



HASTILY, as these cartoons go to press, the roasted bodies of Sacco and Vanzetti, still unburied, are placed in state in the "cultured" city of Boston. The world is still ringing with the protests of workers and liberals against one of the foulest of the innumerable foul crimes of the capitalist class. Demonstrations continue to storm the doors of the American embassies and consulates in two hemispheres; and the American workers are preparing to perpetuate the memory of the two working class heroes who, innocent of any crime except the "crime" of fighting for the emancipation of humanity from capitalist oppression, were tortured for seven long years and finally murdered as a challenge to the revolutionary movement.

These cartoons were drawn from day to day during the tense period immediately preceding the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti. They appeared in the *Daily Worker*. Many elements and many publications tried to save the two men from the vengeance of the ruling class. None was as clear and persistent in pointing out the CLASS nature of the judicial murder as the *Daily Worker*; in clarifying the case as a symbol of the titanic struggle between capital and labor.

This policy explains in part the power of these cartoons. The most vigorous cartoons in this country appear in the revolutionary press. At its best the cartoon has always been a political weapon in the hands of a revolutionary class. Hogarth and Daumier drew their spiritual sustenance from the young and progressive bourgeoisie; their work, satirizing the powers that were, radiated with technical strength and conceptual greatness. The very word "cartoon" (the encyclopaedia tells us) was first applied to political caricature in the case of a "Punch" drawing attacking class injustice. It was called, significantly enough, "Substance and Shadow: The Poor Ask for Bread and the Philanthropic State Accords—an Exhibition."

The bourgeoisie long ago ceased to be progressive and has become reactionary. Its political ideas center around preventing change in a world where change is the one unchanging law. Its cartoons have lost their sting and strength because they have no great aim, no impassioned idea within them. The G O P elephant and the democratic donkey are void of wit, ferocity, satire or anger because the parties they symbolise have lost all meaning except as instruments of exploitation; the Bolshevik appears in American cartoons with beard and bomb because the capitalist cartoonist cannot understand and grapple with his ideas.

The revolutionary cartoonist does not have to invent. Capitalist society with its factories, slums, courts, armies, strikebreakers, political murders, Negro lynchings—its foundation of sweat, blood and poverty—furnishes the working class cartoonist with material, indignation and the will to fight.

No artist could ever imagine anything approaching the cruelty, the barbarous arrogance of the American capitalists during the slow murder of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Fortunately, the American working class has artists like Fred Ellis with sufficient imagination and talent to grasp the implications of this case and to give them form. Ellis is himself a worker. He is about 40 years old; his family has been in the United States for many generations. He has worked as a sign-painter and has been a member of a trade union for the past twenty years. The revolutionary movement woke the artist in him. All of his drawings have appeared in working class publications: the *Daily Worker*, the *Liberator*, the *Labor Defender*, the *New Majority*, the *Labor Herald*.

The drawings in this book are aflame with the idea of the class struggle, from the one where the two martyrs sit in the trap of the working class enemy to the one where their murdered bodies dangle over the slogan: CARRY ON!

The last words were Sacco and Vanzetti's message to their fellow workers. These drawings—like their conduct—calls not for mourning but for struggle!

—Joseph Freeman.