

# Civil Liberties Union Blow at Gastonia Boys is Socialist Trick, Says Foster, Resigning

## Vote Communist! Bust Thomas' Treacherous Attack on Workers!

(Letter From Foster To The Civil  
Liberties Union.)

American Civil Liberties Union.

Gentlemen: Your action on the Gastonia case (reported in the New York Telegram of October 30th) taken together with interviews given to newspapers by spokesmen of the Civil Liberties Union some weeks ago, demonstrates that your organization has placed the question of civil liberties in a secondary position, and that first place is now taken by the political interests of Mr. Norman Thomas and his kind. It is quite evident that these decisions were dictated by the "socialist" Thomas, whose role (together with his party) is to divert the indignation of the masses away from the murderous capitalist state and against those who are fighting capitalism, primarily against the Communists.

At a moment when even a decent "liberal" (no one, of course, expects the Civil Liberties Union to go beyond the bounds of "liberalism") would necessarily be intent upon one single purpose—namely, to rouse popular protest and indignation against the infamous Gastonia ver-

dict—you set yourselves to raise a hue and cry against the victims of that verdict, because they escaped from capitalist class vengeance.

### Attack On Workers.

Not content with this fundamental betrayal of civil liberties, the Civil Liberties Union attempts to interpret this escape as an act of the Communist Party (although the individuals composing the Civil Liberties Union know better). And the Communist Party is "warned" that until it gives "adequate guarantees" that it "will not support or tolerate" bail jumping that the Civil Liberties Union will do everything it can to prevent any Communist from getting bail in the future.

"Adequate guarantees," you have already made clear by your newspaper interviews, means that you demand that the Communist Party shall physically seize the escaping prisoners and turn them over to the police; or, since they have escaped to the Soviet Union (the only land where persecuted workers can find asylum), that the Communist Party shall put a demand to the Soviet Union to deport these workers back to the United States. You attack the Soviet Union because it, alone of all states of the world, maintains really, in earnest, that old institution of "liberalism," the right of asylum.

The world has long been accustomed to witness "liberals" abandon

all their principles when faced with a concrete problem; now, the Civil Liberties Union has gone the way of all "liberals." But the Communist Party has nothing but contempt for such a demand; it is not a policeman for capitalism, but the unrelenting fighter against capitalism and all its policemen and servants. And the Soviet Union, we can assure you, will never close its doors to a worker fleeing from capitalist "justice"; your demands in that direction are just as effective as Hoover's demands that the Soviet Union abandon the building of socialism.

### Contemptible Lies.

Particularly contemptible are your charges in the press that the Gastonia boys are being held in the Soviet Union against their own will. You know quite well that they acted entirely as free agents in going there, as well as in staying there. No one, and no organization, has made their decisions for them. But your outrageous slander is designed to support the capitalist propaganda that "an American jail is to be preferred to Soviet freedom," and a sly offer to the refugees of pardon and material rewards if they will only return and speak along these lines.

The Communist Party has not advocated and does not advocate bail-jumping. Our business is to organize the working class of this country to smash the class "justice" of capi-

talism, and to establish our own class in power, to make impossible the repetition of Gastonia.

### Bonds or Lives?

Your Mr. Pinchot is reported to have summed up your attitude in the wisecrack: "Gentlemen prefer bonds." It would indeed be a tragedy if the Civil Liberties Union should lose any of its bonds in the fight for civil liberties; it is a tradition of American "liberalism" that the only casualties in this fight should be the lives and freedom of Communist workers. The Civil Liberties Union, therefore, finds nothing unfitting in calling a special meeting to adopt motions against the Communists; indeed, it has a special enthusiasm for such a meeting, which I am informed was "the best-attended meeting in its history," many faces appearing which had been absent for years.

At the same moment, in California, seven young Communist union organizers were in prison serving sentences of 42 years for calling a meeting to organize agricultural workers in Imperial Valley—a little fact which seemed not to arouse any interest among all your "gentlemen who prefer bonds." If the Civil Liberties Union has acted, or in the future acts, upon the Imperial Valley case, it is safe to predict that this will not be "the best attended meeting in its history," but will be a ges-

## Communists and Soviet Union Will Never Aid Boss' Police

ture for the record, without enthusiasm and without any effective action to help the fight to release those splendid boys in California who are condemned to rot their lives away in Folsom and San Quentin.

### Foster Withdraws Name.

For many years I have allowed my name to stand on the list of executive committee members of the Civil Liberties Union. I wanted to support every organization which contributed, however indirectly, to the struggle against the brutal oppression of American imperialism. But I am forced to the conclusion, by your actions on the Gastonia case, that you are no longer seriously engaged in the fight for civil liberties, that you have become a tool in the hands of Norman Thomas and his party of apologizers for capitalism, and that the workers have nothing to expect from you in the way of assistance in their desperate struggle against capitalism. I therefore withdraw my name from your executive committee and from membership in the Civil Liberties Union.

Very truly,  
(Signed) W. Z. FOSTER.