

POLICE BREAK UP MAY DAY RALLY IN PITTSBURGH

Arrest Speakers at Open Air Demonstration

(Special to The Daily Worker)

PITTSBURGH, Pa., May 2. — J. Louis Engdahl, editor of The DAILY WORKER, and Abram Jakira, Pittsburgh district organizer of the Workers (Communist) Party, were arrested in an open air demonstration arranged to combat the closing by the police of the Carnegie Music Hall, where the local Communists had arranged to hold their international May Day celebration.

Extensive preparations were made to commemorate May Day. Carnegie Hall, one of the biggest in the city, had been secured. At the last minute the police announced that no meeting could be held without a permit. Efforts to secure a permit met with failure.

Police Close Hall.

The police instructed the hall manager not to open the building for the May Day celebration. When the workers came in large numbers, ignorant of the action taken by the police, they found the doors of the hall closed and locked. They found squads of police and plainclothesmen stationed in large numbers about the building. The crowds grew as the regular time for the opening of the meeting approached. The police began swinging their clubs and directing the crowds, including large numbers who were on the streets for the Saturday evening, to move on.

Arrest Speakers.

At this point Jakira took up his stand on the broad stone steps leading up the entrance of the hall. Acting as chairman he was about to introduce Engdahl as the speaker, but he was arrested before he could proceed. Engdahl then took his place and was also arrested. Both speakers were manhandled while being taken to the North Side police station two blocks away.

Sergeant Mike Carney, the turn-key who locked up the two prisoners, boasted of the fact that he had been a coal miner and a steel mill worker. He was highly excited about the British coal strike and wanted to know if the prisoners desired to bring about such condition in this country.

After being held several hours, during which the crowds at Carnegie Hall gradually dispersed, the police permitted comrades to bail out both Engdahl and Jakira. Engdahl was immediately rushed by automobile to East Pittsburgh, ten miles away, where he addressed another May Day meeting that was more successful than

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Police Break Up May Meeting in Pittsburgh

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anything that had been attempted in years.

East Pittsburgh.

East Pittsburgh is famed for its Westinghouse plant, employing thirty thousand workers, and a Carnegie steel plant. Engdahl told of the arrests in Pittsburgh and called on the workers of the whole Pittsburgh district to organize their strength to combat this black reaction in the home of Secretary of the Treasury "Andy" Mellon and Secretary of Labor Davis. Engdahl delivered the greetings of the Chicago district worker correspondence conference to the Westinghouse worker correspondents who have among them "Sande," "Andy" and other worker correspondents who were members of the first group of worker correspondents organized in this country.

"Is It The Jail?"

The famed Lincoln highway passes thru East Pittsburgh and goes by the Westinghouse plant. There is a continuous stream of automobiles going thru and because so many autoists were in the habit of asking if this is the western penitentiary of Pennsylvania the Westinghouse people had a huge electric sign put up blazoning the fact that it is the Westinghouse Electric plant. Saturday midnight the huge structure was ablaze with light and running full force. The Westinghouse plant did not recognize May Day any more than the police of Pittsburgh.

Reserve Decision.

Decision in the cases of J. Louis Engdahl and Abram Jakira was reserved by the local magistrates' court until Monday, when the arrests of the two Communists at Saturday's May Day meeting came up for hearing. Communists and sympathizers were in court with Engdahl and Jakira.

The case was called at eight o'clock Sunday morning. "What would you do in Chicago if you were denied a permit to hold a meeting? would you go ahead and violate the law?" the magistrate asked Engdahl. "In the first place no permits are demanded for hall meetings in Chicago," replied Engdahl, "if they were demanded and denied, as they are here, I would certainly hold a protest meeting and test such an ordinance in the courts."

To Test City Ordinance.

Attorney George J. Shaffer appeared for the Communists and announced that the ordinance under which Carnegie Hall was closed against the local May Day meeting would be challenged in the effort to maintain the right of assemblage for Pittsburghs' workers.

"This is just the kind of a case that we have been waiting for," said Shaffer. "It will be fought to a finish." No interference has been encountered so far by any of the other May Day meetings in the Pittsburgh district according to all reports received.