Colonial Workers Are Refusing to Bear the Burdens of War

British Soldiers Shoot Down Blacks

Negroes of Africa, in Plight as Tragic As that of Jews under Hitler, Fight **Back in Militant Strikes**

York TIMES (April 4) reported whites or in the mines in order to that in Northern Rhodesia troops pay the taxes. killed ten natives and wounded The effect of these laws can be twenty others when they fired on judged by the number of convictcopper mine strikers. The shoot- ions under them. In Rhodesia ing started when 3,000 strikers, they rose from 8,940 in 1927 to who have been out since March 19.773 in 1935 and have been on 17 to enforce demands for a 25 the increase since. per cent increase in wages with a further 5 per cent to cover the rise in the cost of living, tried to prevent 150 strikebreakers from dinance classifies as punishable drawing their pay.

and oppression hardly equalled out instructions, neglect of duty, tives are completely disfranch- imprisonment or more, and fines. ised, and economically are re-Robbed by the British of their desia. The value of copper prothe Jews under the swastika.

Racial Laws Enforced

The liberties of the natives in ing companies. employment are restricted. The main laws are the Pass Laws and the Masters and Servants Ordinances. The Pass Laws are a series of ordinances detailing a dozen or more passes that the natives cure and carry with them.

the employer each month-pro- holding any skilled or unskilled ment. viding him with a useful weapon; job. to another; the night pass which a native needs if he is abroad employment and Old Age Insurafter the hour of 9 p.m.; and the ance, the Shop Hours Act, etc. receipt for the current poll tax.

Forced Labor

The natives are thus forced to wages.

A special cable in the New work on the plantations of the

Slaves Are Profitable

The Masters and Servants Oroffences the breaking of a labor Back of this strike is a story of | contract, absence from work miserable conditions, exploitation without leave, refusal to carry elsewhere. Politically these na- etc. The punishment is one month

Enormous profits are extracted duced to the status of slaves. from the mines of Northern Rholands, deprived of all means of duced by the mines in 1938 was economic existence, taxed in or- £8,210,000. Out of this aggregate, der to compel them to go to work £3.100.000 was paid in dividends, for the Europeans at starvation while £1,750,000 went in wages, wages, herded into reserves and the bulk to 1,800 European emcompounds, the lot of the natives ployees, who received £1,250,000. of South Africa, and the Rhodes- The 15,000 Africans employed in ias is no less tragic than that of the most ardous labor earned among them \$500,000. This latter figure includes the cost of food, housing, etc., supplied by the min-

Coolie Wages

shillings to 23 and a half shillings nationalist movement. must in various circumstances se- (\$1.30 to \$5.00) a month. Al-

The natives are denied all bene-

General Strike in 1935

This is not the first time that All of these passes cost the na- the native copper miners have tive cash and especially the poll gone out on strike. All the native tax, which must be paid under miners went out on a general penalty of additional fines or im- strike in May, 1935. The soldiers prisonment at hard labor. In or- opened fire and killed ten natives der to pay the poll tax and other and wounded others. The miners taxes and at the same time sup- were supported by the native doport themselves and their fami- mestic servants employed by the lies, the natives must produce Europeans. The strike at that crops for the market or work in time, like the one now, had a definite political character. It But the natives have been rob- protested the policy of the govbed of all their best lands and ernment of Northern Rhodesia, herded into reserves where the which increased the poll tax from land is hardly sufficient to pro- 10 to 15 shillings, while the minduce enough to feed themselves. ing companies refused to increase

West Indian Negro Dock and March 1, by the Nagpur Textile Workers Union. This step was Plantation Workers Striking fused to grant the demands of the union for full restoration of

Three trade unionists in Port- acts in any manner may be prej- increase in wages to meet the inof-Spain, British Trinidad, were udicial to public safety and de- creased cost of living. A meeting convicted in March on a charge fense." Persons detained under of the Provincial Trade Union of violating the war regulations; this emergency law in British Congress was called to consider the Emergency Defense Act. The colonies are denied right of ha- steps to help the general strike men were arrested for demon- beas corpus but may make repre- of the textile workers. strating in sympathy with strik- sentations to an Advisory Coming employes of the Trinidad mittee appointed by the Gover- in the weaving department of the Electric Board at Belmont in defi- nor. In Trinidad this committee ance of the ban against the as- is comprised of one Negro judge semblying of more tifan ten per- and two local whites.

Shouts of "This is an example] of British justice!" greeted the "good" conduct henceforth.

flag during the demonstration ones. and O'Connor, another of the deand British justice.

The Amsterdam News report-

"With attempts by the local the strikers and deny their demands for higher wages and humane working conditions, the people of the city and country as a whole are aroused to the point of violence, a dispatch stated. But British oppression existence while it takes everything it can get to fight a war in distant lands, it concluded."

Uriah Butler, the crippled la-

Unions Growing

Trade unionism, as a result of judge as he fined the workers \$15 Butler's efforts, has made reeach or 21 days in prison, at the markable progress in Trinidad. same time imposing a \$50 bond Today there are 18 trade unions. upon each to guarantee their Collective bargaining is develop- April 2 and latest reports are that Alloy Donawa, one of the de- major industries and promises to fendants, had raised a large red extend to the less well-organized

Oil field workers have just won fendants, denounced the judge a further wage increase of two cents per hour plus a war bonus of one-half cent per hour for every five points rise in the cost of living. Workers now receive of the Legislative Council are seems a foregone conclusion. The the Indies from falling into Jagovernment, hiding behind its |90 cents to \$1.12 per day accordso-called war powers, to crush ing to the job and skill. Out of about 9,000 oil workers in Trinidad, 8,000 are organized.

Kingston Dockers Strike

In Kingston, Jamaica, British West Indies, workers on three importance" clause, the governor well enough. docks went on strike, demanding orders the members of the Legiscontinues to keep the working |48 cents an hour and an eight lative Council to vote with the masses at a starvation level of hour day, charging that since government on any question 1938, they have been paid 20 which is considered essential to cents an hour and forced to work the maintenance of British aueleven hours.

bor leader is still held in "pre- last week in February of the In- members, a sort of House of ventive arrest" at a concentra- dustrial Trade Union led by Bus- Lords group in the Legislature, is tion camp on Nelson Island. But- tamente "called upon the work- used to vote down the elected ler is held "as a native whose ing classes not to allow hypocrit- members.

Together with Workers at Home They Workers of Shanghai Will Smash the Rule of Slaveholders

One after another the leading spokesmen of the British and French Empires repeat reassuring speeches about the "unity" of their empires with the motherlands in the European death struggle for domination of the world's wealth.

Anthony Eden the other day contrasted the barbarism of Hitler's domain with the "equality of development" under British rule. But behind these empty phrases lies the harsh hunger of 500,000,000 black, brown, and yellow peoples, held in the iron vise of a rule no less barbaric than that of Hitler.

It is this rule that Hitler seeks in this war to grasp for himself. It is this rule that the British Empire is fighting to maintain. That is the sum and substance of the war.

But if the peoples of Asia and Africa had only the choice between Hitler and the British there could be no hope left at all for a freer world to come.

Fortunately they are not confined to these choices. They have the alternative choice of fighting and winning their own freedom, of uniting in a socialist commonwealth with the workers of the Western world and setting out with them to build a new kind of world from which war and oppression shall be forever

Although the war is only a few months old and the struggle is only in its first stages, there is already ample evidence that this fight for freedom is on its way. It is not the fight for Britain against Germany, or for Germany against Britain, but the fight of all the oppressed peoples against all the rulers who hold them in subjection.

The British Empire, greatest imperial conglomeration of them all, the product of five centuries of wars, massacres, rapine, and successive seizures of the resources of vast areas of the five continents, is already displaying great rents in its fabric.

India, greatest of all colonies, a nation of 375,000,000, is once more pregnant with revolt. The workers of India have already shown in great mass strikes that they do not intend to take on their knees the war lash of the British raj. Under the pressure of these great masses, the Indian nationalist movement is advancing into an era of fresh open struggle against Britain. In the House of Commons last week, a government spokesman warned that this movement will be met with force. He said Britain would not and could not give India its independence. He was right. The Indian people will have to take it.

Not even wartime censorship has been able to conceal completely the growth of unrest among the colonial peoples. Strikes in all parts of the empire from Africa to the West Indies are beginning to reveal what really lies behind the "unity" of the great domain. In these unfolding struggles the determination of the black, brown, and yellow peoples of the world to cease being the packhorses of Western capitalist civilization grows and in the end will prevail.

They, and not Hitler, Chamberlain, Reynaud, Daladier & Co. shall say the final word in this war. As the workers of Britain, France, Germany, and the warring countries of the near future, the United States, Italy, and the rest of Europe, raise their heads in struggle against the war makers, they will find their most powerful support in the struggles of the subject peoples in the colonies. In the combination of these two currents lies the future hope of society.

Indian Masses Answer British Masters With Waves of Militant Strikes

coolie wage of from 7 and a half pressure force behind the Indian previously.

When you read about Gandhi February 26 by the Joint Board ing wage increases.

strikes. Here are a few of them: Over 1,000 workers at the Gen-

ized in the General Motors Workers Union, were on strike for 13 days in February. The workers won 10 to 15 percent wage increases. The workers picketed the der to prevent scabs from enter-

ers at the brick kilns at Cawn- creases pore ended following the granting of wage increases.

At Dacca, the management of the textile mills declared a lockout after 6,000 workers went out on strike. Forty of the strikers were arrested for picketing.

A general strike was called for wage cuts and for a 35 percent

On February 14, the workers

ical Imperialism to fool them in the colonies."

Jamaica "Okies" Strike

In Jamaica the workers on the various farms of the United Fruit Company went out on strike on ing on a permanent basis in the the strike is rapidly spreading, The workers are striking for higher wages and against the repressive actions of the officials of the company.

> Jamaica is faced with a constitutional crisis because the governor used his veto to retain the tax commissioner for another stretching 3,000 miles across the two years. The elected members South Seas is lost to Holland will go to prevent the wealth of protesting the governors use of Dutch have extracted its wealth pan's hands will be determined, "paramount importance" for nearly three centuries and of course, by how the war in genclause of the Jamaica Constitu- now, with the world being re-di- eral develops. That they do not

British "Democracy"

By invoking the "paramount The Dutch capitalists realize this to the Journal of Commerce on thority and prestige. The com-A speaker at a meeting the bined vote of the government

Since the war began, India has staged a sit-down strike, demand- cer advised the workers to accept been swept by a wave of militant ing wage increases. Workers in a small wage increase but they The natives are thus paid a strikes that constitute the real Mill No. 1 struck a few days demanded more. All the workers

> ship, it is now possible to give a the largest in Ahmedabad since their notice demanding wage in-January and February, published wages. "The view is held in milk-strike on February 21. almost daily reports of these agent circles that the strike declared by the Textile Labor As- payment of a 30 per cent wage

roads leading to the plant in or- February 15 still continues. Over The union is preparing for strike IN CEYLON, TOO 1.200 workers including clerks are action to secure its demand. participating. The main demand The strike of over 3,000 work- of the workers is for wage in- wage increase was made in a re- February 27.

continues according to latest re- action.

Stories and the screen have!

We're witnessing now a sim-

ilar sort of scene, with the

Great Powers hovering hun-

grily over the Dutch East In-

dies, waiting their opportunity

to sink their claws into it as

soon as Holland is laid pros-

Chief of the waiting vultures

are, of course, the U.S. and

Japan, both of which have now

served notice upon each other

and upon the world that they

intend to have the final say

That the great archipelago

After both Japan and the

U. S. had issued statements

about the "status quo" of the

islands - (neither one, of

course, means a Dutch status

quo)-the Netherlands govern-

ment announced that it has

"neither demanded nor would

accept protection for the is-

lands whatever its source" and

asserted their ability to defend

about the fate of the Indies.

trate by war in Europe.

made familiar to us the manner

in which vultures begin to swoop

By ROBERT L. BIRCHMAN | Victoria Mills No. 2 in Bombay ports. The Government Labor offiat the Job Press, biggest press in A general strike was called on Cawnpore are on strike demand-

sociation will be a tough and pro- increase as of December, 1939, eral Motors, Ltd., Bombay, organ-longed struggle." Two of the was passed at a general meeting strike leaders have been arrested. of the Bombay Port trust Em-Latest reports are that the sit- ployees Union on February 19. down strike at the Saharanpur The resolution states that there 25 percent rise in pay. Cigarette Factory at Cawnpore, has been a 40 per cent rise in the United Province, which began on cost of living since August, 1939. BRITISH HAVING TROUBLE

solution passed at the annual The strike at the Lallamal Har- meeting of the B.B. and C.I. Raildeodas Cotton Textile Mills in waymen's Union of Bombay. Both Cawnpore started on February 11 unions are preparing for strike al of Police, who declined to ac-

themselves against any attack,

likewise whatever its source.

. In the press of both coun-

tries this immediately unloosed

a flood of accusations and coun-

ter-accusations that both gov-

ernments contemplated seizing

the islands at the first favor-

able opportunity. Both, of

course, were right. The word

"protection" has taken on a

new meaning, especially since

the Allies and Germany both

set out at about the same time

Just how far U. S. imperialism

"There is some doubt that

the United States would at-

tempt to protect [there's that

word protect again!] the Dutch

possessions unless Holland

ceded them under a protecto-

rate. This would give the

United States an exclusive

right which no government

could contest except at risk of

to "protect" Norway.

April 17 which stated:

opments in Europe.

Behind the Lines

The Struggle Between Japan and U.S.

Over Which Is to Plunder the Indies

The latest report available on the strike of over 150,000 textile workers in Bombay that started early in March indicate that a majority of the workers are still out.

though the native workers are in coming around to talking about of Representatives of the Ahmed- The textile workers in Shalapur 29) reports that when the mills General Edison Company. ure and carry with them.

In overwhelming majority in the a "civil disobedience campaign" abad Textile Labor Association, are preparing for a strike and reopened after the Easter Holi-They include the labor con-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorch-tract, giving details of tribe and mines, there is a rigid Color Bar you know he is feeling the scorchpay, which has to be stamped by Act, which prevents them from pay, which has to be stamped by Act, which prevents them from ling heat of the Indian mass movemember was reported as voting seventh week is still going strong. workers." A government law now by the Shanghai Municipal Coun-Despite the wartime censor- against the strike. The strike is Receiving no favorable reply to forbids picketing except by two cil struck for and won additional the "special pass" required by a native moving from one district fits of labor legislation, such as considerable list of these Indian 1923 and involves over 100,000 creases the municipal sweepers of 64 mills were able to start were occurring at the Chinese Workmen's Compensation, Un struggles of recent months. The workers are de- and menial servants at Shalapur work. The workers went out on Wing On textile mill, the Bri-

> cost of living. went out on strike demanding a lances, represents a wage in U.S.

All the Ministers in the State A demand for a 40 percent Council of Ceylon resigned on

> The resignations are a protest against the support given by the Governor to the Inspector-Genercede to the request of the Minister of Home Affairs that he should instruct police officials to consent to postponement of the trial of the leaders of a strike on the Mooloya Estate. The Ministers wanted a postponement until a Commission, appointed by the Governor at the request of the State Council, had made public its inquiry into the shooting by the police of one of the strikers.

It is expected that there will be demand for dissolution of the Ceylon parliament.

Both Foreign Minister Arita The plantation owners and big and circle over a man lost in a and Secretary of State Cordell business interests in Ceylon are wilderness waste, waiting to Hull issued statements declaring now urging the British Governpounce down upon him for the in almost identical terms that feast as soon as life leaves him. neither country wanted to see the Ceylon and make it less liberal status quo of the rich East Indies than the present one. changed as a result of the devel-

JUST OUT!

WHY we Defenct Soviet Union By ALBERT GOLDMAN vided by the greater, more pow- mean to do so out of any altruerful plunderers, the time has istic motives was stated quite come for them to be displaced. bluntly in a Washington dispatch

> BUNDLE RATES: 10 to 25 copies-3 cents each 26 copies or more-21/2 cents each summoned to release the officials,

Send Remittance with Order

Pioneer Publishers 116 University Place New York City

In Militant Strikes

Face Guns and Bayonets of Invaders and Other Powers in Broad Revival of Union Struggles for Living Wage

Shanghai, scene of a minor in- | rooms congratulating sharedustrial boom because of the inreased demand for domesticallyproduced goods, has also been the scene in recent weeks of a sharp revival of working class activity. This period has been marked by series of important strikes, fought with the dogged militancy so characteristic of the Chinese workers.

Strikers in Shanghai not merely have ordinary police to contend with but come into almost immediate direct conflict with soldiers and marines of the powers who have divided the city into "defense" zones. The Japanese, Italian, British, French, American is beginning to sap the strength marines and troops are used reg- of those now living and threatularly to eject sit-down strikers ens the generations unborn." and to patrol struck plants.

ployes of a British-owned omni- imported. bus company which won a 30 percent wage increase and a fixed price on rice bought through the rual report of the Shanghai Mucompany. The strikers in this nicipal Police published the last case were tear-gassed out of the week in February, there were 96 bus depot by Italian marines strikes involving 24,628 workers called in by the British-dominated in the International Settlement as Municipal Police. The depot was compared with 21 involving 6,149 in the Italian "zone." A few days workers in 1938. Forty-six of the earlier the same Italian marines 96 strikes were directly connected drive sit-downers out of the plant | problem; the others were linked The Times of London (March of the American-owned China to the same problem in one way

Other Notable Strikes

Some 2,500 laborers employed persons at each mill. Only 24 out rice allowances. Other strikes "Times of India" of Bombay, in manding a 25 percent increase in formed a union and called a strike demanding a 25 percent tish-American tobacco company wage increase to meet the rising plants, and along the water-duplicated in one degree or anfront where dock workers of the other in all the principal indust-The New York Times (April 1) Shanghai Tug and Lighter Co. rial centers seized by the Japreports that 15,000 municipal struck for increases from their anese. street cleaners in Calcutta are \$17 (Mex.) per month wages. still out after a week's time. They This, together with rice allow-

> On March 2 the China Weekly Review said editorially:

> equivalent of less than \$2 a

"Industrial plants and enterprises, in nearly all their main branches, made record profits last year, while on the clear cut showing of the competent authorities the producers of this profit have never been worse off. While company chairmen have sat in comfortable board

holders on exceptionally successful working years, hungry crowds have been raiding rice shops in the often vain hope of purchasing a little of the food whose price has soared way beyoud the reach of their slender pocket-books. Investigators have ascertained that workers in the Western District, largest industrial area of the city, are now reduced to living on rice alone-and not very much of that. Vegetables, meat and fish-not to speak of such luxuries as fruit-are utterly beyond their reach. Malnutrition

Rice is now more than four Despite these odds, the strikes times the price at which it could have been growing in numbers be bought prior to the hostilities and effectiveness. The most rec- in 1937. There have been huge ent report to reach here is of a increases in nearly all'commodistrike on Feb. 29 of 2,000 em- tes, both locally produced and

Strikers Quadruple In Year In 1939, according to the an-

used their tear gas bombs to with the wages and cost of living or another.

> It is from such beginnings, rooted in the starkest necessity known by any workers in the world, that the re-grouping of the Chinese workers in the imperialist-occupied centers will take place-indeed, is already taking place.

The situation in Shanghai is

Three years of war and the heavy heel of the would-be conquerors have not obliterated the will to live and in this will deep within the Chinese working class the Japanese and all other exploiters, Chinese, British, American, French, confront the force destined to overcome them all. The Chinese worker has rigen again and again, re-formed his shattered ranks and organizations, and plunged forward into struggle. He is doing it again today in

Burma Protests Forced Role As Supporting Britain's War

of Burma passed a resolution on work" and that "it was impos-February 24 protesting that the sible for the government to tol-British had included Burma in the erate acts of this kind." Many of war between Great Britain and the strike leaders, all Chinese, Germany "without the consent of were behind prison bars charged the people of Burma and have with the offense of "prejudicing ment to recast the constitution of further, in complete disregard of the war efforts". Burmese opinion, passed laws and adopted measures curtailing the powers and activities of the Burma Government." The resolution thorities the strike was continudemanded "that Burma should be ing. One can gather, from the recognized as an independent nation entitled to frame her own Governor of the Straits Settleconstitution and further that suitable action should be taken, the Federated Malay States, at in the immediate present to give effect to that principle in regard to the government of Burma."

In Singapore, main naval base ment against the increased cost of British Imperialism in the Far of living. The Governor stated: East there have been important strikes recently. From the meager press reports it appears that what was described as only a strike among dock workers employed by the Harbor Board was, in fact, a movement of much larger proportions.

The Jan. 18 London Times mentioned casually that three to four hundred workers engaged in the hospitals also struck. Workers in a cane factory beseiged four English officials of the factory and fought the police who had been using bottles as missiles. The Times correspondent declared emphatically that the strikes would "not hamper naval work and shipping will not be affect-

And yet before two days had passed, it was reported that "the have spoken thus."

The House of Representatives strike was hampering military

The last reports available 4. form us that in spite of the strong action taken by the auspeech of Sir Shenton Thomas, the Legislative Council in Singapore on February 12, that there is a growing trade union move-

"We have evidence that trash which is circulated among the labor classes is often violently seditious. Many recent strikes were planned not by the workers but by subversive organizations. Every power we possess shall be brought against the enemies of the state. They a disciples of those against whom the Empire is now fighting. I warn them that sedition is one of the most serious offenses it is possible to commit in war time. Singapore is not a hot bed of sedition-a small minority wants to lead the people to violence and unrest and, be cause of what may happen if this insidious and malignant disease is not cut off now, I