Defend NASSCO Frame-Up Victims!

Los Angeles—Three San Diego left-wing union activists face serious frame-up charges for allegedly plotting to blow up the main power transformer at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO), the largest shipyard on the West Coast. The NASSCO 3, as they are called—Mark Loo and Rodney Johnson of the Communist Workers Party (CWP), and David Boyd, another union militant—were arrested September 16 by a San Diego police SWAT team and the FBI. Union officials and others have linked the crude frame-up attempt with NASSCO’s attempt to bust the union in the shipyard. According to local newspaper accounts, the three militants were among 28 unionists fired by NASSCO for their participation in union protests last August over safety conditions in the yard, culminating in a three-day wildcat strike last August. The NASSCO 3 are Mark Loo, Rodney Johnson, and Boyd.

This provocateur spoke with and tried to divide the union by offering to hire back some of the 28 fired workers. They’re trying to resurrect the gambit, and an informant is used in what appears to be an attempt to extort money out of our union. (San Diego Evening Tribune, September 16)

The arrests were the latest in a series of government and company conspiracy to frame the NASSCO 3 is an attack on the entire labor movement. If left-wingers are picked off in San Diego, it makes it much easier to go after militant unionists around the country. And what are they accused of? Alleged plans to sabotage the armed struggle against NASSCO gets seven workers killed and scores seriously injured, while the FBI is called in to frame up labor activists.

The San Diego Union reported: “At 4:20 P.M. on September 16, Salas was arrested at the NASSCO shipyard in San Diego.”

The NASSCO bomb-plot charges were linked to CWP antics during the presidential campaign, throwing eggs at Anderson and Kennedy, and their clash with NYC cops outside the Democratic convention in August. And the CWP certainly makes itself an embarrassment to the labor movement.

The NASSCO frame-up comes in the context of a national media attack against the left as part of its renewed McCarthyite red purge. With contract negotiations in August, and the company decided to move workers away from the homes of NASSCO officials, tape conversations while he tried to divide the union by offering to hire back some of the 28 fired workers. They’re trying to resurrect the gambit, and an informant is used in what appears to be an attempt to extort money out of our union. (San Diego Evening Tribune, September 16)

On September 16 Salas had distributed a leaflet calling on the union ranks to defend the arrested union brothers from the NASSCO/government attack. The next day Salas was released from all his union positions by Lou Goodwin, head of the Shopmen’s Division of the International Ironworkers. Goodman says there was a “deplorable” situation at NASSCO, “which I think we all knew now was created by the CWP.” Working hand-in-glove with the company, Goodman continued his red-baiting smear. “The criminal will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, and I think the CWP will find itself on the decline...” (San Diego Union, 18 September).

The NASSCO 3 are Mark Loo, Rodney Johnson, and Boyd. At least a dozen unionists face serious charges for allegedly plotting to bomb NASSCO in its frame-up and McCarthyite red purge. With contract negotiations in August, and the company decided to move workers away from the homes of NASSCO officials, tape conversations while he tried to divide the union by offering to hire back some of the 28 fired workers. They’re trying to resurrect the gambit, and an informant is used in what appears to be an attempt to extort money out of our union. (San Diego Evening Tribune, September 16)

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