

The Negro Question
By J. R. JOHNSON

First of all, as we showed last week, lynching has nothing to do with the protection of white "womanhood." Let us once more nail that lie. Some months ago the refusal of Miami Negroes to be frightened away from the polls by the Ku Klux Klan made national headlines in all the Negro papers and even had some attention in the capitalist press. It was only afterwards that we learnt what had frightened off the Klan. The Negroes sat in their houses waiting for the Klan with loaded Winchester across their laps. Backed by this not-to-be-despised argument, American "democracy" won a small victory.

Now a similar situation is developing in Greenville, South Carolina. Both sides are primed for civil war. The Klan is determined that the Negroes shall not vote. The Negroes are determined that they shall. They are carrying on a campaign for registration in the city elections. James A. Briar, 69 year-old head of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, considered chiefly responsible for the agitation, has been arrested for illegal possession of a gun. This time Briar is defending not only "democracy" but his life. The Klan visited his house a few times in recent weeks, but he was always out. According to the N. Y. Amsterdam News (December 23, 1939), the Klan raided the Negro area and "have beaten up men, stripped and humiliated women and destroyed some property."

This conflict has been going on for months. How does it affect the Negro? Enter your Southern scientist: "Here is a situation where the Negro's uncontrollable lust for white women shows itself." William Anderson, 19 years old, president of the local NAACP Youth Council and very active in the registration campaign, was "framed" some time ago for disorderly conduct and breach of the peace, charges by the "authorities," "who insisted he had tried to date a white girl in town." There you have the kernel of lynching in the South. The "authorities" bring a case. The mob is less subtle. It tears the victim to pieces. It is a principle of propaganda today to smear your enemy with the crimes of which you yourself are guilty. Hitler is a past master at the art, Stalin its greatest exponent, living or dead. The South acts on the same principle. The Southern gentlemen pester the Negro women with their attentions. They accuse the Negro of this, their own besetting sin.

Who Are the Savages?

Who are the "savages" in this lynching business? In his recent book, *The Black Man in White America*, John G. Van Deusen, Professor of American History and Government in Hobart College, details some of the practices of the lynch mobs.

In Mississippi a Negro woman had five splinters run into her body and was then slowly burned alive by white men—because the mob had failed to capture her husband. A Texas mob burned a Negro in a courthouse vault. A Georgian mob beat an insane man to death in a hospital. A Tennessee mob tied a fifteen-year-old boy to a train. Mobs in Tennessee and Georgia disemboweled pregnant women. In Louisiana they sewed a man in a sack, weighted it with stone, and threw him into a lake. In Mississippi they buried a man up to his neck, placed a steel cage over his head, and loosed a bull dog into the cage. A Mississippi mob bored corkscrews into the flesh of Luther Holbert and his wife, in arms, legs, and body, and then pulled them out, the spirals pulling with them big pieces of raw quivering flesh every time. Henry Lowry was burned to death over a slow fire in 1921. "Inch by inch the Negro was fairly cooked to death." Nine months later men, women and children in Hubbard, Texas, roasted a Negro to death and, to increase his pain, jabbed sticks into his mouth, nose and ears. In 1937 a mob at Duck Hill, Mississippi, tortured two Negroes with a blow torch before shooting them. "Occasionally fingers, toes and ears have been cut off the living wretch and distributed for souvenirs. Photographs are quickly sold out."

And the "authorities"?

Huey Long did not think it worth while to bother himself about an investigation. It wouldn't "do the dead nigger no good." When a Negro association sent a telegram to Governor Bilbo protesting against a lynching, Bilbo replied, "Go to hell." Cole Blaise, Governor of South Carolina, said to a leader of a mob, "I will turn you loose when charged with lynching a Negro who is accused of assault on a white woman." On another occasion, when campaigning for election to the Senate, Blaise found himself at Union, S.C., where not long before a lynching had taken place. He marked the occasion feelingly: "Whenever the Constitution comes between men and the virtue of the white women of South Carolina, I say to hell with the Constitution."

"Only A Stage"

These gentlemen make "moderate" speeches about states' rights in Congress. But that is not the language and the arguments they use to their own constituents. Let the last word be with Franklin Roosevelt, President of the United States, the great crusader for human rights against Hitler and other enemies of "democracy." What has he to say about lynching? Zero. Exactly that. Not a word of rebuke to the filibusters who year after year have killed the bill. And why? Because Roosevelt knows that lynching is no accidental phenomenon. It is rooted not only in the history but in the whole economic and social system of the South. These Southern politicians are not defending white "womanhood." They are defending Southern property, power and privilege.

And Franklin Roosevelt is defending Southern property, power and privilege too. So that if Southern property, power and privilege need to keep this two-edged sword between black and white poor in the South, Franklin D. keeps his mouth shut. If he and his New Dealers could put an end to lynching without disrupting the social and economic bases of capitalism, they would. But first things come first. They leave lynching where it is as a means of preserving the system. We, however, will not leave lynching where it is. We support the attack on it in Congress. But that is only a stage in the fight. It has to be torn up by the roots, and the roots are in the capitalist system.

A GLEAM THROUGH THE CENSORSHIP

What Is Happening in Stalin's Poland?

Almost nothing appears in the Russian and Stalinist press describing any of the details of the new economic set-up in the territories of former Poland occupied by the Red Army. The following article, which appeared in the Times of London, December 12 (part of it was published in the N. Y. Times with a misleading introduction), appears to be a sober and realistic account. It provides some details of the complex inter-action of the three major factors in the situation:

1. The nationalized economy of the Soviet Union, which dictated to the Stalinist bureaucracy the economic transformation of the occupied territories.
2. The role of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The article verifies Trotsky's prediction of Sept. 25, shortly after the Red Army began to march into Poland: "The appeal to the independent activity on the part of the masses in the new territories—and without

such an appeal, even if worded with extreme caution, it is impossible to constitute a new regime—will on the morrow undoubtedly be suppressed by ruthless police measures in order to assure the preponderance of the bureaucracy over the awakened revolutionary masses."

3. The awakened revolutionary masses, having been encouraged into activity to expropriate the land and establish control of the factories, do not release into passivity at the subsequent command of the G.P.U., but seek to carry on in the revolutionary spirit appropriate to the new economy. These "hotheads" are ruthlessly curbed by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

We publish below the original text of the Times of London article:

The Russians, in the part of Poland they have seized, have not reproduced the methods of the first years of the Bolshevik Revolution. Contrary to general belief there are as yet no "worker's and peasant's soviets" in the occupied territory, and the Russian press has rather tended to emphasize the difficulty that the political commissars have had in restraining "hotheads" from forming them. The administration is being carried on by provisional local commissars and G. P. U. agents. Representatives of the local population have only an advisory voice.

These committees organized the election campaign for the formation of the National Assemblies of Lwow and Bialystok. In this campaign there were no class restrictions, at least in theory, but only one list of candidates was submitted, and the National Assemblies were "monolithic," in accordance with the best totalitarian models. The assemblies are not meant to be permanent legislative bodies. They have been convened for

one occasion only—to pass four fundamental resolutions. They are to proclaim the introduction of the Soviet system into their territories; to incorporate the territories in the Soviet Union; to expropriate the large landowners and distribute the land among the peasants; and to nationalize the banks and large-scale industries.

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS FACE DIFFICULTIES

There will be difficulties in all this. In the occupied territories the peasantry and a small section of the intelligentsia regard themselves as of Ukrainian or White Russian nationality, while the industrial workers in the towns are Poles and, to some extent, Jews. The Soviet authorities clearly show distrust of the Polish proletariat. They have discarded the use of Marxist terminology and discouraged the traditional proletarian outlook.

Proclamations, resolutions, and articles in the press, carefully refrain from reference to the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which in this case would have to mean the hegemony of the Polish section of the population. The new authorities seek support from the peasantry and from the nonpolitically minded Ukrainian intelligentsia who alone are disposed to submit passively to the directions of Moscow.

The Communist party has so far been entirely inactive in the occupied territory. The "Communist party of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia" was, along with the Polish Communist party, disowned by the Comintern two years ago, being accused of Ukrainian nationalism and of acting in the interest of the Polish police and of Hitlerism. The distrust and hostility manifested by Moscow toward all political sections of the Ukrainians and White Russians, including the Communist party, shed an interesting sidelight on this curi-

ous liberation of the oppressed "blood-brethren."

The agrarian revolution in Soviet Poland has had the force of a spontaneous movement. As soon as the report spread that the Red Army had crossed the River Zbrucz the peasants began to share out among themselves the landlords' acres. Land was given first to smallholders, and in this way about 30 per cent of agricultural land was expropriated. But any attempt to introduce collectivization by force would immediately break the friendly relations between the peasants and the authorities.

In industry, drastic acts of expropriation have not yet been carried out on a large scale. The main centers of the banking system, the railway system and a number of large industrial undertakings were State-owned for years before the Russian occupation. In small and medium-sized industries workmen now exercise "control over production."

The industrialists nominally retain a full right of ownership in their own establishments, but they are compelled to submit statements of costs of production, and so on, for the consideration of the workmen's delegates. The latter, jointly, with the employers, fix wages, conditions of work, and a "just rate of profit" for the industrialist.

The Russian authorities attach great importance to the organization of cultural life on Soviet models. The schools are being reorganized and subordinated to the demands of official propaganda. The leading educational posts are filled by trusted Soviet officials. A young reader in history in Kiev has been appointed Rector of the old Lwow University. The use of the Polish language is discouraged, the Ukrainian and White Russian languages are those in which lectures are delivered, and Russian has become a compulsory subject. Textbooks

LEWIS MOVE ON F.D.R. REFLECTS MASS FEELINGS

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auto, rubber, oil—the very nerve centers of American economy. Lewis has seen the militant workers of these industries in battle. He knows their indomitable courage and their determination to win economic security for themselves and their families.

Knows What Is Coming

Lewis has learned, in the recent years, to understand what independent strength the American trade unions possess. Disturbed by the deep, subterranean rumblings of dissatisfaction throughout the country, Lewis is beginning to roar out against the New Deal and its agents. He is demanding a higher price for the support of Labor. He understands the impending revolt and is determined to lead it. To lead it, of course, in a "safe" direction, not toward the necessary Labor Party but back into a deal with capitalist politicians.

Obviously, Lewis made no effort to reach an agreement on his new anti-Roosevelt policy with the other top officials of the CIO, prior to its presentation to the Miners convention. The next day, Hillman, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and Emil Rieve, President of the United Textile Workers of America, rejected the Lewis policy and urged continued support for a Roosevelt "third term." David Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, independent of both the AFL and CIO, is expected to take a similar stand this week in the magazine *Newsweek*.

Sure of His Ground

Lewis is keenly aware of this opposition inside the CIO, but is convinced that economic conditions and the dissatisfaction on the part of millions make it obligatory to break with Roosevelt and take the leadership of this new movement. This, Lewis believes, will fully compensate for the non-support of Hillman. It is, of course, a foregone conclusion that all mid-western unions will follow the Lewis policy and that it will carry in the CIO Executive Board.

Lewis and his lieutenants are convinced that the coming period will be marked by great expansion of all war industries and that the CIO, with its industrial structure and its modern and aggressive methods of organization, will be enabled to win definite hegemony of the trade union movement. That is why he is determined that the CIO unions and policies, under no conditions, be subordinated to the moribund AFL Executive Council. This constitutes Lewis's answer, in effect, to the "peace campaign" of Dan Tobin of the Teamsters Union.

Fight For Labor Party!

Progressives in every local union must now convince all rank and file unionists of the utter bankruptcy, not only of the old-fashioned Gompers' "reward your friends and punish your enemies" politics, but also the streamlined Lewis version of playing around with capitalist politicians. The bankruptcy of the old policies in this field must be utilized to force the unions to break completely with all "company unionism" in the sphere of politics and to utilize the energy, finances, and strength of the unions to build an independent political party of labor, based on a fighting program for jobs, security and the struggle against fascism and war.

Two Views: Front and Back

Stalinists and the New Deal

By CHRIS ANDREWS

"The New Deal lamb has laid down with the 'reactionary lion.' So cried Earl Browder to the Communist Party members gathered in Madison Square Garden on January 22.

It was only yesterday that Browder and the whole Stalinist press were lavishing their praise on the "progressive" New Deal and advising all good Communists to support Roosevelt. Now today they wait of "betrayal," and "ingratitude." Is it true? Do the Stalinists really have a right to speak of "betrayal"? Were the Honest Stalinists really deceived by the Bad New Dealers with False Promises?

The Socialist Workers Party in its press long ago analyzed the venal and degenerate corruption of the Stalinist leadership. One thing, however, we never charged against Browder and his lackeys—we never said they were so stupid as to honestly "believe" in the New Deal they supported. It was precisely the fact that they always knew from the beginning the falseness of Roosevelt's promises to the masses, that they understood completely the sham character of his "reforms"—it was precisely this fact that made the Stalinist betrayal so much more heinous and criminal.

THEY KNEW BETTER IN 1933-1935

To prove this, it is only necessary to turn back to the Stalinists' analysis of the first years of Roosevelt. Leaving aside for the moment the editorial pages of the *Daily Worker* where, day after day, the Stalinists in Third Period delirium described Roosevelt as a "Fascist"—let us cite exclusively from the more sober, more carefully prepared "Labor Fact Book" of the Stalinists, published by International Publishers, using the volumes of 1934 and 1935, where the New Deal measures were carefully reviewed.

Here is what they said THEN:

"In their attempt to find a way out of the crisis, the capitalist class and its government in Washington have used various tactics. Especially since the inauguration of Roosevelt on March 4, 1933, one program after another has been announced as a way to 'recovery.' (Please note—not the People's Government then—but 'the capitalist class and its government.' C. A.)

About NRA: "NIRA is the keystone of the Roosevelt 'New Deal' structure. This act greatly accelerates the development of mon-

opoly capitalism in the United States." For example: "The iron and steel code, according to a recent Federal Trade Commission report, placed domination of the policies of the steel industry in the hands of the major units; resulted in sharp price increases and price fixing; and legalized monopolistic practices and aims previously by the Commission."

How about the workers under Roosevelt? The Stalinists told us then—

"The so-called 'right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing,' has proved to be a delusion for workers and a weapon for employers to prevent organization and/or force through their company union schemes."

"The open shop has been legalized by the inclusion in the automobile code of the notorious 'merit' clause as well as by Roosevelt's statement in a letter to General Johnson, 'clarifying' Section 7 (a) and stating that 'there is nothing in the provision of Section 7 (a) to interfere with the bona fide exercise of the right of an employer to select, retain, or advance employees on the basis of individual merit.'"

"That strike-breaking is one of the chief aims of NRA has been proven by Recovery Administrator's statements, code provisions, agreements prohibiting strikes, and published advice from NRA encouraging establishment of strike-breaking machinery."

On the National Labor Board: Delay, exhausting the physical endurance and financial resources of the strikers, while at the same time giving the employers ample time to fortify their already strong positions, has been the principal tactic employed by the labor boards in weakening workers' militancy.

"The NRA has widened the gap between the purchasing power of the consuming masses and the cost of living." It first established a fixed and very low level of wages."

On the Roosevelt Budget: The Roosevelt budget is designed to support the tottering financial structure, to reduce the taxes of the capitalist class to a minimum, and carry through the inflation scheme, all at the expense of the working masses."

YES, THEY SAID THIS IN THESE EARLY DAYS!

On PWA: "The entire plan of the Public Works Administration has been revealed as largely a program for war preparations,

and as a scheme to create illusions among the working masses and to turn them away from the struggle for unemployment and social insurance."

On Negro workers: "Conditions of Negroes have grown worse under the NRA. With the adoption of NRA codes thousands have been fired and replaced by white workers on jobs where Negroes were being paid less than the established minimum wage scales. Low NRA wage minimums were considered 'too much money for Negroes.' The Federal government itself has given legal sanction to this discrimination policy, long the practice of southern employers, by providing lower wage scales in southern states aimed especially at the Negroes. Black workers in some instances are exempt even from the low minimums of the code."

The Stalinists today could congratulate themselves upon their expert analysis of the New Deal. They could tell the workers that they predicted all along the present drive against organized labor by Roosevelt, the continuance of the crisis, the prosperity at the top for the big corporations, the banks and the whole parasitic Sixty families, the grinding poverty at the bottom back in 1934, they understood correctly the real character of the New Deal.

But they will not so remind the workers. Because every reminder would evoke the bitter response: "If you knew then, why did you lie to us afterwards?"

THEN AND NOW, THEY SERVE STALIN'S GAME

Yes, the Stalinists knew just what Roosevelt was, and what he represented. But then came the order from Moscow. Stalin's foreign policy, from 1935 until 1939, required playing ball with Roosevelt. It did not matter to Browder and his gang that Roosevelt, before and after 1935, was the same Roosevelt, that in the years 1935-1939 his measures against the workers increased. Stalin's voice was louder in their ears than the anguished voices of the hungry and jobless. With their skillful propaganda, they set about making Roosevelt into a lamb.

And now, after five years of service of this kind to Roosevelt, Stalin has ordered a new change. Now they cry out against Roosevelt. For how long? For what purpose? NOT on behalf of the masses whom they so long lied to Roosevelt! Now, as before, they are doing Stalin's dirty work.

are sent from Kharkov, Kiev, and Minsk.

So far the authorities have refrained from much anti-religious propaganda. Clerics who engage in political activities are persecuted, but for political reasons and not as expressions of an anti-religious drive. The separation of church and State, one of the cardinal points in the old Bolshevik program, was not included in the agenda of the National Assemblies.

All spheres of communal life in the occupied territories, whether economic, political or cultural, are in a state of flux. Nothing is definite, save one thing, the determination of the Moscow government to maintain absolute control. The new masters show an unceasing disapproval of all, even Soviet, forms of local self-government.

Will the Soviet regime be able to establish itself firmly in the former Polish provinces? Internal difficulties will be certainly great. The Russians will have to overcome considerable resistance, both Polish and Ukrainian. But the chances of establishing the new regime will not depend so much on internal factors as on the development of the international situation and the course of relations between Moscow and Berlin.

UMW SCORES CUTS IN AID TO JOBLESS

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discussion and denounced the U.S. Bureau of Mines as "anti-union." He attacked Secretary Ickes for previously ignoring the recommendation of the United Mine Workers and demanded a voice in the selection of the Bureau's next director.

"We know what the coal operators of this country want," Lewis exclaimed. "They want to continue what they consider to be their inalienable right to butcher men in the mining industry, rather than spend the money to make the mines safe."

"No member of the Federal Congress has been required to gather up the charred remains of men burned to death in the mines and to carry these burnt bodies to the undertaker. If the members of the Congress had done this," he continued sarcastically, "they would find time to take five minutes to pass at least the Neely Bill."

Demand Law As Right

Lewis added that the miners "do not ask the passage of the Neely Bill as a favor, they demand it as a right."

The 82 page Officers' report pointed out that the Bureau of Mines was guilty of a "series of bureaucratic regulations, and pappasfooting the real issues." The report further pointed out that even if the Neely Bill becomes law, its effects will be nullified unless the Bureau of Mines is organized to "exclude the present evils of incompetence, inexperience and the transfer of funds to relatively unimportant functions."

For Anti-Lynch Law

The convention also passed resolutions endorsing federal anti-lynching legislation and instructed the International officers to work for passage of "an anti-lynching bill in this session of Congress."

The convention lashed out fiercely against the Dies Committee which it described as "the greatest achievement" of anti-labor forces that specialize in "skillful propaganda to demoralize and turn the community against organized labor."

District Autonomy Loses

As in every recent Miners convention, the fight for the restoration of district autonomy took most time and occupied greatest attention under the discussion of the Officers Report. In spite of the determined fight of numerous delegates from West Virginia and Illinois for the restoration of district autonomy, the combined pressure of Lewis and his lieutenants was sufficient to defeat the measure and to force continuance of the old policy, with power lodged in the hands of the International Executive Board to grant each district autonomy as it sees fit.

The Miners Union, one of the most militant and progressive in the country, continues to be run in a highly autocratic manner by the top machine headed by Lewis.

Auto Workers Want Action

They Want Security On The Job And A Decent Living — And Nothing Less Will Serve

By JULES GELLER

FLINT, Michigan—A mass rally of 5,000 General Motors workers here on January 21 served to underline with startling clarity both the growing militancy of the auto workers and the incapacity of the official union leaders to make progressive use of the fighting spirit of the union men.

Much the greatest stress was placed, by George Addes, International Secretary Treasurer of the United Auto Workers (UAW), upon the need for "responsibility" and condemnation of outlaw strikes.

The present leaders are unable to understand the current wave of unrest and outcry for action which is shaking every plant to its foundations. Their only answer to the pressure of the ranks is a decree against "irresponsible" slow-downs and strikes.

Fundamental Needs Cry Out

The wave of sporadic slow-downs and repeated struggles which break out daily in plant after plant, in a sort of disorganized guerrilla warfare against the corporations, expresses the fact that the auto workers are being pressed to the wall by their bosses.

The auto workers are looking desperately for a solution to their need for security, a steady job. Men on the production line are restless, jittery, ill-tempered . . . looking for a way out of their insecurity, trying to find an answer to their need for a job—not six months out of the year, not subject to the whim of Du Pont or Sloan—but a guaranteed income twelve months out of the year, every year, day in and day out. Now production goes up, several thousands more go to work—next month out they go. From this fundamental situation arise the daily protests.

Those with the courage to see the truth recognize that to secure the justifiable demands of the workers means a most determined battle against the corporations—and against the power of the state which would undoubtedly be mustered to back the corporations.

Ranks Unafraid of Struggle

The rank and file is not afraid of this prospect. They showed it at the rally, as they stamped, cheered and shouted lustily every time the 30 hour week at 40 hours pay was so much as mentioned. It is this spirit of struggle which the "leaders" fear to unleash. They have not forgotten the sit-downs.

Since this meeting, the General Motors Department of the UAW has published in the union paper the demands it intends to submit to the corporation.

There is a peculiar separation of these demands into two categories—"immediate" and "basic." According to this arbitrary separation, the UAW negotiating committee will ask only routine improvements in grievance procedure and in seniority regulations in the parleys with General Motors.

The "basic" demands: (1) Guaranteed annual wage, 30-hour week of five six-hour days for 40-hours pay; (2) Complete recognition of shop steward system; (3) Vacations with pay for all employees covered by the contract; etc.—none of these will be presented in the present parleys with the corporation. They will be left to gather dust until after the NLRB elections.

In other words, the UAW is offering in reality only a routine program which cannot by any measure be said to meet the real demands of the workers. If the corporation refuses to grant even the routine demands, the auto workers will be faced with the prospect of a long and debilitating strike at the end of which a victory will bring them no nearer their real goal.

On the other hand, if the corporation grants the routine demands, the real issue will only be postponed. The NLRB elections will probably be held after the peak of the production season. No effective struggle can be waged in slack season for the "basic" demands.

But the ranks are getting tired of waiting. The glaring injustices of the system of private profit is becoming increasingly unbearable.

The Money Is There!

General Motors will declare a net profit for 1939 of at least \$150,000,000. One-fourth of this tremendous loot sweated out of the workers will go to the DuPont dynasty, all the rest to a small group of coupon-clippers. That net profit would put 100,000 unemployed to work in the plant at a yearly average wage of about \$1500.

Think of it! 100,000 men could be given a year-round guaranteed wage, the work week could be cut down to 20 hours and the same productive capacity preserved, if . . . if the auto workers would take back what rightfully belongs to them.

The growing realization of these facts is what is causing turmoil and unrest in the auto plants. A desire to rectify the situation, to break the bonds and chains which hold down production, which lock out hundreds of thousands of workers, is what is bringing about the so-called "out-law" actions in waves in the plants.

It is clear the UAW leadership does not take seriously a struggle for the real interests of the auto workers. They are frightened by the prospect of the struggle. Insofar as the demands of the workers are advanced at all, it is under pressure from the ranks, as mere lip-service. Only the organization of this pressure against the Reuther-Thomas leadership will put the struggle for the real demands of the auto workers on the order of the day.

A woman with a high bred air, carrying a Pekinese under her arm, entered a Minneapolis store recently, and when the dog showed signs of thirst she took it over to the water fountain and gave the beast a drink. Seeing this, a floor-walker timidly suggested that "Our customers might not like to drink after a dog." Hearing this, the lady is frightfully taken aback. "Oh, pardon me," she exclaimed: "I thought that fountain was for your clerks!"