

THE WHITE TERROR

Release the Meerut Prisoners!

Joint Appeal of the League against Imperialism and the International Red Aid.

The Meerut case has already become historical. No trial on such a wide issue and on such an enormous scale has ever before been staged in the annals of imperialist class persecution. It is an attempt to smash the whole working class movement of a land with 350,000,000 toilers. It is a trial on which the British Imperialists have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds.

During a period of three years and eight months these 31 prisoners, three of them British workers, have been incarcerated in a tropical jail in one of the hottest parts of India.

Although the majority of the accused come from the big towns, the trial was deliberately fixed to be held in Meerut far away from the industrial centres, firstly because a trial by jury is not necessary in these smaller towns and secondly in order to be able to carry it through without risk of disturbance by protests of the workers and peasants.

Hundreds, even thousands of documents have been cited in the case. All the classic works of Socialism, Marxism and Leninism have been put forward by the prosecution as proof of the guilt of the prisoners in this gigantic "frame-up"! And the verdict has not yet been given!

In this unparalleled trial in the history of British imperialist rule, the Indian working class and through them the world proletariat has been arraigned before the bars of Imperialist justice to answer the charge of daring to defend itself against Imperialist exploitation and slavery and daring to assert its class aims of social emancipation. In the midst of the big strike movement of 1928-29, the first great mounting wave of the working class movement in India, the first emergence of the Indian proletariat as a leading class force, the British rulers aimed a blow intended to destroy the whole movement. Their main political purpose has been to smash all forms of independent trade union and political organisation on the part of the Indian workers and peasants.

The Meerut Prisoners were the most authoritative leaders of the Indian trade union and working class movement. Their liberation is a key question for the progress of the Indian working class struggle. **They are class war prisoners of international significance.** The question is by no means one which concerns India alone. Just as American imperialism makes every effort by increased lynch activities and legal lynch justice and by terrorising the coloured peoples and incitement of the whites to hinder the formation of a united front of the labouring masses of all races, so British Imperialism pursues the same aims under the different conditions in India by persecuting the active champions and organisers of the united front.

The struggle for the Meerut prisoners is a central question of the Indian working class struggle, it is a focal point for the struggle against British Imperialism and against world Imperialism as a whole. The Meerut prisoners stand in the forefront of the ranks of anti-imperialist fighters.

The anti-working class and mass terror in India is an essential part of British Imperialist preparations for war. The struggle of the Meerut prisoners is essentially bound up with the struggle against the imperialist war. In spite of every hindrance and handicap the Meerut prisoners have made the most resolute and unswerving defence in support of the principles of working class struggle. The joint statement signed by 18 of the prisoners is a guiding, classical document in the advance of the struggle of the Indian workers and peasants.

The joint of the British and Indian working class representatives against their persecutors in this case is a living symbol of the international solidarity of the British and Indian working class. These prisoners have received no help from the Indian national reformists. They have received no help from the British Labour Government or from the British trade union bureaucracy. Even the smallest things in the way of immediate necessities for their existence under the terrible prison conditions or for the very limited legal

assistance they could afford have been provided only by the pennies collected from rank and file workers.

Now the hearing of the case is over and the sentence of the judge (there is no jury) is due to be pronounced on **December 1st**. There is not a moment to be lost. The delay in the pronouncement of judgement is intended to give time to consult the British Government and to test the response of the trial throughout the working class movement.

The sentence which will be passed depends essentially on the steps that are taken during this intervening period. The campaign on behalf of the Meerut prisoners has never yet obtained the international hearing that it deserves. It is the sacred duty of every supporter of the anti-imperialist struggle, of every supporter of the basic rights of the working class movement to put every ounce of effort into the building of a really world wide campaign for the liberation of the Meerut Prisoners.

Between now and December 1st every organisation connected with or sympathising with the League against Imperialism or the International Red Aid should pledge itself to this task. Let us make the Meerut case the issue in such a tremendous volume of demonstration of mass working class feeling that the British jailors will be compelled to throw open the prison doors.

We appeal to every class conscious worker!

We appeal to every enemy of imperialist oppression, to every person and organisation ready to declare in favour of the most elementary rights for the workers and peasants in the colonies!

Organise everywhere meetings of protest exposing the infamous role of British Imperialism and centring around the Meerut case!

Adopt protest resolutions to be forwarded to the India Office in Britain and to the District Judge of the Meerut Court!

Make known everywhere the terrible facts of the conduct of this case, the treatment of the prisoners and the attack on working class organisations and activity in India. Make use of every possible channel of working class progressive literature in order to obtain publicity for the facts.

We call for the immediate organisation of demonstrations and campaigns in every country so that the time available may be used to save the Meerut Prisoners and to build firmly the unity of white and coloured workers and peasants against imperialism!

Fight for the unconditional release of the Meerut Prisoners!

For the complete freedom for trade union and working class activity and organisation in India!

For the liberation of all political prisoners and victims of imperialist terror in the colonies!

For the complete national independence of India!

Against the imperialist war!

For the complete overthrow of British Imperialism!

Down with national reformism and the agents of imperialist rule!

Long live the solidarity of the working class of the metropolitan countries with the toiling masses of the colonies!