

The 9th Year of the International Labor-Defense

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

IN its nine years of life the I. L. D. has been of real service to the working class. Its militant mass campaigns over these years in support of innumerable class war prisoners have not only been an invaluable aid in defending these prisoners, but they have also done much to educate the workers not only regarding the poisonous workings of capitalist class justice, but also the whole capitalist system of exploitation.

Still greater tasks will confront the I. L. D. in the future than in the past. As capitalism sinks deeper into crisis and the capitalists turn more and more to fascist methods of violence and persecution against the workers this will

inevitably mean more and more arrests of militant fighters. Hence the building and strengthening of the I. L. D. becomes of major importance to the effective struggle of the working class.

McNamara and Schmidt

The I. L. D. now has many cases to occupy its attention, what with the Scottsboro boys, Mooney, Hurdon and the many others, but there is one case that will have to be attended to much more energetically than in the past. This is the McNamara-Schmidt case.

This case grew out of the bitter labor struggle in Los Angeles in 1910. As a result of the dynamiting of the Los Angeles Times Building both men are doing life sentences.

McNamara has already done 23 years and Schmidt 18. McNamara is the oldest political prisoner, in point of time served, of any in all the world.

It is a great tragedy that these prisoners have been so much neglected by the working class. They were betrayed and forsaken by the A. F. of L. leadership and even the revolutionary movement has not done its duty in mobilizing the workers for their release.

McNamara's plea of guilty has been greatly misunderstood. It was not his plan, but was put over in spite of his objection. In was in reality a brave, if mistaken, act. McNamara made it in the full belief that he was thereby saving the

labor movement and many militants from disastrous blows. During his many years in prison, McNamara's conduct has been splendidly uncompromising. He has clearly demonstrated himself to be one of the very bravest and finest personalities ever produced by the class struggle in this country. It is an honor to fight in defense of such a courageous proletarian battler as McNamara.

Let us, therefore, from now on begin to rally the masses for the release of McNamara and Schmidt. We must force open the prison gates for these class war prisoners. To lead in this work is one of the many great tasks confronting the I. L. D.