

# LABOR DEFENDER

**A**S we throw our eyes over the country and back into the past months, what stands out more than anything else? Clouds of tear gas, lines of armed thugs firing into lines of unarmed workers, parades of protesting workers, thousands strong marching with banners that proclaim their demands, hatred crazed mobs incited by those in authority reveling around the mutilated body of lynch victims, meeting halls jammed to overflowing with workers and sympathizers in mass protest. The fruit valleys of California, the cotton fields of the South, the coal mines of Gallup, New Mexico and Helper, Utah, the steel areas of Pennsylvania and Ohio, the streets of the great industrial centers, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, the corn fields of Iowa and the fertile valleys of Wisconsin and New York—filled with strife terror and oppression—this is the scene—the picture of America today. The Labor Defender has tried in the seven years of its existence to give you this picture in sharp clear lines in its pages.

Of course it was impossible to include everything. Many pictures and stories of heroic working class actions and brutal acts of terror have had to go unrecorded to leave space for certain cases that have become symbols. There have been hundreds of Scottsboros, Mooneys, Imperial Valleys, during these years. Only the individuals and the details varied but essentially there was the same class line up. The courts, incited mobs, stool pigeons, police, militia on one side carrying out the bidding of their masters against one or more workers who had to be

put away because they dared to speak, or fight for their rights—for the rights constitutionally guaranteed them or in anyway question the program of the rulers.

The Labor Defender is ready to and must continue its work. It is ready to and must go on as the forum from which class war prisoners and victims the world over can tell their story and send their message. It is ready to and must go on with its work of bringing the lessons of workers mass defense, workers self defense to the masses of America—lessons brought from every corner of the world where workers are oppressed. There is no other publication that can be the medium that the Labor Defender is.

These last seven years have been filled with courageous battles for workers rights. Look into old copies of the Labor Defender and you will see history particularly in the sphere of working class defense as it was made. Sacco and Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, Bill Haywood, Eugene Debs, Lucy Parsons, worker heroes from China, Japan, India, Bulgaria, Germany have used its pages to record their words and their deeds not as isolated happenings but as inseparably related struggles.

The Labor Defender has been more than the living history of labor defense struggles in America. It has become a text book for those who must learn how to make such history. It's work must go on. It's size must be increased to make room for the growing struggles of the working class. It must never be reduced to this size again. You its readers must help us keep it alive.

## WATCH FOR THE FEBRUARY LABOR DEFENDER

*Special Survey Issue*

### **It Happened in 1933**

A smashing record of Action, Victory and Terror.

### **Denmark Vesey**

Negro leader who defended himself in court in 1822

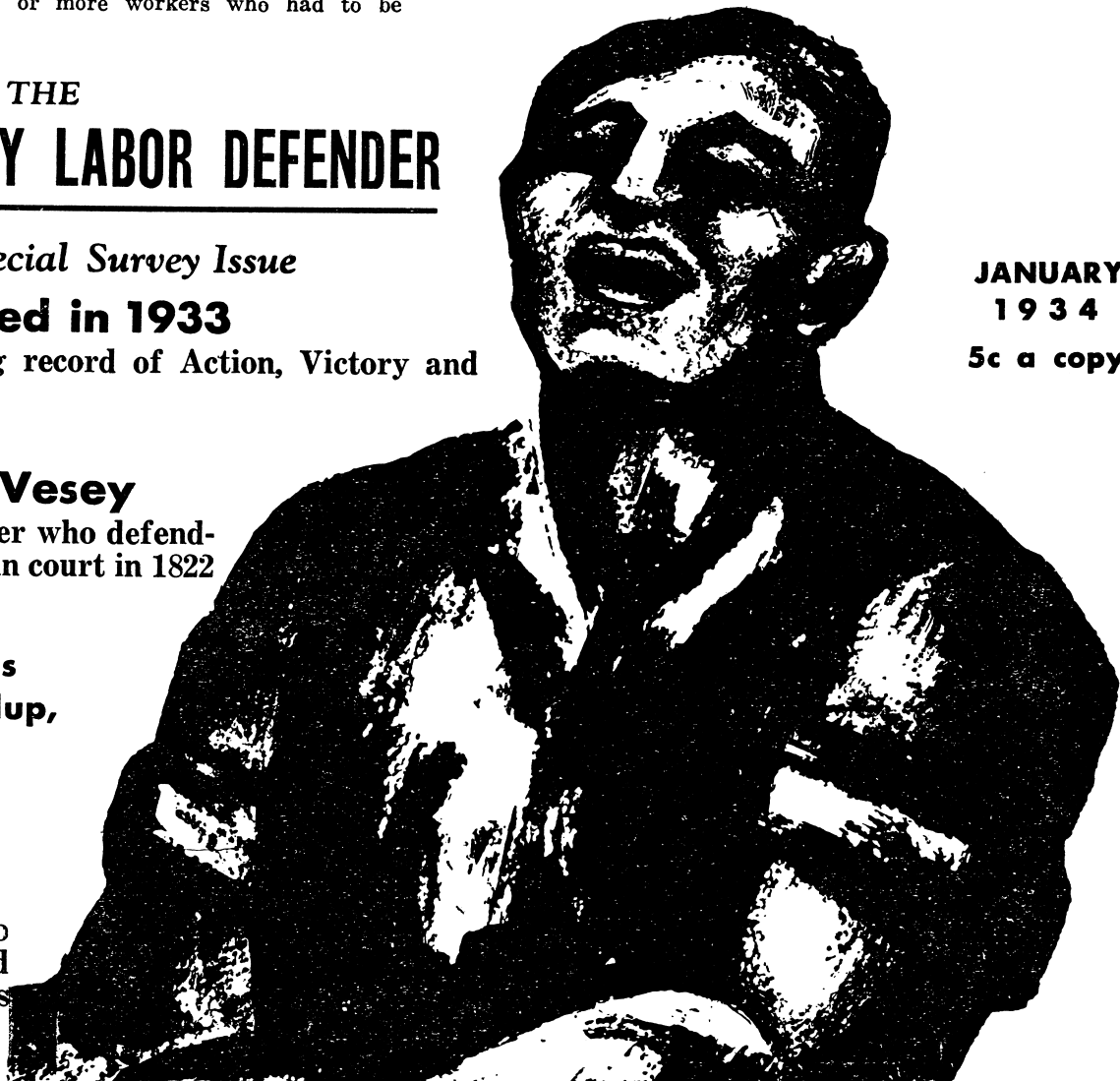
### **The Victorious Battle of Gallup, New Mexico**

### **Norman Thibodaux**

The boy who was lynched tells story in his own words.

**JANUARY  
1934**

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# Ray Becker Retains ILD

Last victim of Centralia's Bloody Armistice Day, turns his case over to the International Labor Defense

On November 11, 1919 Ray Becker and twelve other workers, all members of the I.W.W. were arrested in Centralia, Washington and charged with murder. The American Legion Armistice Day parade ended with a planned attack on the I.W.W. headquarters. This was not the first time the headquarters had been attacked by Centralia's "patriots" and the workers were prepared to defend themselves. In the battle which followed the attack, four Legionnaires were killed. The blood thirsty revenge of the Legionnaires backed by the lumber barons of the region was not satisfied with the arrest of thirteen men. It was not satisfied until it had murdered Wesley Everest with the most devilish torture.

Of the thirteen arrested, 2 escaped, 4 were acquitted and the remaining seven framed in the most vicious open style. Evidence was given that was absolutely impossible. For shots to have been fired from places sworn to by State witnesses bullets would have to turn corners to hit their mark, and so on.

The seven workers were convicted charges of second degree murder and sentenced to 25 to 40 years in Walla Walla Penitentiary.

To Whom It May Concern:

*This is to certify that I retain the International Labor Defense to conduct my defense in both the legal and mass aspects, and that this organization is hereby empowered to demand from the General Defense Committee, the Centralia Publicity Committee or any other organization or individuals or individual any and every affidavit or other form of proof which those who have acting in the guise of my agents have secured, but refused to submit to me or make public.*

(signed) RAY BECKER

Walla Walla, Washington.

December 30, 1933.

The other six Centralia prisoners are all out. Ray Becker alone remained in jail, refusing to accept a parole, protesting his innocence and demanding unconditional release.

Ray Becker's statement to the workers of the United States tells the detailed story of the attack and the frame up. It gives further details of how the defense was conducted during all these years. He repeats sections of speeches made by members of

the General Defense Committee stating, "We know who the lynchers are. We know the guilty ones," but never once disclosing these names that mean freedom for the Centralia victim

Ray Becker says:

*"I have repeatedly asked both of these committees to let me have the proofs of the identity of the lynchers of Wesley Everest, or at least certified copies of such proof. This they have refused to do. When I could not help seeing that both committees were covering up for and practising solidarity with the lynching league I repudiated them. Uglier even than the unprovoked attack upon the union hall, the lynching of Wesley Everest, and the railroad-ing of his surviving comrades is the suppression of facts. Even worse than the tragedy of false imprisonment is the tragedy of broken faith."*

The I.L.D. regards the taking over of the defense of Ray Becker as one of the most important developments. The Centralia case has become just as much a part of the history of the American labor movement as the Mooney case. The Centralia case is part of the great tradition of the American working class and there is not a worker in the entire Northwest who cannot be won for the fight to free Ray Becker. The I.L.D. accepts the responsibility and pledges the support and mass activity of its members all over the country.

## DEFEAT SCOTTSBORO LYNCHERS

January 27 has been set as the date for hearing before lynch-judge W. W. Callahan of Decatur of motions filed by the I. L. D. demanding reversal of the lynch-verdicts of death passed on Heywood Patterson and Clarence Norris.

This step is a necessary legal preliminary to the filing of appeals with the state supreme court of Alabama.

Judge Callahan has it in his power to set Patterson and Norris, and the other seven boys, free.

But it was Judge Callahan who presided at the lynch trial, who systematically barred vital defense testimony, and constantly by his whole attitude and by his every action incited lynch-spirit in the jurors and the audience in the courtroom.

Only mass pressure can force Judge Callahan to reverse his verdict.

Only mass pressure, organized on a scale so far unheard-of, can free the Scottsboro boys, can save their lives.

This month, the I.L.D. launched a national campaign to save the lives of nine other Negroes, one of them a woman, framed and sentenced to die February 9, in Alabama. As a result

of the protest, Governor N. B. Miller has been forced to grant a "clemency hearing" to eight of them. Mass pressure can save their lives too. Mass pressure can force the governor to free them—not merely to demagogically order a "clemency hearing."

The N.A.A.C.P. leadership has in the past two months perpetrated two of the most monstrous betrayals of the Negro people on record. In the case of George Crawford, in Virginia, they refused to take any step whatsoever to arouse mass protest for the defense of Crawford, and to support the larger issues of Negro rights involved in the Crawford case. They asked for a life sentence for him. They got it. They complimented the court. They announced that under no circumstances would an appeal be taken, though a basis for a fight up to the U. S. Supreme Court on the issue of the exclusion of Negroes from juries in Virginia had been held.

In the case of Willie Peterson, tubercular Negro war veteran framed on murder charges in Alabama, the process was repeated, except that the N.A.A.C.P. did this even more secret-

ly, dissociating themselves from the case, not even announcing the fact that Peterson had been condemned to die Jan. 12. Through mass pressure organized by the I.L.D., Governor Miller has been forced in this case also to make the gesture of a stay of execution and a "clemency hearing."

Pressure of white and Negro masses has saved the lives of John Askew and Russel Gordon, Negroes framed on murder and rape charges in Norfolk, Va., and militantly defended by the I.L.D. Mass pressure has kept the nine Scottsboro boys alive so far.

Mass pressure backed by the legal steps taken by the I.L.D. can save them, can win their freedom.

Raise the demand at every meeting, in every shop, in every branch, and every organization, among your friends and neighbors, let every one register their protest—for unconditional, safe release for the nine Scottsboro boys.

Flood President Roosevelt, Governor Miller and Attorney General Thomas E. Knight, at Montgomery, Ala., with this demand.

# Free Tom Mooney

## Build Mass Campaign

From his cell in San Quentin, Tom Mooney has recently sent out two letters, one of them addressed to all the delegates who attended the Free Tom Mooney Congress in Chicago last May. Because of the serious let down in the work of the Mooney Councils of Action established by this Congress, Tom Mooney criticizes those who helped establish these Councils, and even suggests that they were created to destroy his own defense committee and take the control of his defense out of his own hands.

The record of I.L.D. activity in the Mooney case clears it of such suspicions. The I.L.D. always considers the organization of a gigantic working class movement to free Tom Mooney one of its major campaigns. It has never been guilty of such betrayal of Tom Mooney as lies at the door of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy or the leadership of the Socialist Party. It has been guilty of allowing this campaign to lag somewhat at times when it was staggering under the burden of thousands of other cases. But the I.L.D. pledges to Tom Mooney the greatest intensification of the fight for his freedom.

Tom Mooney asks in his letters that funds be raised to enable him to issue a 132 page pamphlet in which he tells the story he was not permitted to tell in open court last April.

He asks for a huge wave of agitation demanding his freedom, to precede the presentation of a writ of habeas corpus to the U. S. Supreme Court which will be done by his attorneys early this year.

He asks that every organization, committee and individual help to show the film "The Strange Case of Tom Mooney" as widely as possible.

The I. L. D. has never dropped its campaign for the freedom of Tom Mooney. But it pledges for the future to carry it on with increased intensity. Already suggestions have been sent to all branches to hold discussions on the Mooney case.—The Mooney case in the light of the developing fascist terror and intensifying lynch wave and the stand of Governor Rolph in support of lynchings.

The Mooney case and its relations to the farmers' struggles.

The Mooney case in the light of Roosevelt's Christmas Day amnesty. The Mooney case in the world setting of Scottsboro, Leipzig, and other international campaigns. A broad series of mass meetings lectures, demands upon the Senators and representatives in Congress, demands upon the president and the attorney general, etc. have been launched.

The I.L.D. has never dropped the Mooney campaign because it is inseparably a part of every struggle of the American working class. The Mooney case has its roots in the last world

war. It is an exposure of the whole rotten system of frame up and persecution of militant workers. It is a vital part of the struggles of worker's rights to organize and strike and build their trade unions. The Mooney Case is one of the greatest symbols of ruling class oppression. And to the American workers it has become a challenge. In the words of the Negro poet Langston Hughes, whose poem was printed in the May Day issue of the Labor Defender:

Of course, the man with the title of governor

Will be forgotten then

On the scrap heap of time—

He won't matter at all.

But remembered forever will be the name:

TOM MOONEY.

Schools will be named:

TOM MOONEY.

Farms will be named:

TOM MOONEY.

Dams will be named:

TOM MOONEY.

Ships will be named:

TOM MOONEY.

Factories will be named:

TOM MOONEY.

And all over the world—

Banner of force and labor, strength and union,

Life forever through the workers' power—

Will be the name:

TOM MOONEY.

## Answer this Prison Voice

State Prison, Marquette, Mich.

Dear Comrades:

Thanks for your letter and the \$2.00 money order. Hope that I am able to justify this remembrance from my fellow workers with active work in the labor movement in the years to come after my release. Although I am 52 years old I hope to have energy left after this to accomplish more in my remaining days for the working class movement then during the past thirty years I have been connected with the movement. I am in good health and spirits, thanks to the I.L.D. who has taken care of my defense and is working for my release. You may have heard from our attorneys, Morris Sugar of Detroit and Henry Paull of Duluth that our petition for leave of appeal has been granted by the Supreme Court and bonds have been set in the sum of \$5,000 pending our appeal. As soon as the technicalities of the bond are arranged I will be released—that may be any day now. As my case is exactly similar to the Stromberg case in California, in which case the U. S. Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional, under which she was convicted and reversed the conviction of the lower court. My case being still weaker because no connection with the charge whatever was proven or attempted. I was convicted for being a Communist and leader of the working class, pure and simple, so there might be a chance to win out in the Supreme Court. No matter what happens my convictions will not change, but be firmer than ever. With greetings.

E. F. BURMAN.

Serving 4-8 years under Michigan Red Flag Law

## Philadelphia Scottsboro Strike

The strike carried through by the Cleaners and Dyers Union (A. F. of L.) in 48 Philadelphia shops last month as their Scottsboro protest did not just happen out of the clear sky or out of the deep anger alone that these workers felt that at the third lynch verdict.

The strike began way back in August. When the Cleaners and Dyers of Philadelphia came out on a strike, for better conditions, the I.L.D. at once sent a representative to their meeting. He brought greetings and pledged solidarity and support. He offered the cooperation of the I.L.D. in defence of the strikers. He pointed out that terror and arrests would surely be used as weapons to break their strike and well organized defense was of the greatest importance.

The strikers were shown how their own struggles were connected with the fight to free Mooney and the Scottsboro Boys. A defense committee was organized after a standing vote of confidence in the I.L.D. was taken. At another meeting a recruiting committee was elected and 400 members then and there joined the International La-

bor Defense.

When the union was approached on the question of helping the Scottsboro defense the executive committee recommended a half hour strike. A general meeting was called. Wm. L. Patterson, national secretary of the I.L.D. was invited to speak to the workers. The strike vote was unanimous.

2,200 workers stopped work for half an hour on the appointed day. In 48 shops Scottsboro meetings were held and all 48 sent protest telegrams to Pres. Roosevelt and Gov. Miller of Alabama.

What was done by the I.L.D. in Philadelphia can be done everywhere in the United States.—wherever I.L.D. branches exist and function as the mighty defense arm of the working class.

### SUB DRIVE

The contest isn't moving fast enough. Nobody has anywhere near 150 subs to win the prize—a one week trip to New York, Chicago or the South. So far Detroit is in the lead.

You still have until March 15, 1934

## Reichstag Victims In Great Danger

The test of strength between organized world public opinion (mass protest) and the German Nazis who are attempting to carry out the planned murder of the four Communist defendants in the Reichstag fire trial is not yet finished.

International working class solidarity with mass action has won the first round. After months of trial, during which the fascist prosecution debased itself to the utmost limit in a frenzied attempt to justify the rule of the filthy Hitler hordes, the defendants were acquitted. That verdict was dictated by the iron force of mass pressure. No attempts by puny "liberals" or misguided handservants of reaction even to ascribe that verdict to the "fairness and impartiality" of the Fascist court (Arthur Garfield Hays, George Bernard Shaw,) can rob the world's workers of the strength and confidence that comes from victorious struggle.

But under the cover of such apologies which if not relentlessly exposed can only have the effect of weakening the mass front against fascism, the Nazis are continuing their provocations. Weeks after acquittal, the defendants are still prisoners in the fascist dungeons. Hitler and his murderous gang are certainly smarting under their unexampled moral defeat. These beasts can never forgive the smashing blows delivered against them and their violent rule by George Dimitroff, who as a defendant conducted himself as the accuser and, with supreme courage, demolished the "case" of the prosecution and brilliantly exposed the Nazis as the real incendiaries.

Nor can the working class ever forget this object lesson in revolutionary conduct. Dimitroff as spokesman for his class, has inspired and fired with enthusiasm millions of toilers the world over.

The Nazis and social fascists the world over detest him, and his co-defendants, and the working class in whose interests they have fought. So they rally their scattered forces, and their apologists, and those who would delude the workers with speeches about impartiality and fairness and justice, and concoct new fiendish plots to behold these heroes of the working class.

In addition, the Nazis intend to bring Ernst Thalmann, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Germany, before their bloody tribunal, and, in the name of world reaction, sentence him to die.

The Leipzig trial and the coming trials are the focal points of the worldwide struggle between Fascism and Communism. The international working class has won a tremendous victory, but the fight has just begun. The Nazis are preparing fresh provocations.

Workers! Rally your forces. Redouble your struggles. Demand the immediate unconditional freedom of Dimitroff, Torgler, Popoff and Taneff.

Demand the immediate release of Ernst Thalmann. Demand the freedom of the tens of thousands of innocent workers, Jews, intellectuals. An end to Nazi blood-letting and destruction. Organize and fight against fascist terror.

## Victory Over Lynchers In Minneapolis

Lynchings are not confined to the black belt, nor even to the South. Wherever and whenever the ruling class wants to sharpen its policy of "divide and rule", to set toiler against toiler, white against Negro, native against foreign-born, lynchings may hit. The basis is also being laid in the development of fascist terror under the direction of the state, against the toilers and particularly against its militant leadership. It has been laid by the chauvinist lynch incitement of the white ruling class.

Lynchings can occur in any part of the United States.

In Minneapolis, last June, a lynch-gang was incited to attack two Negro workers who had just come up from the South. The cry of "lynch them" was raised.

Just as the leader of the gang was about to lay his hand on one of the Negro workers, a shot was fired, and the prospective lyncher fell dead.

Wilbur Hardiman and James Johnson, the two Negroes, were arrested, charged respectively with murder, and assault.

Immediately, the International Labor Defense took up the fight to save these two Negroes—charged with murder and assault because they dared try to defend themselves against a mob intent on a lynching spree. The courts were setting about to accomplish legally what the white rulers through their lynch law ideology had failed to complete—and the basis of the charge was that the lynching had been successful.

The I.L.D. waged a strong mass campaign, and popularized these cases, at the same time providing adequate legal defense. The campaign had serious weaknesses. It did not sufficiently draw white workers to an understanding of why they must fight for the lives and freedom of these two members of an oppressed nationality.

But the fight that was put up has succeeded in winning its immediate objective, and early in January, all charges against Wilbur and Hardiman were dismissed.

On the basis of this victory, the I. L. D. in Minneapolis will carry on a strong fight against white chauvinism, and the oppression of Negro people, to weld the solidarity of Negro and white workers together, against the common enemy.

## Imperial Valley Strikes!

Over 5,000 Mexican, Filipino and white workers in the Imperial Valley, are now on strike under the leadership of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Workers Union.

In the first few days of the strike, hundreds have been arrested. Children have been jailed. One woman striker has been shot and wounded by the police. Mass deportations of Mexican workers is being planned. The union hall has been gassed. All roads leading to the Valley are blocked by armed guards, who stop and turn back relief trucks bearing food for the strikers. The I.L.D. organizer in the Valley has been jailed and beaten. The Sheriff of Imperial Valley County has wired the Governor demanding that troops be sent against the strikers. *This murderous terror must be fought.*

Send protests, wires, resolutions to Sheriff Campbell, El Centro, California and to Governor Rolph, Sacramento, California.

## El Salvador, 1932

On January 22, two years ago the agricultural workers and poor peasants of El Salvador rose against their masters. The insurrection spread through the three coffee growing provinces, the richest and most important provinces in the country.

The capitals and the most important towns of these three provinces were captured by the insurrectionists. A Soviet of workers and peasants was established in Tacuba, the capital of Ahuachapan province. It lasted for 8 days and was the last stronghold of the uprising to fall.

The government in power in El Salvador today is the same government that annihilated the rebels. It was ably helped in this work by troops landed from American, British and Canadian battleships.

It is no exaggeration to use the word annihilated. Hundreds of leaders were murdered. 30,000 workers and peasants were slain. Towns and cities were wrecked.

The rule of terror still lives in El Salvador. A merciless military dictatorship crushes any attempt at protest.

The most fitting commemoration of the fallen workers and peasants of El Salvador will be continued struggle against imperialism here in the United States and every possible form of support to the struggles of the oppressed peoples in Central and South America.

### SUB DRIVE

Rush your subs to Room 430, 80 East 11th Street. Mark them **CONTEST** or you won't get credit. Thousands of workers will be willing to spend 1c a week for the **LABOR DEFENDER**. Get them to subscribe!