

The Capitalists Want to Kill Foster! Workers! We Must Defend Our Leader!

By JOHN PEPPER

A small group of gunmen burst into the Carmen's Auditorium in Chicago and fired three shots at William Z. Foster. He was speaking to thousands of members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union who had gathered to protest against the splitting tactics of the reactionary union officials in expelling from the union seven members of the Trade Union Educational League.

The capitalist government not long ago conducted a trial against Foster, accusing him of advocating force and violence. The official labor leaders, from Gompers to Keating, have a thousand times denounced him as an advocate of force and violence. Johnston and Keating at the Cleveland Conference, Gompers at the Convention of the Cap Makers, Rodriguez in the July 3rd Convention in Chicago—all of them did nothing but repeat the speech of the prosecuting attorney in St. Joseph, Mich., against Foster and the other Communists, about the advocacy of force and violence. It was this systematic baiting against Foster which provoked the cowardly gunmen to the attack on Foster. Foster has used only three weapons against the capitalists and reactionary labor leaders—agitation,

propaganda and organization. The answer of the capitalists and reactionary labor leaders is—real force and violence: three gunmen and three shots.

We do not know as yet who hired the gunmen. We do not know as yet the role played by the capitalist groups, the Department of Justice and reactionary labor leaders in this dastardly crime.

But we do know the motives behind this attempt on Foster's life.

The three shots are but the reply of the capitalists and the reactionary labor leaders to Foster's revolutionary activity in the interest of the working class.

The three shots are but the reply to the progress made by the Trade Union Educational League and the amalgamation movement, which aim to transform the trade unions into a real power against the capitalists.

The three shots are but a reply to the big rank and file conference of the railroad workers in Chicago, which took up the fight to save the railroad unions from a repetition of the disastrous defeat of the summer of 1922.

The three shots are but a reply to the National Conference of Progressive Miners, at Pittsburgh, which took up the fight against the united

reactionary forces of Lewis and Farrington.

The three shots are but a reply to Foster's speech of defense at the St. Joseph trial, where, as a Communist, he proclaimed the fight against the whole capitalist system.

And first and foremost, the three shots are the reply to the July 3rd Convention of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, where Foster was one of the leaders who helped to forge

the mighty weapon of a Labor Party and place it in the hands of the working class. It is not a mere accident, but rather symbolic, that this attempt against Foster's life was made in the same Carmen's Auditorium where the July 3rd Convention was held.

The duty of the workers is to defend Foster, to defend the most outstanding figure, the most prominent militant leader of the American

laboring masses. The workers must realize that after the capitalists failed to put Foster into the penitentiary for ten years, they are now seeking to kill him, not as an individual, but as the most forceful advocate of the cause of the working class. And the reactionary labor leaders help to create the necessary atmosphere.

It is the duty of the workers to defend Foster because it is their duty to defend themselves.

How can and how must the workers defend Foster, our leader, and thereby also the cause of the revolution and the interests of every honest worker?

The answer of the workers to the three shots should be—a three hundred-fold amalgamation movement.

The answer of the workers to the three shots shall be—a three-fold energetic fight against the reactionary leaders of the railroad unions and of the United Mine Workers and Ladies' Garment Workers.

The answer of the workers to the capitalist press which, with its slanders helped in the Foster-baiting shall be—a mighty English-Language Communist daily for telling the truth and unmasking the kept press of capitalism.

The capitalists seek to kill Foster because he is a Communist. The answer shall be—tripling the membership of the Party of the Communists, the Workers Party.

The capitalists want to kill Foster because they fear the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. The answer of the labor movement shall be—the broadening and deepening of the Labor Party on a national scale as well as in the cities and states. It is the duty of every Communist and every militant worker to alarm the whole

labor movement immediately against the gunmen tactics of the capitalists and against the red-chase of the reactionary labor leaders which makes possible such gunmen tactics. We must mobilize the labor movement in order to surround the body of our leader, Foster, the leader of the American revolution, with a coat of mail of love, admiration and solidarity!

IN EVERY BIG CITY AND INDUSTRIAL CENTER THE WORKERS SHALL CALL TOGETHER BIG PROTEST MASS MEETINGS AGAINST THE DESPICABLE MURDERERS!

EVERY TRADE UNION AND LABOR ORGANIZATION MUST IMMEDIATELY PASS RESOLUTIONS OF PROTEST AGAINST THE HIRED ASSASSINS AND AGAINST THE FOSTER-BAITING BY THE REACTIONARY LABOR LEADERS!

THE CAPITALISTS WANT TO KILL FOSTER! THE ANSWER OF THE WORKERS SHALL BE THE STORMY, UNANIMOUS CRY: WE WILL DEFEND OUR LEADER!

The Last Weapon of Reaction

