

Whistling In the Dark

The Norfolk "Ledger-Dispatch" of May 18 tries to make believe that the Negro masses are highly satisfied with their conditions, one condition it notes (without saying how it happens) being "the great majority is still without education, especially in the Southern states."

From this, the wise editor concludes that the Negro masses are too ignorant to become revolutionary.

"Most of them would laugh at the idea of a revolutionary movement directed against the existing order."

Uh, huh! They would laugh—but with joy!

The editor goes on to argue himself out of any anxiety: "How much rebellion was manifested by the fathers and grandfathers of the men who compose the Negro masses, when all the white men of the South were in the armies of the Confederacy?"

This capitalist editor is the victim of his own class propaganda. There were plenty of slave rebellions, but even their history has been suppressed, by the slave masters primarily, with the obliging aid of Negro bourgeois intellectuals. However, the "Ledger-Dispatch" editor comforts himself with a contradiction. The masses are "too ignorant" to be revolutionary—and the Negro intellectuals are "too educated." So the game's off. The Negro masses are "without education" and "would laugh" at revolution—then he proceeds:

"That's for the masses. And the leaders, the educated men, such inspired and towering figures as Dr. Moton, know that hope and justice and help and kindness and forbearance and tolerance for the Negroes lie along the path they are now treading."

Oh, yeah! To be "without education" because of Jim Crow, discrimination, and to go "along the path they are now treading" to forced labor as share croppers enslaved by "contracts," to be abused and oppressed at the whim of the white "master," and to be lynched offhand or sent to the electric chair by such legal lynching "bees" as Scottsboro—all this for the Negro masses may be approved by the "inspired and towering" Dr. Moton, but the masses who "enjoy" such "justice, help, kindness, forbearance and tolerance" are tired of "treading that path."

That's why the capitalist editor is whistling to keep up his spunk.

A New One

We happened to run across it, the "Louisville American," when the sixth of a series of articles appeared. We haven't seen the first five, but we guess we didn't miss much. Not if the following analysis of and remedy for the economic crisis of capitalism is taken as a criterion:

"Over-industrialization in America at the expense of agriculture has put us in a position where work must be supplied for approximately six million men. . . . A hundred and one remedies are proposed, emanating from different angles and interests of our people; but the real remedy is REFORESTATION!"

Are you hungry? Go 'way and reforest! Do you want a job? Shucks, no! What you need is a hickory tree. You can climb it and talk matters over with the squirrels! Are you homeless? You don't need any home. What you need is a hedge fence!

We nominate the editor of the Louisville American for the Pulitzer prize for monumental jackasses.

would mean to insure the death of every one of them.

(5) He agreed to let Charlie Weems and Clarence Norris go to trial together, thereby sealing the death warrant of both; he placed Norris on the stand as a witness for the defense although it was already obvious that this boy had been brutally beaten and terrorized into the idea of saving himself by "lying out of it" and had been promised by the prosecutor that his life would be saved if he would perjure himself against the others. By this means Roddy cooperated with the prosecutor by guaranteeing death sentences for both Weems and Norris.

(6) He did not call or even investigate, nor even ask for time to investigate, the many known eye-witnesses, did not even investigate the evidence.

(7) He shamelessly cooperated (as he had promised in open court he would) with the prosecution by abstaining from questioning the state's witnesses in any efficient way, who were clearly lying.

(8) He did not even express during the court proceedings, any desire for an acquittal, nor any thought that the boys were innocent, although he has since publicly admitted his belief in their innocence.

(9) He refused three times, in the three cases, to speak to the jury; he refused to ask for an acquittal, and when asked by the court whether he would do so, he replied in the presence of the jury in such a way as to indicate that the evidence given by the prostitutes was sufficient and that there was nothing to say.

The LSNR and ILD, being interested only in saving the lives and liberty of the boys, could not permit the Ku Klux Klan lawyer, who is the only one the NAACP has as yet publicly claimed as its attorney in the case, to have anything to do with the defense of the nine innocent Negro boys.

The LSNR calls again, as it has from the first day, for a united front of all forces who are willing to fight for the unconditional release of the nine innocent Negro boys framed up at Scottsboro. We call upon the masses to make it possible for the boys to have the best possible legal defense, but at the same time call upon the masses to realize that the only means of saving the boys is through the mass protest of millions. The LSNR and the ILD will not refuse any sincere offer of any group of persons to help bear the burden of legal counsel and of expenses for legal counsel to cooperate in the fight in the courts for the one object of securing the release of the nine Negro boys condemned to death at Scottsboro.

LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE FOR NEGRO RIGHTS,
B. D. AMIS, President,
CYRIL BRIGGS,
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For the Executive Committee.

court under its present government of white "supremacy." Anyone who thinks otherwise is a fool. Any intelligent person who says otherwise is trying to deceive.

The attitude of the NAACP is: "Let the Alabama courts decide after 'a fair trial.' Then, if they are innocent, they will be freed." The NAACP wants us to consent to stake the lives of the boys upon a supposed "exact justice," which it asks the Negro people to believe can be gotten from an Alabama court by Negro boys accused of rape of white women. The NAACP does not want any disrespect of courts, any disrespect of the capitalist system, which all of its leaders support, as the first consideration. That is why Mr. Walter White in a recent letter to Negro editors (marked "not for publication") described our criticism of the courts which have framed up the Negro boys as being "the most intemperate sort of mis-statements, vituperation and vilification," and complained that "Governor Miller of Alabama has received 94 telegrams demanding that the boys be immediately freed—a manifestly absurd and impossible demand."

But it is impossible for the LSNR to agree with the NAACP that the first thing to do is to respect the courts of Alabama that have framed up the boys, and that the second consideration is to save the boys.

We must handle this case in the Alabama courts, where our boys have been dragged by force to be tried on the frame-up; and we must give them the benefit of the very best legal skill that can be found, taking advantage of the fact that the capitalist courts succeed in deluding the masses only by going through certain forms of pretenses of a "fair trial," we must fight every inch of the way, within the court, utilizing every rule of law and procedure that can possibly be used to obstruct the legal murder which the capitalist court seeks to perpetrate upon these Negro boys.

But is any fool so naive as really to think that the court will not condemn them again to death or prison if the masses of people are not aroused to see the foul trap of perjury and race hate which is being passed off for a "fair trial" of a Negro in an Alabama court?

The NAACP wants, more than anything else, to stop the mass movement which is the only thing that has brought a hope for the condemned boys, and the only thing that can save them.

It is clear that the boys were taken into court only as a legal cover for the lynching. But all of the lynchings, the lynching court, the prosecutors, the white capitalist newspapers—and the NAACP—are screaming against one thing—against the exposure of the frame-up, which exposure the secretary of the NAACP calls "vituperation and vilification."

What the LSNR and I. L. D. have asked the Negro masses and the working class, black and white, to unite upon is the object of securing the release of the nine Scottsboro boys. The NAACP, after being defeated in their first efforts to disrupt the united front, are now trying again to disrupt it by trying to spread the illusion that it is not necessary to arouse the masses against this frame-up, but only to depend upon an Alabama court for a "fair trial . . . regardless of race."

The LSNR and ILD will proceed more vigorously than ever to call for a united front of millions of black and white men and women and youths for the unconditional release of the innocent Negro boys, which demand Mr. Walter White describes as "an absurd and impossible demand," and not to depend upon a "fair trial" by an Alabama Jim Crow court which the NAACP says is its "one object."

The statement of the NAACP says:

"The NAACP has already instructed its lawyers and cooperated as far as possible in legal defense with all other lawyers working in behalf of the nine boys."

The LSNR and ILD have been entrusted by the nine Negro boys, all their parents and by the masses of Negro people and the working class, to secure for these boys the best possible legal defense that can be obtained. We will therefore accept any and all effective legal assistance that can be gotten to add to the present forces to aid in the fight in the courts along the lines already laid down by the ILD in common with the parents of the boys, and provided this assistance is genuine and does not disrupt the defense by trying to divert it to channels which would mean the loss of the lives or liberty of the boys. The sole test for this must be one objective—to secure the release of the boys, to save them not only from death but also from prison.

Although the "NAACP" says under date of May 16th that it has "already instructed its lawyers to cooperate," we must say that up until the present time not one single lawyer claiming to represent the NAACP has presented himself to either the ILD or the LSNR as willing to cooperate, and none appeared to cooperate with our lawyers in the hearing in court.

The only lawyer whom the NAACP has ever declared publicly to be employed by the NAACP for this case is Stephen R. Roddy. This lawyer on the day before the case came up in court gave an interview to the Chattanooga Times, not defending the boys, but viciously and publicly attacking General George W. Chamlee, the ILD attorney who, together with Joseph R. Brodsky was to present the case for the boys in the court the next day. Mr. Roddy, for whose actions the NAACP takes responsibility, added:

" . . . and I intend to denounce General Chamlee in open court at Scottsboro tomorrow."

Mr. Roddy is the only attorney whose name the NAACP has announced as being employed by them for the Scottsboro case. Mr. Roddy, who appeared in the official records of the trials as "attorney for the defense," conducted the "defense" in the following manner:

- (1) Consented willingly to take the boys to trial for their lives on April 6th, not even asking for a postponement, seven days after their arraignment, without having conferred with the boys before the trial opened, neither knowing nor caring what the facts were and only asking 10 or 15 minutes to see the defendants before they were put on the stand.
- (2) Openly in court he promised to cooperate with the prosecutors who were framing up the 14 year old Negro boys for "raping" two notorious white prostitutes; and he kept his promise.
- (3) His first and only speech in court was a long harangue on the subject of who would get whatever fees might be paid for acting as official attorney for the boys.
- (4) He did not ask for separate trials for the boys, although knowing that not to do so

Statement of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights

upon limiting the purpose to "but one object, and that is, a fair trial for them before the courts and exact justice to them regardless of race."

Why does the NAACP want to change the purpose from "saving the boys from prison or death," to the purpose of what it calls "a fair trial?"

Some persons might think that, since the boys are innocent (as they are, and as the NAACP knows, although it does not say so in its statement), it is only necessary to ask the Alabama courts to give them "a fair trial for them before the courts and exact justice to them re-

gardless of race"—and then the Alabama courts will free them. This way of talking will appeal only to persons who know nothing about Alabama courts or about capitalist "white supremacy" courts generally.

There can be no such thing as a "fair trial" of Negro boys accused of rape in an Alabama

You're getting to look like me more and more, brother, now that Green and Woll have been fighting wage-cuts!



PARTY LIFE
Conducted by the Org. Dept. Central Committee, Communist Party, U. S. A.

Section-Functionaries Must Participate in Every-Day Activities of the Units

By LIL
(National Training School)

In an article by Comrade Flalan, published in the Party Life column of May 19, we read:

"These tendencies lead toward the development of the worst form of bureaucratism, which does not serve as an example to the membership and does not encourage the rank and file to work. The Sections must analyze this situation at once and guard against the development of such a kind of leadership in the Units. The Unit Buros must participate in the every-day routine work of the Unit and must also guard against functionaries whose tendencies are that of only giving instructions to others."

While it is correct that such a situation exists in some of our units in New York, one must not stop there, however, but must go a little further. The unit functionaries develop such an air of "superiority" and merely give instructions to the membership, without themselves participating in the every-day routine work of the units, because they receive instructions from the sections in the very same manner. Our section reps come to the units and give directions from above (of which I was guilty myself) without themselves participating actively in the life of their own units. They are therefore detached from the practical carrying out of the decisions made by the section committee and therefore do not know problems and difficulties involved, thus tending to be formal in their approach. The unit buros follow the example of the section leadership creating an unhealthy situation in the units.

The section functionaries must not be detached from the every day work of the units and should devote at least one night to unit work. The most experienced comrades in the sections must give guidance to the membership not only by word of mouth, but in the direct process of carrying out decisions must show the less experienced comrades how best to do it.

In order for the Unit Buros to overcome the disease of "superiority" it is necessary for the section functionaries to get rid of the same malady, thus assuring correct guidance and leadership.

This active participation of leading Party committees in the lower Party organs must, also apply to district functionaries in regard to section committees, and central committee members in relation to district committees, wherever conditions permit this direct contact.

The Party membership must carefully watch such bureaucratic tendencies and in a frank, self-critical manner bring up and correct any such manifestations of bureaucracy.

What the Ill. Miners Will March for, on June 12-14

By PHIL FRANKFELD.

PREPARATIONS are proceeding apace for the State Wide Hunger March to Springfield, Ill., on June 12th to 14th. In the So. Illinois coal fields a series of mass meetings are being organized, workers' organizations visited and Unemployed Branches being built. A number of organizations having already endorsed the Hunger March, and elected delegates to the State Convention to be held in Springfield, on June 14.

Amongst the miners, the question of unemployment is a burning one. The problem of unemployment is nothing new amongst the coal miners. Tens of thousands of miners have been thrown out of the industry—permanently—as a result of mechanization of the mines. Mr. John L. Lewis once declared: "That there were 250,000 coal miners too many"—and together with the coal operators, proceeded to get rid of the "surplus" miners. The mining industry has been in a chronic state of crisis.

But now the situation is intensified greatly. The present crisis has hit the mining industry with particular fury. The crisis continues to deepen and grow, especially in the soft coal fields (as well as in the anthracite). The St. Louis Post Dispatch stated that "for the first 92 working days in 1931, production declined by 6.9 per cent as compared with 1930. This is the lowest production figure for the past ten years."

Today, whole mining towns are unemployed. In others, the vast majority of miners are jobless. Some mines have been down for 2 years, others for 13-18 months, and others for a period of 3 to 9 months.

Starvation, misery, poverty have tremendously increased in the past period. Until now, a certain amount of "relief" work was carried on by the United Shanties, Red Cross, and Salvation Army. This relief work was simply a question of handing out crumbs to the miners—to keep body and soul together. It was the substitution of a process of slow starvation for either militant action on the part of the miners to get the necessities of life for themselves and family—or to die as a result of starvation. This gentle, "Christian," capitalist country prefers to be "delicate" about the manner of its wage slaves dying amidst plenty! So—when two miners' children were found dead last winter in Johnson City—it was found that they had died from "malnutrition"—meaning plain starvation.

Whole mining communities are in a stage of becoming pauperized! No work can be found anywhere—or even bought. The miners come to look at the \$2 or \$1.50 "relief"—as they are getting in Christopher from the Salvation Army as a means of getting by. Demoralization and passivity reigns supreme. A little fishing, a little truck farming, come in to help along. But capitalism today, is tending to develop a mass of paupers—miserably destitute and impoverished workers, without any possible means of selling their labor-power, and dependent upon the lousy handouts of charity as a means of existence. This can be clearly seen in the coal fields.

The capitalist newspapers report that even the fake charities are closing down, and cutting

off "relief." From Pana, Ill., the report for May 6th states that "Pana Food Distribution Ends." Chairman Brown of the local United Charities, announces that food and clothes distributions has ended in Pana. From Harrisburg, Ill., where fully two-thirds of the miners are jobless, the newspapers of May 8th announce: "Relief Funds Exhausted. Charity office at Harrisburg closed." The Red Cross in Christopher, Ill., has stopped its "relief" to the miners there. This town is also hard hit by unemployment.

An appeal appears in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch as follows: "Asks for Food and Garden seed for needy farmers. Mrs. Francisus announces that other aid is lessening in district southwest of city (St. Louis)." Further on, on this same news item states: "Many families of miners have been unable to plant gardens and have been living on greens gathered in the woods," (May 10 issue of Dispatch). Yes, many miners have been gathering greens in the woods to live.

Summer will soon be here, production will decline further, many more mines will close, more miners will be unemployed—greater misery and starvation for a greater number of miners.

The unemployed workers of Illinois will march to Springfield. The miners, too, will march! They have lots to march for.

The miners of Eadorado, Harrisburgh, Marion, Johnson City, W. Frankfort, Zeigler, Christopher, Buckner, Benton, Pana, etc. will march against unemployment and hunger on June 12th to 14th! The miners will march against the danger of becoming paupers!

The miners of Illinois will march against the miserable handouts called "relief" given to them by the Salvation Army, Red Cross, United Charities! Against the \$1 or \$1.50 a week to live on for themselves and their families!

The miners of Illinois will march against the "meals" of "greens gathered in the woods!" Against unemployment and the system that breeds unemployment! Against being forced to set up committees that go begging from store to store, and house to house!

The Illinois miners will march against the vagrancy laws that are responsible for their being jailed on the roads! Against the system that forces them to break into stores and steal a few cans of beans and a few pounds of pork for themselves and their families!

The miners of Illinois will march on June 12th to 14th for immediate relief and unemployment insurance at the expense of the coal operators and the appropriations of the county, state, and federal governments!

And while marching, we must build up strong Branches of the Unemployed; gain new recruits for the NNU, get the best and most conscious fighters into the ranks of the Communist Party! We must get the miners to understand that they are marching against the whole system of present-day society which produces untold misery, suffering, amongst the masses of workers; and on the other hand, produces a parasitical leisured class that enjoy all the good things in life!

On to Springfield!