

80% in Harlem Are Jobless, Survey Shows

Tuberculosis Rate Is 5 Times Higher Than Among Whites

By Cyril Briggs

Mayor LaGuardia's administration, which is frantically attempting to hide its responsibility for Tuesday's events in Harlem behind a savage attack on the Communist Party and militant Harlem workers, Negro and white, is likely to discover that "facts are stubborn things."

"... white and Negro organizations agreed that poverty, unemployment and unhealthful living conditions were to blame and must be remedied to guarantee the peace of Harlem." Thus the New York Post admits in a news-story on March 21 the criminal responsibility of the LaGuardia administration, whose anti-Negro policies the same paper attempts to whitewash in an editorial on the same day, for the appalling misery and jim-crow discrimination which were directly responsible for the outburst of indignation by the people of Harlem last Tuesday night.

Similar admissions of the economic causes behind Tuesday's stormy events in Harlem are now being made by all the capitalist papers, which only a few days ago were attempting to isolate those events from the background of frightful suffering and mass misery imposed on the Negro people by jim-crow discrimination in relief and jobs, high rents and pestilential housing conditions.

Urban League Retreats

The New York Urban League, whose reactionary head, James H. Hubert, joined the police and the lynch press howls that "Communists are responsible" for the Harlem unrest, admits, according to the New York Post, that "nearly 80 per cent of the Negroes in Harlem are unemployed," and that the death rate in Harlem is now twice the city rate.

A measure of the effects of unemployment on the living conditions and health of the Harlem Negro people, as well as of the extent of jim-crow practices in relief and even outright denial of relief is given in the Post's admission:

"As many as five large families are jammed together in some of the apartments of the district, forced to combine their resources in order to pay the rent on quarters which

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frequently are firetraps and disease breeders.

"Resentment born of these conditions and festering through years of suffering, welfare authorities contend, is to blame for the riots. . . ."

Mr. Hubert, who so eagerly joined the police provocation against the Communist Party and the suffering Negro workers, is himself forced, in the following statements, to admit general discrimination against Negroes in the administration of relief and on work projects:

"There is no question that the Negro has been discriminated against, not only in the city at large, but right here in Harlem. Negroes have been given very few jobs on projects in Harlem, and all Harlem knows that."

Urge Prostitution

Even in this, the sixth winter of the crisis and breakdown of capitalist industry, large numbers of Negro families are being denied relief. Negro women applicants are often met with the insinuation that they can earn a living on the streets, by prostituting their bodies. Relief payments, where relief is given, is from one-fourth to one-third lower than in other sections of the city.

Poverty Diseases Grow

In a report on health conditions among Harlem school children, Dr. Jessamy, prominent Negro physician of Harlem, pointed to an alarming growth of "poverty diseases," due to malnutrition and overcrowding in homes and schools.

Other reports issued by official agencies show a rapid increase in the adult death rate and in infant mortality in Harlem. From 1923 to 1927 the Harlem death rate was already 42 per cent higher than the average for the entire city. During the past six years, health conditions have grown worse under the ravages of the crisis. The reports of the Department of Health, as now given out for each section, show an increase in tuberculosis and infant mortality in Harlem and other Negro communities in New York City. The Brooklyn Charities reported deaths among Negroes from tuberculosis as five times higher than among whites. The Greenwich House Health Conference found health conditions in Harlem worse than in any other part of the city, with conditions rapidly growing worse.

Housing Worst

Housing conditions in Harlem are generally admitted to be the worst

tion. I suspect that someone was putting something over on him. . . .

Soviet Payment Record

"Our reputation for keeping our word is very highly respected in all countries by all business men who have dealt with us in different business transactions. During the more than seventeen years of the existence of the Soviet Union all our notes and all our contracted obligations have been strictly paid in the time indicated by contracts or by the notes themselves, in spite of all troubles and in spite of the depression. There have been no sour notes in this symphony. This, I think, is something of a record, especially during the past five years."

In concluding, Troyanovsky advised that "It is better to try for a solution before the guns roar than to wait to study all the questions amidst the smoking ruins of civilization after the event. . . . It is no time to lose courage, to lose energy. . . . One must be prepared to expect anything. Therefore the need is all the greater for wise counsels, the responsibility is all the greater for surmounting the developing situation."

in the entire city. The New York Journal admits that the high-rent tenements in Harlem are "slums more miserable than the East Side ever knew." The Hoover Housing Commission reported terrific overcrowding, and dilapidated and unsanitary conditions, together with exorbitantly high rents. Negro tenants are forced to pay rents ranging from 12 to 50 per cent, and in many cases, even 100 per cent, higher than rents paid by whites in other sections of the city, or in Harlem itself.

These are some of the conditions to which Tuesday's events in Harlem can be directly traced.

Even the pro-fascist, anti-Negro Hearst press, whose vicious attempts to turn Tuesday's events into a race riot were defeated by the vigorous actions of Harlem Communist workers, Negro and white, is now forced to admit the economic causes behind those events.

A united front of all forces ready to fight against the starvation conditions in Harlem, for adequate relief without jim-crow discrimination, for rights of the Negro people, must now be built up to defeat the attempts of the city administration, District Attorney Dodge and the courts to railroad to long prison sentences the Negro and white workers arrested last Tuesday, and in subsequent police raids throughout police-occupied Harlem. Defend the Negro People! Defend the Communist Party, the best fighter for the interests of all sections of the toiling population!