

SCOTTSBORO: AN ANALYSIS

By Anna Damon

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The International Labor Defense records another victory over the forces of lynch rule in the three and a half year battle for the lives and freedom of the Scottsboro Boys: the stay of execution for Haywood Patterson and Clarence Norris from December 7 to February 8, 1935, secured from the Alabama State Supreme Court, by the I.L.D. through our attorney, Osmond K. Fraenkel.

This victory is another confirmation of the correctness of the two fisted I.L.D. defense policy—the powerful fist of world-wide mass defense, and the best available legal defense in the courtroom—the policy which has saved the lives of the innocent Scottsboro Boys during the last three and a half years.

HOW DID WE ACHIEVE IT?

Untold obstacles have been encountered by the International Labor Defense in the course of battle for the lives of the boys and in defense of the rights of the Negro people. But each of these obstacles—trickery, manoeuvres of the prosecution, open lynch threats, betrayals by the reformists—each of them was fought tooth and nail by the organized might of millions led by the I.L.D. so that the best interests of the boys were safeguarded.

As soon as the latest obstacle, in the form of the announcement that Samuel S. Leibowitz together with persons who from the beginning of the case have secretly sabotaged or openly fought the boys' defense, had "taken charge of the defense at the request of the boys and their parents" was thrown across our path, the best interests of the boys dictated a statement which clearly stated our determination to prevent: "Any controversy which would impair the world wide struggle which must be developed to prevent this legal lynching . . . the International Labor Defense repeats its statement that it will continue unabated its struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro Boys, and will co-operate fully with anybody and any organization actuated by the purpose of sincerely fighting for the lives and freedom of the Scottsboro Boys."

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

By threats, promises, manoeuvres, lies, Mr. Leibowitz succeeded in sowing

confusion in the minds of many people. But in spite of this, the I.L.D. is clearly and definitely in charge of the case, *leading both the legal defense fight and the mass defense.* We have retainers from both boys. The application for certiorari and accompanying brief in the Norris case is already in the hands of the Supreme Court, accepted by that court. As the Labor Defender goes to press it is a matter of a few days before the similar papers in the Patterson case which are longer and more involved will also be filed by our attorneys, Fraenkel and Pollak. All the mothers of the boys and both aunts of the orphaned boys understand clearly that this is not a "fight between attorneys," but a fight for their boys' lives, and they are solidly behind the International Labor Defense, ready to do everything in their power to aid the mass defense fight led by the I.L.D. to save their boys. Mrs. Patterson, Haywood's mother, whom Leibowitz at first succeeded by trickery and threats, to confuse, now writes: "I will die with the I.L.D."

WHAT IS LEIBOWITZ'S GAME?

Yet even now, Mr. Leibowitz is making every effort to regain his hold on the case. Why? He has tasted of the personal glory that came through the world-wide publicity the I.L.D. gave the case to rouse the broad millions in support of the defense. He wants to ride to political preferment at the expense of the lives and freedom of the Scottsboro boys.

But we must look further than this to really understand his motives. Mr. Leibowitz is not acting by himself. His connections with the Tammany machine, which is the New York organization of the political party in the saddle in the South, the Democratic party which is the open support of the lynchers; his contacts with Attorney-General Thomas E. Knight of Alabama, the prosecutor of the Scottsboro boys, and the tool of the Alabama industrialists and landlords—these furnish the key to his actions. Only in the light of these connections can the machinery and motives which connect his actions with the reward he wants be understood.

Mr. Leibowitz is an agent of the lynchers in this fight. This is why he seeks to separate the Scottsboro boys from the mass defense led by the I.L.D. which has saved the boys thus far.

WHO ARE HIS SUPPORTERS?

The little group which has been the open support of Mr. Leibowitz, which

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Scottsboro demonstration before the U. S. Supreme Court, November 7th, 1932, when that court was forced to reverse the original lynch verdict.



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has incorporated itself in a so-called "American Scottsboro Committee" to scuttle the Scottsboro boys' defense, consists of people who throughout the history of the case have either been open enemies of this defense, or have sabotaged it more or less secretly.

William H. Davis, publisher of the "Amsterdam News" is the leader of this coterie. It was Davis who did his darndest to stop the March to Washington, after the Decatur trial in 1933, and even organized a junket of his own to forestall it—using for this purpose money collected by him supposedly for the march. Dr. G. E. Haynes, who has scarcely for a moment—and then only when the mass pressure became too great even for such an Uncle Tom—even pretended to be friendly to the defense. Add to these two the Negro ministers who in 1933 shut their doors in the faces of the Scottsboro mothers, politicians who entered the defense front to sabotage it, and a few honest people who have been misled by Haynes and Co.

The open attack on the Scottsboro defense is led by people who are ready to sacrifice the lives of the boys in the electric chair, or bargain for life imprisonment against mass defense, as the leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People did with George Crawford in Virginia and other innocent Negro victims of oppression.

UNITY OF ACTION

The Scottsboro Boys need their true friends today more than ever before. They need more friends, the world over, than they ever had before. They need the support of all those who are sincerely opposed to rule by terror, frame-up and lynching.

With the case before the U. S. Supreme Court for the second time, all the true friends of the Scottsboro Boys must realize that the broadest united front defense movement is essential, that national and international protest action must be developed to new heights of

power, that the masses in the churches, in the A. F. of L. unions, in fraternal orders, men, women, young and old, of all races and all creeds must be united into one mighty defense movement for the Scottsboro Boys.

WE ARE READY

The I.L.D. and the National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee, in which the united front of Scottsboro defense is being forged are ready to-day as we have been throughout the three and a half year battle, for the lives of the boys, to get together with all those who want to strengthen the defense movement for the tremendous task facing it. We have called on the "American Scottsboro Committee" to join in the defense movement led by the I.L.D. to free the boys. We are ready to cooperate with all elements who sincerely wish to join in the struggle for the unconditional and complete freedom for the Scottsboro Boys. On this question we will accept no compromise, no manoeuvres with the enemy for life imprisonment. We will never permit such a betrayal.

The International Labor Defense appeals to all lovers of justice, to all those who cannot stand idly by and see nine innocent boys murdered, to join us in this struggle, to lend your aid in every way possible.

Contribute to the defense morally and materially. Organize all your friends and neighbors, all the members of your organization in a solid fighting front of defense against the forces of reaction.

The Scottsboro case is a challenge to your freedom. The cause of these nine innocent Negro boys is your cause. The old and homely maxim "In Unity there is Strength" must become the battle cry that will thunder from every corner of the globe, re-echoing in the marble halls of the capitol and Supreme Court at Washington, the demand that the Scottsboro boys must be freed, and force those who have it in their power, to free them.