

# SOUTHERN WORKER

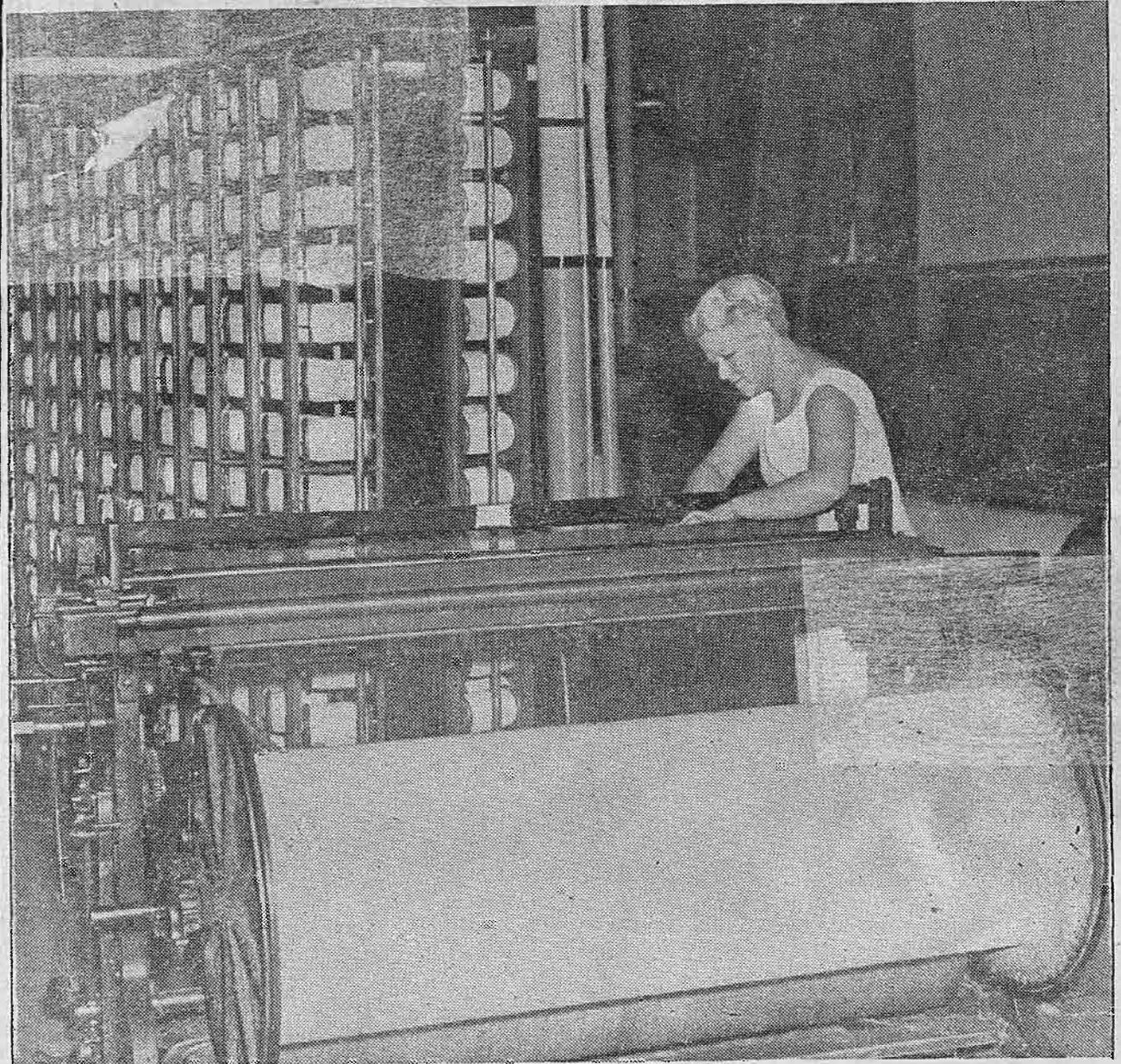
Magazine of the Common People of the South

Vol. No. 12



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## Southern Worker

Magazine of the Common People  
of the South

Official Organ of the Communist  
Party of the U.S.A. in the South

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## Build the U.T.W.

Success of the Textile Union's organizing drive in the South will not only bring a living wage and better conditions to the mill workers but it will also help raise the standard of living of the entire working class of the South. It is the task of every union member, of every central labor union, of the state federations of labor, to throw all resources behind the United Textile Workers and the C.I.O. in this drive. Textile is a major industry in the South, employing more than 300,000 workers in the Carolinas and other Southern states. The campaign to organize the textile industry must go hand in hand with the C.I.O. drive in the mines and steel mills of Alabama.

The mill owners are doing everything in their power to prevent the success of the United Textile Workers. They are determined to continue the starvation wages, and the stretch-out system. The Cannon mills, which last year paid dividends of \$4,000,000 representing a clear profit of more than \$200 on each worker employed, is a typical example. And conditions for the workers will become even worse unless a powerful Textile Union is built in the South.

## Build Workers Alliance

The reactionary interests are carrying on a determined campaign for W.P.A. layoffs in order to reduce the living standards of the masses and particularly in order to reduce the wage standards of the employed workers. Over 400,000 workers have already been thrown off the W.P.A. rolls and the W.P.A. openly threatens that 600,000 more will be laid off by June. Roosevelt, in spite of his promises before the election, is giving in to these attacks. The Workers Alliance of America, the union of the unemployed and W.P.A. workers is fighting to maintain the W.P.A. to organize all needy and is also fighting for decent wage standards on W.P.A. Answer the attacks of bosses

against the living standards of the masses by building the Workers Alliance of America and by supporting its demands.

## Auto Strikers Win

1937 already sees another great stride forward for the American labor movement. The auto workers marched out of their plants last month with banners high—they won an agreement which gives the United Automobile Workers Union the right of being the sole representative of the men in bargaining with General Motors in the 20 plants which were struck.

This agreement will hold for six months. It includes the right of the men to wear their U.A.W. buttons at work, to talk about the union on company property during lunchtime, and many other gains. As the agreement was signed, G.M. announced a wage increase that will increase its payroll \$25,000,000 a year—a direct result of the militant and steadfast fight the auto strikers put up.

## "Disarm Industry"

On New Year's Eve, John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O., called upon the government to disarm industry. In the hearings conducted throughout the past year by the Senate Committee on Civil Liberties, headed by Senator LaFollette, it has been definitely proven that big business is arming to the teeth for violent opposition to workers when they demand higher wages, better working conditions and recognition of their unions.

The lengths to which these industrial barons will go was dramatically exposed when witnesses told the LaFollette Committee how paid thugs of T.C.I., subsidiary of U.S. Steel, flogged Joseph Gelders, murdered and terrorized many workers. The LaFollette Committee is now hamstrung by lack of funds. Their investigations must continue to expose the treacherous practices of the bosses. Demand of your congressmen that they pass an appropriation for the LaFollette Committee.

## Prevent Floods

The heaviest burden of suffering and destitution from the flood of January, 1937—as from previous floods—fell upon the common people of the South. The fight in Congress for flood relief is therefore particularly vital to Southerners. Representative Matthew Dunn of Pennsylvania has introduced a resolution for an appropriation of one billion dollars for immediate flood relief. Southern workers and farmers should urge their representatives and senators to vote for this resolution and should also demand that Congress adopt immediately a comprehensive program for the prevention of future floods.

## Build The New South

By DON WEST

"There was a south of slavery—" Southern masters bought and sold human beings like beasts of burden. By struggle, a kind of slavery was wiped out.

There is a South of misery and hangings. There is a South where thousands are jobless, not knowing where next day's meals are to come from. There is a South of murder and lynching, jails and gangs, against the workers. The same class who drove slaves in the old days, in the courts, jails and in the slavers' tool. That class grows fat on the toil of starving workers.

There must be a new South. There must be a South of peace, of jobs, security and plenty for all. I'd like to see the Southern worker a mighty weapon to help mould a new South.

I've just been with a group of workers to the relief bureau. There we saw the usual scenes—dozens of hopeless, bent figures, stalking away, waiting around hoping.

This morning I visited the home of a Kentucky worker. There are six kids in this home, bright eyed little fellows, like most kids, eager to run and play and have the normal child's life. But these little fellows cannot have a healthy, full normal life. The father used to work and provide for his family. He worked hard. Now he is disabled, nothing left for him.

But what happens to this Kentucky family?

"From Friday till Monday," the mother said, "We have had nothing to eat in the house."

"The relief gives us \$5.00 a week," she told me.

Five dollars a week for a family of eight with food and other things as costly as they are. This mother told me how they had gone days at a time when there was no food at all in the house. She was keeping the kids out of school. They didn't have clothes to wear. Besides hungry kids can't learn anything in school anyhow.

She had tried to get work at the relief Bureau. But this is the story of thousands of Southern workers. They are met with a lot of sarcastic questions.

This is the story of thousands. Not only the colored, but also white workers, are under the heel of oppression. Our way out is the way of struggle, the way of organized, united standing together and building our organizations of workers to mighty fighting strength. There are the unions for the employed workers. There is the Workers Alliance for the unemployed and W. P. A. workers. There is the Farmer Labor Party for all.

# TEXTILE GETS READY

Reprinted from *The Sunday Worker*



FRANCIS GORMAN

*President of the United Textile Workers Union*

TEXTILE has swung into stride with steel in a vast campaign to organize millions of workers in mass production industries of the South!

To Greenville, S. C., the "textile center of the South," came 16 weathered veterans of the great 1934 strike in textile, organizers and officials of the United Textile Workers of America, for a weekend conference to map out tactics for the drive. For three days and nights they listened to and discussed the present situation and the plan of strategy which Francis Gorman, militant leader of America's million textile workers, put before them.

Many of these organizers have been in the union only a few years. Many of them were at their first strike in the great general textile strike of 1934. They learned bitter lessons in that 1934 strike.

They have watched the steel drive closely. They see how it works. They have come to realize, as Gorman put it, "President Roosevelt or no one else is going to do anything for the textile workers, unless we do something for ourselves."

Alert not only to the nation-wide problems of the textile workers of America, Gorman knows the South, the particular problems which face the workers who have but lately come into industry, who do not have the tradition of unionism which northern workers have had for 50 years or more. Gorman knows the terror, the intimidation, the unscrupulous methods that the industrial bar-

rons of the South will use to attempt to break up the unionization of the workers.

"The most important obstacle to organizing the Southern textile workers," as he, himself said, "is the extremely vicious, anti-union policy of the employers. The lengths to which these industrial bourbons go to drive out organization know no bounds—framed arrests on every charge, including murder. This is true of Northern manufacturers, too, but the Southern manufacturers are more savage in their union-busting tactics that most Northern manufacturers."

**E**QUALLY important, Gorman pointed out is the fact that law-enforcement agencies in the South—the courts, police, sheriffs, etc., are in most cases openly lined up with the mill owners. "They make so little pretense of being really impartial and fair that their actions look unbelievable to people in the North who watch our progress."

As we discussed the plan of action in the lobby of the hotel where the conference was being held, along came Homer Welch, U.T.W. organizer in Alabama who was framed in the Talledega Case. Just out of prison a week, sentenced to 10 years in prison for shooting a police officer, which was even disproved by state's evidence in the trial, Welch was typical of the organizers present. While his case is being appealed, he is right back in the campaign.

"Welch is one of hundreds of cases, some not so vicious, some worse. But we can do a great deal to combat this," Gorman was quick to point out. "We must seek not only to draw in the textile workers and other members of organized labor, but also liberals, and small business men. These people can be our friends, especially the tradespeople of the small towns who are directly dependent upon the purchasing power of the workers. We must organize public opinion on our side. The employers have long ago realized the importance of public opinion, and they take great pains to organize it through the radio, the press, the movies. We must do the same through every method at our command.

"Here is an example of what I mean. In Cumberland, Md. the vigilante committee, organized by the company's agents through the press, had public sentiment well organized against the workers until the union stepped in and rallied the people to their own side. They began with the grocery stores, small department stores and the like. The net result was that they received unlimited credit during the strike for food; they received free publicity in the papers, and generally, they found support where they never dreamed they had it. They said in the beginning, 'This is a Du Pont stronghold. We can never get public support.' But when they really went out after it they did get it."

In the South there are hundreds of small towns, even large cities where if you start talking to a worker about joining the union, he will look at you wonderingly and interrupt with, "Now just what is this union idea all about?"

"We have the answer, to that in our agitation and propaganda program that we are going to use. In this campaign we are really going to build the union solidly, and in the course of work we will find a way to present our program of organization and progressive legislation to the workers in intelligible and dramatic form."

**M**OST of the methods the T.W.O.C. will use are the methods which the steel campaign has already proven will do the job. Large dramatic, effective posters will be distributed to all union offices, central labor union halls, state federation offices, barber shops, pool halls, churches, schools, colleges, labor paper editorial rooms, on vacant board fences, on buildings and in all other hundreds of places where workers will read it and think about it.

Widespread use of leaflets and bulletins will immediately be initiated. Volunteer corps from neighboring towns will be organized to distribute these at mill gates and in house-to-house visits.

"One of the things we have learned, particularly in the South," said Gorman, "is the necessity of presenting local grievances for joining the union. We will never distribute just one leaflet to a mill. For each mill there will be a carefully thought out plan. Already, up in Danville, Va., U.T.W. local 2057 has started issuing a mimeographed shop paper which at present will come out

*(Continued on next page)*

once a month and later oftener."

Asked whether he thought Southern textile workers were again ready to organize after the negative results of the 1934 strike, Gorman replied, "Unquestionably. In that strike they felt their power. Now they will learn to use it correctly.

"The inhuman stretchout that has been instituted throughout the industry, and especially in the South, leaves them no alternative but to organize in defense of their interests and to gain better conditions.

"Here is an example of what the stretchout really means: In No. 2 Room of the Riverside Mill in Danville, there were 6 filling rollers on each shift who were paid \$12 each per week . . . or a total of \$72 per week for the workers on that shift. Wages were increased to \$13.20 per week, but one filling roller was taken off, leaving five filling rollers to do the work of 6. Now the company pays \$66.00 a week to the workers on that shift.

**T**HE stretchout, starvation wages and 10-hour work days are among the most important things that the National Textile Act, H.R. 238, is designed to eliminate, declared Gorman. "In that act we also demand an \$18 minimum wage pending a decision by a government commission as to what constitutes a reasonable wage."

The act also attacks some of the basic evils of the mill setup such as compulsory trading at company commissaries, payment of wages in scrip and calls for stringent laws on child labor which is particularly prevalent in the textile industry.

"We are not only bringing pressure to bear on present legislators in Congress and state bodies for the enactment of this progressive legislation, but in our union, we full well realize that the only way labor and the farmers are going to guard their constitutional rights which are increasingly menaced by the employers is to organize a national party of their own, a Farmer-Labor Party. Our locals have already taken the initiative in many regions in doing this.

"Let me emphasize," he continued, "We can organize the South and we must do it. One of the greatest pitfalls is creating breaks in our ranks and dissension among the workers because of differences of opinion over issues which have nothing to do with the organization of the Union. There was a time when Communists and other groups sought to disrupt our union for political purposes. This is no longer true. Today, we will be charged with disruption if we choose to discriminate against present or potential union members because of differences over political, religious or other incidental beliefs. This is the policy of the Committee for Industrial Organization and this is the policy of the United Textile Workers."

"As he rose to return to the conference room, Gorman smiled confidently and declared, "You can tell your readers this: Textile is going to be ready this spring to join hands with steel, coal, auto, rubber and the other mass production industries in whatever program is decided upon for labor's march towards progress and peace in America."

# A PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

• By a Staff Member of The Southern Worker

**T**HE greatest contributor to the New Deal election campaign both in votes and money was the working class, led by Labor's Non-Partisan League organized by John L. Lewis and Major Berry. Mr. Roosevelt told Labor in more or less general terms that he was more or less or generally in sympathy with the aims of labor. Roosevelt, obviously, was considerably impressed by the growing power of Labor and by Labor's growing influence among the farmers and the middle classes. Roosevelt said he was willing to make concessions to Labor.

Labor responded by making out a blank check to Roosevelt and John L. Lewis said, "Fill it in, Mr. President." It was the same with hundreds of New Deal Congressmen. "You are for the New Deal," said Labor. "That's enough for us. You get our votes."

They filled up Congress with men who had made some vague promises and then sat back to wait for that progressive social and labor legislation. To date it hasn't come. On the contrary, there are distinct signs that some laws just contrary to the needs of Labor are coming out of the hopper. What labor and the people forgot was that for every representative of labor dogging the footsteps of the law-makers in Washington there are a hundred representatives of chambers of commerce, trade associations, power trusts, the railroads, and whatnot.

The truth of the matter is that Labor has not united behind a definite legislative program. It has not drawn to its side those forces who have many of the same aims, the peace groups, the farmers, the middle classes. And finally Labor has not adopted a method of exerting pressure, consistently and steadily, towards achieving this program.

**N**OW, first, about the legislative program itself. Everybody knows that in a general way Labor is for the 30-hour week, that it is for the right to organize, and for curbing the power of the Supreme Court. The A. F. of L. office in Washington sends out its ponderous news releases on legislation, but very few locals get in on the secret. The United Mine Workers representative works for the Guffey Bill, the United Textile Workers for the Ellenbogen Bill and the representatives of the railroad brotherhoods for their own legislation. There has not been a single legislative program, known to the ranks of Labor, and covering the various aspects of labor legislation.

The Communist Party has entered this breach with a program. At a recent meeting of our Central Committee, a national legislative program was worked out to include all the needs of Labor, the farmers and the middle classes.

This program deals systematically with the following points:

30-hour week; collective bargaining, social insurance; civil liberties; Supreme Court; Negro people; unemployment relief;

farm mortgages; cost of production; W farmers; tenancy and share cropping; str conservation; taxation; working condit do public works program; banks; monopo ci housing; youth; foreign born; veteri jun legislation; railroad labor; marine work e st election laws; education.

A final section deals with an Ameri g peace policy, armaments and military tr ing. f

It is a program of social and labor le lation with which no worker, farmer o fact any true representative of the com ssm people can disagree. It remained, howe for the Communist Party to draw up su program.

But this program will remain on pap unless the proper forces are drawn up s support of it, and unless this suppor turned into channels that will insure rec

We therefore propose the formation of progressive legislative committees in va ous labor and farm bodies, starting w the locals and including central bodies a the state federations. Such committees sho make common cause with other grou as drawing them into the committees on coun and state scale.

**T**HESE committees should utilize this r tional program by arranging discussion in the various locals and central bodies whi which it has connections. They should dra up similar programs for city, county an The state legislation, based on the needs of this people in these political sub-divisions. nci

It must be realized that the old metho of lobbying will not work. Roosevelt an Congress must be made to realize that thi masses are interested in certain legislatio To get a labor program across calls firstl for organizing the unorganized. ees

This is all a part of what we mean byve independent political action by Labor. M means action which is not tied to the tal of the kite of big business or the politica parties of big business. th

Workers and farmers who are active bht drawing up and working for a people's pogram of legislation will eventually see the need of a people's party. We realize this. We are, in fact, counting on this. We want the common people to learn through their own experience that they need a Farmer-Labor Party, based on the trade unions, the farm organizations, the Negro people and the exploited middle classes.

But while they are learning this lesson why not win some of the demands of the people which can mean a better life? This is the why and wherefore of a progressive legislative program and legislative committees of the people.

(Editor's Note: Copies of The People's Demands, the program of social and labor legislation drawn up by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, can be obtained by sending a postcard to the Southern Worker, Box 572, Birmingham, Ala.)

# WHAT ABOUT SIT-DOWN STRIKES?

By R. F. HALL

WAS reading my afternoon paper on the street car. The headlines were full of the sit-down strike. General Motors had asked the circuit court at Flint, Michigan, for an injunction to justify the use of force to evict the striking automobile workers. In Montgomery, big business interests were pressing for a bill to outlaw the sit-down strike in Alabama and assess triple damages against the unions. The citizen sitting next to me read the headlines over my shoulder. "What do you think of this sit-down business?" I asked him. The citizen was either a small business man or a white collar worker. His answer was not surprising; it was what might be expected from that section of the public which has no direct connection with the labor movement and the problems of labor and which relies exclusively—too exclusively—on the capitalist press for its opinions.

"I believe in the right of labor unions to strike," he said, "but I don't think it's right for the workers to trespass on another man's property and keep him out of it. I always vote as a great one for principle, and it's the principle of the thing that has decided me. Now suppose you had a cook who got sore and went on strike. Suppose she sat down in your kitchen and wouldn't cook your dinner and wouldn't let you in there to cook your own meal, either. It looks to me as if that were the same principle.

The citizen was speaking honestly. This was the principle as he saw it. It was the principle of HIS kitchen, HIS meal, HIS pocket, HIS PROSPERITY. If he were a small business man, he thought also, no doubt, of HIS delivery boy or HIS stenographer. Since so many of our middle class and white collar friends hold sincerely to this attitude, it is necessary that we take up the questions involved in this attitude and make a serious effort to answer them.

The basic question in the sit-down strikes is the right to collective bargaining, the right for which the sit-down strikers are fighting. Now while cooks, maids, office boys and stenographers employed in individual homes and establishments are exploited and have indeed grievances of their own, it is certainly not to be expected that they will have recourse to the sit-down strike. In an establishment where one employee works for one employer, their disagreements must perforce be settled between them. The opposing sides are more or less equal in strength. Mr. Brown can tell Johnnie or Johnnie can quit. It is then merely a question for Mr. Brown to look for another boy and Johnnie to look for another job. As long as industry was composed entirely of small establishments employing one or two workers, the problem of labor relations as we know them did not exist. And, incidentally, it was under circumstances such as this that our Constitution with its hundred and one safeguards of "property rights" was framed.

But the situation today is entirely different. It is not a disagreement between Mr. Brown and Johnnie. It is a disagreement between a great corporation, worth millions of dollars and owned in the greater part by a minutely small group of millionaires, on the one hand, and some 200,000 workers on the other. The corporation has tremendous power and, in the case of General Motors, controls towns, cities and counties.

The individual worker, on the other hand, is relatively powerless against this array of might and power. He can quit, of course, but the prospects, in that event, are poverty and even starvation. He may be blacklisted and as a result be refused work by the other two big automobile companies. If he is to continue at his old trade, he has little choice in an industry, such as auto, dominated by three billion-dollar corporations.

Certainly the "principle" involved here is not the same principle which was bothering my friend on the street car.

The reactionary press would not be im-

and corporate property, the old, narrow view of property rights is no longer applicable. Certainly it is clear that government cannot with justice take the conceptions of property rights designed to protect the individual small owner and apply them on a grand scale to billion-dollar corporations. The people themselves, and especially the individual small owners, thereby become the losers.

The workers and the middle classes are exploited and oppressed by these corporations and they must take the necessary steps to defend themselves. The organization of unions and the establishment of collective bargaining is a vital life and death matter today, not only to the automobile workers in Michigan but to workers in steel, textile, rubber and agriculture. The sit-down strike in Michigan began when the czars of General Motors refused to bargain with the union and discriminated against union men. It was a necessary weapon in the uneven fight of the industrial slaves against the slave-masters.



*Auto workers in Cadillac's Detroit plant join sit-down strike started by their brothers in Flint, Michigan.*

pressed by these arguments. The sit-down strike, to them, is a powerful weapon for "evil" in the hands of the workers. They never cease to invoke the sacred "property rights" of the big corporations.

But the worker might very well answer, "Do not these so-called property rights of the corporations carry any obligations and responsibilities?" And here it should be remembered that the sit-down strike was inaugurated by the corporations themselves back in 1929 when they brought on the crisis and depression. Because they were not receiving profits large enough to please them, the capitalists went on a sit-down strike and closed factory after factory, mine after mine.

THE Scripps-Howard Press, which includes the Post in Birmingham, points out that even conservative Frank Kent advocates the acceptance of the principle of the worker having a property right in his job. But neither Mr. Kent nor the Post can see that the acceptance of this principle means that, with the rise of corporate power

The issue clearly is not whether sit-down strikes violate the principle of property rights. The issue is whether a small group of industrial autocrats shall be able to disregard the welfare of the workers, use spies and thugs and discrimination to smash unions, and refuse to bargain collectively with their employees.

This is the issue also in Alabama today where the reactionaries are attempting to enact a law against the sit-down strike. It is not the property rights of the small business man or the home-owner that is bothering the friends of the bill to outlaw sit-down strikes. It is whether the Organized Labor movement in Alabama shall become so powerful that it can force the reactionary employers, the steel trust, the textile magnates, and the landlords, to bargain collectively.

That is why the anti-sit-down strike bill must be defeated, why the anti-picketing law must be repealed. It will take a united labor movement, together with the farmers and the middle classes, to achieve this.

# "DISARM INDUSTRY"

● By PAT BARR

IN Washington, D. C., last month, the story of why the floggers of Joseph S. Gelders were not brought to justice was unfolded before a tense and wide-eyed audience. The scene was the hearing conducted by the Senate Committee Investigating Civil Liberties, headed by Senator Robert LaFollette.

The story so far, up to the hearing, was this: Joseph Gelders, formerly a professor at the University of Alabama and now Southern Representative of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, was kidnapped from the streets of Birmingham on the night of September 23 because he and several ministers and other liberals in Birmingham sought the release of Jack Barton. Barton was a Communist organizer who was sentenced to prison for repossessing Communist literature in Bessemer.

Gelders was carried 50 miles outside of Birmingham, brutally flogged and left in a road ditch without any clothes. Gelders saw who his floggers were and easily identified them to police authorities. Among the floggers were Walter J. Hanna, of the National Guard and Dent Williams, a Birmingham attorney. Evidence that these men were the floggers was presented to two grand juries in Jefferson County. This evidence could not be refuted, yet the grand jury refused to indict these men for flogging Gelders.

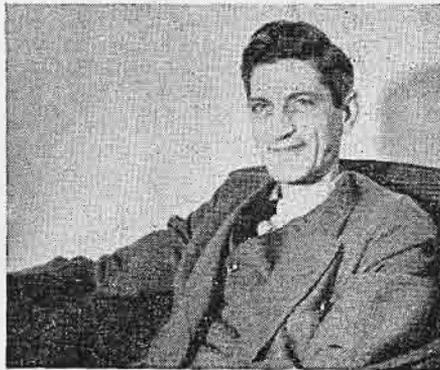
Why did two grand juries refuse to return indictments against the men whom Gelders positively identified as the men who flogged stand at the hearing in Washington by James W. McClung, special investigator of the Alabama State Police, assigned to the Gelders case. This was McClung's answer: "The Tennessee Coal and Iron Company owns fifteen-sixteenth of the country down there!"

T.C.I., subsidiary and Southern outpost of United States Steel Corporation, not only owns fifteen-sixteenth of the property in and around Birmingham, but has 15 out of the 17 officers of the Alabama State National Guard on its payroll. Hanna was one of them. Dent Williams was a lieutenant in the National Guard.

That was the reason the grand juries refused to return indictments against the assailants of Gelders.

Solicitor General Bailes and the prosecutor had this information, but they even refused to call Yelverton Cowherd, Birmingham attorney who was former chairman of the Americanization Committee of the American Legion, who had definite knowledge of this, to testify before the grand juries.

ON the witness stand in Washington, McClung made no bones about the fact that he had "received little aid from local law enforcement agencies" in his investigation of the case with the exception of Chief



Joseph S. Gelders  
*Joseph Gelders, Southern Representative  
of the National Committee For the  
Defense of Political Prisoners*

of Detectives Giles. McClung even charged that the Jefferson County Solicitor's office had failed to press vigorously for indictments.

## MORE JOBLESS

● By TED WELLMAN

SUPPOSE you had fallen asleep on the day before election last year, and did not wake up for three months. Then you awoke and looked about you. You would see that in the three months following the elections 386,817 workers were laid off the WPA, and most of them didn't get any jobs in industry—most of them back on the tender mercies of bankrupt state and county relief agencies. Who would you think had won the elections?

Roosevelt campaigned on the issue of continuing the WPA, while Landon and the Liberty League howled for cutting and doing away with the WPA. Yet in the short period since the elections we have seen nearly 400,000 workers dropped from the WPA rolls. Harry L. Hopkins went to Congress and asked for a cut in the WPA appropriations to \$635,000,000, and brazenly stated that 600,000 more workers would be thrown off WPA by June. All this in the face of the Conference of Mayors held in Washington which stated that at least \$877,500,000 was needed to carry on the WPA for the next five months, and that 500,000 more people should be placed on the WPA at once.

The Workers Alliance of America, the organization of the jobless and relief workers, has taken up the challenge. On January 9, in almost every city in the country there were mass meetings and parades of WPA workers protesting these outrageous cuts. On January 15, a mass delegation of 3,000 delegates representing 1,500,000 organized WPA workers from most of the states of the Union came to Washington to voice the demands of the WPA workers themselves. Their committee met with Marvin

The story of Joseph Gelders was one of the most dramatic and one of the most horrifying described to the LaFollette Committee, but it was only a part of the long history of T.C.I.'s and U.S. Steel's efforts to prevent the organization of their hundreds of thousands of workers into unions which fight for higher wages and better conditions.

Testimony given to the LaFollette Committee in 1936 showed that U.S. Steel maintains a huge private army of stool pigeons, thugs and trigger-men. Its mills are stocked with large supplies of machine guns, tear gas, rifles and other means of fighting against workers.

Two murders of workers, intimidation and terrorization of all kinds were added to this list by a large number of affidavits submitted to the LaFollette Committee.

On New Year's Eve, John L. Lewis, chairman of the Committee for Industrial Organization, called upon government agencies to "disarm industry." The government has blithely ignored this. Is the United States Department of Justice also intimidated by America's chief racketeers—the Morgans, duPonts and other Liberty Leaguers who are the real leaders of this vicious campaign of terror, murder and frame-up?

McIntyre, secretary to President Roosevelt, and submitted the following four demands:

1. Appropriation of at least \$1,040,000,000 for the period from February 1 to July 1.
2. Reinstatement of all discharged WPA workers.
3. Expansion of WPA to include all needy.
4. 20% increase in wages on WPA.

IN the Southern states, which compose the lowest wage region of the WPA, workers receive from \$12 to \$33 per month. Almost half the WPA workers have been cut off in less than a year. In Tennessee the rolls dropped from 55,483 to less than 30,000; in Alabama from 47,701 to 29,959; and in Georgia from 53,804 to 33,121.

The masses of unemployed can answer this brutal attack on their very lives only by organizing, by building the Workers Alliance, by organizing mass actions, meetings, committees, delegations, by insisting that their congressmen fight for more appropriations. The trade unions as a whole must protest these WPA cuts and dismissals. The labor movement everywhere should support the Workers Alliance, the union of the jobless, in its struggle against downright starvation; as well as to prevent a million hungry jobless people from being thrown on the market as cheap labor, to be used as a bait in the fight of the Liberty League and Manufacturers Association to knock down wage levels, and to smash the labor unions.

The people are being double-crossed. Their mandates of Election Day go unheeded. Make the pre-election promises become true.

# LAND FOR THE LANDLESS

● By JERRY COLEMAN

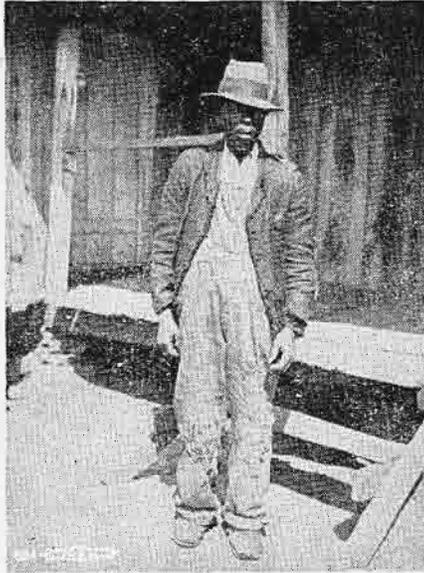
WHILE the hearings held by President Roosevelt's Commission on Farm Tenancy were largely the result of pressure brought to bear upon the administration for progressive legislation to aid agriculture, the hearings held in the South last month were used mainly to gather support for the Bankhead-Jones Farm-Tenancy Bill. The Bankhead Bill will give little aid to the farmer and was presented as a result of the demand of two million landless Southern farmers for land. While the Roosevelt government is making promises, the People's Front government in Mexico has already confiscated the big cotton plantations and in the Laguna region they are being divided up among the landless agricultural workers.

One colored farmer at the Montgomery meeting summed up things in a few words—"We've been waiting 70 years for our 40 acres and a mule and now we're looking to get it."

The Bankhead Bill is supposed to be the answer to the farmer. Will it be? The bill provides for 50 million dollars to be spent each year putting agricultural workers, sharecroppers and tenants on their own land. It will cost about \$5,000 to buy land, build a house, buy teams and tools and supply feed, fertilizer, food and so forth. At this rate, and considering none of this money goes for administration expenses and graft, they can take care of 10,000 families a year. In the South alone it would take 200 years to take care of the two million landless farmers. And considering the number of small farm owners losing their land to the banks and mortgage sharks—an average of 40,000 a year for the last five years—the Bankhead Bill can only take care of one out of four families that lost their land each year, let alone do anything for those already landless.

The Communist Party says the government is not doing its job. In the first place the Frazier-Lemke Farm Mortgage Refinancing Bill, with amendments striking out inflationary clauses, must be passed to protect the small land owner from mortgage foreclosure and stop the increase in tenancy. In the second place a Bankhead Bill providing for at least a billion dollars a year to secure land and homes for tenants is needed.

THE present Bankhead Bill has several more jokers that will work hardship on the farmer. Farmers who get loans will be asked to cut down on cash crops. These farmers will be forced to sign farm-management plans made out by the County Farm Agent who is always helping the banker and landlord gobble up the small landowner. The farmer will not stand for this kind of dictatorship and the government cannot expect the farmer to agree to have the "easy-chair Washington farmers," with their crack-pot ideas, run their business. The Communist Party says the farmer must have his cash crop and no dictatorship from the County Agents.



*A Negro share-cropper in Alabama standing front of the jerry-built house which he and his family are forced to live in.*

The interest on loans under the Bankhead Bill should be paid by taxation of bankers, insurance companies, loan companies and corporations dealing with farmers or farm products. To repay a \$5,000 loan in 40 years would mean a \$125 payment on the principal each year. If the \$75 interest is added to this payment, the farmer will starve to death trying to make it. The banks and corporations have robbed the farmer for years. Let them put back a little of their profits to cover the interest on the loans.



*This is a church in the cotton country. It is also used as a school for the few months of the year that the children of colored share-croppers are spared from work in the fields to attend.*

STATE Homestead Exemption laws up to \$5,000 should be passed to protect the small farmer from unbearable tax burdens. A high graduated land tax on all private and corporate land-holding valued over \$5,000 should be passed to put a check on land monopoly and exploitation through land monopoly. The Federal Farm Credit Administration should be loosened up so the small farmer can get a production loan. At present the F.C.A. is little better than the regular loan shark. It should be changed to allow crop loans for small farmers, tenants and sharecroppers with a crop lien as the only security. Another amendment to the F.C.A. should allow for cancellation of these debts during years of crop failure.

Marketing co-operatives should be given financial aid by the government. Such co-operatives should be organized and controlled by the working farmers. Then the farmer can have a little control over markets and increase prices for farm products by cutting into the profits of the useless middle man.

Purchasing co-operatives controlled by the farmers will allow them to buy in large quantities at wholesale prices and again cut into the middle man's profits and put money into the farmers' pocket. Many Alabama farmers have saved from \$5 to \$10 a ton buying fertilizer co-operatively.

A few people propose producers co-operatives as the way to solve the farm tenancy problem. While the Communist Party believes co-operative farming would be the most profitable under Socialism, the Party warns the farmer that as long as Wall Street bankers control the markets, prices and credit under Capitalism, co-operative farming can never succeed.

If producers co-operatives are started now, Wall Street and the County Agents they control will crush them. It will give a black-eye to this type of farming. Today the American farmer wants his own land and the Communist Party gives its full support to this demand.

# CHERRY PIE

I'LL meet you tomorrow at union headquarters. I've got to go over to Bessemer now. See you tomorrow. And I'll take you home with me for dinner. Wait 'til you taste my wife's pie! It's the best pie in the world. Ask any of the boys here.

Of course you know I'm on the local steel workers committee here, and it keeps me pretty-busy. When we first started organizing I was never home. I'd come back from the mill, grab something to eat, and out again. You know, meetings, talking to people and all that stuff.

One day I was on the three to eleven shift, and I came into the house to get my lunch. I could smell pies baking. I stood there just smelling 'em. I said to Stella—that's my wife—"Don't forget to save a piece for me tonight." She said something, but I was in a hurry and didn't wait to hear what it was.

Well, when I got out of the mill that night I got to talking union with some of the men, and I didn't get home 'till after twelve. Now, I said to myself, Joe, you're going to sit down and enjoy a piece of that pie. I looked at the table in the kitchen. Nothing there. I looked on all the shelves, everywhere. No pie. I thought that was pretty funny. My wife and kid don't eat a couple of pies between them. All I could find to eat was some stale bread and a piece of cheese.

I KNEW there was something screwy going on but I couldn't figure it out. Anyhow, I was pretty tired, so I went to bed. When I got in bed Stella was sound asleep. O.K. I said to myself, I'll find out what it's all about in the morning.

I slept a little later than usual and when I woke up there was nobody in the house. On the kitchen table was a letter which went something like this: "All you do lately is come home to eat and sleep. You don't even want to talk to me. I'm not running a hotel. Until you change you can live by yourself. Yours truly, Stella."

Can you beat that!

I was standing there, feeling sort of punch drunk when my father-in-law walked in. "Hey," I said, "take a look at this. What the hell is it all about?"

"Yeah, I know Joe," he said. "Women get crazy sometimes. Stella and the kid are over to our house. She says she's goin' to stay a while 'till you get sense."

"What's she doin' there?" I asked.

"Oh, she and the old woman, they're eating pie. She brought a couple over yesterday. Damn good pie too."

"Pop," I hollered, "don't talk like that!"

I stood there a minute thinking. Then I said, "Listen, if she wants to be stubborn I can be too." Besides I couldn't go over his place because I had another meeting.

WELL, the rest of the week I just lived by myself. I ate mostly bread and cheese. I still can't look cheese in the face. One day somebody at the mill says to me, "Does your wife still make those good pies?" I told him if he knew what was good for him he'd lay off the pie.

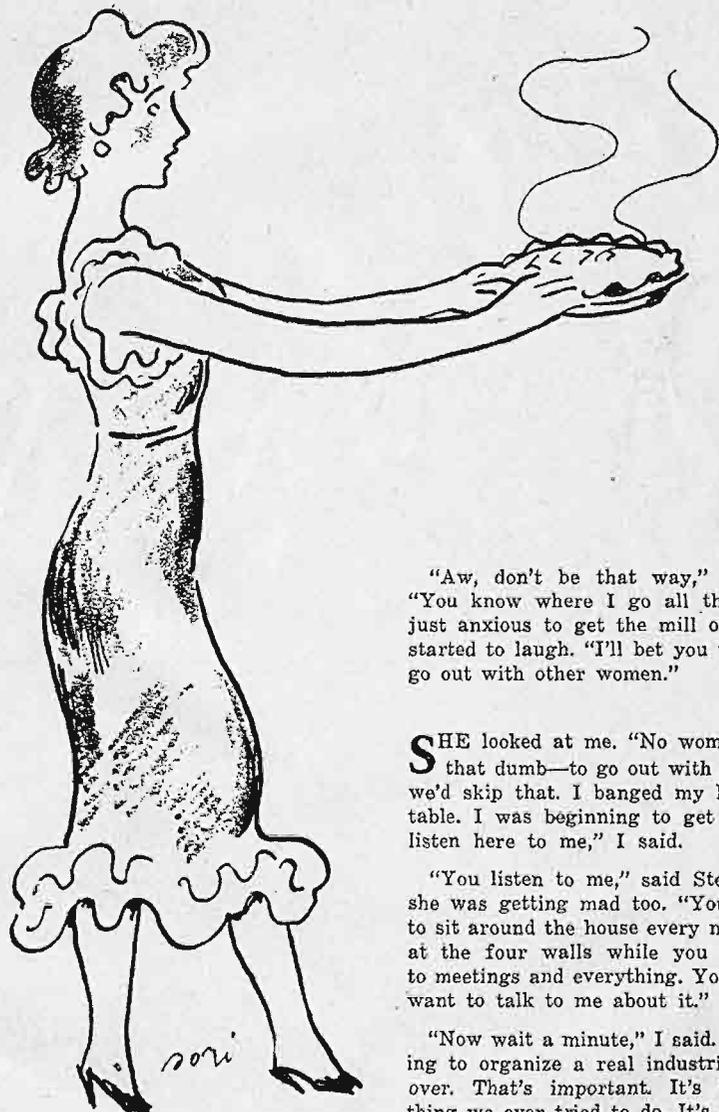
Finally Sunday came around and I went over to the old folks' house. They were

sitting on the porch with Bobby, my kid. Wait 'til you see him, only four, but smart as a tick. He said to me, "Daddy why don't I see you anymore? Why didn't you come home yesterday? We had pie for supper."

"Where's your mother?" I said. He told me in the kitchen, so I asked the old folks to stay out because I wanted to talk with Stella. I went inside.

"Hello, honey," I said.

"Don't honey me," she said. It's a pity you can't get around to visiting your wife and child once in a while."



"Aw, don't be that way," I told her. "You know where I go all the time. I'm just anxious to get the mill organized." I started to laugh. "I'll bet you try to say I go out with other women."

SHE looked at me. "No woman could be that dumb—to go out with you!" I said we'd skip that. I banged my hand on the table. I was beginning to get mad. "Now listen here to me," I said.

"You listen to me," said Stella. I guess she was getting mad too. "You expect me to sit around the house every night looking at the four walls while you run around to meetings and everything. You don't even want to talk to me about it."

"Now wait a minute," I said. "We're trying to organize a real industrial union all over. That's important. It's the biggest thing we ever tried to do. It's men's work, no place for women."

"Oh, yeah! I guess it's all right for us

# A SHORT STORY

● By I. SHAPIRO



All of a sudden she began to smile. "Listen, smart guy, I'm going to show you something. You go home and shave and put on a clean shirt. Then you take Bobby for a walk and don't come back here 'till late in the afternoon.

"What's the big idea," I said.

"You wait and find out. Don't stand there like a dummy. Do what I say."

"All right. All right." I said. "Anything to keep peace in the family."

**W**ELL, I did what she said. I took Bobby out for a walk down towards the Fairfield mill. I tried to explain to him about the union and that he should never be surprised at anything a woman ever did. We came back to the house and when I walked in my mouth just opened up like Joe E. Brown's—Not because I was saying anything—I just couldn't.

The house was full of people, all men from the mills and their wives. They were just sitting around and talking—and eating pie. And Mike Johnson was sitting there eating pie so fast his handlebar mustache was waving up and down.

"We were waiting for you," Stella said, looking at me sort of funny. You know the way women do. Mike was just asking if you could explain a few things to him about the union. Isn't that right Mike?"



women to make ends meet at home, and to go out on the picket line in a strike, but we're too dumb to understand what it's all about. We just bake pies!"

"I didn't say that. I only meant that there was nothing you could do. One reason I go out so much is I'm trying to see Mike Johnson. He's an old-timer with lots of pals. I've got to convince him he ought to support the union. I guess maybe you could do that better than me?"

Mike swallowed a big hunk of pie. "Huh," he said. "What? Well, yeah, all right."

When I heard that I began talking. It was a pretty good speech if I do say so myself. I said, "You fellows know the only way we can beat the bosses is to organize into one big union. Not in old fashioned craft unions, but in industrial unions. If you want to get some place in a hurry, you don't ride an old broken down flivver; you'd get a modern streamlined car. Well, that's the way it is with unions. Industrial unions is the modern, streamlined way of organization."

Well, I don't have to tell you the whole thing. You know as well as I do. When I got through talking Mike said he guessed I was right at that, and when could he join. And the other fellows said the same thing. Finally they all went home.

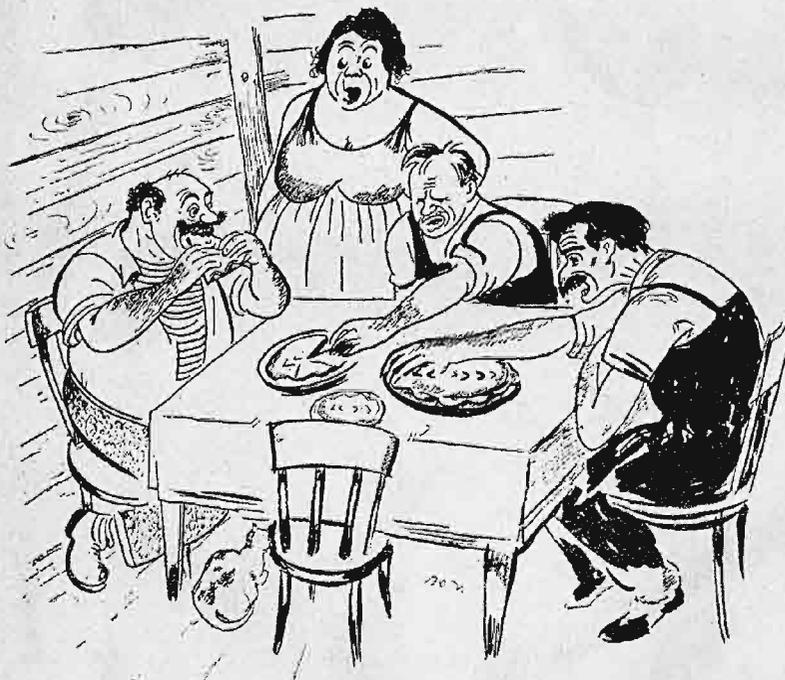
I looked at Stella. "Sweetheart," I said, "I got to hand it to you."

"Oh, you're not so bad yourself," she said. Then I put my arms around her and we sort of made up—well you know what I mean. After that I said, "Well, honey, now I'm going to sit down and eat me some of that pie. I was so excited before I forgot to eat any." I sat down at the table and looked around. "Well, I'll be—" I said. There wasn't a piece of pie left in the house, not even a crumb. They just cleaned up everything there was.

Stella said, "Do you admit you were wrong?"

I said, "Will you bake me all the pies I want?"

So she said yes and I said yes. That's the way it was. Well, I got to scram now, so long. See you tomorrow.



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# The American Scene

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## DISASTROUS FLOODS LEAVE 1,000,000 HOMELESS

One of the most terrible floods in American history swept through the Ohio Valley and down the Mississippi Valley last month, leaving over 500 dead, one million homeless, property damage of more than \$400,000,000, and epidemics of contagious diseases among the helpless refugees.

Experts are pointing out that this was no mere "act of God," no natural calamity that could not have been avoided. The original cause was the ruthless way in which big business exploited the land and natural resources of the country, thus depriving us of natural protections against floods. Big business knew how to prevent these floods, but they did not do so because a good flood protection system would have eaten into the profits of power and other companies.

All that was necessary was for the government to enter on an extensive program of controlling floods at their source. Instead, Congress backed down before the power companies, who opposed it because it would mean government dams and therefore government power plants, like T.V.A.

## AUTO STRIKE JUST FIRST BATTLE OF LARGER STRUGGLE, SAYS LEWIS

The auto strike is only the first engagement in a war between labor and finance," says John L. Lewis, chairman of the C.I.O. in Washington last month. Lewis charges that the leading financial interests of the country have ganged up to fight the organization drive which the C.I.O. is conducting not only in auto but in steel, textile and other mass industries.

## CONGRESS GIVES IN TO WAR- MAKERS; BANS ARMS TO SPAIN

Almost the first official act of the 75th Congress was to stab democracy in the back by passing a law against arms shipments to Spain. This is exactly what Hitler wanted the United States to do. Hitler knows that his man, General Franco, will be defeated unless the Spanish people, who are fighting heroically to save their country and the world from fascism, can be cut off from obtaining supplies from the other democratic countries.

The most reactionary senators and congressmen, who have always bitterly fought any genuine movement against war, strongly favored this so-called "neutrality" bill, while the only congressman who had the courage to oppose it was Farmer-Laborite John T. Bernard of Minnesota.

## MARITIME WORKERS WIN MOST DEMANDS IN STRIKE

The heroic 84-day strike of the maritime workers of the West Coast ended in a smashing victory for the workers when an agree-

ment to end the strike was reached which granted almost all of the important demands which had been raised by the strikers. All but the longshoremen won substantial pay increases. The longshoremen won continuation of a six-hour day and time and a half for overtime. Cooks and stewards won an eight-hour day on freighters, nine hours on passenger ships. Radio telegraphers got an eight-hour day. All but the Marine Engineers and the Masters, Mates and Pilots won closed shop contracts with union hiring halls. These two unions won union recognition.

On the East Coast and in the Gulf ports, although the strike did not gain such smashing victories as were won in the West, the

maritime unions ended in a stronger position than they began. The solidarity between East Coast, West Coast, and Gulf maritime workers was greatly strengthened, thus laying the basis for the building of a National Maritime Federation. Another important victory of the strike was the winning of honest and militant rank and file control over I.S.U. locals formerly under the dictatorship of reactionary officials.

## STEEL WORKERS TO PRESENT DEMANDS BY APRIL 1

Workers in the steel industry plan to present their demands to the steel trust by April 1, of this year, it was reported. Some time before then, a national convention of members of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, the steel workers' union affiliated to the C.I.O., will be held to discuss demands for union wages, hours and working conditions. The union of steel workers now has a membership of more than 128,000.

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# International News

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On the fourth anniversary of the day when Hitler became the ruler of Germany, he delivered a speech eagerly awaited by all peoples and countries throughout the world. In the face of offers of economic assistance tendered him by England and France for promises of peace, would he alter his headlong plunge towards another world war? No, he did not. He attacked the Versailles treaty and withdrew Germany's agreement to the last clause in an attempt to blind the starving, suffering German people whom he is preparing to send into new battlefields. "Cannon before butter," he declared.

His speech was an attack upon the whole system of collective security. He wants to break the Franco-Soviet pact, to isolate Czechoslovakia so that he can march his troops over the body of that country to attack the Soviet Union. Hitler has delivered another brutal attack upon the world's peace. His speech was yet another step towards war.

While in the four years that Hitler has been in power, Germany has become a bristling fortress or arms, the fascist tyrants sit upon a keg of dynamite uneasily. The same week that Hitler spoke, there came from the German people the true hope of a free and peaceful Germany. An appeal for a German People's Front was signed by both Socialists and Communists.

Spanish democracy continued not only to hold its own last month, but began a counter-offensive on several sectors of the front against the fascists. The fascist army of General Franco, increasingly manned by German and Italian troops, tried in vain to

make headway in the attack on Madrid. Loyalist forces, however, have driven them from several areas on the outskirts of the city. In a victorious battle for possession of the Hill of the Angels, now called "Red Hill," a point of great strategic importance, the government forces seized a vast amount of ammunition and reported 1,000 rebel soldiers killed. "I am done for. You are going to shoot me," Major Belda, fascist leader said when he was captured with 300 of his battalion. "We do not shoot prisoners," Major Modesto, the government commander, replied to the amazed fascist leader.

While Spanish democracy fights for its life, the capitalist papers give first place in their news columns to Leon Trotsky, whose agents in the Soviet Union were convicted of treason and counter-revolutionary activities on January 29. Trotsky is now an object of admiration and sympathy in most newspapers, from the "liberal" Scripps-Howard papers down to the outspoken fascist, Hearst. The reason for this is their common hatred of the Soviet Union, the land of victorious Socialism.

Meanwhile Trotsky, newly arrived in Mexico, his latest refuge, continues his anti-working class activities. Having obtained the right to live in Mexico by his promise to refrain from political activity there, his first press statement on arrival was a vicious attack on the Soviet Union and on the present policies of the People's Front government in Spain. The Mexican Communist Party and the Mexican Confederation of Workers are campaigning for his expulsion from Mexico as an enemy of the common people.

# NEWS OF THE MONTH in the SOUTH

## Steel

### Birmingham's First Sit-Down Strike Wins 20 Per Cent Wage Boost

Birmingham's first "stay-in" strike won a 20 per cent wage increase for the 125 steel workers of the American Casting Company who stayed inside of their plant eight days and nine nights. The union men agreed that if they had stayed inside of the plant all during the strike instead of coming out when they did, they would have won much more.

This first strike in the drive to organize Alabama's 25,000 steel workers into the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers not only won many demands for the strikers but also showed the rest of the steel workers in Birmingham what can be done. The S.W.O.C. in Birmingham, recently announced that over 6,000 steel workers had signed up in the A.A.

### Steel Workers in Second Sit-Down Strike

As the Legislature of Alabama held hearings on a bill which would outlaw sit-down strikes throughout the state, members of Local 1109 of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers staged the second sit-down strike in Birmingham in the Birmingham Stove and Range Company's plant.

The strikers are demanding 37 cents an hour, for common labor. They are now being paid 20 cents an hour, less than the wage paid by W.P.A. 37 cents an hour is the general wage for common labor paid in steel mills around Birmingham since the Tennessee Coal and Iron Co. was forced by the growing organization of its workers to grant a 10 per cent wage increase.

## Mines

### T.C.I. Ore Miners Talk Strike Against Stretchout

When J. L. Perry, president of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Co. declared that "there is nothing to arbitrate and nothing to mediate" after Governor Graves had called upon the company to confer with ore miners on a wage agreement, the miners began to take the matter into their own hands.

They did strike against the stretchout T.C.I. attempted to put over on them last May. Then after Governor Graves promised a public investigation of the situation the



Strikers at American Casting Co. read the Southern Worker.

miners returned to work to give the "wage incentive plan" a trial. They found that for an approximate 10 per cent increase in wages they had to give a 70 per cent increase in labor.

While both Governor Graves and a federal labor disputes conciliator are trying to head off a strike, the 1,800 members of the International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Wenonah, Ishkooda and Muscoda mines at Bessemer are quickly losing their patience. They are determined to get back their original pay system of wages by the day.

### Miners to Organize Harlan County

William Turnblazer and Sam Caddy, presidents of Districts No. 19 and 30 of the United Mine Workers, have announced an organization drive in Harlan County. The first mass meeting, scheduled on Sunday, Jan. 4 at Evarts, Ky. was banned by the Harlan County officials on the grounds of a spinal meningitis epidemic which is now sweeping through the coal fields.

Harlan County is today the one remaining major spot where the United Mine Workers have not organized in America. It was the scene of mass struggles during the strikes of 1931-32. Four miners are still in the Kentucky Penitentiary, framed by the operators in that strike. It is said that even today the Harlan operators keep an army of some 300 gun thugs. What they do is have the high sheriff, who is only another thug for the operators, put a deputy badge on the thugs whom the operators wish to employ. But the miners of Harlan have already organized a local of the Union at Black Mountain mines, just above Evarts.

### Miners Demand Passage of Youth Act

At a special meeting of Local 7264 of the United Mine Workers at Lynn, Ala., the local passed a resolution demanding the passage of the American Youth Act sponsored by the American Youth Congress. "We cannot expect the miserly amount of one dollar per week, now being paid students at Lynn High School, to even touch the gigantic and deep problem of our young people. This amount is being paid for work performed by the National Youth Administration!" declared the letter the union sent to Senator Bankhead. A similar letter was sent to President Roosevelt.

## Textile

### Standard-Coosa-Thatcher's Profits Rise; Workers' Wages Remain Same

Standard-Coosa-Thatcher reported a net profit of \$237,000 for 1936. President Thatcher declared that the company had had the best business it had had in three or four years. The company, he said, had not made any profit in 1935. But the wages of workers in the Chattanooga mill remained the same in 1936 as they were in 1935. The 29 per cent increase in the amount of yarn shipped from the mill came from the speed-up of the workers, they said. Here are a few examples of what they made in 1936: winding department, 30 to 35 cents an hour, or \$15 to \$22 a week; floor help, \$12 to \$14 a week, thread girls, \$12 to \$14 a week, mercerizers, \$18 a week; spinning, carding, reeling and twistlers, \$8 a week.

### Miners Help Striking LaFollette Clothing Workers

450 women employees of the Atlas Clothing Company at La Follette, Tenn. struck under the leadership of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union on January 21 against rotten working conditions for higher wages and full union recognition. Supported by hundreds of organized coal miners who picket with them daily, the strikers express great confidence in winning their demands in a short time. The workers of the Reed Shirt Factory in the same town, after several of them had been fired for sympathy with the strikers and union activity, also went out on strike to improve their own conditions. Under the militant leadership of Charlie Handy and Elaine Wright, strike leaders, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union is marching one step further in the struggle to organize the Southland.

## Cleveland Workers Strike; First Time in 60 Years

For the first time in 60 years the workers of the Hardwick Woolen Mills at Cleveland, Tenn. struck against repeated wage cuts which brought their wages down in some cases to \$6.25 a week. 350 workers in the Sewing Department, mostly women, walked out for restoration of their pay cut, closing down the Cutting Room as well. Displaying fine courage in daring the Hardwick clan, rulers of Cleveland, whose anti-labor policy has made this industrial town notorious for low wages and rotten conditions, these workers broke through spying and intimidation.

## Dan River and Riverside Mill Workers Get Increase, But—

When Marshall-Fields Corporation granted its employees a 10 per cent wage increase, the 9,200 textile workers in the Dan River and Riverside Mills in Danville, Va. thought they were really getting something. The truth leaked out when an efficiency expert appeared on the scene. Then the pick clocks at the top of the looms speeded up plenty. Wholesale firing began in each department of the eight cotton mill plants. In the spooling department new automatic spooling machines replaced old. On the new fast machines 4 girls can spool as fast as 20 on the old machines. With every new machine brought in, 16 girls lost their jobs. 30 have been fired already, and it didn't make any difference to the company that one of these girls had worked for them 20 years.

The company which owns these mills is one of the most prosperous in the country. Last year they paid stockholders \$3.00 on preferred stock plus \$9.00 arrearages on the same stock. The president of the corporation, R. R. West, got a salary of \$32,000 or 65 times that of the average worker in the plant.

Danville once was unionized and it's going to be again, say the workers in the mills.



Picket at Atlanta plant of Fisher Body gets shave during recent auto strike.

## Laws

### Bosses Push Anti-Sit-Down Strike Bill in Ala. Legislature

Following close on the victory of the 125 sit-down steel strikers in the Birmingham plant of the American Casting Company, one of the most vicious anti-labor bills in the history of Alabama has been introduced in the Alabama legislature by two legislators from Wilcox and Lee Counties. The bill which would outlaw sit-down strikes would take away from workers in Alabama their last vestige of liberty to fight for their rights, for decent wages and working conditions. This bill would even make unions, calling sit-down strikes, liable for the damages fixed by companies owning the plants.

This is one of the worst attacks upon the civil liberties of the common people of Alabama. The Alabama State Federation of Labor, United Mine Workers, central labor unions and many local unions have already launched an attack upon this bill. Wire and write your representatives and senators in the legislature demanding that they oppose this bill.

### Demand Repeal of Anti-Picketing Law

Capitol Hill in Montgomery, Alabama was besieged by letters and telegrams from union leaders and members demanding that the state's notorious anti-picketing law be repealed. Representative Forest Castleberry of Conecuh has already introduced a bill to repeal the law, but the legislative committee to which it was referred has not yet reported on it. The Alabama State Federation of Labor roundly condemned the anti-picketing law and called for its repeal in a resolution passed at its last convention.

This vicious law makes it a criminal offense for workers to picket during strikes, to boycott a manufacturer, and for a labor union to put a company on an unfair list. It even prevents labor unions and other labor organizations from distributing strike literature and has a provision that would outlaw sit-down strikes.

### Ark. Legislature Attempts to Gag Commonwealth Labor College

A reactionary bill to gag freedom of education in Arkansas, aimed directly at Commonwealth labor college at Mena, has just been introduced in the state legislature of Arkansas. The Bill (H.B. 148, introduced by Representative Horton of Craighead) is entitled "an act to prohibit the teaching of any foreign doctrine of government for the purpose of overthrowing the Government of the United States or the State of Arkansas by violence and for other purposes." This bill would not only restrict Commonwealth College to teaching what the state dictated it should teach, but would also prevent free discussion and education in all schools throughout Arkansas.



Union workers contribute clothes to the defenders of democracy in Spain.

## Spain

### Louisville Hears Plea to Aid Spanish Democracy

Representatives of the Spanish People's Front Government described the brutal campaign of the fascists in their attempt to destroy all civil and democratic rights at a meeting sponsored by Louisville citizens at the Tyler Hotel in Louisville last month. Those present pledged their utmost support in the drive to send money, food, and other aid to the Spanish Workers. Contributions should be sent to the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 149 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Lexington, Kentucky also heard the representatives of the Spanish Workers at a meeting sponsored by the Kentucky University Branch of the American Students Union. Pretty Josefina Ramirez, one of the Spanish delegation, declared that the attack of the fascists upon Spanish democracy is not an isolated occurrence. "Rather it is a part of the concentrated world-wide drive of the fascist powers against the democracies of the world."

### Jacksonville, Fla. Rallies Support for Spain

Speaking before a mass meeting under the auspices of the Jacksonville League to Aid Spanish Democracy, Professor Royal W. France of Rollins College declared, "It is incredible to me that any true American who believes in freedom and his country's tradition of self government should remain unmoved by the fascist onslaught against democracy in Spain." Without the help of Hitler and Mussolini, Professor France pointed out, General Franco, leader of the fascists in Spain "could not have gone 50 yards." The meeting pledged its support of the Spanish people's defense of democracy.

## Mob Lynchers Young Negro

Wes Johnson, an 18-year old Negro farm hand was lynched by a mob who took him from Abbeville Jail where he was held for allegedly attacking a white woman. Johnson was not even given a chance to prove his innocence before the mob tore down the jail door and dragged him out. A few hours after the victim's bullet riddled body was found swinging from a tree near Headland, Ala., Governor Graves ordered a thorough investigation. These lynchers can easily be brought to justice because Sheriff Louis Corbett of Abbeville said he recognized at least some of the 50 men who lynched Johnson.

This is the first reported lynching in the United States this year. In 1936, according to Tuskegee Institute, 9 people were lynched, all of them Negroes in Southern states. Alabama's record from 1892 to 1936 is one of the worst. 296 Negroes have met death at the hands of mobs. Mississippi has the worst record. During the same years, 564 lynching took place in that state.

## Kentucky Workers Alliance Launches organization Drive

At its recent meeting the State Board of the Kentucky Workers Alliance mapped a state-wide campaign to organize the unemployed and W.P.A. workers into the Alliance. The drive was scheduled to concentrate for its first two weeks in Louisville. Six organizers, including W. E. Burns of Paducah, Frank Daniel of Paintsville, Don West of Middleboro and T. C. Cadle were made responsible as the organizing committee. The Kentucky Alliance is fighting for an appropriation of \$500,000 for state relief for the jobless during the winter.

## Cost of Living Due to Go on Climbing

Indications are that the cost of living, which is already 20 per cent higher than in April, 1933, will continue to rise during the rest of this winter and spring. Cotton goods prices have jumped about 25 per cent while men's worsted suitings have risen about 40 cents a yard in recent weeks. The nation's largest shoe manufacturing concern has announced increases of 10 per cent to 15 per cent in the price of shoes. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace has predicted that food prices will go 10 per cent higher this winter although they are already 38 per cent above the level of March, 1933. Meats, dairy products and fish are expected to go still higher.

These price increases will fall hardest on the workers. Without wage increases to at least equal this rise in living cost, the worker's standard of living is certain to be driven still lower.

## Farm

### Share Croppers Union Demands Land for Landless

Forty acres and a mule has been the demand of two million landless farmers in the South for the last 70 years, the Sharecroppers' Union pointed out in a statement to the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy which met last month. The Union is demanding a large government program of land purchasing to settle landless tenants on small farms in place of the present Bankhead Act which would take 200 years to place the South's landless farmers on their own farms.

The Union's demands, which included highly graduated land taxes to discourage large land ownership by banks and insurance companies, requirement by laws of written contracts between landlords and tenants, and protection of the right of the share croppers and farm laborers to organize, were presented by Clyde Johnson, Secretary of the Share Croppers' Union.

### Farmers Union Protests Evictions by Resettlement

Over 110 people are being forced off the land, some out of farming entirely, in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, because the Resettlement Administration has chosen the St. Landry Farm for another of their experiments. Twenty families, most of them colored, are being put on the road to make room for 15 white families chosen by Resettlement for their Tenant-Security program.

Eight locals of the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union of America in St. Landry Parish joined in protesting the eviction of these families. The Union, of which the evicted tenants are members, is demanding that the government either include these families in its Tenant-Security program or find places for them on other farms with satisfactory contracts with landlords and provide them with loans for teams, feed seed and fertilizer.

### Agricultural Workers Organize Federal Locals

Some 3,000 farm wage hands of the Share Croppers' Union are joining the American Federation of Labor as a federal local of farm laborers and cotton field workers. This union had its beginning among farm workers in Winston County, Alabama, and has the support and endorsement of Local 7264, United Mine Workers of America, Local 367, Alabama Farmers' Union and the Jasper Central Labor Union.

A farm workers wage conference is being planned to take place within the next few months in Birmingham to map wage scales and further organizational work of farm wage workers.

## Cotton Row

By JERRY COLEMAN

A little pressure can make a dent in a thick skull. When the Louisiana Farmers' Union got after Resettlement Supervisor Louis Fontenot for discrimination against the union and asked Administrator Alexander to fire him, the man suddenly changed. He even started seeking out the St. Landry Farm tenants to sign them up for their loans.

Some Alabama farmers are putting money in their pockets. In Winston and Walker counties they are pooling their money to buy fertilizer and expect to save from \$5 to \$10 on the ton the same as they did last year.

"What will we do if you give the tenants land," an old landlord whimpered at the Montgomery Farm-Tenancy meeting. He doesn't have to worry yet, the government isn't going to move that fast. BUT the unions will make him wish he didn't have tenants when they make the landlords sign SHARE CROP CONTRACTS protecting the tenants' rights.

At the same meeting Oscar Johnson, master of 862 tenant families of the world's largest plantation at Scott, Mississippi, said the government should not build good houses for tenants. According to him this would make other farmers jealous. Maybe the real reason is that other tenants would demand better homes from their landlords. Another landlord from South Alabama said sealed houses would start an epidemic of tuberculosis among Negroes because they wouldn't open their windows for fresh air. It's nice to be so interested in health, but this gentleman didn't mention Negroes dying from pneumonia and other diseases in miserable shacks where it rains inside and cold winter winds blow quilts off the bed.

Oscar Johnson spoke the voice of Wall Street at the meeting. He warned the government not to mess around giving land to just any old tenant or share cropper. Maybe Johnson read about the Mexican government confiscating the big plantations and dividing them up among the landless farmers. We wonder how he'd look as a plow boy instead of the boss.

Mississippi's Commissioner of Agriculture said he didn't need union agitators to help solve the tenancy problem. The wish must have been father of the thought. Like it or not he's going to get the help.

# A PAGE FOR SOUTHERN WOMEN

Birmingham, Ala.

Dear Friends:

I left Alabama four years ago and now I have come back again to my native state to live.

A lot can happen in four years. For one thing all of us are four years older, most of us are four years poorer and four years wiser, but in spite of increasing poverty many of us are four years happier. That sounds strange perhaps, but when you stop and study about it you will see that it is so. For now we know that poverty is not just our fault or our bad luck or the hand of God punishing us, and ahead we see a light instead of blackness.

On coming back to Alabama I compare the difference in the cost of living.

Up there I paid \$23.00 a month for a small well-kept apartment which the landlord repainted every fall free of charge. The apartment was furnished with a new gas range and though I did all my own cooking my gas bill was never over 95 cents a month. I am told that here I will hardly get by with less than \$4.00 a month, as I have to heat all the hot water we use. There it was boiling hot, day and night. Steam heat was furnished free from October to May, and all repairs, such as putting in new glass when small boys threw balls through my window or the plumbing got out of fix, were paid for by the landlord. Water, of course, was free, as it is owned by the city.

Here I pay \$25.00 a month for a bare house. A sink is in the kitchen but no stove, an Arcola, but I must buy my own coal and coke and wood, a Rudd heater, but of course I must pay for the gas as well as the water—for water here is owned by a private company, and the charge is \$2.50 a quarter for the least amount of water that is used. There was no china-closet or shelves and the wood-work and walls are dirty and stained as is the outside of the house.

I pay more for milk, meat is high and very poor quality.

There I paid 5 cents car fare and here I must pay 7 cents.

One thing I have noticed is cheap, and that is labor. If I did not do all my own work myself, I could get another woman to do it for me: cooking, washing and ironing, housework for all my family—for \$4.50 a week!

I have been thinking more and more about this high cost of living. It is one subject we can not get away from. I mean just plain eating and a place to sleep and keeping clothes on our backs. Not luxuries, hardly even comforts, but bare necessities.



When the people in Washington wrote that part about "Southern Wage Differential," they were using a high-sounding name so they could talk about it openly instead of calling it by the ugly name "Starvation."

We down here have known about starvation for a long time. That's the reason so many of our people die of pellagra and tuberculosis and a lot of other sicknesses we don't even know the name to call it by, so we just call it "misery"—and we have a lot of misery.

The gentlemen in Washington got the cart before the horse. They gave us a "wage differential" because they say it costs less to live down here. The truth is, comfort for comfort, it costs just as much to be decently fed and clothed down here as it does in any other part of the country. If it costs any less to live in the South, it is because we have learned to do without and have sort of gotten used to it. But it seems to me we are entitled to the extra money that would give us a little comfort and better health. God knows we have worked for it, and our fathers before us, and unless we teach our children, by example, to demand something better they will go down the same old road that we are used to. So I say, we must or-

ganize for it and teach our young ones to organize and stick together in the unions.

We, as women and mothers, have a special role to fill. It is up to us to get together, unite our strength and refuse to wear the chains of poverty any longer. We can form Women's Auxiliaries beside the men's unions and help them when they go out on strike and encourage them to do so. There is the textile union that is now planning its biggest campaign. The Parents-Teachers Association, for more education. Domestic Workers Union. The unemployed are powerful when united.

These are all things that concern women, because they have to do with our every day life, with our standard of living in our homes and the way our children shall be raised and educated.

We can use this page to get together and talk about these things. We can talk about the Sales Tax, where the money comes from and where it goes. We can ask questions for a better understanding and make plans for better organizing of our strength.

This page is ours, so please dear friends, let us hear from you.

MARY CRAIK SPEED

# LETTERS FROM PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH

## The Only Road

Charleston, S. C.

Editor, The Southern Worker:

We has organized last June 16 local 1422 of the International Longshoremen's Association. At present we has 1,800 members, the only organization in Charleston, S. C. There is nothing else but churches. Now on December 9, 1936, all steamship companies here recognized the union 1422 and give us a 2 cent increase in pay. But we could not get 8 hours per day. We have to work 10 hours per day. Also get time and one-third over time. Also we has signed an agreement for this until September 30, 1937. Also the scale runs from 25 cents per hour to 60 per hour. This is the best we could get at this time.

Now some of the seaman was on strike here, about 80 of 'em. Also on December 16, a group of them came to our hall for aid. Many of the I.L.A. members wanted to help them out but orders from Mr. Joseph P. Ryan of New York would not let our president of Local 1422 give them a thing. Ryan said that the seamen is nothing but a bunch of reds just raising hell all the time and trying to fool the Negroes in all ports



of the U.S.A. Also Ryan is putting the whites against the Negroes here in Charleston all the time. Many of the Negroes has said to hell with Ryan.

About other things in Charleston.—The W.P.A. and P.W.A. has cut 20 per cent of all the men around here . . . they cut 3 Negroes to one white. All over South Carolina. The mayor of Charleston says that the Negroes must catch fish and eat them to live. Times is very hard here.



White men, also the Negroes, is looking toward some organization to lead them on the right road and that is the Communist road. No other one will do but the Communist road. Also the whites workers is in a hell of a fix in Charleston, S.C. Many of them have no shoes on their feet at all. From this letter you may print what you want in your paper.

—I. R.

## Postscript from the Editor

Dear Readers:

We told you that we were going to get out a bigger and better Southern Worker. Well here is a sample of the kind of magazine we are going to get out from now on. Is it the kind of magazine you and your friends want to read? If it is, write in and tell us. Write in and tell us your ideas for making it even better.

If you think this really is the kind of magazine that can be used to lead the workers in their fight against the bosses for higher wages and a better and happy land, get your friends to subscribe to it. It's only 25 cents a year for 12 issues.



By the way, the reason we did not get out a February issue of the magazine is that we wanted to spend a lot of time on planning to get out a real good one. We think we've done it. If you think so, you'll back that up by sending in a load of new subscriptions right away.

Fraternally,

JIM MALLORY, Editor

## We Can Stop It!

Birmingham, Ala.

Editor, The Southern Worker:

This ought to be stopped! Us going into the houses of the whites and working from dawn till dark for such small pay.

Washing and ironing, house cleaning and all—this is what we do. Work hard and nothing much to eat, just one or two sandwiches, four slices of bread and two eggs, and no meat.

Just listen, I mops up the front porches and back porches and bath room. Cleans up 4 or 5 rooms, washes and cleans the ice box, sun parlor and living room. I bumps my head on the dining room table dusting the legs. I cleans and sweeps the basement. I do all this in one day and only gets two sandwiches at lunch time and \$2.25 at the end of the week. No chicken or pies or milk—not even ice-water and they drinks milk and eat Post Toasties an' all kinds of good things and get good and full and sits around and watches me work. They have fried chicken or broiled chicken or stewed

I LIKE TO WATCH!



chicken 2 or 3 times a week and I only get the bones after they have finished and it comes time for me to eat my 2 sandwiches.

The only tips I gets is some old stockings that the lady wouldn't wear herself—all holey as they can be, and a rough sugar-sack for me to make a maids apron out of—something she would use for dish towels.

Well, you see if we could get more money we could buy decent stockings and aprons for ourselves, and every thing we need and would not have to sew and patch the old rags they don't want and can't use.

The only way we who lives in the South can get better homes and better food and better treatment, is to organize. If we get together and organize we can stop freezing and stop being hungry and stop being robbed of our pay.

—A FRIEND

## Signing Up Already

Mobile, Ala.

Editor, The Southern Worker:

Mobile has long been regarded as an unorganized community where labor is cheap and the workers "won't stick together." This reputation was built up at the expense of the workers by no others than the phoney leadership supplied by some of the craft unions.



The head of the organizing committee of the Central Trades Council has for many months been dreaming about organizing all those old craft locals back again. He writes a number of letters to William Green and some of the other A. F. of L. big shots to send him a half-dozen of the organizers from the different Internationals affected. He then arranges to hold a public meeting and invites all members of unions and their friends. He does everything but find out what the ship-yard workers think. He doesn't even try to get shipyard workers to the meeting. I believe he is really scared of them.

The shipyard workers in the Alabama Drydock are going to do plenty for themselves. They have already begun to sign applications for the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America. They are starting on their own and will create their own leadership out of the best among themselves. We hope that the Port of Mobile, in establishing the Industrial Union, will set the lead for the entire ship repair industry in the Gulf. Our slogan is, "sign up for the Industrial Union!"

—Alabama Drydock Worker

# BUILD THE SOUTHERN WORKER

You Southern farmers have a fight on your hands.

You dirt farmers who work your own land have to sell your products cheaply, though farm products are high enough when the worker buys them on the market. You dirt farmers are plagued with droughts, crop failures, ridden with mortgages and insecurity.



You tenant farmers are in debt to the landlords. You are held in poverty by lynch courts and landlord tyranny.

You farm laborers work from dawn to dark for a few cents in season. Out of season you are left to starve or get along as best you can.

You Southern workers have a fight on your hands.

You work long hours—too long—in the mine, mill or factory—for pay too little to meet your needs. You do not have a nice house to live in, your children do not get a good education. You do not have security; the boss fires you when he sees fit. You cannot save up enough for your old age. When you try to get better conditions you are met with discrimination and terrorism. Your conditions are worse than those of Northern workers who hold the same kind of jobs, your pay is less.

To fight for your rights you must organize. And you must have papers and a magazine like *The Southern Worker*, which are not afraid to stand with you against any attack from the bosses.

You Southern women and children have a fight on your hands along with your men.

Southern homes are faced with starvation and semi-starvation. Southern housewives are crippled with overwork. Southern children are menaced with disease and death because they lack proper food, proper housing and proper medical care. Southern children are unable to get the education they need. As the cost of living rises, the family income fails to rise with it. Living standards are driven still lower. The family is burdened with unemployment and insufficient relief.



The whole family needs to read *The Southern Worker*. The fight for a better life is their fight, too.

*The Southern Worker* is a powerful force in organizing the struggles of the masses for better conditions. Use it. You should not only read it yourself; you should put it in the hands of your fellow workers. They will be glad to see it.

If you are not yet a subscriber, clip the coupon below and send it, with 25c. to Box 572, Birmingham, Ala. That will bring you *The Southern Worker* for a year.

Whether or not you are now a subscriber, clip the coupon above and send us the names and addresses of your friends who ought to be readers of *The Southern Worker*. We will send them free sample copies.

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