

## How Can We Secure the Use of the Radio?

By F. BROWN

THE ruling class has at its disposal tremendous facilities which it uses to divert the working masses from the issues of the class struggle, to blind them to the growing menace of fascism, and to poison their minds with vicious lies against the workers' fatherland, the Soviet Union, and against the revolutionary vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party. At this moment, when the ruling class, supported and assisted by the Roosevelt government, is making its sharpest attack upon the working class, when the munitions manufacturers and the Roosevelt government are engaged in the greatest war preparations of history, the whole apparatus of press, church, school, movies and radio are being utilized to throw out a barrage of poisonous propaganda to confuse, mislead and blind the workers.

Among the most important of the instruments of propaganda are the movies and the radio. We are all familiar with the broadcasts of Father Coughlin. But we are not always aware of the many little "Father Coughlins" who broadcast their insidious poison many times a day. They are the announcers on every radio station, who inform us of the news and "interpret" the weekly events, along the line laid down by the ruling class and its government. For example, the spokesman of the Hearst press is on the air several times each day, bringing the fascist poison of Hearst to the masses.

It is a rare occasion when a true labor speaker, bringing forward the point of view of the proletariat, of the working class press, has an opportunity of reaching the broad masses who compose the radio audience, the majority of whom are workers and farmers. Today, the radio is an instrument exclusively for the propaganda of the ruling class. Its rates are prohibitive for working class organizations. Proletarian culture is kept off the air by the simple expedient of making the air costly. In this situation it becomes difficult through the written word alone—through our daily press, bulletins, leaflets, etc., to counteract the propaganda of our enemies, who have such a tremendous apparatus at their disposal.

However, from the inception of the class struggle, the proletariat has found ways and means of using all the technical achievements of society for the purpose of spreading its own revolutionary propaganda. In this period of the movies, radio, etc., we must strive to make these also ours. Certain achievements have already been attained in the field

of motion pictures. But the prohibitive expense of the radio has until now closed the radio to us. This problem too can and must be solved by the revolutionary working class.

The most powerful weapon in the hands of the workers—mass pressure—can open to us this medium of propaganda. Mass pressure can compel the radio companies to take into consideration the wishes of the radio audience. The comrades in California and other places have given us an excellent example. The **Western Worker** announced that Lawrence Ross, co-editor of the **Western Worker**, will broadcast every Wednesday night, over Station KTAB, a resume of important world events. This broadcast is being sponsored by the Workers School of San Francisco.

We do not know how the Workers School of San Francisco succeeded in making arrangements for these broadcasts, how much they pay for them, or whether they are free of charge. However, knowing the resources of the Workers School, it is clear that the charge cannot be prohibitive. It is also evident that the demand of the radio audience in San Francisco must have compelled the granting of time on the air for these weekly broadcasts of a Marxian analysis of important world affairs.

We are convinced that if the comrades in San Francisco could succeed in utilizing the radio, similar success could be achieved in hundreds of American cities. The problem is to mobilize the radio audiences, who are composed in the large majority of the toiling masses, to demand that radio, which is the technical achievement of the twentieth century, cease to be the exclusive property of the advertising companies, the industrialists, Wall Street and their mouthpieces, and be placed also at the disposal of the masses.

It is clear that if one of the outstanding leaders of our Party could have the opportunity to utilize the national radio hook-ups, there would be millions of requests that more time be provided for our speakers.

The policy of the Radio Commission is to keep the radio exclusively at the disposal of the ruling class. We must take up the challenge. In all the important cities of America a real campaign should be developed, flooding the radio stations, on a local, state and national scale, demanding lower rates, demanding the opportunity for representatives of the working class, and its vanguard, the Communist Party, to utilize the radio. The example of California and other cities shows us the possibilities. Why not start such a campaign immediately?