

The Reds

Say--

By JIM ALLEN

Our old friend, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, which helped whip up some friendly lynch mobs against us during the Gastonia strike, is on the war-path again. That in itself doesn't worry us very much—we have withstood worse friends than the Observer and its crowd—but what's bringing it on, anyhow?

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Sure, Bessemer City! It kind of rankles in the hearts and pocket-books of the mill gentlemen that after all the friendly lynch mobs—don't forget, they claim to be friends of the workers—after the floggings, murders and prison sentences they handed out at Gastonia and Marion, Ella May live on in the hearts of her fellow-workers at Bessemer City. That strike is just too much for them. Here they thought they had everything safely put away—Ella May in the graveyard, six workers in their coffins at Marion, 117 years of prison waiting for the Gastonia organizers, the workers on the stretch-out, the Black Hundred on hand, the A. F. of L. union in the background ready to sell-out any striking workers. They figured the mill gentlemen, we cut and cut and cut, and stretch-out and stretch-out, and lay off and lay off—for the Reds ain't here any more, any more, any more!

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That's what they hoped, anyhow. Of course, they try to make us all believe that the Reds is some "Russian gang" shipped special delivery to Gastonia or Bessemer City, from Moscow, or at least from Soviet New York. What we got to do, they say, is refuse the shipment without even opening the package.

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Reds are born in the South, too. You become a Red when you have to work from 60 to 70 hours and get about \$10 a week. You get to be a Red when you can't get a job, when there is a 20 percent wage-cut, when there is nothing to eat, when you have been sold out and fooled, when you learn that the bosses and the courts, and the state are dead set against you. You get to be a Red when you learn about having to fight together with other workers, Negro and white, to overthrow the system of stretch-out, wage-cuts and unemployment. Yes, there are lots of Reds born in the South.

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The only trouble with the workers in Bessemer City is that they are not Red enough yet. Some allowed too much yellow to be poured down their throats by the mill gentlemen's friends. They listened too much to the advice of false friends like Carpenter and Black and the Charlotte Observer. But the workers of Ella May's town know better. Deep down they know who are the real friends and who the enemies. You got to be burned to know what fire is like. And the fellow workers at Bessemer are getting burned, and they'll come out of it, good red Reds in the real Red Union, the National Textile Workers' Union.

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And the Observer sees that the Bessemer workers are getting Red. Je and that what they call the "incendiary" Southern Worker is on the field to help the workers along. That's what's bringing on the lynch talk in the mill gentlemen's papers. But deep down the workers know who is their friend and who is not.