the Brotherhood of Engine and Firemen before the La Follette Senate subcommittee, labor saving machinery during the last few years has displaced about 250,000 workers, and since the beginning of the crisis, the owners of the railroads have dropped an additional 500,000 employees. Many important regulations gained during years of struggle have long ago been lost in practically all of

the railroad crafts, and some of them have lost the eight hour day once in operation throughout the railroads.

#### How the Capitalist Pressure Works

The first direct step in the assault upon the present wages was taken by the railroad owners in their appeal to the Interstate Commerce Commission for a 15% rate increase. Their appeal was predicated upon a denial, which promptly followed, to lay the basis for a wage cut. No sooner had the denial been rendered, then several roads began some, by directly announcing wage cuts; others by making a pretense of negotiations with the unions, with the stage all set of course and proper pressure provided. The Canadian National Pacific lines demanded a wage cut. The New York Central lines, the largest single system in this country, demanded a 10% wage cut, to be voluntary and to remain in effect for one year; evidently to prepare for further cuts after that.

The New York Central Lines alone have reduced their working force from a total of 170,061 on January 31, 1930 to 128,448 on February 15, 1931.

Finally there is now additional press-

**Urgent!**  
**Help The Militant**

The regular appearance of *The Militant* this week is due to emergency relief on the part of the New York Branch of the Communist League. It is imperative that a greater financial response be received from other sections of the country. There has been a beginning, but insufficient to meet the requirements, already scaled down to the minimum, of *The Militant* budget.

We are compelled to continue our public appeal for financial assistance. Will YOU HELP to maintain the WEEKLY MILITANT? Our appeal this time is brief but absolute.

SEND FUNDS IMMEDIATELY

**THE MILITANT**  
84 East 10th Street,  
New York, N. Y.

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