

Organized Labor in Pittsburgh Strengthens Its Support of Coal-Steel Tyranny Victims

By JAY LOVESTONE

(Special Writer for "The Worker")

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—That Organized Labor of Pittsburgh is not at all dismayed by the action of Superior Court in upholding the conviction of Israel Blankenstein charged with violating the State Sedition Act was clearly demonstrated last Sunday.

Ruling on Blankenstein's appeal against the constitutionality of the law the Superior Court held: That Article I, Section 2, of the State Constitution which cites the right of the people to alter, reform or abolish their Government in such manner as they see proper, is not intended as permission to residents of other states or foreign countries to come into this Commonwealth for similar purposes. The court further held that the power to make such changes rested only in the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Workers Quick to Answer

Assistant District Attorney Meyer welcomed this decision as assuring a conviction of the workers arrested in his infamous "Red Raid" of April 28th. But organized Labor of Pittsburgh lost no time in answering the Court and the prematurely elated agent of the Steel and Coal interests.

Last Sunday the Pittsburgh Labor Defense and Free Speech Council held its Second Conference. It was a most successful gathering. There were 61 delegates present representing various working class organizations. The discussions were spirited and all delegates showed a live interest in the steps to be taken in behalf of Constitutional liberties for the persecuted workers who happen to be members of the Workers Party, or any other political or economic organization of Labor.

Among the labor unions represented at the Conference were the Tobacco Workers' Union, the Waiters' Union, the Machinists' Union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Journeymen Tailors' Union and the United Mine Workers. There were also present delegates from the Socialist Party, the Miners' Relief Committee, the Workers Party and various fraternal, benevolent and educational organizations of Labor.

One of the most active delegates at the Conference was Brother A. A. McNamara, organizer for District 6, International Association of Machinists, and member of the Social Service Bureau of Pittsburgh.

Plan Intensive Campaign

The Conference got right down to brass tacks and organized itself for a vigorous defense campaign.

McNamara offered to give numerous connections and to aid in lining up the Federated Shop Crafts in behalf of the attacked workers. Within

the Defense Council there was organized a special group of American Federation of Labor representatives to interest all A. F. of L. unions. It was also decided to hold as many street meetings as possible. Such meetings will be held every Sunday in September. Brother McNamara was charged with the task of getting permits for these meetings.

A resolution on the steel workers was adopted. A plan for getting out pledges for loans to aid in financing the defense was accepted. Thru the Social Service Bureau of Pittsburgh efforts will be made to secure the co-operation of the local liberal forces. All local labor unions will be visited and the case of the persecuted workingmen will be presented to the trade unionists of Pittsburgh.

The affairs of this vigorous Defense Council are administered by a strong central committee consisting of: Chairman, Gent (A. F. of L. union); Vice-Chairman, Dr. Van Essen (Socialist Party); Second Vice-Chairman, Horvat (Workers Party); Secretary, Sarah Z. Libach (S. P.); Financial Secretary, Margaret Cowl (W. P.); Treasurer, Jane Tait (S. P.). The remaining members are Fred H. Merrick, F. Randa, Dr. M. Rasnick, and A. McNamara. Co-operating with this Central Committee there will be an advisory Committee among whom G. Schaffer, a local liberal attorney, Dr. Van Essen of the Socialist Party, and the noted Reverend Dr. Kazinski, who was very active in behalf of the workers in the Great Steel Strike of 1919.

The battle now being waged against the Steel and Coal Trust tyranny by the workers of Pittsburgh is of tremendous importance to the workers of the whole country. The issue of the safety of the most elementary Constitutional rights for workers holding certain political beliefs and principles is of national significance. All workers should rally to the energetic campaign organized by the Pittsburgh Labor Defense and Free Speech Council.