

Leibowitz Exploits Scottsboro Record To Put Over McKee

Seeks to Betray Negro Masses By Talk Of "My Fight"

By CYRIL BRIGGS

NEW YORK.—Samuel Leibowitz, shamelessly exploiting his record as an attorney in the Scottsboro Case, was the main spell-binder at a McKee election rally in Harlem Wednesday night, which sought to exploit the anger of the Negro masses against the hunger and jim-crow relief system of Tammany into support for the McKee wing of Tammany Hall.

Working on their sympathies for the Scottsboro boys, and covering up the leadership of the International Labor Defense in the fight to save the boys, Leibowitz appealed to the audience to show its gratitude to himself by voting for his friend, McKee.

"I am for Joseph McKee, and if you want to make me happy, if you feel I have fought for the down-trodden, the low and the helpless, then vote for Joseph McKee. When I go back down South in a few weeks I want to take one memory with me—a straight vote by Harlem for the Recovery ticket."

This appeal for gratitude by a man never before connected with the liberation struggles of the Negro People, and entering the Scottsboro case only after it afforded him the opportunity for wide publicity as a result of the more than two years' struggle for the boys of millions of Negro and white workers under the leadership of the I. L. D., backed by the Communist Party, was accompanied by a deliberate attempt to sow illusions among the masses of faith in the capitalist lynch courts, and in Leibowitz's abilities as an individual.

He all but called for an abandonment of the mass defense campaign which alone has saved the boys so far, four times wresting them from the hands of the executioners.

"I am returning to the South in a few weeks," he declared. "Before the end of this month I will bring the Scottsboro boys back to Harlem with me."

He took complete credit for himself for the partial victories won by the I. L. D. and the mass defense in forcing several Southern states to abandon their policy of excluding Negroes from petit and grand juries. He gave as the reason for this change in the legal system of the South, "the fight we put up at Scottsboro," but

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never once mentioned the I. L. D., which from the very first had militantly raised the challenge to the vicious practices of the Southern lynch courts of depriving Negroes of their constitutional rights, of barring Negroes from juries, of using all-white juries to railroad innocent Negroes to the electric chair.

He declared with a fine show of emotion that the Scottsboro boys had been in the shadow of the electric chair for almost three years. But where was Mr. Leibowitz during the first two years of this period of frightful torture and ordeal for the nine innocent lads, of heroic protest mass actions by Negro and white workers in Harlem and throughout the whole capitalist world, of mighty protests from the emancipated toilers of the Soviet Union? These questions he carefull avoided.

The meeting was held at the Junior High School, corner of 136th St. and St. Nicholas Ave., in an auditorium gaily bedecked with American flags and flaunting in the faces of the hungry masses such slogans as "Vote Every Key—This Will End Your Misery"; "McKee, the Taxpayers' Friend"—highly contradictory slogans aimed at deceiving the masses while openly promising further exemptions from taxes for McKee's landlord and banker supporters. Poster pictures of McKee flanked on either side a photograph of Roosevelt, President of the "New Deal" of wage cuts, inflation, rising costs of food and other necessities, wage differentials against Negroes and mass discharge of Negroes under the N. R. A. codes. A jazz band futilely tried to pep up enthusiasm for the "New Deal," but the crowd remained apathetic until Mr. Leibowitz's appearance.

Leibowitz was preceded and followed by a procession of white and Negro misleaders who demagogically played upon the misery of the Harlem masses and wildly handed out the usual campaign promises of the boss parties—promises which the Negro masses know from bitter experience will be forgotten the day after election. U. S. Poston, Negro reformist, introduced as a "publicity man in Harlem" for the Recovery Party, and one who "had unselfishly sacrificed his own personal interests" to aid the Recovery Party, struck the only note of realism, declaring in what he termed a practical approach to the election campaign, that La Guardia's election would result in the dispensing of patronage to the Republicans, and that with Republican control of the patronage of New York City, that party will be able to control the State Legislature, and within two years will be able to control the election of Congressmen.

The meeting was properly climaxed with the presence of Rev. J. Clayton Powell, Sr., and Rev. Powell, Jr., who a few weeks ago set Tammany cops on a meeting of Negro and white workers protesting the lynch-murder of James Matthews by Tammany officials and guards on Welfare Island. Rev. Powell, Jr., acted as chairman of the first half of the meeting, and was succeeded by Colonel William Haywood.

The crowd began to peter out shortly after McKee began to speak.