

Today Marks Fourth Year Of Scottsboro

Call for Greater Action For Their Freedom Must Resound

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Today the nine Scottsboro Negro boys will have been in jail, under the shadow of the electric chair, for four years.

By Monday, April 1, when the United States Supreme Court is expected to hand down its decision in the appeals taken by the International Labor Defense against death sentences passed on Clarence Norris and Haywood Patterson, they will have entered their fifth year in jail.

The power of world protest organized by the I. L. D. has kept them from the electric chair of the official, legal lynchers, and from the hempen rope and the burning faggot of the fascist gangs, for these four years, and it is only this power that can continue to hold off the eager hand of the executioner, that can force their complete freedom.

Four years ago these boys were arrested at Paint Rock, Ala., and taken to the town of Scottsboro for a mock trial conducted to the tune of a band that played "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight."

4 Bitter Years in Jail

Four years ago, these boys were mere children. The youngest was only 15 when he was pulled off that freight-train. They were kids on the loose, turned out into the world to look for something to eat, a place to sleep—one of them travelling

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4 Years of Scottsboro

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across the country looking for a clinic he had heard about where Negro boys could get glasses. He was almost blind.

Today, the oldest of these boys, Haywood Patterson and Clarence Norris, have grown into manhood. The youngest is 19 years old. They have spent four bitter years, years of youth and energy, rotting in jail.

And today they sit in jail, waiting for the decision of the United States Supreme Court, which has the power to set them free; which does not want to set them free; which can be forced by the pressure of the masses to set them free.

During this time so many things have happened that have centered around the courthouse where they were tried, the courtrooms where their appeals were heard by gowned servants of the lynchers, the jails where they have been beaten and mistreated, tortured with the sight of an electric chair. Only a few weeks ago, the guards at Kilby took away Haywood Patterson's bed, leaving him only the concrete floor to sleep on, took away his little personal belongings. For what? On principle—lynch principle.

Scottsboro—A Call to Action!

During this time, the story of their case has echoed around the world, and re-echoed in the voices of millions of toilers, white and colored, demanding the freedom of these boys. Trial after trial has conclusively proven their innocence. Ruby Bates, one of the original accusers, has told thousands of people,

from the lecture platform, millions of people from the printed page, how she was forced to lie. She told it to the court in the first Decatur trial of the boys, after the Supreme Co.'t reversed the first lynch-verdicts.

Scottsboro, in these four years, has become a call to action, and the demand for their freedom a major slogan in the struggle of the Negro people for civil rights, for the right to vote, to serve on juries, and for national liberation. Scottsboro has become a cry around which white and Negro have rallied together, smashing down the barriers of prejudice and Jim-Crow set up for their division and their exploitation.

The lessons of Scottsboro have been impressed deeply into the consciousness of the tolling masses of America, and has led them to a conscious struggle for unity of black and white as an indispensable prerequisite for successful struggle against exploitation and repression. Millions of white and black have joined the struggle against lynching, because of Scottsboro.

Scottsboro, four years after the arrest of those nine Negro boys at Paint Rock, is not yet won.

Facing a decision of the United States Supreme Court, it is necessary for the masses of people who have by their protest kept these boys alive four years, to be launched into a new and greater campaign, with the determination that long before the fifth anniversary of their arrest is reached, the Scottsboro boys' freedom will have been won.

Kitty Dallet of Youngstown, according to the Steuben Daily Worker Shock Troop report, "already got five Daily Worker Worker subscriptions, and is determined to be one of the first to get ten."