

SKY HIGH - AND STILL GOING UP

Prices keep zooming upward—ever upward. The cost of food is at an all time high, according to Dun and Bradstreet. Living costs have risen more than 18% since a year ago and the end is still nowhere in sight.

Every wage increase is accompanied by a price increase many times as great. Railroad companies today are asking, and according to Robert Young will receive, a 27% hike in freight rates. Wage rates have gone up only 13%. Last year steel companies raised prices to yield \$450 millions additional; the cost of their wage increases, however was only \$90 millions.

We're living in a bull market. The post-war world is still digging out from the war-time destruction. America is sending more than 10% of its goods to foreign markets. Surplus of exports over imports is in the neighborhood of 17 billion dollars. With such lush markets around the world and with the American people still hungry for many staple goods the American manufacturers are in a shameful conspiracy to hold back production—and boost prices.

Even the capitalist government has become fearful of the "gray" market in steel, where steel is sold above the regular price to special customers. According to Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney "the auto industry, by private understanding, is rationing the output of automobiles. The steel industry is rationing the output of steel. In each instance products are distributed according to the ration of distribution before the war".

RICH GET RICHER

The need for commodities is so great that people are taking money out of the bank, out of bonds and out of stockings to catch up on their needs. Families with incomes of \$3,000 or less made up 85% of all families in 1946, earned 36% of the total of personal incomes, yet they saved only 4% of the year's personal savings. In the year before this group saved 24% of the total. Savings this year continue to drop below that of last year. The top 30% of the people accounts for more than 93% of the total yearly savings. The lowest earning 70% of the people only accounts for 7% of all savings.

What's more most of these low-income groups are withdrawing savings or bond money. Twenty-seven per cent of the families in the country last year withdrew money from the bank. Seventeen percent of all income was saved in 1945. Only 8% was saved in 1946, and this year the rate will be much smaller.

DEPRESSION ON THE WAY

Profiteering is robbing the workers of their savings, paving the way for an economic crash that will eventually eclipse the 1929 crash. When Europe's crisis becomes sharper it will be felt immediately in America. Should the hemmed-in economy being built by England now be extended, it will mean that U. S. exporters will lose some of its markets. Either way — if Europe recovers rapidly or sinks deeper into crisis — America's favorable balance of trade must decline.

We are heading toward a great vise where workers will be unable to buy as much of what they produce as they do now, and where capitalists will be hard-up for markets. The results will be the perennial crisis of over-production.

The present wave of profiteering proves once again that the working class can not permanently solve its problems thru the trade unions, that the struggle for higher wages is only PART of the struggle for a better living. Unions in the last years have made great

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From DeGaulle to Hitler Is Only a Few Short Steps

The overwhelming victory of the rightist DeGaulle's Rally of the French People in the municipal elections October 19th is an ill omen of things to come. Stalinism will undoubtedly hail their own 1% increase in the total vote as a big victory. Similarly in the elections in Germany in the 1930-32 period the Stalinist party took heart at such negligible changes. The big factor in the French elections, however, was not Stalinism but the unbelievably large percentage of votes for DeGaulle. Two out of every five voters cast their lot with the war-time head of the Government-in-Exile.

What do the results signify?

One thing and one thing only — the French masses are thoroughly disgusted with the reformist approach of the Stalinists and Socialists and are turning to extremists of the right! If there existed in France today a revolutionary Marxian Party it would be polarizing the working class to the left and it would be weaning away innumerable members of the middle class in the same direction.

PROP FOR CAPITALISM

But the acts of the Socialist government are merely acts of strikebreaking, dilatoriness, indecision. Under the "socialist" regime no basic changes are being made. Hunger is rampant. Wages trail far, far behind prices, and production levels are nowhere near the Monette plan estimates. Wheat areas are 30% below pre-war. Tractors are badly needed, but are not being obtained. Crude iron production this year was to be 70% above 1938. Actually it is 15% BELOW 1938 levels. Steel was expected to run 12% above 1938 figures, according to the plan, but is actually 5% below. Cement production was expected to be 233% above 1938; actually it is only one-fifth better than that pre-war year. And the prospects for higher production and better living standards are worse for the coming period.

The French worker is dissatisfied. The French farmer is unwilling to trade his grain since he can not purchase enough finished goods in the cities. Capital for greater production is needed but French capitalists are actually hoarding seven-eighths of the total gold supply in France and the government's currency is more shaky than a shimmy dancer. The Ramadier government is incapable of meeting this crisis, since its main concern is to retain private property, remain in the profit system. This anomaly of a so-called socialist government fighting desperately to protect capitalism has created severe cleavages in the Socialist Party's ranks. Its membership is disaffected.

But where can the French masses turn?

The Stalinists, it is true, has led a number of major strikes. But most of those strikes were endorsed either belatedly by the Stalinist CGT leadership, or endorsed grudgingly. Fur-

thermore the primary purpose of each strike is merely to gain political concessions from the present government — they are harrying actions, rather than basic class struggle opposition to the bourgeois state. The French worker can readily understand that the Stalinists are fighting merely for reforms within the framework of capitalism; and the French farmer and middle class intelligentsia sees no percentage in a party that endorses private property and confines its struggles to mere pin-pricking.

REACTION SCOOPS UP

Under the circumstances DeGaulle, with a quickly improvised Party and with no program except a few damagocic speeches, has been able to carry the day. The Stalinists and Socialists may take heart in the fact that DeGaulle's gains were won at the expense of the political center, but such self-delusion is foolhardy. In politics the winning of the center is decisive. Hitler was able to destroy the revolutionary movement only because he weaned the middle-class and farmer center away from the leftist parties. The victory of DeGaulle signifies that the center is being destroyed, that there is a polarization to the Left and to the Right, but that the polarization to reaction is FAR MORE RAPID than the minute drift to the Left.

Obviously the polarizing force on the Left can not attract people because of its reformist program.

This is an ominous danger signal. The revolutionists in France must act quickly before
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The Lean Grow Leaner

A world survey made by the Food & Agriculture Organization in the U. N. recently revealed that in 1939 more than 50% of the people of the world were undernourished. Only 1/3 enjoyed an adequate diet. These figures reveal the condition of the world's workers and exploited masses as a result of the depression. Now further figures have been compiled. As a result of the imperialist war, either directly or indirectly, a little less than 50% of the world's population is starving and 2/3 do not have enough to eat or don't have an adequate diet.

This is what capitalism has given to the people everywhere—depression followed by imperialist war. The results are being translated into the mass murder of everyone on both sides of the battlelines. They are furthered through slow death either by starvation or malnutrition.

Obviously the war solved nothing. As we predicted it merely made matters worse. It proved adequately that capitalism is capable only of war, hunger, death and depression.

The Egg and Us - Meat the Facts

"EAT NO MEAT ON TUESDAYS!"

How many people can afford to eat meat the other six days of the week? Meatless Tuesdays are not aimed at lowering prices. On the contrary, Charles Luckman, head of the Citizens Food Committees flatly stated at a press conference that it is not his intention to attempt to reduce prices—that "high prices usually bring reduced consumption—one of the objectiveness of the committee".

Such high prices are supposed to indicate prosperity. Yet the New York health Department reports that families on relief cannot maintain themselves on present allotments at present day prices. Senator Baldwin head of a Senate subcommittee on high prices reveals that in the Middle West people with an income of \$50 to \$60 per week cannot adequately feed their families. And the Massachusetts Farm Bureau predicted even higher prices as a result of meatless and poultryless days. "Any slowdown in consumption while farmers are trying to market their least productive chickens and animals means a longer feeding period back on the farm, with added cost of production reflected in the price to consumers." Meatless Tuesdays will probably help bring higher prices and meatless Wednesdays, Thursdays and other days.

"EAT NO POULTRY OR EGGS ON THURSDAY!"

Last spring the Truman agriculture department was concerned because people weren't buying enough eggs and the price was too low. The department proceeded to buy huge quantities of eggs, \$95,000,000 worth were dried and \$20,000,000 worth were frozen. At the time of the shortage it was stated that the food would be moved out in two or three months.

Six months have rolled by and your Thursday morning breakfast is still socked away. The total of eggs stored by the government would be enough to supply an egg breakfast for every American on every "eggless Thursday" for three months. Think of how the starving Europeans, whom we are supposed to be helping, could use this food. There are 200,000,000 pounds of poultry in storage. This is a record for this time of year—three times as much as there was in 1942 and twice as much as 1941. The government policy has raised prices but it hasn't helped feed anyone in Europe.

"WE MUST SAVE WHEAT FOR EUROPE"

France has prospects of a rather good winter crop of wheat, but there are handicaps such as shortage of machinery, men, and fertilizer. Here is another of capitalism's contradictions. In order to produce the needed fertilizer France gets phosphates from North Africa, but they must be mixed with nitrates which formerly came from the chemical factories of the Rhineland. Right now the French, British, and American armies are busy dynamiting these chemical factories in order to eliminate a major competitor. Reopening these plants would greatly increase the French and other wheat crops, but U. S. capitalism is far more interested in the increased profits gained by dynamiting competitors than in feeding the starving Europeans.

What is the answer to this confusion? Capitalism is floundering in attempts to feed a vast area to try and stave off Communism. There is nothing humanitarian here. It is strictly political; today food is the strongest weapon of the U. S. Fill a man's stomach and you quiet his hostility momentarily.

It is evident from the foregoing that the whole food conservation program is primarily a propaganda move on the part of the Truman

RIOTS SECURE EXPLOITER RULE OVER INDIA

Fratricidal war in India has reached unbelievable proportions, particularly in the Punjab. On the heels of "so-called Indian "freedom" Moslems and Hindus (and Sikhs) are slaughtering each other by the tens of thousands. Whole villages on either side of Hindustan and Pakistan have been wiped out. The British policy of "divide and rule" has come home to roost. The pent-up hate of the masses against their impoverishment is taking on a reactionary form of struggle, from which only John Bull can gain anything.

The Moslems are actually descendants of the Hindus, who were converted to Islam long ago. But where the Hindu religion is still based on the four castes and the untouchables—a system ideally suited to chattel slavery, the Moslems have adopted the idea of equality amongst its members. There is a slight parallel between these relations and that of the chattel slave religions and early Christianity.

At any rate the Moslem bigwigs until recently preached against interest of any kind, and their wealth, by and large, rests in large scale feudal ownership of the land. The Hindu leaders, on the other hand, control all the large industries and banks not owned by the British. They have broken with chattel slavery and feudalism more thoroughly than the Moslem sector of the population.

HOSTILITY FANNED BY BRITISH

Until forty years ago the idea of two separate nations within India was practically unknown. Lords Morley and Minto, however, conceived of introducing a separate voting system for each religious group as a means of implementing the perennial British policy of "divide and rule". Since then feeling between the two groups have been inflamed.

The different economic roots of both religions creates the basis for the present hostilities. In 1943, for instance, there was a man-made famine in India during which at least 3 million people starved to death. Hindu merchants boosted the price of grain from 8 rupees for 80 lbs. to 40 rupees, making a surplus profit of \$44 millions. But this profit was paid for in the hunger of millions who could not afford food at inflated prices. Obviously the Moslem landlords utilized this profiteering in their propaganda against the Hindus.

The Hindu bankers, mill owners, and large landowners (who rent the land to peasants), inflame their sector of the population against the Moslems because they are fearful of economic reprisals by the Moslem leaders if the latter come to power. The avowed program of many Pakistan heads is to "socialize" the banks and mills and put the Hindu owners out of business. Each ruling group therefore has a definite economic stake in inflaming the masses against each other.

HUNGER AND DEATH

The peasant masses, on the other hand, are merely tools in this racket. In the middle of the nineteenth century only 55% of the population lived off agriculture. There was an enormous artisan industry. But the British refused to introduce the industrial revolution into India. The country remained backward and today 74% of the people live off the land, most of them on 2 or 3 acres of poor soil.

government to mobilize sentiment for the Marshall Plan. Workers are being forced into a form of "voluntary" rationing to make them conscious of the "need for sacrifices" to help Wall Street prop up decadent capitalism in Europe and Asia.

As a result of the advantages given to the landlords half of the peasants have been expropriated and are today only land laborers.

Over a hundred million acres of cultivable land lies in waste because the British refuse to spend anything for irrigation. The whole population lives in illiteracy, filth and want. One child in six dies before its first birthday. Life expectancy is only 27 years, and at least six million people a year die of diseases that are easily preventable.

The deaths and murders of the Indian people are merely sacrifices to the almighty British pound. They are needless in modern society. But so long as the profit system prevails the imperialists will continue to exact as much profit and to invest as little for education and improvements as possible.

Unfortunately there is only a small working class in India — about 2½ million factory workers. But that small group must strive to unify the population, Moslem and Hindu alike, against the real enemy, the imperialists and their native lackeys. "Freedom" and "dominion status" are hollow mockeries until economic SECURITY becomes a reality. Such security is impossible under capitalism — whether Britain or the U. S. controls India, whether Nehru or Jinnah dominates its internal politics. Only the complete destruction of the profit system can bring peace and plenty to the impoverished masses of India.

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WHAT WE STAND FOR

1. Capitalism can not be reformed. The profit system can only bring more misery, war and depression.
2. We are therefore opposed to all reformist parties, including the Labor Party, which strive merely to patch up the present capitalist system.
3. We are for independent working class action on all fronts, starting from strike action at the point of production and leading up to the revolutionary destruction of capitalism.
4. We are for full equality for all oppressed minorities, for the right of self-determination for all colonies.
5. Defend the Soviet Union. Reestablish a Marxian Party, Soviets, Trade Unions and Armed Workers Militias to accomplish the Political Revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Extend the October Revolution throughout the world.
6. For a Revolutionary Marxian Party in the United States and a New Fourth Communist International on a world scale.
7. For the establishment of workers control of production for use under a workers council government.

WALL STREET AT THE HELM

Who controls the government of the United States? The following is self-explanatory.

THE ARMED FORCES

The Army, Navy and Air Force are run by James V. Forrestal, secretary of defense, who is a former president of Dillon, Read & Co., Wall Street investment banking house. Under him is William L. Draper, undersecretary of the army, a former General in the AMG of Germany, who is a former vice-president of the same firm.

Then there is Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, assistant secretary of the air force, a corporation executive; John Nicholas Brown, assistant secretary of the navy for air, one time "richest baby in the world"; Thomas J. Hargrave, president of Eastman Kodak Company, chairman of the munitions board, and Arthur M. Hill, president of Atlantic Greyhound Corporation, chairman of the national security resources board. Lewis Straus, partner in the New York firm of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., is a member of the atomic energy commission.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT

In the state department there was until recently, William L. Clayton, undersecretary for economic affairs who is a multimillionaire, former chairman of Anderson, Clayton & Co., the largest cotton brokerage firm in the world. His total income for 1946 was a mere \$5,000,000. He has just resigned but will be replaced by William Thorp, who is a director of numerous public utilities. The undersecretary of state, Robert A. Lovett, is a former partner in the investment banking firm of Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co. Then there are the assistant secretaries Charles E. Saltzman, former president of the New York Stock exchange, and Norman Armour, who is unofficially affiliated with many big business outfits on Wall Street.

Among the ambassadors we find Charles U. Bay, now in Norway, whose office is 1 Wall St., a banker, stock broker, and industrial and shipping magnate; Herman Baruch, Holland, a brother of Bernard M. Baruch, well known archduke of Wall Street; Lawrence Steinhardt, New York corporation lawyer, now in Czechoslovakia; James Bruce stationed in Argentina, a Baltimore banker, and Lewis W. Douglas, Great Britain, former president of the Mutual Life Insurance Company.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Secretary of Commerce W. Averell Harriman, is one of the mainstays of Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co., and serving under him as undersecretary is William C. Foster, New York industrialist. In the treasury department is Archibald L. M. Wiggins, undersecretary, former president of the American Bankers Association while David K. E. Bruce, brother of the ambassador to Argentina, is assistant secretary. To go further down the list we find William McChesney Martin, former president of the New York stock exchange, as head of the Import-Export Bank, and its vice president is Robert L. Garner, former vice president and treasurer of the Guaranteed Trust Company of New York.

WORKER'S REVOLUTION

The list is far from being complete. It only includes Wall Street's agents in the Government. These are the men who do not only control the United States economically but also through the government, control it politically. The government of the United States is based on private property. It must therefore represent the interests of private property. The ballot box, a vote for either the Democratic or Republican parties, only decides which set of capitalists shall have the say in the government. The working class loses regardless.

The UN and the Comintern

The world is lining up for another holocaust. This time it will involve the two titans, the Soviet Union and the United States. Calmly and deliberately America is preparing itself and its satellites for another invasion of the Soviet Union. In self-defense Stalin is frantically turning from left to right to left to keep his bureaucratic neck out of the imperialist noose. The breaking off of diplomatic relations by Chile and Argentina with the Soviet Union, the development of wholesale political and economic restrictions against the Stalinists in the Western European countries, the sensationalized red-baiting in the United States are all evil omen of the things to come.

But the United States strategists know that no imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union can take place unless the working masses of those countries, in which the United States dominates, are in complete subjection either through deals and horse trades with the reformist labor bureaucracy as in World War II, or through outright fascist dictatorship which the U. S. and England is fostering in the more unstable countries.

However, Stalin also knows these facts and in his own haphazard way is attempting to defend his bureaucracy.

TEMPERS SHARPEN

The lineup of forces has been definitely accelerated within recent months. The United Nations has become the "legal" organizing force of the Western "Democracies". This U.N. is being supplemented by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan of the United States. "Aid" given by the U. S. is the economic basis upon which the U.N. will be rallied and organized to oppose and eventually invade the Stalinist bloc of Eastern Europe. The credits thus obtained will be used to stabilize the Center Bourgeois governments and start the wheels of industry turning towards an invasion of Russia.

Stalin's weapon, like those of the Americans, are geared to the economy which he represents. Whereas the British and U. S. governments employ finance as a basis for political control, the Stalinists use ideological weapons. The THREAT of revolution (not revolution itself) is the means by which Stalin maintains political hegemony and gains minor concessions from the Western Bourgeoisie.

SMALL COMINTERN

In order, then, to use these ideological weapons, to counter the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine, a new nine nation "Comintern" has been set up in Belgrade. When the Marshall Plan was first proposed, Poland and Czechoslovakia, both within the Stalinist Orbit, accepted invitations to the Conference. Following political pressure from Moscow, Poland withdrew almost immediately. Gottwald, the Czech foreign minister was bought out by a very advantageous trade agreement with the S. U.

However, the Marshall Plan is of such gigantic proportions that the S. U. cannot hope to compete with it on an economic basis and keep the Eastern countries within the Eastern bloc. The only answer for Stalin is

The election to office of "labor candidates" through a labor party wouldn't change matters one iota. They would still have to serve the interests of private property. They would merely be office boys and stooges for the capitalists who pull the strings in the background. Only through a revolution which would represent the majority, the working class, could a truly democratic United States and world order be established.

to tighten up his political pressure on these countries by tightening up his ideological pressure.

In other words, the Stalinist parties will demand a few more concessions from their bourgeois governments. These demands will probably be granted under pressure. A few more trade agreements are also likely to be made.

PRESERVE CAPITALISM

The Stalinist parties in Western Europe will aid the political and economic program of Stalin by carrying out various opposition activities through adventurism of one kind or another. The main purpose will be to wreck the Marshall Plan but not to lead the masses to any revolutionary change. Throughout the Western Hemisphere the Stalinists will probably continue to pursue their middle of the road petty bourgeois program. Their attempts in the U. S. will be to modify the Marshall Plan as much as possible leaving it to their Western European comrades to wreck it entirely.

The political and economic future of Europe looks black indeed. Reaction is on the march again. Especially ominous are the recent elections in France discussed elsewhere in this issue. The American and Soviet worker must understand that this problem of Europe is the key to his own future. Unless a Revolutionary Marxian Party is built to lead Europe to a Workers Council solution to its problems, the European and Asiatic proletariat must go down to defeat. Other conditions remaining the same, the stage will be set for another imperialist invasion of the Soviet Union. The time is now, the place is here — to begin building a strong, independent, revolutionary Party.

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economic gains, when looked at in a vacuum. But price boosts have eaten away these gains, and more besides. The capitalist state made sure that the capitalists would reap a harvest. It gave the capitalist a free hand to raise price levels, but it put the squeeze on labor to accept wage boosts that lagged far behind prices.

The trade union is an elementary working class weapon that plays a defensive role. That is true today in the big race between wages and prices. As Lenin put it, it is a "training ground" for the working masses. The ultimate solution of the various problems of the workers under capitalism can be resolved only through an offensive action to completely smash capitalism, to establish a society based on production for use, rather than profit. Such an all-out battle can be waged only under the leadership of a new Revolutionary Marxian Party that will coordinate all phases of the class struggle.

ROB THE POOR TO FEED THE POOR

Throughout the country the community fund drive, to raise money in support of various charitable organizations has begun. All the big banks, industrial companies, movie actors and actresses, labor skates, the newspapers, and radios, have thrown their support behind the campaign. Through every plant and factory in the country a system has been devised to secure individual contributions from workers. They are being "urged" to contribute as much as a day's pay or more. Contributions are "voluntary", but a social stigma is on those who don't contribute. The heat put on to contribute is substantial.

The money collected is to go to agencies that will provide family service and assistance, care of dependent children, general health and nursing service, care of the aged, specialized services, hospital and clinical care, as well as educational and recreational activities. In other words the workers are being asked to contribute to their own charity.

It is no wonder that the campaign has the support of the bankers, industrialists, and all their capitalist politicians in the government. It is far cheaper for them to dole out a few thousand dollars to some charity institution

and have all of "polite" society at their feet, rather than give higher wages to their workers, so that they will not be forced to go begging for charity.

Capitalist society has disorganized the family and forced all its members to individually sell themselves on the labor market for low wages. Juvenile delinquency, crime, and prostitution have been the result. When a worker has given the best years of his life to the company he has no retirement system which he can turn to that will adequately support him. In sickness and in death the worker has not been provided with any means to meet the situation. The community fund campaign is the capitalist answer to the problems that the capitalist system has shifted onto the backs of the worker. The capitalist call upon all their brothers and the rest of society to contribute to the various charities they have created. At best they can only aid a few poor creatures for a few days in the year. But the people must live 365 days a year. That is their problem, say the wealthy, we've done our part. Meanwhile they continue to exact record breaking profits. Pennies to charity protect millions in profits.

100 BLACK YEARS

The International Harvester Company is celebrating its one-hundred years of progress and growth, 1847-1947. It is spending approximately one-half a million dollars to advertise its achievements in the farm equipment field.

Many workers throughout the country who have worked for this company or know someone that has, will not join the company in celebrating its progress. Instead they can review a history that has been marked by a continual struggle on the part of the workers to maintain decent wages and working conditions. It has been a violent history in which the company has resorted to every trick on the books to subject the workers to the grind of its machines. Its reputation for the major part of its growth has been established in the worker's mind with one of the best company spy details. It has resorted to the use of scabs, hoodlums, and gangsters, to break strikes. It has resorted to wholesale bribery of city and state governments to support its campaigns against its workers when they were out on strike.

It was the massacre of striking workers at the Harvester plant, who were fighting for the 8 hour day, that led to the mass protest meeting on May 1, 1886. It was this meeting where the famous Haymarket riot occurred. Out of the crimes which the police committed against the workers at that meeting, May Day was born and has become the historic holiday of the working class throughout the world.

International Harvester has expanded through one-hundred years of the dollars it has sweated out of the labor of its workers. According to the 1940 census of the Government, workers in the Farm equipment industry received wages equal to only 40% of the value their labor power added in the manufacturing progress. It is no wonder that in 1940, International Harvester made an OPERATING profit (these are the company's figures) of \$23,311,390. Through the war years (as a result of its various speed-up methods and by keeping wages "stabilized", it was able to make an operating profit of \$40,933,000. The McCormick family and the various stockholders can well celebrate, but the Harvester workers can only look back to a century of terror, bitterness and low living standards.

DeGAULLE TO HITLER

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It is too late. The present road leads directly to Fascism — and quick too. Unless a Revolutionary Marxian Party is soon forged, defeat of the French proletariat is inevitable. What is needed today is SUSTAINED militant action; strikes for higher wages and a sliding scale organization of workers defense groups to defend the working class against the terror that is coming; workers' councils to coordinate local struggles against the government; and above all a perspective of revolution, not reform.

JOHN DEWEY—

"A MARXIAN CRITIQUE"
By SID OKUN 10c

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Victim of Landlord's Greed On Trial November 5th

Oct. 25th. — The campaign to free James Hickman, Negro steelworker accused in Chicago of murder, has gained national momentum with individuals and groups in Los Angeles, New Jersey, Akron, New York, St. Paul and other cities joining in with the central Hickman Defense Committee in Chicago.

Hickman shot and killed his landlord David Coleman after a series of events which culminated in the burning to death of Hickman's four youngest children. Forced to live with a family of 9 in an attic fourteen feet square, without water, gas, toilet or electric facilities, Hickman was told by the landlord to move out so that the apartments in the building could be converted to more profitable kitchenette rooms. When the tenants balked the landlord threatened to burn them out, and a few days later the fire which killed four members of the Hickman family and injured two others, actually did break out.

DEFENSE COMMITTEE FORMED

A Hickman Defense Committee was immediately established with representatives of the AFL, CIO, American Veterans Committee, Baptist Church, Trotskyites, National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples and others participating. The Committee felt that while killing landlords was not the solution to the bad housing situation and restrictive covenants, Hickman nevertheless was a victim of the capitalist social system.

To date the case has been well publicized throughout Chicago and a tour of a Committee member is now under way to organize affiliated groups in other cities. The Chicago committee met with an Assistant State's Attorney who will handle the trial and demanded that Hickman be released with no strings attached. The States Attorney's office refused

to consider the matter. Instead it gave the committee a lecture about our "established system of justice" and other cliches.

ACTIVITY OF COMMITTEE

A few weeks ago a giant mass meeting on Hickman's behalf was held on Chicago's South Side. One thousand people heard a number of big-name stage stars and authors, as well as Bill Abner, Mike Mann, Phillip Weightman of the CIO, Sid Lens of an AFL local, M. J. Myer, one of Hickman's attorneys and representatives of the AVC and NAACP.

One of the most significant features of the case so far is the attitude of the bourgeois liberal Marshall Field. Field was visited by a delegation of the Committee and was asked to publicize Hickman's plight. He replied that he couldn't "prejudice" the case before it came to trial. The committee offered him a moving article by Willard Motley, author of "Knock on Any Door" a booming best-seller, free of charge. The Field papers however refused to publish the article. Under any other circumstances Motley could probably get 25c a word for anything he wrote. But since this article depicted a victim of the capitalist-made housing shortage the "liberal" Field couldn't use it.

The Hickman committee has done a good job in arousing mass pressure, but it has a number of shortcomings. Too many of the members of the committee are involved as individuals, rather than through organizations. There is a fear in some circles of openly utilizing revolutionary groups. Although the Cannon Trotskyites are quite active in the case, the Schachtmanites are not yet involved actively in the Committee and the Stalinists, Socialists, Yipsies and others are not involved at all.