

The Great San Francisco General Strike

**The Story of the West Coast Strike – The Bay
Counties' General Strike and the Maritime
Workers' Strike**

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	(Resolution Adopted by the Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, September 5-6, 1934.)	

I. Preliminary

The general strike of some 125,000 workers in San Francisco, Oakland and the Bay Counties, organized in unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labor, with only such exceptions as the Marine Workers Industrial Union, affiliated to the T.U.U.L., in support of the general strike of 2,000 miles of coastline of the members of ten maritime workers' unions for better wages, working conditions and against company-controlled hiring halls (the open-shop machinery of the shipping and stevedoring companies) brought the nation-wide strike wave that began late in 1932 to a new high point.

The strike, centering around the elementary demands of workers in the key marine transport industry for the right to organize in unions of their choice free from control of company agents, for the union shop versus the open shop, for decent wages and some measure of control over working conditions, shook the A. F. of L. hierarchy, the Roosevelt administration, the various organizations of the employers, from head to heel.

The general strike in the principal port of the West Coast of the United States, developing out of the organization campaign initiated by local workers and rank-and-file organizing committees in the ports from Seattle in the North to San Diego in the South, the campaign which organized the longshoremen who had been defeated and had had their organization shattered in the struggles of 1921, affected all workers in the industry precisely on that coastline which is bound to be a main military and naval base of American imperialism in the event of an outbreak of war resulting from the growing imperialist contradictions in the vast Pacific area.

This fact alone could account for the ferocity with which the employers and all their government agencies attacked the strike itself, the waterfront workers and their organizations – and the Communist Party, whose program and influence accounted in the main for the solidarity of the mass movement and the fact that the working class was able to resist successfully the efforts of the employers and their government to smash the unions and institute the open shop all along the West Coast as they had planned.

The employers, however, had other and more immediate objectives than the establishment of a “sanitary zone” along the West Coast in preparation for war as the way out of the five-year crisis. The employers and their organizations – The Waterfront Employers

Union, the Industrial Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the collection of other organizations of exploiters and their hangers-on gathered around these dominant groups – were concerned with securing a further reduction of the starvation wages – longshoremen were making from \$40 to \$60 per month in one of the most hazardous occupations – and were preparing to “teach labor a lesson,” i.e. either to defeat and destroy the unions or to place them more firmly in the control of such dependable allies of the employers as Casey of the Teamsters Union (Truck Drivers), Vandeleur of the Municipal Street Railwaymen, Kidwell of the Milk Wagon Drivers, McLaughlin and other “recognized leaders” of the Central Labor Council, Joseph P. Ryan of the International Longshoremen’s Association and other “sane and constructive” union officials.

These officials, tied for years to the chariots of the Democratic and Republican Parties, supported the attempt of Ryan to jam an open-shop agreement (leaving the control of hiring halls in the hands of the companies) down the throats of the striking longshoremen, force them to return to work and thereby defeat the strike of the unions of seamen, firemen and oilers, cooks and stewards, scalers, etc.

The Longshoremen’s union repudiated Ryan’s proposal. Ryan was defeated so decisively after refusing to call on the Atlantic Coast section of the I.L.A. to strike in support of the West Coast men that he had to retreat to New York – where he continued to conspire to defeat the strike.

The waterfront strike went on with practically a complete tie-up of shipping. The Matson and Dollar shipping companies had to route their ships to other ports. At one period not a single ship had loaded, unloaded, or steamed in or out of San Francisco harbor – the Golden Gate – for 45 days.

The unemployed workers, organized in or supporting the Unemployment Councils, for the most part refused offers to take jobs as strike-breakers and joined with the strikers on the picket lines, in the relief work, etc.

The scab crews were composed mainly of a core of professional strikebreakers, of bankrupt businessmen, jobless advertising executives, ruined real estate sharks, some deluded college students and other riffraff of the crisis. These scab crews did not succeed in moving enough cargo to affect decisively the tie-up of shipping.

The entire police forces, augmented by special deputies, of the

Coast cities were assigned to waterfront “duty.” Armed attacks on strikers and picket lines were made continually in practically all ports, with San Francisco, Portland and Seattle especially being the scenes of vicious onslaughts, strikers and sympathizers making heroic resistance.

The Marine Workers Industrial Union – affiliated to the Trade Union Unity League – raised the question of a general strike. The Left wing in the leadership of the I.L.A., and the Joint Strike Committee of the Waterfront Unions, headed by Harry Bridges, in San Francisco, endorsed the proposal to call upon the Bay Counties’ unions for a general strike.

Harry Bridges and the committee of strikers brought the question of a general strike to the Central Labor Councils in San Francisco and Oakland. The official leaders opposed it. Bridges and the committee then began a systematic canvass of all local unions affiliated to the Central Labor Councils.

Here they were given enthusiastic support by the rank and file of the membership. Union after union voted for the general strike.

While the organization of the general strike from below was going on, two strike pickets were murdered by the San Francisco police during an armed attack on the picket line. A meeting of 20,000 workers in the Civic Auditorium previous to the murderous assault had already denounced Major Rossi and his police and booed Rossi from the platform of the meeting.

The working class of the Bay Counties was getting ready to challenge its rulers in the most important mass struggle of the series of great strikes that had swept from coast to coast and from the Canadian boundary to the Mexican line in a two-year period.

In the mass funeral for the two murdered workers some 40,000 of their comrades marched and other tens of thousands lined the street through which the cortege passed. The police fled before this army of stern-eyed workers. Not a cop could be seen during the funeral. They had drawn the correct, if cowardly, conclusion from the return of their cash donation to the funeral expenses together with the flowers the police department – with incredible hypocrisy – had sent. (Mayor Rossi in private life is a florist.)

There can be no doubt that the murder of the two workers during the vicious police attack on unarmed pickets, and the tremendous demonstration of solidarity around their coffins strengthened the determination of the Bay Counties workers and was largely in-

strumental in precipitating the general strike. (It should be noted here that the funerals of workers murdered by police, company gunmen and troops in strikes and unemployment demonstrations have become in this period of great class battles a powerful means of militant mass mobilizations and a method by which the whole struggle reaches a higher political level. The general strike stage is not always reached but the issue of a general strike lies close to the surface in all these mass funerals, as in Toledo, Minneapolis, Honea Path, South Carolina, Woonsocket, R. I. – wherever striking workers are murdered by armed forces of the employers and where the labor movement is mobilized in protest.)

The votes of the local unions for the general strike continued to pile up. The key organization of the shore unions, the Teamsters' Union, headed by the arch-reactionary Michael Casey, revolted against its official leadership practically unanimously.

By the time the Central Council officialdom had decided to take up the question of the general strike it was faced with the choice of endorsing it or – surrendering leadership to the militant committee of the united waterfront unions.

The reactionaries decided to go along with the general strike and occupy the key positions in the Central Labor Council Strike Committee. They had not been sufficiently exposed during the preparation of the general strike. Their endorsement of the strike brought on a sort of truce between them and the Left wing which they utilized to seize the key posts and work behind the backs of the strikers and their organizations with the employers' organizations and their government agencies.

These double-crossing officials sabotaged the strike publicity. They made no defense of Bridges against the barrage turned on him by the press, mobilized under the leadership of Neyland, Hearst's attorney, called back from Hawaii for this very purpose; they did not answer the attacks made by Governor Merriam and Mayor Rossi upon the Left-wing leadership of the waterfront unions but welcomed them; they did not reply to General Johnson's vicious onslaught in the name of the Roosevelt administration upon Bridges, foreign-born workers and the whole strike.

The wave of fascist terror organized and financed by the Industrial Association* with its strike-breaking and union-smashing fund –

* Boynton, secretary of this organization, gets \$35,000 per year.

estimated variously as amounting to \$2,000,000 - \$5,000,000, to which Standard Oil had contributed \$1,000,000 – with the aid of the American Legion officials, a number of “patriotic” societies, directed openly against Communists but with its brutal raids, destruction of personal property and vicious beatings victimizing striking long-shoremen and their families, was also welcomed by these officials.

Two sets of union officials managed to keep their members at work: Howard of the Typographical Union who, although the contract with the newspaper publishers had expired, used the pressure of the general strike to secure the restoration of a ten per cent cut – which would have been restored anyway – and, by threat of expulsion kept the printers at work setting into type the flood of anti-working class poison poured out by the San Francisco press; the officials of the Electrical Workers Union likewise kept their membership at work.

With these exceptions, and that of the Southern Pacific Railway and Southern Pacific ferry employees – whose officials used the excuse of U.S. Mail contracts to keep them at work – the entire working class of the Bay Counties brought industry to a complete stop in a section of the Pacific Coast with some 1,500,000 population.

Acting Governor Merriam called out the entire California National Guard – 7,000 troops with artillery, tanks and airplanes. Instead of trying to extend the general strike to other California ports as the proper answer to the troop mobilization, the cowardly and treacherous Central Labor Council officials co-operated with the employers and their government to end it.

The capitalist press charged that the strike was an “insurrection”; it painted horrible pictures of an impending food shortage and impending famine for which there was not the slightest basis; the press yelled that the strike was a “Communist revolution.” It called hourly upon the “recognized leaders” of the unions to repudiate the “Reds,” who were said to be ready for rape and plunder.

To this poison gas barrage the official leaders of the Central Labor Council strike committee made no reply, The *Western Worker*, official organ of the Communist Party, had had its offices raided and destroyed and its printing plant burned. It appeared for a time in leaflet form and then was able to resume publication. *It was the only voice of the embattled workers.*

In Portland the local unions had voted for a general strike but the “strategy committee”, composed of salaried labor officials,

postponed the call for a strike day after day, waiting for the end of the San Francisco Strike even when Governor Meier mobilized the National Guard. They co-operated with Senator Wagner to check the mass movement in support of the waterfront strikers.

In Seattle the striking unions and the Left wing headed by the Communists, forced the general strike issue into the Central Labor Council but their leadership of the longshoremen was not militant and determined enough to force a vote – which the thousands of signatures for the recall of the strike-breaking Mayor Smith later showed would have carried – after a telegram from President Green to the Labor Council, stating it had no authority to sponsor such a vote, was received.

The West Coast strike reached its highest point in San Fran because the leadership of the waterfront workers there was class conscious, militant and determined enough to take the question directly to the rank and file and win them for united front action over the heads of the official A. F. of L. leaders.

The strike reached its highest point in San Francisco because the influence of the Communist Party in the waterfront unions was strong enough to defeat the reactionary leadership. The strike could not have been ended without reaching all its major objectives without the fascist terror against the Communist Party, the prohibition of all meetings and the silencing of its press right at the decisive moment of the great struggle.

The fascist drive extended into all inland towns in California, Oregon and to some extent in Washington. In all three States headquarters, halls, offices and homes were raided, mass arrests made and beatings and deportations carried out by the police and fascist bands of thugs working hand in hand.

Communists and members of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union were the special targets of attack. Their offices and homes were raided, they were beaten without mercy and many of them were driven from town to town and county to county like wild beasts. In Sacramento 16 members of the C.A.W.I.U. were held on criminal syndicalism charges.

In San Francisco raids and arrests filled the jail to suffocation with 600 workers in quarters intended to hold 175. A hunger strike brought some betterment of conditions.

After Vandeleur and the official strike leadership had ordered the Municipal Street Railwaymen back to work, after the permit

system had been made into a racket and many middle class people alienated by this, after big department stores had been allowed to remain open while hundreds of small neighborhood groceries and meat markets had been forced to close – alienating additional great numbers of the middle class and clerical workers, after a score of restaurants had been allowed to open on a profit-making basis instead of the strike committee retaining control of food depots, after the C.P. had been driven underground, after the anti-strike leaders in the strike committee had manipulated and handpicked “safe” delegations to the committee, without a roll-call vote, over the protest of Harry Bridges, the strike was called off.

There never was even an actual majority for ending the strike. There never was a real majority in the subsequent vote to return to work. The real representatives of the Bay County workers and their unions never voted to end the strike. They voted against ending it, as the record shown. They voted against the return to work.

The general strike was not defeated. It was betrayed from within. But the organized labor movement is stronger in the Bay Counties than ever before.

The employers, their press, their police, their military forces, their “fascist” citizens’ committees, were unable to defeat the waterfront unions.

The Longshoremen’s Mediation Board appointed by President Roosevelt, and at first hailed by employers as the main instrument of salvation, was rendered impotent by the solidarity of the longshoremen and the other unions. Its attempt to split the ranks of the striking maritime workers failed. The longshoremen did not return to work until the other unions had voted and made their choice of the union to join and spokesmen they wanted to represent them.

The waterfront employers were unable to carry through their plan for smashing the unions. They had to deal with them at long last. They had to abandon their control of the hiring halls. They had to make concessions on wages and working conditions.

Their whole open-shop offensive was defeated and entirely halted for some time at least.*

* As this is written, the news comes of a strike of 200 seamen in San Francisco, with 1,000 longshoremen picketing with them, and the stoppage of trucking to the struck docks.

These achievements on the part of the workers who engaged in the waterfront strike on 2,000 miles of coastline and in the general strike are not the result of defeat. The only reason they did not gain more is because the treachery of the official A. F. of L. leadership in the Bay Counties' general strike and in the I.L.A. nationally, in the national leadership of the A. F. of L., in the Central Labor Council leadership in Seattle and Portland, made it impossible for the working class to bring all its forces to bear against the unprecedented mobilization of the forces of the employers and their government.

The Communist Party was not defeated. Something like 200,000 votes cast for Leo Gallagher, Communist candidate for the California Supreme Court, immediately following the fascist terror drive and partial suppression of the C.P., certainty is not the result of defeat.

The California labor and revolutionary movement marches forward. The general strike in the textile industry has shown that American workers, in spite of the joint propaganda of defeat of the Bay Counties' general strike, broadcast by the labor hierarchy and the capitalist press, do not take this false estimate of the outcome seriously. Far from marking a peak beyond which the American labor movement could not go in its struggle against the capitalist offensive under N.R.A., the Bay Counties' general strike gave great impetus to the whole labor movement whose mass struggles reach new high levels as this is written.

The day to day story of the strike and its immediate aftermath is contained in the following pages, together with the resolution on the strike by the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Grateful acknowledgement is hereby made to the *Daily Worker*, the *New Masses* and *Labor Unity* for permission to reprint articles which appeared in these publications.

II. General Strike

Sacramento, Calif., July 15 – Today the whole West Coast from Vancouver to San Diego rocks to a wave of gargantuan laughter. This laughter, roaring and echoing down the traffic-barren streets of San Francisco, which surges over silent docks and rattles the chains of a thousand anchored ships, comes from two places – the living dead in the prison dungeons of West Coast capitalism, and from the graves of those who died in the historic struggles that marked the upward surge of labor for a whole generation on the Pacific Coast.

American capitalism, not only on the West Coast but in the entire nation, is scared stiff not only by the homeric mirth of Tom Mooney, J. B. McNamara and Matt Schmidt in San Quentin, but by the eerie laughter from the graves of Wesley Everest in Centralia, the workers' leaders slaughtered in Wheatland and Everett, from the Communists who died in Imperial Valley that a labor movement might live.

They have a right to laugh, these shock troopers of labor, for the very thing they were framed, jailed and murdered to prevent has come to pass – the development of unity and militancy among workers on a 2,000-mile battlefield. They hoped for it, they preached it and fought for it, and it was long in coming; but it is here.

In spite of the combination of official treachery from within and the threat of state force from without, nothing moves without the consent of the strike committee in San Francisco – that shining storehouse of the Pacific on whose steps stands Roosevelt shaking his fist at the rebellious millions of workers and peasants in the Orient.

Clearer than ever before is the fact that the N.R.A. administration looks upon this great struggle correctly as a test of the main principle on which it is based, namely, class collaboration. This fact is indisputable since the statement of Archbishop Hanna, chairman of Roosevelt's mediation board, late yesterday, in which he said:

“It is the policy of the United States, declared in the N.R.A., to induce and maintain united action of labor and management, and to remove obstructions to the free flow of interstate and foreign commerce.”

What this means for labor is seen in the issuing of secret instructions to the police for the round-up of radicals of all shades beginning, of course, with Communists. Mayor Rossi has declared an emergency. The police force has been reorganized. The Crime Prevention Bureau has now been made over into the “Anti-Radical and Crime Prevention Bureau”. The San Francisco Lodge of the Knights of Columbus, Loyola Council 2615, has passed a resolution placing itself at the disposal of Chairman Hanna and the police department. The police force was increased yesterday by 500 men with additional equipment to cost a minimum of \$180,000 per month.

In spite of all stalling by the so-called “sane and conservative” leaders of unions, the number on strike increases daily. The present position of these leaders is politically untenable. More and more they must depend on the various government agencies to limit the strike. One hundred and seventy-five unions are affected by the strike call, but there are many unions on strike in this area that no one but those directly involved ever knew existed.

In this State capital, center of one of the richest farming districts of the whole world, business is practically at a standstill. Strikers are stopping all produce trucks Frisco-bound, but nevertheless, the farmers here express the greatest sympathy for the strike.

It is impossible at this stage to predict the actual outcome of the strike, but one thing seems certain. Roosevelt is not likely to agree to any demands of the workers without their abandoning their strike and putting themselves at the mercy of his board.

The estimate is given great credence by the confident tone of the local press and the obvious fact that the employers and the Manna board expect the “sane” leaders to be able to make enough of a split in the ranks to force over compulsory arbitration, Today it is clear that the bulk of the workers think quite differently.

III. The Strike Spreads – The Terror Starts

San Francisco, July 17 – The general strike wave swept higher today as 40,000 more workers of various industries joined the army of labor now battling in the mightiest strike in the annals of American labor.

All the East Bay Cities are now completely paralyzed, with Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, and nearby territory wholly shut down.

All Key route trains, ferries, and car lines have stopped. Only the Southern Pacific ferries are operating. They carry the U.S. Mail.

During this forward sweep of the strike wave, the National Guard troops have been augmented to the astonishing number of 5,000, with 1,500 more ordered to stand ready for immediate duty.

Soldiers and marines of two battalions as well as police have surrounded the wholesale marketing district, with police standing on every corner of the city.

Official Surrender Begins

Striking; a direct blow at the general strike, the reactionary leaders like Vandeleur today ordered the street car men of the municipal lines back to work.

Vandeleur, who heads this union, has ties with the Rossi machine, and offered the feeble excuse-that a strike would deprive the car men of their pension rights. He is an important figure in the Central Labor Council General Strike Committee.

Against the proposal of Harry Bridges that the strike committee provide for feeding places on a non-profit basis, the A. F. of L. officials decided to permit 50 more restaurants to open.

Over Bridge's strong opposition the same officials voted to permit the striking sheet metal workers to repair the police cars, the very cars which are being used against the strikers.

The General Strike Committee is now composed of one delegate from each A. F. of L. local.

Stir Fascist Provocation

To an unprecedented degree every radio station, newspaper and pulpit is being mobilized in a concerted campaign of vilification and calumny against the Communist Party.

The newspapers feature flaming headlines and editorials warning the workers against being "misguided" by the Communists, and incite open fascist violence against the Party and its headquarters.

This incitement to mob violence has already born fruit in an organized attack on the headquarters of the Communist Party, with a gang of hoodlums wrecking all the furniture in the place and beating all workers found there.

Joining in these fascist raids are the San Francisco police, who today raided the headquarters of the Marine Workers Industrial Union, arresting more than 60.

The atmosphere is tense with the threat of more polite raids which are expected at any moment.

Communist Party leaflets which are appearing regularly on the docks and in the strike area are seized eagerly. The *Western Worker*, Communist weekly, is now the official organ of the strikers and is quickly grabbed wherever it appears. A special edition appears tomorrow.

Governor Merriam, in a series of vicious, inciting radio speech-

es, talks wildly against the Communists, blaming the strike on a “handful of outside agitators” against whom he urges mob action.

Ten thousand workers in Contra Costa will vote tomorrow to strike. The T.U.U.L. unions here will hold a conference to form an independent strike center to assist the strike, as thus far they have been kept out of the strike committee.

Hundreds of small stores have closed, with signs indicating sympathy with the strikers. The General Strike Committee has ordered all liquor stores closed.

* * * * *

San Francisco, Cal., July 17 – The splitting strategy predicted in earlier dispatches is now being carried out with the greatest energy as the general strike became effective today in Oakland and all the Bay Counties. There is the most intense drive upon Communists ever seen in this vicinity and especially upon all in the strike leadership suspected of being Communists.

Arbitrary raids and arrests, destruction of headquarters by roving gangs operating with police knowledge and co-operation in the Oakland region, have now been followed by the raid upon the headquarters of the Marine Workers Industrial Union and arrests to the number of 200, according to the local press.

Simultaneously, new maneuvers for an agreement to submit all questions to arbitration without guarantees and an immediate return to work are being carried on today by the politicians and press of the big capitalist parties within the Central Labor Council.

In this way the employers are working for a split in two directions; that is, between the revolutionary workers and their leadership in the strike and the stronger elements of honest and militant workers, and the weak section, affected most by the employers’ propaganda and unprecedented display of armed force.

Their press is almost unbelievably vicious while the publicity of the strike committee is compromising and certainly not very effective among the large numbers of middle class people made uncomfortable by the strike.

There is likewise here a great concentration of Federal forces headed by Senator Wagner and General Johnson. The reactionary section of the strike committee is undoubtedly heavily involved in dickerings with Acting Governor Merriam, who hopes to be elected this fall and with the Roosevelt administration leaders. The finest

sample of the anti-Red propaganda and example of the split strategy of the employers is today's front page editorial in the *Call-Bulletin*

Hearst's Split Strategy

“Where do you stand?

“The Communist Party today is out in the open as directing the strike that endangers the lives of more than a million persons in San Francisco and the Bay area.

“Through the columns of the New York Daily Worker, organ of the Communist Party in New York, a section of the Communist International, credit for this revolutionary move is taken by the Party.

“And if additional evidence might be needed, Earl Browder, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in America, has announced that 1,200 Communists are ‘directing the workers of San Francisco in the logical path of a better life.’

“This makes the alignment:

“Acknowledged Communists – 1,200.

“Misled by propagandists – 18,800.

“Total on strike – 50,000.

“Where do you stand?

“The statement by Browder strips the strike situation bare. It will surprise the 50,000 workers who have paralyzed the life of San Francisco and endangered the health of more than the million people.

“Their leaders have frequently denied that any Communist element was involved in the strike.

“What have those leaders to say now – now that this Communist official insists his group is responsible for this strike and that ‘A hundred San Francisco's lie ahead of America’?

“And what will 48,800 San Francisco workers, who so reluctantly quit their jobs to participate in the greatest act of mass violence San Francisco has ever known, do?

“The Daily Worker editorial will be found in another column.

“The lines are formed now and the 1,200 Communist agitators are openly arrayed against one million three hundred thousand men and women who have no responsibility

and never did have any responsibility for any of the conditions behind the strike.

“They are arrayed, too, against the families of the strikers. The families will suffer even more than others because their bread-winners have been without income for so long.

“This general strike is violence. Violence never succeeds. It sows future bitterness but never wins a victory.

“This strike is unjust because it inflicts its injuries on hundreds of thousands of innocents who had nothing but good wishes toward the striking longshoremen and San Francisco workers with proper grievances.

“It cannot be anything but unjust because it hurts only the mass of people and never the ones whom the Communist fomenters wish to injure.

“The 48,500 men on strike never intended to ravage and destroy the city of which they are so proud. They never envisioned the suffering and paralysis of our common life that has come upon us.

“They never wanted San Francisco to be the battleground of the violent struggle that exists today. They could not have dreamed that they were, in voting to strike, the dupes of Communists directed by a New York Communist Committee.

“And what will they do now? What will their leaders – their real, old and trusted leaders – do!

“Will they continue this strike, this violence? Or will they go back to their work, lift the heavy burden from their San Francisco, and go about the adjustment of their differences like the reasonable men they have always shown themselves to be?

“They are not Communists, they have no common part with Communists, they do not need to be Communists to achieve justice and fair dealing for themselves in San Francisco.

“Will they allow Communists to push them into a situation, into a struggle from which no victory can arise for either side?

“Or will they turn against the boastful Earl Browder, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of America, and rebuke him by returning to work?

“Our coast labor leaders have always hotly denied that this strike is Communistic. They have denied it because they did not know the facts.

“They did not know that they were being lured into a trap from which there is no escape except through chaos and disaster. But their eyes are now open. The truth about this strike has been proved to them by Communist Browder himself.

“They can do nothing now but lead their workers out of this trap and back to civilization once more, back in a truly logical path of a better life.

“Reprinted from New York Daily Worker, Communist organ in the East:

““For victory in the general strike.

““The general strike is on in San Francisco.

“Overwhelmingly the workers in San Francisco have rejected every effort of the small group of decrepit misleaders who fought to stave off the general strike in support of the Marine and Dock Workers....

“In every part of the United States the Communists are urged to take the lead In the most energetic campaign to extend the deck and seamen’s strike to cover the whole country.

“Now is the time for the East, South and Gulf ports to join their brothers and win for themselves recognition and better conditions.

“Never in the history of the country has there been a more favorable opportunity for all marine workers to walk out and win what for many years they have been striving for.

“Every ounce of energy, every step should be taken to spread the marine strike to every part of the country....”

It will be noted from the above example of the method by which the strike-breaking campaign is being conducted that it implies that the workers have no grievances and no demands, but that the whole cause of the trouble lies with Communist agitators.

In view of this, it is necessary more than ever for the *Daily Worker* and the whole labor press to emphasize the economic demands of the longshoremen and all the marine trades. It is certainly clear from the quoted editorial and all the immense amount of similar

but less plain spoken material that the striking workers will be defeated only by isolating the Communists temporarily. The goal of the whole campaign is to make it extremely difficult or even impossible for the Communists to function until the strike has been broken.

IV. Fascist Raids and Strike-Breaking Maneuvers

San Francisco, Cal. July 18. – Gangster and police terror, timed to coincide with the efforts of the reactionary union leaders to bring about a split in the strike forces by jamming through a special resolution dropping all demands and turning everything over to arbitration, swept through the Bay Counties yesterday and all last night.

Arrests are variously estimated from two to three hundred. At this writing it is impossible to give exact figures. Directed at the Communists, the raids, slugging, complete wreckage of halls and homes, smashing of all typewriters and equipment and mass arrests carried out by uniformed police and special detachments of Legionnaires reinforced by Hergoff gunmen, failed of their purpose. All night long special patrols spied on hotels and rooming houses looking for “outside agitators”. They found none. The Communist Party district workers are all still on the job.

Large amounts of literature are being distributed, including a special edition of the *Western Worker*.

Eleven places were raided and wrecked yesterday and last night. Latest figures are 200 arrested last night alone. Wrecked places are: Workers Book Store, *Western Worker* offices, Party District headquarters, Workers School, Workers Center on Fillmore St., Workers Neighborhood House on Valencia St., M.W.I.U. Hall, Ex-Servicemen’s Headquarters on Howard St., the home of Don A. McKee on Linden St. A raid was also made on the I.L.A. feeding station and the homes of two workers named Prater and Moore in Richmond, across the Bay, were wrecked. The local press plays all this up as the work of union men enraged by Communist activities.

The facts are that it was a deliberately organized reign of terror by the various middle-class, employers and employees dominated by fascist and semi-fascist fraternal organizations.

The strike-breaking resolution was railroaded through the Labor Council’s general strike committee last night by methods so raw that even conservative union leaders like Mallen of the Longshoremen’s Union were moved to protest. The maritime unions, the decisive part of the general strike, voted solidly against the arbitration

resolution, which dropped even the demand for union hiring halls, the crux of the present strike. Frank Ryan, secretary of the local International Seamen's Union; Mallen, of the local longshoreman; Harry Bridges, district I.L.A. secretary, and other leaders, have all issued statements against the proposal.

It was adopted by the close vote of 207 to 180.

The cue for the mass raids and arrests was given by General Johnson in his Berkeley University speech accepting Phi Beta Kappa key. Defining the general strike as an insurrection, Johnson put the seal of his approval on all the fascist measures taken against workers and their organizations and gave a political basis for the retreat of the reactionary leaders last night. The division of labor among the heads of the Roosevelt administration now concentrated on the Coast is truly remarkable. Senator Wagner pauses in Portland long enough to get the general strike movement there postponed until the action of the strike committee here is known.

Johnson gives the line for the procedure here, while Ed McGrady works closely with the local reactionary union officials. To all of this, Archbishop Hanna gives his episcopal blessing. Secretary Perkins has sent another representative, one Donohue, to take care of any small details. There never was a truer word said than that the chief activity of Roosevelt's N.R.A. is strikebreaking.

It can be said with considerable confidence, even in the face of such powerful opposition, that the maritime trades, longshoreman, seamen, etc., are going to continue their own section of the general strike no matter what the other unions do. The maritime unions can surrender the demand of union hiring halls only by accepting the open shop.

The general strike which started yesterday in the Oakland Alameda section, involving close to 35,000 workers, has greatly strengthened the strike movement in all the Bay Counties and on the Coast generally, since this is where the metal and other more important industries of this area are located. The Communist Party District Committee held an enlarged meeting here yesterday. In a seven-hour session reports of the situation were heard and a resolution on the work of the district adopted unanimously.

V. Juggling the Votes

San Francisco, Cal., July 20. – The strike of Maritime Workers beaded by Harry Bridges continues.

The Market Street Carmen, members of the Amalgamated Association, have voted practically unanimously against returning to work. A company union formerly dominated the situation but shortly before and during the general strike the A.A. was organized.

The men have made demands for higher wages and better working conditions. The cars are being operated, however, with strike-breakers under police protection and so far there has been no attempt to picket the car barns or lines. Further sympathy strike action in support of the carmen is a possibility.

The statement in previous dispatches that there was no real desire to return to work on the part of the rank and file involved in the general strike even in face of the barrage of employer propaganda, the organized Red scare and the deluge of demagoguery and threats with which the press has been inundating the working class, is confirmed by the closeness of the vote in the strike committee on the question of the return to work.

The vote was 174 against a return to work and 191 for. The workers were betrayed but not defeated. There is small comfort in the situation for the open shop employers, the press, the local union bureaucrats or the Roosevelt administration.

The hangers-on of the employers are venting their anger on the Communist Party and all organizations suspected of Communist sympathies in addition to the fascist attacks on striking marine workers.

VI. Cowardly Scoundrelism of Leaders

San Francisco, July 20. – A cowardly scoundrelism tempered by the hypocrisy of the so-called sane labor leadership of the Central General Strike Committee, has isolated the still striking maritime trades. The return to work, in many cases disguised under the permit system which has now partially been made into a racket – fees of ten to fifty dollars and up being charged for permits, the money going into various dark channels – has become general among the shore trades.

The Dollar and Matson lines have wired all their ships at sea with San Francisco as their home port, to return here. Since these ships have been loaded and unloaded in other ports since the strike of the maritime trade, it is clear that the intention is now to work them with strikebreakers under the guns of the 5,000 National Guardsmen, cooperating with thousands of regular and special po-

lice, whose lines extend along a five-mile front and whose outposts reach into San Francisco proper as far up as Third Street.

With these facts in mind, the strike-breaking character of the whole arbitration strategy of the Roosevelt administration, headed here now by General Johnson, and the cooperation of Vandeleur, Kidwell, Casey and McLaughlin, is seen in its full meaning. No sooner was it announced that by juggling delegates, refusing registration and roll call of delegates, and other standard gyp methods, the agents of the employers had succeeded in dividing the ranks of the strikers on the question of continuation of the strike, than General Johnson and the entire employers' press delivered an ultimatum.

Its best expression, as is to be expected, is found in the liberal San Francisco *News*, a Scripps-Howard paper. Its main headline for Wednesday said: "Go back to work, arbitrate, Board tells workers".

VII. Deliberately Organized Betrayal

San Francisco, July 23. – Many, if not most, of the betrayals in American labor struggles have been more or less accidental or organized on the spur of the moment. The San Francisco betrayal was planned in advance. It was deliberate.

The "real leaders of organized labor" – as Mayor Rossi of San Francisco and the press call them – have begun to talk: Secrets are being told. There is a wonderful atmosphere of good fellowship even though there is no honor among the members of the cabal which conspired to "go along" with the general strike, demanded by the resolute workers of the ten maritime trade unions headed by Harry Bridges, in order to betray it.

The potent drug that is distilled by the process of fraternization with the great has gone speedily to the heads of the "real leaders of organized labor". Fawning on Farley, wrangling with Wagner to divide the ranks of labor, shaking hands with General Johnson and giving slavering approval to his fascist denunciations of Communists and all honestly militant working class leaders whom Ryan, Vandeleur and Company were unable to alienate the rank and file of workers, these "gentlemen's gentlemen" of the American robber class are making some revealing statements.

First on the list of loose talkers is one Joseph Patrick Ryan – National President of the International Longshoremen's Association. In trying to select the most important and characteristic of his recent utterances one suffers from an embarrassment of riches.

Perhaps the statement most indicative of the defeatist conspiracy – practically without parallel in the annals of the American labor movement – to deliver a mass strike movement into the hands of its class enemies, is that contained in Ryan’s telegram to Major Rossi published in the *San Francisco News* for July 20:

“As one good pal to another, wish I were with you. It will all come out all right.”

Little comment is needed on this effusion. It is directed to the mayor whose police shot and killed two members of the union of which Ryan is president, and wounded 32 more by gunfire upon unarmed pickets.

It is directed to the mayor, whose police protect the fascist bands now beating up striking members of the I.L.A.

If Harry Bridges and the maritime trades strike committee do not have photostatic copies made of the *San Francisco News*’ story and distribute some 50,000 of them to waterfront workers, they are far less able than we think they are. If Ryan thinks he can get away with this kind of stuff merely because General Johnson denounced Bridges in his speech yesterday in the Hollywood Bowl he is completely ignorant of the temper of the men upon whose dues payments he lives.

But rarely do Communists have their estimates confirmed so rapidly as by Ryan in another statement issued in New York, and sent out by the United Press. The wave of righteous indignation which came from the “real leaders of organized labor” in the Central Labor Council of San Francisco – and which prompted the press to go into spasms of anti-Communist diatribes – when it was reported here that Earl Browder, speaking for the Central Committee of the Communist Party, had written in the *Daily Worker* that these leaders had headed the general strike in order to be in a position to betray it, was something to write home about.

Proof of Planned Treachery

Joseph P. Ryan obligingly makes the concrete admissions that were lacking to make the indictment preferred by Browder factually complete. In the U.P. dispatch *from New York, dated July 20, the San Francisco News says:*

“Conservative union leaders sanctioned the San Francisco general strike to force a showdown and terminate the activities of Harry Bridges, radical longshoremen’s leader, according to Joseph P. Ryan, President of the I.L.A.

“The longshoremen’s chief said that when he reached the West Coast last May he found the grievances of the maritime workers real, but that the employers had refused to deal with them because the West Coast longshoremen do not have responsible leadership.

“In his contacts with Mr. Bridges, Mr. Ryan said, he found that the man would not be bound by majority feeling and that he was following a course of arbitrary decisions.

“Mr. Bridges went with 75 active followers to union meetings of all sorts, relating the grievances of the longshoremen and calling for sympathy strikes.

“This active minority group, Mr. Ryan said, finally tied up labor in so many individual branches that the Central Trades and Labor Council decided the remedy was violent action designed to have a quick ending. Their view of the general strike, Mr. Ryan said, was that it would be a strike to end strikes.”

The “Crime” of Bridges

The crime of Bridges is clear. He appealed to the rank and file of the unions over the heads of the “real leaden of organized labor”. The rank and file supported the policy of strike action in sympathy with the maritime trades. The “responsible leadership” the employers desire is that of the Ryan type who agreed from the start to “share” the control of hiring halls with the employers; this means nothing more or less than employers’ control of hiring halls and the open shop.

Bridges and the maritime workers’ strike committee were “bound by majority feeling”. They had the majority of the *workers* with them. But not a majority of the “*real leaders*”.

What Ryan really means – although his statements are so clear as to require little explanation – is that Vandeleur, Casey of the Teamsters Union, Kidwell and others endorsed the *general strike* so as to be in a better position *to defeat the strife of the longshoremen*. Bridges could not be defeated without defeating the strike of the maritime trades.

The strike-breaking process is now going ahead under full steam. General Johnson speaks in the Hollywood Bowl in a national broadcast mainly for the purpose of denouncing this Australian, Bridges, trusted leader of the Pacific Coast maritime workers, as a person who has “not even the simple dignity of American citizenship”. Johnson accompanied this magnificent piece of Roosevelt administration blackguardism with endorsement of the fascist onslaughts upon Communists and militant workers up and down the coast and throughout the inland agricultural regions.

The issue for the collection of great master minds of Roosevelt mustered for recovery is not that the striking maritime workers are demanding the right to organize better wages and working conditions and the right to run their unions themselves, and that the waterfront employers deny these rights, but that the outstanding leader happens to have been born in Australia! “Whom the gods would destroy, etc.”

Michael Casey

Next comes Michael Casey, The members of the Teamsters Union, which is unfortunate enough to have him as its head, were the first to strike in sympathy with the longshoremen. They are in a strategic position – they are truck drivers and not teamsters; Teamsters Union is an anachronistic term, as anachronistic as Casey himself – since they control the transport of unloaded cargo from the docks to railways, warehouses, etc.

The vote of the Teamsters Union to return to work after the general strike had been ended, was, according to Casey’s statement to the press, “without reservation”. But before the vote was taken there was much explanation to the membership that this did not mean hauling “scab” cargo, that it did not mean that they would desert the maritime workers, etc. The press was even confused on the issue.

After the vote there was a different tale. We quote from the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* for July 21:

“The teamsters’ vote was 1,139 to 283” – “without reservation.” [The waterfront driver’s section evidently cast a big vote against the return to work without reservations. – B.D.] “They began at once to haul off and on the docks, in complete disregard of the pier workers’ strike.... Moreover, Michael J. Casey, president of the union, an-

nounced that the union will protect its trucks and drivers from any interference by the strikers. Union guards were assigned to squad cars and placed at strategic points.

“The action of the teamsters was admittedly a severe blow to the embattled longshoremen and seamen. With the exception of the latter the only workers still on strike are the Market Street railway employees.”

“More than 70 per cent of the teamsters’ work is on the waterfront,” said J. F. Vizzard, president of the Draymen’s Association (employers). *“The longshoreman will have to go back to work now”*

The National Guardsmen are still in control of the waterfront and adjacent streets so that the drivers are working under military rule, although the General Strike Committee made the gesture of “requesting” the withdrawal of all troops. The Industrial Association trucks are also still operating on the waterfront so that the union teamsters are working side by side with the professional strike-breakers who man these 35 trucks.

William Green

Let us hear now from William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, who, right at the tensest moment of the historic conflict, announced that the workers did not have the sanction of the A. F. of L. leadership for their heroic struggle, and that it had “no national significance”. He is quoted in a Washington dispatch dated July 21 as saying, in reference to the ending of the general strike:

“That means that now the organized labor movement in San Francisco and elsewhere can give all support possible to the striking longshoremen and associated organizations, and can demand and require that the differences and disputes responsible for the longshoremen’s strike are all submitted to a fair tribunal for final division and final settlement.”

The general strike was endorsed by the “real leaders of organized labor” so they could maneuver themselves into a position to antagonize the lower middle class elements of the population by means of a thousand unnecessary inconveniences, so they could furnish the press with ammunition for the barrage against the Communists and militant union men who stood for a well-organized and

effective general strike, and for the campaign of slander and vilification against the maritime workers and their militant leadership.

VIII. The Rift in the Capitalist Ranks

San Francisco, July 27. – The voting and negotiations centering around the return to work by the longshoremen; their expressed determination to delay their return until there are suitable guarantees that the seamen and other maritime unions will be recognized by the employers, have served to show, since the union shop versus the open shop was the central issue in the great struggles here, how the marine workers' strike and the general strike have widened the rift in the ranks of California capitalists and their associates.

The Hearst press and Hearst himself froth at the mouth over the "betrayal" of the open shop drive.

The joint committee of the maritime unions demanded the following guarantees from the President's board: *Removal of all strike-breakers and armed guards from the waterfront; no discrimination against any 'workers for union activities; all "sidewalk" hiring to be discontinued; hiring to be done through the union halls.*

Ralph Mallen, head of the publicity committee of the International Longshoremen's Association, stated, evidently speaking for the strike committee, that he was certain the I. L. A. members would not return to work until the seamen did.

Such conclusive evidence of the fact that the maritime workers have not been defeated is the main reason for the turn the conflict among various capitalist groups has taken in the last few days.

There are even many strange but heartening tales told of the sentiment among the National Guardsmen occupying the waterfront. People who should know say that a big majority of the guardsmen were against strikebreaking and that the officers, for the most part heads or high-salaried executives of big corporations, at no time felt that they could depend upon the majority of their forces in decisive action. In any event the officers moved staff headquarters onto a ship out in the bay after passing some rather anxious nights on the waterfront. It is not to be understood that the National Guardsmen were on the point of mutiny or anything of that sort. But they did not like their dirty job, many of them said so, and their morale was low at all times.

There is a tremendous popular reaction against the police and the authorities generally as a result of the destructive raids, beatings,

deportations, burning of books and other property, arbitrary mass arrests. There is popular disgust with the wave of terror that swept through practically every California city and town and which was organized in cooperation with and participated in by the police.

The Hearst press, however, continues to insist that the nation was saved from revolution by these atrocities.

“The newspapers of San Francisco,” says Hearst in a first page editorial, “had repeatedly denounced the strike, not merely as a rebellion, but as *revolution*....

“It was an attempt by force and violence to depose all constituted authority and to destroy established American institutions.

“The citizens of San Francisco have, and have had from the beginning, a full appreciation of the significance of the Communist revolution and a shrewd understanding of the causes of it.”

And, according to the Hearst press, the chief cause is that:

“As a matter of frank fact, much of the administration is more Communistic than the Communists themselves.

“And it is the firm opinion of many conservative citizens that the revolution in California against stable government and established order would never have occurred except for the sympathy and encouragement which the fomenters of the revolution were receiving or believed they were receiving from those high in the counsel of the administration.”

Thieves Fall Out

There you have it! The thieves have fallen out over the question of tactics, over the question of how best to preserve what remains of once flourishing American capitalism, over the question as to how best to combat the growing consciousness and rising militancy of the American labor movement.

The San Francisco *News* (Scripps-Howard) is also right up in the forefront of the forces for saving the republic from Communism.

It attacks N.R.A, from another angle, combining the question of federal relief for striking workers with the issue of Communist tactics. This great liberal sheet goes further in its slander of Communists than the Hearst press. On July 23 in its “news behind the news” column one *Ira Bennett* has the following to say:

“Communist intrigue and feeding of strikers by the F. E. R. A. are the two factors- which make this country’s strike situation more menacing than former labor disturbances.

“...Systematic death threats by Communists within labor organizations have cowed conservative members in hundreds of instances. They and their families are threatened with death, kidnapping and bombing if they obstruct Communist plans. By this method, minorities led by trained agitators have captured control of many labor unions. The object in all cases is to prevent strike settlements and to provoke labor and feed riots and burnings in an effort to overthrow the authorities and hasten national revolution.”

Outside the ravings of Ku Kluxers and vigilante chieftains who are paid so much per rave, it would be hard to find a more deliberate attempt at provocation than the above.

The Washington Bureau of the Associated Press also openly became a propaganda office for the employers during the strike.

This is one dangerous aspect of the California situation – the unrestrained slander of Communists, which furnishes the moral justification for the campaign of atrocities.

There is another side. Mr. Hearst, during the strike and thereafter, turned a lot of his bright young men loose to cover all Communist angles. They did a swell job. Nowhere in the United States in the same length of time have the readers of the Hearst press had such an opportunity to receive a political education. *In four days this writer counted 56 columns of type* in the Hearst sheets devoted to reprinting an editorial statement by Earl Browder, important parts of an article by Jack Stachel on trade union work, numerous extracts from C.P. resolutions and theses, long quotations from numerous articles by this writer, long sections from *Daily Worker* editorials and Party pamphlets, history of general strike movements, etc., etc.

The *Western Worker* office had been raided and demolished, and anyone caught reading the *Daily Worker* was arrested.

But Mr. Hearst kept his boys busy and rendered truly yeoman service to Communism. Many Communist sympathizers whose practical work had left them little time to devote to theoretical study were able because of the Hearst policy to catch up with their reading at small cost. The Hearst sheets gave circulation to articles on Communist theory and tactics that the Party could not have purchased for a million dollars.

This, like the rift in the ranks of California capitalists, and the ferocious fight waged on the Roosevelt administration program by a section of the capitalist class, is the result of more acute inner contradictions of the system.

They will increase as the struggle over the question of the proper tempo of fascist development involves other sections of the country as deeply as it has the Pacific Coast.

IX. Waterfront Workers Out-Maneuver Bosses

San Francisco, July 28. – Behind the *re-appearance* of an advertisement today for strike-breaking longshoremen and winch drivers in the local papers over the signature of the Waterfront Employers' Union is a story of working class solidarity marked by grim humor which, like so many other recent acts of Pacific Coast workers, sets a new record in the American labor movement.

In and around the I.L.A. headquarters and those of the Joint Strike Committee of the Maritime Unions there is loud and ribald laughter.

Strolling by the offices of the Waterfront Employers' Union in and those of the Industrial Association one hears low moans of exquisite anguish.

The longshoremen and their militant leadership have once more out-maneuvered the employers and their various agencies – including the President's "mediation" Board: They voted to go back to work – but they did not say when.

They have not gone back to work and they are not going back to work until the votes of the seamen and the other eight maritime workers' unions have been registered.

There is great grief in Gideon and the supply of balm in Gilead, augmented by the end of the general strike and the decision of the longshoremen to return to work, has again reached a low point.

Most of the strike-breakers on the docks left hurriedly when the troops were withdrawn. Most of the remainder left when the special police were discharged. The rest of them, having great confidence in the veracity of the Waterfront Employers' Union and the local press, believed that the union men were going back to work Saturday, and hurriedly sought other fields.

Longshore work is a hazardous occupation even in normal times. Strike-breaking longshore work, without the protection of troops and special police, under present conditions, undoubtedly

involves special and additional risks of which intense nervous strain is not the least.

So the strike-breaking patriots employed on the waterfront took it on the lam. There has been no unseemly rush to answer the ads for strike-breakers which state, contrary to the formal facts, that "strike conditions prevail". The strike has been called off. With the greatest regard for all formalities the longshoremen voted to return to their jobs. But no cargo is being loaded or unloaded by union men.

Proletarian Solidarity

The waterfront workers are giving one of the finest demonstrations of proletarian solidarity and discipline ever seen in a labor struggle in this country. Such a demonstration, after 80 days of bitter strike struggle, after the cold-blooded betrayal of their strike by the officially recognized "real leaders of organized labor", could be undertaken and carried out only by a leadership that has the complete confidence of the rank and file and by a rank and file that has developed a higher consciousness and determination in the first line trenches of the class conflict, holding the most important sector of a 2,000-mile battlefield.

The longshoremen are not going back until two questions are settled. First, the question of representation for and recognition of the other maritime unions. Second, the question of hiring halls. The hiring halls have to be under union supervision if not actual union control. The immediate objective is to have the dock foremen, who do the real hiring, come to the union halls for their men.

Naturally, this does not meet with the approval of the waterfront employers or of the Industrial Association. But, as things stand, it looks like there is not very much they can do about it.

Contrary to what may be the opinion outside of the San Francisco waterfront, and the mere statement of the fact has a miraculous sound, *it is the forces of the employers that have been demolished.* The maritime unions lost their active reserves when the general strike was betrayed but their own forces, always the militant core of the strike movement, are practically intact.

The longshoremen simply do not go to work. The employers were evidently somewhat deluded by their own publicity agents. They actually convinced themselves that it was only necessary to raid and smash Communist headquarters, raid and smash homes,

beat up and arrest known Communists and militants, whip up the Red scare and slug strikers, start a deportation drive – and the waterfront strike would collapse.

Out of some 500 to 600 arrests, the courts have been able to fix a few vagrancy charges and collect the stupendous total of 15 alleged aliens held for investigation by the immigration authorities. (In Sacramento the cases are more serious. There the authorities have preferred criminal syndicalism charges against Caroline Decker, Pat Chambers and 24 other workers and organizers of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Union.)

Yesterday longshoremen's laughter drowned out the shriek of tugboat and ferry whistles. With all due ceremony a crew went aboard the Australian liner Makura. Their pictures were taken and all afternoon papers featured them. The press rejoiced. The longshoremen were hard at work with happy, smiling faces. They seemed not to resent the long series of slanders, sluggings, killings, and military and police tyrannies.

But one could wring tears out of the next editions of the papers. The longshoremen who boarded the Makura, it developed, *had unloaded only the mail.*

Touch No Cargo

In response to insistent requests they replied that they were not touching any cargo yet and *would not touch any cargo until they had instructions to that effect, from their headquarters.*

So the advertisements for strike-breakers were again inserted in the daily press. But the fervor to serve the golden state of California on the part of many bankrupt businessmen, briefless lawyers, jobless advertising executives and real estate sharks without victims, the middle class urge to wipe out the disgrace of a waterfront tie-up in this historic port, has declined in direct proportion to the number of troops and special policemen on the docks.

Following the withdrawal of the 5,000 National Guardsmen with their artillery and tanks, the desire for patriotic service in moving cargo under the eyes of union pickets seems to be very weak.

The President's Board is in what is often referred to as a quandary. What can you do with longshoremen who refuse to desert their fellow workers in the other maritime unions and, with actions speaking louder than words, refuse to go to work until they have

what they consider genuine guarantees that their demands will be acceded to?

The prestige of the waterfront workers and their organizations is mounting higher in the other unions. The prestige of the employers' organizations and of the President's Board is decreasing. As one member of the maritime workers' delegation remarked irreverently after leaving the august presence of the President's three ecclesiastical, legal and labor department appointees: "They look like fruit to me!"

Mr. Hearst complains bitterly in his editorial today that even Mr. Edward McGrady seems unable to do any effective strike-breaking work in the present situation.

These San Francisco longshoremen and their leading committees deserve the acclaim and unstinted support of every section of the American working class. They have won it. They have disregarded the employers' cry of peace when there was no peace. They have adapted their tactics to meet new situations as they arose. They are teaching the great lesson that American labor, so many of whose victories won in strikes are bargained away in negotiations with the enemy, need to learn: *Not only in time of peace to prepare for war, but in time of war to prepare for "peace"*.

X. How the C.P. Emerged From Illegality

San Francisco, Aug. 1. – The speed with which the Communist Party here is emerging from the conditions of illegality and semi-illegality forced upon it is probably the most striking evidence of the popular disgust with and hatred for the recent excesses of the fascist elements financed by the Industrial Association and other organizations of the employers.

It is inconceivable that the Communist Party should have been able in so short a time to resume open activity in such important sectors of the class struggle as the fight against fascism and imperialist war, after the coastwise raids, arrests and beatings, without a wide base of support among the working class and also among large sections of the lower middle class.

Outstanding among the recent developments are:

The *Western Worker* has appeared. It got a warm welcome from workers. In spite of technical defects due to obvious difficulties, the paper in its four pages manages to deal with all major events of the class struggle that have occurred since its last issue. It is being distrib-

uted on the waterfront by members of the International Longshoremen's Association. The longshoremen apparently enjoy this work. They seem to consider it a real slap in the face to the employers.

The main feature of the *Western Worker* is a statement on the strike signed jointly by Earl Browder and Sam Darcy. Fully aware of warnings conveyed in the "Letters from Readers" column of the *Daily Worker* about "sensationalism", this writer nevertheless is constrained to say that this statement is sensational in its utter simplicity.

It is a complete answer to the question posed by the capitalist press and its labor officialdom and socialist and near-socialist allies like Upton Sinclair, the major question in regard to what were the principal issues in the strike.

The basic issues of wages, hours, working conditions, and the union shop versus the closed shop as it appeared in the central question of hiring halls, are set forth clearly. The statement destroys the inspired contention that the San Francisco strike had insurrection as its primary purpose. A proletarian poem, startling in its thrilling defiance, is published on page three.

Last night an anti-war meeting was scheduled for Polk Hall in the Civic Auditorium. The police, acting in accord with a recent ruling of the City Council that no meetings of a "seditious" character should be tolerated in municipal buildings, prohibited the gathering.

But volunteer ushers passed out cards giving the new place of meeting at 1133 Mission Street and with really working class discipline the audience assembled there to listen to speakers with whom the police did not dare interfere.

Day by day the wrecked headquarters are being reopened. There are, of course, no guarantees that a new wave of fascist terror will not wreck them again. But the Communist Party is working. It is on the job.

All of this is possible because the waterfront workers defeated the attempt of the employers and their press to split their ranks. The Communist Party did a good job regardless of what might be called the ignorant enthusiasm of young elements that resulted in some useless arrests. The important parts of the Communist Party machinery remain intact.

A Left-wing conference of maritime workers from up and down the Coast will be held about the middle of the month. It will adopt a program for workers on 2,000 miles of waterfront.

XI. How the Terror Drive Was Organized

San Francisco, Aug. 1. – The general strike of all unions, except railway and electrical, in San Francisco, Oakland and the Bay counties – which followed the general strike of marine transport workers in practically all Pacific Coast ports, big and little, reaching from Seattle to San Diego – is now history. All its far-reaching results cannot be appraised in this article. Neither will we deal here with the important question of the various parts played by the class forces and their representatives involved in this great struggle. Here we will take up only two points:

The demagoguery with which the attempt was made to cover utter reaction and the organizational methods by which fascist bands were set up to carry out the campaign of red-baiting, house-searching and wrecking, beating, union smashing and mass arrests numbering, as this is written, some 500.

It must be remembered, if there is to be any real understanding of the issues in both the strike of the waterfront workers and the general strike, that the waterfront employers among whom are *listed the Standard Oil Company with its great tanker fleet and other big oil companies*, more or less dominating the other shipping and stevedoring concerns, were engaged in their favorite pastime – *they were waging an open-shop campaign*. This is the point from which everything else in the strike situation started.

The Communist Party, explaining to great masses of aroused workers the meaning of this drive in connection with the whole capitalist offensive under N.R.A., and getting a tremendous response resulting in the forming of a militant Left-wing core among the waterfront workers, was endangering the success of the open-shop drive. The arbitration issue which later arose was simply a maneuver on the part of the waterfront employers aided by the President's board to confuse and divide the strike ranks.

It is obvious that such questions as union-managed hiring halls for longshoremen can under no circumstances be arbitrated simply because this demand expressed the difference between the open shop and the union shop. It is exactly for this reason that the waterfront employers at first agreed to arbitration of all questions. This is why the reactionary union officials on the general strike committee also agreed to it.

It is also the reason why *the longshoremen refused to arbitrate*

the issue. This is why it became the breaking point between the reactionary and the Left-wing leaders like Harry Bridges.

Essentially the issue was the right of workers to organize and manage their own unions. It was understood as such by practically all workers and their puppets in public office.

The Communist Party and its *Western Worker* – which for a time was the official organ of the waterfront strike committee – appeared as the most conscious and militant champion of the right to organize and the union shop.

Acting Governor Merriam was, from the first day of the strike, the pace setter for the campaign against the Communist Party – which he tried at all times to identify with “subversive aliens” – and against the more advanced section of the working class. In a public statement which called for the organization of “*citizens’ committees*” to aid in driving back the threatening plague of famine,^{*} violence[†] and indescribable terrors still unleashed, Merriam did, so far as this writer is aware, an unprecedented thing: He referred in his capacity as acting governor to the fact that Harry Bridges, responsible head of the striking longshoremen, and an Australian by birth, was an alien. Merriam said:

“It should likewise be remembered that I did not order the California national guard to proceed to the San Francisco waterfront until I had received notice from an alien [Harry Bridges], speaking in behalf of the striking longshoremen, that further operations by the State of California of its state-owned Belt Line railroad along the state-owned harbor would not be ‘permitted’.”

The Acting Governor had preceded these remarks on the strike situation by saying:

“A more active and intensified drive to rid this state and nation of alien radical agitators should be undertaken by the workers themselves if they are to enjoy the confidence of the people.” (Workers are evidently not people. – B.D.)

^{*} At no time was there danger of a food shortage.

[†] All violence of a major character was instituted by the police, troops and fascist bands.

“It is the plotting of such alien and vicious schemers, not the legitimate and recognized objects of bona fide American workers, that has intensified and aggravated our labor problems.”

Truly a calm and dignified statement from the governor of a great commonwealth!

When it is recalled that every union involved in the strike was affiliated to the American Federation of Labor – with the exception of the Marine Workers Industrial Union – it will be seen how little the government officials of American capitalism care about the proprieties of their relations with the “bona fide” labor movement when these organized workers are on the offensive to establish their right to work and live, and the right of their organizations to exist and function.

The Real Issues

Concretely, the demands of the unions were:

Those of the I.L.A. – control of hiring halls; union recognition; higher pay and shorter hours.

Those of the Seamen’s Union – control of hiring agencies; union recognition; higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions.

The other maritime trades had struck in sympathy with the longshoremen and had made their own demands relating to wages, hours, working conditions and union recognition.

The general strike was in support of these unions and their demands; against the use of the National Guard to protect strikebreakers; in protest against the police assault in which two workers were killed and thirty-two wounded by police bullets.

There certainly are no insurrectionary demands here – unless the attitude of the employers and their state is such that these modest demands – of a standard American trade union character – are considered tantamount to a declaration of civil war against the employers and their government.

Now, in regard to demagogy and hypocrisy – the one expressed in approval of bona fide demands, the other in *concern for the welfare of “the people”* whose confidence may be shaken in some 100,000 workers taking part in the general strike in the Bay Counties:

Who Is Governor Merriam?

Just who is Acting Governor Merriam?

In answering this question we can afford to believe the *Sacramento Bee*, published in the capital of the state of which Merriam is acting governor, right under his nose, in fact. He has not as yet taken any action against this paper as a result of an editorial published by it on July 16 which said, among other things, in speaking of the political situation:

“Today these forces of retrogression, owing to a peculiar succession of political circumstances, threaten to dominate the state again. And they have chosen as their candidate Acting Governor Frank F. Merriam, a man they can depend upon entirely to do their bidding.

“Merriam has been the willing aid of the corporate interests of the state since he began his first term in the legislature in 1916. In 1924 it was his vote, upon which the progressives had counted, that caused the defeat of the King tax bill.... Merriam’s vote was always on the side of big business... he has always been hand in glove with a little group of diehards... *the chore boy of the Chandlers and Requas.*”

There is more of this, but this will do. It appears from the above record that as far back as 1921 Merriam sold out his own colleagues for the money and influence of the power trust. (We are not dealing here with the virtues or lack of them in the so-called progressive group.) It seems clear that Acting Governor Merriam is what workers in their crude way call a rat – in his relation with his own class.

It is this sterling character that sounded the call for the righteous to rally for the struggle against Communism and militant foreign-born workers. It was the noble soul that was worried about labor losing the confidence of “the people”. It was this Galahad that gave official sanction to the organization of committees and roving bands of corporation hangers-on for the purpose of strike-breaking, hunting down and beating Communists and other workers. It was this creature of the power trust who, together with Mayor Rossi of San Francisco, urged on the fascist storm squads to the raiding of workers’ homes, the slugging of strikers, the destruction by armed bands of the halls, headquarters, furniture, banners, books and pamphlets, musical instruments, of everything found in workers’ clubs – the destruction of cultural collections paid for by workers’ dimes and pennies over many long years.

Brave acts these! Heroic persons who perform this great service to society! A striker is known to have a gun in his home. The police arrest him. They take his gun away and release him. He goes home. He is there a few minutes and an armed band breaks in, drags him out and beats him into unconsciousness.

Who Are the Terrorists?

The police are “unable” to find the assailants. So widespread did their form of terror against striking longshoremen and their families become that E. S. Dietrich, chairman of the legal committee of the I.L.A., informed Judge Lazarus that he had instructed stevedores to arm themselves at home, after several of them and their wives had been beaten, and the police seemed unable to catch those responsible (*San Francisco News*, July 19).

Judge Lazarus was very helpful. He asked Dietrich “to furnish the police with the names of the assailants”.

Who were these “assailants” the police “seemed unable to catch”? How were they organized? How did they operate?

The answers to these questions are of great importance since they furnish a sort of blueprint of the byways by which fascist organization is developing rapidly in this country, appearing in rather definite forms in decisive struggles.

It is of course impossible to prove at this stage that the anti-Red and anti-labor movement which reached its height in California during and after the general strike in the Bay Counties, but which swept up and down the entire coast, was financed directly by the big waterfront employers out of the \$2,000,000 fund they are known to have raised for the light against unionism.

But it is morally certain that out of the huge total of daily strike-breaking expense some percentage was diverted to financing the activities of the fascist bands. A letter from the head of the Water Front Employers Union (!) fell into the hands of the I.L.A. in San Francisco. A facsimile of this letter was published in the *Western Worker*. From this letter we learn that the total daily expense for strikebreaking in San Pedro alone – the port of Los Angeles – was \$7,000, Multiply this by thirty and we get a total of \$210,000 per month or approximately \$2,000,000 per year. There were times when Hitler was glad to have as much as this at his disposal.

When the general strike broke in the Bay Counties the total daily and monthly expenditures of the employers and their various agencies

must have been many times the total expended for like periods in San Pedro. That the various forms of terroristic organization have not lacked funds furnished by the employers, one can be sure.

A month or two before the waterfront strike, and increasing in tempo as the strike involved ever larger numbers of workers and the influence of the Communists and Left-wing forces increased, there was to be noticed a general tightening up of the police agencies. Raids and arrests mounted in number.

Shortly before the general strike the American Legion organized an Anti-Red Week. Partly to carry through the anti-Red program and partly developing out of the general anti-labor activity around it, there was organized a so-called Citizens' Committee, mainly to broaden out the campaign, but also because of the opposition of a number of Legion posts, where the membership was composed principally of longshoremen and other workers, to the whole campaign which they correctly estimated as a strike-breaking weapon.

Following Anti-Red Week a number of sub-committees were organized. They were to handle such matters as names and addresses of known Reds, publicity, general espionage (intelligence service) forms and methods of terror, liaison with other organizations, etc.

Within the County Council of the Legion a close committee was formed to handle all these matters. It was known as the Anti-Red Committee and is said to have consisted at various times of from 10 to 30 members.

When the Crime Prevention Bureau of the San Francisco Police Department was reorganized and became the Anti-Radical and Crime Prevention Bureau headed by Captain O'Mara, the Legion Committee through its Citizens' Committee established direct working connections with it.

Selected members of the sub-committees were given about 75 photographs and alleged records of known and suspected Communists. They were given orders to locate, trail and spy upon the person whose photograph they had. They were required to submit detailed reports.

In this way the Legion Anti-Red Committee and its various subcommittees became to all intents a part of the police department, the members devoting themselves mainly to anti-labor espionage.

When the general strike was called Mayor Rossi formed his Constitutional Committee of Five Hundred. Mayor McCracken of

Oakland raised the ante considerably and called upon *all* “good citizens” to register for service. It is claimed that some 3,000 registered in response to this call – not a very impressive number for a city which claims some 300,000 population.

The Legion’s Anti-Red Committee was largely taken over by and amalgamated with the enlarged Citizen’s Committees. The members of these organizations have at least a semi-legal standing and the full backing of the so-called constituted authorities. The members of the Legion’s County Council sub-committees have the status of deputy sheriffs or special police. This is not because of any great regard for legality, but chiefly to place any of their worker victims who resist their attacks in the position of resisting an officer of the law.

The operations of these various committees are purely fascist in type. That they resemble also the former activities of the Ku Klux Klan is no contradiction. The outstanding principle of the heroic defenders of capitalist law and order who make up these committees is to take no chances.

This was the principle invoked for their guidance by General Hugh Johnson in his now famous Phi Beta Kappa speech at Berkeley University which gave the signal for letting loose the terror campaign which Acting Governor Merriam and Mayor Rossi had already organized. Johnson referred to “the one-half of one per cent of the population” which was not going along with the glorious New Deal. He told his audience that “it would be safer for a cottontail rabbit to slap a wildcat in the face than for this one-half of one per cent of our population to try to strangle the rest of us into submission by any such means as this”.

“The people”, said General Johnson, “would act to wipe out this subversive element as you clean off a chalk mark on a blackboard with a wet sponge”, if the federal government did not act. Labor, said the general, “must run these subversive influences out from its ranks like rats if it is to retain the respect and support of the American people, etc., etc.” “Bloody insurrection”⁶ was in progress, he said.

At the moment the General spoke, about one per cent of the population was running this country for its own benefit – for the benefit of its little clique of millionaire monopolists.

Two strikers had been murdered by police and professional thugs. Thirty-two had been wounded by gunfire. There were Some

5,000 National Guardsmen on the waterfront with tanks and artillery. Thousands of regular and special police were mobilized from Seattle to San Diego. There could not have been less than 30,000 fully armed police and troops against 100,000 unarmed striking workers.

It would seem that these citizens who were opposing the strike openly were fairly well protected without further organization of a fascist character. But General Johnson's speech gave government sanction to what will in all probability prove to be, not the birth of actual fascist terror in America, but something more than that – the first widespread raging on the loose of this bestial child of capitalism in decay.

On the day on which this is written I have just read of last night in Berkeley. The San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* reports gleefully “that a mob of 300 men smashed into a Communist hall at 1819 Tenth Street, wrecked four pianos and a radio, splintered several hundred chairs and *destroyed a \$1,000 library*”.

The same paper reports further: “The crash of shattering window glass awakened the residents of widely scattered Berkeley homes early today as emissaries of a mysterious ‘citizens’ purging committee’ cruised the city and hurled brick-tied notes of warning. ‘Leave this community immediately or drastic action will be taken.’” The notes listed as undesirable “Communists, Bolsheviks, radicals, agitators and other anti-government groups”.

The same paper reports approvingly:

“In San Jose, a crowd of 300 vigilantes, cruising around Santa Clara County in automobiles, captured ten known Communist leaders, beat them severely and threatened: ‘This is just a sample of what you will get – if you’re not out of here by dawn’.”

These Were Not “Mobs”

Two facts must be noted: One, the fact that this is not “mob” action.

It is not an outraged citizenry, rising en masse to scotch what they believe, rightly or wrongly, to be a danger of such dread proportions that any measures are justified. *This is organized action by less than Johnson’s one-half of one per cent – although of course the press does its best to create a sympathetic background for it.*

Two, one must note again the fact previously referred to, that is, the cowardly character of the attacks – the overwhelming outnum-

bering of the prospective immediate victims and the outright vandalism of these committees.

The Berkeley atrocities show that the attacks are by no means directed only against itinerant agitators. The workers and other persons who were so courteously warned to leave that fair college town have homes and have lived there for years.

As in Germany, these attacks are directed first of all against the most advanced section of the population – the revolutionary section, Communists and other class conscious workers and intellectuals.

The rest will follow if these onslaughts are not checked. Trade unions and all other forms of working class organizations will be next. (In San Francisco these same committees entered the homes of striking longshoremen and beat them and their wives.) Unions which do not resist the present capitalist offensive, intensified as the crisis in the N.R.A. program deepens and the business barometer drops, will not be attacked just yet. But the moment their members are compelled to strike rather than slowly starve on the job under the present wage and working conditions, the Red Scare will be raised and the fascist bands will ride against them.

Anyone who does not understand the meaning of the events dealt with above endangers the united front against fascism. Those who play down the menace of Fascism in the United States are helping to clear the bloody trail it will mark with the bodies of murdered workers.

Let us understand once and for all, on the basis of the wealth of evidence now in our hands from practically every state in the union, with California heading the list, that *the Roosevelt administration*, by word and deed, *is encouraging* and condoning the organization and use of fascist bands, against Communists first of all, but also against every section of the working class which resists the onward march of its program of hunger and war as the way of the crisis its masters and their system created.

The “sane and conservative” union officials who welcome and aid these fascist manifestations and act as a weapon against the hated Reds in the labor movement, are really helping as their kindred in Germany did, the forces making for the destruction of the unions.

This must be made clear to every American worker, organized and unorganized.

XII. Background and Summary

San Francisco, Aug, 7. – The general strike of longshoremen, seamen and other maritime workers on the entire Pacific Coast, from Seattle to San Diego, with the Vancouver, B. C., waterfront workers taking sympathetic action, followed by the general strike of shore trade unions in San Francisco, Oakland and the Bay Counties has raised all the basic questions of strike strategy in their most elementary and at the same time in their most decisive forms.

These two general strikes – one of the workers in the marine transport industry on an entire coastline, the other of workers in other industries and occupations in a coast center with a population of about 1,500,000 – marked a new high point in the strike wave that has swept through the country in the last year and from which hardly an industry, with the sole exception of the railways – and here too there have been some small strike actions – has been exempt.

With the exception of the Marine Workers Industrial Union and some small independent unions the organizations whose members took part in these two great class battles are all affiliated to the American Federation of Labor. *The influence of the M.W.I.U. in the strike movement was far greater than its membership figures would indicate. It was the initiator of the united front program which solidified the ranks of the marine workers and it had a great part in the general strike in the Bay Counties.*

The two strikes displayed all those evidences of both great strength and dangerous weaknesses which so far have been historically characteristic of the American labor movement. The main strength was the real and growing will for solidarity in action against the open shop, company unionism and the general offensive against the wages, working conditions and living standard of the working class; it lay in the militancy and determination of the great army of workers directly involved in the struggle and in the widespread sympathy and support of the strike among workers not directly involved – *and among the masses of unemployed workers.*

Solidarity of Unemployed and Strikers

There are few facts of more importance in connection with the two strikes than the inability of the employers and their various agencies to secure more than a negligible number of strikebreakers

from the ranks of unemployed workers. In the two ports where cargo was handled in any considerable quantity during the strike – Seattle and Los Angeles – the crews were composed of a core of *professional strikebreakers*, a small number of *college students with the balance composed of bankrupt businessmen, ruined real estate sharks, former commercial “executives”, etc.* (A recent letter to the Los Angeles *Times* from one of these strikebreakers in which the writer tells in some detail of the composition of the gang he is housed with corroborates this estimate completely.)

Sympathetic Strikes

The marine workers’ strike *produced many sympathetic strikes in lumber camps, sawmills and pulp and paper plants.* It also shut down many of these concerns by tying up the water transportation on which they depended for profitable operation. But the increase in the number of unemployed workers because of this did not lead to increased numbers of strike-breakers. On the contrary, *it led to an increase in the numbers of workers aiding the strikers on the picket lines, in relief work, etc.*

Even as late as July 21, after the Bay County general Strike had been called off, it was possible for the Portland Longshoremen’s strike committee to pronounce that following the threat of Governor Meier to send troops to the waterfront, *“2,000 loggers, paper mill workers and auto-mill workers were arriving to join the picket lines”.* (San Francisco *Examiner*).

Following the wave of organization which swept along the waterfronts, the wave of organization which brought at least 25,000 new members into the International Longshoremen’s, Association, the local unions formed a Pacific Coast District and, as a result of the efforts of President Joseph P. Ryan of the I.L.A. to put over an unfavorable agreement on them, repudiated his leadership. The leadership passed into the hands of a Left-wing group, working in fraternal cooperation with the M.W.I.U., headed by Harry Bridges. A maritime trades strike committee was set up composed of the elected representatives of the ten unions involved, seamen, longshoremen, firemen and oilers, cooks and stewards, sealers, tugboatmen, masters, mates and pilots, etc.

This joint committee was at all times the genuine leadership of the movement. It had its weaknesses, of course, it was at times indecisive, but there can be no doubt that the rank and file considered

it honest and capable and that for the most part it was. There were great gradations of militancy and consciousness within the committee but it was certainly a Left-wing bloc working for a united front and militant policy as against the efforts of the various Central Labor Council officials and international union officials to keep unions divided.

It was essentially a new leadership, far closer to the rank and file than any previous leadership, arising on the whole Pacific Coast and challenging the old craft union leadership of the Central Labor Councils for hegemony. Its strength, in addition to its militancy, lay in the fact that *it represented the workers in the most decisive industry* – marine transport, the industry on which, with minor exceptions, all other Coast industries depend.

The Main Weaknesses

This brings us to the question of the principal weaknesses of the general strike. (What we say here about the general strike in the Bay Counties applies also to Portland and Seattle where, mainly because the leadership of the joint committees of the maritime unions was not as resolute and capable as in San Francisco, the Central Labor Council officials and international union officials were able to postpone action time and time again.)

These weaknesses were mainly, first, the completely reactionary character of the San Francisco Central Labor Council officialdom – tied hand and foot for years to the machines of the Democratic and Republican Parties, and through these machines to the biggest employers of labor.

Second, the inability or failure – probably because of inner differences on tactics – of the joint committee of the maritime unions to carry on any important campaign of exposure of the true character of the Central Council leadership. The role of these officials was only implied in speeches, apparently upon the theory that their opposition to the general strike in support of the water front workers would be sufficient to discredit them.

Third, the craft and occupational structure of the A. F. of L. organizations was a tremendous handicap for successful general action. But this in itself was not an insuperable obstacle had the leadership of the general strike been vested in a rank-and-file committee, But this, of course, was impossible without a decisive struggle against the reactionary officials.

The Trade Union Unity League and the Marine Workers Industrial Union, and the Communist Party District (whose official paper, the *Western Worker*, was adopted by the joint committee of the marine workers as their official organ) carried on a campaign to expose Vandeleur, Casey, McLaughlin and other reactionaries. It had considerable effect in strengthening the labor forces but little in actually loosing the reactionaries' *grip on the union machinery* since the Left wing in the shore unions was weak. The decisive character of the truck drivers' unions has been overlooked by the Left wing to a great extent. In San Francisco very weak efforts were made to organize the Left wing in these unions.

Classic Treachery of Labor Officialdom

The general strike in the Bay Counties probably furnishes the nearest thing to a *classic* example in the U.S. of reactionaries heading a militant movement in order to narrow its scope and cripple it at the opportune moment.

It is a matter of record that the Central Labor Council was placed in a position where it either had to go along with the general strike in support of the waterfront workers or suffer a severe loss of influence with the rank and file – a loss of such proportions that it would have been tantamount to giving way to a new leadership based on the waterfront workers, to a leadership which, in spite of its weaknesses would have represented a tremendous advance for the labor movement of the Bay Counties and consequently for the entire Pacific Coast. Within the A. F. of L. itself the consequences would have been far-reaching and not the less so because the A. F. of L. convention is due to meet in San Francisco on October 2.

If these facts were not deeply woven in the history of the general strike, we could easily prove them by no less a person than Joseph P. Ryan himself. The joint committee of the waterfront unions had worked correctly. The "*real leaders of organized labor*", as the press fondly terms the agents of the employers and capitalist party politicians in official union positions, were given an opportunity to come to the aid of the waterfront workers. They promptly echoed the employers' propaganda – the waterfront workers "*do not have responsible leadership*". What these "real leaders" were demanding was the complete surrender of the joint committee, headed by Harry Bridges, to themselves, to the President's arbitration board and to the employers.

The joint committee then took their case to the rank and file.

The extent to which the “real leaders” were in touch with rank-and-file sentiment is shown by the fact that they were amazed to find the membership of their own unions voting by overwhelming majorities for a general strike in response to the appeal of the waterfront unions’ joint committee.

In a New York dispatch published in the *San Francisco News* of July 20, Ryan said that:

“Mr. Bridges went with 75 active followers *to union meetings of all sorts* relating the grievances of the long-shoremen and calling for sympathy strikes.

“This active minority group, Mr. Ryan said, finally tied up labor in so many branches that the Central Trades and Labor Council finally decided the remedy was violent action designed to have a quick ending. Their view of the general strike, Mr. Ryan said, was that *it was a strike to end strikes.*”

Very little explanation is needed here. The rank and file members of union after union had voted to strike in aid of the waterfront workers *without waiting for their leaders to act*, or after having waited and getting no action. These “real leaders” had to go along or lose their control.

Once they decided to go along and sabotage from within, the disastrous results of the failure to expose the employer-dominated nature of their leadership became clear.

These leaders maneuvered to secure every decisive position on the Central Labor Council General Strike Committee. Their endorsement of the general strike had served to make the rank and file forget their previous opposition. They were accepted although it is doubtful if at any time they had a *genuine* majority of the strike committee. The close vote for ending the general strike – 207 to 180 – and the vote to send the union members back to work – 191 to 174 – in view of the known gerrymandering of delegates, confusion of issues and other trickeries, indicate that at no time did they have an actual decisive majority and that at no time was there any substantial sentiment among the rank and file for calling off the strike before it had gained at least some of its major objectives.

The union membership involved in the two strikes understood very well that the issue at stake was the *union shop versus the open*

shop – union controlled hiring halls, etc. In addition, the workers in the unions, many of which had made demands of their own upon the employers, were in favor of helping the waterfront workers get higher wages and better working conditions, reasoning absolutely correctly that if this was accomplished in this decisive industry it would be easier to raise wage standards for all workers.

The deep roots that the general strike movement had in the ranks of the working class can be gauged best perhaps by the extraordinary measures that the employers and their local, state and national government had to take to prevent its spreading and to liquidate it as well as they could. (In this connection it is necessary to remember that the ending of the general strike *left a big residue of separate strike and wage movements outside* of the waterfront. The members of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees employed by the Market Street lines – 1,500 men on the largest street railway in S. F. – remained on strike or went back to work with wage demands pending. Laundry workers, cleaners and dyers, cooks and waiters, drivers in various trades, etc., either remained on strike or went back to work with wage demands pending.)

The worst blow was the defection of the Teamsters Union (auto truck drivers). This was engineered by Michael Casey – a leading member of the reactionary old guard leadership. *Voting on the question of returning to work to handle only goods unloaded by union men the drivers found themselves hauling scab freight under armed guards.*

Choking the General Strike

What brought the quick ending to a strike which the rank and file had voted themselves?

First, the mobilization of the greatest display of armed force – police and military – ever arrayed against striking workers in the history of the American labor movement. In California ports alone, if we include the 7,000 National Guardsmen, equipped with tanks and artillery, regular and special police, the semi-official detachment organized by city authorities and the so-called Citizen's Committee, there could not have been much less than 30,000 armed men arrayed against some 100,000 unarmed strikers.

Second, the sabotage of strike publicity. With the exception of leaflets and the *Western Worker*, the California press, the most vi-

ciously anti-working class in the country, headed by the Hearst sheets, *had the field to themselves*. They quickly identified the strike with insurrection; then they identified the Communists with the general strike; they then turned around and made the strike synonymous with everything that could be interpreted as violence – on the part of workers, of course. (Actually, there was a surprisingly small amount of violence by workers considering the extreme forms of provocation that were used and this was of a sporadic character, Much of it, especially that directed against small store owners, etc, *was obviously the work of provocateurs*.)

Third, the intervention of the federal government in the persons of General Johnson, Senator Warner, Postmaster General Farley and others whose job was twofold – to pep up the waning morale of the middle class and to assure the striking workers that all grievances would be adjusted by a benevolent government if they would show their faith in it by going back to work.

Fourth, the *deliberate provocation and alienation* of large sections of the middle class on the part of the reactionary union leaders through the use of useless and indecisive but extremely aggravating tactics; the forced closing of hundreds of small shops and stores while big department stores were allowed to remain open; the organization of the permit system in such a way as to encourage racketeering; the conscious handling of the food supply problem in such a way as to furnish ammunition to the press for its “anti-famine” campaign, etc.

Fifth, the organization of a campaign of terror against “Reds and Communists” by the American Legion leadership, the “Citizens’ Committees”, and the regular and special police – without protest from the leaders of the strike committee; on the contrary, with their sanction and cooperation. (Had Communists and Left wing workers been left even a small measure of freedom for holding meetings and distribution of literature to explain the situation, the strike could not have been ended without some of the demands being won.)

As it was, they were the targets of an organized terror drive that destroyed more than 60 halls and headquarters, jailed some 600, sent dozens of fascist bands, working with the police, roving through the cities and countryside, hunting down all suspected Communists like wild beasts.

The terror was directed also *against the striking waterfront workers. So bad did it become – with armed bands invading their homes and beating up men and women – that E. S. Dietrich, head of the legal committee of the San Francisco I.L.A., informed Judge Lazarus that he had instructed the I.L.A. members to arm themselves in their homes.*

Sixth, the threat of martial law – with which the entire capitalist press clubbed the strikers even after some 5,000 troops had occupied five miles of waterfront and extended their outposts far into the cities proper.

Seventh, the concentration of the propaganda of the employers, the state government (Governor Merriam) and the federal government (General Johnson) against Harry Bridges on the grounds that he is an alien. (He was born in Australia and came here 14 years ago.)

The immediate objective of course was – and is – to intimidate foreign-born workers to the point *where they will not take part in the mass strike movements – and thereby create further division in working class forces.*

General Johnson was given and carried out the task of putting the seal of approval of the Roosevelt administration on the fascist strike-breaking methods of the California ruling class and its middle class hangers-on.

President Green of the A. F. of L. distinguished himself as usual by denouncing the strike at its most critical moment and by seconding Johnson's demand for more deportations as a solution of the question of wages, hours, union recognition and working class living standards.

The two strikes brought a significant change in the approach of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy to the question of Communists and Left wing workers in the labor movement. Hitherto, they have, with some exceptions, ridiculed the "Reds", denied that they have any substantial influence among organized workers, and pooh-poohed their ability as organizers.

The line now is to admit and even exaggerate their growing influence and to organize and *use essentially fascist groups, organizations and methods against them.*

This too is strong evidence of the crisis within the American labor movement – the clash of two diametrically opposed policies,

that of the T.U.U.L. and Left-wing opposition and the class cooperation policy of N.R.A. and the A. F. of L. officialdom.

Were the two strikes defeated? No. The general strike was betrayed and as a result the waterfront workers had arbitration forced upon them. But the strikers were not defeated. Not only did their unions remain intact but there was a tremendous influx of new members into practically every union.

The employers did not dare to put over the wage cuts they had in mind. They will try blacklisting but it will be resisted. There is a greater feeling of solidarity among Pacific Coast workers than ever before. They have marched a little way on the road to power. They were not organizing an insurrection, nor were the Communists, but for a short time there was a division of authority between the strike committee – even with its reactionary leadership – and the “constituted authorities”. To have won substantial concessions this division would have had to be driven further. This the leaders were opposed to and afraid of. Actually they were afraid of the working class.

Must Organize Against Fascist Terror

The business barometer is falling. Workers' conditions get progressively worse. The fascist terror methods continue on the whole Pacific Coast – but especially in California. In the interior of the state they are directed now mainly against the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Union.

As this is written there are some 500 organizers and workers in jail for their activities. Scores have been horribly beaten. Some have been killed by the fascist bands.

It is necessary to stress the use of fascist methods backed by the state and federal governments as the principal weapon used in strike-breaking on the Coast. It is plainly necessary to organize a national movement against rising American fascism. It must be based solidly in the unions and other working class organizations.

Crush Fascism or Be Crushed!

In the great strike movements that are certain to arise as the capitalist program of salvation drives the working class to still lower economic and social levels, it is necessary that all workers' organizations be prepared to smash fascism whenever it bares its fangs. The labor movement must crush fascism in whatever form it arises or it will be crushed.

In the trade union movement the responsibility for making this clear to workers, for uniting them on the basis of the experiences of the Pacific Coast strikes and other great struggles, rests upon the Communists, first of all, upon the Trade Union Unity League, its organizations and its press headed by *Labor Unity*, and upon the Rank and File Committees in the A. F. of L. unions.

XIII. Aftermath of the Strike in Portland and Vicinity

Portland, Ore., Aug, 19. – The American Legion convention of this state goes into session in Astoria – a fishing and lumber city of 10,000 population, down the river from Portland. The Washington State Legion convention meets in Spokane this year. The California state convention was held recently in San Francisco.

The intention of these conventions is to place Legion officialdom at the head of the anti-labor union and anti-Communist terror drive in the three Pacific Coast states to strengthen the Union-smashing and strike-breaking machinery of the employers in the four main industries: marine transport, lumber, fishing, and agriculture.

The situation in Astoria, where there is a workers' cooperative (milk, butter, cream, etc) is typical of that in practically all Coast centers at present. *The insurance company has just cancelled the cooperative's policy, evidently knowing in advance of Legion preparations, although it had remained in force after the dynamiting of workers' headquarters by vigilantes in Astoria about a year ago.*

This cooperative is a center of the workers' movement in and around Astoria. Its members are active in the unions and other working class organizations. The cooperative helps financially the *Daily Worker*, the *Western Worker* and the *Voice of Action*. It assists other working class publications. It aided the waterfront strikers with donations of food.

This is bad enough from the standpoint of the employers and business men, but – *this cooperative pays higher prices than private firms for milk, fish, vegetables and other foodstuffs to the farmers and fishermen.*

This, in the eyes of the business elements which dominate the American Legion, is a high crime. There is no doubt that the cooperative plant will be wrecked during the Legion convention, unless the workers' defense is able to organize strongly enough to prevent it.

The Astoria Budget has been carrying on an intense campaign against the unemployed. This paper published recently a list of

names of workers and others signing petitions to place the C.P. on the ballot with the demand that they be cut off from unemployment relief – if they were getting it. Boycott measures were urged against those not on relief. Workers have already been blacklisted for signing the petitions.

This is the atmosphere in which the Legion convention will be held.

In Portland a number of organizers have been held on charges of criminal syndicalism. In other cities the authorities and vigilantes have resorted to every sort of subterfuge for holding organizers in jail.

The Cannery and Agricultural Workers Union had organized some 1,200 workers in and around Medford when the raids took place. There is already talk among the longshoremen of another strike.*

The lumber business has dropped to about 30 per cent of capacity. There are about 29,000 registered families on the Portland relief rolls (in a city of some 300,000 population); figuring only four to a family, more than an entire third of the population on relief.

Employment in the agricultural fields this year in the state – getting in the crop – will be of short duration because the crops matured early (where they were not burned out by the drought) and the work will be rushed through.

All these factors make it necessary for workers to go into action for the right to work and live. It is these factors which have speeded up the terror drive, proving that it has as its main motive wage-cutting, strikebreaking and the open shop.

Faced with great difficulties because of the constant arrests, police patrolling of halls and book stores, etc., the District Party machinery has managed to keep its official organ, the *Voice of Action*,

* A few days after this was written, members of the I.L.A. local union picketed the headquarters of the Columbia Waterfront Association – the company union and professional scab organization. A battle took place after the union men were fired on. One guard was killed and a number wounded. Several I.L.A. men were injured. Thirty-two I.L.A. men were indicted for murder but it is probable that the mass defense movement that developed against the general terror wave will free them in spite of the efforts of the union officials to make the defense on a purely “legal” basis.

in distribution. During this whole period it missed only one issue.

XIV. Aftermath of the Strike in Seattle

Seattle, Aug. 22. – Today I saw something I have never witnessed in any other American city: On Third Ave., just above James St. – one of the busiest downtown sections – a man picked a half cantaloupe out of a restaurant garbage can on the curb, and stood and ate it while hundreds of people passed.

The appalling thing about it was that of the whole throng, I was the only person who paid any attention to him. Such incidents evidently have become commonplace even in the Seattle business district.

The depth and scope of the mass unemployment and poverty which this incident indicates was the background against which the waterfront strike occurred.

Unemployed Helped Strikers

But the unemployed who are forced to live under these conditions have kept their will for class solidarity. They did not take the opportunity to scab. At no time were any but a negligible number of waterfront strike-breakers recruited from the ranks of the unemployed workers. The Unemployment Councils and the Unemployed Citizens' Leagues, taken over by Communist workers and Left-wing groups after the debacle of the "self-help" program sponsored by Carl Brannin and other Musteites, were powerful weapons at the disposal of the waterfront workers and their organizations.

The work of the Marine Workers Industrial Union among the Seattle unemployed bore rich fruit for labor. As it matter of fact, nowhere on the 2,000-mile strike, front was there greater solidarity between strikers and unemployed.

Not a pound of cargo was moved by strikebreakers until along toward the end of the whole Coast strike – and this was accomplished only after bitter and bloody clashes with the police and shipping company guards on one side, and the strikers and unemployed on the other.

Pier 40 was opened after a series of these clashes, in a number of which the police were defeated. Pier 40 was opened with a crew of professional scabs, some college students and bankrupt business men to whom Mayor Smith had promised the assistance of the en-

tire police force. The chief of police resigned and Mayor Smith took personal charge of the armed forces.

Campaign to Recall Mayor Smith

One of the major political repercussions of the strike is the campaign now going on to recall Mayor Smith. Some 30,000 signatures are needed to force a recall election and about 24,000 have already been secured.

Central Labor Council officials of the self-styled progressive type, like James Duncan, who opposed and sabotaged the movement for a general strike, dare not openly oppose the recall of Smith. But they are covertly sabotaging the recall just the same.

The notorious Rev. Matthews, reactionary, anti-labor, professional crusader against “vice”, has come out against the recall of Smith.

Secretary Doyle of the Central Labor Council, arch-faker, repudiated by his own Painters’ Local Union, recently re-elected by a vote of 114 to 76, is naturally against the recall of the mayor who commanded the police in their murderous attacks on strikers. (These Central Labor Council officials sabotaged the mass funeral for murdered longshoreman with the pretext that the exact time of the funeral could not be decided.)

The employers, of course, are against the recall of Smith. He has earned their gratitude.

So we have the sweet spectacle of the whole Central Council officialdom – “conservative” and “progressive” – the employers, and their clerical hangers-on like Matthews, all opposing Smith’s recall.

Where then have these 24,000 signatures come from? *From the rank and file of the unions!*

In a way, this shows what the sentiment of the local union membership was for a general strike in support of the waterfront workers. They were never allowed to vote on the question.

When the struggle on the general strike issue reached what the officials believed to be a dangerous point, they procured a telegram from President Green of the A. F. of L. declaring in time-worn terms that the Central Council had no authority or right to take part in such a movement.

Had the Longshoremen Union’s leadership been of the same militant type as their San Francisco leadership, they could have

forced the issue. But some of them were denouncing the Communist Party and raising the Red scare after the manner of the Central Labor Council officialdom.

All these gentlemen of "the best elements of organized labor" who sabotaged the strike and who support Mayor Smith, murderer of workers, are going to have a hard time laughing off these 24,000 signatures.

These signatures for Mayor Smith's recall, and not the pious declarations of James Duncan, are the real expressions of the sentiments of Seattle labor – organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed.

Lessons of Recent Strike Struggles

(Resolution Adopted by the Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, September 5-6, 1934)

Introduction

The strike wave which began early in 1934, the first period of which was examined by the Eighth National Convention, has since that time risen to new heights. The strike movement not only grew in number of strikers, militancy and duration of strikes, but also qualitatively entered a higher stage with the emergence on a nationwide scale of a general strike movement. This general strike movement came to the verge of realization in Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Portland, Seattle. It was realized in San Francisco in a four-day General Strike of solidarity with the Pacific Coast marine workers' struggle of twelve weeks involving the overwhelming mass of all workers in the San Francisco Bay region. At the same time the strike movement further penetrated the deep South and the basic industries. At the present moment a great movement for the nation-wide industrial strike of textile workers has forced their A. F. of L. leaders to submit for the moment to the fighting determination of the rank and file and issue a general strike call, which has brought on strike a half-million workers in the greatest single strike in American history.

These struggles, and especially the San Francisco General Strike, mark a new high point in the development of the American working class and are of historic significance.

Especially on the Pacific Coast, the fury of the bourgeoisie reveals also the intensity of war preparations, and the capitalists' de-

termination to smash all mass trade unions as the main bases of war preparations. The lessons of these struggles are of first importance for the development of the entire revolutionary movement.

The history of these battles must be thoroughly studied and their lessons assimilated by the entire revolutionary movement and the whole working class.

Every nucleus, every fraction, and every Committee must begin by discussing this Resolution.

I. Main Characteristics of Recent Strikes

This growing strike movement which is the answer of the workers to the sharpened attack of the capitalists is characterized by the following main features: (a) these strikes are in one form or another directed not only against the capitalists in the various industries around the questions of wages, hours, conditions of labor, the right of organization, etc., but they also are more and more directed against the new deal policies and the N.R.A. codes and the arbitration features in particular; (b) these strikes, consisting primarily of workers organized in the A. F. of L. unions and especially those who became recently organized, took place through the efforts of the rank and file of the A. F. of L. who either forced the leaders to "sanction" these strikes or struck over the heads of these leaders; (c) the national and local governments resorted to increasing use of violence against the workers on strike; practically in every strike the National Guard was called out; in general, growing fascist and semi-fascist methods of suppressing strikes were used by the government supplemented by fascist organizations and armed thugs, resulting, in most of the strikes, in the killing and wounding of strikers, intimidation of the foreign-born workers, etc.; (d) above all as already indicated these strikes are characterized by a marked increase in mass solidarity already taking the form of the development of general strikes as the answer of the workers to the increasing attacks of the capitalists and the suppression of the struggles of the workers by the capitalist government; (e) a very important feature of all these strikes is the ability of a minority of organized workers on strike to involve the mass of the unorganized workers and the unemployed, who furnish almost no strikebreakers (these come from declassed petty-bourgeois or criminal elements), but on the contrary give active support and assistance. An important factor in the organization and preparations of the strike struggles has been

the greater ability of the Party to mobilize the masses in defense of their interests (San Francisco, Milwaukee, etc.).

The Strike Struggles and the Role of the A. F. of L. Bureaucrats

The experience of the workers in the first wave of strikes also led to growing realization of increasing sections of workers that the A. F. of L. bureaucrats were allied with the employers and the government against them. The workers in increasing cases entered the strike struggles over the heads of the leaders, although in most cases the bureaucrats, sensing the danger that they will become isolated, pretended to lead the strikes of the workers for the purpose of assisting the bosses in defeating the workers. In increasing cases it was only with the aid of Socialist misleaders (Milwaukee), the renegade groups (Lovestoneites among the needle workers; Trotzkyites in Minneapolis), Musteites in Toledo and sham opposition (committee of ten in the steel industry), etc., were the top bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. able to maintain their influence over the workers. The leaders of the S.P., who first supported the A. F. of L. bureaucrats' "no strike" policy, as the strikes developed, openly allied themselves in each instance with the A. F. of L. leaders and supported their strike-breaking policies. This policy of the S.P. was again approved at the recent S.P. convention controlled by the Thomas group of "militants". The convention rejected even the proposals for the mildest criticism of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats. Only where the work of the Communists and genuine Left-wing elements in the A. F. of L. unions was seriously undertaken and organized (San Francisco, marine strike, recent painters' strike, etc.), were the A. F. of L. bureaucrats isolated. The majority of the strikers in recent months were workers organized in the A. F. of L. unions, clearly showing that the A. F. of L. workers are more and more accepting the policies of the Party and the revolutionary trade union movement. This development makes more urgent than ever the development of systematized work in the A. F. of L. unions and emphasizes the correctness of the decisions of the Party Convention to carry on struggle against all attempts to underestimate or weaken the work in the A. F. of L. unions (Zack).

Growing Solidarity and Movement for General Strikes

Among all the features of the recent strikes which were already noted by the last Party Convention, the growing mass solidarity of the workers has seen the greatest development. This is, of course,

clear from the fact that during this period there took place the first general strike since the Seattle General Strike of 1919 and the fact that this was by far the largest and most important general strike ever conducted by the workers of the U.S. This tendency was already expressed in Toledo, where the masses of the city came to the assistance of the striking workers and where the overwhelming majority of the organized workers had voted for a general strike. This same development was seen in the May strike of the Minneapolis truckmen, in the Milwaukee carmen's strike, etc. If these Struggles did not, as in San Francisco, lead to a general strike, this was not because the workers were not ready. It was because the bureaucrats were still able to forestall it. The Frisco general strike was able to be developed to a large extent because of the movement for general strike in the Toledo and Minneapolis strikes.

These movements and actions of mass solidarity, taking the form of mass support, protest actions, demonstrations, and finally in the San Francisco general strike, were the development in the minds of the workers, given consciousness by the correct analysis and slogans by the Party, as to the next step in the answering by the workers of the furious and violent suppressions of the strike struggles by the capitalist government. The whole complex of circumstances that formed the background of the recent strike struggles (N.R.A., role of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, terror, etc.), inevitably lead the masses to the realization that only through bringing up their own reserves can they successfully battle for their demands and their rights. The movement for a general strike was also the response of the workers to the bringing of troops, shooting down of workers, prohibition of picketing and the right of assemblage, etc. *The workers began to understand that in these struggles conducted by one group of workers the demands and the interests of the whole class are involved.* Thus, out of the beginning of economic struggles around demands common to all workers (wages, hours, the right to organize) and against the increasing violence of the government on the side of the employers grew mighty class battles which though not always recognized by all workers became transformed into a combination of political and economic struggles directed against the whole system of capitalist exploitation and suppression.

II. Some Lessons from the West Coast Marine Strike

To understand the development of the strike struggles from the economic struggle to the mass class battles such as the Frisco General Strike, it is necessary to draw the lessons of the organization and leadership of the West Coast marine strike, especially in the San Francisco port. Already in July, 1932, under the leadership and guidance of the Party, there began the formation of the nucleus of the great struggle in the San Francisco port. Out of these first beginnings, which took the form of the publication of a longshore bulletin, there grew in the middle of 1933 a local of the I.L.A. in which the militant elements played a decisive role. Such a development did take place in other industries, but the second step was lacking. Here the workers organized with militant leadership, faced with the refusal of the I.L.A. leadership to take up the fight for their interests, took the initiative and in February, 1934, organized a West Coast Conference of all I.L.A. locals at which a program of struggle was mapped out in which the workers were forewarned against arbitration as a scheme to defeat them. It was this foresight and exposure of the N.R.A. that made possible later the defeat of the workers' enemies. Though the Roosevelt government came to the assistance of the shipowners and was able to postpone the strike in April, because of the militant leadership of the I.L.A. local in Frisco, the workers defeated the Ryan-Lewis attempt to defeat them through arbitration and struck on May 9, and by May 11 tied up every port on the West Coast.

Role of the Joint Strike Committee and the Marine Workers Industrial Union

The M.W.I.U., which because of the situation in the West Coast limited its organization among the unorganized seamen and which had already in the last years demonstrated its capacity successfully to lead the struggle of the employed and unemployed seamen (Munson line, Boston coal boats, Baltimore unemployed struggles, etc.), from the beginning raised among the seamen the question of joint strike action with the longshoremen, thus defeating the old A. F. of L. policy which in 1921 and 1923 led to the defeat respectively of the strikes of the longshoremen and seamen by division in their ranks. This effort of the M.W.I.U. was successful from the beginning and led to the tying up of every ship on the West Coast and

many ships in other ports, including foreign ships. The I.S.U. officials (A. F. of L. seamen's union) only on May 19, when confronted with the mass strike of seamen sanctioned the strike by the I.S.U. *This unity of the seamen and longshoremen, involving all maritime unions, which took the form of a pact that neither group return to work without the other, and the building of a joint strike committee of seamen, longshoremen, etc., was one of the most important elements that made possible the long battle of the marine workers and finally prevented the shipowners from completely defeating the workers or smashing their organization, even after the A. F. of L. bureaucrats stabbed the general strike in the back.* This action of the M.W.I.U. further demonstrated not only that the M.W.I.U. is a force among the seamen but in general the possibilities and the role that the T.U.U.L. unions can play in the development and leadership of the struggles of the workers through the application of the united front policy. The defeat of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats' policy to divide the strikers who were in A. F. of L. unions from those in other unions and the unorganized, the ability of the strike committee under the leadership of the Left wing to unite all Strikers, made possible the solid strike for three months.

Another important feature of the marine struggle was the appeal of the strikers to the teamsters and the response of the teamsters which already on May 14 resulted in a decision by the not to haul any scab-loaded cargo. A further feature of the correct leadership of the marine strike which made impossible the division the workers was the taking up in time of the demands of the Negro workers among the longshoremen, who hitherto had been discriminated against both by the shipowners and the A. F. of L. bureaucrats.

All these correct strike tactics could be carried through only because the strike of the marine workers was in the hands of the rank and file and their trusted leaders. This was made possible by the Left-wing elements placing' the interests of the workers to the foreground, not capitulating before any legalistic illusions. Although the District Board of the I.L.A. claimed the sole leadership of the strike, the workers elected their own rank and file strike committee and this strike committee began to organize the strike (picketing, relief, etc.), so that in practice the workers looked to the rank and file strike committee as the organizer and leader of the strike. The power to make agreements, however, still remained in the hands of the bureaucrats. But after the attempts of Ryan to betray the strike, the strike commit-

tee was able to realize the slogan “all power to the rank and file strike committee”, with the full support of all the strikers.

It was these correct policies on the basis of which the movement was organized from the beginning, the manner in which the strike was organized and led, that made possible the defeat of all attempts to break the strike. In this way the strikers defeated Ryan, McGrady, the National Longshore Board, etc. That this was not possible in Toledo and Minneapolis, for example, was of course due to the fact that in these strikes the workers themselves had not taken over the leadership of the strike and the strike remained in the hands of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats and their allies (Muste, Trotzkyites, etc.).

III. The Development of the San Francisco General Strike

When the employers and the government, confronted with the solid front of the workers which they could not disintegrate from the inside because the bosses’ agents, the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, were isolated, decided to break the deadlock through force and violence and issued the slogan “Open up the ports at all costs”, which meant of course through force and violence, the Communist Party already issued the slogan of “General Strike”. When the open violence of the government and the bosses resulted in the killing of a number of strikers and the practical creation of martial law, this slogan was recognized, not only by the striking marine workers, but by the *majority of all workers*, as the slogan which corresponds to their understanding of the next step in the strike.

Economic Struggles Develop Into Political Class Battles

In the San Francisco General Strike (as in the other strikes dealt with) we have a classical example of the Communist thesis that, in the present period of capitalist decline, a stubborn struggle for even the smallest immediate demands for the workers inevitably develops into general class battles. Beginning in a typical economic struggle over wages and working conditions of longshoremen, there took place, step by step, a concentration of class forces in support of one and the other side which soon aligned practically the entire population into two hostile camps: capitalist class against the working class, and all intermediate elements towards support of one or the other. It became the well-defined class struggle, a test of strength between the two basic class forces. The economic struggle was transformed into a political struggle of the first magnitude. The working class under-

stood that if it allowed the concentration of capitalist forces to defeat the marine workers, this meant a defeat for the entire working class, general wage cuts, speed-up and worsening of conditions, the smashing of all unions; the capitalist class knew that if the marine workers should win their demands this would launch a general forward movement of the entire working class which would defeat the capitalist program for their way out of the crisis, a program based upon restoring profits by reducing the general standard of living of the masses. It was the capitalist class which, in panic before the rising giant of class action of the workers, hysterically cried out that this strike, which they could have settled very quickly at any time by the simple expedient of granting the workers' demands, was actually a revolutionary uprising organized by the Communist Party to overthrow the whole capitalist system. Of course, this strike did not have revolution as its objective, but only the immediate demands of the workers. The unity of the workers, however, raised before the employers the specter of working class power, of the potentiality of revolution. On the side of the workers their experience was leading them step by step to more serious challenge of the capitalist class, teaching them the necessity of extending the struggle for power, bringing them face to face with the State power as the guardian of capitalist profits and the force driving down the workers' standards; at the same time it was giving them a new understanding of their own power, of their ability to shake the very basis of capitalist rule. In this sense, the strike was truly the greatest revolutionary event in American labor history.

The A. F. of L. bureaucrats were, of course, from the beginning opposed to the General Strike. William Green was already busy organizing against the General Strike (telegram to Seattle, etc.), while the San Francisco labor bureaucrats were carrying on a vicious campaign against all those who advocated the general strike, were busy working against the development of a national marine strike, did everything to weaken the West Coast strike. And if these leaders later "sanctioned" the General Strike, it was with the express purpose not only to escape the isolation, which they already suffered among the marine workers, among the rest of the workers, but also as Ryan stated not merely to break the general strike, but also to oust the Left-wing leadership in the San Francisco marine strike as a prelude to breaking the strike of the marine workers. *The efforts to break the general strike did not develop with these leaders in the*

course of the general strike. It was planned before the strike, which they could not stop, began.

It was therefore not because the San Francisco labor bureaucrats were less reactionary than those of Toledo that the General Strike was developed. Nor was it due to any fundamental differences in the level of development of the workers. *The main reason was that the united and militant stand of the marine strikers, made possible because of the rank and file leadership, united the whole working class of San Francisco behind them and inspired them with the same spirit of unity and struggle that permeated the striking marine workers. The A. F. of L. bureaucrats were unable openly to defeat this spirit amongst the workers of San Francisco.* This furnishes a great lesson to all Communists and militants in their work within the A. F. of L. unions and among the masses generally.

IV. How the Historic General Strike Was Broken

The General Strike was not defeated in the first place because the open forces of the employers were stronger than those of the workers. It was defeated because of the fact that the agents of the enemy class stood at the head of the General Strike. All the enemies of the workers immediately cried out that the General Strike could not be victorious. This was said not only by the employers and the government, but also by the A. F. of L. bureaucrats and the leaders of the Socialist Party. They tried to prove this on the basis of experiences of other countries. They wished through the defeat of the San Francisco General Strike to discredit the General Strike as a weapon of the class struggle. *But in this case the whole record of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and their open statements during and after the strike expose them as the strike-breakers.* Without the aid of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats the employers and the government could not break the strike. It is, of course, true that without the aid of the government terror the A. F. of L. bureaucrats could not carry through their treacherous policies. *But it is also true that without the treachery of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats the government and the employers could not have carried through their fascist terror against the workers.*

The Democratic Roosevelt government must be exposed as one of the organizers of the terror campaign carried through jointly by the Republican Governor Merriam, Mayor Rossi, and the federal government. It was McGrady and the N.L.B. that prepared the

ground for the terror. It was the Labor Department headed by Madam Perkins, the Roosevelt liberal, that organized the intimidation of the foreign-born workers. And it was Roosevelt's N.R.A. head, Johnson, who openly provoked and called for the organization of violence against the strikers and the Communist Party. We must expose those liberal circles who with the aim of maintaining the Roosevelt illusions among the masses try to separate the responsibility of Governor Merriam, Mayor Rossi and the ruling cliques on the West Coast from that of the Roosevelt government.

The main weakness of the General Strike from the beginning was that it was allowed to be headed by those A. F. of L. leaders who from the beginning opposed it. *This was possible because the Party's work in the A. F. of L. unions in San Francisco was still extremely weak, especially among such workers as the teamsters and the printers, electricians, etc.* It was also due partly because there was not a sufficient activity in the A. F. of L. locals to expose the A. F. of L. leadership and to call for the election to the General Strike Committee of those workers who were in favor of the general strike.

Thus we see that the element which gave solidarity, unity and strength to the marine strike and which made possible the development of the General Strike, namely the rank and file leadership, was not achieved in the General Strike and thus inevitably doomed it to defeat unless the workers could quickly take the leadership out of the hands of the bureaucrats in the course of the general strike. The bureaucrats succeeded in breaking the general strike before such a development became possible. The Party at the decisive moment when the bureaucrats stood isolated and the workers were rallying for the general strike, in the first meeting at which the General Strike leadership was elected, did not develop a struggle against the misleaders and saboteurs. It allowed them through this course to place themselves at the head of the General Strike and overcome their isolation by feigning support for the General Strike.

How did the bureaucrats proceed to break the general strike? In the first day they sent back the municipal transportation workers. They refused to call out the decisive public utility workers. They issued permits indiscriminately, thus giving away one of the most powerful weapons of the workers. They refused to organize workers' defense organizations, to maintain discipline and enforce the workers' decisions. The leaders of the printers' unions entered into an agreement the last days before the general strike with the em-

ployers and did not call out the printers. Thus, while the workers' press was suppressed by the fascist bands and the armed government forces, the bosses were able every hour to pour out poison against the strikers, creating confusion as to the situation, were able to win the support of vacillating elements and among the middle class strata of the population. The Hearst press especially played a vile and vicious role.

It is clear that had the strike leadership been in the hands of the workers it would have been possible by calling out the printers to stop the whole bosses' press' through the workers' press telling the workers the truth, and win allies for the strike among the other strata of the population. Food could have been rationed so that the strikers and their supporters would be assured that they would not go hungry. Transport would be controlled and regularized only for the purpose of strengthening the strike. The workers' defense would have prevented the terror against the workers and their organizations. Only under such conditions could victory be won. This was the program of the Communists, while the A. F. of L. bureaucrats did all possible to disorganize and defeat the General Strike.

The bourgeoisie and its agents carried on a campaign that the general strike could not be victorious because it aimed at insurrection and that a general strike for purely economic demands could not be victorious. The Party correctly stated that the immediate aims of this strike were not to win power, but to win the immediate economic demands of the workers as well as the withdrawal of the troops, the withdrawal of all decrees against the freedom of the strikers to picket, etc. But even among the Communists in the marine strike and in the general strike there was insufficient clarity as to the demands of the general strike, and this helped in the weakening of the general strike by the bureaucrats. The workers felt what they were fighting for in general, but this was not formulated concretely. It should have been made clear to the strikers and to all masses that the general strike was called for the purpose of protesting the shooting of the workers, and had for its demands the withdrawal of all armed forces, and the withdrawal of the prohibition of the rights of the strikers, picketing, meetings, the rights of organization, etc., in order to enable the marine workers to win their demands, at the same time encouraging the workers in the various industries to continue the strike for their own demands.

The ruling class charged that the Communists in this strike were out to make a "revolution". The Communist Party, in the words of Karl Marx, "disdains to conceal its aims" and never hides, from the workers and from the capitalists that it is fighting for the overthrow of capitalism. But the Communist Party is not an adventurist Party that thinks that it can make a revolution without winning over for its revolutionary program the masses of the workers. The Communist Party bases itself on the teaching of Marx, Lenin and Stalin as to what conditions there must be in the country for the overthrow of the rule of the capitalists. This, too, the Party openly teaches the masses. And certainly such conditions did not exist in San Francisco and the Communist Party did not tell the workers that they "can take power" in the City of San Francisco. The Communists, however, are fully aware of the fact that out of every struggle the workers can gain experience that will teach them the correctness of its revolutionary policies and tactics and win their confidence and support. This our Party also attempted to do in San Francisco.

This great struggle, which was betrayed by the A. F. of L. bureaucrats did not, however, bring the results to the employers which they hoped for. They wished, through the defeat of this strike, to let loose the open shop, not alone on the West Coast, but throughout the country. They wished to smash the unions of the marine workers. They wished to initiate a new wage attack. They wished to isolate the radical leaders in the maritime unions. In this they did not succeed, thanks to the correct policy of organized retreat carried through by the marine workers' strike committee which the Communists advocated in order to defeat the aims of the employers. Thus, even this strike has brought not only great lessons to the workers throughout the country and the San Francisco workers, especially, but also resulted in some material gains for the workers and the solidification of their organization. The employers were compelled to deal with both the unions of the Longshoremen and especially the seamen, which they had no intention to do before the general strike. The correct tactics of an organized retreat, basing itself on the fighting spirit of the marine workers, was thus able to maintain the unity of the workers, who forced consideration of their demands, taking back of all strikers with practically no discrimination, the maintenance and consolidation of the marine unions under strong influence of the Left-wing forces, the growth of the authority of the militant marine workers' leaders.

The hope of the capitalists that with the breaking of the general strike they could arrest the growing strike movement throughout the country has also not been fulfilled. This is one of the basic reasons why Green and the A. F. of L. Council have anew declared their unholy war on the Communists, because they know that the Communists are organizing the workers to resist the sharpened attack now being undertaken by the capitalists and the Roosevelt government against the workers. The San Francisco general strike is now being followed by new mass strikes of the Mellon plants, aluminum workers, the knit goods workers, the re-strike in Minneapolis, because the workers became aware of the betrayal by the leaders of the strike, among whom are the Trotzkyists, the strike of the N. Y. painters, where, for the first time the Zausner machine is being challenged by the rank and file, beginnings of strikes in the stockyards, the continuation of the strike of the metal miners, smeltermen and mechanics in Butte, Anaconda and Great Falls, etc. The best proof that the San Francisco General Strike is not the end but the beginning of a widespread strike wave as forecast by the Party is already proven by the General Strike of all textile workers, embracing approximately a million workers – the largest strike in an industry in the history of the country. Without doubt it will be followed by gigantic strikes of steel, auto, and other workers.

The Anti-Red Campaign of Terror

The terror campaign and the San Francisco General Strike, which quickly extended throughout the State of California, and since broadened throughout the entire nation, requires special study because of the far-reaching character it has taken on. Who initiated, organized, and led this campaign? Who was participating in it? It must be registered first of all that the signal for the terror was given by General Hugh Johnson, who, the night before the raids, delivered speeches at Berkeley and Hollywood Bowl, in which he declared that the Communists had gained control of the trade unions and were planning a revolution as the result of the strike; he called upon all patriotic citizens to join together to “exterminate them like rats”. General Johnson was declared in the newspapers to be speaking as the personal representative of President Roosevelt. It is clear that the Roosevelt regime placed itself at the head of and accepts full responsibility for all the fascist outrages that followed. General Johnson was ably seconded by the “liberal” Secretary of Labor,

Madame Perkins, who simultaneously announced a campaign of deportation of all foreign-born workers handed over to her by the local vigilantes and police. The Republican Party, locally, in the State, and nationally, has organized a serious competition with the Democratic Party as to which should have the most "credit" for the fascist terror. Upton Sinclair, recent Socialist and now progressive Democrat running for Governor of California, seized the opportunity, not to protest against the fascist terror, but to denounce the Communist Party and disclaim the slightest connection with the hunted "reds", blaming them for the terror. The *New Leader*, organ of the Socialist Party Right wing, denounced the Communists as being responsible for the breaking of the strike and provoking the fascist terror. Even the "militant" Socialist leader, Norman Thomas, while mildly disapproving of the terror, gave his blessings to the betrayal of the strike with the declaration that "The General Strike was soon called off by Labor itself". General Johnson's command to the A. F. of L. officials that they should exterminate the Communists like rats found a quick response from William Green of the A. F. of L. Executive Council, who denounced the strike and who publicly proclaimed a campaign of expulsions against all militant elements in trade unions. This campaign has already resulted in the expulsion of whole local organizations, notably Local 499 of the Painters Union of New York. The campaign has been taken up by the American Legion, the fraternal societies of the Elks and the Eagles, etc., as well as by all the professional red-baiting societies throughout the country. The capitalist press throughout the country, with Hearst at the head, is carrying on the most vicious incitation to fascist violence against all reds, which means all militant workers' leaders. The growing list of criminal syndicalist cases reflects the terror as applied by the courts, while dozens of reports come in every day, showing a mounting wave of fascist criminal assaults against revolutionary workers. In Oregon the campaign takes such form as the publication of lists of all signers of the Communist election petitions and the inciting of fascist violence against the signers unless they publicly repudiate their signatures. A leader of the American Legion Convention in California climaxed this hysteria by proposing a concentration camp in the wilds of Alaska for all reds, a proposal which was widely publicized throughout the country. The *terror* used to break the San Francisco General Strike has thus been spread over the whole country and served as an enormous

stimulus to the whole tendency toward fascism inaugurated by Roosevelt's New Deal

V. Some Weaknesses of the Communist Leadership on the West Coast

The outstanding shortcoming in the whole development of the marine strike on the West Coast was the inability to develop the strikes of the marine workers in other ports (Atlantic and Gulf) and to coordinate the strikes that did take place (Gulf) with that of the West Coast. This was to a certain extent due to the underestimation of the marine strike on the West Coast by the Party as a whole and especially the marine districts. Another weakness was the slowness in mobilizing support for the strike among the workers generally throughout the country.

The comrades responsible for the leadership of the Party in San Francisco expressed their main weakness in a slowness and even hesitancy in taking up the exposure of Ryan and Company, in the weakness in answering the red-baiting campaign of the capitalists and the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, in the insufficient bringing forward of the Party and building it among the strikers. These weaknesses reflect a tendency which believes that the development of unity of action on the part of the workers is possible by weakening the fight against the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, who, in every phase and stage of the strike, were actively engaged in strike-breaking. A further weakness was the inability to co-ordinate the strike in the various ports on the Pacific Coast, where the two Party districts worked on the whole without adequate contacts.

One of the major weaknesses of the fraction of the M.W.I.U. on the West Coast was the tendency to capitulate before the A. F. of L. bureaucrats with regard to the role of the M.W.I.U., in the mistaken idea that through this they were "preserving" the united front. With regard to the General Strike, which lasted four days, the C.C. already before the outbreak of the General Strike dispatched representatives to the strike scene and through the *Daily Worker* attempted not only to raise and clarify all issues, but also to mobilize the masses in support of the General Strike. Actions in support of the General Strike were organized in many cities. The leadership of the Party on the West Coast, however, showed on a number of questions weaknesses both in the preparation and in the conduct of General Strike. In the first place, there were, as already stated, insuffi-

cient attempts made to elect to the General Strike Committee only those who had proved their support to the marine strike and for the General Strike. Secondly, there was insufficient clarity as to the General Strike demands. Thirdly, during the strike there were insufficient efforts made to win to the support of the marine strike and later the General Strike the support of the middle class strata of the population, as was the case, for example, in Toledo. One of the weaknesses of the Party's work was the still weak position amongst the teamsters, printers, utility workers, and the inability throughout the marine strike and prior to the General Strike to overcome this. Finally, the Party, while on the whole proving itself connected with the masses and able to lead under the greatest difficulty, was not able to organize in advance for the publication of its press in those critical days. At the same time it must be stated that the Party leadership, which worked well despite the unprecedented terror, showed that it was able to develop the initiative of the Party units and sections, which showed up splendidly in the trying days.

VI. The General Strike and the Open Letter

The recent strike struggles in Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, etc., and especially the struggle on the West Coast, have again fully confirmed the correctness of the decisions of the Party Convention and have especially emphasized that only along the lines laid down in the *Open Letter* can the Party take up and win the leadership of the masses. Not only did these strikes prove the growing radicalization of the workers, the class character of the N.R.A., the growing fascization through the New Deal and the treacherous role of the social fascists, but they especially emphasized the methods by which the Party can work successfully. First, it showed the importance of organizing and leading the economic struggles, and, therefore, the necessity for improving the work in the trade unions and factories, and among the unemployed, the more energetic carrying through of the Convention decisions to draw all eligible Party members into the trade unions. Secondly, it emphasized the correctness and fruitfulness of the policy of concentration. Beginning with the task of work in one or two docks in Frisco, the Party, by developing and guiding this work, was able to play an important role in the historic General Strike of San Francisco. It also showed the importance of winning over the new active elements now being developed everywhere among the workers and drawing these forces into the Party. *Thirdly, this strike more than an-*

anywhere else showed the tremendous importance of developing work in the unions, and connecting up this work with the development of independent leadership of the struggles, on the basis of connecting up the opposition with the shop, mill, mine or dock. And finally, it proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the hiding of the face of the Party, the capitulation before the red-baiting campaigns of the enemy, must lead to defeat, while the taking up of the bosses' attack on the Party, answering all questions to the workers, explaining to the toiling masses the whole program of the Party, leads to the very attack of the bosses, their hostile propaganda, being converted into a means of interesting new masses in Communism and winning them to our side.

VII. Tasks of the Party in the Developing Strike Struggles

Most of the tasks which confront the Party in the developing strike struggles have already been stated clearly and sharply in previous resolutions, especially in the resolutions of the last Party Convention. Here we wish merely to emphasize them by briefly stating them, while some of the tasks have as yet escaped our serious attention. Briefly stated, these main tasks are:

(a) Basing ourselves upon the growing radicalization of the workers and taking full advantage of the spontaneous actions of the masses everywhere more boldly to take up, organize and lead the struggles of the workers for wage increases, shorter hours, against lay-offs and speed-up. This, however, cannot be done by relying upon the spontaneity of the masses, but only through a firm course of organization in the factories and the trade unions along the lines of the Party policy of concentration in the main industries, districts and factories.

(b) Everywhere that the workers are organized in the A. F. of L. unions to develop systematic opposition work; to penetrate those unions in which we are still isolated; to fight against underestimation of the dangerous maneuvers of the A. F. of L. officials in leading strikes in order to betray them; to bring all Party members eligible into the unions; to convert the oppositions into fighting oppositions carrying through the leadership of the struggles of the workers connected up with the mines, mills and factories; *finally to overcome and root out all underestimation of work in the reformist unions.*

(c) To strengthen the work and leadership of the T.U.U.L. and other independent unions under our influence, and develop the united front of all workers, organized and unorganized.

(d) To organize the united front of all workers, in the A. F. of L., the T.U.U.L., the independent unions, Socialist workers, etc., on the basis of their immediate demands and through the struggle step by step convince them of the necessity for uncompromising struggle against the bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. as a condition for victory in every struggle.

(e) To develop systematic work in the company unions and win the workers to the trade unions on the basis of exposing the company unions through the putting forward of demands, participation in elections, developing the struggles in the shops, etc. The fight against company unions is one of the best issues for the building of the united front with the A. F. of L. and Socialist workers. It is necessary to fight all tendencies to neglect work in the company unions or to adopt an abstention policy in elections.

(f) To mobilize the unemployed for active participation in the strike movement; to take up the struggle against lay-offs and speedup, for relief to the unemployed and for the *Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill* that unites the struggle of the employed and unemployed workers, extend the movement for the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill in the A. F. of L. unions, the development of the broadest campaign and united front around the Congress for Unemployment Insurance in Washington at the time of the opening of Congress.

(g) To raise special demands of the Negro workers in the shops to fight for full rights in the trade unions, to develop Negro cadres; to take up the demands of the women and young workers; to fight against any discrimination against the foreign-born workers in the factories, in the trade unions, etc.

(h) To utilize every small struggle for the development of mass solidarity, having in mind the possibility of the development of mass strikes, the General Strike, various forms of protestations, solidarity actions; to mobilize supporting actions among the farmers and petty bourgeoisie, linking their demands and struggles with those of workers (fighting against high prices, taxes, rents, evictions, etc.).

(i) To bring all the vital political issues to the workers, into every strike, into every trade union. In this connection to bring forward such questions as the fight against war and fascism, the fight for the freedom of Thaelmann, the defense of the U.S.S.R., the work for the

Anti-War Congress in Chicago, the election campaign, the fight against high taxes for the masses, etc.

(j) To bring to the workers in the shops and the trade unions the work in the army, in the National Guard, who are used increasingly in strikes and who are composed of workers and farmers; to give systematic attention to work among the veterans, whom the capitalists try to use as fascist detachments, but who, as the struggle in Portland showed, can be won to the side of the workers. This is especially important in connection with the struggle against fascism.

(k) To give special attention to such workers as the teamsters, who have until now been entirely neglected but whose role has been shown in these recent strikes (Minneapolis, San Francisco, etc.); to increase work among the railroad workers.

(l) To develop mass defense against the fascist bands for the protection of the workers and their organizations. This is to be based on mass appeal and built around the factories, trade unions, and other workers' organizations.

(m) To develop the greatest activity in the present election campaign on the basis of organizing and leading struggles around the basic planks of the Party platform, overcoming the weakness, exposing the Democratic, Republican Parties, the so-called progressives (La Follette, LaGuardia, Sinclair), the so-called non-political policy of the A. F. of L., the various new groupings to the Right (Liberty League) and "Left" (Utopians, etc), the Socialist Party; to bring forward in a language understandable to the masses the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

(n) To undertake everywhere in connection with every struggle to build the Party and the Y.C.L.; to raise the level of the Party membership, to develop their initiative and prepare them to function under attack; to prepare the Party apparatus, the press, etc., to be able to work and be connected with the masses under the increasing fascist terror now developing the country over. In order to strengthen the fighting ability of the Party it is necessary to carry on a sharp struggle against all Right opportunist and "Left" sectarian tendencies and to fight for the Bolshevization of the Party on the basis of the experience of the struggles and the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.