

SCOTTSBORO CASE IS A RALLYING CRY FOR UNITED ACTION

By CYRIL BRIGGS

The Socialist Party is seeking the support of Negro voters in the present election campaign on the claim that a vote for the Socialist candidates is a vote for "Socialism," and thus for Negro emancipation.

Are the Socialist leaders sincere when they speak of Negro emancipation? Is there a test to which their professions can be subjected? There is. That test lies in contrasting their promises with their deeds, their words with their actions.

To take only one example: the Scottsboro Case affords an excellent testing ground by which to measure the sincerity of all the professed friends of the Negro people. Scottsboro is a struggle between two opposing classes: in one camp are the friends of Negro liberation; in the other are the advocates and sly supporters of lynching, persecution and national oppression of the Negro people. Let us see in which of these two camps are the Socialist leaders.

Forward "Wipes Out" Class Divisions

In its issue of Friday, Oct. 12, the Socialist "Jewish Forward," gloating over the apparent success of the plot engineered by Samuel S. Leibowitz and Harlem Negro misleaders to oust the International Labor Defense from the case, attacks the I. L. D. policy of mobilizing and uniting the toiling masses, black and white, to the defense of the boys. It declares of the I. L. D. conduct of the Scottsboro defense:

"All the grudges that exist between the Negro race and the white people, all the conflicts between the working class and the capitalists, between man and God, between life and death—everything was dragged into the Scottsboro case."

Thus, according to the Forward, the natural resentment of the oppressed Negro masses against the white ruling class oppressors, their struggles against jim-crowism, lynching, etc., are mere grudges. And, at that, grudges between the

Negro people and the whole white population! The exploited white toilers, the natural allies of the oppressed Negro masses, are lumped together with the capitalists by the Socialist paper in a common front against the Negro people.

Substitutes "Race War" For Class Struggle

From this position flows the line, repeatedly given expression by the Socialist leaders, that the arising class and national struggles in the South are leading to a "race war" between the Negroes and the whole white population; that the fight for Negro liberation is unconnected with the struggles of the working class for social emancipation, for the social revolution which will wipe out all forms of exploitation and oppression. From this follows the conclusion that the white workers, themselves exploited by the ruling class, should not support the struggles of the Negro people against that ruling class.

Indeed, the inference may properly be drawn that the Socialist leaders seek to line up the white toilers in support of the lynch rulers' attempts to drown the Negro liberation struggle in blood. That this inference is by no means far-fetched is shown by the shameful record of the Belgian Socialists of support and actual participation, through their "labor" banks, etc., in the exploitation of the Negro masses of the Belgian Congo; by the support of the French Socialists to their predatory bourgeoisie in its colonial wars against the African masses (Morocco, etc.), and in the use of troops and bombing planes by the British Labor Governments to crush the struggles of the masses of Nigeria, West Africa; of India, Egypt, etc.

Attacks Fighters For Boys; Not Lynchers

The Socialist leaders center their attacks not on the lynch rulers of Alabama and their courts, which are seeking to burn the innocent Scottsboro boys in the electric chair on Dec. 7, but on the revolutionary forces leading the world-wide mass

fight for the lives and freedom of the boys. Thus, the Forward declares:

"The Communists are still the most deadly enemies of the Scottsboro case."

We Communists have always declared that the roots of the "rape" frame-up of the Scottsboro boys are deeply imbedded in the conditions of national oppression and persecution of the Negro people. We maintain that no effective fight can be waged for the lives of the boys that does not take this into account. We maintain that to be effective, the fight for the boys must of necessity be a fight against oppression and plundering of the Negro people, against the conditions that breed "rape" frame-ups and mob and legal lynchings of Negro toilers.

Scottsboro a Rallying Cry for Unity

Scottsboro is not an isolated case of Negro persecution. It is not a mere miscarriage of justice as the reformists would have us believe. Scottsboro is both a symbol of the persecution of the Negro people, and a rallying cry for united action by the Negro masses and all real friends of the Negro people in a relentless struggle for the lives and freedom of the boys, for complete equality of the Negro people, for the right of the brutally exploited Negro majorities in the "Black Belt" to govern those territories in which they constitute a majority of the population. In other words, for the smashing of the whole monstrous system of Negro oppression and accompanying degradation of the Southern white toilers; for equality everywhere for the Negro people and for self-determination for the Negro people in the "Black Belt" territories.

This has been the firm position of the Communists from the very first day of the Scottsboro case. This is the position of the Negro and white fighters for the Scottsboro boys. The history of the Scottsboro case, proving that mere proof of innocence of Negro victims of capitalist justice is of no avail in the lynch courts, fully confirm the correctness of this position.

Reformists and the "Good Relations" Bunk

The Socialist leaders, together with other reformists, white and Negro, attack this position. So do the lynch rulers, but their attacks frankly express their determination to maintain their oppressive and plundering rule of the Negro people. The reformists, however, pretend that the Communist position endangers the supposed "good rela-

tions" which they claim exist between the lynch lords and their Negro victims. They claim, moreover, that the Communist position "endangers" the lives of the boys.

They conveniently ignore the fact that the boys were sentenced to death before the Communist Party began to rally the masses to their defense, before the I. L. D. entered the case. They put forward the traitorous line of confining the defense of the boys within the bounds of bourgeois legality, within the confines of the very lynch courts which pronounced the death verdicts.

Mass Fight Rips Lid Off Negro Oppression

They charge the Communists with making propaganda out of the case. We Communists plead guilty to the charge of making the Scottsboro frame-up a means of exposing the horrible persecution of the Negro people. Scottsboro demonstrations, tours of the mothers (against which the Forward rages), have carried the case around the world, rousing millions of toilers, white and black, to a realization of the brutal oppression of the Negro people, to the fight for the lives of the boys and for Negro liberation. The Scottsboro case has become a part of every important struggle of the workers in this country.

The fight for the Scottsboro boys and for Negro emancipation is an integral part of the election campaigns of the Communist Party, which, in one of the seven major demands of its election platform, demands the unconditional and safe release of the boys, and calls upon the toiling masses to fight "against jim-crowism and lynching, for equal rights for the Negroes and self-determination of the Black Belt, for the Negro Bill of Rights.

Scottsboro an Election Issue

We Communists leave it to the masses, white and Negro, to decide on the basis of the evidence who are the fighters for the Scottsboro boys and the Negro people and for the interests of the whole working class, and who are the betrayers of both the white workers and the Negro people. We call upon all fighters for Negro freedom and working class emancipation to vote as they fight, under the guidance of their Communist Party, and for the election of its candidates.

The success of the Daily Worker \$60,000 drive means a better, larger newspaper. Donate and get donations today. Send the money immediately to the "Daily."