

# 30,000 Protest Murder of Cleveland Negroes

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**White, Negro Workers Show Fine Solidarity in Huge  
Mass Funeral for Murdered Workers**

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**Pledge Carry Forward Fight for Unemployed Relief and  
Unconditional Negro Equality**

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CLEVELAND, O., Oct. 12.—30,000 white and Negro workers gathered in the heart of the Negro section of Cleveland on Saturday for the mass funeral of John Rayford and Edward Jackson, leaders of the Unemployed Council, who were murdered by city police on Tuesday night.

Later, over 10,000 workers, maintaining perfect working class discipline, marched five miles through streets lined with tens of thousands of sympathetic workers to the Harvard cemetery, where the final meeting was held as the bodies of our comrades were lowered into the grave. The growing solidarity, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Unemployed Councils, of Negro and white workers was expressed by the fact

# 30,000 PROTEST MURDER OF CLEVELAND NEGROES

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that fully fifty per cent of the workers were white.

For two days preceding the funeral a continuous stream of workers passed before the bodies where they lay in Spiro Hall, guarded day and night by 25 Negro and white workers who took turns in mounting guard. Day and night the workers, men and women, some with children in their arms, passed in silence through the hall to pay a last tribute to these murdered fighters of the working-class.

For days thousands of workers gathered in protest meetings to express their indignation against the murderous boss policy of answering the demands of the unemployed workers with bullets and gas.

## Workers March To Funeral Hall

Marching columns of thousands of workers from five different sections of the city converged on the funeral hall at 1 o'clock Saturday afternoon. In front of the hall they were joined by fresh thousands who had arrived individually or in small groups. In grim silence the workers massed around the huge red-draped platform erected in the center of the street. The city government, whose police had shot down Raymond and Jackson, had been forced to cut off all traffic in the street where the funeral was held. All police had been withdrawn from the area of the funeral in face of the evident determination of the workers to stand for no interference.

The meeting was opened at one o'clock by the chairman, Herbert Newton, a Negro leader of the working class, who represented the arrangements committee. Representatives of the International Labor Defense, the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, the Communist Party and the Young Communist League, spoke briefly, pledging the support of their organizations for the struggle in which Rayford and Jackson lost their lives. Maggie Jones, leader of the Number 8 Unemployed Branch to which Rayford and Jackson belonged, called on the workers to join the Unemployed Council in mass and to stop every eviction in the city of Cleveland as a tribute to the slain workers. She called for the intensification of the struggle for unemployment relief and for social insurance, to be paid for by the bosses and to be administered by committees of workers.

## A Fight Against Starvation

"This meeting today is more than a proletarian funeral," declared Tom Johnson, representing the Central Committee of the Communist Party. "It is above all a fighting demonstration against starvation and pauperization of the workers, against police terrorism, and for the unbreakable solidarity of the Negro and white workers in the struggle against the system which took the lives of our comrades."

Phil Bart, district organizer of the Communist Party, called for a mass recruitment of thousands of Cleveland workers into the Communist Party as a living monument to the memory of our martyred comrades. "The city government hopes to smash the militant fight of the unemployed and beat them into accepting starvation quietly by the shoot-

ing down of unarmed workers," Bart pointed out, further declaring, "but this brutal murder, as this meeting shows, will not terrorize the Negro and white workers. On the contrary it has aroused the deepest indignation in the hearts of tens of thousands of workers and inspired them to greater struggle."

## For Unity Jobless and Employed

Bart called for the unity of unemployed and employed workers in the fight against the wage slashing campaign of the bosses, against their war preparations, directed especially at the Soviet Union, and for a united fight for unemployment insurance and for the unconditional equal rights of the Negro masses, including the right of self-determination for the Negro majorities of the Southern Black Belt, with confiscation of the land for the Negro and white workers who work the land.

Grimly and silently the massed workers stood until the speakers concluded. Then Comrade Newton slowly read an impressive working class pledge to continue, until final victory is won, the struggle in which Rayford and Jackson lost their lives. Thirty thousand clenched fists shot into the air as Newton concluded and 30,000 throats roared out the words of the pledge in unison.

## Pledge To Continue Struggle

With the mass recitation of the pledge the meeting ended, and under direction of scores of captains the workers fell into line, four abreast, for the long march to the cemetery. First came a picked guard of white and Negro workers, followed by the hearse with the bodies of the heroic dead. Behind the hearse marched tens of workers laden with the flowers sent by working class organizations and individual workers. Then block after block the long line strung out, a sea of placards and banners with many organizations marching under their own banners. Behind the marchers came 147 cars and trucks carrying women and children.

All traffic was stopped in the main streets of the south side of Cleveland through which the procession passed. The marchers walked in closed ranks in silence. The best expression of the solidarity between the marchers and the tens of thousands of the workers who watched from the sidewalks took place as the march passed E. 55th St. and Woodland. There a street car tried to break through the line. Immediately some 200 workers rushed from the sidewalk and surrounded the car, preventing it from moving until the procession, a mile and a half long, had passed. The same thing occurred at another point to a police squad car which tried to break thru the procession.

## For More Intensive Fight!

The funeral concluded with a short speech by Sandberg, secretary of the Cleveland Unemployed Councils, and a stirring appeal for the workers to join the Communist Party by Herbert Newton, as the bodies were lowered into the grave. Hundreds of workers filled out applications for membership in the Party.

Still in silence, grim and determined, the workers returned to their homes to take up on the morrow a more intense and better organized struggle against hunger and police terrorism.