Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition] Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second class mail matter, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

VOLUME IV, NO. 35 [WHOLE NO. 94]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1931

PRICE 5 CENTS

The N.Y. 'Dynamite Plot'

Marine Union Supports Defendants

The defense of Soderberg, Bunker and a public mass meeting around the first Trajer, indicted and facing long prison terms in the New York "dynamite plot" was put squarely before the working class as a labor case by the action taken at last Sunday's meeting of the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union. At this meeting of the union, of which Soderberg is secretary and the other two defendants are members, a resolution was adopted to stand on the basis of the statement sent from prison by the three members and to defend them against the frameup. The meeting endorsed the actions taken by the Marine Workers' Defense Committee to defend the brothers in prison and pledged full cooperation and support in the work until the prisoners are freed. Carter Hudson, Public Marine Defense Meet a member of the Executive Board of the union, is the chairman of the defense Committee. The meeting at which the resolution was adopted was presided over by John Stoat, president of the organi-

marine workers registered progress all along the line during the past week. The bership to include representatives of all needed. tendencies in the labor movement willing Progressive Labor Action, Socialist defense. Party, I. L. D., Road to Freedom Group, and to various trade unions sympathetic to the defense.

of the year with representative speakers. The first public discussion of the case

occurred at the Labor Temple last Fri day night when James P. Cannon spoke on "The New York 'Dynamite Plot'-a conspiracy against union organization in the New York Harbor", under the auspices of the Communist League. Comrade Cannon spoke on the same theme again on Sunday night before the I. W. W. forum. In each case the audience responded warmly to the appeal and pledged solidarity and support to the prisoners in their fight against the frame-up.

Left Opposition Holds First

Workers representing various sections of the labor movement-marine workers, members of the I. W. W. and Communist Party members, etc.-were present at the Friday evening Forum of the New The work of defense of the frame-up York branch of the Communist League to hear comrade James Cannon tell the unemployed) and will also approach railroad owners emerged victorious. Defacts concerning the "Dynamite Plot" in those friends of mine who are fortunate spite the failure to receive a ready condefense committee formed at the request the N. Y. Harbor. After reviewing the of the defendants held a meeting Wed- various dynamite plants and frame-ups could be persuaded to support a revolu- Railway employers are confident of ennesday, December 2 at the office of II in labor history, in which the labor move-Martello, 82 East 10th Street, where ment has taken a traditional stand of temporary headquarters of the commit- solidarity with the victims of the ruling tee have been established. The meeting class, he expressed surprise and indigadopted a program of systematic activ-| nation that the latest dynamite frameity in behalf of the arrested marine up had as yet not brought out the comworkers and decided to broaden its mem- plete working class defense that is

Because of the failure of the Comto cooperate on this issue of common munist party and I. L. D. to take up interest and concern to the whole work- the defense of the jailed victims-Sodering class movement. The secretary of berg, Bunker and Trajer-the Communthe committee, Carlo Tresca, was auth- ist League of America (Opposition) had, orized to send invitations to cooperate in in collaboration with Carlo Tresca, the work of the committee to the Com- formed a defense committee which will munist Party, I. W. W., Conference for see that the men get a working class

An appeal for solidarity of the entire labor movement on behalf of the arrested men was called for. Next Friday even-The meefing decided to issue the state- ing, Dec. 11, at the Labor Temple, 2nd ment of the committee on the case, which Ave. & 14th Street, comrade Cannon will has already been sent out in mimeograph continue his series of lectures on the form, as a four page leaflet for wide viewpoint of the Left Opposition on the distribution. It was also decided to hold labor and political field.

Help The Militant

We are endeavoring to hang on with the Weekly Militant from week to week until a wider response is obtained to maintain The Militant. It is impossible, however, to say how much longer The Militant can continue its weekly issuance. We again call upon our supporters and sympathizers to increase their financial support of our press.

The importance of the Weekly Militant is keenly felt by our supporters. This is evidenced from the excerpts of a letter from a Minneapolis comrade and is typical of many received from various parts of the country.

" ' ' ' I realize The Militant is in urgent needs of funds. The thought that The Militant may be forced to go back to a semi-monthly basis is not a pleasant one, as in my opinion it is the only paper available to the American workers that gives a true Marxian analysis on the events of international importance and is of particular value to the revoluproletariat.

"I will endeavor to have my subscription paid up by the 15th of this month. sumably nothing was settled at these (I am one of the ten or more millions enough to be employed and who I think sent from the Brotherhood leaders, the tionary paper."

of The Militant as a weekly, as well as for the success of the Left Opposition, I remain.

Comradely yours, WILLIAM CURRAN.

This is the spirit and understanding that have made it possible to build our organization, the Communist League and steadily to expand its field of activities. Further and immediate expansion is again necessary, among which is the Opposition drive for the issuance of a Jewish and a Greek paper, following closely upon the successul start of the youth paper, Young Spartacus.

The Militant is the central point of activity and direction of the Left Opposi- way, one of the largest roads, on Dec. of the capitalist class," in this case par- vice employees work only from four to tion. By all means the Weekly Militant 1 proposed that its union employees ac ticularly, the heads of the Brotherhoods. eight months a year. Thousands of must be maintained. Will you assist? cept a voluntary 15% cut; other west- They expect the latter, however they TODAY! Send all funds to:

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

URGENT! Railroads in Wage Cut Drive

Mobilize Railroad Workers in Struggle for Six Hour Day

Eastern Railway presidents and the leaders of the four Brotherhood unions held a four day conference in New York during the last week of November. A deadlock on all important questions was those long, drawn-out investigation comthe immediate outcome, neither group of- missions which always produce nothing fering at the time to accept the other's for the workers). This stand of the proposals. The Railroad Executives received a report of the conferences on November 24, but decided to defer further action until after Dec. 8, when 1,500 Railway Labor Union heads are to meet in Chicago to receive official reports on the New York conferences, and to take and development of militant unionism in up the entire railroad situation. The employers had demanded that the railroad workers voluntarily accept a 10% wage cut, and thus avoid the necessity for them to resort to action under the Rail- ment caused by extreme exploitation, the way Labor Act which would delay a de- speed-up system and technological imcision for at least a year. The heads of provements - now group themselves tionary vanguard of the English-speaking the Brotherhoods, on the other hand, around the central issue and struggle for proposed their plans for the stabiliza- the six hour day. tion and increase of employment. Predrawn-out conferences, but in reality the forcing at least a 10% wage cut, and feel "Hoping for the continued publication that they will shortly have the support and agreement of the Brotherhood heads

The Wage Cuts Begin

for this immediate objective.

Georgia & Florida Railroad have already accepted a 10% cut beginning December The publication, Business Week (12-2-31), remarks that "it is significant that this agreement was approved by the grand officers of the Big Four brotherhoods." The railway bosses cannot but regard this as a precedent and forerunner of national railroad labor policy and are proceeding acordingly.

this road there prevails the B. & O. plan, the what remains of unionized labor union employees, which in every instance, must have no doubts of that. where it has been introduced, has devitalized or destroyed the character and militancy of genuine labor unionism.

the very existence and standards of the railroad workers, both the employed and unemployed, the Eastern Railroad owners, expressing themselves publicly through Daniel Willard, President of the Baltimore & Ohio, took a stone-like stand. Theirs was an attitude that con- there in their fight against wage reduc- 000,000 more revenue from the same templated a wreck and destruction of tion, they could not let them down be- amount of labor" have been granted by what remains of the railroad unions and fore the Dominion arbitration board is- the Interstate Commerce Commission, their hard-carned rights and gains, unless sued its findings. The other is that, be- but the gluttons demand more off the the railroad workers will be able to cause of the temper of the men, the labor backs of the workers. wage an effective struggle for their main- executives-regardless of what they

Bosses Sharply Reject Six Hour Day

To the proposal of union labor for a six hour day as a partial remedy for unemployment in the railroad industry, the Railway Executives categorically re-

without reduced compensation." Con commend the appointment of a commisof applying this principle to the different classes of employees."

» OPEN FORUM «

Current Events

Labor Temple 14th Street andd Second Avenue

Unemployed Workers Admitted Free League of America (Opposition)

employers in the six hour day is a direct challenge to the very existence of what remains of union railroad labor. The struggle for the six hour day and five day week, without reduction in pay is the essence and kernel of the existence the railroad industry. All other issues -amalgamation of the unions, organization of the unorganized, preservation of seniority rights, alleviation of unemploy-

Six Hour Day Is Rallying

It is in the militant fight of railroad boiled stand of the railroad owners for labor for the six hour day that it will an immediate wage-cut of at least 10%. be possible to arouse all the railroad Railway Age (11-28-31) enters into deworkers, organized and unorganized, em- tails on the various phases of this conployed and unemployed, skilled and unskilled for a united struggle against the railway bosses. Only the rank and file of the railroad bosses and the readiness of the railroad workers led by the mili- to yield of the Brotherhood heads, whose tants and Left wingers will be ready to spokesman was D. B. Robertson, presiinitiate the necessary steps in prepara- dent of the Locomotive Firemen and tion for railroad struggles that will be- Enginemen. The train service employees of the gin on single roads but which will rapidly extend their scope. Upon the supine present day union leaders, they cannot rely at all to defend their interests. These misleaders of labor will "negotiate" and sell out the rank and

Brotherhood Heads Are the Allies of the Bosses

so, that they have allies in the ranks Conference, says, in part: The Chicago and North Western Rail- of labor, that is, "the labor lieutenants ern railrads are expected to make simi- plead or pretend otherwise now, employlar demands in the next few days. Un- ees accept the owners' demands for imion officials were scheduled to meet in mediate wage cuts. The railroad owners Chicago on Dec. 8 to take up the entire know their union leaders. In addition, railroad situation. No comment as yet they are preparing swiftly for any evenhas been made by the union leaders on tualities, and that includes, as their the C. & N. W. Railway proposals. On foremost objective, the destruction of that is, between the railroads and the on the railroads. The railroad workers

How supremely confident the railroad bosses are concerning the union heads, and how lightly they regard them, is On all fundamental issues involving put simply and bluntly by Business Week (12-2-31):

"There are 2 reasons why the labor

This declaration is plain, hard and themselves may think about a wage cut challenging: labor shall receive no con- -want to compel the managements to cessions; the matter can not any longer carry the wage reduction proposal to the even be discussed (not even another of Board of Meditation where they will show their hand."

Preparing Sell-Out Through Board of Mediation

What could be clearer? Already a despatch from Ottawa, Canada reports that the application of the railways (for a wage cut) has been granted". The "Board of Conciliation" has acted; now the union heads will try to "conciliate" and convince the men that the wage cut must be accepted because of the "special conditions". And before the "Board of Mediation" in the United States, "they will show their hand."-the hand of agreement with the bosses' demands.

All the other negotiations and discussions that took place at the New York conference between the Eastern Railroad Executives and the labor representatives, loom up as secondary beside the hardference. Above everything else, the reports demonstrate the persistent demands

Conditions of Rallroad

What, briefly, are the conditions prevailing among railroad workers today? More than one-third of the employees in the industry are unemployed. Only part-time employment exists for thousands of the men. The statement of railroad labor's situation and requirements, as set forth in the labor manifesto pre-The railroad owners feel, and rightly sented by the railroad unions to the

> maintenance men (in the shops and ou the right of way) are idle for a substantial part of the year. In the months of employment their wages equal only

At the same time, comparing 1910 and 1930, "the employees of today handles over 50% more traffic and produces twice as much revenue over labor cost." With this result of the speed-up system, the improvement of technique and the increased exploitation, the railroad owners still demand a wage cut from the employees. From the meek shall be taken. The railroad workers are being made right along to bear greater burdens so that the railroad barons may also reexecutives could not accept the proposal ceive dividends in times of capitalist for a voluntary cut in wages. One was crisis, not to mention their swollen prothat after sending men to Canada to fits of the past. Railroad increases in stiffen the necks of the rail employees traffic rates which will "produce \$125,-

(Continued on page 4)

The Exploitation of the New York Harbor Boatmen

when some of us connected with the or- periences of Trajer are typical of all be aboard means he misses his boat, ganization of these workers were ar. the rest. Sanitary conditions there are which never fails to mean that he also rested on a frame-up charge of dynam- none. When a bath is needed, it is has missed his job. And when his job iting some of these old floating coffins. taken by using a pail of river water- is gone, his "home" is gone too, because Very few workers even in other branches if you have the pail. The cabin is that dirty, foul-smelling and dark cabin of the Marine Industry realized the ex- the dining-room, bed-room, bath-room, was the only home he possessed, and tent of exploitation of the barge cap-

There are employed approximately 4,000 men in the New York harbor in this particular industry. Their wages ranged from \$110.00 per month down as low as \$65.00 per month. Many companies pay nothing to the captain when the boat is empty; others pay, a dollar a day when light, while some pay straight wages, loaded or light. The O'Boyle Towing Co., for instance, (and incidentally the complainant in the frame-up to keep us in prison and railroad us for life) is of the "dollar a day" type. This company also has a habit of having one captain take care of 4 or 5 boats, even when these boats are loaded and waiting for consignment. When these boats are loaded, the company receives anywhere from 7 to 14 dollars per day for each boat as long as they are loaded; yet they cannot afford to have a man aboard. Due to lack of real militant organization among these workers, conditions have grown so bad that hundreds of boats today in New York harbor are being taken care of no pay in any shape or form while waiting for cargo. The remuneration is that of being allowed to sleep on-the boat and live there if they can steal, beg or borrow something to live on.

Miserable and Degrading Living Conditions

What are the living conditions on these boats? Take the boat on which William Trajer, one of the defendants was employed. Trajer, an active and militant union man, had been out of work for months due to his union activities, when he got this job. Naturally he had no money and the only clothes he possessed were those he wore. He came abroad this boat and found a cabin-dark, foul-smelling and overridden with bed bugs and roaches. The total furnishing of that hole consisted of one stove, one table and one soap box that was used for a chair-no bed no blankets, no cooking utensils. He slept on the damp floor. He went out and begged a coffee pot and some coffe

to put in it. His pay day was 15 days off and in the meantime he was compelled to beg

toilet or what have you.

are compelled to bring up their families. is expected to be everything from a deck Five, six or more children is nothing un- hand to an authority on naval architecusual. What chance these children have ture. If the boat leaks too much, he to obtain even the most elementary edu- is expected to get down there and stop cation can be imagined when one takes the leak. But if he wants to keep his into consideration the fact that the boat job, he had better not present a bill moves from-say Port Reading today to to the company for materials bought to Harlem River, from Harlem River next repair that leak. He is expected to alday to Perth Amboy and so on. Natur- ways keep the boat painted and in ally the children cannot attend school trim, but can't ask for more than a under these conditions, as the pay is not gallon of paint every year or so, or enough to allow the captain to rent a he is accused of selling the paint. place ashore for the wife and children so that the latter may attend school. The result can be imagined. The child is born on the river, grows up on the river and dies on the river. The only miserable life where the most elementary education such a child gets is to become an expert boat captain when he is grown are denied them. There was no escape. up and to serve the boss well for little or no pay. The life of a boat captain's girl is to grow up and become a good boat captain's wife and in turn help produce some more prospective boat captains and boat captain's wives. Born in misery. Live in unbelievable misery and and kept floating by men who receive poverty. Die in misery, poverty and suffering. That is the outlook and life for these members of our class.

> The working conditions on these boats are on a par with all other conditions in the industry. No 8-hour day here. No over-time pay. No regular house at any time. Load the boat in the daytime back to their fleating coffins called boats, and tow up the canal at night time. A boat captain is expected to be on the

Our National Tour

The National Tour of comrade Arne Swabeck is proceeding well. Full reports will be given in the next issue of The Militant. The remainder of the schedule follows:

Springfield, Ill. Dec. 14.

۵ļ	St. Louis, Mo Dec. 15, 16.
P	St. Louis, Mo Dec. 15, 16. Kansas City, Mo Dec. 18, 19, 20.
1,	Minneapolis, Minn Dec. 24, 25, 26,
e	27, 28, 29.
t	Chicago, Ill Dec. 31 and
e	January 1st
-	Youngstown, Ohio January 3
n	Cleveland, Ohio January 4, 5.
	Philadelphia, Pa January 10.
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Very little, if anything, has even been from other captains -- a loaf of bread; boat at all hours and be ready when said about, the harbor boatmen, a branch here, a little coffee there, a few potatoes the tow boat blows the whistle to get of the Marine industry until recently, somewhere else and so forth. The ex- out and fmake the tow". Failure to he possesses it just so long as the boss On the majority of these boats, captains allowed him and no longer. A captain

Men and women are compelled to live for years under conditions described back to their floating coffins called boats. means of escaping this degrading and principles of decency and human rights Nowhere to go. There remained but one

way-to Organize. The Union Is Formed

The union was formed. It had its flood and its ebb. Up and down. A struggle with the bosses or their hirelings. Struggle against ignorance, bred and fostered through the living conditions and general environment. Step by step these things were overcome, but a struggle at every step. The union gradually grew. It grew into fighting form. It hit back. Won a few concessions but after a while lost them again. Men went some disillusioned, some with all the fight taken out of them; others seemed not to care any more and the bosses, especially the type of O'Boyle and Hourshan, took advantage of this situation and slashed the wages still more.

But there was a small body of men who had not yet given up hope. A small bdoy of men that realized that we could Friday, December 11, 1931 only regain our lost ground by again organizing, and organizing in such a way that when the time came we would be ready to fight; we would stop the retreat. From defense we would take the offensive. The union came to life again. It gradually grew. Already one of the companies was listening to the rumbling undercurrent of revolt among its captains hire nothing but union men and hire them out of the union hall. Another Auspices: New York Branch Communist case. (Continued on page 2)

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CANADIAN COMMUNIST TRIAL WALKER AND MOONEY RAILROAD WAGE CUTS

Lecture by JAMES P. CANNON

QUESTIONS and DISCUSSION ADMISSION: 25 Cents

THE ECONOMIC MONTH The tenative signs of business recovery. Sterling exchange reached a new low

In answer to a questionnaire addressed to several hundred bankers, about from 139,200 tons to 158,800 tons. 79% said they did ont expect a recovery in business before next Spring, about 21% not before next Fall. Another round coming more and more acute. From of wage-cuts is in prospect, as capitalism | September 18, just before the abandonknows no other way out of its imme- ment of the gold standard, to Nov. 11, diate crisis than a vicious assault on the general level of prices in England the standards of living of the working went up 10%, the prices of primary

That capitalism is today a retrogressive instead of a progressive force is illustrated by the dispute now going on between a group of associations of Brazilian planters and the Brazilian government. The government wants to destroy 12 millions bags of coffee, all picked, transported, packed, and ready to ship; the growers are holding out for 18 mil- such a costly victory that it must be lion bags. We can be sure that the retained no matter what happens.

which began to appear in October, fol- of \$3.25 to the pound this week, the lowlowing a temporary inflationist policy of est since the pound were off the gold "We have found ourselves unable to the Federal Reserve banks, have been standard and within a few cents of the accept your conclusion that the six hour practically eliminated. Wheat, silver all-time low of \$3.14 reached in 1920 day is necessary and that it must be and crude oil have gone back in price before the "stabilization" In August instituted in order to absorb the exist- toward the low points reached in the the MacDonalds and Snowdens were ing number of experienced employees first week of October. Steel production, clamoring for reductions in the dole and which reached as high as 32% of cap in the wages of civil servants, painting sequently, contines President Willard's acity a few weeks ago, is now back to dismal pictures of the downfall of Briletter, "we would be unwilling to re- 29%. Automobile production for Oct- tish imperialism if the pound should ober amounted to 80,142 cars and trucks, collapse. Now they are jubilant over sion to determine the ways and means or about the average monthly product the increased stimulation to industrial tion for 1915. Bankruptcies for October activity caused by the depreciation of totalled 2,362, compared with 1,936 in the pound. British iron and steel pro-September and 2,124 in October, 1930. duction went up in October, compared Railroad car-loadings for the week of to September, the first time in six months Nov. 21 amounted to 653,000 cars, against that any improvement has been shown. 779,000 in the corresponding week of Pig iron production gained from 248,000 tons in September to 284,000 tons in October, and exports of iron and steel

Meantime the question of wages, salaries and the amount of the dole is beproducts 19%. Any worker who received the same amount of pounds for his week's work got in effect a 10% cut in wages. On top of this the National Laborites insisted only a few weeks ago that the abandonment of the gold standard would not make any difference to prices of goods in England, and Mac-Doald during the election campaign said that the 10% cut in the dole had been

large plantation-owners will be properly The rising prices will bring the quescompensated by the government in any tion of economic class struggles to the forefront in the very near future, and

(Continued on page 2)