

A STATEMENT OF THE MARINE WORKERS' DEFENSE COMMITTEE

(Continued from page 1)

tion, party, group and tendency to participate in the common work on an equal basis. The committee now contains representatives of two Communist groups, the C. P. I. A., the I. W. W., the Young People's Socialist League, trade unions, Anarchist groups and other organizations. The I. L. D. and the Communist Party are absent only because they refused specific and repeated invitations to participate.

That record alone, made in the face of many difficulties in a few weeks' time, could stand as a refutation of any attack against the committee. But there is one more accomplishment, and the most important one of all: The Marine Workers Defense Committee established the fact that no worker's no matter how obscure he may be, who falls into the hands of the class enemy shall be deserted and left without means of defense. Those who try to infringe this principle and deny assistance to a persecuted worker—as the Communist party and the I. L. D. did in this case—will find a defense movement arising spontaneously without them. This is the greatest significance of the work of the present committee and its strongest appeal to the honest workers of all organizations.

HOW THE DISRUPTERS ACTED AT THE TIME OF THE ARREST

When the Daily Worker comes forward in its issue of January 25th with the statement that the defense committee has a policy of "betrayal of the class struggle and of the defendants particularly" it invokes a reminder of its own policy and conduct, and that of the I. L. D. in the case. The people who now proclaim themselves the only champions of the defendants, who offer to "defend" them even against their own committee spoke in a slightly different manner in the days following the arrest—when Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer were helpless in the hands of the police without influential friends' money, attorneys or any means of defense. Here is what the Daily Worker wrote on November 18th, two days after the arrest:

"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 activities. Trajer, Reilly, and Bunker were expelled from the Marine Workers Industrial Union as bad elements." At the same time the Young Worker stated: "Soderberg is a stool pigeon."

Then, when personal friends of the accused men went to the I. L. D. for aid, it was refused. The I. L. D. refused to have anything to do with the "renegades", the "suspicious elements", the "stool pigeon", the people who had been "expelled from the Communist party". And from Nov. 18th until Jan. 25th, the Daily Worker never mentioned the case by a single word! It requires a supreme cynicism and an unbounded contempt for the intelligence of the workers for those who made such a record in the case 'to come now' two and one-half months later, on the very eve of the trial and pose as the only real friends of the prisoners. They come too late!

THE UNITED FRONT POLICY OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE

The Marine Workers Defense Committee was formed only after the I. L. D. and all other defense agencies had refused or failed to intervene. It was formed at the express written request of all three defendants who had no other means of defense and nowhere else to turn. The first nucleus of the committee, at its first meeting, adopted a policy of united front and invited all elements in the labor movement to join and cooperate. In its broadcasted statement on the case, published in various papers and in leaflet form, it stated: "It is the aim of the committee to broaden its membership to include representatives of all tendencies in the labor movement". On that line it sent invitations to the Communist party and the I. L. D. On December 5th, on December 18th, and again on December 29th, it addressed letters to the I. L. D. asking for cooperation in the struggle to arouse the whole labor movement for a united fight. All these invitations were ignored. The request for a speaker to represent the I. L. D. at the public mass meeting was unanswered.

THE ATTEMPT TO DISRUPT THE LEGAL DEFENSE ON THE EVE OF THE TRIAL

Rejecting all appeals to help in the organization of the workers' solidarity movement, the I. L. D. resorted to an insidious campaign, through its lawyers, to demoralize the prisoners and induce them to change counsel at the last moment. Taking advantage of statements of the prisoners that they wanted the help of the I. L. D. as well as that of all other organizations—which was likewise the policy of the committee—the I. L. D. lawyers tried by every means to induce the prisoners to sign a statement repudiating their defense committee and the legal counsel employed by it and to turn the case over to them. When the nature and seriousness of the charges against the marine workers is taken into consideration—charges of hav-

ing committed specific crimes which carry a penalty on conviction of as much as forty years in prison, with an agent provocateur and perjured evidence to conduct the trial, and substitute new lawyers whose specialty is minor cases in the Magistrate's Court—is that not playing with the lives of men? Is it any wonder that the prisoners who would be glad to have their help if it were given in good faith, recoiled again, at this infamous proposal with the bitterest indignation and refused to talk with them any further?

It was in answer to these machinations that all three defendants sent their telegram to the mass meeting and declared: "We reaffirm our fullest and unswerving confidence in the committee handling our defense and appeal to all workers everywhere to give the committee its fullest cooperation and assistance". On the basis of that express declaration of the prisoners themselves, which is only a restatement of what they have said on every occasion when the matter was called into question, the defense committee resolves to continue its work and calls on the I. L. D. to cease its disruption.

THE FRAUDULENT ISSUE OF "CLASS STRUGGLE DEFENSE"

Condemned by their record in the case from its inception, their dishonest maneuvers repulsed by the prisoners, and their own rank and file members protesting against their policy—the disrupters seek to justify themselves with a final argument. They want "all workers and workers' organizations to fight this case along class lines, along the lines of mass defense". This argument against the Defense Committee is just as false, just as dishonest, as all they have said and done in the case. The Defense Committee has worked from the beginning to convince the workers that this case is an issue of the class struggle, and by no means an ordinary criminal case. Its chief activity has been to organize the united front of labor to protest against the frame-up and defeat it. It was for this aim that the cooperation of the I. L. D. was requested in written form three different times. But instead of cooperation to build a united mass movement of the workers the I. L. D. offered unqualified lawyers to replace the counsel already retained. At the eleventh hour they promise a workers' mass movement, and begin with an attempt to disrupt the movement that has already been organized while they kept silent. Their own statement in the Daily Worker testifies to the effectiveness of this movement. When they say in this statement that the "International Labor Defense considers this case as a direct attack upon the workers in the marine industry" they are only repeating what they learned from the publicity material of the Defense Committee. What they have yet to learn is that all workers have a common interest in repulsing the attack and that they must fight unitedly to that end.

The Defense Committee appeals to the honest workers of all sections of the labor movement to join and support this united fight and condemn the attempts to disrupt it. If Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer do not stand alone before the court, as they stood in the first days after their arrest, it is due to the principle of labor solidarity which called the Defense Committee into existence. Labor solidarity is the best, and—in the final analysis—the only real defense of persecuted workers who fall into the hands of the class enemy. Those who violate this principle, who put narrow factional interests above it, who seek to disrupt the movement, organized on that basis, are acting against the interests of the class. A defeat of these disrupters will be a victory for the class and for all class war prisoners, now and in the future.

Build a stronger movement of workers solidarity for the imprisoned marine workers!

Defend all class war prisoners regard less of their views or affiliations! Collect funds to help the defense of Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer!

MARINE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE
82 East 10th St.,
New York City

DANCE
For the Benefit of the Imprisoned Marine Workers
Bunker — Soderberg — Trajer
at the

STUYVESANT CASINO
Second Avenue and 9th St.
Friday Evening, February 12th.
Auspices of the

Marine Workers Defense Committee
Show your solidarity with these victims of the frame-up system. Come and bring your friends.
ADMISSION: 35 Cents

The R. F. C. Ruse

(Continued from page 1)

three billion would have to stand a loss of approximately 42%; two and one half billion losses of 18%. The merchant and worker unable to pay the high rents of 1928 and 1929, the real estate owner unable to pay the interest on the mortgage and the same with the farmer; the bank unable to pay its depositors. This is the picture presented.

In the field of railroad bonds the situation is exactly as serious. More than 70% of all railroad bonds are held by banking and similar institutions. The severe decline in the net income of railroads, dropping from \$1,284,000,000 in 1929 to the low of \$534,000,000 for 1931, brought about a consequent decline in the railroad bonds. In 1931 alone, to say nothing of the sharp decline of the last few months of 1932, railroad bonds have experienced a decline of 25 to 50 percent. Of course there are various remedies that are being experimented with now, to increase railroad income. Namely: the rate increase recently granted, will succeed in bringing in an additional profit of \$100,000,000; the second, if put into reality, another \$200,000,000; while the amount of bond interest not being earned now is estimated at \$75,000,000. The holder of railroad bonds and securities might put much hope in these prospective increases, were it not for the realization that very little replacing of fixed capital, very little necessary repairs to locomotives and cars has been done during the past year. Were the actual balance sheet to be drawn, it would be much worse than it now appears; for money that should have been used for replacement purposes, has been used for dividend purposes to the stock and bond holders. The proposed savings of \$300,000,000 is already being balanced against replacement of worn equipment. Only a substantial increase in the total haulage of the railroad of the country can return to them a portion of the income of the prosperity days. This increase in haulage is dependent upon a general improvement on the business situation as a whole.

The third unpalatable factor is the defaulting on both the European and the Latin-American markets. The vastness of this item is impossible to determine, but when we consider the countries defaulting—countries in which the American banker has been investing his funds for the past decade, an inkling of the size of the canvas can be obtained. In a recent statement of the Chase National Bank, it was pointed out that approximately 3 1/2% of the total resources of the bank consisted of German credits (with Germany on the verge of defaulting). Adding to the above the loans to the S. A. and European defaulting countries, brings the total to a far from negligible item on the asset sheet. A general all-around, world wide refusal to pay, as seems to be imminent, would seriously impair the condition of the American banking institutions.

The above are the conditions that the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corp. is to remedy. Even the leading financiers of the country are very skeptical as to its value. "Sixty billion dollars in values lost during the past three years cannot be repaid by two billion." The *Annalist* of January 15, 1932 uses the phrase "There is no real remedy for this depreciation in security value, except the restoration of earning power". In referring to the recent measure they say, "the business depression cannot be cured by such measures." Recognizing the truth of the above statements, one must search elsewhere for the explanation of the creation of this present Corporation.

A DOLE FOR BANKERS—STARVATION FOR WORKERS

The bill has been described as a "two billion dollar bill to relieve bankers' mistakes." The explanation of the above is easily seen by a careful reading of the measure as passed. The initial capital is to consist of \$500,000,000; the remaining 1 1/2 billion is to be made up through the sale of bonds, but and this is the all inclusive but, "the said obligations are to be fully and unconditionally guaranteed as to interest and principle by the United States," by the government. In other words, the U. S. government has agreed to buy two billion dollars worth of depreciated and worthless paper from the banks and railroads. The proper title for the measure should have been "The Bank Subsidy Bill of 1932".

All this by itself is nothing new. Big business repeatedly attempts to secure the aid of the class as a whole for its own particular enterprises. The whole campaign to dump the reparations into the Atlantic revolves around the question of aid by the capitalist government to a particular group—the bankers. The present plan has exactly a similar character.

The latest patch has been applied to our industrial and financial system. Two billion dollars have been diverted from the taxes to aid the bankers and railroads in their present "sore plight". Although the measure may have a temporary effect, there is obviously no real remedy for this depreciation in security values except the restoration of earning power. The trend out of the present crisis must occur in the industrial field, in the field of manufacture. Without a pick-up for industry as a whole one can expect to begin hearing before long of a

Spain's Bourgeoisie on the Offensive

This is the second of a series of articles on the situation in Spain by comrade Max Shachtman who recently returned from an extended visit to such centers as Madrid and Barcelona.—Ed.

Have the workers gained politically from the establishment of the Republican-Socialist coalition government which came into power after the overthrow of the monarchy last April? What rights have they been accorded? To what extent do these "rights" conform with the high-sounding phrase "the democratic republic of all the workers" which the socialists had incorporated into the fundamental law of the land?

An Atmosphere of Suppression

The visitor to Spain is immediately impressed with the fact that the most rigid control is exercised by the police authorities not only over foreigners but even more so over the native born. Spain is the only country on the continent, except Fascist Italy, known to this writer where there is a passport or document examination in the course of a trip in the interior of the country. Passport control at frontier countries is a matter of course everywhere, but in Spain the traveler who makes a trip from one interior city to another has an official going down the length of the railway carriage demanding his documents. We travelled with one of the comrades from Madrid to Barcelona, two cities well within the frontiers of the country, but we had scarcely got under way when a police official, accompanied as usual by the evil-looking Civil Guards, approached us and asked for our documents. My comrade's revolutionary "notoriety" (he has been arrested 29 times now!), gained us both the dubious honor of being accompanied all during the voyage by the agent, who kept pacing in front of our compartment till we reached Barcelona, casting the most suspicious glances at us all the while as though to prevent us from making the slightest move to disturb the law and order of the country from the vantage point of a train car. While representatives of the most reactionary section of the foreign bourgeoisie receive the undisturbed hospitality of the government, foreign Communists have not only been arrested, but, as in the case of some Communist members of the French Chamber of Deputies who came to Spain, have been transported to the border of Spain for deportation.

Under Primo de Rivera, practically every labor organization, regardless of its form or activity, was suppressed or declared illegal. The only exception to this rule was the Socialist party and its organizations, for the simple reason that the sanguinary dictatorship enjoyed the collaboration of no less a personage than Largo Caballero, party leader, secretary of the socialist trade union center, and councillor of State under the monarchy. The advent of the republic has not brought about any appreciable change in this respect. The labor organizations exist at all as yet is due solely to the fact that the bourgeoisie, in forsaking the monarchy, was compelled to give a formal recognition to the militant labor organizations which had broken through the dictatorial repressions of Primo and of Berenguer in the months before the fall of the latter. But now the rights which the working class and peasantry gained for themselves by sheer force in the early moments of the republic are being cynically abolished by a reactionary bourgeoisie in power which is taking no chances on allowing the workers the democratic political rights which were originally promised them.

Legalizing an Organization

Under the republic today, all organizations, whether trade unions, political parties, chess clubs, sports associations or sewing circles, must "legalize" themselves if they have 10 members or more. The statutes of the organization must be presented in advance to the Director.....

..... new scheme to restore confidence and return prosperity. To the millions of unemployed workers, the government's refusal the slightest aid. But to the financial oligarchy it is prepared to lend its entire machinery. As the coadjutor of American capitalism, WIN Rogers, intimates: The government is always ready to help those who do not need it—those who do, the working class, will have to wrench it from them in the course of the struggle against capitalism for its eventual overthrow.

—H. STONE.

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General of Security (roughly, the equivalent of our police chiefs), or to the governor of the province, and if that worthy grants the required permission, a formal meeting is called eight days later at which the organization is formally constituted. At this meeting, two police officials must be present for the purpose of supervising the procedure and taking notes for their reports to their superiors. If the meeting formally approves the proposed statutes and the officials of the organization are elected, a report is then turned in to the "Seguridad", together with the names and records of every officer, and then—only then—is the organization "legal"; we hasten to add, providing all of this has been approved by the authorities. Every meeting, regardless of whether it is a public mass meeting or a closed business meeting of an organization, must receive the O. K. of the authorities before it can be held. A local trade union cannot call its own members together to discuss its internal affairs without permission from the "Seguridad" which also has the right (and exercises it) to send a detective and a uniformed policeman to attend the meeting for supervisory purposes and to make a report. Even the Socialist party, which has scores of representatives in the Cortes and three ministers in the cabinet, must apply for permission to hold a public or private meeting and have them attended by police! A regular branch meeting of the Madrid local office Opposition which I attended was also graced by two plain clothes men, who made no secret of their business, listened to the proceedings with great attention and made copious notes. At both ends of the street on which the meeting place was located, were stationed four Civil Guards and two regular police—quite an escort of honor for the business meeting of the Madrid Opposition! The Russian Okhrana could do no better.

We have already had occasion to write about the Spanish court system in relation to workers. The abominations of "governmental detention", despised so heartily under Primo, are carried over today into the republic without the slightest change. And carried over mostly into the regime of the very men who fulminated so violently against the system when the dictatorship applied it. The outstanding example is Galarza, the Director-General of Security in Madrid; others, like Azana, the president, Prieto, the socialist minister, Domingo, "the man to the Left of the Left", could also be mentioned. Workers may (and are) still be arrested without charges placed against them. They can be held without either charges or being brought to trial. They can be kept in prison for years without "due process of law"—that is the system of "governmental detention". Just as the workers have not gained the real right to organization so little have they gained the right to strike. In 1926, Primo created the so-called "comités paritarios", or parity committees, which were composed of one representative of the workers, one of the employers and the "impartial" government chairman—compulsory for every industry. This scoundrelly law was elaborated and approved by his councillor of State, Caballero, and only the socialist unions (U. G. T.) and the Catholic unions approved it; the anarcho-syndicalist C. N. T. would have no part of it. These "parity committees", which virtually crippled the right to strike, are still in force today, at least to the extent that the workers recognize them.

The Government and Strikes

When the workers go out on strike in spite of the strangulating class collaboration committees, they meet with the violent, organized opposition of the government. The same people who today occupy some of the most important posts in the state once did all they could to foment strikes and disturbances under the monarchy; today they drown them in blood if necessary. During the famous national telephone strike of more than six months ago, directed at the American trust which holds the mono-

Resolution of Marxian Y. C.

The resolution below was passed unanimously at the Marxian Youth Club, on Sunday January 31. The reason for its issuance is evident from its contents.—Ed.

1. The Marxian Youth Club has received a letter from Welsbord making accusations against one of the former members of his organization who is now a member of the club.

2. In view of the fact that Welsbord has taken his case against this worker to the capitalist court, we consider it beneath the dignity of a workers' organization to consider the charges at the same time they are pending here.

3. We condemn this appeal to the capitalist courts as a violation of the ethics of the labor movement and as a far greater offense even than the one charged against the worker in question.

We demand that Welsbord withdraw his case from the capitalist court. Only by that can he gain the right to appeal to any workers' organization. When that is done, the Marxian Youth Club will consider the accusations and pass judgment on them.

—MARXIAN YOUTH CLUB

poly, the government and its Civil Guard were to be found exclusively on the side of the employers. In Madrid, the telephone exchange was completely occupied by the Civil Guard. Each scab repairman who went out, was accompanied on the truck by four Civil Guards, armed to the teeth and ready for business. The same story can be told about any other strike. Nor do they stop at "giving protection" to scabs. The instances are piling up when the Civil Guard has fired point blank at strikers, killing and wounding men and women and even little kids.

Now, with the adoption of the "Law for the Defense of the Republic", the situation becomes worse. Merely to quote from its provisions will give an idea of how the shades of Bismarck and the Russian Czars must envy the reactionism considered as "acts of aggression against the Republic and as such liable to the present law":

"4. The indirect provocation or incitation to commit acts of violence against persons, things or property for religious, political or social motives.

"5. Every word or gesture of contempt for institutions or organizations of the state.

"6. Strikes not announced eight days in advance, unless there exist other intervals designated in the special law; strikes launched for motives other than questions of work and those not having been preceded by arbitration or conciliation."

Punishment is indicated in the second article: "The direct authors of the acts enumerated in paragraphs 1 to 10 of the preceding article, as well as those who will have incited them to commit them, may be deported or banished for a period no greater than that of the validity of this law, or have imposed upon them a fine up to the maximum of 10,000 pesetas."

A Dictatorial Power

In the third article, we read that "The Minister of the Interior has the power to: 1. Prohibit public meetings or manifestations of a political, religious or social character when, by reason of circumstances, it may be assumed that their unfolding may disturb the public peace. 2. Dissolve centers or associations considered as inciting to the realization of the acts enumerated in article 1 of this law." And article four informs us that the application of the law is confided exclusively into the hands of the Minister of the Interior.

The result of the application of such a monstrous piece of ultra-reactionary legislation may well be imagined. The reactions of the workers and peasants to the law, of the workers and peasants who retained so many of their illusions in the "republicanism" of the bourgeoisie, are increasingly satisfactory from the revolutionary point of view. The bourgeoisie, by the adoption of this law and by its subsequent application, is manifestly on the offensive. It is aiming at the complete suppression of any independent working class movement, of reducing the proletarian and peasant movements to the subterranean, illegal level to which it was depressed under the rule of Alfonso and Primo de Rivera.

Even before this law—voted by the socialists and Catalonians as well as by the bourgeois parties—but especially after it, the repression has been accentuated. Scores, perhaps hundreds of Communists, are in prison now. When I was in Barcelona, the editor of the C. N. T. daily paper, *Solidaridad Obrera*, the anarchist Felipe Alai, told me that in Barcelona alone there were more than 200 members of the C. N. T. imprisoned, and more than 1,000 throughout Spain. The number has undoubtedly increased since then, especially after the recent revolutionary events.

—MAX SHACHTMAN.
The third article will deal with the Socialists and the question of a Socialist government in Spain.—Ed.

CORRECTION

In the article by comrade Maurice Spector on Rosa Luxemburg, which appeared in the *Militant* of January 23, several unfortunate mistakes crept into the proof, which require rectification.

In the paragraph beginning with "The response of Rosa . . .", the sentence reading "When the character of the Russian revolution was debated at the London (1907) Congress of the Russian social democracy and Lenin defended the position of the Mensheviks (1), Rosa Luxemburg along with Lenin represented the viewpoint of the Bolsheviks . . ." should, of course, read: ". . . and Plekhanov defended the position of the Mensheviks, etc."

The sentence at the beginning of the last paragraph, should read: "German menshevism and the bourgeoisie had triumphed", not "has triumphed". —Ed.

CHICAGO OPEN FORUM

Sunday, FEBRUARY 14, 1932
"What Will the 12 Million Unemployed Do?"

Speaker: JOHN EDWARDS
at
1435 N. Western Avenue
Auspices: Chicago Branch, C. L. of A. (Opposition)