

COMMUNIST PARTY, DISTRICT 17,
Birmingham, Ala., May 16, 1930.

To All Unions and Other Working-Class Organizations:

GREETINGS: On May 27 two young workers go on trial for their lives in Atlanta, Ga.

They are guilty of but one crime, the organization of negro and white workers into unions on a basis of equality. For this the capitalist class of the South is determined to burn them in the electric chair.

M. H. Powers, district organizer of the Communist Party, and Joe Carr, district organizer of the Young Communist League, were arrested while speaking at a mass meeting of white and colored workers in Atlanta last March. The fantastic charge of "insurrection" was placed against them and they were indited under the provisions of a law passed during the Civil War period and never before invoked. Conviction under this law carries with it the penalty of death.

By taking the lives of Powers and Carr the capitalist class hopes to smash the Communist Party, outlaw all revolutionary organizations of the working class, and to deal a heavy blow against the whole southern labor movement. This is not an isolated case. Throughout the country the bosses are directing a campaign of terrorism against the working class as a whole and against its most advanced section, the Communist Party, in particular.

Here in the South this terrorism and mass oppression of the workers assumes its sharpest, most open form. In the past two months no less than five negro workers have been done to death by boss-led mobs. In Gastonia, N. C., seven textile workers and union organizers are being railroaded to jail for terms of 5 to 20 years because of their activity in the Gastonia textile strike last year. Thousands of unemployed workers are picked up on vagrancy laws and railroaded to the chain gang each year. Literally hundreds of thousands of white and colored share croppers and tenant farmers are little better than slaves of the landlords under the oppressive laws of the South. Negro workers are discriminated against by all sorts of Jim Crow laws, denied the right to vote or run for office in the elections.

In order to unite all the forces of the southern working class for an effective struggle for the release of Powers and Carr, against the oppressive, antilabor laws of the various States, and against the growing lynch terrorism of the bosses, the Communist Party calls on all working-class organizations to give full support to its campaign against these laws and against this whole system of discrimination and oppression, and to elect delegates to the united front conference against the bosses' terror.

The conference will be held at the union hall at 2117½ Second Avenue North, on Friday, June 13, at 8 p. m. At this conference plans will be worked out and steps taken to mobilize the workers of Birmingham for struggle against all antilabor laws, for the release of Powers and Carr, and against all forms of social and political oppression of white and negro workers of the South.

Please elect two or more delegates to represent your organization at the conference. Fill out the inclosed credential and mail one copy to the Communist Party, box 85, Birmingham, Ala.

Fraternally yours,

TOM JOHNSON,
District Organizer, Communist Party of the United States.