

The Revolutionary Press and the Scottsboro Case

By CYRIL BRIGGS

THE Scottsboro case presents one of the most dramatic proofs of the absolute **indispensability** of the Daily Worker in the developing struggles of the toiling Negro and white masses against the misery and hopelessness of the capitalist system and its increasingly murderous terror.

It was the Daily Worker that sounded the alarm when in March, 1931, the landlord court at Scottsboro, Alabama, attempted to rush eight of the nine innocent Scottsboro Negro lads to the electric chair, at the same time paving the way for a living death of life imprisonment for the ninth boy, 14-year-old Roy Wright. It was the Daily Worker that smashed through the conspiracy of silence of the capitalist press and the Negro reformist leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. It was the Daily Worker that rallied the white and Negro masses behind the International Labor Defense and the League of Struggle for Negro Rights for a vigorous mass defense of the nine child-victims of capitalist justice, framed up on a lying charge of "rape."

The mass fight has won several tremendous partial victories. The Negro and white workers, in joint struggle, have four times forced back the outstretched murderous claws of the Alabama ruling class, have four times forced the lynch courts of the United States to set back the date of execution. The mass fight forced the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse the lynch verdicts last November and to order new trials for the boys. These great partial victories could not have been achieved without the daily leadership, agitation and constant vigilance of the Daily Worker, expressing in its news articles and editorials the clear line of the Communist Party in the fight to free the Scottsboro boys, in the fight against ruling class terror, against national oppression of the Negro People and against all attempts to split and divide the working class and disrupt the mass fight which, life itself teaches, alone can free the Scottsboro lads and other Negro and white victims of capitalist class justice.

The Scottsboro boys are still in danger. The U.S. Supreme Court verdict returned them for new trials to the Scottsboro court which originally rendered the lynch verdicts. The mass fight must be intensified and broadened out to draw in new sections of the working class, new sections of intellectuals and all elements opposed to the brutal persecution

and oppression of the Negro People. In this fight and other defense campaigns the Daily Worker is absolutely indispensable.

PRECISELY because the Scottsboro Case is an expression of the horrible national oppression of the Negro masses, any real fight for the Scottsboro boys must necessarily take the character of a struggle against the whole brutal system of landlord robbery and imperialist national oppression of the Negro people. The struggle for the Scottsboro boys and for Negro national liberation is thus a direct menace to U. S. imperialism, directed against its weakest link: the existence of a brutally oppressed and resentful nationality, at the very heart of American imperialism.

This explains the viciousness of the attacks on the Scottsboro defense, the police attacks on white and Negro workers demonstrating for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, the deportation of militant foreign-born workers (Yokinen, etc.) who rallied to the defense of the Negro people.

This explains the frantic mobilization by the imperialists of all their corrupt agents in the ranks of the working class and the Negro people: the Norman Thomases and Heywood Browns, the Walter Whites and William Pickens. This explains the attempts of the U. S. State Department to disrupt the European tour of the Scottsboro Mother, Mrs. Ada Wright, and the late J. Louis Engdahl—their arrest by "socialist" and capitalist police chiefs in many European cities, their deportation from Belgium, Czechoslovakia and other countries.

This explains the vicious attacks by the authorities of the State of Georgia and the bosses and their agents throughout the country on the growing unity of the white and Negro workers, which is being forged under the leadership of the Communist Party in the Scottsboro struggle, as well as in the mounting resistance of the toiling masses to the bosses' program of hunger, fascist terror and imperialist war.

The Daily Worker is the weapon of the whole working class and of the Negro people in the fight against the rapidly worsening conditions of the toiling masses, in the fight against starvation and national oppression. Rally to the support of the Daily Worker! The Daily Worker must be saved from suspension! Rush funds at once! Mobilize your organizations, your clubs, etc., for immediate aid to the Daily Worker!