

NEW MILITANT

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In California

EIGHTEEN workers are on trial in Sacramento, California, facing a hostile jury and possible sentences of long terms in prison. They are charged with criminal syndicalism. But no smoke screen of any kind can hide the fact that these workers are prosecuted because they were the active organizers of the agricultural workers of the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. It is the most elementary working class right which is at stake in this trial: the right to organize into trade unions.

To stir up passions and hatred against the defendants the prosecution has raised the "red" issue and has challenged the right to legal existence of the Communist Party.

A special red-baiting Deputy Attorney General—although defeated in the last election—heads the prosecution, amply supplied with funds by the "Associated Farmers" and the Industrial Association. Religious and racial prejudices are played upon to secure a conviction. The Hearst press is flooding California with anti-red and anti-labor propaganda. And in this atmosphere of fierce reactionary agitation the Sacramento City Manager has publicly taken upon himself the arming of 900 "citizens" to repel an alleged invasion of the city.

The American Legion, the Elks, the Lions, Rotarians, Kiwanis, priests, rabbis, pastors, Boy Scout leaders, real estate brokers, brothel keepers and legislators—one and all are yelling for the incarceration in San Quentin of the eighteen defendants.

In face of this gigantic lynch party one duty remained supreme for those engaged in the active support of the defense: solidarity and unity of all defendants before the capitalist court despite differences of political views. Only utter disregard for working class interests could permit any other course.

For these reasons we accepted the building of a united front in the Sacramento defense as our special task and we have not swerved one inch from the pursuance of this aim. One of the defendants no longer adheres to the Communist Party. He shares the views of the Workers Party; but the capitalist court is no place for the discussion of internal working class differences.

We knew that the accomplishment of a united front in this defense would be no easy task. The perfidious attitude of the Communist Party had made that appear well nigh impossible. When members in their own ranks demanded a united front in this case they were denounced as stool pigeons. All the prejudices, artificially fostered, all the obstacles created by their false policies had to be battered down one by one to make a genuine united front possible in which the participants accept its obligations and carry them out honestly.

At the present moment this united front has been accomplished and a defense committee set up including the Communist Party, the Workers Party, the Socialist Party, the International Labor Defense, the Non-Partisan Labor Defense, the Civil Liberties Union and other organizations mutually agreed upon by all concerned. The organizations involved and the defendants are pledged not to raise the internal controversial issues before the capitalist court and the attorneys for the I.L.D. and the N.P.L.D. cooperate in the courtroom.

Will this united front last until the case is through? This we cannot guarantee since it involves more than our party. But we can say that only light-minded charlatans would consciously take any steps or carry out any actions designed to endanger or break the united front defense.

Our position is clear. We fought for the united front from the day we entered the case. We are pledged and we carry it out honestly not only for the sake of one defendant who shares our views, but not only for the sake of the other seventeen defendants, but for the sake of the working class—the real defendant at Sacramento.

The C. P. and the Labor Party

AFTER having been the almost exclusive property of the right wing in the Socialist Party for years, the slogan of a labor party has just been taken over bag and baggage by the leadership of the Communist Party.

The leader of the Communist Party, straight from Moscow, rushed down the gangplank of the boat which brought him home, grabbed the first train to Washington, and in the presence of the assembled delegates of the "unemployment insurance conference," set forth the new revelation.

Roosevelts Insecurity Program

(Continued from Page 1) is taught in our respectable universities.

That workers are chronically thrown out of their jobs, by technological change, by the business cycle, by seasonal influences—all this is disregarded. Similarly, the New Deal social welfare lads forget that the American worker hardly earns enough to support himself, let alone to save for his old age, and that as he grows older, his earning power declines. The annuities are to begin at 65. But the worker under modern industrialism becomes aged economically long before he is biologically old.

Fifty-Fifty? The cost of purchasing the annuities will be divided 50-50, in theory, between workers and bosses. But if the boss does not pass on his share, as wage reductions, something is wrong with the theory of the incidence of taxation as it

the Communist Party is the fact that although it has been the policy of that organization for the past seven years to oppose the slogan of a labor party in this country, its leadership never even bothered to inform the membership that a change had been made in the policy.

Up to yesterday, the C.P. bureaucracy looked upon anybody who advocated the formation of a labor party as a deliberate agent of capitalism, a social demagogue and a social fascist. The right wing of the Socialist Party was the special object of C. P. ridicule and attack precisely because it defended the idea of a labor party.

What, then, is the meaning of this abrupt, bewildering and bureaucratic turn-about-face which has been effected in the dark of the moon?

On the lips of Waldman, Panken, Solomon the demagogue that a labor party be formed, or that the S. P. should initiate or help to create one, signified an acknowledgement that the S. P. had failed even as a party of reformism.

The slogan is a confession of bankruptcy.

On the lips of Browder and his truncheon, the appeal for a labor party in this country has essentially the same significance. In his "historic" speech in Washington, Browder as much as confirmed this. In effect, he declared:

I think the C. P. is the only party that is good for the working class; but the working class doesn't think so. It does not yet want a revolutionary party. Well, since this is the case, we, the Communist party is perfectly willing to create a non-revolutionary party. The kind that you want. After a while, you will learn that this party is not really the kind you need, and just as we created it for you, we will smash it for you so that you can finally follow the leadership of the only, genuine, real, etc., party.

What other sense can be made of this political abracadabra?

We do not believe it to be the job of revolutionists, who have had the opportunity to thoroughly absorb the lessons of what labor and reformist parties have led to in Europe, to create a reformist labor party in the United States.

We shall return to the question of the labor party in greater detail in forthcoming issues of the New Militant.

Tom Mooney's Freedom

WHEN the United States Supreme Court entertained a writ of habeas corpus for Tom Mooney in November 1934 we said the action was a post election sop to the California working class. At that time the court ordered the state of California to show cause why the writ should not be granted.

Leaving aside the sheer irony of entertaining a writ of habeas corpus eighteen years after incarceration, we remark that our analysis was correct. The court has refused the writ.

The Supreme Court has the colossal gall to inform Mooney that he has not made sufficient efforts to obtain his freedom in the California courts.—After eighteen years of appeals and reappeals, after four governors have refused pardon, after the California Supreme Court has declined to review the case!

The Court said that "Mooney had never asked the California court for the writ on the grounds which he now submits", and refused to deny that California would grant him his proper legal rights.

Ironically, Mooney is sent back to California law at the very moment when it is in the act of rattling eighteen workers in Sacramento—for what? For the crime of organizing agricultural workers!

The Supreme Court is a court of aristocrats and millionaires. Mooney's freedom—the freedom of class war prisoners—is up to labor.

Attack the Enemy

THE best defense is a good offense. Attack the enemy—put him on the run.

This strategy is particularly important to the workers of the United States today.

The employers are pushing the attack on unionism. Section 7a of the N.R.A. bill as it has done actually to secure to the workers the right to organize, is to be emasculated or repealed altogether if the bosses have their way.

Mindful of the growing sense of solidarity displayed by the workers in Toledo, San Francisco, Minneapolis and other strike areas in 1934, the National Association of Manufacturers now proposes federal legislation to prohibit general and sympathetic strikes. If the machinists, for example, go on strike over a question of wages, no other workers even in the same shop may stop work if the N.A.M. is to be suited!

The only answer to these proposals to hog-tie and enslave the workers is for them to pick up where they left off last fall—organize in rubber, steel, automobiles, and fight out the issue of union recognition on the picket lines.

Production is for the moment on the rise in these industries. The bosses would like to avoid trouble. The American Federation of Labor leaders must not be permitted in 1935 to prevent or sabotage strikes as they did in 1934. It is because these bureaucrats did all in their power to thwart the militancy of the masses that the bosses have dared to take the offensive again.

Let the workers of Akron, of Weirton, of Detroit, and a score of other centers take the offensive again! Union recognition will not be won in Congress, or in a Labor Board hearing, or in the Supreme Court, but in militant strike struggles.

The Workers Party of the United States pledges its utmost support to these struggles.

on the abolition of the Wisconsin liberals. And the Wisconsin plan does not even pretend that unemployment insurance is its primary objective, but addresses itself to coaxing employers into regularizing production and employment. Thus we shall probably have sanctioned, by the Act of Congress, the idea that individual employers can turn back the tides of economic forces.

Democratic Poverty When the President set up his Committee on Economic and Social Security last June, the Secretary of Labor remarked that not for us any European scheme of economic and social insurance, but an American scheme; not for us any socialistic devices, but democratic devices.

"Security"? Perhaps, if you call it "insurance". "Insurance"? Fine—but be sure it encourages self-help and thrift among the casualties of the economic order, and be ever so certain that it costs the owners nothing. To safeguard the profit system, after all you must first safeguard profits.

Charges are being preferred at once against Duncan before the new state relief administration and a committee of the Ohio Unemployed League will demand his immediate removal.

ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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to write for the Central Labor Union paper.

The Auto Workers' Union has kicked out Ramsey and Bossler and its present leaders make no secret of seeking the help of our comrades. The union is growing rapidly and despite the fact that the Auto-Lite plant itself is still half company union, thanks to Ramsey's influence, the Minger interests hesitate to provoke a quarrel. They've had a lesson!

Five members of an S.P. local drove 60 miles over roads that were a sheet of ice to our Toledo mass meeting. And they weren't sorry! Toledo branch is growing. Sam Pollock can't be spared for Detroit just now. Ted Selander, however, is going to Columbus to hold down the office of the National Unemployed League of which he was elected treasurer last summer.

DETROIT, Mich.—There's going to be big political news soon from Detroit. It will mean a substantial accession to the W.P. But we'll have to keep the comrades guessing for a while.

Meantime we can report that the Detroit branch has a good start, has the respect and confidence of the best elements in the trade union movement, and with the forces that are being sent in will prove itself capable of handling even as big a situation as Detroit.

Reports on the interesting and complex industrial situation here, the New Militant is getting from other comrades. Capitalism is booming here, Ford working 24 hours a day.

So there's no unemployment in Detroit? Say, comrade, we said capitalism is booming.

CHICAGO, Ill.—A hall jammed with nearly 400 people, Spartacus Youth with their red sashes, the crowd so interested that we had to get the management of the hall to extend our time, the C.P. and S.P. attempts to answer us so weak that the workers present often roared their derision, the singing of the International and three mighty cheers for the Workers Party of the U.S.—that was the Chicago meeting.

A Hot Situation It's 10 below zero here meteorologically speaking, but it's a "hot" situation as far as our branches, the Spartacus Youth League and prospects of growth are concerned.

The Chicago branches believe that a district comprising Illinois, southern Wisconsin, eastern Iowa and Missouri and northwestern Indiana, with headquarters in Chicago, ought to be set up soon. Comrade Cannon and I are convinced by their arguments and are recommending action to the Political Committee.

There are a million things to write about Chicago, but here as elsewhere the time is all too short. Besides, I can hear the editor cussing now because this copy isn't in. Better have mercy on us. As I said, it's 10 below zero here, the weatherman says the cold wave is staying for a while, and we're headed for Minneapolis and—the North Pole!

56 Released by Ohio Leaguers (Continued from Page 1) reached in advance. Fearing organization of a proper legal defense, the presiding justice refused to continue the hearing. Since the new defense counsel was unacquainted with the case, the justice permitted Art Preis and Pollock to cross-examine the witnesses. When Duncan was placed on the stand, the cross-examination became so hot the justice quickly ruled these two could not legally carry on the questioning.

The justice refused to permit any testimony on the matter of relief conditions and administration. Relief Building "Private"

Inable to find a legal basis for the charge of "trespass", the justice ruled that the relief building—rented with public funds for a public agency—was the property of the relief administration only and in that sense "private" property. He ruled that the public could remain in the building until the regular closing time.

George McGee, one of the defendants and fighting Negro leader of the Roosevelt Unemployed League, replied to a question as to why he did not leave the building at closing time. "The closing time of the relief office may be 12 o'clock but when your stomach is empty it's still open."

Mrs. Frederick, a militant Leaguer, asked what right she had to walk up the stairs of the relief building, answered, "Because I am a citizen of the U.S. I believe I have the right to remain as long as it takes to get food for starving children."

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That Pittsburgh Convention

Tight Will Maneuver to Hold Steel Delegates in Check - Bill Spang is Opposition Leader

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blocking the rank and file revolt within the steel union will automatically liquidate the less organized and developed rank and file movements of the other participating unions.

Will Delegates be Hoodwinked? Whether or not the delegates will allow themselves to be hoodwinked by these concessions or by any other maneuvers on the part of Green, Tighe and their benchmen is hard to predict. As far as the A.A. is concerned, the rank and file movement seems to be suffering from the same weaknesses that were apparent in the famous Committee of 10 which nullified all its excellent opportunities for destroying the Tighe bureaucracy and rallying the union to a militant struggle against the slow attrition tactics of the steel barons.

These weaknesses resulted from the lack of program, of a common tactic, and a unifying agreement based on progressive union policies. The movement was directed against the person of Tighe rather than the philosophy and tactics that make Tighe possible. The members of the Committee, united by a common dislike of Tighe, were disunited on every other basic point. The rank and file found themselves with an assortment of leaders but with no leadership. It was a comparatively simple business, therefore, for Green to sidetrack the strike movement and to throw the fight against company-unionism onto the laps of the NRA, the courts, the lawyers and all the thousand practitioners of pink sentiment and red tape.

Not Likely Again The rank and file members of the A.A. are not likely to repeat that particular mistake. They have had eight months of the Steel Labor Relations Board and are today in a worse position, if anything, than they were at the outset.

(For a detailed description of what the Steel Labor Relations Board has "accomplished" for the steel workers see article on page 3.)

"Our Men Are Desperate" In the words of Bill Spang, chairman of the Fort Duquesne Lodge which has been the spark plug of the fight against company-unionism:

"The union will not live through another delay like this. Our men are already desperate. Some of them are hungry—they have kids who are undernourished and wives who fade away right under their eyes. Unless our union starts to fight company-unionism with every weapon at its command right now—there may be no one to fight with later on. The men will go back to work."

Bill Spang was one of the members of the Committee of 10. He will be chairman of the "rank and file convention" and one of the leaders of the rank and file movement for the strike and against the Tighe bureaucracy. Hard fisted,

coarse, sincere, unshakably honest, Spang represents the virtues characteristic of rank and file leadership in the steel unions. And he represents the weaknesses of this leadership as well—weaknesses that may well prove fatal to the present movement as they were to the Committee of 10.

Bill Spang's Weakness He does not understand that an opposition movement within a union demands an even more careful organization and consistent leadership than a movement in opposition to boss greed. He will not submit to the discipline imposed by a program, the discipline that obliges every leader to submerge his personal differences, opinions and weakness in the interests of the common program and the common cause. He is an individualist, relying upon personal prestige and ability to storm the bureaucratic barricades. He has the man-of-action's contempt for careful planning, for "theorizing" and, in consequence, is fair prey to the very first plan that comes his way—in all probability the worst possible plan.

Such is the plan proposed for A. A. action in the "rank and file convention." The delegates will lay their plans for organization and appoint their own organizers for carrying these plans out.

Tighe is Afraid "Tighe does not want to organize new locals," says Spang, "because he knows he would lose control. If we left it up to him to send in organizers he would send us guys like the one we had last time who was more congenial to the steel company than to us. We are going to organize the A.A.—Tighe or no Tighe, and then he can sit at his desk and look at the four walls of his office."

In these naive reckonings, the seeds of defeat are already sown. Tighe will not look at those four walls long before he evolves a plan for gaining control of the new unions or for keeping control in spite of the new unions. Actually, that is what his position is, if he is not removed from office. And if the A.A. is strong enough to follow a plan of organization based on an eventual steel strike in spite of the Greens and Tighe then it is also strong enough to remove Tighe and clean house generally. If it fails to do this, it will also fail to carry out its other plans.

A Golden Opportunity There is certainly a golden opportunity in the present movement to overthrow the reactionary Tighe and their destructive class-collaborationist policies and to reassert the militant traditions and the progressive history of genuine trade-unionism. The time is at hand for an entire reorganization of the unions on democratic and non-compromising principles. Will the "rank and file convention" achieve these things?

Letters To The Editor

An increasing number of readers write letters to the editors of the New Militant. Most of these letters deal with subjects that will be of interest to a large number of readers. In the future, therefore, the editors have decided to turn over this section of the New Militant to its readers. Conditions for publication are: 1) No letter shall be over 300 words in length. 2) The name and address of the writer must be known to the editors.

START MEETINGS ON TIME!

Dear Comrade Editor:

A party starts out with certain principles, certain tactics, and an organizational set-up.

In the process of building itself, certain "details" are cast aside, even treated with scorn. "There are bigger things" is the answer to these smaller problems.

I would like to bring up one of these "details" for consideration.

In the "left-wing" movement all meetings, parties, gatherings, demonstrations are traditionally unpunctual. Lateness has become almost a fetish.

Originally, perhaps, comrades and workers were so busy, that they could not manage to arrive on time. However, starting a meeting one hour after scheduled time has since come to be a sort of hoary tradition, that no radical party would dare to violate.

Aside from the physical inconveniences of this lateness, it must be remembered that some time, in our career as a revolutionary party, we may come across a "raw worker", one unfamiliar with the ways of the reds. When this worker does come to our meetings, he will come on time. And very likely he will be alienated by the undisciplined fashion in which our meetings are run.

Glance over the correspondence section of every working class paper, union, political, social, and you will read this same plea for promptness, for discipline.

What other working class parties and groups have failed to point out, are the political implications of promptness.

The worker is accustomed to efficiency. His boss makes him come to work on the dot of eight.

We as revolutionists admire the well run machine. We base our ideology upon maximum efficiency. We fight for an efficient, well-run society.

In order to secure this society, we ourselves must have a well-knit, well-run machine. And punctuality, discipline in meetings, gatherings and demonstrations, is one very important factor in our efficiency.

Aside from the bad psychological effects of lateness, as a political tactic, it is ruinous.

I would therefore advocate that the National Committee take up discipline in meetings as a real issue. That branches discuss and pass resolutions on this subject, and that disciplinary measures be introduced to insure the efficient conduct of meetings and gatherings not only of the party itself, but of mass organizations in which the party participates.

As an agitational "front" this insistence upon punctuality and disciplined conduct of meetings is invaluable. As a party we will be set apart, our efficiency will be symbolized by this innovation.

A month hence, a year hence it will be too late to decide that we're going to conduct our meetings in a more orderly fashion. You can't break down old habit patterns easily!

What do the comrades in the field think about this question? I believe that the New Militant should devote space to it, and lastly, I urge that action be taken. It's easy to nod one's head wisely and say "that's right!"

Let's become the party that meets on time!

—COMRADE A. B. C.

REVIEWING THE NEWS

By BILL SHERMAN

NEW TITLE WANTED

The editors don't like the title of this column, so they got together with the business manager and I am asked to announce that a year's subscription to the New Militant will be given free to the reader suggesting the best title. The editors to decide. Titles must be in by February 15.

The Mooney Case Again the "courts of justice", this time the highest in the land, played shuttle-cock with the life and liberty of Tom Mooney. This time the publicity and protests of the radical labor movement was so strong that the nine fossilized tools of Wall Street had to administer a gentle slap to California "justice", while on a "technicality" they condemned an innocent man to a continued living death. They passed the case back to California, where that other "staunch representative of American democracy", Governor Merriam, says he is too busy to consider it now.

Where do our "labor leaders" stand? That smug Baptist faker, Bill Green, remains as silent on Mooney as he was vocal when helping to break the Frisco general strike.

"All the News That's Fit to Print" That's the motto carried on the masthead of the New York Times, and they print a boxed in front page display to the story of the Judge in the Hauptmann case, giving a cough drop to the defense lawyer, and the Shenandoah mine explosion is tucked away on page 9.

Slobbering Over Stalin Never to my knowledge has there been such servile slobbering over a leader in any section of the labor movement as is found today in articles, speeches and resolutions of the Communist Party of Stalin. Even Olgun's poetical praise of America's entry into the World War is surpassed by the following greetings sent to Stalin by the Moscow District Committee of the C.P., which we take from a New York newspaper:

"Long live he who has led our party in the struggle against all enemies of Leninism! Long live he who is teaching the Party daily and hourly the art of discerning the enemy in the very embryo and mercilessly stamping him out! Long live he who has secured the victory of our Party and the iron unity of the Bolshevik ranks! Long live our own great Stalin!"

The Dignity of the Court The Hauptmann case continues to be the big news in the capitalist papers. It has been turned into a "Broadway success" by the press, by publicity-seeking lawyers, judges, etc. Here is a man on trial for his life, charged with kidnapping and murder, and yet guards have been posted over the hall to stop the gales of laughter that sweep the courtroom. The Prosecuting Attorney, noting that the interest of his audience lagged during the hearing of expert testimony and fearing that attendance would fall, decided to bring in a Broadway brunette to break the monotony. Such is the dignity of justice in America, the dignity of a waterfront prostitute.

Strikers Versus Labor Leaders After a militant ten weeks' strike, employees of the Kayne Company of Cleveland returned to work with the signing of a collective bargaining agreement by the company and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. A Cleveland paper reports that following the signing of the agreement a workers' rally was held in the NEWS Auditorium, which was addressed by Sidney Hillman, President of the A.C.W. "In the evening the union entertained a banquet to Mr. Hillman, officials of the company, city officials and judges." We wonder why the chief of police was left out—or was he?

California Trial

(Continued from Page 1)

and bona fide trade unions. However, at the first meeting among those claiming to represent organizations was one man who said he belonged to the American Veterans Association, "only that organization is controlled by agents of the Industrial Association and last night they expelled me and 11 others, but I represent them officially."

Real United Front The attempt to pack the united front was defeated. Voting together for a real united front policy were the Workers Party, the Socialist Party, the Non-Partisan Labor Defense and the Civil Liberties Union.

A slanderous article had appeared the previous week in the Western Worker, referring to "racketeering" and linking the Non-Partisan Labor Defense with it. Herbert Solow, N.P.L.D. representative, declared he regretted that the I.L.D. did not make some statement concerning this article. After much hesitation, the I.L.D. representative promised a printed retraction in next week's paper.