
Foster's Fate is in Balance: US Agents Keep Reporters Hootched Up and Have Free Access to Jury.

by Robert M. Buck

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Attributed to editor Robert Buck.

As this edition of *The New Majority* goes to press, the case against William Z. Foster at St. Joseph, Mich., is about to go into the hands of a jury consisting of 9 farmers, 1 non-union railroad employee, a grocery clerk, and the wife of a factory superintendent.

The jury has not been locked up, but the jurors have gone to and from their homes and have appeared freely and constantly on the streets. In the intervals between sessions of court and in recesses, they have mingled with the crowds in the corridors of the courthouse. They have been subjected to tirades against the defendants in their hearing, out of court, by Department of Justice agents and others interested in convicting Foster, and there has been nothing to prevent such persons from talking directly to them.

Dicks of the United States Department of Justice and others associated with the prosecution keep the newspaper reporters liberally liquored up with hootch and wine and nightly parties are held to insure that the reporters will be as enthusiastic in their thirst for the blood of the defendants as are the Department of Justice spies themselves.

This is the hostile, manufactured atmosphere in which Frank P. Walsh is battling for the freedom of Foster.

Tribune Publishes Fakes.

The attentions of the stool pigeons, showered upon reporters, show results in the sending out of stories of things that did not happen in court, and other-

wise unfair to the defense. For instance, the *Chicago Tribune* has made liberal use of what was said to be the text of a speech made by Foster at the Communist convention at Bridgman. This was not introduced into evidence in this case, because the prosecution, with all its willing tools, could not legally identify it as the speech actually made. Nevertheless, the *Chicago Tribune* printed it as such.

This was the alleged speech that quoted Foster as having said that he could "get by with almost anything" in the Chicago Federation of Labor. It is denied by the defense that Foster made any such reference to the Chicago Federation, but said that almost any progressive measure was certain to pass if introduced in the federation.

The evidence of the prosecution consisted mainly of the stories of the spies and stool pigeons of William J. Burns, head of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice. For the defense, Charles Ruthenberg testified concerning the documents introduced in evidence by the state. He branded many of them as spurious. Concerning whether the Communist Party teaches "overthrow of the government, by force and violence," Ruthenberg said:

The Communist view is that force is not a weapon for a small group or party to use. If force is resorted to it must come out of the social and political conditions existing in a country. An advocacy of force in the United States would be nonsense.

The prosecution cross-examined Ruthenberg for two entire days.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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