

Pickens Again Aids the Lynchers

By CYRIL BRIGGS

William Pickens, Field Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, declares in a syndicated article that the Scottsboro fight "has just begun." And Pickens leaves no doubt as to which side of this historic battle he and his organization are on.

At this critical stage in the fight for the Scottsboro boys, Pickens again joins with the white ruling class lynchers in viciously attacking the mass defense which alone has so far stopped the bloody hands of the Alabama lynch courts.

Enraged by Growing Unity of Black and White

Mr. Pickens and his white masters are devoured by a consuming rage at the spectacle of white and Negro workers joining together in angry, thunderous protests against the lynch verdicts, of the challenge of these workers to the bloody lynch courts. All over the country, the ruling class has tried to crush this mass defense movement. They have hurled their police in brutal attacks on protest demonstrations. They have used their courts to hand out savage jail sentences to white and Negro workers protesting the lynch verdicts. The Wall Street Government, through its diplomatic agents abroad, have inspired police attacks in Germany, France, England and other countries against the world-wide Scottsboro defense movement. The Hoover Hunger and War Government has attempted to disrupt the European tour of Mrs. Ada Wright, mother of two of the Scottsboro boys.

Mr. Pickens, together with Walter White, Dr. DuBois, and the leaders of the Socialist Party, support these brutal attacks on the mass defense fight. They do everything to disrupt it. The Socialist Party slanderously attacks as a "Communist racket" the world-wide mass fight to free the Scottsboro boys and smash the hideous national oppression of the Negro masses. Pickens attacks as "a lot of ignorant nuts in Detroit, Chicago and Moscow," the millions of white and Negro workers who are angrily protesting against the lynch verdicts. What is this but open and traitorous support for the lynch

courts, for the frightful lynch verdicts against these innocent Negro children?

Mass Fight Stopped Executions

What is the significance of this new barrage of attacks on the Scottsboro mass defense? Let us review briefly the victories so far achieved in the fight to free the boys. Mass pressure exerted by millions of workers throughout the world three times forced the Alabama lynch courts to retreat on the dates they had set for the legal massacre of these boys. Mass pressure again forced the U. S. Supreme Court to agree to review the lynch verdicts. The case is now before that court, which has set October 10 for the hearing.

The Baltimore Afro-American, which is not a Communist paper, admits in the following sentence the tremendous effectiveness of this world-wide mass pressure:

"The Scottsboro Case is no longer the private affair of an ignorant community of prejudiced whites in a little Alabama town as it would have been had not the I.L.D. stepped in, but it is now an international issue."

Of course, it is not a question of "an ignorant community of prejudiced whites." The Scottsboro frame-up and lynch verdicts are part of a conscious policy of the capitalist rulers of this country for the suppression of the Negro masses and the perpetuation of their hideous oppression and robbery. Mr. Pickens wants to return the Scottsboro case to the status of "the private affair" of the capitalist oppressors and their courts. He snarls against the efforts of the Communists to "try the cases on the hustings"—meaning the tactic of mass protests, of mass defense, of breaking through the legality of the lynch courts, of rousing the white and Negro masses to angry protests against the frightful attempt to legally massacre these innocent boys, as hundreds of Negro workers have been legally lynched in the past.

Defends Lynchers—Attacks Communists

Pickens moreover claims that the activities of Communists in exposing the vicious Scottsboro frame-up and

the national oppression of the Negroes has resulted in "unfortunate and prejudicial sentiment that has been stirred up in Alabama against the boys." This is tantamount to saying there was no prejudice against the boys before the Communists entered the case, that the lynch sentences of the original trials in the town of Scottsboro, Ala., were arrived at without prejudice—although it is a matter of record that the boys were rushed to trial without being permitted to communicate with their parents or to secure legal defense, that the trials were deliberately set for Horse Swapping Day to attract a crowd to Scottsboro, that the first of the lynch verdicts was greeted with cheers and a brass band celebration by a mob which surrounded the court house howling for the death of the boys, that the brass band was furnished by local mill bosses who, with the bourgeois press, helped to whip up lynch sentiment against the boys. From Pickens' statement it might well be assumed that the scores of Negro workers lynched annually in Alabama are lynched—without prejudice. That the frightful national oppression and landlord robbery of these masses is carried on—without prejudice.

Workers Must Build Mass Fight

The aid given the Alabama Lynchers by the N. A. A. C. P. could not prevent the tremendous victories won so far by the working-class in the Scottsboro case. But these victories, great as they are, are partial victories. The boys are still in danger of legal lynching. The mass fight is more than ever necessary. And herein lies the sinister significance of the attack by Pickens on the mass fight. The N. A. A. C. P. assistant hangmen of the Negro masses can still render valuable aid to the Alabama lynchers. And this is precisely what Pickens, Walter White, Dr. DuBois and the others are about.

The workers must answer these attempts to disrupt the mass defense with a more energetic building of the mass fight which alone can free the boys. The defense of the Scottsboro boys is part of the fight against

the upsurge of the mass fight begun. The revolutionary social democrats are endeavoring to extend and strengthen it by helping it to develop still further until it has reached the stage of revolution.

The election platform of the Party issued by the Central Committee was drawn up before the events in April and May. The events confirmed the correctness of the platform. The platform is permeated with one idea; criticism of the hopelessness, of the utopianism of constitutional reforms in present-day Russia; propaganda of the revolution.

Consider the platform of the liquidators! Its liquidatory character is carefully concealed by Trotsky's revolutionary phrases. This concealment can for a time deceive naive and inexperienced people, and even appear as a reconciliation of the liquidators with the Party. But the slightest scrutiny will rapidly do away with this self-deception.

The platform of the liquidators was written after the May strikes and the attempt at revolt in the Summer. How does it estimate these strikes and the attempt at revolt?

"Economic boom" . . . "by the growth of its strike movement the proletariat showed the approach of a new social upsurge." . . . "The powerful April movement of the proletariat, with the demand for freedom of combination"—that is all that the liquidators write in their platform regarding the strikes in April and May.

But this is not true! This is an outrageous distortion of the facts. There is lacking here the chief thing, namely the revolutionary character of the political strikes which aim not at winning a number of constitutional reforms, but at the overthrow of the government, i. e. the revolution.

imperialist war. The increasing terror against the Negro masses, the foreign born and the working-class generally is part of the bosses' preparations for war. This terror aims to crush the resistance of the toiling masses to the Hunger and War program of the bosses. Workers! Answer the terror, answer the criminal drive for war with tremendous anti-war demonstrations on August First!