

Promises of New Deal Are Written in Blood Of 57 Strikers Who Were Murdered in 1934

By CYRIL BRIGGS

The fascist contents of the New Deal were written in the blood of 57 murdered strikers and the wounding of additional hundreds of striking workers during the year now ending, as the armed forces of the bourgeois state were hurled against workers fighting for the right to live and in defense of their constitutional rights and class interests.

Roosevelt's honeyed promises to the working class were accompanied by the murderous rattle of machine guns, the flash of bayonets as they were buried in the vitals of workers, the rumble of army tanks and the poisonous fumes of gas bombs, used against Negro and white workers, striking against the New Deal attacks on their living standards, the right to organize into unions of their own choice—a right supposedly guaranteed by the N.R.A., under the Clause 7-A. In addition to the 57 strikers murdered, 5,000 others were arrested for strike activities and 24 Negroes lynched during the same year, according to figures compiled by the Labor Defender. In Georgia, textile strikers were thrown into concentration camps, in emulation of the Nazi hangman regime in Germany. In addition, hundreds of workers and students were jailed for taking part in anti-fascist demonstrations and other struggles of the working class.

Class Struggle Sharpened

The second year of the New Deal, 1934, saw the disillusionment of broad masses of the toiling population, Negro and white, in the dema-

gogic promises and alphabetical panaceas of the New Deal, and the tremendous sharpening of the class and national struggles throughout the entire country. It witnessed the most magnificent strike struggles in American labor history, with increasing pressure of the rank and file of the A. F. of L. against the bureaucracy and its treacherous class collaboration policy and against its open and covert support of the fascist program of the New Deal. It saw the heroic strike struggles of the West Coast longshoremen and the powerful San Francisco general strike in support of the demands of the longshoremen; the general textile strike; the militant teamsters' strikes in Minneapolis and Toledo where the workers battled fascist corps of armed business men and gangsters. There were agricultural strikes from Cape Cod to California, from the cotton pickers on the Gulf to onion pickers near the Great Lakes.

The answer of the bosses to this mighty explosion of mass resentment and struggle against the New Deal program was to sharpen the repressive forces, legal and extra-legal, of the bourgeois state, against the working class and its organizations. Raids and mass arrests on workers' organizations were carried out jointly by vigilante bands and police in California. The Ku Klux Klan and the White Legion in the South increased their terroristic activities against Negro and white workers uniting in struggle against their common enemy. Criminal syndicalist laws passed during or shortly after the World War were revived to further the attacks on the working class. In

Sacramento, Calif., 18 workers, arrested in the vigilante-police raids, are now on trial charged with violating the Criminal Syndicalist Law of that state.

Candidate Given 9 Years

The Illinois Criminal Syndicalist Law was used to frame 15 unemployed workers, arrested during relief demonstrations, on charges of attempting to overthrow the government. In Portland, Washington, Dirk De Jonge, Communist candidate for mayor in the recent elections in that city, was sentenced to nine years imprisonment for membership in, and advocacy of the program of, the Communist Party against unemployment, hunger, fascism and war. There was also a sharp increase in the use of the deportation weapon to deport foreign-born workers for taking part in the struggles of the American working class.

In Georgia, Negro and white members of the International Workers Order, a fraternal organization, were indicted on a charge of "inciting to insurrection" for defying the ukase of the Georgia ruling class forbidding the fraternization of Negro and white workers. Two girl textile strikers were indicted in the same state under the old, resurrected slave law used to railroad Angelo Herndon, Negro leader of the working class, to a sentence of 18 to 20 years on the chain gang. In Chicago, Ill., the courts tried to enforce residential segregation against the Negro people, with prison sentences for white and Negro workers resisting the attempt to evict Herbert Newton, Negro Communist leader, from 615 Oakwood Boulevard.

In their attack on the working class and the Negro people, the bosses have directed their blows particularly against the Communist Party, the fearless leader and unifier of the struggles of all sections of the toiling population. This attack, reflecting the fears of the ruling class at the rising resistance of the workers and the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism, became particularly ferocious during the closing weeks of 1934, with the initiation by the United States Chamber of Commerce and the Hearst press of a drive for the suppression of the Communist Party, as the necessary prelude and signal for a broader onslaught against all working class organizations. In Chicago, this drive is at present centered around the attempt to destroy the Chicago Workers School and jail its instructors.

Against these attacks, the developing united front struggles of the Communist Party, Socialist workers and several Socialist Party organizations, anti-fascist workers, professionals and students recorded many important victories during the past year in defense of the rights of the working class and the Negro people. These victories attest to the growing force of the united front movement and its power, as it is further developed, to smash the fascist reaction and beat back the drive of the Roosevelt government to fascism and imperialist war. The forging of a mighty proletarian united front is the guarantee of working class victory in this struggle. This is the immediate task confronting every Communist, Socialist and non-party worker. It is a task that cannot wait.