

SOUTHERN WORKER

Vol. III No. 11

Birmingham, Alabama, March 25, 1934

Price 2 Cent

PICKET JOHNSON SHIRT DESPITE ARREST OF GIRLS

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Eight girls picketing the Johnson Shirt Factory, where a strike is going on against sweat-shop conditions have been arrested and charged with "disorderly conduct" for trying to keep scabs out of the shop.

The International Labor Defense has offered these girls and all other strikers, its support and defense.

Picketing at the plant continues in spite of the arrests.

GOVERNOR BARS I. L. D. AT FAKE HEARING FOR WILLIE PETERSON

BY PETER CALDWELL

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—Willie Peterson, framed-up Negro prisoner condemned to die in the electric chair, was not present at the "open hearing" before Governor Miller on March 8. Neither were any other Negroes allowed into the Governor's office, where the hearing was being held. The white ruling class of the state of Alabama held an open Jim-Crow hearing, not to find out whether Willie Peterson was guilty or not, but to put an O. K. on the lynch sentence.

Afraid to listen to a real exposure of the frame-up, which is part of the whole oppression and persecution of the Negro people, the delegation of the International Labor Defense was not allowed to speak, and the Negro members of the delegation were threatened in an attempt to force them to leave the state capitol building itself.

Justify Lynching

"I am not in favor of capital punishment" said state prosecutor Long in a vicious, lying attack on the Negro people, "except where lynching is almost justified." Why, when I first saw this nigger here, if I had even had my pen-knife I would have lynched him myself.

"And so would you, Governor."

Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., Negro, I. L. D. attorney for Angelo Herndon, heroic young organizer of the Georgia workers, led the delegation.

Chaplain Champney, Negro "Uncle Tom" Chaplain in Kilbrison prison, was sent by deputies to tell Mr. Davis to leave the capitol building. "You're taking your life in your hands if you don't," he said.

Madwick Beddow, special lynch presenter of Peterson, led the prosecution and tried to break down the testimony of the white watchman, who told how the original description by Nell Williams did not fit Peterson at all. A deputy sheriff also testified that thirteen Negro witnesses to

(Continued on Page 2)



are we demanding? read one of the banners carried by the Birmingham laundry strikers on their parade thru the main section of town. The strikers were not bluffing—they put up a splendid fight only to be sold out by Robinson and Bell and shipped back to work under the old conditions. Now the laundry workers are gathering their forces for a new struggle.

At right: Mass meeting of laundry strikers in Capitol Park.

Rome Foundry Strikers Hold Ranks Solid

ROME, Ga.—The strikers at the Southern Cooperative Foundry are holding their ranks solid in the face of open terror by the bosses. The sheriffs called for the National Guard to terrorize the strikers, but now Governor Talmadge thought it better to try the bureaucrats of the State Federation of Labor and have them sell out the strike peacefully. His scheme has not worked and the strikers are staying out to win their demands.

The bureaucrats of the Iron Molders Union (Nick Smith, Pendergraft, and O'Keefe) succeeded in selling out the Hanks Stove and Range Co. workers, sending them back to work at a 10 cent reduction in pay.

Fighting Sell-Out

The strikers at the Southern Cooperative, under the militant leadership of Jesse Perrier and Emmett Parks, are fighting against the sell-out tactics of the N.R.A. National Labor Board, the police, the company officials and the bureaucrats of the union.

The bosses are getting desperate, and are calling in stool pigeons from the Railway Audit and Inspection Co., a detective agency, to disrupt the ranks of the strikers.

The fighting spirit of the Southern Cooperative strikers is as determined now, after 16 weeks of hardships, as it was when they came out.

Read
LABOR'S TWO HANDS
A SHORT STORY

On Page 4



LAUNDRY STRIKERS, BACK AT WORK AFTER BRAZEN SELL-OUT. GATHER FORCES FOR BIGGER STRUGGLES

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Workers in the Sunshine laundries have again come out on strike because of discrimination against strikers by the bosses.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Following a three-weeks strike in the Birmingham laundries, the workers have been sent back to work by the top leaders of the union, with no gains made, with only the promise to "arbitrate." This means sell-out.

The laundry workers came out on strike against conditions that were unbearable. The average weekly wage for white women was about \$5 or \$6, the average wage for Negroes from \$3 to \$4. One worker reported that in several years her highest weekly paycheck was \$5.98, and her average pay much lower.

Speed-up and Abuse

For the Negro workers in the laundries, the conditions are worst of all. They are allowed to do only the muscle work—the hardest, dirtiest jobs, where the pay is lowest. They can't be markers, checkers, clerks or drivers.

Throughout the strike, the workers showed a splendid fighting spirit. There was marked solidarity between whites and Negroes. The workers were ready to sacrifice their little pay, and to stick until gains were made.

Misleaders Held Workers Back

What was it kept the laundry

workers back from winning their needs? It was the policies followed by Robinson and Bell, the misleaders of the union. From the beginning, they kept the workers from picketing the plants, knowing very well that only by picketing and keeping the scabs out could any real gains be made. Although the Negroes are 80 per cent of the laundry workers, no demands were put forward for equal wages for this group, or for their right to hold any job in the plant. Robinson and Bell kept the white and Negro workers separated, at union meetings, at the strikers' parade, and in the locals. The wage demands were for only 16 2-3 cents an hour for Negro workers, and 22 1-2 cents for whites.

When they sent the workers back to the laundries, these union "leaders" told them to "work hard, put in a good day's work and don't grumble." What kind of talk is this in a union? It sounds just like the talk we hear from laundry bosses.

Urge Rank and File Control

From the beginning, the Communist Party and the militant laundry workers urged the election of a rank and file strike committee to lead the strike and be responsible for all dealings with the bosses.

Today the laundry workers are gathering their forces for a renewed struggle.

ALA. MINERS DOWN TOOLS, DEFY STRIKE-BREAKING ORDER OF N. R. A. BOARD

Cavalry, Machine Guns Can't Stop Fight for Union

BULLETIN!

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—More National Guardsmen have been ordered into the mine strike area by General John C. Persons. Persons is an official of the First National Bank. The calling of the troops against the miners is Persons' first official act as Governor Miller's "impartial" representative on the arbitration board.

Eight miners were arrested and charged with "assault and battery," following a picketing clash at the Bradford mine of the Alabama By-Products Corporation.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Defying the ruling of the N. R. A. Labor Board, 3500 Alabama miners have laid down their tools. They are on strike for union recognition and against the starvation pay and miserable living conditions that prevail in the Alabama mine fields.

Neither the action of the District Labor Board, ordering the miners back to work nor the treachery of the U.M.W. of A. officials urging the men not to strike, nor the presence of the national guard, cavalry, airplanes and machine-gun detachments sent by Governor Miller at the request of the operators, could quench the fighting spirit of the miners.

Fight For Union Recognition

Recognize the union! Recognize our rat committees. These are the chief demands of the strike, and to gain these the miners of Alabama are ready to go through hell and high water.

The rank and file miners are furious over the order of William Mitchell, district president of the U. M. W. of A. ordering the miners not to strike pending the Labor Board decision, and over his action in stopping the petition of the miners for the removal of the labor-hating Acuff from the Labor Board.

Disarm Company Thugs

The spirit of the miners is shown by their action in the Little Cahaba coal fields, where white and

(Continued on Page 2)

I. L. D. Foils Legal Trick to Murder Scottsboro Boys!

more about MINE STRIKE

(continued from p. 1)

Negro miners disarmed fifteen company thugs whom the sheriff had promised to deputize, and sent them back to Birmingham. In Walker County, 300 miners, white and Negro, marched with clubs and shotguns to pull out mines still at work.

Conditions in the Lewisburg mine, one of the mines on strike, are typical of conditions all over the coal fields. The miners get 36 cents a ton with supplies furnished, and 48 to 52 cents where they must buy their own supplies. The miners say that commissary prices are "robbery without a pistol." By paying only once in two weeks and hauling out clackers between times, the company keeps the men in debt.

11 Hours Top to Top

Eleven hours from top to top is the working day in the mines although pay is for only 8 hours. If miners are unemployed, and get back on their feet, the company not only evicts them, but takes the miners' furniture for the rent. The company houses aren't fit for dogs to live in, let alone humans.

The unit of the Communist Party in the Lewisburg mine has distributed leaflets calling for a struggle for the following demands:

- 1) Full recognition of the union. Against all company union schemes.
- 2) Basic day rates of \$3.40 for outside and \$4.40 for inside labor.
- 3) 62 cents a ton for loaders, with a minimum guarantee of four cars a day. Abolition of all contracting in the mines.
- 4) Equal pay for equal work, the right of Negro miners to any job including trackmen, electricians and all others.
- 5) 8-hour day from top to top for all inside labor with the rates of pay as above.
- 6) Re-installment of special cars for free transportation between 10th avenue and Lewisburg. Installation of larger bathhouses.

more about PETERSON

(continued from p. 1)

Peterson's whereabouts at the time of the killings had been intimidated and kept from testifying as to this in court. Jurors also testified that they were not convinced of Peterson's guilt.

Recalling that Bedlow was proposed by the N. A. A. C. F. leaders to defend her boys in the famous Scottsboro case, Mrs. Janie Patterson, also a member of the I. L. D. delegation, said: "That's the way Walter White, with all his smooth talk wanted to defend my boy."

The I. L. D. is now preparing further evidence to be contained in the statement which will go to the governor soon. Hundreds of protests are being sent in from meetings of white and Negro workers throughout the country.

I. L. D. TO DEFEND CAROLINA FARMER FRAMED TO DIE

DURHAM, N. C.—Emanuel Biddings, Negro share-cropper, sits today on death row in the Central Prison at Raleigh, N. C. He has been condemned by the boss courts of North Carolina because he dared to protest against robbery by his landlord, and because he defended himself when his landlord was going to kill him.

The International Labor Defense, which has been retained by Biddings, will bring his case before the State Appeal Board.

Condemned to Starve

Biddings was a cropper on the farm of T. M. Clayton, a landlord with a reputation for crookedness, cruelty and violence. In June, Biddings was cut off from all rations. He got a job in the sawmill. His family worked the tobacco crop, and his wife worked in the fields up to three days before her baby was born.

When the tobacco was harvested, Clayton refused to give Biddings his half of the crop, saying that "his work had not been satisfactory."

Shot in Self-Defense

When Biddings tried to take his share of the crop, Clayton follow-

Gov't Cuts off CWA, Firing in South First, Jobless Plan Fight on Hunger

With no provision made for the hundreds of thousands of jobless workers, the Roosevelt government has ordered all C.W.A. work ending by March 30. This is a month earlier than the date previously announced, May 1.

Firing from C. W. A. jobs has been going on for the past few weeks, with the heaviest blows against the jobless in the South. Every Southern state was ordered to fire at least 20 percent of its C. W. A. workers at once, while in Pennsylvania, for instance, only 5.5 per cent were immediately fired.

Landlord-Government Deal

This policy is the result of an agreement between the Southern landlords and the Washington government, to make sure that the landlords here have a good supply of cheap hands for the early plowing and planting. Besides, the government knows that the Southern workers, divided white and black against each other, are not so well organized as in other sections. Against the unorganized the heaviest blows always fall.

But in the South also, the workers are fighting the government's starvation policies. Unions of workers on relief projects have been formed in many cities and states—Louisiana, Texas, Florida and elsewhere. The Unemployed Councils are growing. The jobless workers do not intend to starve after March 30.

Roosevelt recently made a long speech about his new relief policy. It was full of fine words, but what it means in plain bread-and-butter talk is that there are going to be fewer people getting relief, and they'll get mighty little of it. Roosevelt also came out against cash relief. A strong mass movement of the unemployed and employed workers, and growing, fighting Unemployed Councils, will change Roosevelt's policy—and nothing else can!

PROTESTS POUR INTO ALABAMA

DECATUR, Ala.—Appeal for a reversal of the lynch verdict of Judge W. W. Callahan handed down last December against Heywood Patterson and Clarence Norris, has been filed by International Labor Defense attorneys. This thwarted the underhand plans of the Alabama white ruling class and their agents, Callahan and Tom Knight, Jr. who denied the I. L. D. the right to make motions for new trials.

Flouting the very law he was sworn to uphold, Judge Callahan, reputed to be intimately connected with the Ku Klux Klan, told I. L. D. lawyers that they had 30 days in which to file the motion for a new trial. Following this he granted two extensions of this time, because the court clerk did not turn over necessary records in time. Then on the very day he had himself set the hearing, he accepted a motion of Knight to bar any argument by the defense lawyers on the ground that it was too late. In a feeble attempt to explain this dirty, underhanded trick Callahan tries to claim that he was "mistaken" and that he had no right to extend the time.

Protests Pour In

Hundreds of protest resolutions are pouring in upon Callahan, Governor B. M. Miller in Montgomery, Ala., and President Roosevelt from all over the world. Sections of the I. L. D. in every country have received cables on these latest lynch moves of the Southern bosses, and are holding demonstrations in the principal cities of the world. They are demanding—in addition to the immediate and unconditional freedom of the nine boys, and the smashing of these attempts to deny a new trial to the two condemned Negro youths, the removal of Judge Callahan.

Throughout the U. S., new efforts are being made to raise the thousands of dollars necessary for the appeal. James Cagney, famous movie star, presided over one large meeting in San Francisco. The proceeds from one night's showing of "They Shall Not Die," Scottsboro play written by John Wesley and now drawing huge crowds on Broadway, are to be donated to this fund. White and Negro workers throughout the South are strengthening their campaign, under the leadership of the I. L. D., passing resolutions, sending protests and collecting funds to carry on the case.

Scottsboro Mother Fights On
Mrs. Janie Patterson, mother of Heywood Patterson, brought greetings to the workers of the I. L. D. from her son, following a visit to Kilby prison, arranged by the I. L. D.

The roar of protest from the working-class that freed Dimitroff and his fellow-prisoners from the axe of the German fascists can also free the Scottsboro boys. In the demonstrations called in every country for the freedom of the German class-war prisoners, the workers will also demand the release of the Scottsboro boys.

"Wouldn't Quit The Reds For All The Mules in Alabama," Says Paxton

NOTE.—When J. H. Paxton, farmer of Citronelle, Ala., went to Washington last month as part of the Alabama delegation to the Unemployed Conference, one of the papers there said that he would agree to quit the movement for a mule. All the boss class papers in the South said so too.

Would a real man quit the workers' movement for a mule? Read Comrade Paxton's answer below:

TO THE SOUTHERN WORKER:

I was one of the delegates to the Unemployed Conference in Washington, D. C., Feb. 3-5, and wish to write you of some of our experiences there.

I was on one of the committees that called on the president and was surprised at being met by a lot of burly cops and refused admittance. I had seen news items where men who had flown airplanes and other stunts were received.

Went Bother with Starving Men
I guess there is a difference between these and a delegation of unemployed men seeking relief for the starving millions of people out of work in the U. S. A.

While there, I asked Mr. McIntyre if he received a letter from an Alabama farmer protesting the discrimination on CWA and other relief actions.

I told him I had written the President about it and had enclosed a jingle to him entitled, "The Humblings of an Empty Stomach," that closed with these lines: "If you want to help a forgotten man, help me get another mule."



J. H. PAXTON

He asked for my name, which I gave him.

That afternoon I saw a story in the Washington News, stating I had promised to turn yellow and quit being a Red for a good mule.

I at once took the platform at the convention and branded their statement as a dirty lie, and wrote them as follows:

"Lies in Bosses' Papers"

"I have just read your reporter's story regarding the Unemployed Councils promising me a mule, and will say that this is the biggest lie I

ever saw in a capitalist paper and I have been reading them all my life.

"If these unemployed people were able to give away mules or anything else they would not have to come thousands of miles to fight for relief for their starving families.

"Regarding my turning away from the movement for a mule, will say that this is a dirty lie, for all the mules in the United States would not stop me nor my wife from heading a movement for the betterment of millions of people in this country.

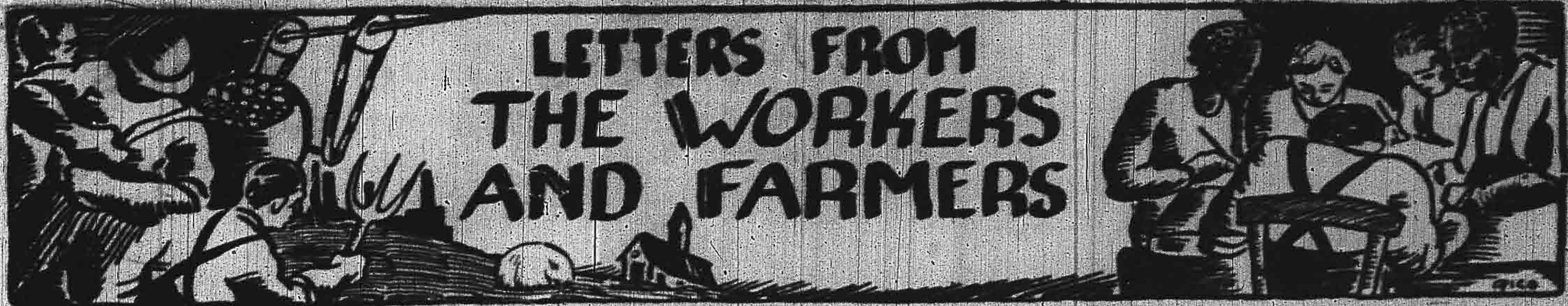
Respectfully yours,

J. H. PAXTON.

"P. S. Speaking of mules, I would say that I consider your reporter a packass."

We Must Organize Together

We had to travel miles in the snow and suffered from the cold, but believe me attending that conference was worth more than I can find words to express, for there I found everyone militant and determined to carry the fight on to victory. And the unity between the whites and the Negroes showed plainly that the working people realize that we must organize together against our joint enemy, starvation and unemployment, also sewer living conditions. I feel sure that each delegate returned with his or her mind firmly made up to work harder in the struggle that will in the end be victorious.



Southern R. R. Isn't Paying Enough to Live

Note: The railroad bosses, with the help of the Roosevelt government, are trying to put over a permanent 10 per cent cut. As it is, many of the railroad workers can't make enough to live. Here is what a group of workers in the Southern Railroad Shop have to say about the conditions.

(By the Communist Party Shop Unit in the Southern Railroad Shop, Birmingham, Ala.)

We are now asking for our so-called money back that you said you were borrowing from the employees in 1933, and that you would return it back in April in 1933 and did not do it.

Our wages were cut 10 per cent on each dollar, and also cut on the labor, and also have got one man doing two and three men's jobs. It is not paying enough wages for the workers to take care of their families, especially the Negroes.

Commisaries Rob Us

The Negroes' wages is cut so low that they have to go to the commissary to get their groceries, and also their clothing, and the prices are so high it takes all they make.

We go to the commissary to get a 24-pound sack of flour. It costs \$1.55, and the bosses can get the same flour for \$1.20.

Too, there is some workers making six days in the same department. We don't say quit them down, but we do say let all the workers make the same. We want them to give us an equal amount of days. Let us make the same amount of days, because we have families to take care of too.

Speed-up Every Day

We can't hardly live out of 24 days with the wages we are getting, and the bosses are speeding the jobs up every day and saying if you can't work so faster, I will put someone in your place. We are working so hard that we can't go no place after we get off work.

The Negroes only get \$1.50 and some get \$1.65 a day, and get \$2.27 a day, and the white foreman get \$7.50 and some get \$11.50 a day, some get \$12.50 a day, some get \$14.50 and \$20.50 daily. This is the white. Negroes cannot have these jobs.

There is a strike for the white workers, but no colored in it.

And now the railroad bosses want to cut our pay again. Many white workers are beginning to see

Miners Write From Three Towns

ARK. LOCALS IN FIGHT ON LEWIS MACHINE

(By a Miner Correspondent)

GREENWOOD, Ark.—Arkansas-Oklahoma miners, District 21, U. M. W. of A. met in convention at Fort Smith, Ark., and took autonomy of the district. This revolt against the Lewis-appointed officialdom is a fight for rank and file control and for the right of the miners to elect their own officials and representatives. At the convention, temporary district officials were elected from the rank and file.

David Fowler and Elmer Mickel, the Lewis-appointed officialdom for the district, have a long history of betrayal, disruptions and bureaucracy. They are totally discredited in the eyes of all honest miners. The last straw came when Fowler returned from Washington and disrupted a general strike against the NRA coal code last September.

The Task Ahead

Now that the miners of District 21 have taken autonomy, what is the task ahead? Can the miners call it victory, fold their arms and return to the pits with security, or are there battles still to be fought?

The truth is this: on paper, freedom has been taken. But actually the Fowler-Lewis dictatorship still exists. It is still among the miners, and has control of many locals because the honest rank and file miners have been weeded out. At their disposal is the lying capitalist press, all the strike-breaking apparatus of the NRA government, and all the other forces of capitalism.

Fight All Labor Misleaders

The miners must also realize that their fight is not only against John L. Lewis, as a person, but against his type of labor misleader wherever it is found. They must see that Peary and Keck of the Progressives, and Maloney and Capellini, of the new anthracite union, are of the Lewis type. They are guilty of doing just what Lewis has done. They have broken strikes and picket lines, and betrayed the miners to the NRA labor boards, especially at the beginning, feigning to expose them as operator-controlled. No Lewis or Peary or Capellini will help the District 21 miners.

That both white and Negro get it in the neck together, and that we get to organize together, to fight it. We all got to fight in one united union.

Things Much Worse At Dolomite Mine Than Before N.R.A.

(By a Miner Correspondent)

DOLOMITE, Ala.—At Dolomite Mine No. 3 the conditions are much worse than before the N. R. A. The coal-diggers have to get their rails the best they can and move rock and get no pay for it.

The men must stay in their place until 4 o'clock. If the coal-diggers load a board or a piece of bark in their car, they are subject to a fine. They will fine a man if he throws rock, dust in his place so he could blast some coal.

They want the men to pay \$1 a month for doctor and \$1 for hospital.

The track man has one helper, and most times the coal digger has to help them to get any coal loaded during that day.

PIEDMONT MILL THROWS WORKER OUT TO STARVE AFTER 11 YEARS

(By a Textile Worker Correspondent)

EGAN PARK, Ga.—At the Piedmont Mill, more workers are being laid off every week. And few of the workers get a full week's work.

Lee Laney had worked at Piedmont for eleven years. He was laid off recently without any reason whatever. Right away Tift, the owner, wanted him to move out of his house. Tift got the benefit of eleven years of Lee Laney's slavery and now Tift throws him out to the cold and hunger like a dog.

This shows how much the bosses care about us workers. They don't care, if we do starve or freeze as long as we slave for them while we're in the mill.

Stop Evictions!

Other workers have been laid off too. They all face the same future as Lee Laney. The misleaders of the A. F. of L. have not done anything about the lay-offs. The workers in the A. F. of L. and other workers, should get a committee from the union to see Tift and demand that the laid-off workers be rehired. And if Tift refuses to rehire the workers, the A. F. of L. should take these workers to the relief station and see that they get an relief immediately. And we should also see that none of these workers are thrown out of their homes. The workers in the union must use the organization to protect workers. We can't wait for

SPEEDUP ARTIST IS STILL BOSS AT RAIMUND MINE

(By a Miner Correspondent)

RENSSELAER, Ala.—Well, we are back at work after our strike under the same old conditions, and that is as much as the National Labor Board hearings did for us. We can't possibly get a decision before summer, and when we do get it how will it help us? Meanwhile the company is trying to wear us down.

Speed-Up Artist at Foreman

The same conditions hold good as before the strike. Norman Thompson, our speed-up superintendent, is right on the job. All the dead work we have to do, we don't get paid for it and it keeps us back from making tonnage. We have to do all sorts of jobs double. Like the muckers have to muck and be mule boy at the same time. And the muckers have to take the pull spikes and fix tracks. And then to cap the stack, we get cheated on the scale weight, they take off about one ton for every car.

The company makes big stop pages from our pay. Besides that if you live in the little leaky company houses, they take 50 cents a month for the cold, dirty bath house, \$1.25 for doctor, \$1.50 for hospital, and another 50 cents for insurance.

High Commissary Prices

The mine commissary charges awfully high prices. Take a 24-pound sack of flour that costs \$1.05 in town, is \$1.50 at the commissary. The whites are always waited on first, no matter if they come in last.

Now look at these prices: Shovel, \$2.50; lamp, \$1.15; fuses, 1 cent a foot; caps, 5 cents apiece; powder, 5 cents a stick, and carbide every day. It all comes out of our wages.

Eighty-five percent of the miners are Negroes, but they can't do most of the jobs. They can't be track foreman, or timber foreman, or issue powder, or be electrical. They can't be blacksmith, car knocker, bank boss or engineer, or yet tally man or carpenter or machinists. Only very lately they can run motors. All they are allowed to do is the muscle work.

The leaders of the A. F. of L. to act.

\$9 a Week in Card Room

In the card room, the workers only work a 4-hour shift. They only make \$9 a week.

Mexicans Are Almost Slaves In Texas

(By a Worker Correspondent)

DALLAS, TEX.—There is a terrible condition in the Mexican section of Dallas, as many as twenty persons living in three small rooms, all sleeping on the floor.

The biggest industry among these people is shelling pecans for the Equival Pecan Company. The company sells the workers the pecans for eight cents a pound and pays them 25 cents a pound for the shelled nuts. The nuts lose about half in shelling. A whole family of four or five will work 12 or 15 hours a day to make \$5 or \$6 a week. This work is done in the homes.

Lame Men Cut Wages

Every lame man in Dallas cut wages two-thirds when the NRA went into effect. Lame men who were making \$17 to \$20 a week were cut to \$5 or \$6.

All the big towns work Mexican boys of 18 and 20 in the poultry for 7 cents a day and one meal.

MEN WORK LIKE PRISONERS ON JAX DOCKS

(By a Dock Worker)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—When you learn about the dockers of Jacksonville, then you can realize brutality.

Men work like prisoners or worse. They work with overloaded trucks. When loading fruit, there are four to five crates of oranges placed on one man, and he is left to pull up a steep inclined platform and driven up there by the boss.

Merchandise Piled High

When handling merchandise, they carry loads on trucks too high to see where they are going with trailing motions. Lumber and steel are all handled.

For this greatest speed they are paid 21 to 27 cents an hour and docked for part of that.

WORKER PHOTOGRAPHERS

Does the sight of workers' broken-down trucks, bread-lines, police brutality, Jim-Crowism, make your blood boil? Does the sight of workers on the picket line, and at mass meetings, make you feel we're getting somewhere in our fight against the boss?

If you snap pictures of these things, you can make your camera a fine propagandist and organizer. We'll pay you 25 cents apiece for good pictures of working-class conditions and struggles in the South.

THE SOUTHERN WORKER

The Paper of the Toiling Masses of the South
Official Organ of the Communist Party of the United States
JIM MALLORY, EDITOR
Address: Box 572, Birmingham, Alabama

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Volume III

MARCH 25, 1934

Number 11

SPREAD THE MINE STRIKE! ON GUARD AGAINST SELL OUTS!

The strike in the Alabama coal fields is spreading from pit to pit like a prairie fire fanned by a high wind. In mine after mine, the workers have heeded the call of the local unions and have laid down their tools. Neither the orders of the strike-breaking N. E. A. labor board, nor the treachery of the top misleaders of the U. M. W. of A., nor the troops, machine guns and cavalry sent by Governor Miller at the request of the operators, to cow and terrify the miners—none of these things have been able to hold the Alabama miners back.

The Alabama coal strike is only one in a great chain of strikes all over the South. In every Southern state workers have come out in straggle. And in almost every one of these strikes, one of the central demands was for the recognition of the union, for the right of workers to organize in unions of their choice. More than in any other part of the country, this elementary human right is denied to us Southern workers.

Some of these strikes have ended without immediate gains for the workers. But from these lost battles, we can learn lessons that will help us win in the future. The Alabama miners, now in desperate struggle with the operators, can learn from the experiences of the laundry workers of Birmingham.

The Birmingham laundry workers, after a strike of weeks, were shipped back into the laundries without one single guarantee of improvements. Yet the workers were solid, there was the beginning of a spirit of unity between white and Negro strikers, and the workers were determined to stay out until they won. Well, then, what went wrong?

Early in the strike, dozens of men and women laundry workers took up their stand outside the plants to picket, to keep out the scabs. Robinton and Bell, the leaders of the strike—men who never breathed the steamy, suffocating air of a laundry—stopped the picketing as soon as they heard of it. But mass picketing is the only way to keep the scabs out. Mass picketing is the only way to win a strike. Did Robinton and Bell know that? Sure they did! And in calling off the pickets, they took their first step in selling out the strike to the laundry owners.

All through the strike, these misleaders did their best to keep white and Negro strikers separated. The workers who went up against the laundry bosses were divided among themselves, white and black against each other. In the union, separate locals. In the union halls and the courthouse—separate meetings. In the parade, separate divisions of marchers. And, worst of all, a wage demand for the Negroes 100% lower than for the whites! And yet, we know that it is just this division between the races, just this policy of driving the Negro women workers down to rock-bottom conditions, and then using them as cheap labor, that has made it easy for the laundry bosses to lower wages of all laundry workers both white and black.

Finally, Robinton and Bell sent the laundry workers back, without gains, and told them to rely on the Regional Labor Board for better conditions. And what they have got from the Board is exactly nothing!

The laundry strike was not in the hands of the strikers. It was led and sold out by misleaders.

The Alabama miners have made a splendid beginning in their strike. They brushed aside the no-strike ruling of the District Labor Board. They brushed aside the treacherous no-strike ruling of Mitch. In the coal fields, the spirit of unity between white and Negro miners has made it out of the question to recruit one race as strike-breakers against the others.

Of all the political parties, only the Communist Party stands solid with the miners in their fight for recognition of the union. Only the Communist Party supported the strike of the Birmingham laundry workers. The Democratic machine in Birmingham helped the bosses in every way, including police to break up possible picketing, and a slush fund to tide the laundry bosses over. Norman Thomas, appearing for the Socialist Party, urged the workers to have a nice, quiet strike—as if there could be such a thing as a "quiet" fight for the right to live!

From the bitter experiences of the laundry workers, the Alabama miners can learn great lessons.

Only the miners have the right to run their strike, and only

Labor's Two Hands A TRUE STORY

By MYRA PAGE

(Author of "Gathering Storm," a novel of the struggles of the Southern textile workers.)

TROUBLED, heavy at heart, Bill Mertson started home. The heavy dusk pressed round him, against his aching back and empty sides. Above the mine tipples, behind Red Mountain, the first stars shimmered fitfully. His boots moved with a slow beat. How could he face his wife Nell and the batch of hungry kids with this low-down pay check? That blasted company was getting the miners lower and lower. And the big union guys asleep at the switch! Was this what coal-diggers had built up their union for? What in Sam Hill! It was getting to the place where, well, sometimes a man had to think and keep silent.

Cheated and Speeded

Alabama miners, being cheated and speeded like hell and high-water. Now he had to show Nell another measly ten bucks for this halfmonth below ground. Time came when a man, if he was a man, just couldn't keep still.

His worn boots thumped sullenly over the uneven dirt road. The huge shadow of a man moved toward him. He recognized Fern Battle, a colored fellow who worked in the pit near him.

Pay's Gettin' Thin

"Howdy, Bro' Mertson." Bill would have passed with a gruff "Howdy, Battle" when the other man stopped him. (He was going to feel out the white miner, Chance.) "How things going with you all? Pay's gettin' pretty thin, ain't it?" Mertson spat far and hard. That's how Battle jerked his head in a quick nod. Now just what did Bro' Mertson think the miners might be going about, it?

The Reds Are For the Unions

Before their talk was over, the Negro handed the other coal-digger some papers. "Maybe you'd like to read these!" Bill turned them

a rank and file strike committee, elected by the strikers themselves, can be counted on to fight for the miners. To leave the strike in the hands of Mitch and his fellow-misleaders—who have already tried to force the miners back to work—is to invite disaster in the mine fields. Nor should the hard-earned pennies of the miners be paid to Mitch, Lewis and his kind. To the demand for the check-off, we should add that these dues should be paid directly into the treasury of the union locals.

The miners have a hard fight ahead. All the forces of the operators are pitted against them. Aiding the operators are the state officials who have already sent troops against the starving miners. Roosevelt's NRA labor board has outlawed strikes, thereby outlawing the only weapon the workers have in their fight for life.

Alabama miners! Only an elected committee from your own ranks should speak for you! Only real unity between white and Negro miners, which means also a fight for equal pay and jobs for the Negroes, can weld the strikers into a solid front against the mine operators. Only a most militant policy of mass picketing and determined struggle can win the Alabama mine strike!

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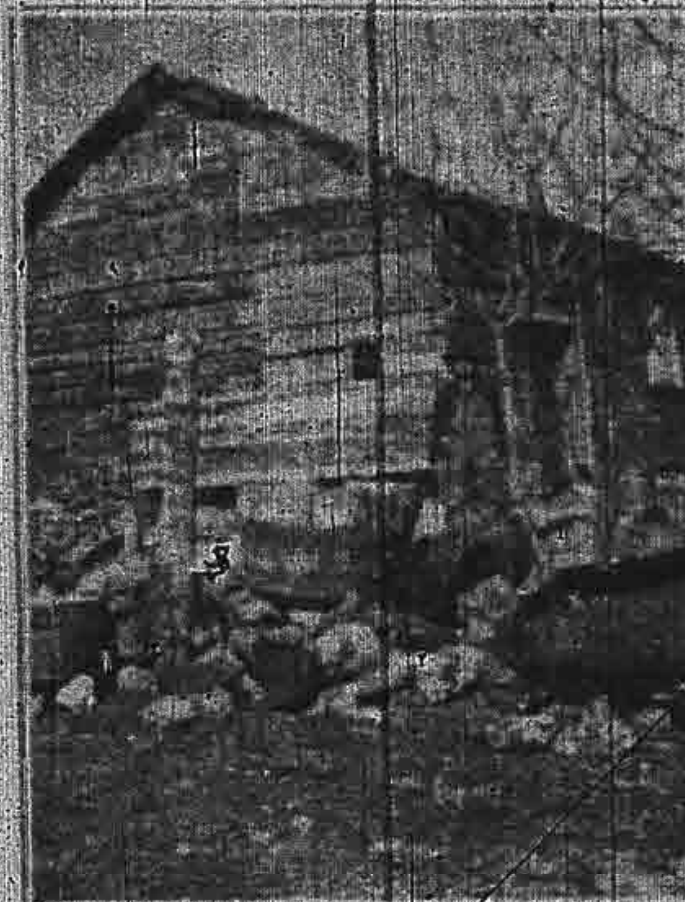
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over. "Where'd you get 'em?" In the thickening dusk he could barely make out the heavy black type, SOUTHERN WORKER, and on the leaflet the words: "To all rank and file miners." He fingered them, uncertainly. "This ain't the Communists' Union-smashers they were, he was against that."

Battle shook his head. "You know I'm a strong union man too. What I understand, the Reds are for unions, only they want rank and file control and a fighting spirit. Where'd I get these? Some man came along and gave 'em to me. And knowing you as a smart and honest miner, a good union man, I thought as how I'd pass one



No job, no wages, no pension—and the shack you see in this picture for a "home." That is the reward that Mike Boraski of Wylan, Ala., is getting after 27 years of back-breaking work for the T. C. I. They gave him a "well" medal for "good service"—but they won't come across with a pension. And Mike finds that medals don't mean much when you're cold and hungry.

along to you."

Black and White—Labor's Two Hands

As Mertson lumbered off, hurrying to his lamp at the cabin, Battle added with a chuckle to himself: "And I'm not telling you—not yet—how I helped draw up this leaflet in our Communist mine unit meeting." It was high time that more of these white miners lined up in the Party. Black and white, labor's two hands. Each needing the other.

In the next two weeks, Battle brought Mertson more papers to read and study over. They had several long talks. "I reckon I had those Reds wrong," Bill said. "Guess that's what I've been looking for all along, and didn't know." He had been talking to a few other white coal-diggers. They had some points they wanted to clear up so if Battle could get hold of one of those organizers from Birmingham, yes, and come himself, they'd get together for a little talk over at his place and see what was what. Yes, they'd see.

Now the T. C. I. Can't Stop Us!

The result—another mine unit in the Communist Party. Units including both white and Negro miners.

When Battle reported to his unit, the Negro miners' faces gleamed. Now let the T. C. I. try and stop the miners! Slave conditions in the pits had to go. More than that, in not so many years, the Alabama mines going to be owned and run by the miners and other workers. And millionaire Morgan and his gang of bloodsuckers chased into the sea.

This is how the Communist Party is uniting Southern labor's ranks. Battle and Mertson are real people, their story one of many true stories of growing solidarity in the South. Often it is the Negro worker who makes the first move, bringing Communism to his white fellow-workers. At other times, it is the white worker who first breaks through the Jim-Crow bogey that the bosses have built up and the A. F. of L. officials endorse, to extend his solidarity and say: "Come on, together we can win!"

The Case of John Thompson

This is what John Thompson is doing. He is a former railroader and now on the CWA. In the section where he lives the Klan was once very strong. Yet he was in the Party only four weeks when he got the idea of spreading the SOUTHERN WORKER and leaflets in the Negro neighborhood. He is organizing together on CWA jobs, building their Unemployed Councils, and preparing to put a stop to evictions and turning off water, light and gas in working people's homes, whether white or black.

What the Fern Battles and John Thompsons are doing means a new day in the South. For the cause of Southern labor is the division and race in the ranks. In union, and in union alone, will the workers win their rights. To fight for that is what it means to be a Red.