

Pennsylvania Cossacks on the Job Again

By A. Jakira

OVER thirty men, mostly striking miners, were arrested in connection with the riot that took place at Cheswick, Pa., on August 22nd, at a Sacco and Vanzetti meeting. Some of these men were released after having spent several days in jail. The grand jury of Allegheny County returned true bills against twenty two of these men, who are at present out on bonds of from 500 to 5,000 dollars each. They are charged with unlawful assembly, inciting to riot, riot, and resisting an officer. Several hundred were brutally beaten up and wounded, some very seriously.

"The crowd refused to move, so we moved them," testified Sergeant Downing of the State Police before the squire and refused to state how and under what circumstances this "moving" was done. Here is how it all happened.

About three thousand men, women and children came together to attend a Sacco and Vanzetti mass meeting, arranged by a number of local unions of the U. M. W. A. of Allegheny Valley. Everything was orderly and quiet. The chairman started to open the meeting when Lieutenant Martin of the State Police mounted the platform and ordered the meeting stopped. He informed the gathering that the sheriff of Allegheny county ordered all meetings stopped for that day. The miners of this Valley were accustomed to hold meetings at this place without police interference. Only on July 10 a big Sacco and Vanzetti mass meeting and parade was held in the same little town with no trouble or any disorders. The gathering could not understand why the meeting was ordered stopped. Attempts were made to persuade the state troopers not to interfere with the meeting. Meanwhile, according to the testimony of the state troopers themselves, someone shouted that he was a tax payer and had a right to meet. Another one shouted that he was wounded in the war and could see no reason why the meeting should be stopped. Lieutenant Martin ordered to charge the crowd. Tear gas bombs rendered

the crowd helpless. Mounted police, about fifty of them, drove their horses into this defenseless crowd, trampling and clubbing every one who could not run fast enough into safety. The crowd was dispersed. The police apparently achieved their purpose.

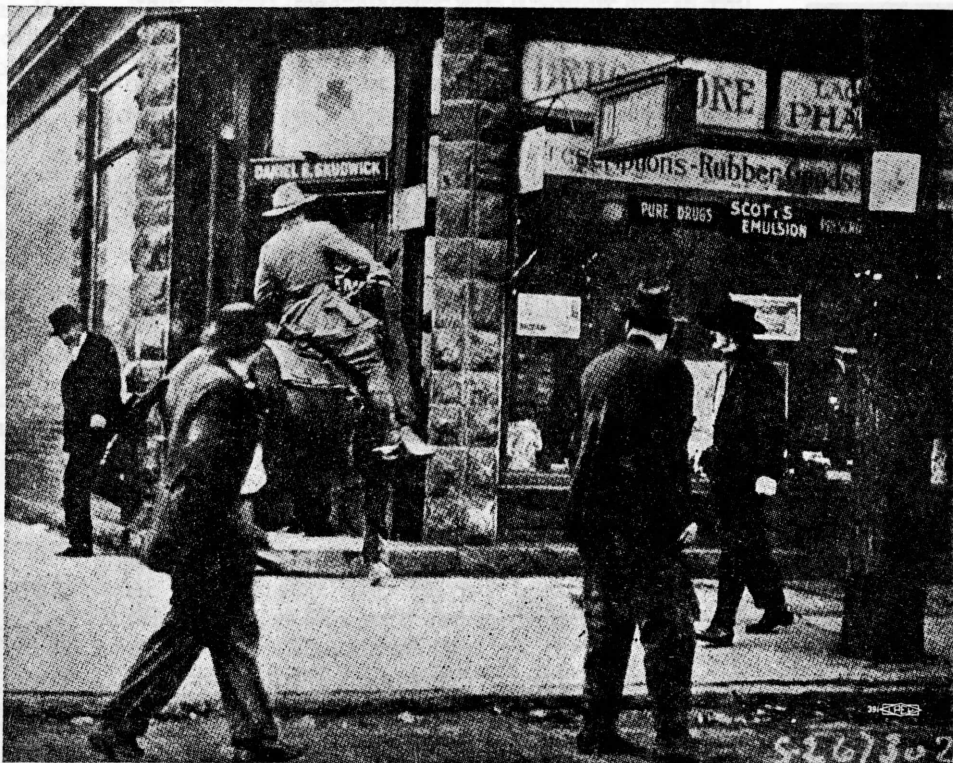
This, however, did not quench the thirst for more blood. Like wild beasts the cossacks proceeded to march along the highway, brutally beating up every one on their way, smashing automobile windows and beating up the passengers. In the excitement a state trooper was shot and killed, possibly by the bullets of the state troopers themselves. This added to the bewilderment of the preservers of law and order. A kind of a field court, like in the old days of Czarist Russia, was established on a nearby farm, where hundreds of men were brought in for "examination and questioning". This wild

orgy in the panicky stricken little mining community lasted the whole day until late at night. Private homes were invaded where women and children were subjected to brutal treatment.

It is reported that some of the coal companies took an active part in this brutal assault upon the miners and their families, supplying private detectives, deputies and trucks to haul the prisoners to the county jail.

Yet, the state troopers, who caused the riot, who are responsible for hundreds of wounded men, women and children, are still at liberty, and attempts are being made instead to railroad to jail more than twenty miners who committed no crime whatsoever.

The entire country, and not only Pennsylvania, should be aroused by these outrages of the state police who are solely responsible for the Cheswick riot and every man and woman in the country should rally in defense of the men under charges.



State Cossacks in Action Against the Workers

Merritt

San Quentin, Calif.

International Labor Defense,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Workers:

I received the regular check for relief some time ago. An old Texas woman on being asked the condition of her husband's health, re-

plied, "He's powerful weak this mawnin". So it is with me: I am powerful weak on writing; nevertheless, I am always thinking of the working class and those who fight for their rights, and I am powerful strong for the I. L. D., because the I. L. D. does a powerful lot of good, not only for me, but for all the workers who have made a sacrifice for the cause.

At this time, I am powerful busy doing a

powerful lot of time, and if no results come from my efforts, why I shall just have to try something else. But give up—never!

And I feel confident that that is the attitude of the I. L. D. Give up? NEVER!! That makes for a movement with plenty of spine.

I wish you a powerful lot of success.

Yours sincerely,

Claude Merritt.