

# THE NEW DEAL OF LYNCH TERROR IN ALABAMA

## Wave of Lynchings and Murders Attempt to Force Burden of Crisis on Negroes

By HARRY HAYWOOD

WITHIN the past three weeks, Alabama has witnessed four lynchings of Negroes, lynchings accomplished in an especially savage and spectacular manner, and with the clearest complicity of the state apparatus in planning and execution.

In Tuscaloosa, three Negro boys were charged with the rape and murder of a white girl. The frame-up was one of the crudest ever seen. Even the white papers of the town had admitted that the girl was obviously killed by a white man.

In Decatur, a Negro was framed on an equally crude charge of "rape" of a woman on a public road in broad daylight. Three attempts were made by the armed gangsters to lynch him.

In the reign of terror let loose by lynch gangs attempting to lynch him, another Negro was murdered in the Negro section of the town.

What is the meaning of this wave of terror? This wave of lynch orgies is for the purpose of crushing the rising resistance of the Negro toilers and white toilers to the Roosevelt New Deal—the hated National Industrial (Slavery) Act — and the Roosevelt program of plowing under cotton.

The economic crisis takes on its most acute and most aggravated form in the South, developing on the basis of a chronic agrarian crisis, resulting in a breakdown of agricultural economy, a catastrophic paralysis of the

cotton trade, the basic money crop. Stagnation of industrial life, closing down of factories, mills, mines rounds out the picture of the ruinous extent of the crisis in Alabama. This is reflected in a budgetary crisis of the state, county, and city government, which are vying on complete bankruptcy.

Significantly, the State, through Governor Miller and Attorney-General Thomas Knight were recently in New York attempting to get a loan from the National City Bank. The loan was refused, the State being considered a bad risk. The result is that the whole economic situation grows more acute for the Southern rulers.

The ruling classes of Alabama and the entire South have turned to the National Industrial Act for a way out of the crisis, by loading the burden of the crisis on the banks of the masses. But it is the Negroes, as the weakest section of the toilers—those with the least rights—who are forced to bear the main brunt of the crisis and the attacks of the rulers.

The cotton plow-under program, which is a complete and legalized swindling of the renters, croppers and small farmers, is part of the way out for the landlords. The NRA, with its wage differentials between North and South, between white and Negro labor, with its speed-up and stagger-plan, is looked to by the industrialists to protect them from the ravages of the crisis. The NRA codes ignore the vast number of agricultural work-

ers, and "outside labor" in the cotton mills. These are, predominantly Negroes.

Negro porters and domestic servants are being replaced by whites under NRA provisions, in a further deliberate move to split them from the white workers, and to destroy the growing unity between them.

Fear of the growing resentment of the croppers, renters, and small farmers, against the outright swindle of forcing them to plow under their cotton, then taking the government checks supposed to pay for these plowed-under acres in payment of "furnishings" or other credits, impels the landlord interests to launch spectacular attacks upon the Negroes.

Formation of NRA vigilante committees is advocated by the press. In the Carolinas already, the Ku Klux Klan has been re-organized openly to enforce the plow-under program.

In the steel mills and mines, so far, only the intervention of the American Federation of Labor has prevented the widest outbreaks of strikes against the New Deal program.

However, the workers are not waiting for the codes as patiently as was expected. Even now, strikes are spreading in the coal and steel fields.

On the basis of the NRA prosperity ballyhoo, the Red Cross, R.F.C., and other relief agencies are cutting thousands of workers off from all relief. And the workers are not taking this lying down either. Already a relief strike originating in Ensley, a T.C.I. suburb of Birmingham, is threatening to take on city-wide proportions.

This is the background against

which the lynchings at Tuscaloosa, Decatur, and Selma are perpetrated.

THE slave-drivers see the Communist Party and revolutionary organizations as the main obstacle to their carrying through of the New Deal program. Under the pressure of the crisis and the attacks of the bosses, the masses are rallying to the revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party as the only force offering a fighting program in the interest of the Negro people and white toilers. The heroic struggles of the Share Croppers Union, the Unemployed Councils, the fight for Willie Peterson and the tremendous worldwide campaign of the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense for the Scottsboro boys, has challenged the whole system of national and class oppression in the South and has created a new fighting spirit, new confidence among the Negro masses. The prestige of the slave-drivers is being undermined.

The Tuscaloosa and Decatur lynchings on the eve of the new Scottsboro trials, are part of the preparations for the murder of the Scottsboro boys. Hence the sharpened and desperate attacks upon the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense, to head the revolutionary movement of the Negro and white masses, to remove these obstacles from the path of the lynchers.

The struggle to defeat this lynch terror is the burning demand of the toilers of the South. The maintenance and strengthening of our leadership of the Southern toilers depends to a great extent upon our

## The Break-down of Southern Economy Leads to Offensive Against Negro Toilers

ability to organize a powerful mass movement to stop this terror.

The Negro and white toilers of Alabama, led by the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense are girding themselves for decisive struggle. They are carrying through a militant program of action, and are organizing themselves to smash the New Deal lynch terror. They are demanding:

1. The arrest and prosecution, with death penalty, of judge, sheriff, deputies, and all officials and others responsible for the lynchings at Tuscaloosa, Decatur, and Benton. Cash indemnity to the families of the lynch victims.

2. Release of Elmore Clarke and all other defendants in Tuscaloosa and Decatur, Willie Peterson and the Scottsboro boys, and all victims of white ruling class frame-up.

3. Down with the whitewashing grand jury of the bosses! For an open hearing with Negroes and sympathetic white workers on the grand jury.

4. Disarming and disbanding of the Ku Klux Klan lynch gangs; the right of Negroes and their white working-class supporters to keep and bear arms in self-defense; formation of defence corps of Negro and white toilers.

5. The right of Negro defendants to choose their own lawyers; safety for I.L.D. lawyers and representatives.

6. Immediate investigation of Tuscaloosa, Decatur, and Benton lynch-

ings by a federal grand jury with representation of Negroes and white workers; transfer of the Tuscaloosa, Decatur, and Scottsboro frame-up cases to federal courts; the immediate passage and enforcement of the Bill of Civil Rights for the Negro People.

We hold President Roosevelt responsible for the murderous crimes of the Alabama Democratic Party government!

**For a United Front of Negro Masses and White Toilers against the Common enemy, the white ruling class and their K.K.K. henchmen! Against the New Deal starvation and terror!**

Committees of Action against Lynching and Negro Persecution are being formed in Alabama. Preparations for a conference in the city of Birmingham are being made. Delegations are being elected to this conference from shops, mills, unions, and other organizations.

The heroic struggles of the Negro and white toilers of Alabama must be supported by a nation-wide mobilization of the working-class and its allies and sympathizers.

The mass meetings throughout the country must be continued and multiplied, and the tempo of protest action intensified. The struggle against lynching and terror must be brought into all activities of the Party and the revolutionary mass organizations, as an inseparable part of the whole campaign against the National Industrial