
Sunday Worker

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1939

The Case Against Bridges

• Dean Landis has found that there is no evidence that Harry Bridges, West Coast CIO leader, is a member of the Communist Party or affiliated with it. It is hard to see how Landis could have come to any other conclusion, in view of the fact that all the evidence presented by the government and the ship-owners against Bridges, came from stool-pigeons, perjurers, ex-convicts and other disreputable characters.

Landis evaded the other accusation made by the government, namely that the Communist Party advocates "violence." Let it be repeated here, therefore, that the Communist Party has never been a party of "violence," and that not a single shred of evidence has ever been presented to the contrary. In fact, the government's case against the Communist Party was based on the same lying, stool-pigeon evidence on which it accused Bridges of Party membership.

Landis' decision has the force only of a recommendation to the Secretary of Labor. The trade union movement, which has been the real target of the attack on Bridges, will undoubtedly be vigilant therefore to see that the Labor Department now dismisses the charges against the West Coast leader.

That, however, is only part of the job. For the attack which was begun against Bridges, has now been taken up by Attorney General Murphy and the Department of Justice on a wholesale scale. Murphy is now threatening to deport militant trade unionists "by the boatload." Where the case against Bridges was conducted under the cry of "force and violence," the drive by the Department of Justice is using a new strategy: the "foreign agent" line prepared by the Dies Committee. Like the case against Bridges, the Murphy drive aims at strangling the trade union movement and making it an easy prey for the war-machine.

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