

Bosses Alarmed at Communist Gains in Harlem Section

Herald Tribune Admits Growing Resistance of Negro Masses to Unparalleled Poverty, Mass Misery and Unemployment

Harlem Described as the "Hungriest, Unhealthiest, Most Depression-Ridden Section in Greater New York"

By CYRIL BRIGGS.

With its Negro population segregated and victimized by rent-gouging white and black landlords, discriminated against in public construction work and other jobs and in relief, Harlem is admitted by the Herald-Tribune (Sunday, Oct. 8) to be "the hungriest, unhealthiest, most depression-ridden section in Greater New York." In Harlem "there is more misery and despair than may be found in any other neighborhood of the city." Of its total Negro population of over 300,000 "only 12,000...are at present employed." With unemployment has come "the attending evils—infant mortality, disease, undernourishment—the same evils that poverty brings to white people, but in greater degree."

What are the reasons for these admissions by the capitalist press which habitually hide the misery and oppression of the Negro People? The answer is: the political awakening of the Negro masses, the growing influence of the Communist Party in Harlem and the increasing radicalization of the Negro masses, responding to the correct leadership and program of the Communist Party of ruthless struggle against all forms of discrimination. The Herald-Tribune fearfully admits the growth of Communist influence in Harlem:

"...the Communists have met a considerable degree of success. Educated and uneducated Negroes alike are becoming more vocal in their demands for professional, and in many cases, social equality."

Fills Bosses With Dread

It is this that fills the Herald-Tribune and its masters, and their Negro tools, with fear. They see the tolling Negro masses and many members of the professional classes responding to the revolutionary program of the Communist Party. They see huge crowds attending the Communist election rallies, cheering James W. Ford, Communist leader in Harlem and candidate for alderman in the 21st district; Robert Minor, veteran Communist fighter for the rights of the Negro People and candidate for mayor; William Patterson, national leader in the Scottsboro fight and candidate for alderman in the 19th district; William Fitzgerald, Herman McKawain and other Negro and white Communist banner-bearers. They see the masses of Harlem, condemned by the capitalist system to unemployment, poverty, jim-crow relief, rallying around the Communist demands for the right of Negroes to any job in any trade, industry and profession, for equal pay, for unemployment relief and social insurance to be paid by the bosses and their government, without discrimination, for an end to the police terror and police-inspired lynch incitement in the Herald-Tribune and other capitalist gutter sheets, for an open trial and punishment of the Tammany officials guilty of the murder of James Matthews and the suspicious deaths of other Negro prisoners on Welfare Island. And the sight of the increasing militancy of the Negro masses fills them with undisguised dread:

"There is little doubt...that Harlem is beginning to look upon itself and becoming ready to fight for the things that are withheld from it."

Tries To Cover Up Misery

While admitting the heavy toll of the crisis on the population of Harlem, in increased unemployment, poverty, disease and the death rate, the Herald-Tribune deliberately distorts figures in an attempt to hide as much as possible the terrific misery imposed by capitalism upon the Negro people. While the Health Department figures reveal a death rate of 18.5 per 1,000 in Harlem, as against the general death rate for greater New York of 11 per 1,000, the Herald-Tribune substitutes the unit of 100,000 for 1,000, putting the Harlem death rate at 18.5 per 100,000. Similarly it puts the Negro population of Harlem at 300,000 in order to juggle the percentage figures on unemployment, giving the totally unemployed at 80 per cent of the population. Even bourgeois agencies admit that 90 per cent of the heads of families are unemployed, while of single workers 85 per cent are out of work. Of those employed, at least 15 per cent are on part time—a fact not mentioned by the Herald-Tribune, which also ignores the starvation wages paid to those employed, especially to the domestic workers.

The ravages of disease on the impoverished, undernourished Harlem population is similarly concealed, although the Herald-Tribune is forced to record the over-crowded conditions of the Harlem Hospital, the "single municipal institution which serves the whole district. And there, in a building equipped to accommodate 325 inmates, 405 beds, filled at all times, are placed in aisles and corridors. Similarly, in the out-patient department, where 40,000 visits a year would be about normal, 140,000 patients came for free treatment last year." But not a mention of the brutal treatment, of the experiments on Negro patients by inexperienced white internes, of the suspicious deaths of scores of Negroes, or of the militant struggles of Harlem workers, led by the Communist Party, against these horrible conditions. The Herald-Tribune likewise ignores the wave of protests by Harlemites against the suppression by the N.A.A.C.P. leaders, in deference to Tammany, of the report on the Harlem Hospital.

The fears expressed by the Herald-Tribune of the rising militancy of the Negro masses are not unfounded. The tolling masses are ungrounded will show their determination to fight against discrimination and oppression by registering under the Banner and Sickie this week, and by voting Communist for their demands, in the coming elections.

Flatbush Workers Protest Driving Out of Negroes

Denounce Democratic Alderman; Cheer Communists

NEW YORK.—In a mass protest action, Negro and white workers of East Flatbush, Brooklyn, yesterday demonstrated their indignation against the attempts of local landlords and city officials to drive Negro families out of a section they have occupied for 20 years. The demonstration, held at Tilden and Lott Sts., East Flatbush, was addressed by William Burroughs, Communist candidate for Comptroller of the City of New York, and director of the Harlem Workers School, and Lavera, Communist candidate for alderman in the 21st Assembly District, Brooklyn. The meeting adopted a resolution condemning Democratic Alderman Sahner, who is running for re-election in the 21st, for his refusal to join the protest against the savage persecution of Negro tenants of the three-story brick tenement at 2330 Tilden Ave.

The process of driving Negro tenants out of the section has been going on for the past two years, with the active alliance of Board of Health and Tenement House Department officials with the landlords, who are seeking to erect modern apartment buildings in the section to accommodate business men who within the past few years have moved their businesses near the section. Houses have been condemned and torn down under the pretext of making ground for the building of a public school. Where Negro tenants have resisted, the Water Supply Company cut off their water and the Board of Health conveniently stepped in to condemn the buildings as unsanitary.

Tenants of 2330 Tilden Ave., supported by white and Negro workers in the neighborhood, are putting up a stern fight to retain their homes. Although this building is in as good condition as most of the houses in the neighborhood, it was condemned on Oct. 3 by the Tenement House Department which ordered the tenants to vacate by Oct. 16. The pretexts offered for this order are "an accumulation of old stoves, carriages, mattresses, old furniture and paper" in the cellar; "broken plaster in the cellar," "defective angle of iron supports on rear fire-escapes," "leaking water supply pipes." The tenants point out that the city has the power to force the landlord to make repairs. Their water has been cut off for non-payment by the landlord of the water rate, although the usual procedure is for the water company to secure an attachment against the house.

Last week a delegation of five Negroes and three whites visited Democratic Alderman Sahner to protest these persecutions. Sahner, who is running for re-election, refused to aid the tenants. He insultingly told the delegation he had done his best to help "the niggers of Flatbush," that when "the nigger church wanted a tent he used his influence to get it."

The workers branded Sahner as part of the machine set up by the landlords and business men to drive Negroes out of their homes. They told him that since he was powerless to secure civil rights for them, they would have to elect a candidate who is not afraid to lead their delegation and protest against the oppression they are undergoing. The delegation was led by Lavera, Communist candidate in Sahner's district.

Harlem Workers to Place Demands on La Guardia

Delegation to Visit the Fusion Candidate This Morning

NEW YORK.—A delegation of Harlem workers will call on the office of Major LaGuardia, Fusion candidate for Mayor, this morning at 11 o'clock to demand that he state his position on the police-inspired lynch incitement against Negroes in the capitalist press, the murder of James Matthews on Welfare Island, and the fight for the release of the nine innocent Scottsboro boys in Alabama. The delegation was elected yesterday at a meeting called by the League of Struggle for Negro Rights of delegates of various organizations, at the office of the Harlem Liberator.

All members of the original delegation which visited Mayor O'Brien last week with similar demands are urged by Herman McKawain, chairman of the Harlem James Matthews branch of the L.S.N.R., to join the delegation. The delegation will meet at the Liberator office at 9 o'clock this morning.