

# RACE HATRED ON TRIAL

ISSUED BY  
COMMUNIST PARTY  
U.S.A.



PRICE 10c





**60,000**  
**MASS CIRCULATION**  
FOR THE

**Daily Worker**  
Central Organ of the Communist Party U.S.A.

will unite Negro and white workers for struggle against white chauvinism and race hatred, and will organize the white and Negro workers in their every-day struggles against the capitalist system.

**BY MAIL**

ONE MONTH, 50c; TWO MONTHS, \$1; THREE MONTHS, \$1.50; SIX MONTHS, \$3; ONE YEAR, \$6

(Subscription rates in Manhattan and Bronx, New York City: 1 month, 75c; 2 months, \$1.50; 6 months, \$4.50; one year, \$8)

**Daily Worker**  
Central Organ of the Communist Party U.S.A.

50 East 13th Street, New York City



20-  
+ 5539-3

## RACE HATRED ON TRIAL

### INTRODUCTION

---

**T**HE trial of August Yokinen before 1,500 white and Negro workers in Harlem for acts clearly based on race prejudice was an event without example in the history of the American Labor movement. He was not tried before any court of American ruling-class "justice." He was tried by a court of workers. He was brought to trial by the Communist Party for conduct detrimental to the interests of the working class as a whole and for violation of the fundamental program of the Party.

It was a workers' jury which convicted him. And the workers throughout the country, who already understood the vicious anti-labor nature of race prejudice, together with those who were led to a clear understanding of it through this trial, acclaimed the verdict of "guilty" and approved of the tasks set for Yokinen to do before he could again apply for re-admission to the Party.

The meaning of the guilt of Yokinen, the seriousness of the crime he committed against the working class is made clear in this pamphlet. Yokinen was guilty of upholding by his sentiments and his acts, the ideology of "white superiority" which serves as a ruling-class excuse for the acts of suppression and persecution of the Negro workers and farmers. He was guilty of permitting lynch law, in its less brutal but just as vicious form, take its course. In acting thus, he permitted himself to become an instrument of the ruling class. For it is this wall of race prejudice by which the bosses in the factories, the landlords on the farm, keep the workers and farmers divided.

By this trial, the Communist Party, has done two things. First, it has made clear the anti-workingclass character of race prejudice. Second, it has shown that it will not



tolerate any form of race prejudice within its own ranks, and will fight tooth and nail to root it out of the working class as a whole.

Yokinen acknowledged his errors and pledged himself to carry on untiring activity against all forms of race prejudice. As a foreign-born worker, he realized that he too was being divided off by the ruling class from the other white workers, in the same way as the workers were being divided on race lines. He really understood his crime.

So did the ruling class. While ruling-class justice has its Jim-Crow laws, aids in actual lynching parties, leaves lynchers go by unpunished, it reserves its prisons for fighters for working-class solidarity. After Yokinen had seen his errors before a working-class court and decided to energetically correct his mistakes by taking up an active fight for full Negro equality as a member of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, the "laws" of the bosses jumped into action, arrested Yokinen and held him for deportation to Finland, where prison or death awaits a Communist.

Yokinen now represents the very thing which he injured. He has now joined the struggle for full equality and for the unity of the workers. The ruling class answers the threat of deportation. The workers' answer must be greater solidarity and greater fighting unity among the toilers of all colors and nationalities, against deportations, against all persecutions of the Negroes, and against the capitalist system which maintains itself by such institutions.

JIM ALLEN.



## Proceedings of the Trial

OF AUGUST YOKINEN CHARGED WITH WHITE  
CHAUVINISM, BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.,  
NEW YORK DISTRICT

March 1, 1931

### *Procedure:*

1. Workers' Court called to order by Comrade Alfred Wagenknecht, from the Trade Union Unity League.
2. Election of Jury of 14 members.
3. Prosecutor, Comrade C. A. Hathaway, trying the case for the New York District Committee of the Communist Party, U. S. A.
4. Defense Attorney, Richard B. Moore, Head of the Negro Department of the International Labor Defense.
5. Statement by the Defendant, Comrade August Yokinen.
6. Witnesses for Prosecution—waived.
7. Witnesses for Defense—waived.
8. Summary of Defense—Comrade Richard B. Moore.
9. Summary of Prosecution—Comrade C. A. Hathaway.
10. Verdict of Jury.

*Jury*—Toivonen, Lahti, Christianson, Mitchell, Lendis, Kovac, Himmelfarb, Stanton, Ross, Downs, Wickman, Gumbs, Barnes, Haywood (7 white and 7 Negro workers).

1,500 persons attended, including 211 elected delegates from 113 mass and fraternal organizations.



**\*Speech of C. A. Hathaway**  
**PROSECUTOR FOR THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF**  
**THE COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A.**

---

**C**OMRADES, it will be our aim this afternoon to prove, on the basis of evidence which we will submit, that the defendant, Comrade August Yokinen, holds views that are detrimental to the interests of the working class.

We will further show that the views which Comrade Yokinen has put forth are contrary to the program of the Communist Party.

On the basis of this evidence we will propose to the jury which you have just elected, that they recommend the expulsion of Comrade Yokinen from the Communist Party.

We will propose further that, following this expulsion, Comrade Yokinen, as a member of a revolutionary working-class organization, be assigned by this body certain definite tasks which he must carry through to prove that this trial has done him some good, that he is ready to correct the chauvinist tendencies to which he gave expression.

Finally we will propose that the faithful carrying

---

\* The speeches both of Comrade Hathaway and Moore, as well as the statement of Comrade Yokinen, have all necessarily been cut in order to bring the proceedings of the trial within the limits of a popular priced pamphlet. The main argument and the body of the speeches, however, have not been mutilated by the cutting.



through of these tasks be made a prerequisite for re-admission to the Communist Party.

It is necessary now to review the facts of the case.

### *The Facts*

First, there was a dance at the Finnish club here in Harlem. This club, composed of Finnish workers, regularly gives such entertainments in the very heart of the Negro neighborhood. At this particular dance three Negro workers came to enjoy themselves as did the other workers there. But when these three Negro workers came they found, that instead of being given the welcome repeatedly promised by the Communist Party and by all revolutionary workers, they were pushed off to one side and given anything but a cordial reception. In addition to this there was a definite group in this hall that showed such an attitude of hostility to these three Negro workers that they wanted to eject them bodily from the hall. I repeat: instead of receiving the welcome they expected, and the opportunity to enjoy themselves, as did the other workers in the hall, these three Negro workers had to leave the hall because of the hostility of certain white workers.

On top of this, we find that the Party members, who are also members of this club, instead of going to the defense of the Negro workers, adopted a tolerant attitude to those elements bitterly hostile to the Negroes. While the principles of the Party declare for stubborn opposition to all persecution and discrimination against Negroes, our Party members in this particular club did not fulfil their responsibilities and duties as Party members. They adopted a policy of smoothing over these issues without taking a decisive stand for the defense of the right of the Negro workers to attend this dance together with the white workers. We have in this organization Party members, apparently, who vote in favor of a resolution which declares for equality for Negroes, but when it comes to actually putting equal rights into practice in the Finnish



Workers Club, these Party members were not ready to rush to the defense of these Negro workers. On the contrary, by this negative position they aided those who hounded Negroes out of the hall.

### *Party Conducts Investigation*

The Communist Party Committee in the Harlem section, alarmed by such a gross violation of the Party statutes, supported by the District Committee of the Party, immediately undertook a complete and thorough investigation of this whole affair. We questioned the comrades in the Finnish Club. We found out exactly what had happened, so that disciplinary action could be taken against those comrades who failed to come to the defense of the three Negro workers. When the matter was discussed with the Finnish comrades, they admitted their mistake; they said, yes, we should have carried out the policy of the Party; we should have thrown out those elements who persecuted the Negro workers at the dance.

The majority took this attitude—all except Comrade Yokinen. He more or less justified the chauvinist policy followed at the dance. He even went further. He argued that if the Negroes came into the club and into the pool room, they would soon be coming into the bathroom, and that he for one, did not wish to bathe with Negroes. He justified throwing the Negroes out of the dance, because he was afraid if Negro workers were permitted to come to a dance, they would also come to play pool; they would also come to bathe in the excellent bathroom of which the Finnish comrades are justly proud.

### *A Dangerous Attitude*

This attitude is a very dangerous one. In expressing the view that he did not want to play pool with Negroes; that he did not want to bathe with Negroes, Comrade Yokinen was giving another indication that his was only a formal acceptance of equal rights for Negroes without accepting it in practice. He was ready to adopt a resolu-



tion for equal rights, but he did not want to grant equal rights in the Finnish Workers Club.

In this he was giving expression to the white-superiority lies that have been developed consciously by the capitalists and the Southern slave-owners. He was taking a position that hindered the mobilization of the Negro masses for struggle together with the white workers under the leadership of the Communist Party. Just so long as any of our Party members take such an anti-Communist stand, we give to the Negro workers the perfect right to mistrust us and our promises as they mistrust the other political Parties and their promises. We must bear in mind that others, besides Communists, have also made promises to the Negroes. The Socialists, the Republicans, the Democrats, the American Federation of Labor—all of these bodies have and can continue to make promises. But none of these have fulfilled nor will fulfil their promises. The Negroes have learned to expect from them nothing but broken promises and betrayals. They have learned to mistrust all whites.

Unless every member of our Party fulfils *in action* the Communist promise to the Negro masses they have the same right to distrust us as they have learned to distrust the other Parties. We say, therefore, that when Yokinen opposed the use of the bath room, the pool room, or any other part of the Finnish Club by the Negro workers, he was giving expression to views that undermine the confidence of the Negro masses in the Communist Party and in the revolutionary white working class. And we must guard the revolutionary integrity of our Party by immediately expelling Comrade Yokinen from membership.

### *Capitalist Class Hatred*

Is this just a personal whim on the part of Comrade Yokinen? No, comrades. The views that Comrade Yokinen has put forth are not alone his views. They are systematically and persistently implanted among the workers of this country by the capitalists. Comrade Yokinen was merely acting as a phonograph for the capi-



talists. These views are put forward by the capitalists in hundreds of papers, magazines and books, in the movies, in the schools and in the churches—everywhere you go, you find this race prejudice being developed against the Negro workers.

A short time ago we received in the Daily Worker office a statement sent out by William Randolph Hearst as a guide to all Hearst editors. In this statement he said, that whenever a crime is committed, whenever an act of violence is committed, if it happens to be a foreign-born worker, state this in the story. The same practice is followed by all papers with regard to Negroes. They realize that by constantly associating Negroes with rape, with murder, with robbery, and other such crimes, in the public mind, they create suspicion and hatred against all Negroes. This is conscious propaganda designed to maintain false white-superiority theories.

### *So-called "Scientific" Theories*

An even more subtle propaganda by the capitalists is practiced. So-called "scientific" treatises are widely circulated in which they attempt to show that certain physical differences between the Negro and white prove that the Negro is on a lower physical and intellectual scale, at a lower standard of development than are the whites. Experiments are made in an effort to show that the weight of the Negro brain is less, that the shape of the Negro brain is different. They point to the difference in the lips, to the hair, etc.—all to falsely prove that the whites are superior, and that the Negroes are on a lower scale, nearer to animals.

When Comrade Yokinen expressed his opposition to the Negro workers using the pool room and the bathroom at the Finnish Club, he is giving expression in a concrete form to these false theories that have been consciously developed by the bourgeoisie. He has accepted the view that the Negroes are on a lower scale than the whites; that if they bathe in a Finnish bath tub they may pollute the water. This is the position of Comrade Yokinen, long



after every reputable scientist has refuted these theories as plain "bunk."

These views have been consciously sown among the workers here as the justification for the brutal exploitation and the vicious persecution of the Negro masses by the capitalists in the United States.

The capitalists know from experience, that if they can develop a hatred against Negro workers they



can segregate them in the filthiest and most unsanitary sections of the city, they can Jim-Crow them, they can rob them, and lynch them if they resist. They know the white workers, poisoned by their white-superiority propaganda, will support them in this terrible and continuous persecution. In the South, comrades, due to the brutal and bitter hatred created by the landowners against the Negroes, we even find cases where white workers are drawn into the murderous lynching attacks on Negroes,



stringing Negro workers up to trees, for no other reason than that the Negroes resisted the bitter exploitation of the southern landlords.

In every part of the United States, North and South, the answer to the Negro segregation, Jim-Crowism and lynching must be clear and decisive.

### *Segregation and Jim-Crowism*

Here in Harlem, in the heart of Negro Harlem, there are restaurants and theatres that refuse admittance to Negro workers. They can only do this because of the tolerant attitude of white workers, who thus consent to the persecution and segregation of the Negro masses.

In the South, what have we? An actual state of bondage for the mass of Negroes! The Negroes—the tenant farmers and share croppers—are practically in the position of slaves. They are permitted to till the land and are given credit for beans and bacon at the landlord's store. When the season is over the Negro farmer finds that the landlord takes possession of the crop. He markets the crop, and then comes back to the Negro tenant and says: "I am sorry, your summer's work has all been spent for the beans and bacon you received from the store. In addition to the crop you owe me \$100 for supplies." The Negro cannot leave the land. If he does, he is charged with jumping his debts, and is put to work on the chain gang, until he is ready to return to the landowner on the landowner's terms.

This whole system has been built up with the white superiority theories as the foundation. We whites are so "superior" to the Negroes, they say, that we have the perfect right to exploit and rob the Negro, to persecute the Negro, to lynch the Negro.

Comrade Yokinen, of course, is against all this. He is against lynching and persecution. But, unconsciously, Comrade Yokinen with his theories weakens all the efforts to bring about the unity between the white and Negro workers in common struggle against the ruthless and bloody exploiters. His theories about bathing, etc.,



stimulate the antagonism between the Negro and white workers.

He only says that Negro and white workers cannot bathe in a Finnish bathtub. But in Chicago it took a little different form. There the chauvinists not only objected to Negro workers using their bathtubs, but they objected to Negro workers going to bathe in Lake Michigan. They tried last summer to bar the Negroes from bathing in Lake Michigan. They stoned Negroes on the beaches and again almost precipitated race riots such as occurred in Chicago in 1919. So, comrades, when we consider the implications back of such theories, only then can we realize that such theories play into the hands of the capitalist class, which ruthlessly exploits both the Negro and white workers. When white workers show the slightest race-superiority tendencies in working-class meetings, or in the shops and factories, they actually become the agents of the bourgeoisie inside of the working class movement.

### *A New Capitalist Offensive*

The views put forth by Comrade Yokinen are always extremely dangerous views, but I want to say that at the present time these views are even more dangerous to the workers, white and black. And why is this so? Because in the United States at the present time there is an extremely severe economic crisis. We know from our experience that in every period of crisis the capitalist class tries to get out of this crisis at the expense of the working class. By cutting wages, by mass unemployment, by police terror, by the vicious speed-up system, by lynchings, by race riots, etc., they try to force the workers into poverty, hunger and starvation. They try to maintain their own profits by making the workers bear the burden of the crisis. And this is the policy of American capitalists and landowners in this particular crisis—now in 1931!

But, comrades, in this general attack that is taking place against the workers as a whole, the capitalists are particularly directing their fire against the Negro workers. First, the exploitation of the Negro workers is more



severe than ever before, and secondly, the efforts of the capitalists to bring about division in the ranks of the working class is greater during a period of crisis than at other times. Therefore, at such a time we also have to redouble our efforts to bring about unity between the Negro and white workers.

### *Danger of Race Riots*

I want to call your attention to the fact that in the period of 1919-20-21, in the period after the war, in a similar period of crisis, we saw then that the capitalists consciously developed this antagonism between the Negroes and whites to the point where in Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, and in a dozen other cities, the racial bitterness and hatred between the Negroes and whites became so sharp that it actually resulted in race riots in which hundreds of Negro and white workers were killed and severely injured. But the profits of the white capitalists were increased, and now they are again preparing such riots.

We see that in order to prevent the Negro and white workers from uniting they maneuver to mislead honest workers like Comrade Yokinen and then use them to poisonous advantage inside of the working class movement.

Already we see sharpening attacks against the Negro masses. During the course of the last year, and mostly in the last months of the last year, 43 Negro workers and poor farmers were lynched because they fought against the conditions the landowners of the South attempted to force upon them. They made the usual charge of rape. This is the stock charge. But when you go to the root of these "rape" cases, we find not rape but that the Negro is lynched because he refuses to give over his crops to the landowner, or refuses to accept the accounting that he is given by the landlord's store. They refuse to be enslaved by the landowners, and it is principally for these reasons that 43 lynchings took place last year. And already this year, and this is only March, eight Negro workers have



been lynched in the United States, also because of the growing militancy among the Negroes and because of the determination of the capitalists to more brutally and profitably exploit these Negroes at all costs.

Only a few months ago I had an experience in Chicago that also illustrates the efforts the capitalists are making to divide the Negro and white workers. The Communist Party in Chicago was holding a number of meetings down on the Negro South side. The work of organizing the Negroes was going on quite successfully, and we were mobilizing large masses of Negroes behind the Party. The police heard about it, with the result that they made a series of attacks—they raided the Party offices not less than three times, they raided Section offices, they arrested comrades, some of whom are in this hall today, and brutally beat them into unconsciousness. Finally, Stege, then chief of detectives, came to us and said, "if you keep your hands off those g...d... niggers we will permit your Party to operate, but if you go near the South side again we will smash your organization and every bone in your bodies." This was the position of the Chicago police department. This shows concretely the efforts which the capitalists and their slimy, cowardly tools will make to prevent the unity of the Negro and white workers.

And because of this we have to bear in mind the necessity of carrying on the sharpest struggle against all such chauvinist tendencies as are expressed by Comrade Yokinen and other comrades, no matter how innocent or honest these comrades may be.

### *Terror in Detroit*

I want to call your attention also to the fact that today in every city Negroes are being hounded as they never were before. In Detroit, for example, when two or three Negroes get together on the streets, the police bust up this group, refusing to permit them to even talk to one another. This is only because the Negroes in Detroit are



organizing to fight evictions and for unemployment insurance.

We have to also clearly see that the boss not only uses such a crisis situation as this to more ruthlessly exploit the Negro workers, but they also use the Negro workers in the fight against the whites. If we look at the situation in the needle trades we find, that because the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union did not clearly see the danger of chauvinism in its own ranks and permitted all sorts of "little" manifestations of chauvinism to exist here and there, the result was that the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union did not succeed in drawing in the increasing number of Negro workers in the needle industry into the strike taking place in New York at this time. These Negro workers are permitted to remain in the shops where they weaken the strike and aid the bosses, primarily because of the neglect and underestimation of Negro work that still exists in the working-class movement.

So we see that all these tendencies that are here expressed by Comrade Yokinen, as well as by dozens of other comrades, have to be burned out of our movement, especially now, in the fire of public criticism, such as is being done at this trial. These views have to be categorically condemned as anti-workingclass views, as views that make impossible the development of working class unity, as views that strengthen the enemies of the workers—the capitalists and landlords. This is the first reason why we ask the expulsion of Comrade Yokinen from our Party.

### *What About the Party?*

But one more question must be asked and answered. Are these views those only of Comrade Yokinen or are they also actually the views of the Communist Party. Does the Party uphold the views that are held by Comrade Yokinen? Does the Party justify or accept such views? We say, *no*, emphatically *no*! Comrade Yokinen has not only expressed views which are against the interests of the working class, but he has adopted capitalist views



which are basically contrary to that of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party, not only in the United States, but in all countries, stands everywhere for the equality of all peoples. And to prove this assertion I only want to quote one short sentence here from Comrade Lenin, to show that the position of our Party on the Negro question is not something that we have worked out here in the United States alone. The position of our Party on the Negro question is the position of the international Communist movement in regard to all peoples oppressed by imperialism, by the capitalists. He states:

"The victory over capitalism cannot be fully achieved and carried to its ultimate goal unless the proletariat and the toiling masses of all nations of the world rally of their own accord in a harmonious and close union."

This is the international policy of the Communist Party. On the basis of this fundamental principle that was given to us, that has been given to all its Sections by the Communist International, the Communist Party here worked out its program on the Negro question in the United States. And we state categorically and unconditionally, that the Communist Party stands for complete and unconditional equality for the Negroes. We do not add any "ifs" or "buts," we do not make any qualifications—we say full equality, and this we mean—*full equality*. We propose the abolition of all laws or practices that prevent the Negro masses from enjoying any right or any practices that are, or will be given to the whites now or at any future time in the United States.

### *For Full Equality*

Comrade Bill Dunne, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, U. S. A., made a speech a few months ago in the South, and in the South, as you know, it is a little dangerous to speak on the Negro question, but he chose as his subject, "The Position of the Commu-



nist Party on the Negro Question." During his speech somebody asked: "Mr Dunne, would you want your sister to marry a nigger?" And Comrade Bill Dunne replied, that he would sooner have his sister marry a militant, fighting Negro, determined to secure equality, than any yellow-bellied white chauvinist. (*Applause.*) They then tried to organize a walk-out. Most of them were white workers—they succeeded in getting only fifteen to leave the hall, and five or six came back.

And I say again that all laws which in any way discriminate against Negroes, whether they be marriage laws, or other practices, must be eliminated by joint struggle of the Negro and white workers and by wiping out of the minds of every white worker especially, all traces of white chauvinism.

The Communist Party not only declares its support for social, economic and political equality—for complete unconditional equality—for the Negroes, but the Communist Party fights for equality for the Negroes. We organize the fight everywhere to get equality for the Negroes with the whites. In the South we also fight for equality for the Negroes, but we do not merely fight for equality in the abstract; we do not merely chatter and talk about equality in the South at some future time. In the South we make our fight for equality in terms of concrete demands for the Negro masses, so that when these are won, it actually means real equality and not equality on paper.

### *The Land For the Negroes*

In the Black Belt of the South Negroes constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, and how can these Negroes ever have equality there so long as the white landowners who have persecuted them for centuries continue to rule? We say that the land belongs to the farmers, to the Negro tenants and share-croppers, and the Communist Party fights to confiscate this land that is today held by the white landowners and operated by the Negroes. The cotton is produced in the South



today by the sweat and blood of the Negro masses and not by the white landowners. We say that the Negroes who are tilling the land, who are raising the cotton are entitled to this land. This is their land and the first step toward winning equality is to take this land away from the white exploiters and give it to the Negroes.

*For State Unity of the Black Belt*

Secondly, we say that the Negroes in the Black Belt of the South can never get equality under the rule, domination and State power of the southern landowners. We say, immediately fight to establish the State unity of the Black Belt of the South. The Black Belt now runs across several States. We say, unite this territory into one State and then hold new elections there and give the Negro masses there the freedom, not to be dominated by the rule and the persecution of the white ruling classes, but to rule themselves in their own State, under such a form of government as they desire in the South.

*For Self-Determination*

Furthermore, we say that the Negro masses in the Black Belt must have the complete and unrestricted right to determine for themselves the kind of government that they will have, and their relationship to the government of the United States, to the other States and to foreign governments. We say that they must be given the opportunity if they wish to completely separate themselves from the United States, to establish their own rule here without any restrictions imposed upon them by any foreign power.

There have been Negro leaders such as Garvey who have come forward with the proposal that all the Negroes be loaded into boats and sent back to Africa. We say that the Negro masses have helped to build this country, to establish its institutions and to create its wealth. These Negro masses today are just as much American as any one of us here. They have a right to live in this country on terms of complete freedom. (*Applause.*)



So we do not propose to load all the Negroes on boats and send them to Africa or any place else. We propose that in the first place, the white working class take up the fight to establish the right of the Negroes to remain in the United States. (*Applause.*)

The Party furthermore declares that it is the duty of the working class, the white workers especially, and also the Negroes fighting together with the white workers, to take such steps as are necessary to defeat the practice of lynching in the United States. (*Applause.*) We demand that the death penalty be administered to all lynchers. We say that the workers must not tolerate any more the lynchers. We say that the white workers especially must organize to meet the lynch gangs and prevent lynchings from taking place, by meeting the frenzied lynch mobs with the organized mass power of the workers. (*Applause*)

#### *Not Mere Promises*

Our program is not a program of phrases, not a program of resolutions, not a program of promises. Our whole program is a program of struggle, and comrades, the policy of the Communist Party in all sections of the country has been to carry through in action the program put forth in our resolutions.

In order to show that the program I have put forth is not merely my program, or my interpretation of the program, I want to read a couple of excerpts from the resolutions of the Party, published in our official monthly organ, *The Communist*:

*"The slogan of equal rights of the Negroes without a relentless struggle in practice against all manifestations of Negrophobia on the part of the American bourgeoisie can be nothing but a deceptive liberal gesture of a sly owner or his agent. This slogan is in fact repeated by 'socialist' and many other bourgeois politicians and philanthropists, who want to get publicity for themselves by appealing to the 'sense of justice' of the American bourgeoisie in the individual treatment of the Ne-*



groes, and thereby side-track attention from the one effective struggle against the shameful system of 'white superiority': from the *class struggle against the American bourgeoisie*. The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes is, in fact, one of the most important parts of the proletarian class struggle of the United States. . . .

"In the struggle for equal rights for the Negro, however, it is the duty of the *white* workers to march *at the head* of this struggle. They must everywhere make a breach in the walls of segregation and Jim-Crowism which have been set up by bourgeois slave-market morality. They must most ruthlessly unmask and condemn the hypocritical reformists and bourgeois 'friends of Negroes' who, in reality, are only interested in strengthening the power of the enemies of the Negroes. *They, the white workers, must boldly jump at the throat of the 100 per cent bandits who strike a Negro in the face. This Struggle will be the test of real international solidarity of the American white workers.*"

Merely to make promises is not worth a dime. That the Negro masses have found out through many bitter experiences. The Democrats, the Republicans, the Socialists, the American Federation of Labor, have all made promises; but their promises were empty words. This has embittered the Negro masses and strengthened the distrust born of years of persecution and oppression. So we say to our Party members, promises in words only strengthen the bourgeoisie. We impress upon them the necessity in action, *in struggle*, of strengthening the bonds of class unity. We give the following instructions to our Party members, to all members of revolutionary workers' organizations—that they, the white workers, every white worker, must unhesitatingly jump at the throat of any person who strikes a Negro in the face, who persecutes a Negro. The willingness of the white workers to act



in this way must be the test of unity of the Negro and white workers. Our Party members must be in the forefront of the most militant fights in behalf of the Negro masses and especially in every case of persecution against Negro workers.

### *In Action*

I want to show that the Communist Party in action is proving its determination to win equal rights for the Negroes. First, I want to cite an international case, the recent case in Stalingrad, USSR. There a group of Negro and white American workers were brought over to work in the construction of farm tractors as a part of the great Five-Year Plan. These workers were living together. Some of the whites began to show in Soviet Russia, where the workers rule, the same chauvinistic tendencies they had practiced for years here in the United States, and one day they made an attack on a Negro worker. These white workers were immediately brought to trial before a proletarian court in Stalingrad. They were found guilty of actions detrimental to the interests of the working class, and they were deported from the Soviet Union in disgrace. This was the policy of the workers in the Soviet Union.

Comrades, in Gastonia, North Carolina, at the time of the Gastonia textile strike, we raised uncompromisingly, the question of equality. There our Party comrades unflinchingly raised the Negro question and demanded complete equality for the Negro workers in the strike. The white workers in the textile mills strung a rope down through the center of the meeting hall on several occasions, but, comrades, that rope under the leadership of the Communist Party, was torn down and, under our leadership, the chauvinist tendencies that had been injected into these white workers for centuries were broken down. So, that chauvinism, even where it exists deepest, in the South, can be overcome and the class unity of the Negro and white workers established.

Comrades, as a result of our uncompromising policy in Gastonia, when Comrade Hall, a Negro organizer, was



about to be lynched at the instigation of the Gastonia mill owners, these same Southern white workers, who a few weeks before this had insisted on a rope through the hall, loaded Comrade Hall in an automobile and drove him two hundred miles in order to escape the lynch mob.

### *Into the South*

Our Party has gone into the heart of the South, and established there a paper, the *Southern Worker*, which is rallying the Negro and white workers against chauvinism, against lynching, for the full program of the Party, for the confiscation of the land, for the State unity of the Black Belt, for the right of self-determination of the Negroes. Our Party is carrying the fight for the first time in the history of the American working class into the heart of the South, and they are not going to drive us out. (*Applause.*)

Yesterday, I saw a piece in the paper that the Methodist bishops held a convention and there pledged themselves to go back to their respective cities and drive the Communists out of the South. This same Methodist Episcopal Church, took a stand for chattel slavery in 1841. They carried on a fight then against the liberation of the chattel slaves, and they fought a losing battle. They are in a fight now to drive the Communists out of the South and they are fighting with even more certainty that the battle will be lost. The Communist Party, as the revolutionary Party of all workers, is going to stay there. It will organize the Negro and white workers. It will successfully carry through, in the South as in the North, the united revolutionary struggle of the Negro and white workers, which alone can free the white workers and the Negro workers and establish real equality. (*Applause.*)

### *What About Harlem?*

In all parts of the country the Communist Party is carrying on such a fight. But when I come before a Negro audience here in Harlem it is not sufficient to say that our Party is fighting against persecution in this place and that



place. The workers will say, yes, the Communist Party, you say, is fighting there for equality, but what is the Party doing here in Harlem? And then, they point to the Finnish Workers Club. They point to the efforts to throw three Negro workers out of the hall.

I say, never, under any circumstances will we be able to overcome the suspicion, the doubt, the mistrust that every Negro worker has of the whites, as long as incidents such as the Finnish dance are tolerated. Promises, I repeat, mean nothing. Our Party in Harlem must also prove *in action* that we are ready to fight unflinchingly in behalf of Negro rights. If, when these three Negro workers came to the dance at the Finnish club, Communist Party members had come to the defense of these Negro workers, had jumped at the throat of their persecutors and established their right to dance in this hall, to play pool, and even to bathe, Comrade Yokinen, these Negro workers would have known that our promises about equality were not only words. The Negro workers and hundreds more in Harlem, would then have been able to say with conviction: "*The Communist Party, alone, fights for equal rights.*"

### *Stamp Out White Chauvinism*

And now, comrades, especially at a time when the capitalists and landowners are more viciously persecuting the workers than ever before; at a time when great masses of workers, both Negro and white, are actually being forced into starvation; at a time when these same capitalists are feverishly preparing for war, especially against the Soviet Union, the struggle to overcome white chauvinism among the white workers, to overcome the suspicion and mistrust of the Negro workers, to establish a united front of all workers, Negro and white, must be waged more fearlessly and with more energy than ever before. Every manifestation of white chauvinism, no matter how slight, must be ruthlessly stamped out of our own ranks.

The District Committee of the Communist Party, therefore, proposes that Comrade Yokinen be found guilty of



conduct that is detrimental to the interests of the whole working class; that he be found guilty of views and practices which aid the bourgeoisie in bringing about disunity among the Negro and white workers; that he be found guilty of violating, both in theory and practice, the fundamental laws of the Communist Party.

*Find Yokinen Guilty!*

We propose that he be found guilty, on all of these counts, and we then propose to the jury, on the basis of this, that they recommend Comrade Yokinen's expulsion from the Communist Party.

Next, we propose, that Comrade Yokinen, as a condition for membership in the Finnish Workers Club, be assigned to definite tasks which will give him the opportunity *in practice* to prove that he has corrected the position he previously held, and is now ready to fight for Negro rights.

We propose that he be given the task of calling a meeting of the Finnish Workers Club, after this trial, and there make a report to the club on this trial, pointing out the basis for the jury's verdict of guilty, which I am convinced will be given; pointing out his own errors, and taking up in the club the work of overcoming all remaining chauvinist tendencies.

We further propose that he be assigned the task of selling a definite number of copies of the paper, *The Liberator*, the organ of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, and that generally he be assigned to a whole series of such tasks as will prove to the working class of Harlem, and to the Finnish workers that he has corrected his position.

Only by treating this case in such a manner can we help here today to cement the bonds of Negro and white working-class unity, which is indispensable in our common revolutionary struggle for liberation from capitalist exploitation. (*Applause.*)



## Speech of Richard B. Moore

### ATTORNEY FOR THE DEFENSE

**F**ELLOW-WORKERS: This mass trial, the first workers' trial of its kind in the United States of America, is of the greatest significance and importance for the development of the working-class struggle in this country. As we approach this trial, we must first make clear to ourselves what are the principles of working-class justice, and then on the basis of these principles decide the verdict in this case. Working-class justice differs fundamentally and basically from the rotten, bourgeois justice of the capitalist oppressors, which is corrupt, cruel, and vicious. Working-class justice bases itself upon the protection and advancement of the interests of the working class as a whole. Never do we descend to the sentimentality and hypocrisy, to the false, disgusting, bourgeois cant of "mercy" which is only a cover for the hideous violence of the capitalist-class justice; nor do we sink into the brutal terror of the rich exploiters who must have the blood of the workers to satisfy their sadist appetites and to uphold their oppressive class rule.

Therefore, fellow-workers, on the basis of this fundamental principle of working-class justice, we must be just as severe as is necessary to protect the interests of the whole working class and at the same time we must be just as merciful as is necessary to build and strengthen the working-class movement. The crime with which Comrade Yokinen is charged is a great one indeed, the crime of bearing within the ranks of the labor movement, the vicious, corrupt, white chauvinist prejudices which are spread by the rich rulers to destroy the working class movement. But, fellow-workers, we must realize that it is not for us merely to look at one side of the case. Working-class justice requires that we analyze the case



fully, and, on the basis of all the facts, render a verdict which will insure the development of the struggle of the working class and the unity of all the oppressed toilers.

In this connection, I want to recall the statement of Comrade Lenin, the great leader of the working class:

"Sophistry picks out one plausible argument and parades it, but dialectics demand a many-sided investigation of any given subject. To get at the truth we must investigate social phenomena in the course of its development, seek beneath the external surface manifestations for the *driving* force, and examine their relations to the productive forces and the class struggle."

### *Yokinen Admits Guilt*

Upon the surface it appears that Comrade Yokinen alone is guilty. But is this so? No, fellow-workers, Comrade Yokinen is guilty, and he admits his guilt. Comrade Yokinen realizes now the gravity of the crime which he committed against his class, and he is willing to show by action, that he has actually realized the real nature of racial prejudice as a crime against the working class and will never commit it again. But it is not Comrade Yokinen alone who is on trial here. No, fellow-workers, the vicious *capitalist system* which exploits all the workers, this vile, corrupt, oppressive system is the chief criminal in this working class trial.

Is it not this vicious capitalist system which controls all the instruments of education and the moulding of opinion? Yes, it is this vile, bourgeois system, which spreads the poison of racial and national hatred throughout every stratum of this society. The white landlord-capitalist ruling class spreads slanderous stories of savagery, of inferiority, of criminality and rape against the Negroes whom they hold as slaves and outcasts at the bottom of their barbarous society. The bosses spread their chauvinistic prejudices through the church, that pious,



hypocritical Jim-Crow agency of the oppressors, which is the chief recruiting group for the fascist Ku-Klux-Klan lynchers. The rich slave-drivers spread this poison through their prostitute press, their lying, yellow sheets, through their schools and colleges where the masses are taught almost from the very cradle to hate the Negroes, and to uphold the arrogant, imperialist, 100% white American superiority.

### *Capitalist Oppression*

Capitalist imperialism not only doubly oppresses the Negro masses in the United States but it oppresses also the foreign-born workers who are brought to this country by the bosses for the purpose of exploiting their labor power. The American boss class segregate the foreign-born workers into narrow national communities and a narrow, bourgeois nationalism develops, which weakens and destroys the international consciousness of the workers.

Reinforcing this chauvinist, racial, and national prejudice is the poisonous master-class ideology of opportunism. Again I will quote Comrade Lenin, the clearest working-class mind on these all important questions. Lenin defines opportunism thus:

"Opportunism means the surrender of the *basic* interests of the masses for the *temporary* interests of a small minority of workers, or in other words, it means the union of a portion of the workers with the bourgeoisie in opposition to the mass of the proletariat."

We know, fellow workers, how these corrupt, opportunist forces work insidiously within the working class movement, that this deadly opportunism is the result of the capitalist bribery of the labor aristocracy, the most highly paid and privileged upper strata of the working class, with a share of the spoils sweated from the masses of underpaid workers and toilers. We know how this boss-poison of opportunism is spread by the fascist mis-



leaders of the American Federation of Labor, by the yellow "socialist" traitors, by all these dirty tools of the capitalist class who permeate the ranks of the working class with this corrupt ideology, making possible so great an error as that committed by Comrade Yokinen.

### *Petty-Bourgeois Influences*

In addition to this, the petty bourgeois, middle-class elements bring their opportunism into the ranks of the labor movement. As Lenin clearly shows: "They surround the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, impregnating the proletariat with it, corrupting and demoralizing it, causing it to relapse into petty-bourgeois lack of character, disintegration, individualism, and alternation between moods of exaltation and dejection."

It is just this foul, shop-keeping, middle class opportunism which permeated the mind of Comrade Yokinen and caused him to take the impermissible attitude of wishing to exclude Negro workers from the pool room and baths of the Finnish Workers Club on the basis that the white workers would be driven away, and the club would thus lose its monetary support, the basis of its financial upkeep.

### *Examine Yourself!*

There is yet another factor which is also responsible for this chauvinistic outburst in the case of Comrade Yokinen. I think in this connection we will not be so eager to destroy Comrade Yokinen when we examine ourselves, each and every one of us, to see how far by our criminal negligence we have contributed to this situation to which Comrade Yokinen has fallen a victim.

Have we carried on within the various workers' organizations and within the Communist Party itself a broad campaign of education to stress the importance of this question, to clarify the workers and to root out chauvinist prejudice against the Negro workers? We have not sufficiently carried out this task and this is one of







the reasons why this rank and file worker has committed this crime. We must not forget that he speaks and reads English with great difficulty and therefore does not get the benefit from all of our resolutions and documents printed in *The Communist* from which the prosecuting attorney, Comrade Hathaway, has read.

Do I say this to justify and protect Comrade Yokinen? No, fellow workers, no. No militant class-conscious worker could or would defend his chauvinist act. I cite these facts only to show that while Comrade Yokinen is guilty of this act and while he must bear the responsibility, he alone is not guilty, for these various forces are culpable and we ourselves share the crime of Comrade Yokinen. Now what must be our attitude here? I say there can be no division of opinion. The prosecuting attorney dares not ask more than is necessary to protect the interests of the working class as a whole and the defense attorney dares not demand less than is good for the working class.

### *Yokinen Must Be Condemned*

We are both in agreement on the guilt of Comrade Yokinen and Comrade Yokinen himself admits his guilt. Now Comrade Yokinen must be condemned. This chauvinist act of his must be sharply and severely condemned. He has forfeited by this act the right to remain in the vanguard of the working class and must be on probation until he proves not only in words but in his actual practices that he has overcome his chauvinism; and then he takes his place as a militant class-conscious worker fighting with the Negro workers and with all workers against white chauvinism; then he must be reinstated into the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat.

This proletarian court cannot take the attitude of the pious, hypocritical Jews and Christians, who imagine that they have washed themselves of their sins when they have killed a lamb or a goat or slaughtered their "savior-gods." I say, we cannot make and we will not make a "paschal lamb" of Comrade Yokinen. While we must



condemn his act sharply and severely, we must exercise that working class clemency necessary to win him away from this error back into the ranks of the working class movement.

Before we come here and yell for the blood of Comrade Yokinen, it would be much better, and far more in keeping with the principles of Communism, to criticize ourselves. Let us examine ourselves, each and every one, and see if we are free from this taint—this vicious influence of anti-Communist, anti-working class prejudice, of the ruling capitalist class. Nor can we prove ourselves free from this taint of chauvinism merely by clamoring for the expulsion of Comrade Yokinen. We can only prove this in deeds, by the manner in which we actually work and fight side by side with the doubly oppressed Negro masses, against the bosses' Jim-Crow lynch system, for full equality and self-determination.

### *Disgrace of Expulsion*

We must remember that a verdict of expulsion in disgrace from the Communist Party is considered by a class-conscious worker as worse than death at the hands of the bourgeois oppressors. As for myself, I would rather have my head severed from my body by the capitalist lynchers than to be expelled from the Communist International. (*Applause.*) And I say, fellow workers, that it will be no part of the actions of a proletarian court to destroy a worker, an honest but unenlightened worker who has fallen a victim of capitalist prejudice. We must not destroy Comrade Yokinen, we must not drive him out of the working class movement, but we must save him for the Party and the working class.

I say this, fellow workers, as a Negro worker who is conscious of the centuries of brutal exploitation that the Negro toilers have suffered and are still suffering at the hands of the ruling class, at the hands of the brutal, capitalist, imperialist exploiters. But with all this terror and suffering and misery of the Negro workers, I see also the suffering and misery of the workers of the



world. I see the Russian workers and peasants bleeding beneath the yoke( in the old days before the revolution), under the terrorist rule of the czars and capitalists. I see the Finnish workers under the lash, under the hammer, under the guillotine of the oppressors, when their revolt was drowned in blood immediately after the last imperialist World War. I see the Chinese workers under the thumb-screw of the brutal European and American imperialist oppressors and of their Chinese tools, the bourgeois nationalist war lords and Kuomintang butchers; I see the masses of workers and peasants in India crushed under the bloody rule of the "socialist" traitor, Ramsay MacDonald, even as the masses of British workers are oppressed by this social-fascist imperialist government, and as the masses in Africa and the other colonies are plundered and massacred under this same British rule. And I realize, comrades, the full significance of what Marx wrote about the American slave system: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." Just as I also understand that for the Negro toilers, too, emancipation requires the united struggle of the toilers of all races.

With all this clearly before me, I will say to Comrade Yokinen: "You have fallen into a grievous crime against the working class. You have given expression in the working class movement to this vile boss prejudice, white chauvinism, this vicious force for destroying the working class, for smashing the unity of the working class which is the only hope of our class for emancipation. But you are a worker, you are my class brother. Do not remain in the swamp of white chauvinism. Rise out of it. Correct your error. March forward with the working class. Prove yourself worthy of marching in the army of the proletariat, in the vanguard of the working class. This you must prove by your struggle against the capitalist oppressors, by your fight against white chauvinism, by your sacrifice to build the unity of the workers of all races. Then take your place again in the vanguard of the working class and go forward in the fight."

(Applause.)



*Trial of the Wreckers*

Comrades, there is a great example which illumines our way in this mass workers' trial today. We have seen only a few months ago a most important working class trial conducted in the Soviet Union, the only land, as yet, where the workers rule, the trial of the saboteurs, the counter-revolutionists and traitors who organized a formidable conspiracy to smash the industries and to destroy the only government of the workers. What was the action of the Communist Party in that trial? What was the action of the workers' court which tried this case, which tried those wreckers and traitors who had given aid and comfort to the sinister intervention plot of the bourgeois governments of the world? Was it to condemn these traitors to death? Was it to torture them?

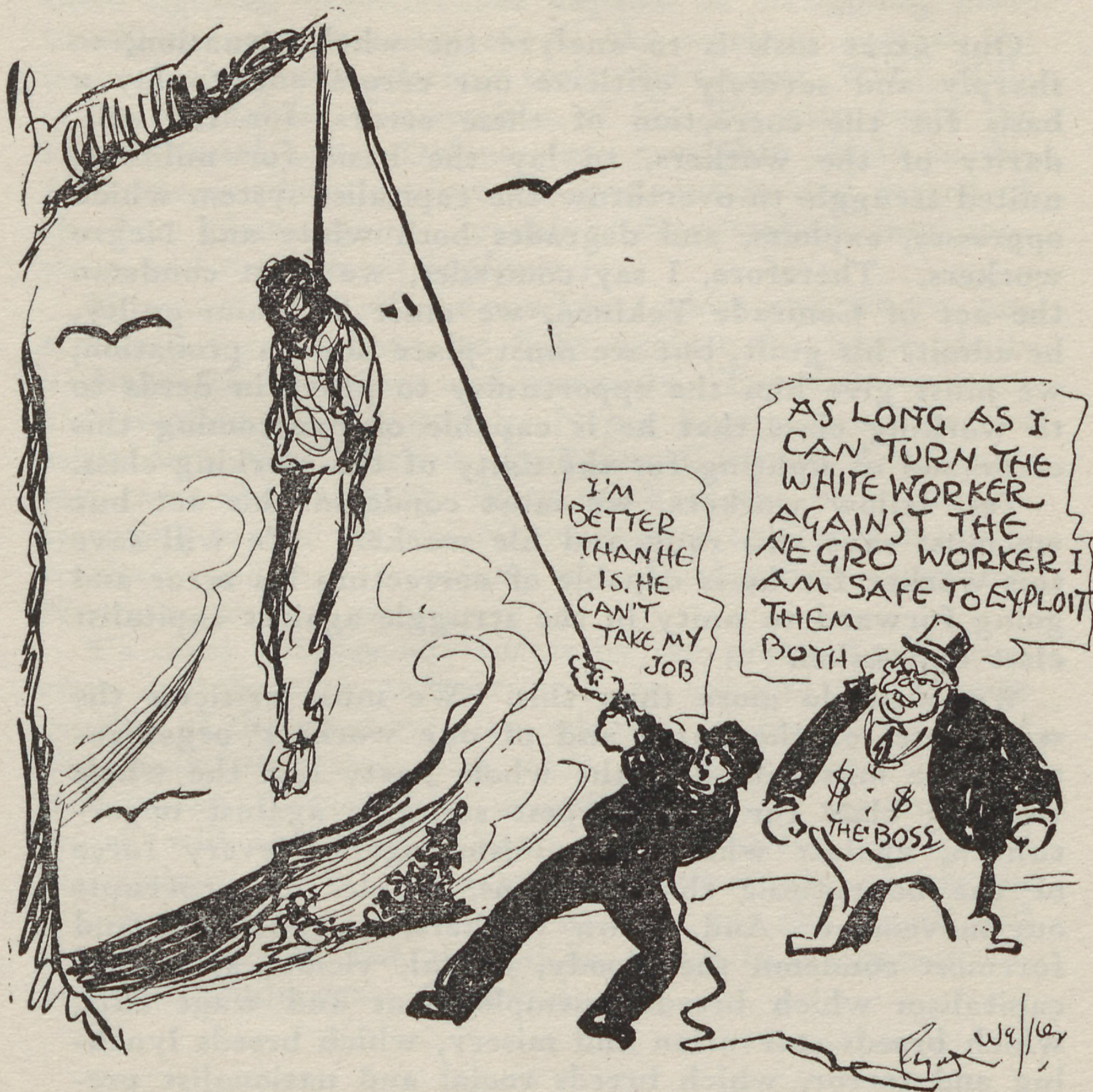
We must remember that at this trial, the defense attorney cited the words of Lenin: "In certain situations the working class can afford to show clemency." Upon the basis of an analysis of the whole situation, they were severely condemned and punished, but the capital punishment was commuted by the government under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Therefore, I say, that our Party in America in this case must commute the sentence of expulsion, which means death politically.

*More Self-Criticism*

Finally, fellow workers, what is necessary for us is a great searching self-criticism. Once more I wish to quote the words of Comrade Lenin:

"The attitude of a political Party toward its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest criteria of the seriousness of the Party, and of how it fulfils in practice its obligation toward its class and toward the laboring masses. To admit a mistake openly, to disclose its reasons, to analyze the surroundings which created it, to study attentively the means of correcting it—





I'M  
BETTER  
THAN HE  
IS. HE  
CAN'T  
TAKE MY  
JOB

AS LONG AS I  
CAN TURN THE  
WHITE WORKER  
AGAINST THE  
NEGRO WORKER I  
AM SAFE TO EXPLOIT  
THEM  
BOTH

THE BOSS

Egan 4/42



these are the signs of a serious Party; this means the performance of its duties; this means educating and training the class, and, subsequently, the masses."

Our great task is to analyze the whole situation, to sharply and severely criticize our errors and to lay a basis for the correction of these errors, for the solidarity of the workers, to lay the basis for militant, united struggle to overthrow the capitalist system which oppresses, exploits, and degrades both white and Negro workers. Therefore, I say comrades, we must condemn the act of Comrade Yokinien, we must find him guilty, he admits his guilt, but we must place him on probation, we must give him the opportunity to prove in deeds to the working class that he is capable of overcoming this error and of fighting for the unity of the working class.

Yes, fellow workers, we must condemn this act but we must save this rank and file worker. We will save this worker for he is capable of correcting his error and going forward to unity in the struggle against capitalist class oppression.

We must do more than this. We must criticize the weaknesses of the Party and of our workers' organizations, we must mobilize the whole Party and the whole working class for the sharpest struggle against opportunism, against white chauvinism, against every force of the bourgeoisie that weakens, divides and corrupts our movement. And, fellow workers, we must first and foremost condemn the bloody, brutal, vicious system of capitalism which breeds unemployment and wage cuts, which breeds starvation and misery, which breeds lynching and terror, which breeds racial and nationalist prejudice. (*Applause.*)

### *Clarify Ourselves!*

We must go out from this workers' trial determined to clarify ourselves, to mobilize our forces, to unite the workers, Negro and white, in that common bond of work-



ing-class solidarity before which the capitalist system must at last fall. We must build the Communist Party, the leader and vanguard of the working class. We must build the revolutionary trade unions and unemployed councils, these fighting organizations capable of struggling militantly for the demands of all the workers against the bosses and against all their tools, the Greens, Wolls, Hillquits, Randolphs, Crosswaiths, et al. We must build the International Labor Defense into a mighty shield to defend the workers against the persecution and terror of the boss class, against lynching, deportations, imprisonment and torture. (*Applause.*)

We must unite all the workers, white and Negro, native and foreign born, to fight against the white chauvinist, fascist lynchers and terrorists. Together we must also combat the opportunist Negro bourgeois nationalist misleaders, the DePriests, DuBoises, Garveys, Randolphs, etc., who are doing the dirty work of the bosses by attempting to stir up the Negro masses against the white workers and are attacking the foreign-born workers, Negro as well as white.

We must prepare our forces by the greatest self-criticism, mobilization and struggle, to execute the historic mission of the working class which is to dig the grave of the capitalist system and upon its ruins to establish a proletarian dictatorship, a working class government which will abolish all classes, all nationalist and racial discrimination, and to achieve a Communist society in which we shall realize at last equality for all; for all will then be workers and all will be equals in a common society of producers. (*Applause.*)



## Statement by August Yokinen

*(Translated from Finnish)*

I ADMIT having been under the influence of white chauvinistic ideology in my activities in connection with the Finnish Workers Club, which led me to manifest open white chauvinism in such utterances as, for example, my statement that I would not care to go into the Finnish bath house with a Negro. Also my attitude supporting the exclusion of Negroes from the Finnish Workers' Club on the basis of fear of financial losses for the institution through the probable decrease of income from the white workers if Negroes are allowed,—showed plainly that my attitude was chauvinistic.

I now realize that this attitude of mine was a decidedly white chauvinistic attitude and the Communist Party is correct in calling me to trial before the workers. I see now that this white chauvinism is not only an outrage against the Negro workers, but is also a crime against the working class as a whole. Especially at this period, when our class oppressors are sharpening their attack against the workers and are in every way possible trying to divert the working class from struggling against the vicious attack upon their class organizations and their living standard, it is becoming ever more important for the workers to solidify the class solidarity of the Negro and white workers.

The narrow clannishness that has been thrust upon the foreign-born workers of this country by American imperialism, which utilizes the petty-bourgeoisie and its influence upon the minds of many of the workers, has, to a certain extent, led to an isolation of the Finnish as well as other foreign-born workers from the class struggle of the American workers. American imperialism uses this artificial separation of the workers into groups to further split them from each other by spreading its vicious doctrines of race and national prejudices and by playing the Negro and foreign-born and American white workers all against each other.



At the time of my white chauvinistic statements, I was under the influence of these anti-Communist and anti-proletarian ideas that are foisted upon us by the ruling bourgeoisie. But I do not wish to bring out these facts as an excuse for my conduct. As a member of the Communist Party I should have been a staunch supporter of the line of the Party, which at all times and everywhere fights resolutely against all forms of bourgeois race and national prejudices among the workers and against all oppression. I recognize, also, that my attitude only served to give aid and comfort to all the agencies of the ruling class, such as the Fish Committee, etc., who are now engaged in launching a vicious attack particularly against the foreign-born working class generally and against the working class as a whole.

I recognize that the vicious oppression of the Negroes on the part of the American imperialists, and the fostering of the doctrines of race hatred against Negroes among the white workers by the agents of the imperialists in order to support that oppression, strengthens the whole capitalist system of oppression and enslavement. Therefore, the struggle of the Negroes for freedom is not the struggle of the Negroes alone, but of the entire working class. The white workers must be in the forefront in the struggle of the workers against all oppression in America.

I realize that my statements, directed against Negroes, were anti-working class in their content. I refute and condemn my previous attitude, but at the same time I realize that it is not enough to merely state my complete break from my former attitude, but I want to prove in action that I no more have the slightest white chauvinistic tendencies. I ask this workers' court not to deprive me of the opportunity to further carry on my activity for the Communist Party and for the working class. I pledge myself to fight unflinchingly against all tendencies of white chauvinism among the workers, to fight for the social, political and economic equality of the Negroes and for the solidarity of the working class as a whole.



## Summary of Richard B. Moore

### FOR THE DEFENSE.

**C**OMRADES, I wish briefly to summarize the reasons why this workers' court should not pass the full sentence upon Comrade Yokinen. I point again to all the various forces which I have already enumerated, vile and powerful, the pressure of the capitalist, chauvinist propaganda through church, press and school; the segregation and narrow bourgeois nationalism fostered by the bosses among the foreign-born workers; the opportunism spread by the corrupt and treacherous labor fakers within the ranks of the working class; the pressure of the petty-bourgeois, middle-class opportunism; the lack of education to clarify the workers upon the question of white chauvinism and the necessity of struggling in defense of the rights of the Negroes.

All of these facts are sufficient reason for clemency, working class clemency for a worker who is honest enough to admit his crime and who declares himself ready and willing to take his part in the struggle against white chauvinism, against the capitalist system. Therefore, I again say we must not destroy Comrade Yokinen, we must save him for the movement; I say that he must be given a period of probation, and though he must forfeit his right to remain within the ranks of the Communist Party at this moment, I say that working class justice demands that Comrade Yokinen be given an opportunity to prove in deeds that he fights for the rights of the Negroes. Then he must be admitted once more into the vanguard of the working class. I say that the great criminal in this whole crime of chauvinist prejudice against the Negro masses is not Comrade Yokinen, but it is the damnable, capitalist system which we must



mobilize the workers to crush and destroy and upon its ruins, build the Communist society, where all will at last be equal.

Fellow workers, let us save this fellow worker and let us criticize ourselves and overcome our shortcomings in order to mobilize the workers. Let us unite the Negro and white workers in solidarity, through struggle, for the victory over capitalism and the establishment in this country of a Soviet Republic, a workers' and farmers' government. (*Applause.*)



## Summary of C. A. Hathaway FOR THE PROSECUTION.

**T**HE attorney for Comrade Yokinen, Comrade Moore, and Yokinen in his own statement, admits the guilt of Comrade Yokinen on all of the charges made against him. They admit, that at a time when it was necessary to make the sharpest struggle against chauvinist tendencies in the Finnish Workers Club, Comrade Yokinen did not take those actions. They admit that Comrade Yokinen's actions were unbecoming a member of the Communist Party.

At the same time, they make their plea for the clemency of the court. It is my opinion, comrades, that it would be a mistake in this case if such clemency were granted.

You have to bear in mind that the Communist Party is not merely an organization of workers; it is the organization of the advance-guard of the working class. The Communist Party has the task of organizing and leading the working class as a whole in a revolutionary struggle against American capitalism. And it has to lead this struggle under the most trying circumstances, and will have to meet the greatest obstacles before we reach our goal—the overthrow of the American capitalist system and the establishment here of a government of workers. This is by no means an easy task. It is going to require men with iron determination to carry through this task. And, comrades, for that reason we cannot have inside of such an organization elements that are wobbly, that are not ready to take a decisive stand on this question of white chauvinism.

On this issue of white chauvinism depends the whole question of our ability to organize Negro and white workers in common struggle. Just as soon as we bring a Negro worker into our Party or into any of the mass organiza-



tions around our Party and this Negro worker meets the slightest indication of a chauvinist attitude, he becomes more convinced than ever that his mistrust of the whites is justified. For that reason, comrades, our Party must be kept clear of white chauvinist tendencies. We must retain in our Party only those elements who are ready to stand four square on this issue. To take any other stand, comrades, would mean our defeat by the capitalists. And not only would it mean the defeat of the Communist Party. It would mean the defeat of both the Negro and white working class as whole. Victory against the powerful American capitalist class can only be won by complete unity, by the unflinching solidarity in action of the white and colored workers.

Comrade Moore, in making his plea for clemency refers to the trial of the members of the Industrial Party recently held in Moscow. There, comrades, the sentences were commuted after the defendants had been found guilty of sabotage and counter-revolutionary activities. The judges in the court found these men guilty and sentenced them to death. The Executive Committee of the Soviet Government commuted the sentence the following day to terms ranging up to ten years imprisonment.

But, comrades, there is a difference. These people were not given their liberty. But most important, they were not members of the Communist Party. They were sentenced to a term of imprisonment with the provision that during their term of imprisonment, and under the strict control of the G. P. U. (A special governmental department uncovering counter-revolutionary and sabotage activities against the workers' government), they were to continue their scientific work in the interests of the proletarian dictatorship. This was not a case of giving these men their freedom; and especially it was not a case of permitting dangerous persons to remain in the Communist Party.

In this case we are dealing with a comrade, with a member of the Communist Party, who asks clemency on the grounds that he now recognizes his mistake. We have



to bear in mind that if, at this trial, clemency were shown, and the sentence commuted, as Comrade Moore requests, it would be an extremely dangerous precedent; it would make it easy for many comrades to avoid expulsion for extremely serious crimes merely by pleading guilty in words.

You cannot compare in any sense this case with that of the leaders of the Industrial Party. If you must draw a comparison, comrades, draw the comparison of Comrade Yokinen and Ryazanoff. Ryazanoff was a member of the Communist Party for a number of years, and he was not granted clemency, he was unconditionally expelled from the Party.

Even here, in this hall, we are faced with the fact that some comrades thought this trial was specially staged, that it did not mean a thing. This is now the attitude of some workers here. And I say, comrades, that if the workers' jury were to grant clemency to Comrade Yokinen many workers would not be impressed, either with the seriousness of the charge of white chauvinism, nor with the determination of the Communist Party to burn it out of its ranks.

Yes, comrades, we want to save Comrade Yokinen for the revolutionary working class movement. We greet his acknowledgement that he was wrong. But before we accept his promise, we want to see *in practice* that Comrade Yokinen has changed. Comrade Lenin once said that he who believes in words alone is a fool. Comrade Yokinen, therefore, to regain the confidence of the Party, to regain the right to readmission in the Party, must first carry out in practice, *in the sharpest struggles*, the promises which he has made in his statement. We believe Comrade Yokinen will follow this course.

My proposal is that the jury find Yokinen guilty on the basis of this testimony, and that he be expelled from the Party.

The statement that he has given is the basis for expecting from him even more work than I previously suggested. We must see him go out in Harlem and there



take actual leadership in the development of the struggle against white chauvinism, and to unite the Negro and white workers in a common struggle against capitalism.

The mistakes that were pointed out in the work of the Communist Party undoubtedly are partially true. Comrade Moore argues that there are dozens of workers in the Party who have tendencies similar to that of Comrade Yokinen. This is a truth which is recognized by the Central and District Committees. I want to say for the Party, though, that in organizing and carrying through this trial we are beginning the sharpest and most ruthless struggle against white chauvinism in the Party. This fight will not be stopped until chauvinism is uprooted. The Party is determined, beginning with Yokinen's case to wipe out every remnant of white chauvinism and lay the basis within the Party for the wide recruiting of the most conscious and most determined Negro workers to fight alongside of the most conscious and determined white workers in the common struggle to organize the working class under the leadership and revolutionary program of the Communist Party. Our Party only then can prepare itself to carry through the proletarian revolution in the United States which alone will free all toilers.

Decision in this case will help the Party in cleaning its own ranks, in preparing itself to do still more effective work in every phase of the class struggle in the future than in the past. This must be borne in mind by the workers' jury.

When Comrade Yokinen, as a member of the Finnish Workers Club, working inside to overcome the white chauvinist tendencies there, carries out the Party decisions in practice and demonstrates conclusively his qualifications for Party membership, we will again consider the question of Comrade Yokinen's re-admittance to the Party.

We say to the workers' jury: recommend expulsion from the Party! Only on the basis of his future work for Negro and white unity in the revolutionary struggle for freedom, can we consider the question of clemency.



## Report of Jury

*(Report of Comrade Mitchell)*

THE jurymen of 14 workers, after listening to the arguments of the prosecution and to the arguments of the defense, concluded that Comrade Yokinen is guilty of white chauvinism. A vote was taken in the jury and there was a disagreement as to the punishment. All fourteen voted for expulsion from the Communist Party. However, there was a disagreement as to how much time must elapse before Comrade Yokinen can apply for re-admission to the Party after he has proven through his activities and persistent struggle, a complete correction of his mistakes. Eleven voted for six months, three voted for twelve months.

The final decision of the jury is:

1. That Yokinen be immediately expelled from membership in the Communist Party.
2. That after his expulsion he is to perform the following tasks:
  - (a) that Comrade Yokinen shall go back to the Finnish Workers Club and call a mass meeting as soon as possible. At this meeting he is to make a report on the trial in such a manner as to make this meeting the opening of the fight to destroy any chauvinist tendencies that may still exist there;
  - (b) that Comrade Yokinen is to carry on a persistent struggle in the Finnish Workers Club to admit all Negro workers there with all the privileges now accorded to white workers;
  - (c) that Yokinen actively participate in the struggle against white chauvinism throughout Harlem;
  - (d) that Yokinen joins the League of Struggle for Ne-



gro Rights and sells an adequate number of the *Liberators* every month;

- (e) that he must put himself at the head of the struggle against white chauvinism in all of the organizations that he is a member of, and engage in the struggle.

In making these decisions we also took cognizance of the fact that Comrade Yokinen is not alone in the labor movement and even in the Communist Party who harbors white chauvinist tendencies at the present time. Therefore we urge that the Communist Party carry on an even more relentless struggle against all manifestations of white chauvinism in the ranks of the Party, the unions and the working class.

On the question of Comrade Yokinen's admittance back into the Party we have decided that Yokinen must prove conclusively by his every-day actions that he is carrying on the fight against white chauvinist tendencies in all of the clubs and organizations of which he is a member. After such consistent work, and when he has sufficiently proven to the Party that he is carrying through this work, he may apply for re-admittance to the Party.

We, as a workers' jury, were not instructed what to do and say. We listened and found that in the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, the general staff of the working class in this country which is leading the workers' struggle against capitalism, it is imperative that all chauvinist tendencies be eliminated, that the Negro and white workers be united. On this basis we arrived at our decision.

We move that the decision of the jury be unanimously accepted by this meeting.

---

Comrade Wagenknecht then put the verdict to a vote and it was unanimously adopted. The trial closed with the singing of the *International*.



*For Better Understanding of the  
Class Struggle You Must*

**READ**

Why Every Worker Should Join the Communist Party .....	.05
Out of a Job, <i>by Earl Browder</i> .....	.05
Another War Coming .....	.05
Lynch Justice at Work, <i>by B. D. Amis</i> .....	.05
American Working Women in the Class Struggle .....	.05
Work or Wages, <i>by G. M. Burnham</i> .....	.10
Fight Against Hunger .....	.05
Speeding Up the Workers, <i>by James Barnett</i> .....	.10
Social Insurance, <i>by G. M. Burnham</i> .....	.10
Yankee Colonies, <i>by Harry Gannes</i> .....	.10
The Frame-Up System, <i>by V. Smith</i> .....	.10

*Mail Your Orders to:*

**WORKERS LIBRARY PUBLISHERS**

P. O. Box 148, Sta. D, New York, N. Y.