

Some Lessons from the Sacco-Vanzetti Case

By JAY LOVESTONE.

IT is yet too early to estimate the results and evaluate the significance of the Sacco-Vanzetti case. The coming days will be decisive. It is already clear, however, that the American, as well as the international, phases of the movement to save Sacco and Vanzetti from the strangling hand of capitalism is of immeasurable significance and tremendously enriching in its lessons for the international proletariat. The usually well-informed Vienna correspondent of the Chicago Daily News tells us the following:

"That the reprieve of Sacco and Vanzetti will have far-reaching political effect both in Europe and America is the indication of the trend of events since the reprieve was granted and also is the substance of the opinions of almost all careful observers with whom the Chicago Daily News correspondent has had occasion to discuss the affair in its broader aspects."

What the Reprieve Means.

THE same correspondent tells us that, in Europe, there is considerable opinion maintaining that: "The Sacco-Vanzetti reprieve — is the greatest victory attained by red Russia." How much truth is there in that? The answer to this question is the following. Undoubtedly the reprieve was granted by Governor Fuller not out of his love for pure, abstract justice, not because of his desire to see Sacco and Vanzetti saved from death. Such desires Governor Fuller could have satisfied long ago by playing a different role than that of a hangman who has been responsible for keeping these two innocent workers within the jaws of death for seven years. There was only one cause for the reprieve. This was the mass pressure brought to bear on the American ruling class by the American as well as the international proletariat. The most conscious section of the working class, the Communists, in the United States as well as in every other country in the world can naturally only welcome the extent to which working-class consciousness has been aroused against the capitalists in this instance. The Communists can well be proud of the role they have played in the tremendous class movement developed over the Sacco and Vanzetti execution.

But let none fool himself. The reprieve does not mean freedom for Sacco and Vanzetti. Our arrogant and crafty ruling class may well utilize the reprieve as a sort of war camouflage with which to hide (behind this very delay as the final establishment of "justice.") their continued intentions to murder these two champions of the workers. The danger is far from over. The danger is not even lessened. The danger of death for Sacco and Vanzetti may be even intensified by this very probable ruse of the reprieve.

There is only one language that the capitalist exploiters and oppressors understand. This is the language of class power. They are used to talking in this language. Obviously when the workers speak to the ruling class in the language of class power, the capitalists understand. More than ever before is it necessary to continue and to develop to greater strength than hitherto the pressure of the working class on the American capitalist masters in order to save Sacco and Vanzetti from murder.

Our Tactics and Tasks.

WE have mentioned the role of the Communists in the Sacco-Vanzetti campaign. We must emphasize the role played by the organization of the class conscious workers which defends the working men and working women from capitalist persecution on the basis of class interests and class need—the International Labor Defense. This organization has served as the vehicle for the most militant and energetic fighters in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti. It has served as the unifying center of the most persistent and devoted opposition to the murderers from Massachusetts and their nefarious allies.

It is strikes and mass demonstrations in the United States and in many other countries which have dealt the body-blows to Massachusetts capitalist justice and have lengthened the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti.

The New York demonstration, having at least over fifty thousand participants, is perhaps the biggest mass protest that the streets of the metropolis have yet seen. In Chicago, many thousands of workers spontaneously demonstrated on the streets their vehement opposition to legalized murder of proletarians. In Gary, for the first time since the big steel strike, thousands of workers went out on the streets to protest to the steel barons against murder cloaked by employing class justice. In New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and the anthracite coal regions, thousands of workers struck.

There is nothing the capitalists fear more than thousands of workers pouring out from the factories to the streets in mass protest against the exploiting class rule.

Here we should not hide the fact that certain elements, parading as champions and defenders of Sacco and Vanzetti, have been only a hindrance to this great mass movement of the American workers. The fact that these petty bourgeois liberal elements have been in strategic positions in the Sacco and Vanzetti defense and have been tainted with anarchist sympathies not only does not make them less dangerous but actually makes them more dangerous to the class basis, to the only sound basis which can beat back the hangmen of innocent workers.

More strikes. More demonstrations. Bigger strikes, Bigger demonstrations. These are the weapons with which the workers can paralyze the hands of the killers.

Some "Friends" Who Need Watching.

THE official socaist party bureaucracy has played a shameful role in the Sacco-Vanzetti drive. Their propaganda has tended to make workers put faith in capitalist class justice. Their propaganda has only served to blur the class issue. Such help for Sacco and Vanzetti only hurts them and the interests of the class for which they may be murdered. But the most despicable role in the whole Sacco and Vanzetti campaign has been played by Mr. Green and the rest of the agents of American imperialism in our movement. At the time when the executioners were about to put their hands on the switch to electrocute Sacco and Vanzetti, the arch-reactionary president of the American Federation of Labor could do nothing more than to beg that these men should be sen-

tenced to a living death, should be jailed. At this very moment, Mr. Green felt that even such dastardly conduct on his part might be interpreted by his masters as biting the hand that feeds him and therefore declared his complete dissociation from Sacco and Vanzetti.

American "Democracy" On the Job.

EVERY wheel of the government machinery is rolling at full speed towards the murdering of Sacco and Vanzetti. The church is working over-time. The press is doing more than its bit. Witness the case of the so-called liberal New York World, firing one of its outstanding contributors, Heywood Brown, because of his powerful messages in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti. Mr. Coolidge is too busy pardoning boot-leggers and extraordinarily desperate plain criminals to "consider" the Sacco and Vanzetti case. Government prococateurs are busy manufacturing bombing exploits in order to demoralize and destroy the workers' protest movement. It is seldom that American democracy, the American government, shows its brute force, its ugly class fist, against the workers with such painful clarity as it has been showing in the case of the plan to murder Sacco and Vanzetti.

Significance of Mass Movement.

THE main features of the tremendous dimensions of the Sacco-Vanzetti movement are: (1) It is a powerful radicalizing force for American labor. (2) The use of the strike for political purposes is strengthened by its application to the Sacco-Vanzetti case, even on the limited scale to which it has been resorted in this instance. (3) The Sacco and Vanzetti movement has destroyed still further some of the illusions regarding American democracy, not only among the more relatively class conscious workers in Europe and elsewhere, but even among the more politically backward American working class masses. (4) For the first time in decades, the American proletarian masses have participated in a movement of international dimensions on so large a scale simultaneously with great masses of workers throughout the world in behalf of working class interests. No one can under-estimate the importance of this breath of international proletarian solidarity for our working class.

The workers of America and other countries have shown how Sacco and Vanzetti can be saved. Now we must strengthen our efforts manifold in order to save Sacco and Vanzetti from capitalist justice, in order to protect the basic interests of the working class.

A UNITED FRONT FOR DEFENSE AGAINST THE ATTACK UPON THE FREEDOM OF PRESS

By B. SKLAR.

The attack of the federal government against The DAILY WORKER the persecution of the Workers (Communist) Party in the state of Pennsylvania manifested in the framing up and sentencing of members of the Party for alleged seditious activities; the vicious attacks upon our Party in New York by the joint forces of the police, the courts and the trade union bureaucracy; the campaign against our Party by the American Federation of Labor—all of this brings to our recollection the days of 1922.

This was the time when the Party was struggling to find its way into the open, to function legally and just that time was chosen by the federal authorities to make an attack upon the Party, to create a new red scare in the country and to maintain the isolation of the Communists from the broad masses of workers.

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How did the Party meet the situation in 1922? It met the situation by the organization of a broad united front movement against the forces of reaction. Its appeal for such a united

front was based upon the correct viewpoint that the attack against the Party was but a part of an attack against the entire labor movement and that it was an expression of a growing reaction. Labor and liberal organizations adopted this viewpoint and responded to the call of the Party. The drive of reaction was stopped. The Party not only weathered the attack but made great progress. The Party proved itself the true vanguard of the American working class.

attack against the Party at present is general, similar to the situation at the time of the Bridgeman raid. The attack against the Party at present is also a part of an attack against the entire labor movement; it comes in the wake of an intense class struggle in the needle industries, in the coal mining industry, in the textile industry; it comes at the time when the pace of industry is slackening and when a general intensified drive may be expected upon the wages, working hours and conditions of labor. It comes therefore at a time when a further sharpening of the class struggle is to be expected.

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The vicious attack of the labor bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor against the Workers (Communist) Party is a part of the same drive against the entire labor movement.