

THE PLOT TO OUTLAW THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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The meaning of the arrest of our 12 leaders is that it is an attempt to outlaw our Party. The reactionaries aim to do this by wholesale convictions and by securing hostile legal interpretations of the Constitution in the hope that this would drive our Party underground and would lay the basis for the further condemnation of the Party by legislative action. We must be quite clear about all this, so that we can fully expose this frame-up plot to the masses and arouse them to the danger to their freedom involved in outlawing the Communist Party.

The reactionaries who are behind this attack upon our Party have several related motives. First, the Truman Administration needs a Red herring to help it get itself reelected in November by confusing the people. The Republicans have deliberately created a Red herring of their own in the spy scare, to disrupt the Moscow negotiations and to turn the people away from the high cost of living. And the Democrats are doing the same thing with the Communist arrests. It is all as cynical as that.

President Truman, to enable himself to hang on to power, is quite willing to send guiltless people to jail by undermining the Bill of Rights. But what better can we expect from a President who broke four national strikes and who shares fully the responsibility for the Taft-Hartley Law and the soaring cost of living?

A second and more important rea-

son for this attempt to outlaw our Party is that the reactionaries want to stifle its clear and powerful voice. They realize quite well that the Communist Party is the most resolute of all the fighters against the war drive of American imperialism and for the defense of the people's living standards and civil liberties. Consequently, they are seeking to deprive the people of this Communist leadership by trying to decapitate our Party and eventually to drive it underground.

But the most decisive reason of all why they want to outlaw the Communist Party is the same reason that Hitler had for illegalizing the Communist Party of Germany. This is because such action is basically necessary for the building of fascism.

American reactionaries, like those in Hitlerite Germany, understand very well that if they are to be successful in their general attack against the people's democratic rights and organizations, they must cripple the Communist Party. With our Party outlawed, they could and would then attack far more effectively every active organization and movement of the people as being the work of underground conspirators. The attack upon the Communists is the major phase of the drive toward fascism that is now taking place in the United States.

The defense of the arrested Communists must be fought, therefore, in the broad forum of public opinion as well as in the trial courtroom. We must show up Truman's cynical election reasons for the persecution; we

must explode the fantastic Republican spy scare; we must unmask the slanderous charges against the defendants. But above all, we must make the workers understand that they have a big stake in this case; that the outlawing of the Communist Party would be a deadly blow against the labor movement, against American civil liberties, and against mass living standards.

Everything depends upon our making the workers and the people understand that the attempt to illegalize the Communist Party is an attack upon their organizations and their well-being.

That the capitalist reactionaries attach great importance to the outlawing of our Party is proved by their determined and repeated efforts in this direction. It is only a little over a year ago since we had the first direct attempt, in the shape of the demand of the late Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach, for Congressional legislation to illegalize our Party. But this naked proposal aroused instant and widespread opposition in the ranks of organized labor, the liberals, and the people's forces generally. The masses correctly smelled fascism in Schwellenbach's reactionary proposition and he had to retreat from it in a hurry.

Then, not long afterward, came the infamous Mundt police state bill. The authors of this measure, learning from Schwellenbach's sad experience, and that of the Un-American Committee itself, tried to hide the fact that their bill aimed to outlaw the Communist Party. They sought to railroad it through Congress in a hurry under the lying pretext that its pur-

pose was only to "regulate" the Communists, to "bring them out into the open." And this bill's backers almost succeeded in getting it adopted by Congress. But the people came to see through the ruse in time. A broad united front opposition of A. F. of L., C.I.O., Progressive Party, Civil Liberties Union, Communist Party, and many other groups, finally exposed the sinister purpose of the bill to outlaw our Party, and on this basis they defeated it. The masses correctly sensed that to outlaw our Party would be a long step toward fascism.

Now we have the present effort to outlaw the Party by arresting and vilifying its leaders. This is an even more insidious and dangerous move than the two others that have preceded it. This time the stale accusations of trying to overthrow the Government by force and violence are coupled up with lying, terror-provoking charges of espionage directed against us. The aim is to do the outlawing job in the courts under the cover of a pretense of rendering legal justice. What they could not accomplish in Congress by the Schwellenbach and Mundt proposals they hope to put through in the courts.

This latest attempt to outlaw our Party can be defeated, as were the two previous attempts.

The American people do not want the Communist Party outlawed, not because the majority agree with its political program, but because great masses realize that the outlawing of our Party would undermine American democracy—what there is left of it. We must be fully aware of this fact and take our case to the people in all its political implications.