





Jamison

"Senator Barkley says we needn't worry about convoys."

for the Sailors Union in Aberdeen, Wash. Incredible? Of course. True? Incontestably so.

Dean Landis, on Dec. 28, 1939, turned in his verdict: "The evidence therefore establishes neither that Harry R. Bridges is a member of, nor affiliated with, the Communist Party of the United States of America."

Complete vindication for all save the taxpayers who stood the expense of the trial; for all save the government witnesses who discredited themselves and covered the prosecution with shame; for all save those men and organizations which for seven years had hounded Bridges in violation both of morals and law.

Said Dean Landis of Bridges' testimony: "It was given not only without reserve, but vigorously as dogma and faiths of which the man was proud and which represented in his mind the aims of his existence. It was a fighting apologia that refused to temper itself to the winds of caution. . . . It was unequivocal in its distrust of tactics other than those that are generally included within the concept of democratic methods."

Having made himself clear on the issue of Harry Bridges, the Dean turned to a dissection of prosecution witnesses. Of Major Milner, he wrote: "Milner's testimony in this proceeding is deserving of little, if any, credence." Of Leech: "In evasion, qualification and contradiction it is almost unique." Of Harper Knowles, head of the American Legion's Radical Research Committee and former executive secretary of the Associated Farmers: "He was neither a candid nor a forthright witness." Of Sapiro: "Sapiro's testimony possesses elements of incoherent improbability." Of Captain Keegan of the Portland police Red squad: "The conclusion is inescapable that his testimony is far from reliable. . . . Not only was Keegan's respect for an oath negligible, but he was again and again faced with testimony so variant from that which he had given that he was forced to alter his original story or to make its hollowness patent by the crudeness of his subsequent explanations." Of Larry Doyle, bearer of credentials from the ex-governors of California and Oregon, self-confessed labor spy and professional Red-hunter: "Doyle proved to be a problem in contumacy."

Thus, the collapse of the great Red trial against Harry Bridges. . . .

Harry Bridges is now thirty-nine years old. He was born in Australia of a family which held and still holds rather extensive real estate interests. His uncle is a member of Parliament. He was reared and educated a Catholic. As a boy he fell in love with the books of Jack London and took to the sea. He arrived in the United States April 20, 1920, paid his \$8 head tax in San Francisco, and became a legal entrant.

He applied for his first papers, received them; in applying for his second papers he filed thirty-two days before the expiration of the filing period, although government officials claimed he was a few days late. A slip-up somewhere. Petty, bureaucratic immigration officials are famed for their shabby treatment of alien petitioners. Again Bridges applied for and received his first papers, becoming eligible for citizenship during the depth of the depression. Being unemployed most of the time, he lacked the twenty dollars necessary for his second papers. He was informed somewhat later that if he attempted to get his second papers, things would be made "so hot" for him he would wish he'd never tried. However, since his last deportation hearing, he again has tried unsuccessfully to become an American citizen.

His status is quite different from that of rich Americans who—while clinging to their American citizenship—flock to every country of Europe to live luxuriously at the expense of deflated foreign currencies, returning to America only when trouble threatens, and then reluctantly. In any event, his status is different from that of wealthy and titled Europeans who—retaining their foreign citizenship—enter the United States as refugees to infest the most expensive hotels, resorts, night clubs, and gambling establishments, while sighing and murmuring for the tragic fate of their countrymen across the Atlantic. His status, in short, is probably no different from that of 5,000,000 other aliens who have lately registered with the federal government.

Whatever the cause, to his own sorrow and to the sorrow of American labor—albeit to the great delight of employer groups—the man is not a citizen and probably cannot now obtain citizenship. It is worthy of comment that the same hypocritical individuals who attack Bridges for not having become a citizen are the same men who have moved heaven and earth to prevent him from acquiring citizenship. As an alien he is subject to trial and immediate deportation. As an alien he is denied all protections accorded to citizens when brought before the bar of justice.

But to continue with Bridges, the man. He holds an honorable discharge as a quartermaster from the United States Geodetic Survey. He is married. He has a fifteen-year-old daughter. He has a twenty-year-old step-son who is a sergeant in the United States Army. His only possessions are a mortgaged automobile and a vacant lot in Australia. He gives too much of his money away. During the 1936 coastwide waterfront strike Bridges gave all of his salary to the strikers each week. His

salary as president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union is \$75 per week. Contrast this salary with the legendary incomes of corrupt labor leaders, and you have the true measure of Harry Bridges. . . .

NOW WHAT of the union he heads? What of this revolutionary organization which so hideously and subversively demands a living wage for the 35,000 workers at present affiliated with it? Considering the fact that there are labor unions whose officials have not permitted an election in twenty years, it is refreshing to discover that the ILWU elects officers annually. They are elected by the majority of absolutely secret ballots. At any time the union is tired of an officer, a petition signed by fifteen percent of the membership compels his immediate impeachment. He is out of office the moment the petition is presented, and draws no salary until his trial, during the course of which his guilt or innocence is determined. This clause was inserted at the request of Harry Bridges.

This process of democracy at work runs through every action of the union. Any act of the International Executive Board can be subjected to referendum by the entire union at the request of fifteen percent of the membership. All proposals which a negotiating committee is authorized to make to employers are first adopted by secret majority vote. Beyond such proposals the bargaining committee is not authorized to venture. No contract may be ratified without secret majority vote. Bridges has long argued that a union leader must share the hardships of a strike as well as the glories of victory: hence *neither he nor any other official of the union receives a penny of salary while the men are on strike.*

There is no racial, religious, or political discrimination within the union. Members include Americans, English, Russians, Negroes, Finns, Turks—every nationality in the world. Beyond any question the ILWU is the finest example of democratic trade unionism in America.

When confronted with such an organization, there are only two ways to destroy it: split the membership, or eliminate the leader. For seven years the attempt has been made by provocateurs and labor spies, yet the magnificent cohesion of the union has only increased. Hence, the leader must be destroyed. One attempt has failed miserably. Another is under way at this time. If the . . . hearings fail, there will be still others. For Harry Bridges is a dangerous man, as all honest and efficient men are dangerous.



April 15, 1941 NM

In spite of the complete legality, the genuine unselfishness, the enormous social benefits of his work, this man for seven years has been harassed. His rights of privacy have been violated. His telephone wires have been tapped. He has been trailed by detectives. He has been urged into dozens of compromising situations. He has refused fortunes in bribes. . . .

For months detectives have quizzed disgruntled unionists—and there was a disgruntled one even among the Twelve Apostles—seeking every detail of his personal life. He will be smeared economically, politically, morally. If the charges against him fail as signally as in his previous trial, still more money will be raised, still more detectives will be employed, still more hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars will be squandered. For his crime, as evidenced by the paychecks of his union members, is grave beyond measure. . . .

WHEN I READ the surveys of American fortunes, when I witness overwhelming financial power descend from father to son precisely as the entailed estates and titles of Europe descend, I realize more fully than ever how much Harry Bridges has given to America and how little he has taken from America. This man and his \$75 weekly salary and his mortgaged car are very important to me for the typically American pattern they present. He is an immigrant, as all of us were immigrants at one time or another. Like most of us, he has made no fortune, profited by no man's toil, violated no law, betrayed no man or cause. But more patriotic than most of us, he is a sincere democrat, a genuine defender of America by his defense of that portion of the "ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed" third of our nation. . . . If he is deported as an undesirable alien, or when he dies, his daughter's only heritage will be the knowledge that 35,000 maritime workers, under the leadership of her father and in full conformity with the law of the land, advanced from degradation and poverty to that position of human dignity and economic sufficiency which is the aim of all free men.

We can spend a million—ten million—lives in defense of the American continent, yet they will have been wasted if those principles for which Harry Bridges stands and now is persecuted are overthrown. For in our whole land—vast in its resources, teeming in its industries, first in the world if you wish—there will be no single free man. . . .

It is not really the man Harry Bridges who matters at the . . . hearings, for his record will remain triumphantly behind him in the daily lives of the union he headed. And if the hearings turn out adversely for the defense, it will not be Harry Bridges who is deported, but the principles of American liberty. . . .

DALTON TRUMBO.

Mr. Trumbo's article is abridged from his pamphlet "Harry Bridges," published by the Hollywood Chapter of the League of American Writers.

NM April 15, 1941

IN YOUR HANDS

Last week we told you that unless we had \$3,000 for the printer by Tuesday, April 8, the issue would not go to press. Thanks to our readers and friends, who contributed \$1,958, and to our art auction, which netted \$925, we were saved—for one week.

But next week is, if anything, even more critical. The printer is again on our necks. The paper man, the landlord are clamoring for payment. Every day we face a financial deadline. Will there be a NEW MASSES next week? Again the verdict is in your hands.

THE EDITORS

(Please fill out coupon on page 25)

THE COMING TRIUMPH

Jefferson's and Lincoln's dreams ended in the nightmare of monopoly. A. B. Magil traces the growth of America's working class. The battle for democracy and the promise of the future.

This is the last in a series of four articles on the driving forces in the past development of American democracy in relation to the problems of the present and the future. The previous articles dealt with the period from the close of the Revolution to the end of the Reconstruction era, with special emphasis on the role of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln. NEW MASSES presents these articles as a reply to those who seek to pervert the American tradition and thwart the effort to fulfill the promise of American democracy.

IN THE year 1877 two events occurred which announced the coming of a new epoch in American life. In April of that year the last tattered banners of Reconstruction were lowered when President Rutherford B. Hayes, carrying out the terms of a deal which gave him the election over Tilden, withdrew federal troops from South Carolina and Texas, turning over their state governments to the representatives of the counter-revolutionary planters. In July 1877 the great railroad strike broke out, the first large-scale clash between capital and labor and the first in which federal troops were used in peacetime. These two apparently unrelated events signalized the end of one irrepressible conflict and the beginning of another. The troops which had guarded democracy for the Negro people and small white farmers of the South were sent to extinguish it for the workers of the North. It was a momentous symbol. Within a few short years the dominant industrial bourgeoisie had traversed the path from revolution to reaction and now bestrode the republic, a colossus of predatory power.

This was a major transformation. Hitherto it was the bourgeoisie, either as a whole or through its middle-class component, which had pushed forward the frontiers of bourgeois democracy in America. But in the period that opened after the Civil War the capitalist class became increasingly an anti-democratic force, seeking to narrow the area of popular liberty. The United States was witnessing the phenomenon which Karl Marx had noted in France in 1851:

The bourgeoisie recognized that all the weapons which it had forged against feudalism could have their points turned against itself; that all the means of education which it had created were rebels against its own civilization; that all the gods it had set up had deserted it. It became aware that the so-called civil liberties and instruments of progress were menaces to its own class domination.

This changed attitude of the American ruling class was the product of a fundamental economic change. The democracy which was established by the first American Revolution was based on the ownership of property which,

particularly in the form of farm property, was at that time widely distributed. In the struggle which the American people waged after the revolution under the leadership of Jefferson the central issue was whether democracy and political power were to be limited to the holders of large property, as the Federalists desired, or were to include as well the holders of small property, farmers and artisans. Throughout the whole of the period up to the Civil War the absence of any feudal heritage, the slow growth of industrial capitalism, and the expanding frontier made possible the continued dissemination of property in many hands. And within this favorable economic climate the efforts of the people, reaching new peaks in the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian eras, extended the scope of bourgeois democracy. It may be said that never before or since has any capitalist country achieved so close an approximation to economic, social, and political equality for the majority of its people as existed in the United States—outside of the South—during the three decades preceding the Civil War. Whitman's greatest poetry was written toward the end of this period; in contrast to his work after the Civil War, there is in this poetry the exuberance and self-confidence of the young democratic giant that was America, untouched as yet by the gaudy corruptions, the racking inner pains and disquietudes of later years.

PARADOXICALLY, the overthrow of the chief obstacle to further democratic advance, the slave system, also overthrew the basis for continuing that advance: small-owner economy. Industrial capitalism, which had been held in leash by the slave system, leaped forward with unprecedented speed and power, creating both an enormous concentration and centralization of capital in few hands and a large, growing class of propertyless wage-workers. At the same time the disappearance of the frontier—by 1890 the entire country up to the Pacific had been settled—closed that means for expanding the ownership of small property; on the contrary, many farmers began to lose their property through indebtedness and foreclosures. From 1880 to 1900 farm tenancy rose from 25.6 to 36.3 percent, and by the end of the century 31 percent of all American farms were mortgaged. The once vigorous middle classes, out of whom had sprung the industrial bourgeoisie, were reduced to a position of dependence. The dream of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln had ended in the nightmare of monopoly. And for the first time the antagonism between capitalism and democracy came nakedly into view.

This antagonism expressed itself primarily as a conflict between capital and labor. History quickly demonstrated that only the

proletariat could replace the middle classes as the yeast of new democratic growth. For this was the class which played the decisive role in the industrial production which was spreading its dominion over the entire country. And this was the class which was most directly affected by the social consequences of the concentration of economic power and the subservience of government to big business. Moreover, the very conditions of capitalist production, by bringing large numbers of workers together, gave them the means to challenge the new despotism that was seeking to abridge democracy.

The activity of the working class, while immediately directed toward preserving and extending bourgeois democratic rights, necessarily also raised the question of a new economic foundation for democracy since the old one could never be retrieved. Thus, in the period that opened with the betrayal of the Negro people in the South and the violent assault on the great railroad strike, American society has developed under two opposing impulses. The drive of capital has been toward the contraction of democracy, the drive of labor toward its expansion. The consummation of capital's drive is fascism, a phenomenon of the monopoly or imperialist stage of capitalism. The consummation of labor's drive is the eradication of capitalism and the establishment of a new economic basis for democracy, socialism, or the cooperative ownership of productive property—the factories, land, and natural resources—by the workers and farmers. This qualitatively different and immeasurably higher type of democracy for the first time makes possible the realization for *all* the people of the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness which is the heart of the American dream.

THE SEVENTIES marked the turning point, when the era of free competition reached its peak and the transition to monopoly began. This was greatly accelerated by the economic storm which in 1873 broke over the United States and the entire capitalist world, the most severe crisis that capitalism had known up to that time. Two years after the railroad strike of 1877 the first trust, Standard Oil, was formed. American capitalism had come of age. In the nineties there began the export of capital, one of the chief stigmata of imperialism, and in 1898 this country fought its first imperialist war. The organization of the United States Steel Corp. in 1901 may be said to have marked the full emergence of the epoch of imperialism (monopoly capitalism), which on the economic plane is the complete negation of the democracy of Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln.

Simultaneous with this process the capital-