
Defense Audit Shows Deficit Hampers Work: Ruthenberg Appeal is Big New Task [Jan. 23, 1924]

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The Labor Defense Council, which for 15 months has been in the forefront of the fight against “anti-criminal syndicalism” persecutions, now finds itself in serious financial straits. The financial statement for the three months ended Jan. 1, 1924 discloses that expenses for the period exceeded income by \$2,142.

The total deficit of the Labor Defense Council amounts to \$4,670 and it will be seen that nearly half of this was incurred in October, November, and December 1923. Receipts have fallen off steadily during the past few months — unfortunately precisely at the time when renewed efforts are needed for the winning of the Ruthenberg Appeal.

Must Raise \$15,000.

Between now and March 1, the Defense must raise \$15,000. This is the minimum required to meet current bills and expenses, some of which are already past due. It will not cover any of the \$4,670 deficit referred to above which has been taken care of temporarily by loans which must be repaid shortly.

Organized scarcely a year and a half ago, the Labor Defense Council has raised more than \$110,000 for the defense of the Communists indicted in Michigan as a result of the machinations of Burns and Daugherty. The magnitude of this accom-

plishment will be realized when it is understood that over 90 percent of the money raised was contributed by working men and women, in small amounts. It was the wholehearted response of workers everywhere that made possible the engaging of Frank P. Walsh as chief counsel for the defense.

Kept Workers Out of Prison.

By its persistent campaign, the Labor Defense Council has been able to save 32 staunch fighters of the working class from prison. But it has done much more than this. It has carried on a defense which was at the same time an attack, making use of the Michigan emergency to create a united front of labor against the vicious agents of the employers. It has exposed the secret collaboration of Burns and his "Department of Justice" operatives. It has defeated the avowed purpose of the enemies of labor to destroy the militant wing of the labor movement and weaken the whole labor structure.

But the remarkable victory in the case of William Z. Foster will be again endangered unless it is made secure by a precedent of outright acquittal under the Michigan Criminal Syndicalism Law. The struggle must be carried to complete and final victory through the winning of the Ruthenberg Appeal. If the Appeal is lost, it is almost certain that Foster will be brought to trial again — along with William F. Dunne, Rose Pastor Stokes, Robert Minor, and the 27 other defendants who have not yet been brought to trial.

Has Raised \$110,000.

The Labor Defense council has raised over \$110,000 in its year and a half of existence. The administrative cost of raising this has been about 30 percent, including printing and advertising, traveling expenses of speakers, office expenses, etc. It is gen-

erally agreed that this is an extremely low percentage for collecting defense funds. Some \$75,000 have gone directly into legal expenses.

Great results have been achieved, more than justifying the time and money which have gone into the defense work. The present condition of Labor Defense Council finances, however, is such that the fruits of past triumphs may be lost unless sympathizers can be made to realize the importance of assuring final victory through the winning of the Ruthenberg Appeal. The Secretary of the Council declares that plans in connection with the appeal may be hampered in the event of insufficient funds.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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