

Significance of the Yokinen Trial

By I. AMTER.

THE New York papers, when granted an interview on the Yokinen trial, immediately featured the interview, bringing forward not only the significance of the trial, as understood by the Communist Party, but the aims of the Party in mobilizing the white and Negro workers in the country for the defense of Negro rights—in the struggle for full political and social equality and for self-determination in the black belt of the South, for the establishment of a Negro state.

When the trial was over, the New York papers—particularly the New York Times—featured the trial, not merely demonstrating that the Communist Party is very earnest in its determination to uproot white chauvinism within its ranks, and to carry the fight into the entire working class, to unite the Negro and white workers in the struggle against American imperialism. No, it demonstrated much more—it manifested the fear of the American capitalist class that the Negro and white workers can get together on the common basis of the Communist program and organization for the struggle.

This fear becomes so much more manifest when one realizes the dread that the capitalist class and government have of the unrest that is beginning to seethe throughout the country—in the strikes that are growing in number and embracing larger numbers of workers, both organized and unorganized—and in the militant activities of the unemployed under the leadership of the Trade Union Unity League and the Unemployed Councils. This fear is expressed in the manifold preparations that all local and state governments have made to suppress "riots," the recommendations of government and army officials to provide gas, tanks, etc., to quell mobs. It is again clear in the campaign of lynching against the Negro workers and poor tenant farmers, to crush their rising spirit. It is manifest in the savage drive against the foreign born workers and the activities of the U. S. Immigration and Labor Departments, aided by the local police and new police departments that are being established for this and other activities.

Thus the capitalist class through its press expresses its fear of the mass trial conducted by the Communist Party for the elimination of white chauvinism from its ranks.

For the working class, this trial has a double significance. It indicates that there is only one section of the working class that really unites the workers of all races and nationalities in struggle, and that is the revolutionary section of the working class led by the Communist Party. Again, it indicates that when a worker is expelled by the Communist Party, expresses his repentance for his views and actions, and accepts the tasks that are imposed upon him to prove his unity with the Negro workers, then too he is accepted by the capitalist government as their enemy. Yes, he is their enemy—if he carries out the tasks placed upon him—the tasks that every sincere revolutionary worker must accept. This includes activities that will prove to the Negro workers NOT IN WORDS but IN DEEDS that the white workers will fight for the rights of the Negroes.

This is the significance of the Yokinen trial—this is the significance that the Communist Party ascribes to the trial—this is the meaning that has well been understood by the capitalists, the meaning that they fear. For once the disunity that they are sowing and trying to deepen, once the disunity that they are stimulating between the white and Negro workers, the native and foreign born workers, the Negro and foreign born workers, is broken down, then the class struggle will sharpen and the lines of the battling American workers will be united in struggle against the capitalist class, the capitalist government and all their lackeys.

The lackeys of the capitalist class already are complaining. They dare not come forth condemning the position of the Party—although the N. Y. Daily News calls it an "advertising stunt." They dare not criticize the Party for the expulsion of Yokinen, for that would mean justification of the attack of whites upon Negroes. No—now that the dastardly hand of

the U. S. government has been laid upon Yokinen—and peculiarly after he has been expelled from the Party—he is charged with membership in the Party!—the enemies of the working class, particularly the Finnish socialists, declare that the Communist Party is responsible for the deportation of Yokinen.

They have nothing to say about the arrest and holding for deportation of about 20 Finns who were seized during the raid at the Finnish socialist hall. They do not even protest in their Finnish socialist daily. Not a word in protest—the N. Y. Herald-Tribune states that the management of the hall even furnished the immigration authorities with a room for questioning the people at the dance that was raided. What splendid cooperation of these social-fascists with the police!—against the workers! The role they play in Finland, in Hungary, Yugoslavia—in all countries, including the United States!

The Communist Party declares that the class struggle demands its victims. No worker who goes on the picket line, into a demonstration, into any phase of the struggle is protected from the grasping hand of the capitalist government and its destructive organs. If Yokinen goes on the picket line he would have been exposed to the same danger. Today as a declared friend of the Negro, as one who recognizes the error he made in the past, he is an enemy of the capitalist class and is to be made a victim.

But the Communist Party will not let a worker who wishes to fight for the interests of the working class become a victim so easily of the capitalist government. The Communist Party will rally the masses of workers—Negro and white to the defense of Yokinen who is to be deported for his expression of solidarity with the Negro workers. Particularly the Negro workers must see in the mass trial of Yokinen that the Communist Party is the only political Party that unites Negro and white workers on an equal plane, and carries on the fight for the Negro workers. Particularly the Negro workers must rally to the defense of Yokinen who is to be deported because he wishes to fight for the Negro workers.

The foreign born workers, too, against whom the Negro misleaders and fakery are trying to arouse the Negro workers, must recognize that the Communist Party is the only Party of the working class that carries on the struggle in their behalf, especially now that they face deportation also for working class activities. They too, must rally to the defense of Yokinen.

The trial of Yokinen is of tremendous importance. In this trial the Communist Party of the United States openly tells the working class what the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union declared when in Stalingrad several months ago, two Americans working in the tractor plant slugged a Negro worker. At that time the workers of the plant declared that "there is no place in the Soviet Union for American capitalist methods." The Communist Party declares that there is no room in its ranks for enemies of the Negro, who therefore are enemies of the working class. The Communist Party declares that the working class of the entire country must become aware at last that unity of the working class is essential for the revolutionary struggle; that the enemies of the working class—the capitalists, the strike breaking A. P. of L. leaders, Green and Woll, the socialist party—stand for division of the working class, to make it helpless against the attacks of the capitalists.

Negro and white workers! Prevent the deportation of Yokinen! Weld your ranks together in struggle! Only the revolutionary organizations unite all workers! Build the League of struggle for Negro Rights—the organization of white and Negro workers, determined to fight for the rights of the Negroes! Join the Trade Union Unity League! In all the struggles that the working class conducts and must conduct, its leader is the Communist Party—the revolutionary party of the working class!

But above all the native born white American worker must recognize that division between him and the Negro worker can serve only the boss, and therefore the boss intensifies his propaganda for deepening this division and in-

creasing the hatred of the Communists, who struggle to end this division. The native born white worker must recognize that the U. S. government is not deporting Yokinen because he is a Communist—for he has been expelled from the Party—but because he wishes to fight for the Negroes and therefore for the working class. The white American workers must rally to Yokinen's defense.

Incredible as it may seem, the greatest support given Capital in this infamous frame-up has come from the major labor leaders of San Francisco. Paul Scharrenberg, Secretary, State Federation of Labor, attacked our defense committee and myself with malicious cunning at the September, 1930, Marysville Convention of the California State Federation of Labor. Scharrenberg knows that it is vital for our defense that funds be collected, at least he maintains the pretense that they are needed, but he has done, and is doing, everything within his power to sabotage the Defense Committee's efforts to secure funds—thus effectually blocking our chance for a real defense. He knows that no organization under his control has ever donated one cent for our defense during the past 13 years; he knows that none of the donors to our funds have ever questioned the administration of the moneys given us; yet he has the effrontery to demand an accounting from our committee. A financial statement will be published, not because Scharrenberg demands one, but to prove how baseless are his charges. Remember that it is Scharrenberg, more than any one else, who is responsible for the stand taken by the 1927 A. F. of L. Convention in Los Angeles, when for the first time in the history of our case no resolution demanding our pardon was passed by the delegates. This was done because Scharrenberg wanted to protect his dear friend, Governor Young, from embarrassment. It was also through Scharrenberg's vicious influence that this same convention outlawed our defense by passing a resolution preventing any labor organizations directly chartered by the A. F. of L. from donating funds for our vindication.

Again I say that all the major labor leaders are our worst enemies, because:

- (1) They supported and helped elect Fickert;
- (2) They supported and helped elect the governors that would not even review our case;
- (3) For fourteen years they have been members of the various cabinets appointed by the governors, and never once have these "leaders" of labor made a gesture indicating genuine disapproval when we were denied justice;
- (4) Not one of these "labor leaders" has ever written a letter to any governor of this state sincerely urging our pardon;
- (5) Never have these "leaders" stated that the support of labor could not be given to a governor who refused to heed the universal demand of the entire trade union movement for our pardon;
- (6) They have never made our case, inextricably linked with the continuous struggle between Capital and Labor, a vital issue in this state or nation;
- (7) They repeatedly stated our case was not a labor issue;
- (8) They gave the California Governors to understand that to pardon us would "disturb the regular labor movement"—they want us "paroled," not pardoned;
- (9) They even demoralized my defense and subverted the former secretary of the Tom Mooney Molders Defense Committee.

TO BE CONTINUED

**Organize Unemployed Councils!
Every Mining Camp, Steel
and Textile Town, Every
Large and Small Industrial
Center Should Be
Honeycombed With
Jobless Councils**

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