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W.P.A. strikers. There are other ways, too. There is notably the question of connecting up the demands of the building trades workers on W.P.A. with the desires and needs of the—

Unskilled Workers

The unskilled workers, on the same projects, are today largely unorganized. Top pay for the unskilled is about \$55 a month, not enough to live on by a long shot. These laborers are hungry for organization, and the building trades unions have a responsibility toward them. Their support is needed, not so much to tie up the projects perhaps, but certainly in order to win the widespread sympathy without which the strike cannot win. If Congress can be forced to amend the W.P.A. laws so as to provide the prevailing wage rate, it can also be forced to amend the laws so as to provide better wages for the unskilled workers.

If the building trades unions understand the strategical needs of a political strike, we are sure that they will come to understand the pressing need of linking their demands with those of the unskilled workers.

Meanwhile, more power to the strike!

Aping Their Brothers

This past week the British government in India adopted, by decree, a series of laws strictly regulating the activities of any foreigner who comes to India.

Visitors must register with the police as they move about from place to place; they must convince the British that they come only as tourists or on business; they can stay only for a maximum of 3 months.

And these are the same Britishers who talk about fighting for democracy! If a visitor as much as shakes hands with an Indian nationalist who is fighting for the freedom of his country from British rule he can be kicked out as an undesirable element.

Doesn't all of this have a familiar air about it? Isn't this business of passing laws by decree, preventing people from moving about except under the eyes of the police, etc., quite familiar to all of us?

When we condemn the German and Italian brutal dictatorships let's not forget the dirty work of these British imperialists in their colonies. They are doing their best to ape and outstrip the fascists when it comes to the denial of elementary rights.

But all the King's horses and all the King's men cannot prevent the 400,000,000 people of the Indian Empire from carrying on their battle for independence and freedom from the British imperialists.

Labor Looks Through The Press

By Arthur Hopkins

Page the Relief Administration—Under the headline, "Here's something college youths have overlooked," a U.P. dispatch tells how a 51-year-old Lincoln, Nebraska, world war veteran has solved not only the grasshopper but the problem of human existence. He carries a butterfly net and is thus able to catch 250 grasshoppers daily which he eats raw. His theory is that they are not only edible but delicious.

France plans to construct a submarine to replace the Phenix, which sank recently with a loss of 61 lives. Gad! What magnificent spirit those French bosses display—with the lives of other persons.

A committee of the United Blind Workers of Minnesota will meet with the executive board of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union to plan a campaign to alleviate the living conditions of blind workers of the city and state. Some Minneapolis workers may be blind, but they're not dumb.

Bull-etin—"Business is fundamentally and necessarily moral as a condition of its own existence," says Henry Ford's own mouthpiece, W. J. Cameron. He assailed "crack-brained" leaders "who preach to gullible people that business is naturally evil and necessarily predatory."

Judge W. Calvin Chesnut, New York Federal District judge, declares that the case of Judge Martin T. Manton, found guilty of accepting bribes and sentenced to two years in prison, is unprecedented in the 150-year history of American jurisprudence. You bet it's unprecedented. He was not only caught, but actually sentenced to prison!

Several thousand bankers attending a convention of the Minnesota Bankers Association at St. Paul met the secret service in the person of John D. Voss, agent in charge of the Wisconsin district. The U. S. Secret Service is composed of quiet, efficient fellows whose duty it is to protect the president, to make life miserable for counterfeiters, and who investigate and stifle all kinds of attempts to defraud the government. Well, John, what are you waiting for?

Look who's talking!—John C. Gail, counsel for the National Association of Manufacturers, charges that the National Labor Relations Board "... has been hostile to employers ... have violated many elementary principles of fair play, and that they have not only not contributed to a reduction of the volume of labor disputes, but have in fact sown the seeds of future discord."

Horror item: U. S. Attorney General Frank Murphy believes the LaFollettes of Wisconsin are "the best political stock in the nation."

In the Disease Ridden Slums We See an Indictment of Boss Rule

The Facts Collected by the Housing Authority, Though Only Partial, Present a Damning Picture of Vermin Infested Slums in Which "One-Third-of-a-Nation" Lives

By **RUTH JEFFREY**
 Couching though they are in conservative figures and conservative phrases, the facts which the United States Housing Authority has picked up in its surface-scratching "slum-clearance" campaign (and which it will mail free to anyone) present a shocking picture.

If we could see the entire country from coast to coast in bird's eye view, nearly one-half of its populated surface—or as the President would have it, "one-third"—would look like a hideous running sore, where the population, pale, underfed, diseased, fights a losing battle against a plague of cockroaches, bed-bugs and lice, and lives in daily embittered intimacy with armies of rats.

In these blighted areas live the American masses—the "free American people." Here flourishes the American Home in (almost) all the touching beauty of a woman's magazine editorial. Here are conceived the underprivileged youth who fill our schools, streets, factories and employment agencies.

NO WONDER EPIDEMICS START IN THE SLUMS

Note an incidental footnote in a government bulletin on health conditions in slum areas: "The newspapers recently reported a particularly dramatic example of the fact that old frame buildings are often infested with vermin, beyond hope or possibility of extermination. The Syracuse Housing Authority is in process of demolishing several blocks of slums preparatory to putting up a large housing project with U.S.H.A. assistance. Demolition has actually been delayed by the pressing problem of what to do about the rats. It is estimated there are half a million rats in the area as a whole (200 per former occupant) and that it will cost \$500 a block to get rid of them and thus prevent neighboring areas from becoming doubly infested. No wonder epidemics start in the slums!"

Bad conditions are admitted to be of nationwide prevalence and not at all confined to large cities. In a national health survey, "Overcrowding and Sanitation", the following conclu-

sion was recorded, as of 1936: "Overcrowding was not confined to cities of any particular size. It prevailed in small cities, as well as in those with a population of 500,000 or more. In the Central region overcrowding among families in small cities was almost as great as in the large cities, while in the West cities with a population of less than 25,000 averaged a slightly greater degree of overcrowding than the larger cities in this area. In the South overcrowding was the greatest in the smaller cities ... Regardless of the size and location of the city, relief and low income families frequently shared a hallway toilet or an outside privy."

FACTS ARE AN INDICTMENT
 A government summary of this survey indicates that serious overcrowding and inadequate toilet facilities were not the only failings investigators observed in these slum-dwellings, despite their preoccupation with those two factors. The summary ends:

"The housing information collected in the Health Survey of the U. S. Public Health Service was confined exclusively to the problem of overcrowding and to the adequacy of toilet facilities. It did not take into account the many other aspects of deficient housing, such as the use of one room as a combined kitchen, dining room, living room and bathroom. Congestion in the halls and on the streets, lack of adequate ventilation, absence of sunlight, insufficient natural or artificial illumination, dilapidation of buildings, and fire and other hazards were not recorded. The Public Health Service indicated, however, the close relationship of these factors to accidents, infectious diseases and normal growth of children. "Maybe it is not an accident that these new national reports confine themselves to one or two factors at a time. All factors, surveyed in one paper, might produce a more damning document than any capitalist government would dare issue to its citizens."

Going a little more deeply into the depths of the slums, one becomes aware of a carefully

softpedaled fact. The very worst slums are more than proportionately filled with Negroes and assistance is far less than proportionately meted out to them. Where assistance does reach them facts such as these are uncovered:

"In one tenement house just demolished on the Bedford Dwellings Site of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh, the notorious Wesley Row tenement, twenty-four Negro families were living. There were no bathing or sanitary facilities whatever; there were three disgraceful outdoor toilets for all twenty-four families; the sixty-four children scrambled over rank weeds and heaps of rubbish; and one 9-member family occupied a single room. Unfortunately, Wesley Row is not the only rotten slum dwelling occupied by Negroes—or whites either, for that matter. Forty percent of Pittsburgh's dwellings are substandard in the sense that they need some form of major repair."

CONDEMNS NEGROES TO DISEASE, DEATH

Unless special public measures are extended and radical health measures are applied, it does not seem likely that the Negro group in Pittsburgh will grow appreciably by natural increase. The birth rate is not sufficient to offset the high death rate. In 1933 Negroes, being 8.2 percent of the total population in this city, suffered 14 percent of all the deaths, 15 percent of infant deaths, 24 percent of the deaths from pneumonia, and no less than 35 percent of the deaths from tuberculosis."

These few quotations just scratch the surface. The story of how tens of millions of Americans really live in this land of freedom and opportunity has still largely to be told. It is obvious that the United States Housing Authority, which is at best, by its own figures, helping only 4 percent, the "aristocracy" of slum-dwellers, certainly will not solve the housing question. Only the slum-dwellers—that is, the masses themselves—when they organize the power that is theirs, only they can help themselves.

IN THIS CORNER

By Max Shachtman

The action of the Stalinist youth organization's representatives on the resolutions dealing with "dictatorship" at the American Youth Congress, offers a significant commentary on the development of the Communist Party line, and on politics in general.

The Stalinists began, a few years ago, to deck themselves out in "democratic" garments for a very deliberate and well-thought-out purpose. The wild-eyed adventurism of the "Third Period" had ended in disaster. The hope that friendly relations could be maintained with the Hitler regime, on the basis of Russia's (and the Comintern's) traditional hostility to the Versailles Treaty, was speedily dispelled by the Nazis' belligerent avowal of designs upon Soviet territory. With the signing of the Franco-Soviet pact, the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935 decreed that henceforward Bolshevism was equivalent to support of class collaboration, a passionate attachment to "democracy" and a holy war against fascism.

How Serious the Change

Virtually at a stroke, the workers were denied both their independent and their leading roles and assigned the part of voting and fighting cattle of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. The French Stalinists resurrected Joan of Arc and Browder re-discovered his childhood affinity for George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson and that other Great American, the Fourth of July speller. Communism became Twentieth-Century Americanism, Roosevelt the torch-bearer of Progress, and all C.P. members—vehement Democrats.

How was this drastic change of policy carried through so easily in the C.P.? In the first place, it was not so easy. How many members quit the party in disgust will not be known for a long time, because published figures are not yet available. But it is no exaggeration to say that those members who did swallow the new line did so because it was whisperingly explained to them that it was not to be taken seriously.

Not to be taken seriously? Exactly. We don't believe in this "democracy" stuff, it goes without saying, but it ought to make us popular with a lot of people and gain us a large number of recruits and sympathizers. And, once we have won them on that basis, why, it should be a simple matter to teach them to be "real reds." At the same time, it will take the edge off bourgeois criticism and attack, and enable us to penetrate into circles that would otherwise be closed to us. Our "democratic" pretensions will be, so to say, the Trojan horse which will be innocently allowed to enter into the very heart of the masses and within which will be concealed our "revolutionary" ideas. This is not fantastic speculation; it is substantially how Dimitroff outlined the strategy of the Stalinists at the Seventh C.I. Congress; it is how it was explained for a long time, with a knowing wink, by rank and file communists.

Apart from all other considerations, the main trouble with this cunning scheme was that it was conceived in violation of the laws of nature and of politics. No matter how clever and staunch its originators may have thought themselves, no matter how sure the sincere rank and filer was that he would remain, in his heart of hearts, a real revolutionist and that he would "come out with it" as soon the situation warranted throwing off the shrewd disguise—the murderous logic of the position adopted developed with full and predictable force.

Even though he still believed he was playing an astute game, still deceiving both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, Browder let more of the cat out of the bag than he thought when he testified before the McNaboe investigating committee in New York. Quite rightly—at least in one sense—he pointed out that it is "impossible to reconcile the accusation of hidden revolutionary aims with the fact that the people recruited by the C.P. nowadays are won to its fold by the emphasis on capitalist democracy and the need of preserving it. But he was right in only one sense; and wrong in another, namely, in that he secretly believes that if it is ever decided to make another "left turn" in policy, all those recruited by the C.P. on the "democratic" basis will string along merely because Browder's apparatus so decrees.

The Logic of Politics

There is a logic in political lines that no person, no movement can escape. Once the Stalinists took their "democratic" course, they were confronted with such widespread skepticism that, ever since, they have had to spend most of their time going to the most radical extremes in order to prove their "sincerity." Where the ordinary bourgeois politician, for example, merely states his patriotism, the Stalinists find themselves compelled to shriek to the pitch of blatant chauvinism. Where an ordinary bourgeois democrat merely states, in a quiet and unostentatious manner, that he is not a believer in dictatorship or fascism, the Stalinists are now compelled to eat course after course of crow and even to denounce communism and dictatorship in the same breath with fascism and Nazism.

That's the meaning of the ignominious, self-humiliating posturing of the Stalinists at the American Youth Congress. To prove that they were not reds, that they were blown-in-the-bottle democrats, they were forced to vote for a resolution which, in sum and substance, places communism in the same bag with fascism. Hitler's regime, Mussolini's regime, were denounced in the same terms as Stalin's regime and, for that matter, the regime of Lenin in the early years of the revolution. For, as we understand it, in those years at least both Lenin and Stalin called the Soviet republic a dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Be it resolved that this Congress of youth record its opposition to all forms of dictatorship, regardless of whether they be communist, fascist, Nazi or any other type, or bear any other name." That's the resolution Gil Green, boss of the Young Communist League voted for. Unbelievable? Yes, yes, but literally true nonetheless. Far more unbelievable is the fact that his organization still bears the name "communist."

We have said for some time: There is nothing communist about the Communist party except its name. How long will we have to wait before it becomes possible to drop those last three words?

New York WPA Building Workers Ready for "Strike to the Finish"

(Continued from Page 1)

Hodson—one Roosevelt's direct lieutenant and the other an ardent New Dealer associated with Mayor La Guardia—the strike action meant a head-on collision between the labor movement and the Roosevelt administration.

Indicating his understanding of the political nature of the strike, President Murray in his interview with the press declared: "The best way to protect is to carry through the kind of action we have just endorsed. The only people who can change this law are the people who made it"—that is, Congress and President Roosevelt, against whom the strike is logically directed.

NO RELIANCE ON CAPITALIST PRESS

The issues in this strike are clearly defined, and if the labor movement does not depend on the capitalist press to provide the public with the necessary information, but issues leaflets in the millions to explain its stand, overwhelming public opinion will back the building trades workers in forcing Congress to amend the Roosevelt-Woodrum Law.

The crux of the matter was admitted by Administrator Somervell himself, when he stated that most of the men on strike the first day—Wednesday—would not have to be replaced because the lengthened

announced earlier in the day that "If the A.P.L. doesn't want to work for the government, that's its business," Murray countered: "When the W.P.A. wants competent men on its projects, it appeals to the union." All construction projects will have to shut down. "Laborers cannot work if skilled craftsmen are off the job," Murray pointed out. "There are usually four or five laborers attached to one skilled union mechanic."

Asked by the newspapermen coming from Murray's office what would happen in the event of a prolonged strike, Somervell handed them a telegram from Col. F. C. Harrington, national W.P.A. administrator, ordering dismissal of all men absent from the job for five consecutive days.

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