

Arsenals of  
'Democracy'



"LABOR WITH A WHITE SKIN CANNOT EMANCIPATE ITSELF WHERE LABOR WITH A BLACK SKIN IS BRANDED" - - Karl Marx

# LABOR ACTION

FEBRUARY 3, 1941

Organ of the Workers Party of the United States

THREE CENTS

## ARMY ORDERS 4,500,000 TAGS FOR U. S. WAR DEAD

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### CIO Workers March on Every Front

Rank and File Makes Demands on Corporations Swollen with War Profits

By JACK WILSON

CIO workers struck on every front this past week in a determined effort to resist the shifting of the war burden on their shoulders.

A wave of strikes temporary walkouts and general demands for higher wages and better working conditions reached a high point. In steel, auto, packinghouse, aircraft, rubber and other basic industries the CIO was on the march again.

Impatient with the dilatory tactics of SWOC officials, workers in the huge and powerful Bethlehem Steel Corp. went on spontaneous walk-outs last week.

Bethlehem is the open shop steel company which is glutted with a billion dollars in war orders, while it maintains the lowest wage standards and the louiest working conditions.

The mood of the Bethlehem workers is very significant. The rank and file is pressing the SWOC leadership to fight. It is restless and resentful. Bethlehem, a citadel of open shopism, is ready to be taken to town by the CIO.

The Allison-Chalmers workers in Milwaukee went on strike, officially called by the UAW-CIO.

Packinghouse workers in the meat packing areas are stirring and demanding CIO signed contracts with some improvements in their miserable existence. Demands of the U.S. Rubber Co. workers on a national scale brought signed contracts at its various plants again because of the unrest among the rubberworkers involved.

Want More Pay

Phillip Murray, chairman of the CIO and SWOC chief, announced that a demand for a general ten per cent wage increase would be given to the U.S. Steel Corp. employing 250,000 steel workers. For a long time considerable dissatisfaction has been evident among these workers because they felt the union should fight harder for some demands.

And the sentiment of the miners for more wages because of the squeeze of the rising cost of living, has led to reports that John L. Lewis is going to ask the mine owners for a two dollar a day raise in miners wages.

Negotiations between the Crucible Steel Co. and the SWOC are under way too, Crucible steel workers have

pulled many strikes in the last two years for better pay.

The spontaneous walk out at the Carnegie-Illinois \$70,000,000 plant at Irvin was ended only after strong insistence by Murray.

The Ryan aircraft victory, the drive at Douglas and Consolidated, the recent Vultee and Brewster strikes tells the story in aircraft.

Yes, the steel workers are finally stirring. And this despite the go easy, bureaucratic leadership of the SWOC which has kept an iron hand on the rank and file.

Of course, the CIO top leaders will compromise, and temporize, and retreat more and more in the future as the heat is turned on. But they have the powerful pressure of the rank and file on them. The spread of "unauthorized" walkouts is the best sign of this development.

The rapid drive of the Roosevelt regime towards all-out participation in war can only intensify the crisis in mass production industries between the bosses and the workers.

Despite the Churchills and Bevins, and war and bombings the English workers have gone on 184 strikes during the past year . . . despite a

slew of compulsory arbitration laws passed by the government.

American workers will do better. The economic impulsion of the phoney war boom makes this inevitable. And Roosevelt has less chance of smashing the labor movement in war-time than Churchill.

### Brewster Men Face Speed-Up

Special to Labor Action

LONG ISLAND CITY, Jan. 27—With a backlog of orders well over \$110,000,000, Brewster Aero. Corp. of Long Island City unexpectedly reduced the working hours of the men from 51 hours to 46 hours a week. The reduction in hours without an hourly wage increase will mean a day's loss of pay for the men every week.

This action comes two days after George Chapline, President of Brewster Aero. Corp. appeared before the Naval Affairs Committee of Congress and proudly announced "that Brewster is on a six-day shift and was noticeably increasing delivery of planes to the Government." He further boasted that since December 15, the men were turning out three planes a day and that in the last 30 days, sixty planes had been completed for delivery to Britain.

Many of the men are inclined to believe that the cutting of the hours may be a speed-up, for production has been increased in many departments.

The Brewster Aero. Union recently concluded an agreement with the Company which resulted in an average increase of \$3.36 a week. The loss of a day's pay plus the increased cost of living as a result of the war and the defense program, more than offsets the increase in wages. The men will make less now than they made before the new contract, unless the hourly rates are increased to make up for the loss of pay.

Unless the union prepares to carry on an aggressive campaign to obtain a substantial increase of the hourly rates during the reclassification period in April, the men will be pretty hard hit by the cut in wages.

### THAT'S GOLD IN THEM THAR WAR PREPARATIONS

Republic Steel, reporting on its war profits for the last year, listed a gain over the previous year of 100%. Profits for 1940 were \$21,113,507 as against \$10,671,343 for 1939.

Youngstown Sheet and Tube also reported doubled "earnings." In 1940, it sweated \$10,815,463 of profit out of its workers, as against the by-no-means paltry profit of five million some odd the preceding year.

The United States Army has ordered 4,500,000 tags to identify the war dead and wounded.

According to the best sources, these tags will not be leased or loaned or given to the British. They will be used by every fourth American boy who will be ploughed under or wounded in the boss war.

These four and a half million tags are a token of war entry soon to come. They mean the sacrifice of life or limb by an American youth. They also mean war dividends for some Wall Street coupon-clipper.

These coupon-clippers and business men, knowing that their bread is buttered on the side of military entry into the war, have affirmed their almost solid support of President Roosevelt's "lend-lease" war dictatorship bill.

Last week LABOR ACTION reported the plea made by Rockefeller spokesman, banker Winthrop Aldrich, to the Chase National Bank stockholders, urging overwhelming support of the bill.

Since then one banker after the other has come forward to champion the cause of war dictatorship and military entry.

James F. Warburg, a big Wall Street banker, spoke up for the bill and for the establishment of a "new social order." (You can be sure that he did not mean a "new social order" where there would be no bankers—and no human leeches of any kind.)

The very same day, Thomas W. Lamont, executive head of J. P. Morgan & Co., and behind-the-scenes man for Willkie in the November election campaign, urged speedy passage of the bill to ensure "national unity in support of the President." Lamont took the stump before his industrial and financial pals in order to demand greater war production and increased aid for Britain. Morgan-Lamont's man-Friday, Wendell Willkie, is now in London carrying out his bosses' (and Roosevelt's) mission.

Listen to Lamont: "It will mean long hours for everyone, heavier taxes for all who can pay them, and sacrifice for all in a thousand ways. Also, that Britain must be given material aid, 'be it lend, lease, or gift, or all three.'"

Kindhearted, Christian gentlemen—these bankers.

If you, John Worker, are willing to operate that lathe a few hours longer each day, even if it kills you, they are willing to match the sacrifice by giving up some hours of their rest to count the extra money they pull in.

If you, John Worker, are willing to kick in for the huge war expenditures through a multitude of indirect taxes which affect you most strongly, they are willing to skim a little of the cream off their intake to pay for their own (NOT OUR) war. After all, somebody has got to pay for those identification tags—and the bankers want to contribute their share.

End result: everybody sacrifices in a thousand different ways—except that we workers sacrifice in one way, by back-breaking toil and loss of life and liberty; and the bankers sacrifice in another way, by toting the burden of back-breaking money bags.

Just in case you doubt the severity of the bankers' "sacrifices", we want to tell you about how the Morgan-controlled United States Steel Corporation scraped the bottom with its bitter "sacrifices". The same day that Lamont spoke, U.S. Steel reported its net profits for the year 1940. These profits jumped over the previous year by a mere 148½%—and that AFTER payments on preferred stock and bonds, deductions on future pensions, etc., had been made. In the last quarter of the year (1940), net earnings were greater than at any period since the world war.

When we think of these people wearing their fingers to the bone clipping their stock coupons, and then hardly getting any sleep after spending a sacrificing-evening at some swank night

club, it almost makes us cry. And U.S. Steel isn't the only one suffering in the general sacrifice. The other large steel companies, Bethlehem, Republic, Jones and Laughlin—all of whom have had fat U.S. and British war contracts—they too "sacrificed" by doubling their earnings in 1940 after payment of taxes.

Now, we don't want to hear of any of you suspecting that these profits might have something to do with the "pay-triotism" of Morgan and Rockefeller, Lamont and Aldrich. The very thought! Why, Lamont went out of his way to assure us that "We want a free world, free enterprise, free speech, free religion—everything that America and England stand for, everything that Hitler is fighting against."

That's a member of the House of Morgan, an "economic royalist", a "money changer" (remember when Roosevelt called him that?) speaking. To get this "free world, free enterprise, free speech and free religion," banker Lamont proposes that his erstwhile "enemy," President Roosevelt, be given dictatorial powers. There must be a reason for it. And we more than suspect that this is the reason: Roosevelt is carrying out Wall Street's program. What could therefore be more natural than that Wall Street should want to give Roosevelt the powers he needs in order to do the job adequately.

Among some of the Wall Streeters there has developed a great fear, expressed by Lindbergh and by ex-Ambassador to England, Kennedy, namely, that under the impact of war oppression, the European masses might set about the business of building a really "free world" created in the image of the liberated working-class and not in the image of financial tyrants. Also the fear that some of the safe labor leaders of England might be forced to organize a socialist government in England. THE SPECTRE OF REVOLUTION HAUNTS THEM—BECAUSE, SOONER OR LATER, THEY KNOW IT MUST COME.

Lamont calmed their fears on one score: "When British labor leaders take charge and have the responsibility of government they become the most real of realists. This they have already proved" by their participation in the Churchill government. Bankers are smart men, and Lamont is one of the smartest of them all. To that extent he spoke the truth—the Labor Party leaders, men like Bevin and Morrison, are no threat to the capitalist system of boss-imperialism. As "His Majesty's Opposition," their job is to beguile the workers into supporting the war and the system which breeds war, to keep the class tempers of workers in check.

Yet, smart as Lamont is, he reckons without his REAL host. Sure, the labor leaders are "safe"; but what about the working class itself? There is the big question mark. And Kennedy, Lindbergh, Hoover and those other members of the ruling class who have opposed Roosevelt's foreign policy, are afraid of the answer.

Kennedy and Lindbergh made their views known openly. They are afraid that a crushing defeat of Hitler can only be accomplished by revolution in Germany and in the occupied territories, and that this would mean a worker's revolution which would put an end to capitalist exploitation and persecution for all time. Kennedy and Lindbergh stack up the possibilities one way (and they are right!); Lamont and Morgan stack them another way. In the showdown, however, both groups fear workers' revolution, "a new social order," more than they fear Hitler. With Hitler they are brothers under the skin; brothers who are not on very good terms; but brothers nevertheless. With the workers, they are as enemy against enemy—be it in Germany, England or America.

So it happens that a section of the ruling class opposes Roosevelt's foreign policy. Nevertheless, all of them, Lindbergh as much as Lamont, favor Roosevelt's policy of super-arming. (Continued on page 2)

### Note This Special Subscription Offer

In order that LABOR ACTION can be made available to more readers and in order to acquaint them with our press from week to week, we are offering a three month subscription for only twenty-five cents. This offer is good until March 1 ONLY. Take advantage of it at once and mail in the blank below.

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The AFL contract froze wages for two years but it is not improbable that the company might boost pay to hope to offset the CIO organization drive. Meanwhile, the small Solar Aircraft plant furnished a temporary set-back for the CIO when workers therein failed to vote for the CIO for bargaining rights. A company union took the most votes by a slim margin. However, the CIO expects to change this situation by an aggressive drive.

# Army Orders Identity Tags For War Dead

(Continued from page 1)

ments and militarism as the means by which Wall Street may win for itself world domination. Their differences are differences of method, not of principle. The dominant group in the ruling-class, the Morgan-Rockefeller interests, believe they can become the heirs of British imperialism by "all out", including military, aid to Britain. By doing that they hope to reduce the English plutocrats to the status of junior partners and at the same time block Hitler's expansion. To accomplish this end they care damn little how little "freedom" is preserved in this world, just so that the end is accomplished. That is Roosevelt's policy!

In order to carry out this policy, Roosevelt proposed the "lend-lease" bill. This "lend-lease" bill, coming after Roosevelt has already entered the war in most respects (by alliance, etc.) would give the President power to turn over to Britain, in any way he saw fit, any war materials on hand or in the process of production. More than that, the "lend-lease" bill would give the President (remember he is Wall Street's agent!) the power to get the country FULLY into war without even consulting Congress.

To get the bill passed, Roosevelt tried an old trick. You will remember that when Roosevelt wanted to get the conscription bill passed, he first proposed a staggering one including all men up to forty-five. When that had drawn out all the opposition, he made a magnanimous gesture and reduced the age limit to thirty-six.

He's trying the same stunt today with the dictatorship bill. As proposed, it is extremely vague, and deliberately omits a time limit. That draws out all the fire. That done you can be sure Roosevelt will nobly concede a time limitation of maybe two years. And a lot of people who were shocked by the bill (especially Congressmen who were "shocked" with an eye on their constituents) will settle back and enjoy their "victory." Victory indeed! Roosevelt wants the powers now, TODAY. Once the damage is done, a time-limit has little meaning.

Every worker must see how dangerous this bill is. It means military entry into the war without the asking of a by-your-leave. It means the utilization of those four-and-a-half million identification tags for yourselves, your sons, your brothers. (They weren't bought as museum pieces) It means a slap at the independence of your unions, your right to strike, your right to demand better wages, your freedom of speech, yes, and your freedom of religion too (if your religion stands in the way of your participation in the war.)

Speak up NOW, fellow-workers. It is NOT YET too late to act. There is still time for the unions of the nation, menaced by this bill, to send a delegation marching on Washington. It is not too late to shake the Congressmen out of their damnable intentions by the threat of organized action. Yes, ACTION does it. Make it known—loudly, very loudly so that there can be no mistaking it—that you millions of men and women organized in the union movement warn against passage of the bill.

And you, rank and file militant! Don't wait for your union leader to give you the lead. Many of the union leaders are too concerned with the promoting of the bosses' war plans. However well they may be championing your interests in other respects; in this respect they are violating their trust. MAKE THEM ACT by proposing action at your union meeting. Send letters of protest to your Congressmen. But, above all, swing your union—your weapon, your arm—into organized motion against the bill.

LET THE VOICE OF LABOR RING OUT. LET IT RING OUT SO LOUD AND SO CLEAR THAT IT WILL DROWN OUT THE PLEAS OF THE WAR-MONGERS AND "PAY-TRUSTS"—AND SO STRONG THAT IT WILL BLOCK THE PASSAGE OF THE WAR DICTATORSHIP BILL!

# Europe at War

SPAIN: Eggs are 12¢ each; a pound of beans costs \$60. There is no feed or fodder for chicken or cattle. Ration cards for the population provide minute quantities of olive oil, chick-peas, sugar, four ounces of meat every 3 or 4 weeks. There are no potatoes available, or milk.

Food from abroad can only be purchased on credit. The British Navy can stop it at any moment. Industry operates at less than half of its capacity—no fuel or raw materials are available.

Spaniards remind themselves of a famous 17 Century famine when "a lark could not fly across Castille without carrying its own provisions."

FRANCE: (Concentration Camps) "They will not fight any more; apathetic, they lie on their straw mattresses, often refusing food and waiting for the end." This camp at Gurs in the France of Pétain includes the entire former Jewish population of Baden (7,500) together with 3,000 men from St. Cyprien. There are 500 children and 1,200 people more than 70. A report of the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) describes "the most primitive conditions . . . lack of food . . . no medicine . . . unhygienic . . . 15 to 25 dead each day . . . heart disease . . . typhoid . . . cold is felt strongly . . ."

## LABOR ACTION

Official Organ of Workers Parties

Published weekly by the Labor Action Publishing Company

Vol. 5, No. 5 FEBRUARY 3, 1941  
114 WEST 14th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y.  
(3rd Floor)

Editor: JOSEPH CARTER  
Managing Editor: EMANUEL GARRETT  
Business Manager: JOHN BILLINGS  
Subscription Rate: \$1.50 per year,  
\$1.00 six months  
(\$2.00 per year or \$1.50 six months for  
Canada and Foreign)

Re-entered as second class matter May 24, 1940,  
at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the  
Act of March 3, 1879.

## FROM OUR WEST COAST CORRESPONDENT

# On Freedom of the Press and Movies

William Randolph Hearst and the freedom of the press are two things that don't go together. Labor hates Hearst for obvious and well-known reasons: His anti-unionism, his red-baiting, his race prejudices, his corruption and senility.

Currently, the Lord of San Simeon, that fabulous million acre estate, is engaged in a dirty job of browbeating the press and blackmailing Hollywood.

His power is still sufficient to put an almost nation-wide ban on a sensational news story about the movie produced by Orson Welles, America's bogey-man. Mr. Welles had the temerity to produce and portray, "Citizen Kane."

The New York Times, the New York Sun, Time magazine are thus far the only publications that have dared to print at least part of the story around this forthcoming movie, Hedda Hopper, a Hollywood movie columnist who is a rival of Hearst's columnist, Louella Parsons, also discreetly said a little about the situation.

Welles wrote and acted in this movie which does a very good job of exposing the role of the Hearst press in America. It shows how the Hearst war-mongering created the hysteria for the Spanish-American war. It reveals the story of Hearst's corruption of the press, and of the movies insofar as he is responsible.

This movie is almost as sensational as Welles' notorious "Invasion from Mars" radio broadcast, and more powerful. It strikes a blow at the propaganda for war, at the role of the venile capitalist press. It's social dynamite.

### Plain and Fancy Blackmail

Such is the power of Hearst that when the Madame Parsons demanded a special private preview of "Citizen Kane," it was granted. Now Welles

claims—and perhaps somewhere man exists who will believe—that his story of a putrid publisher was not intended to portray Hearst. He neatly has placed Hearst in the position of "If the shoe fits, wear it." The shoe fits.

How powerful capitalist interests influence Hollywood movies, and therefore the ideas of movie-going people, is revealed in the events subsequent to the Parsons-Hearst complaint against "Citizen Kane."

RKO top officials were directly contacted. As a hint of days to come, all RKO-pictures either got poor reviews or were not mentioned at all. RKO publicity didn't get a break, Parsons demanded that the picture be suppressed. International News Service, the wire association controlled by Hearst, was used as a club against RKO. Out of deference for a friend, the United Press and the Associated Press, thus far have ignored this story. Freedom of the press means the freedom to suppress stories that might educate the people; according to the big wire service standards.

But Hearst's stooges didn't stop at just merely that. An ace scandal monger, Adela Rogers St. John, well-known to Hearst paper and Liberty magazine readers, was dispatched to Hollywood. Her job was simple. "Get the lowdown on Orson Welles and Dolores Del Rio." Perhaps Welles could be blackmailed into withdrawing his movies.

Special investigators are snooping around Hollywood to get a basis for a sensational "anti-refugee" story. Some European actors are employed here, refugees from Hitler's terror. Many of them are Jews. They constitute a very small proportion of the people employed here. Hearst has threatened to start a wave of anti-semitism around this issue, unless the Welles movie is

buried. Of course, he won't dare attack the British colony here, who function solely as propaganda agents of Churchill. Roosevelt will stop that monkey business. Just the more helpless Jewish refugees.

### People in Glass Houses

Al Capone never went at a job more thoroughly than Hearst is doing. Other reporters are digging up all the files on the private lives of RKO officials and stars, and all people connected with the Welles production. And there'll be plenty of basis for blackmail, of course.

But this is very touchy ground for Hearst, and Madame Parsons. People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Douglas W. Churchill, of the New York Times, once wrote a very interesting chapter in the book, "We Saw It Happen." It describes how Parsons forces contributions as "Christmas presents" from movie stars or else they are crucified in the entire Hearst press. And the presents aren't small change, either. Hearst's Marion Davies can't be equated with Dolores Del Rio.

American newspapers are on the spot. Hollywood is on the spot. Hearst's actions once again demonstrate what a jousy and corrupt press exists in America. If RKO releases "Citizen Kane," Hearst will dig up a lot of mud, and Hollywood goes down another notch, if that is possible. If RKO changes or suppresses the picture, it simply shows how lousy and influenced Hollywood is by powerful capitalist interests.

When thieves fall out, an honest man has a chance. Perhaps the people will learn something valuable from the sensational news about to break. Or from the possible suppression of the whole affair.

# England at War A Series of Articles by Dwight Macdonald

## 4: Is Wartime England Totalitarian?

England has been at war a year and a half. Since the blitzkrieg of last May, the British Government has had, in form at least, totalitarian controls over the economy and the masses. But to what extent have these forms materialized in practice? In my last article I showed that England's war economy is not yet totalitarian by a long shot. This time I propose to look into the matters of strikes and civil liberties.

This week's papers report the suppression of the Daily Worker and Bevin's plans to finally put into effect the powers to conscript labor which he has had since May 20. It looks as though the Labor-Churchill government is going to try to restrict the liberties still held by the masses. Next week I shall discuss this turn. This week let us see what measure of liberty the British masses have so far retained in 17 months of war. The British wartime social system, like the British war economy, is a ramshackle structure, a matter of compromise and confusion. The British bourgeoisie is so weak and decadent, British capitalism is so obsolete from historical viewpoint and the British workingclass movement is relatively so strong that, even with the willing help of the labor bureaucracy, the ruling class is unable to go beyond a certain point in regimenting and rationing the masses for the war effort. Churchill and Beaverbrook, Bevin and Citrine—these gentlemen advance in one sector, retreat in another, reach a stalemate in a third. This makes a very complicated and contradictory general picture: strikes are outlawed—and take place; a sales tax is imposed—and also a 100% excess profits tax; the masses are rationed while the rich can gorge in unrationed restaurants—yet there has been a general rise in social benefits. Looking at one set of factors, the liberals conclude England is more democratic and progressive than ever. Looking at another, many on the left conclude that England is already a quasi-fascist state. The actuality seems to be more complex than either of these views. Let us see.

### Civil Liberties

The most striking evidence of the as-yet non-totalitarian nature of British wartime society is the remarkable way that civil liberties have been preserved. There seems to be little more political censorship of the press in England today than there is over here. The suppression last week of the Daily Worker is the first instance, to my knowledge, of suppression of a left-wing paper. The left Labor Party organ, The Tribune, the Independent Labor Party's New Leader, the Anarchist's War Commentary, all of these and many other leftwing papers continue to appear regularly. There is likewise great freedom of assembly: Communist speakers still are not barred in Hyde Park; on January 12 last the Stalinists organized a "people's convention" of 2,200 in London, calling for freedom to India, a "people's government" and a "people's peace", at which, according to the N.Y. Times, "there was not a single policeman in sight and no disturbance of any kind". Debate in Parliament is also unrestricted: Labor and I.L.P. members have been able to force the Government to withdraw such steps as Minister of Information Duff Cooper's plan for extending the censorship of the press to political matters and Home Minister Anderson's proposal to set up in "war zones" special one-man courts with death powers and no right of appeal. Finally, the treatment of conscientious objectors—of whom there have been

tens of thousands—seems to have been, on the whole, remarkably humane and intelligent.

There are good reasons for all this, of course, which have nothing to do with Mr. Churchill's burning love for democracy (a love discovered only since Hitler opened war on the British Empire). One is that none of the left-wing parties, in England today—including the Stalinists under that head for simplicity's sake—are strong enough to be dangerous. Another is the pressure exerted by the rank and file of the workingclass, a pressure which cannot be disregarded by the Labor members of the Government. And finally there is the historical tradition of civil liberty in England, which is far more developed than in any other leading nation, including this country.

### Social Security

Since the Labor Party entered the Government, there have been increases in various social benefits. The unemployment dole has been increased from 26 to 30 shillings a week for married couples; the scope of unemployment insurance has been extended to take in an additional 500,000 workers; the scale of compensation for civilians killed or wounded by "enemy action" has been increased; old age pensions have been raised from ten shillings to one pound weekly; there has been an increase in the weekly allowances of wives and families of men in the armed forces.

Three things must be said about this list: (1) the original levels of most of these social benefits were very low, and the additions are quite small; (2) these gains are of minor importance compared to the general decline in living standards forced on the workers by the war effort (of this, more in my next article); (3) these gains are an index not to the democratic idealism of the Tories (or the Labor Party leaders!) but to the weakness of the ruling class on the one hand, and the strength of the workingclass on the other. This leads us to the matter of —

### Strikes

Among the "emergency powers" granted by parliament to the Tory-Labor government last May was the right to forbid strikes and lockouts. As Minister of Labor, Bevin clearly has this power in form. In practice, however, being an experienced and shrewd trade unionist, he has wisely followed a policy of talking tough—and doing very little to back up his threats. Thus on June 7, the N.Y. Times reported: "Mr. Bevin outlawed strikes and lockouts by making acceptance of arbitration decrees mandatory in all labor disputes." This would seem conclusive enough: no more strikes! Yet on July 13 we find the N.Y. Post printing a dispatch headed: "BRITISH BAN STRIKES—Decree authorizes Bevin to Act". This story merely repeats the June 7 Times story about compulsory arbitration; the only difference is that this time the government has issued a special "order-in-council" on the matter.

The British workingclass is notoriously law-abiding and orderly. Since last May there have been no strikes in England. But there have been a great many "work holidays"—and it would take a very clever lawyer, with lots of time on his hands, to distinguish a "work holiday" from a "strike". A few of these strikes have been reported, in small news items, in the American press. For news of most of them you must go to the files of British left-wing papers like the London New Leader

(a really excellent job, by the way). Many if not most of the strikes have been led by "shop stewards", elected by the rank-and-file workers in a plant to carry on the struggle against the employers which the regular trade union officials, tied to a policy of "industrial peace" during the war, have abandoned. (In a later article, I shall go more fully into this shop steward movement, at present the most significant expression of the class struggle in England.)

Let me set down a few notes on recent strikes, to give an idea of their scope and nature:

Oct. 10: 250 men at a Coventry aircraft plant have been on a "work holiday" for a week. Cause: the firing of a shop steward.

Nov. 23: 200 men have been out at Govans on the Clydebank for six weeks over the firing of a shop steward. The Clyde Shop Stewards Council is to meet on the issue and may merge it into the larger issue of the refusal of the Clyde employers to grant a wage increase.

Nov. 28: The National Committee of the powerful Amalgamated Engineering Union meets to consider calling a strike of 1,500,000 construction workers. Issue: wage increase. Strike motion finally lost, by 25 to 11 votes.

Dec. 22: An "unofficial" strike begins, involving 5,000 tailors working on army uniforms. Issue: refusal of management to fire a tailor who had violated union rules. Strike threatened to spread to other shops and to assume "serious proportions". Finally called off, after a week, through intervention by the national union officials.

Dec. 28: Scottish miners, despite pleas of government to take only one day Christmas holiday, decided to take the usual two days off. Glasgow transport workers vote overwhelmingly to stop work and seek shelter during air raids.

Jan. 11: Railway workers at the East End docks in London go back to work after successful strike. Issue: extra rates of pay for carrying out "highly dangerous" fire-watching duties.

Thus the anti-strike decrees have remained as much of a dead letter as the rest of the "totalitarian" powers granted the government last May. This is not because of any shrinking on Bevin's part from outlawing strikes, of course, but simply because it is politically impossible for him, with the best will in the world, to enforce such measures in the face of serious opposition from the British workers. (Hillman over here is in much the same position.) This is not to say that Bevin, by a combination of force and persuasion, has not in many instances succeeded in stifling incipient strikes. He has—just as Hillman and the top CIO-AFL bureaucracy have over here. But the process is much more difficult and complicated, the results not nearly so certain as in a real totalitarian regime such as Germany has.

When, as was the case recently in a Dundee engineering works, a strike

## City Dodges Responsibility in Barring Relief Clients from Housing Project

CHICAGO—The City of Chicago has done a neat job of trying to evade responsibility for the fact that relief clients are not able to live in the new Ida B. Wells federal low rent housing project, situated in the heart of Chicago's Negro neighborhood.

Corporation Counsel Barnett Hodges recently handed down a decision stating that "relief clients are not to be discriminated against in apply-

# In These United States of America

(Continued from page 3)

The Department of Health carries out a deliberate policy of discrimination and segregation which affects Negro physicians, nurses and patients. The suppressed report of the Mayor's Commission states that: "The present problem of Negro health in the Harlem community is epitomized in the situation which has been found in Harlem Hospital. This is not only because it is the only municipal hospital in the area, but more especially because of its practices and policies in regard to Negro physicians, nurses and patients. . . . With a bed capacity of 325, it was not an unusual occurrence for the hospital to accommodate as many as 450 patients . . . .

As a result of this terrific overcrowding, patients were forced to give up their beds periodically; cots were placed in the hallways; couches were squeezed between beds; stretchers were used as beds; and some patients were forced to sleep on chairs. In other respects the inadequate facilities and the old and worn-out equipment of the hospital makes for an unbelievable situation in a civilized community."

Negro physicians had to carry out a long and bitter struggle to be allowed to practice at Harlem Hospital. "But this so-called partial victory, instead of opening the way for the appointment of Negro physicians and internes in the municipal hospitals, has turned out to be a policy of systematic racial discrimination with all its attendant evils." 21 of 26 city hospitals have no Negro doctors or nurses at all.

### Situation Indescribable

Added to the problem of unemployment is the serious housing situation. It is generally conceded that Harlem's houses are the worst in the city. Here, Negroes are forced to pay exorbitant rents in houses which would be condemned in any other section of the city.

More than 85% of the houses in Harlem are over 35 years old; 12% of the houses are without heat; 15% lack hot water; 30% have no bathing facilities; and 31% have toilets in the hallways.

It is estimated that Harlem families pay as high as 50 to 70 per cent of their income for rent as against 20-25 per cent paid by white families for better apartments. This, of course, makes it almost impossible for most families to make ends meet and forces every member of the family to find work to meet their living expenses. As a result there are almost twice as many Negro women on the job market as there are white women.

The policy of Jim Crow housing is very profitable for the landlords. By creating a monopoly on houses where Negroes may live, they are able to impose maximum rents which are far in excess of values obtainable in other sections of the city.

### Time to Do Something About It

The discriminatory practices against Negro children in the schools has long been a scandal in Harlem. The Harlem schools are undoubtedly the most overcrowded and the poorest in physical equipment. In addition the not too subtle zoning regulations adopted by the Board of Education further discriminates against Negro children by shunting them into old, dilapidated buildings, commercial training on the ground that it would be and by discouraging pupils from taking academic or difficult for them to obtain employment in these fields.

Yet the "progressive" Mayor or Governor of New York have never taken any steps to remedy the situation.

It is now clearly up to the people of Harlem to take matters into their own hands. They can no longer depend on "good-will" speeches to get them lower rents or better hospitals. If they are to get anything at all, it will be as a result of their own activity. They must demand adequate low-cost housing projects in Harlem to replace the run-down tenements which are not only a violation of the building laws, but fire and health hazards which menace the lives of the occupants. They must demand and secure the right to live anywhere in New York without discrimination so that they are not at the mercy of the landlords who impose inflated rents for an artificial scarcity in houses which they find profitable to maintain. The must, in general, stand up and demand the elimination of all those evils which blight the life of the Harlem Negro.

# HOLLYWOOD

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—Most movie fans who saw the recent Jack Benny-Fred Allen picture, "Love Thy Neighbor" went away agreed on one thing: Rochester is an excellent comedian.

And those lucky people who heard Paul Robeson sing and watched him act in the revival of "Black Diamonds," certainly wished they could see more movies featuring this great artist.

These pictures are exceptional. Usually a Negro actor, confined to playing the role of a servant or African savage, is given a moment or two in which to display his talents. In these two pictures Hollywood went so far as to give them three moments, but no more.

For Hollywood maintains a vicious, caste system that must bring envy to a Southern plantation owner. It has contemptibly carried on an "All-Out" program of race prejudice, ignorance and stupidity.

This is not merely a question of blunders in the field of casting for movies. Or a matter of better or worse entertainment.

It is the stifling and suppression of great artistic realities and potentialities of a splendid group of capable artists who could do much to elevate the brutalized world of today: That is what is in account.

It is a question of exposing and fighting and smashing a system of lies and slanders against the Negro people pumped daily into an already doped up white race.

It was not merely the honest students of history who shuddered at what Hollywood did to John Brown, the abolitionist, in "Sante Fe Trail." Nor the movie fans who want good shows.

John Brown's memory had its defenders. Even Raymond Massey, cast in that role, did much to elevate the character above the monstrosity created by the Movie Moguls to please the Southern bourgeois.

But what about the Negro actors and actresses? To work and eat they are forced to portray servile, cringing run-aways, anxious to get back to "Old Virginia" and the "blessings" of slavery.

How ignoble! To get paid to slander oneself and one's people. To use one's talents to perpetuate the greatest myth of all times—the white supremacy bunk. To appear as a defender of the feudal South!

It has been thus in the vast majority of movies. Watch for it the next time you attend one.

Hollywood—and these are among its greatest crimes—does only one thing to the Negro people. It slanders them. It does only one thing to the honest actor. It debases him.

Each movie practices and seeks to justify Jim-crowism. It incites race prejudice. It defends the South of slavery and the South of the lynch mob.

Jim-Crowed in the choice of movie seats, Jim-Crowed on the screen, Jim-Crowed everywhere, the Negroes should recognize as one of their insidious opponents, Hollywood, which tries to glorify this infamy.

# "All Men Are Created Free and Equal..."

Washington's Bar Association, which is housed rent-free in the District Court House, refuses to allow colored lawyers access to the library or to membership in the Association. They never heard of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Harlem is aroused over the arrangements made for the departure of the 369th Coast Guard Artillery anti-aircraft. While other regiments leaving New York for camp were sent off from Grand Central Station, where relatives and friends had an opportunity to bid them farewell, the 369th which is a Negro regiment, was dispatched from the railroad yards on 156th Street and Park Ave. The soldiers were marched to the trains and friends and relatives were prevented from getting near them, although it was a full hour before the train was scheduled to leave.

The man in charge of the British campaign in Ethiopia is General Jan Christian Smuts of South Africa "where Negroes wear dog tags for identification and keep off the sidewalks."

South Africa is part of the "democratic" British Empire which is fighting for a "world of free men."

Here is a sample of the freedom enjoyed by South Africans. Under the Pass Law System it is an offense for a native to walk the streets of any industrial city of South Africa unless he has a passport showing that he is employed by some white capitalist.

In addition, the natives are compelled to carry passes which they call "the twelve badges of slavery." These are: Identification pass, Traveling pass, Special pass to look for work, Monthly pass, Daily laborers pass, Day Special pass, Night Special pass, Trek pass, Visitor's Permit pass, Lodger's permit, Poll-Tax Receipt pass (they have it there too!), and Exemption pass.

And General Smuts is going to help "free" Ethiopia!

George Thomas and Sydney Beyle, editors of the AFRICAN STANDARD, organ of the West African Youth Federation, have been imprisoned for reprinting an article from a New York newspaper criticizing the action of the British government in sending Wallace John-

son, an African trade union leader, to a concentration camp.

The judge informed the accused that citizenship in the British Empire was the greatest heritage of the black man.

They certainly know that now!

Los Angeles has a new housing project which was built with public funds, ostensibly for the benefit of the slum dwellers. The Negro population of Los Angeles (as well as most everywhere else in these benighted states) are, because of their economic status and the discrimination they suffer, in greatest need of decent housing. But the executive director of the Ramona Housing project says: "No Negroes shall live here." We eagerly await a renunciation of this policy from Washington. But at the same time we suggest some direct action by the Negro residents of Los Angeles if they want to live in the Ramona project. Don't forget it took 150 years from the time Jefferson wrote "all men are created equal" to the Civil War which finally emancipated the slaves!

Senator Connally of Texas, where the "White Primary" law prevents Negroes from voting, says he is "in favor of supplying arms and munitions to the nations fighting against aggression and for the survival of democracy and free government."

**Democracy and free government** seems to be all right as long as it does not include Texas.

In a survey conducted for the Urban League of one typical city—Cleveland, Ohio—it was found that two-thirds of the firms who have received "defense" contracts hire no Negroes for skilled or semi-skilled work.

One of the favorite dodges used by the bosses in refusing Negroes employment is that they do so only because they fear resentment on the part of their white workers. This in spite of the fact that there has been almost no racial antagonism in the shops controlled by the CIO where 400,000 Negro workers work side by side with their white fellow workers. Naturally, if their white workers went on strike, they would have no hesitation in calling on Negro workers to fill their place.

# DAVID COOLIDGE WRITES FROM THE FIELD ON THE NEGRO STRUGGLE

## Among the Negroes, as Among the Whites, There Are Two Classes: Worker and Boss

By DAVID COOLIDGE

One of the outstanding features of the tour that I am taking is what seems to be unmistakable evidence of the development of a class line between the Negro worker and the upper class Negro. I am talking about what is known among Negroes as the "big Negro." These are the Negroes who are in the bigger Negro businesses, the politicians, government officeholders, professional people and the like. Of course Negro workers have not escaped entirely the clutches of these parasites but the beginning of the breakaway is certainly underway.

Increasing trade union consciousness on the part of the Negro is partially responsible for this. The progress of the CIO among Negroes has aided in the process. Furthermore the teaching of revolutionaries has undoubtedly left its mark. Negroes, however slowly, are beginning to understand that most of the so-called Negro leaders use them just about in the same way that they are used by the white leaders. That is, the Negro politicians are after votes and jobs; the Negro professional people are after fees; the Negro businessmen are after profits. They use Jim-Crow and segregation as a base for exploitation and profit taking the same as the whites.

### These Are the Rich

In a western city, I talked to an old friend, a Negro who is president of a rather substantial Negro insurance company. He was a Willkieite and talked about the national situation and Roosevelt just as the white businessmen I listened to on the train. "Roosevelt is strangling business. He is ruining the country with the relief and WPA program." I pointed out that the business people seemed to be doing very nicely under Mr. Roosevelt and that he was really put into office by that section of the ruling class who knew the time had come to make a few concessions to the workers. This didn't impress my friend who wanted to know where I got the information from that business was making big profits. He being a big business man, I modestly and diffidently replied that one could get such information from the daily papers or certain business journals.

I talked to a Negro woman in another city, who is a social worker, but who on the side has amassed

## Two Join Party At Los Angeles Coolidge Meeting

LOS ANGELES—The national tour of David Coolidge, labor secretary of the Workers Party, brought very successful results for the Los Angeles Local of the Workers Party last week.

Over 65 people attended a mass meeting at which Coolidge spoke on the second world war and revolution. His effectiveness enabled the chairman to make the largest collection at a public meeting for the last six months.

Two industrial workers joined the party the next day, following Coolidge's appeal for pitching in and fighting with the Workers Party against war and capitalism.

The previous night Coolidge spoke before the membership of the American Advancement League on the problem of fighting racial discrimination in the war production industries. Over 50 Negroes were present. Coolidge spent considerable time visiting in that area.

On Tuesday night Coolidge made a brief address at the class on Negroes in the South. He described his visit among the sharecroppers in Southeastern Missouri with the St. Louis comrades. Ten outsiders, including Negroes and industrial workers heard this talk, besides the party people who attended.

A special general membership meeting was held to hear Coolidge's report for the political committee. He also met with the major industrial factions, and had two sessions with the city executive committee on party perspectives.

It was an excellent and fruitful week of activity for the Los Angeles movement. The sale of fifty LABOR ACTIONS and twenty NEW INTERNATIONALS resulted from the various meetings.

### SCHEDULE FOR COOLIDGE TOUR

Seattle	February 3
St. Paul	February 6
Louisville	February 7-8
Columbus	February 9-10
Pittsburgh	February 11-13
Baltimore	February 14
Washington	February 15-17
Philadelphia	February 18-19
Worcester	February 20-21
Boston	February 22-23
Lynn	February 24-25
New York	February 27

about \$250,000 dollars from gasoline stations which she operates. She too was a Willkieite who is certain that the country is going to the devil during the present third term.

I also talked to a Negro who is a social worker in another city. He is for the same end as the socialists (meaning the Workers Party), but he is against our methods. "You want to overthrow our government" he said to me. To be sure this man wants neither the government nor capitalism overthrown. He is doing very well thank you. I ate a meal at his house. I also ate a meal in a Negro sharecropper's house. My friend the social worker had a cook who served the meal. It was a gorgeous dinner with good table linen and silverware. The food was excellent and the best. There was wine and liquor.

### And Then the Poor

The meal I ate in the humble cabin of the sharecropper was sow belly, black eye peas, cornbread and very poor creamless coffee. The food of my friend, the social worker, was supplied by white businessmen who support this particular institution organized to give "not alms but opportunity" to Negroes. The sow belly of the sharecropper came from his own hard toil in the cotton fields owned by the same kind of men who gave my social worker friend his fine table linen, liquors and ham. The cotton that these white businessmen give him to clothe his body with is produced by these same sharecroppers who spend their entire lives in nakedness and hunger.

It has been the same everywhere; a few Negroes living in splendor, plenty and elegance (just like the masses of Negroes grubbing for the whites of the same class) and the barest necessities of life just like the poor whites.

### Learn What It Means

I had an interesting experience in one city. I met a Negro CIO voluntary organizer in a certain Negro social work institution. I talked to him in a rather guarded manner and left. Later he called me and said that he had a feeling that I wanted to say something to him that could not be said in front of the social worker. He was correct. We made an appointment for the next day and had a two hour conversation about his work and the way out for Negroes. Here was a Negro who works as a volunteer organizer for the CIO and has spent some of his own money to get Negroes into the organization. He isn't making any money from white businessmen saving Negroes.

There are many more of these incidents that could be told but this is enough. Negroes are learning what all this means. They are learning, slowly it is true, that a Negro is not just a Negro no more than a white man is just a white man. They are learning that there are really two groups of Negroes just as there are two groups of whites. They are beginning to understand that a Negro insurance company president is no more interested in them being cared for when sick or buried when they die, than is the president of the white insurance company. Both of these presidents, the black and the white are interested in the amount of money that is paid into the company; that is in the profits that come from selling insurance. This process will continue until the Negro worker becomes class conscious and not race conscious.

### Workers Understand

It has been very plain also that it is the so-called leading Negroes who are the patriots among the colored people. I have spoken to Negro audiences and to Negroes in mixed audiences. I have held smaller con-

## Oppose Jim-Crow Army Air Unit

CHICAGO—In line with its policy fighting segregation in the national "defense" program, the Chicago Council of Negro Organizations voted to support the struggle aimed at checking the establishment of a Jim Crow pursuit squadron of the army air corps, at its meeting January 20.

A recent announcement by under-secretary of War Patterson announced plans for the establishment of a segregated air corps unit at Tuskegee Institute. It is understood that the Jim Crow unit will receive preliminary training at Chanute Field, Ill. War department plans are said to call for white officers to command the squadron.

### TAKING IT FOR GRANTED

The Harvard Class of 1922 concluded its plea for attendance at the annual class dinner (January 30 at the Harvard Club in case any of you grads want to attend) with the following:

"Please do as much for your Class as you did for Willkie."

Can it be they know their Harvard men?

ferences with Negroes. These meetings have not been large of course; that is not in the thousands, but I have yet to have a Negro worker express any patriotic sentiment whatsoever. They have listened intently through long speeches and long replies to questions asked. In one meeting of about 90 Negroes I spoke a total of nearly three hours and no one left the meeting.

I have reported on the meeting with the sharecroppers. There they insisted on keeping the meeting going after we had suggested that they should get to bed because of the next day's work.

On all of these occasions the speeches were openly and frankly revolutionary calling for the overthrow of capitalism as the only solution to the evils that beset Negro as well as white workers. No one should think that they did not understand. They did understand. We saw to that. The sharecroppers understood, the steel

## In These United States

### CHICAGO

CHICAGO, Ill.—Last fall, when elections were coming up, the politicians in the Illinois State Legislature suddenly discovered that the living conditions of the Negro people of the cities in that state were not "quite up to par." With great fuss they passed a bill authorizing an investigation to "thoroughly probe" these conditions. After much delay a commission was finally set up to par. With great fuss they passed a bill authorizing the commission to investigate the housing conditions in which the Negroes of Chicago and other cities are forced to live. Instead of getting testimony from the tenants themselves, who know very well who and what causes high rents and poor conditions, the commission called in the president of the Chicago Real Estate Board, the organization of landlords and real estate agents. The first thing he was asked to explain was the position of the Chicago Real Estate Board on restrictive covenants. These restrictive covenants are one of the main causes for poor housing conditions—they are agreements between landlords within the "black belt" and landlords of property surrounding the Negro neighborhood. These agreements provide that Negroes should not be permitted to rent houses outside of the "iron ring" which surrounds the Negro neighborhood. What this representative of the landlords said about restrictive covenants was very interesting. "The right of owners of property to make whatever use of that property they wish is deeply imbedded in our political and economic system. We cannot intrude on the right of private contract, no matter what affect it has on society."

This statement, coming from a member of the boss class, exposes for Negro workers the fundamental cause of their troubles. According to this man, the bosses, who own the factories and houses that the workers live and work in, have the right to do whatever they please with "their" property, and to hell with the workers. And that is exactly what they do. They refuse to build decent homes for the Negro workers and raise rents in order to make more profit. Then they turn around and call upon the Negro people to defend "democracy." The quotation above, saying that the cause of poor housing is "deeply imbedded in our (that is the bosses') political and economic system" is absolutely correct.

After answering the question about restrictive covenants, the representative of the Chicago Real Estate board was asked what he thought would improve housing for the Negro people. According to him three things had to be done:

1. Trade unions have to be eliminated so that wages could be lowered.
2. The government has to stop building housing projects, so that "business need not fear government competition."
3. Taxes on property should be lowered.

Translated into every day English, these three points mean only one thing—do everything possible to increase profits for the bosses and landlords. In order to do this, unions have to be broken—that is the working people have to be satisfied with lower wages. Next, whatever little improvement, and its been mighty little, that has been made through government projects has to be stopped. And last, taxes on property have to be lowered so that more profits from rent can be made.

The answer that the workers, and particularly the Negro workers, should make to this representative of the boss class is just the opposite of what he proposed. First, we must demand that the profit of the bosses should be taxed 100%. Second we must demand that these taxes be used to build homes—instead of battleships and cannons for war. And finally we must build and strengthen our unions. This means that we must put an end to racial discrimination in the unions, and must unite and fight for a worker's government!

## KANSAS

By REVA CRAIN

The situation of the Negro in Kansas City as regards jobs and employment may be taken as fairly typical of the larger cities and Negro communities in the country. Although the Negroes are only 9.6 per cent of the population, they constitute 11.2 per cent of those gainfully employed. Despite their somewhat higher proportion of working population, the occupations which they may pursue is very limited.

Only 139 of the 155 occupations listed will employ Negroes, and of these, 43 employ less than 10 Negroes in the entire trade. The percentage among the trades employing women workers is even more disadvantageous to the Negro. The trades which do employ Negro labor are most often the lowest paying ones, those with the least amount of trade union organization, and are limited in the main to three types of domestic and personal service to the extent that 80.1 were concentrated in these pursuits.

To a very large extent, the trade union movement is responsible for this situation. For many years American labor has neglected to include in its organized ranks a very important section of the American working class. So successful has been the penetration of racial hatred into the ranks of the working class, that it is only comparatively recently that the organization of Negroes into the ranks of the trade unions on an equal basis with white workers has been carried out to any extent. From a study made in Kansas City by the Urban League, it has been found that wherever Negro and white workers have been organized together, the results for both have been very gratifying; and conversely, wherever Negroes have been discriminated against by white labor, both have suffered and the only gainer was the employer. This holds true on a national scale.

In general there are about seven types of unions, classified according to their attitude to Negroes. 1)

Those with constitutions barring Negroes. These also bar Mexican workers and even American Indians. In the main they are the Railroad unions. 2) The AFL unions which bar Negroes, to whom special federal charters for Negro locals are issued directly by the AFL. In many cases these special Negro unions constitute dual unions to those of white workers. 3) Unions which have no constitutional barriers to Negroes, but which admit very few, and then after admission, discriminate against them in placement on jobs, etc. These are the Carpenters, Painters and Electrical Workers. 4) Unions which admit Negroes, but bar them from holding office, as, for example, the Letter Carriers Association. The Blacksmiths will admit Negroes, but in the apprentice category only. 5) Unions which admit Negroes, but in separate locals. The Musicians Union is an outstanding example. 6) Unions which admit Negroes in both mixed and separate locals, for example, the Barbers, Laundry workers, Tobacco workers. 7) Unions which will admit Negroes freely and only into mixed locals on the grounds that they want no separation among the workers such as the United Mine Workers and the Garment Workers Unions.

Those unions which exclude Negro members cut themselves off from large groups of workers who are driven into becoming potential anti-unionists. There are generally unions which are organized along craft lines and whose organizational outlook is very limited. For example, the Electrical workers exclude some 1,200 Negro workers who are eligible for membership, the Carpenters some 30,000 and the Painters some 10,000. The Plumbers will not take in any Negroes because the latter cannot obtain a license which is required of all plumbers in Kansas City. Yet there are numerous cases where Negro plumbers work on permits and licenses issued to white workers and their work is found to be entirely satisfactory.

The situation in the CIO unions is very much more favorable to Negro workers than in the older AFL unions. In Kansas City, there are 34 locals of the CIO, divided among the steel, packing house, textile, retail and wholesale employees unions. Virtually every one of these locals include these latter in their ranks. In many cases, the percentage of Negro unionists is higher than the percentage among the white workers. In every instance, the Negro workers are found to be among the most loyal and devoted members of the unions.

The success of the CIO in organizing Negroes has forced a more liberal policy among AFL unions, but the CIO nevertheless retains as one of its outstanding achievements the fact that it has organized Negro and white workers on an equal plane and has done much to destroy an important factor which has divided the ranks of labor, race prejudice. In every case where there is a mixed local, outside of the CIO, the cooperation among the workers has been most harmonious.

The fact that the Negro working population is 11.2 per cent, and that out of 29,015 trade unionists in Kansas City, 6,836, or nearly 24 per cent are Negroes shows to what extent Negroes are ready for trade union organization. The ending of discrimination in the unions will do much to end discrimination by the bosses in industry, especially in the better organized trades. The struggle against this discrimination, the struggle for a policy of mixed locals with equal membership opportunities to all, the initiation of special consideration for Negroes where they are discriminated against is the job of the progressive worker in his trade union.

## HARLEM

There are over 200,000 Negroes living in Harlem. Aside from the small number of Negroes engaged in business (about 2,000) the rest of the population is compelled to work in order to live. Negro business in Harlem differs greatly from the businesses owned by whites. They are confined mainly to personal services, such as barber shop, beauty parlors, cleaning and pressing shops where little capital is required. On the other hand, the businesses owned by whites provide the basic needs of the community.

As a result of traditional barriers, Negroes are excluded and discriminated against in both public service (Federal, State and Municipal agencies) and in private industry. Consequently, there is a disproportionately large concentration of Negro workers in domestic and personal service. Over one-half of all Negro workers are employed in these fields. It is these occupations which are hit most sharply during depressions and in which re-employment is the slowest.

Almost half the Negro families in the Harlem area are on the relief rolls. The report of the New York State Commission which investigated conditions of the urban Negro population, shows "that Negroes, 7.5 per cent of the city's gainfully employed population, constitute 21.7 per cent of the city's relief load, but received only 9.8 per cent of job placements made by the employment service of the Bureau. These records also indicate that Negroes have been displaced from private employment at twice the rate of whites and re-employed at only one-half the rates of whites.

In a report on Family Incomes in New York City, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that while the income of the combined relief and employed families of 1/2 of all white families is \$1,814, that of 1/2 of all Negro families is less than \$837. In other words, the poorer half of the Negro families must live on an income which is only 46% of that achieved by the poorer half of the white population.

Unable to secure work and protection against discriminatory practices, the Negro has been the victim of the most ruthless economic exploitation.

Every conceivable device has been used by the bosses to "keep the Negro in his place." He is given the most undesirable job with the fake argument that the "public" is prejudiced against having contact with Negroes except in certain capacities.

Harlem has the highest tuberculosis, death and infant mortality rate in the city—yet has the least adequate medical care.

(Continued on page 2)

## Our Platform

The Workers Party as the party of world peace and international socialism calls upon all workers to join with us in a struggle for—

**A Job And A Decent Living For Every Worker In The Country**  
End unemployment by: Thirty-three—a \$30-a-week minimum wage and a 30-hour-a-week maximum working week.

**Houses—Not Coffins**  
A twenty-Billion Dollar Federal housing and public works program.

**Adequate Relief For The Unemployed!**  
According to the 1940 census, there are still 14,000,000 unemployed workers in the United States. Jobs must be provided for the unemployed. But until they are, the government must provide adequate relief for the unemployed.

**Confiscate The Wealth Of The Parasites!**  
Expropriate the Sixty Plutocratic Families! The government does not hesitate to confiscate millions of lives by conscription and war.  
Nationalize American industry and run it under workers' control.

**For A Workers' Government!**  
A workers' government! If the capitalist politicians do not accept these demands and they do not and will not, because they are bound hand and foot to Big Business and its system—let the workers take over and run the government themselves!

The Workers Party also calls upon the workers going into the army to demand—

1. Full political rights. The right to vote in all federal, state and municipal elections while serving in the army and navy. There is no reason for men in the military service to be deprived of this democratic right.
2. The full democratic right of the soldiers and sailors to assemble under their own auspices for political discussion. The right to receive political literature of their choice; the right to have their own publications for the free discussion of the issues involved in the war.
3. The right to retain their previous political and trade union connections during military service.
4. Full democratic right to elect committees from their ranks to handle grievances and represent them in dealing with officers.
5. No less than \$60 a month, plus expenses.
6. That all racial religious and political discrimination be eliminated from the army and navy. That any and every branch of the army and navy, and every rank be open to every soldier and sailor without discrimination.

## Ukrainians, Beware of Provocation Sheet Issued by Canadian Government

The following communication has been received by LABOR ACTION. While we are unable to verify the information contained therein, LABOR ACTION nevertheless wishes to state that its source is considered absolutely reliable.

### NOTICE

TORONTO, Ont.—"All Canadian workers are hereby warned against the Ukrainian language paper, "NARODNA GAZETTA", now circulating in Canada. Under no circumstances should any worker correspond IN ANY WAY with this paper until the working class is favorably assured as to its editorship.

"NARODNA GAZETTA" was the Ukrainian language paper of the Canadian Communist Party. With the beginning of the war, it was seized by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who publish it as a provocative sheet to ensnare militant workers.

Workers are emphatically warned to discontinue IMMEDIATELY their letters of criticism, etc. to the paper. We also urge the widest circulation of this information."

"CANADADUS"

# NEGRO WORKERS! FIGHT WITH US FOR EQUALITY, JOBS, PEACE, FREEDOM!

## Slave Markets

By SUSAN GREEN

In the Bronx alone there are at least thirty established slave markets. These are street corners where Negro women gather at seven in the morning and wait sometimes all day to sell their labor to some housewife who wants her dirty work done for almost nothing. There are more such slave markets in the Brighton Beach and Brownsville sections of Brooklyn.

The tokens of these women's servitude are a dark skin and a paper package under the arm, containing their work clothes. They stand around, huddled in doorways and vestibules in the cold, snow and rain of winter, or in the broiling sun and heat of summer, waiting for a customer for their labor. They may wait a half day before they get a break, or they may wait a whole day and go home—having wasted their energy just waiting and no money to show for it.

The condition of these women is just another proof that the capitalist system is absolutely bankrupt. It can no longer take care of the simplest needs of the poor people.

### Deserve Relief

The slave markets first appeared in the depression, which hit the Negro people a harder blow than anybody else. When unemployed white men began to work for any wage at all, Negro men were forced out of their jobs. That was when the Negro women went out on the streets to look for household work.

It was possible for these jobless women to get work on the streets because many middle-class people found them cheaper than regular maids. For the heavy cleaning and real dirty work, the Negro woman was called in. When it was learned by other housewives that it was possible to hire cleaning women for 15c or 20c an hour, they began to call in the Negro women to do the most distasteful tasks—scrubbing, window-cleaning, washing, cleaning bathrooms.

The existence of the slave markets also proves the two-faced character of the boss government. It is supposed to be giving relief to destitute people to enable them to get the necessities of life. Many of the women who sell their labor in the slave markets are on relief. But what the government hands out is a mere pittance that does not cover bare needs. It is harder for a Negro family to get along on relief than a white family. The average rent in Negro sections is one third higher than it is in corresponding white districts. So Negro women have to sneak in a bit of work in order to exist at all.

Furthermore there are women in the slave markets fully entitled to relief who do not get it. They refuse to submit to the indignities the relief client is subjected to. They will not sell their souls for relief that does not relieve anyway. But they sell their labor in the slave markets where the housewife picks them up as she does a bunch of carrots or a loaf of bread.

### Miserable Wages

At these corners, waiting for work, can be seen old women gnarled and bent from a lifetime of labor. But there are plenty of neat, capable-looking women in middle life, as well as young women and girls. Men come to the slave markets and try to lure the young women and girls to their apartments—to perform other tasks than housework. But these women are seriously looking for housework and refuse to go with a man.

The women get paid whatever sum they can command from the individual housewife who hires them. The rates are a bit higher now than they were during the depression. A good worker who has established a reputation for herself, can get 35c or 30c an hour. Others get 25c and less, depending on the neighborhood and the time of day they are hired.

Because these women are absolutely unprotected, they are often gyped. They may be promised 35c an hour, when the housewife pays them, she will give only 25c. Or they will be promised \$1.50 for a job and then the housewife will try to take off 50c for the lunch the cleaning woman ate.

All the boss politicians are shouting today how American "democracy" has respect for the individual and how we're all supposed to fight for it. Certainly these women who peddle their labor on street corners, don't get any respect or anything else. Many a Negro girl, fresh from the south, and full of ambition, finally lands in the slave market. Here she stands and shoos off what is politely called "immoral advances", until a housewife picks her up. Girls who thought they could make something of themselves, lose their morale as

week after week they frequent the slave markets.

And this is true of white house workers as well as of Negro. Even though the white women do not sell their labor in street markets, they are just as unprotected in their work as the Negro. They often work for \$5 a week, living in. Their hours are practically limitless—an 80-hour week being quite common. They are employed at one figure and when pay day comes they receive less. Often a white girl takes a household job thinking it will be only temporary. She hopes to go to school in the evening and make something of herself. But she doesn't get time off and can't go to school or do anything a human being needs time to do. After a while she begins to think of herself as just a servant and a drudge.

### A Union Needed

From time to time agencies of the boss government as well as private clubs and associations of boss women, have made a big noise about "doing something for those poor domestic workers." But all this is a flash in the pan. Workers never get anything unless they fight for it themselves.

In New York City there are about 200,000 household workers, both Negro and white. But they are powerless because they are not organized. Of this great number of domestic workers only about 400 belong to a domestic workers union. That is the trouble.

These downtrodden and exploited workers have no reason to fight for a non-existing democracy. But they have every reason in the world to fight for one big union of the 200,000 domestic workers in the city. Only with a strong union, of Negro and white together, will the domestic workers be able to talk turkey—to demand union wages, hours and conditions.

That will be the death knell of the slave markets, of the "immoral advances", of the gyping, of the demoralization of tens of thousands of women who do honest and hard labor.

## The Negro and the Trade Unions

### The Unions Must Put an End to Race Discrimination in Their OWN Interests

By CONRAD LYNN

As a worker, the Negro is exploited by capitalists. As a Negro he is discriminated against by organized labor. So generally is this true that instances where progressive unionists have fought for and with Negro workers have, until recently, been in the nature of exceptions.

On the threshold of emancipation, the organized railroad men slammed the door in the face of the freed laborers by barring them from membership. No trades union has been as relentless in its discrimination against the Negroes as has the railroad fraternity.

Today, the Railway Clerks claim jurisdiction over Negro freight handlers and baggagemen, but relegate them to Jim-Crow auxiliaries without full voting privileges. Only a few days ago, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed a ruling that railroads may not allow porters or laborers to act as brakemen.

Only less consistently in adhering to a policy of race discrimination is the American Federation of Labor. Of its internationals, only the United Mine Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers may claim to be fair to the Negro worker. True, at various times, Powderly (labor leader in the 70's of the last century) or Gompers (AFL president for decades) or Green (current president) might indulge in expansive generalities about the unity of all labor regardless of race, nationality or color. But these were hardly more than verbal tributes to democracy so common in American politics and life. Not the experience in Homestead, where Negro strike-breakers smashed the steel strike nor in Chicago, where they broke the stockyard strike, nor their effective employment by New York's waterfront bosses at the turn of the century, could shake the bureau-

crats out of their stubborn refusal to count the Negro as part of the American labor movement.

Everywhere the Negro turns in our "democratic" United States he is faced with almost insurmountable barriers. Whether it is a job, a decent house to live in, equal educational opportunities for himself or his children—there is sure to be some written or unwritten law which says: NEGROES NOT WANTED!

Even today, when the government is trying to enlist the entire population in support of its boss-war plans, Negroes are being viciously discriminated against in "defense" industries, Jim Crowed in the armed forces, insulted and humiliated.

In the face of these FACTS it is necessary for Negroes to realize that these conditions will not be changed unless they FIGHT to change them. How effective are all the laws that have been passed "guaranteeing" equal rights and opportunities to the Negro? When the Declaration of Independence was signed there were a half-million slaves within the confines of the United States giving lie to the assertion "that all men are created equal..." It took a civil war 87 years later to free the slaves.

In the face of all the misery and hardships and persecution the Negro is forced to endure today, there are still some lice who prate about the stake Negroes have in "preserving our democracy."

The WORKERS PARTY which stands for COMPLETE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY for the Negro therefore calls upon all Negroes to join with it in struggle against the system that persecutes and degrades them.

Yes, you have good reason to distrust organizations appealing to you for your support. Your experience with one after the other has made you justifiably suspicious. The treachery of the Communist Party, which used you for its own miserable purposes, is still fresh in your minds. But we ask nothing more than that you test us, watch us in our work, judge our sincerity.

We do not appeal to you as a white organization offering you its friendship and leadership. That would be an insult. We appeal to you as an organization of white workers and of black workers, asking you to join our ranks and work beside us as working men and women among other working men and women.

crats out of their stubborn refusal to count the Negro as part of the American labor movement.

### Flock to CIO

The depth of every depression might be gauged by the severity of the violence visited by white unionists on Negro workers. In the year 1933 alone, seven Negro brakemen and freight handlers were killed and seven wounded on one railroad, the Illinois Central, by white, unemployed unionists determined to get their jobs.

Two years later, however, the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed. Its program was organization of the unorganized into industrial unions. The form of such unions made it difficult to bar racial groups from membership. The entire shop comprised a unit for collective bargaining. The response of the Negro worker, traditionally dubbed a scab by the old-line unionist, was electrifying. In four years, 400,000 of them marched into the CIO. Negro organizers not only inspired Negro workers but were effective in organizing white workers.

But the problem of the Negro in American industrial life has by no means been solved. He meets job discrimination even in CIO unions. The National Maritime Union in New York City, dominated by the Communist Party, has withdrawn Negro members from ships where white unionists refuse to work with them, and replaced them by white workers. The Transport Workers Union, Local 155 in Brooklyn, has a Jim Crow Negro section which holds separate meetings. This union, too, is said to be CP controlled. The National Maritime Union in New York pays its Negro organizer \$35 per week, and the white organizers doing the same type of work \$45 per week. Bitter competition with white

workers and disillusionment with organized labor has given the Negro racketeer a base of operation in the labor field. The Harlem Labor Union is one such product. Originally formed by the anti-semitic "Sufi", it passed successively under the control of Ira Kemp and a certain Read, both indicted for extortion. Such groups have as their creed violent hatred for all whites. In urban centers, where a large body of young, educated would-be white collar Negroes live, the group urges that Negroes be employed in stores and other retail establishments. Were it not for the petty fleeing of the underpaid Negroes who become members of such groups, they would serve a useful purpose.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Urban League are bodies which have intervened from time to time in attempts to influence Negro labor's attitude toward unions. Local branches of the Urban League in Pittsburgh, Chicago and New York before the first World War, and immediately after, consciously acted as strike-breaking agencies, bringing thousands of Negro field hands from the south whenever directed to do so by northern philanthropists, upon whom the organization was largely dependent for support. Later, however, the Urban League, through its Workers' Council, has adopted a policy favoring the organized workers. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has had no settled policy towards the unions.

### The Prospects

The immediate prospect for the Negro worker is gloomy. He may not be employed in aviation factories. In the war industries as a whole, a tacit agreement between the government and the employers bars Negroes from jobs. As yet the CIO and the AFL have taken no stand

Others also ask your support. The government and the bosses, for example. These gentlemen who have fastened the noose of servitude around your necks, want your help in a war to aid "democratic" England—the greatest slaveholding empire in the world—because through that war they expect to gain profit and conquest. In other words, they ask YOUR support for THEIR interests!

No, we do not appeal to you that way. We want you to work side by side with us for our COMMON interests. We, the Workers Party, call upon all workers, be they black or white to oppose the war plans of the boss government and Wall Street. The only war that is justified in our eyes is a war in the interest of the exploited and the oppressed—for jobs at decent wages, for full democratic rights, for better living and working conditions, against discrimination and segregation, for peace and freedom.

There is only one way the Negro can possibly force recognition of his rights from a system which deliberately fosters race prejudice and hate. That is by organization and ACTION.

It is for such ACTION that the Workers Party appeals to you through this special issue of LABOR ACTION—to join with us, black and white, for social, political and economic equality—for the independence of the colonies—for the liberation of the WHOLE working class. Do not join one group of capitalists, against another. Fight against both!

Join us in the struggle against this bloody imperialism which offers the Negro nothing more than continued humiliation and persecution—the same raw deal that he got after the last war, all the pretty promises notwithstanding.

There are only two alternatives before us, fellow-workers: liberation in struggle for a socialist world of free men; or degradation and poverty in the purgatory of capitalist wars and oppression.

Fight with us for OUR alternative—a new world where no man will be dictator over the other, a world in which all men can raise their heads like human beings, a world of security and of peace, a new society where each will enjoy and share equally with the other the magnificent resources of earth and man.

JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY.

## Conference on Negro Problems Demands "Defense" Industry Jobs

Special to Labor Action

CHICAGO — In a session that started out simply as a rally for Alderman Earl B. Dickerson, rank and file delegates turned a conference on Negro problems, held in Chicago, Jan. 11, into a protest meeting against discrimination in defense industries.

In adopting a program to fight for jobs for Negro workers, a number of delegates made clear that they were not following the lead of nationalist politicians trying to win the Negro masses on the basis of allegiance to a "Race" leader. As Mrs. Marie Ellis, delegate from the South Side Action Committee, stated, "When we go out to fight against discrimination in jobs we are not just fighting to displace white workers—we demand enough jobs at decent wages for all, without any kind of discrimination." Included in the program adopted

by the session on Jobs in Defense Industries were:

1. Equal participation for the Negro in the national "defense" program and in the armed forces—from top to bottom.
2. That the conference take action to eliminate discrimination against Negroes in employment, advancement, and pay on all Federal State and municipal jobs.
3. That the conference continue specific fights—against discrimination of Negro workers in the Milk Drivers Union, and for equal job opportunities in the Bell Telephone system.
4. Equal opportunities for training in new trades and occupations.
5. Fight against color bar in the trade unions—urge all Negro workers to join those unions where there is no discrimination.

## Our Only Course

By JACK MANN

On every side the workers are being deluged with propaganda designed to win support for America's entry into the war in order "to defend democracy and preserve our American way of life."

The newspapers, radio, pulpit, the bankers, politicians, professors and labor bureaucrats have all combined to preach the cause of "national unity." The Negro has not been neglected by the propagandists. The "forgotten man" was also remembered. It seems he also has a stake in "preserving democracy," and giving "all-out" aid to Britain which is fighting the battle for "democracy and civilization." At least, so they say.

We now find scoundrels like William Pickens, branch director of the NAACP, Frank Crosswaith, head of the Negro Labor Committee, and many other "distinguished Negroes" pleading the cause of aid to England and full support for the President's rearmament program. As a matter of fact, they are even serving as members of the Wm. Allen White Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies.

According to all these gentlemen, the war now being fought in Europe by the British Empire and her allies against the Rome-Berlin axis is a war against oppression and tyranny and for "democracy and freedom."

### Facts Contradict the Propaganda

Now democracy and freedom are noble objectives to which Negroes in particular are very sympathetic. Because they know oppression and tyranny so well the Negro people are always ready to do battle for a cause which will bring them democracy and freedom.

Especially here in the United States, where he has known so much humiliation and degradation, the Negro will be quick to support any cause which will in any way alleviate his present position in American life.

Unfortunately, however, nothing that has happened so far can give the Negro the least bit of confidence that his status in America will be altered in the slightest by supporting Roosevelt's drive toward war, or by giving aid to Britain.

As a matter of fact, everything that has happened since the outbreak of the war serves as conclusive evidence that the white ruling classes of America and Great Britain are determined to "keep the Negro in his place."

The United States government has refused to make the least concession in its policy of Jim Crow and discrimination in the armed forces. Negroes, who were refused admission into the regular army, prior to the passage of the conscription bill, because "there were no vacancies for Negroes" although the U.S. was carrying on the greatest recruiting campaign in its history, are finally accepted under the draft act. But only in Jim Crow regiments—or as messmen aboard ships where they must act as "chambermaids" for white officers.

In the industries which are working on government armament orders, Negroes find that they are also not wanted. Surveys conducted by the NAACP and the Urban League in various sections of the country show that a rigid policy of discrimination is carried on against giving Negroes employment in these industries. Uncle Sam has yet to voice any protest against this discriminatory practice. How could the government logically do so, when it officially condones discrimination as a matter of settled governmental policy?

15 states still have Jim Crow laws, while it is practiced in every state. Negroes are still disfranchised in 10 states, either legally or by intimidation. Residential segregation is strictly enforced everywhere in the U.S. The Negro ghetto is a permanent feature of American life. The same educational facilities which are enjoyed by white children are denied to Negro children.

These are the facts and they are indisputable. And what about England whom we are asked to aid in its struggle for "democracy"? Democracy? Let's see what this actually means for the natives of Africa, India and the West Indies who are also part of the British Commonwealth.

One would imagine that the first step England would take in convincing the world that it is actually concerned about "democracy" would be to give freedom to the colonies. However this is furthest from their mind. India's attempt to get a promise of Dominion status in exchange for support in the war is answered by imprisoning the leaders of the India National Congress.

England has over five billion dollars invested in the colonies on which the interest alone amounts to approximately 500 million dollars a year. This is too juicy a plum to give up. England wants the support of the colonies in its war effort, but is unwilling to give anything in exchange—except the continued brutal exploitation to which the natives are now subjected.

Let us compare the handsome profits of the white English exploiters with the conditions of the people who produce the wealth. In India, the average income of the population is \$35 per person a year. While the life expectancy of the population in England is 55 years, in India it is only 23 years. In Trinidad, the wages paid to natives average from six to 30 cents a day. A Royal Commission appointed by the Crown to investigate conditions on the Island reports that disease, malnutrition, overcrowding and bad housing are rife.

In Tanganyika, one of the mandated territories in Africa held by Britain, the average wages are between \$1.50 and \$2.50 per month.

There is no free compulsory education in any of England's colonies. 86% of the males and 98% of the females in India are illiterate. In Bombay, a third of the population live in single rooms with an average of five persons in each room.

The present war between England and Germany is over who shall have the right to exploit the colonies. Regardless of who wins the war, the masses have nothing to gain by supporting either side.

### There Is Only One Course Open to Us

There is only one course open to the Negro and white working class who are forced to bear the burden of the war. That is a relentless struggle for the advancement of their own interests.

This means a struggle against both war camps. It means raising the banner of the THIRD CAMP, the camp of the workers and peasants of all countries who are opposed to the present imperialist war which is waged for profits and plunder and for the continued exploitation of the colonies.

We loathe and detest the ruling-class tyrant, Hitler. We will give aid and solidarity to the workers of Germany and the occupied territories in the fight against Hitler. But our first job is to get rid of Hitlerism at home first. Hitler is 3,000 miles away; our own oppressors are right here on our backs.

Here in the United States we must organize our forces to demand full and equal rights in jobs, housing, education. We must make "democracy" have a different meaning for the 15 million Negroes who now only know lynching, economic exploitation, degradation and proscription. In this struggle the Negro will be fighting for himself and not in the interests of the bosses. In this struggle he will finally achieve the freedom that he is now denied.