

The Negro Struggle

By ALBERT PARKER

The Struggle Against Jim Crow

Two of the most important questions facing the masses of Negroes today are (1) winning equal rights in the armed forces of the nation, where they are being Jim Crowed by the government, and (2) getting jobs in the rapidly expanding war industries, from which they have been generally excluded by the bosses.

The first is as important as the second, if only because what is involved here is governmental endorsement of the principles of Jim Crowism, which can then be pointed to by the advocates of "white supremacy" as a pattern for all spheres of American life. But in an immediate sense, the second is more important in that today this question is agitating more of the Negro people.

And after all, look at what is going on: The whole economy of the nation is being shifted to a war basis. Production of all the great and important industries is being reorganized and expanded. The factories and machinery which the bosses kept idle for over ten years when people were starving are now being opened and put to use to produce the instruments of war. The bosses and their corporations are rolling in profits. The cost of living is going up for everyone, but so far most of the unions have managed to boost wages along accordingly, so that the standard of living of many of the white workers is no worse than it was before.

But where are the Negroes in this busy picture?

One industry after another bars them altogether from jobs that pay even a half-decent wage. They occupy only two kinds of jobs in the vast majority of the war industries that do hire them: in the menial, non-productive positions, or at the hardest and worst paid laboring jobs. The cost of living is going up for them as well as others, but because they are excluded from the better-paying jobs in the strategic industries, their income isn't able to keep up with it. The hullabaloo about the "end of unemployment" is being used as a good pretext in each state to slash the relief budget and the relief rolls far more sharply than ever before. Negroes who want to work and can't get jobs suffer from this more than white workers, because at least some of the white workers are able to escape from the need of getting relief for the time being.

In short, the Negroes are being left out in the cold. The old saying about "the last to be hired" is still true.

A Correct Understanding Necessary

There are many obstacles that must be faced and overcome if this situation is to be corrected, and the doors of the war industries thrown open to the Negro workers.

First of all, there is the opposition of the bosses, of the ruling class that owns and controls industry, who want to keep the workers divided along racial lines: "divide and rule." Included as part of this is the government; acting in the interests of the bosses, it does nothing to interfere with their exclusion of Negroes from the important industries, but endorses it by its own treatment of the Negroes in the armed forces and civil service.

Secondly, there is the antagonism on the part of some, not all, white workers, who have been badly miseducated and have fallen for the propaganda of the bosses, and have thus permitted themselves to be used to weaken the strength of labor as a whole, including themselves.

And thirdly, there is the misunderstanding among many Negro workers themselves, expressed in an incorrect attitude toward the trade unions. We intend, in coming issues, to devote ourselves to a discussion of the entire problem. But here we want to touch briefly on one aspect of the third question, about which we have been asked to comment by some comrades who have run into it in the course of their distribution of the *Appeal* to Negro workers.

Especially in the smaller industrial cities, some Negroes have come to feel a hostility toward the entire labor movement. We say to them: "The unions belong to the working class, they belong to you; true, they must be reformed, and the scissorbill leadership of some of the unions must give way to a truly representative, progressive, rank-and-file leadership—but the unions belong to the workers and they themselves must make these changes." But these Negroes reply as follows:

"We don't see how the trade unions are our organizations. They ignore us and in some cases they even kick us out of our jobs. Why should we even try to reform something that is so harmful to us? What reason have we to believe any good can come out of them for us?" And on more than one occasion we have heard Negro workers say, "We might just as well try to reform the Ku Klux Klan."

It is very difficult to convince these workers that they must be in the union movement, and must even fight to get into it. As Horace Cayton, the prominent Negro labor expert said recently, it is hard for a Negro worker to assume the role of a "lily white angel," "making sacrifices for a principle which allows him nothing but unemployment and starvation."

Before these Negroes can be convinced, they must be shown in action and through experience that they need unions to improve their conditions. Abstract arguments are not enough.

Already there exists some literature on the events of recent years showing the gains made by Negro labor on all fronts: their improved working conditions, the improved relations inside the unions between white and colored workers. Outstanding among these is the book dealing with the CIO, "Black Workers in the New Unions" by Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell. We recommend its study and use by our distributors of the *Appeal* who reach workers interested in this question.

The Kremlin's Child Labor System

"Soviet Russia Today" Pretends It's "Socialist" Schooling---

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

Stalin issued last October a set of ukases whereby: 1) Soviet children of 14-17 were made subject to draft into a conscript labor force; 2) the right to education so solemnly "guaranteed" by the Stalin Constitution was abolished without a formal constitutional amendment, or consultation of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. On November 10, 1940, three days after they had celebrated the Twenty Third Anniversary of the October revolution, 350,000 children of 14 and 15, and 250,000 youngsters of 16 and 17 were drafted as the first contingent.

Under Lenin: "All school children must be supplied with food, clothing, footwear, textbooks and other school accessories at the expense of the state." (Section IV Paragraph 80, Program of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted at the Eighth Party Congress March 18-23, 1919.) Under Stalin: Tuitions have been introduced into Soviet schools—to drive the children from the school rooms into the factories.

No official news of this has appeared in the *Daily Worker*. "Unofficial" periodicals like *Soviet Russia Today* have been assigned the task of covering up in this country the exploitation of child labor outlawed under Lenin and Trotsky and reestablished under Stalin. "The first 600,000 Soviet youth," writes Jessica Smith, "enrolled in the newly organized State Labor Reserves schools began their period of training and study..." (*Soviet Russia Today*, January 1941). This opening sentence with its vista of "schools," "training," "study," "enrollment" is of a piece with the rest of the article—a web of impudent and cynical lies. Most of these children have already been thrown into industry and are "studying" in coal and iron mines, in basic plants and large-scale industries, in the heaviest and most dangerous occupations.

WHAT THIS "SCHOOLING" REALLY IS

On the very first day of the draft, P. Moskatov, head of the special Labor Reserves Administration wrote a special article.

"It is very important," he warned, "to assign in advance work places and to prepare the

organization of the training process for those Trade Schools and Factory and Shop Instruction Courses (F.Z.O.) whose industrial schooling will take place directly in the enterprises themselves (metallurgical plants, coal mines)." (*Pravda*, November 10, 1940)

That speaks for itself. Apart from "Trade Schools" and "Factory and Shop Instruction Courses" (F.Z.O.), referred to by Moskatov, there are also the "Railroad Schools" to which 35,000 have been assigned, i.e., less than 6 per cent of the total.

Factory and Shop Instruction Courses (F.Z.O.) embrace 250,000 youngsters of 16 and 17. Their working day is fixed at eight hours a day. Article 9 of Order No. 1 issued by the Labor Reserves Administration, and countersigned by P. Moskatov, reads: "The length of the school day in the Factory and Shop Instruction Courses (F.Z.O.) is fixed at eight hours." (*Pravda*, October 5, 1940) But—an innocent or gullible reader may object—a school day of 8 hours is one thing, and an 8-hour working day is something else again. Not in Stalin's language! "In the F.Z.O.," writes the same Moskatov, "according to the entire program 118 hours are allotted for instruction at place of work and the remaining 1,138 hours—for productive work under the guidance of the master-workman (foreman)." (*Pravda*, November 10, 1940)

Clearly, this means one thing and one thing only: Everyone of the 250,000 youngsters who

New Year Message To Natalia Trotsky From Chicago

The following telegram was sent from the New Year celebration in Chicago: Natalia and Seva Trotsky Coyacan, D. F. Mexico

Our heartiest comrades greetings at the New Year with the firmest conviction that in 1941 we shall make great strides toward the goal for which our leader laid down his life.

Chicago Local Socialist Workers Party

have been "enrolled" in the F. Z. O. for six months, i.e. 26 weeks (and who then will be required to work four years as conscript laborers) will receive during their training less than five hours a week "instruction at place of work." (118 divided by 26). The rest of the time must be spent in "productive work." As is well known, it actually takes about 5 hours a week to instruct a child—or any new worker for that matter—how to function productively in a mine or plant.

Just how many of the 315,000 boys of 14 and 15—only males have been drafted as yet—who come under the other category of "Trade School Students" (and who are "enrolled" for 1-2 years before serving 4 years more) will be assigned at once to industry remains one of the Kremlin's dark secrets. As Moskatov clearly states, however, the plan is to do precisely that. Their "school-day" is fixed at 7 hours—"5 hours productive training and 2 hours for general education and special discipline" (*Pravda*, October 5, 1941).

A 5-hour working day for children of 14 and 15 in coal mines, and metallurgical industries! An 8-hour day for those 16

and 17! Those not sent directly into large-scale industry will produce in "special" workshops.

HOW THESE CHILDREN WILL BE ROBBED

But that is not all. The Kremlin parasites intend not only to exploit child labor but to underpay these children and thus drive still lower the wages of adult workers. "Students" will receive one-third of the prevailing wages.

Article 19 of Order No. 1 issued by the Labor Reserves Administration reads: "Trade Schools, Railroad Schools, and the F.Z.O. are permitted to fulfill elementary productive orders for the state. It is hereby established that one-third of the revenues accruing from the fulfillment of these orders as well as for the work done by the students during their training in industry is assigned to the state budget; one-third remains at the disposal of the Director for expanding the schools and the F. Z. O. and for supplying the cultural and living needs of students, master-workmen (foremen) and instructors; and one-third is to be given into the hands of the students fulfilling the work." (*Pravda*, October 5). Even the "Railroad Students" will be assigned to perform "elementary" productive tasks—at one-third the wages!

Stalin's pen-prostitutes of both sexes, who try to throw sand in the eyes of American workers, feel so immune as to boast that the Soviet children (who have been driven from the real schools and institutions by the introduction of tuitions) are not asked to pay for this "education!" "The students in those schools are supported wholly by the government. Tuition and maintenance including housing, bedding equipment, food and transportation are free..." (*Soviet Russia Today*, January 1941).

But the editors of *Soviet Russia Today* dare not quote from the official decrees to substantiate these vile boasts. Let us

juxtapose to their lies the Kremlin's legal text.

WHAT THE "STUDENTS" WILL GET

Article 12 of Order Number 1 of the Labor Reserves Administration follows: "The students (F.Z.O.) are provided at the expense of the state with their food, bedding, spets-odezhda (specialists-clothing); and those from rural regions and out of town are also provided with housing." (*Pravda*, October 5.)

Note that Stalin did not even make a pretense of listing "school accessories" or "equipment." Let us examine the three items which are designated: 1) spets-odezhda; 2) food; 3) bedding and housing.

What is "specialists-clothing" (spets odezhda)? This high-faluting label is intended to evoke visions of hats, shoes, gloves, socks, coats, overcoats, etc. To be precise, it means work-clothes. To be still more precise, it is nothing but a miserable pair of overalls, or an ordinary apron.

Food—that is indeed free—if and when supplied in dining rooms and kitchens. This, as we shall presently see, cannot be taken for granted.

As for housing and bedding only out-of-towners, it will be observed, are assured of lodgings—on paper. The "natives" must shift for themselves. And not they alone.

In Moscow, for example, 74,600 children were drafted, but only 25,000 will be housed at government expense. Report of the Moscow City Committee (five days before the draft): "Out of the required 25,000 beds, only 9,000 have been prepared." (*Pravda*, Nov. 5).

Report from Yaroslavl: "Preparations for opening of the schools proceeding poorly... Not a single place for housing has been prepared or arranged for... There are not enough beds or bedding... One doesn't even hear any discussion about providing fire-wood for the schools, equipping the dining rooms and kitchens." (*idem*)

Report from the city of Riddar (during the draft itself): "Nobody knows what trades will be taught in the schools. Workshops are not being prepared; there are no lodgings, either." (*Pravda*, Nov. 12)

Report from Leningrad (Nov. 12): "However, the schools and institutions have not yet been completely equipped with living quarters."

Comment by P. Moskatov: "Certain Executive Committees of local Soviets are likewise approaching very lightly-mindedly the selection of buildings for the new schools. In Podolsk, for example, it was planned to use a grain bin for housing." (*Pravda*, Nov. 10)

A PICTURE OF CHAOS AND OF BUREAUCRACY

Report from Chita: "It was decided to select an apartment house that is being built for the school building. But as yet only the walls of the first story have been raised. The second story is being completed poorly and will hardly be ready by December 1. And where will the students live? Who will be the director of the school? What equipment must the schools have? There is nobody who can even answer these questions." (*Pravda*, Nov. 12)

Pravda, November 13: "We have received a telegram from Voronezh that the leaders of Glavmebelprom have proposed to the Borsk combine that it take over for the school a building which is threatening to cave in." *Pravda's* comment: "These managers apparently think that laws are not written for them. Will it really be necessary for the procurators to teach these people how to fulfill Soviet laws?" (*Pravda*, Nov. 13)

This is how the children are being lodged, fed and maintained "wholly by the government"! Similar data could be adduced at will. Suffice it to quote in conclusion *Pravda's* own summary of the situation:

"In a number of places housing is lacking and suitable buildings are not even being looked for. These signals testify to this, that in a number of places the enormous state importance of preparing labor reserves is not being appreciated, and that certain workers are obviously violating discipline and not fulfilling government directives." (*Pravda*, November 12.)

We know what *Pravda* means by "a number of places" and "certain workers." It means everywhere; it means every bureaucrat—from the satraps in Moscow and Leningrad to the pettiest scoundrel in the provinces. It means that the children are being subjected to working and living conditions even more inhuman than those endured by the adult workers.

"Nation" Weeps Crocodile Tears For The Refugees

Scratch a "liberal" these days, and you will inevitably uncover a nauseous hypocrite and Uriah Heep.

These are the elements who most ably gild the lily of the imperialist war aims of the "democratic" ruling class, and cloak the sordid motives of the Allied war lords in the dainty gossamer of democratic fictions.

True to type is the *Nation*, leading liberal weekly, and its editor-in-chief, Freda Kirchwey.

It seems that the State Department is clamping down ever more heavily on the admission of anti-fascist refugees into this country, while paving the way for the entrance of rich and well-born foreign reactionaries, dispossessed members of the nobility and others of similar ilk.

The *Nation* and Freda Kirchwey are shocked, outraged, overwhelmed, stunned. They have been beating the anvil for a good, noble, democratic, idealistic, untainted, purely-motivated war against the Axis powers. And now the handling of the refugee problem by the government is adding a trace of tattle-tale gray to the virginal robes of the "democratic" champions.

Freda Kirchwey says as much in an article in the *Nation* of December 28, bewailing the short-sighted policy of the administration, as expressed in a recent State Department statement "designed to silence the mounting protest against the handling of the emergency refugee problem created by the Nazi conquest of Western Europe."

This statement, charges the article, "cited figures which... told lies of monstrous proportions when published without explanation."

And "the statement as a whole only increased justifiable fears that the refugee problem will in the end be left to the harsh mercies of the most reactionary, anti-alien elements in the State Department."

Strong language, with stronger to follow: "The record is one which must sicken any person of ordinarily humane instincts. It is as if we were to examine laboriously the curricula vitae of flood victims clinging to a piece of floating wreckage and finally to decide that, no matter what their virtues, all but a few had better be allowed to drown."

Outraged virtue then gets down to the nub of the question: "But politically the behavior of the State Department is even more shocking. It betrays the profound failure of leading officials of the department to understand even the elements of the conflict in which the United States is inextricably engaged. Has the preservation of democracy anything to do with the conflict? If it has, surely the leaders of democratic thought and action in Europe will not be deliberately sacrificed to their—and our—fascist opponents. This position should determine every act of every official charged with the conduct of our foreign affairs."

It thus seems, according to Freda Kirchwey, that the "democratic" motivation of the war for which she has been beating the drums is not "understood" by the State Department,—that is, the department which has most to do with American foreign policy and is the most direct agency for the promulgation of this policy.

The State Department understands full well what it is doing and why. It leaves the blather about democratic ideals to the Freda Kirchweys, who also "understands," but like the whore in the fable cries, "It's love I'm really after."

Why the behavior of these liberals "must sicken any person of ordinarily humane instincts," is forcefully demonstrated by one of the concluding sentences of this scandalized lady:

"It is difficult to believe that the President himself would knowingly countenance such a change."

According to this outraged female, frantically rubbish among the scrap heaps for a "democratic" rag to throw over the suddenly denuded paunch of the American ruling class, the policy of the government toward the refugees is something alien to the real motives of the war-mongers, a ravishment accomplished in the dead of night behind locked doors, and hidden from the eyes of noble men like Roosevelt.

On the contrary, as Freda Kirchwey well knows, this is Roosevelt's policy, as it is the policy of the whole boss class of America which Roosevelt represents, as it is the policy which most truly reflects the actual motives for the American war preparations.

This picture of a Roosevelt deceived, kept in the dark, surrounded by secret enemies in the guise of friends is the only fig-leaf left to the liberals whereby they can still cover up the nakedly reactionary character of the war.

Scratch a liberal these days, indeed, and you will find a cowardly, yellow-bellied, hypocritical apologist for capitalist war and plunder decked in the garments of a vestal virgin. But a white robe can't hide her smell!

Arm London Police

The London "bobbies" are to be armed with fire-arms for the first time in their history. The British Purchasing Commission has placed an order for 25,000 revolvers for the London police with the Harrington & Richardson Arms Company of Worcester, Massachusetts.

Issuance of revolvers to the "bobbies," it is claimed, is to enable them to help repel any invader.

If the arms ordered were rifles, machine guns, grenades and similar ordinance, this claim might appear plausible. But not revolvers. These are going to be used for an opposite purpose: not against invaders, but against the British workers. These arms are ordered for the not-too-distant time when the British masses begin open protest actions against the abominable a/r-rail shelter "protection afforded them," in contrast with the safe, swank and luxurious under-earth playgrounds in which the rich disport themselves.

There's Only One Road For India

A Ceylonese Tells Why Only The Masses Can Free India

(The author of this article is a comrade from Ceylon who is now in England.)

By J. V. P. de SILVA
LONDON (By Mail) — A few weeks ago, Pandit Nehru, chief disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, was sentenced to four years imprisonment, for asking his white masters for a little more of the pie: more opportunity for the black capitalist to exploit India.

Let us not weep or laugh, but try to understand, for while we support every move against British imperialism in India, we know at the same time that it is not the India bourgeoisie which is going to solve the problem of India. Ever since Nehru was sentenced, middle-class intellectuals, democrats and the lackeys of Moscow in Great Britain have each in their own style emptied buckets full of sentiment on the cultured, ex-Cambridge Pandit. That Nehru has taken as his symbol in the struggle against British imperialism the pious goat of Gandhi, and not the hammer and sickle, seems to delight them.

Of course nothing has been said of the 4,000 militant workers and peasants who have been jailed in rat holes of prisons during the past few months. "Release Nehru and Britain stands to gain more" is the policy of the bourgeois lackeys. "First Nehru then we" is the policy of the Communist Party.

SIMPLE FIGURES REVEAL THE TASK IN INDIA

India, with a population of 353 millions, has an area of 1,808,000 square miles. The workers are distributed as follows: 66% in agriculture, 18% in trade, transport and industry, 7% in domestic service, 3% in public administration, 5% in unproductive occupations. Thus we are able to visualize the structure of India's society. A small class at the top (about a million consisting of wealthy land owners, and others living on private incomes). Below them is the middle-class (15 millions composed of clerks, teachers and small businessmen, traders, students, and others). Then come the vast bulk of the hungry masses, in two categories: (a) 70 million peasant-cultivators and (b) workers of all other occupations. 99% of the people live in villages, of which there are 700,000. Each village is a muddle of mud huts. Needless to say, the

basis of the social structure is agriculture.

The total area of British India is 687 million acres. 22% of this land is totally unfit for cultivation, 13% is covered with forests (state owned), and 7% in current fallow. The land used for arable farming is 232 million acres, i.e. 35 per cent of the whole. 80% of the land cultivated is given to cereals, pulses (leguminous plants), and sugar (the latter chiefly for export). Dividing the total area of land cultivated by the number of cultivators, we get an average of about 2½ acres per agriculturist. These holdings consist of isolated fragments.

LIFE UNDER THE BRITISH "DEMOCRATS"

The cardinal disability of the peasant is the existing division and distribution of land, along with the tremendous taxation imposed. The peasant is burdened with enormous taxes; one to the state, and the other to the landlord. Therefore the peasant who gets a salary of about eight shillings month pays about four shillings in the form of tax. As a result, all of them are heavily in debt, and the debt was estimated at about \$900 millions in 1937.

On the other hand are the landlords, who between them hold about 75% of the agricultural land. There are two types: (1) Those who were put in possession of vast estates by the British as a matter of political expediency; (2) Those who have acquired ownership by purchase or otherwise during the last 100 years. More than five-sevenths of the cultivable land is today in the hands of one-third of the landlords.

The industrial workers are composed of expropriated peasants. Nearly 50% of them work in the textile factories where the wages are 4 to 5 pence a day, for 12 to 14 hours work. In the mines they are paid 7 to 8 pence a day for 14 to 15 hours work. In industries like the TATA Works the wages are the same, and in the plantations they are no better. These low wages have put the workers, like the peasants, into heavy debt to the tune of several hundred millions of dollars. With the exception of an insignificant minority composed of the landlords, the princes and the white bourgeoisie, the average per capita income of the remainder of the population—nearly 348 millions out of 353—works out at £4-16

shillings a year, i.e. £24 per family of five.

With this despotic rule imposed on India by Britain, the Government of Churchill dares to speak of the loyalty of India to the Crown. On the other hand the Stalinists speak of a free India under Nehru and Gandhi, two marionettes who dangle from the strings of the mill owners. While we could ignore the wishful thinking of the fast-crumbing ruling clique in Britain, the treachery of the Comintern must be unmasked, if we are to avoid a more bloody massacre of the masses than in Spain.

CONGRESS REPRESENTS THE BOURGEOISIE

The Indian National Congress which Nehru represents was from its inception a bourgeois movement. The expansion of British capital created in the process a class of Indian middlemen who grew rather rapidly and invested their wealth first in land, and later in industrial enterprises. The economic conflict arose between the imperialists and the rich landowning class with regard to revenue, and the policy of the British in heavily taxing the young native industries and upholding the monopoly of foreign capital. This resulted in the forming of the Indian National Congress.

The Congress knew that if they were to get any concessions from their British masters, they had to have the support of the masses: Therefore they maneuvered and struggled ceaselessly for two ultimately incompatible ends: (1) To gain ascendancy over the mass movement and (2) To win the revolutionary elements among both the workers and peasants over for Congress aims, and divert them from the economic struggle.

Thus the policy of Congress—(a) non-violent, non-cooperation; (b) boycott of British goods; (c) civil disobedience. The advocacy of non-violence was a method of holding back any revolutionary tendency of the masses, and protecting the property interests of the landowners. The boycott of British goods was of very great financial advantage to the mill owners, and as long as it remained a passive resistance movement no harm could come to the India bourgeois; but it was a powerful lever to use against the British. The outcome of this criminal policy has been, as is well known, a

history of sell-outs and compromises against the millions of India.

It is obvious that the telescoped development of Indian capitalism, due to the presence of a ruthless master, does not permit the native capitalists to play even the rôle their counterparts played in the struggle against feudalism in Europe. India is left with only one road on which to travel, the road of permanent revolution; for only the industrial workers in alliance with the peasants can play the revolutionary rôle vital to the success of the Indian struggle.

There is, however, a very great significance in the recent events in India. We know that without mass pressure Congress would never have begun even individual civil disobedience. We know this also in advance: the second wave will not have by far the peaceful, almost good-natured pious character, that the first has had. It will be more mature, more stubborn and harsh, for it will arise from the disillusionment of the workers and peasants in the policy of the Congress and their own initial venture.

The conclusion is inescapable. There is today in India the burning need of a program, an organization, a plan and a staff, under the banner of the revolutionary Marxism of Lenin and Trotsky: under the banner of the Fourth International.

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