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Brother Chairman, Sisters and Brothers, Friends:

The 19th of October, the day when the Supreme Court refused to accept the appeal of the International Workers Order, will be recorded as a day when reaction succeeded in dealing another body blow to freedom through the destruction of one of the most worthy organizations of the people in America.

When you look back at the history of the 23 and a half years of work of the International Workers Order, you can see that there is no other fraternal organization in this country that has made such a many-sided contribution to American life through its fraternal, cultural, social and civic activities.

Starting out with a small body of five thousand workers, twenty-three years ago, it grew to a membership of 160 thousand. Why this outstanding

and inspiring growth? Because the IWO answered the members' needs by providing cooperative fraternal protection, and by expressing their aspirations as working people and Americans.

In a modest but effective way all the fourteen national group societies of the IWO and the Douglass Lincoln Society helped to enrich the culture of our nation by bringing to it the cultural heritage of their former homelands and fusing it with the American culture. This was something that no other fraternal organization was in a position to do.

We constantly tried, and in a great measure succeeded, to create a unity between the national groups of ~~this country~~ and the Negro people, in order to give life and substance to the ideal of American democracy. We were in the

forefront in the crusade against racism in all phases of American life.

And will anybody forget the many contributions that the Order has made all through the 23 years of its existence to the Labor movement and to all struggles for a better life for the workers?

Will the reactionary forces in our country be able to wipe out these very real and lasting achievements and contributions that the IWO had made and is making to American life? Will it be possible for the McCarthies and the McCarrans, the Deweys and Bohlingers and Brownells to destroy all these things? We say NO!!

Look at the latest developments. Look at the way the liquidators and the hatchet-men

work. On Monday, October 19th, about 12 o'clock noon, the Supreme Court made known its refusal to accept the appeal of the International Workers Order against liquidation. And just a few hours later, about 4 o'clock the same afternoon, Insurance Superintendent Bohlinger had already served Show Cause papers asking that he should have the sole right of management, the sole right to the seven and a half million dollars in assets saved up by the members of the Order for their protection. He also asked for the right to evict your elected officers from the premises of 80 Fifth Avenue.

They wanted this even before presenting their plan for reinsurance, ~~which they were ordered to do by the Court of Appeals of New York State.~~

What was the rush? They were well aware of the fact that the Order had a right to appeal for a re-hearing for acceptance of our case by the Supreme Court. But they didn't even have any respect for the Supreme Court, not even to the extent of waiting for fifteen days for the Supreme Court's decision, before they began the actual destruction of the Order.

I ask the question again: What lies behind this great rush?

I have only one answer to this question. The Insurance Department had a dream, a very bad dream. When they started their attack on the Order they thought that the Order would be destroyed just by dragging us through the courts. They thought that by the time we got to the final court, nothing would be left of this people's

organization. But just the opposite has happened.

We still have more than 100 thousand members in the organization with over 15 hundred functioning lodges. That is what they want to destroy now, as quickly as they can.

And not the smallest factor is also the fact that seven and a half million dollars of workers' money is lying around to be snatched up by those who are so eager to get their hands on it. That is why they couldn't wait even 24 hours to rush in with their shameful Show Cause order for sole management.

And, finally, there is another very important feature. Why did the leadership of the Order have to be thrown out? The lodges destroyed? To cause demoralization, so that when they would

be ready to give this good thing to their selected insurance companies, there would be as few members as possible to go along with the reserve fund of seven and a half million dollars.

With this hurried attempt at expulsion of the leaders, whose mandate it is to stand guard over the members' interests, people have a right to question whether the members will receive reinsurance similar to the insurance in the IWO, as was promised to the members by the highest court in the State of New York.

When the infamous Show Cause order to abolish joint management of the Order reached Judge Greenberg, he signed it even before he had a chance to listen to the reply of the officers of the International Workers Order.

Judge Greenberg, upon our request,

listened to the argument by the lawyer of the IWO, Arthur Kinoy, who pointed out the great danger in abolishing joint management at this time because it would tend to destroy the organization before the re-insurance plan is finalized. It would create great confusion just when it is most necessary that the membership remains in good standing, that the lodges should function, so that they may be entitled to re-insurance and any other benefits that they may be eligible to receive after liquidation.

This attempt to destroy joint management before the final stages of liquidation and to dissolve the lodges creates conditions for a tremendous loss of membership. Surely this is not in the interest of the more than 100 thousand members in the Order today.

But the Judge didn't only sign the sole management order. He also came out with a blast that the insurance of the Order is no good. During the entire trial which lasted for months, this matter was not mentioned in court. Just the contrary. The Insurance Superintendent was forced to admit through his representative, Mr. Williams, that the IWO has the ^{good} best insurance for workers. He had to admit that the financial status of the Order is very healthy. He could not deny that the Valuation Report of the International Workers Order showed not 100 per cent, but close to 150 per cent in assets necessary to protect the insurance funds. And it is a fact that the membership wanted to have the IWO insurance because from their experience this was in their best interests. As workers they wanted the maximum in benefits at the minimum in cost.

Does this mean nothing to Judge Henry Clay Greenberg? Yes, we can say tonight that the original decision made by Judge Henry Clay Greenberg, as well as the last attack against the Order, reflects the recent statement of former President Harry S. Truman when he stated that fear and hysteria are being used in this country today purely for political purposes.

At this time, when our members face the very destruction of their beloved organization, when they are confronted with the loss of their insurance, is it not a disgrace to have this same Insurance Department become the sole guardian of the members' rights and interests?

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Bohlinger's talk about re-insurance is just a new cover-up for his vicious liquidation.

In court and out of court the Insurance Department is trying to soften the blow of this political frame-up by declaring that as long as the members will be re-insured, they will lose nothing by the destruction of the IWO.

This is a new fraud. The aim of this fake argument is to put us to sleep, and to put over some kind of a deal with an insurance company. I say "a deal" because it is our firm opinion that there is not, and there cannot be, any re-insurance of fraternal benefits through any commercial insurance company.

Why do millions of people select fraternal insurance as the means of their protection? Because it is different from the cold, pure, card-index business insurance.

It is honest protection, and it has the great feature of fraternal concern for people in case of death and sickness.

How can these features be replaced by a commercial insurance company? Can any insurance company provide these human, mutual aid elements which our Order has provided? Of course not!

That is why we speak with certainty of the dangers of "reinsurance" to the interests of the membership. That is why we affirm that no cooked-up commercial reinsurance plan will or can satisfy the needs of our members who have enjoyed a rounded-out, fraternal, IWO insurance plan.

It is only to be expected that the Insurance Department, which is in such a rush to liquidate us, will disregard these basic

and irreplaceable aspects of our fraternal insurance, and cook up some plan which they will call re-insurance. That is why we suspect that the attempt to break up the lodges, and to instruct the members to pay their dues directly to the Insurance Department, is a calculated plan to silence the opinions of the members when they will be faced with the reinsurance plans.

That is why joint management, the continued existence of the lodges, the ability of the officers to represent the membership at the re-insurance hearing, and of course a public hearing, are basic means of safeguarding the insurance protection of the membership.

There are still more aspects to reinsurance that we want you to know about.

It is quite possible that some insurance company may agree to reinsure your life insurance at approximately the present rates. Who will stop them a year from now, without asking you any questions, from increasing your rates?

You can see that very important questions have to be considered, and we, with our 200 thousand watchful eyes, with our 100 thousand fearless voices, must be heard on this very important phase of reinsurance.

We ask you. Shall we give up that right, and turn over your protection to the officials in Albany? Turn it over to those officials who have carried through your rent increase, your fare increase? We know your answer.

That is why we declare that we, all of us -- your officers, the lodges and the membership -- will stand on guard to make sure that this shameful act of liquidation shall not result in the enrichment of some insurance company at your expense. We shall stand on guard whether we are in the premises of 80 Fifth Avenue or not.

This is a new phase in our IWO struggle.

The fact is that so far we did not receive the insurance plan which the Insurance Department so glibly promised the Court of Appeals ten months ago. They told the Court then that they have a plan ready. Where is it? Do they want first to abolish the lodges, and then present their plan, in order to silence our opinion?

We are issuing a clear-cut demand:

No compulsory re-insurance! The right of the

membership through a referendum to vote on any plan presented!

We, you and I, will have something to say. And we must all say it loudly. We must call for the re-insurance plan to be presented to our lodges, to our members, so that they can discuss it, and express their opinions about it, with the right to accept or reject it.

You have a right to ask, what will happen after the liquidation of the Order. It is our duty to answer this question. We are the elected officers.

While our case is still before the United States Supreme Court, it is still hard to imagine that at the eleventh hour the Supreme Court will not consent to a re-hearing in our case.

We must however be realistic. We live in a time of hysteria, in a situation where even a former President can get a taste of the bitter brew that ~~he himself cooked up~~ ^{helped to of McCarthyism}. The McCarthyite forces are pressing for the destruction of all progressive and ~~even~~ liberal organizations, and to smash the New Deal forces in preparation for the 1954 elections. ^{in this period of hysteria} Therefore we must be ready, no matter how unbelievable it may be, for a rejection by the United States Supreme Court of our petition for a re-hearing.

Of course when I say this, I say it with pain, a pain that comes from the hearts of 100 thousand people. This pain is not only caused by what is happening to our Order, which is one of the first victims of this war hysteria. It is the pain of millions of people over what is

happening to our country, to its democratic way of life, to the people of America of ~~whom we are~~
~~an integral part.~~

The people of our country are not accepting and will not accept the murder of democratic institutions. That is why we cannot just accept liquidation and get off the arena and say, "Well, we carried on great work for equality, democracy, security and peace in the past" -- and just satisfy our conscience with that.

Our work is not over. We came together 23 years ago for a great purpose, a purpose which soon embraced 180 thousand members and their families. This purpose was part and parcel of their need and their aspirations. We have embodied these aspirations in our progressive fraternalism and cooperative mutual aid.

These purposes are far from being

accomplished. On the contrary, they are being attacked by the forces of reaction and we have before us today greater tasks and greater responsibilities -- namely, to stop the creeping fascism in our country.

Reaction twists the laws for its own purpose. They can liquidate our IWO insurance. They can take away our glorious name. But they cannot and they will not be able -- ever -- to liquidate our members. Our right to associate, to fraternalize, to mutually help each other, to express our opinions in a democratic way, to fight for a peaceful and democratic America -- all of these rights which are under the protection of our United States Constitution, we must and we will defend.

They were able to seek the liquidation of the IWO because we were under the jurisdiction of the Insurance Department which, instead of protecting organizations against the vicious pressure of monopoly insurance companies, has made us a victim of that pressure. The Insurance Department violated the insurance law and used the present hysteria as an atom-bomb to pulverize a fraternal organization, to stop us from doing insurance business, and turn over our money to an insurance company.

But we tell you, Mr. Bohlinger, at this meeting, that the legal ^{confiscation of our assets} ~~robbery~~ which has been carried out upon us cannot and will not kill progressive fraternalism, which lives in the hearts of our members. Our membership will find forms to exist which will be out of reach

of the lawless arms of the Insurance Department.

and Mr. Sealey

You may think, Mr. Bohlinger, that you are the

great hero of the battle of the IWO. But you

are mistaken, because labor fraternalism, dedicated

to the struggle for equality, democracy and

security will live, and within a very short

period you will see before your own eyes that

brotherhood and fraternalism cannot be eliminated.

~~I see, Mr. Bohlinger, that you are~~

~~shocked. You have learned nothing from what is~~

~~happening in the world and what is happening in~~

~~America.~~ The people are beginning to see through

all these attacks on progressives, that these are

ax blows upon the people's rights. Everybody

is beginning to feel the sharp knife of ^{creeping} fascism.

The Negro people feel it in the increased wave

of discrimination and Jim Crow, and legal lynchings.

Labor is beginning to feel the results of the
Taft-Hartley Act. The foreign born are beginning
to feel the results of the Walter-McCarran Act.

the people are *recognize* *He*
~~Everybody~~ is beginning to ~~understand~~ that Hitler - *McCarthy*
methods, being imposed upon our country
~~tried it.~~ *He* too liquidated organizations. He
Hitler

too confiscated workers' investments. He too sent
people to jail.

But he too was defeated by the people.

After what I have said, if you still ask
what will happen tomorrow, the day after the
explosion of the liquidation-bomb upon the IWO,
we can answer: They may have legally stolen our
hard-earned money ~~through legalized burglary~~. They
may tamper with our insurance for the profit of
insurance companies. They may liquidate our lodges.
But we have saved ourselves. We have saved ourselves
to live, to associate, to maintain solidarity together

in a free association of people who will exercise their belief in progressive fraternalism.

So when they tell us we cannot meet any more as lodges of the IWO, when they tell us that everyone must pay his premium through the Insurance Department, when they tell us we can no longer use our glorious name of International Workers Order -- and it is a glorious name with great traditions -- we shall get together under whatever name you will desire. We will meet together under whatever name you may choose. Because no matter under what name we will exercise our right of free association, we will carry in our hearts the glorious banner of progressive fraternalism and service to our fellow members and the people of our country.

This is a great feeling. This ^{reduces} ~~kills~~ the pain of liquidation of our Order. This faith in

our people, faith in our membership, is the thing
which has maintained us for 23 years, and this
great faith will maintain us in the days to come.

O.K. this is not a funeral song
~~This is not a funeral song.~~ This is not
good-bye. This is a song of hope and confidence,
of faith in tomorrow. The unity that we have
cemented in our organization, the democratic
principles that we have established, the brotherhood
that we have been faithful to, will live on.

So you see, our fight is not over. So
long as there remains within our bodies the living
seed of that unity and brotherhood, the free
association of ~~manhood~~ will live, and live forever.

people,

and labor fraternalsm

Rubin Holtzman