

"I Take Orders"
Nazi Chief
Tells Y. W.
Staff
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Young Worker

Wisconsin Sends
In \$51.00
On Drive

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Angelo Herndon, brave young Negro organizer, is breathing free air once more because the mighty demands of the working people forced his freedom. Unable to ignore the concerted cry: "Free Herndon," the Georgia slave insurrection law under which he was convicted has been called unconstitutional and he has been released under \$8,000 bail. The State of Georgia will appeal the case, it is expected.

UNITY GAVE ME LIBERTY

By Angelo Herndon

I am free, temporarily perhaps, but free. And I owe my freedom to the people for whom I gladly fought; they have repaid the debt nobly and well.

I have lived but a little while; twenty-two years amount to little of ours. And the working people have been the ones who have set the clock of history forward, more rapidly than it has ever been set before.

How have they accomplished this? How was it possible that the working people could force the mighty machine of capitalist justice to bow to their will? I know why and thousands of others know now - we have FORGED A MIGHTY UNITED FRONT AND A SUCCESSFUL ONE!

When I went back to Fulton Tower a few weeks ago, many things had changed. Our cells were clean, the food was excellent, my treatment was better than ever before. And I knew then that those million signatures demanding my release; those hundreds of letters and telegrams protesting my chain-gang sentence had caused these changes. Ministers, businessmen, Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, people of all races and creeds had sent these petitions and letters to Atlanta; they forgot I was a Communist but remembered I was from the mightiest class of all—the working class.

My case is not over by any means. The state of Georgia is bringing an appeal to send me to the chain-gang. The State Supreme Court may overrule the lower court's decision which temporarily set me free. In that event, the pressure upon Governor Talmadge will be that on which we must depend. But I am confident today that I will be free, for the UNITED FRONT has accomplished so much that the coming battle, severe as it may be, MUST and CAN be a victory.

Coming back on the train last week, I talked to a Negro worker from Alabama. He whispered to me: "Say, these unions have sure done things for us in the South." And I would be happy to join and do work in the Sharecroppers' Unions when I am able to return to Alabama, free at last.

Yes, the power of organization is slowly but surely lifting the South out of its bed of serfdom and ignorance; the mighty surge of the united front is being felt and the working people, black and white, of my home country are uniting in a mighty effort to break their chains forever.

When I went to work at the age of thirteen, things were different. We had no unions; the young miners labored as slaves for slave wages and under conditions unbearably vile. After five years work, I knew that something had to be done, and with other youth, tried to form a union. Naturally, I was fired.

I had a mother and eight brothers and sisters who depended largely on my wages for support. My father died when I was six; and

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'UNITY GAVE ME LIBERTY'

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all of us had to forget about school and think about earning a living. We were one of thousands of families; the Negroes of the South suffered from poverty and disease and education was out of the question when there was bread and butter to earn.

I heard a fellow talking about the right of the workers to organize and win bread and freedom way back in '31. It does seem a long time ago. He was a Communist, and although I had heard that the Communists were foreign agitators, he was an American and his talk seemed to hit at the problems the American workers faced.

So I talked with him and with others like him. I decided that they had the solution for our troubles, so I joined the Young Communist League. And, even in Fulton Tower when I knew the chain gang was reaching for me and death with it, I have never regretted joining. You don't mind a little suffering when you think of a father who died from overwork; of a mother and brothers and sisters starving. Those memories give you courage; courage when it is needed and confidence when all seems lost.

They arrested me for leading a relief demonstration in Atlanta in 1932. The rest of the story is well-known; how the Georgia authorities dug up the old insurrection law and sentenced me to twenty years on the chain gang; how the workers came to my help and with their nickels and dimes, loaned \$15,000 bail; the refusal of the United States Supreme Court to call the decision unconstitutional; my re-



GOVERNOR TALMADGE

turn to Fulton Tower prison and my release a week ago.

There have been times in the past

three years when I wondered how it would all end and when. But I knew that all the time the International Labor Defense was fighting bitterly every step towards my freedom organizing the united front and the whole mass of working people of my country were also fighting. And those moments of doubt were brief in my mind; how could such a mighty force as ours lose?

But that force, mighty as it is, can be greater. The united front could be much stronger if the youth of the country would unite, irrespective of beliefs and creeds, in the battle for economic and political freedom. The formation of a Labor Party would be a tremendous step forward and such a party would give our youth a complete united front and the only chance to protect our interests as a whole.

I thank you, gratefully, gladly, whether you be Protestant or Catholic, Communist or Democrat, clergyman or labor leader, for the part you have played in opening those prison doors. Some day, when we have forged our United Front into a truly unbreakable chain, all of those prison doors will open forever and the bars will not shut out the sun from any man. And may that day come soon.