

The Filibuster Can Be Licked

By CLAUDIA JONES

THE speech by Senator Barkley, Democratic House Majority Leader, last week was an important last week was an important busterers and their Republican colleagues.

It was the first challenge of its kind in the Senate since the 12-day field holiday of the filibusterers began. It was a direct result of the national indignation at the continuing anti-FEPC filibusterers. It revealed that alarm is beginning to permeate leading Democratic Senators, getting them into action to halt the polltax disruption which is blocking a vote on the anti-prejudice bill.

Barkley supported FEPC legislation during FDR's administration. But what was new in his support (despite threatening telegrams from southern bourbons who fear passage of such a measure) was that he cut through the verbiage and urged a cloture vote to end the filibuster.

Barkley, however, sought to absolve President Truman.

Said Barkley: "I do not think that he (President Truman) has attempted in any way to inject himself into the procedure so far as timing of the consideration of the bill is concerned. I feel like saying that in justice to the President."

* Now the issue of timing (on which there are grounds for disagreement insofar as strategy is concerned) is one thing.

TRUMAN'S FAILURE

But the key criticism of President Truman by FEPC supporters is the President's failure to back up his words with deeds—with endorsement of the Senate Bill S-101 or House Bill 2232, or with denouncing members of his own party for the scandalous talk-fest of the last 12 days. There can be no sloughing off this failure until this is done.

Senator Barkley put his an-

ger on the basic principle involved in FEPC legislation when he reminded his Senate colleagues that they voted without exception for every able-bodied man to be drafted for service in the war. He challenged their refusal "to vote for the same kind of democracy in peace."

This note was struck by the historic Washington FEPC delegation. When visiting Dean Acheson, Undersecretary of State, the delegates won a promise from Acheson that he would ask President Truman to press for FEPC passage, since as the delegates pointed yet, it would help the United States in her international relations, with allied and colonial peoples.

THE SENATE—SETUP

It is important for supporters of a permanent FEPC to understand that there is absolutely no reason why failure of the Senate to vote cloture should signal the end of the fight to get a vote on end of the fight to get a vote on S. 101, the FEPC bill.

FEPC supporters should let their Senators know that their constituents are aware of this. To the extent that Senators realize that this knowledge is widespread—to that extent will the country be protected against a sell-out of FEPC.

It does take two-thirds of the Senate to close debate to break a filibuster. But even if this is not obtained at the first second or even the 10th try—the fight can—**MUST**—still go on. Unless its sponsor, (Sen. Chavez) withdraws it, it only takes a simple majority to keep the bill on the floor of the Senate. The bill must remain on the floor of the Senate until passed. Unless the Senators sponsoring the bill sell out, the FEPC will be passed.

LABOR'S FIGHT

The fight for a permanent FEPC bill is one with labor's fight for higher wages and collective bargaining. This is clearly observed in the frequency with

which the polltax-Republican coalition pushes anti-strike legislation at the same time as they fight fair employment practices.

This is an additional reason why the time for basic challenge to such strangleholds on the democratic process is here. It is a time when the right of the Bilbos, Rankins and Eastlands to any place in Congress must be challenged. The time is nearing for their fade-out.

This was shown when 3,600 representative Southerners, Negro and white, under the auspices of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, condemned the filibuster. This was shown when Birmingham Negro veterans, led by the Southern Negro Youth Congress, marched on their city poll boards to demand their rights to register and vote.

Supporters of FEPC will be encouraged by these actions and will vigorously assist their Senators' efforts to disassociate themselves from the filibusterers. They will likewise continue their work for signatures to the House Discharge Petition by their representatives.

GOP TRICKS

Little can be said for the actions of the Republicans or their tactics. Senator Taft's (R-O) statement that he intends to file a motion for cloture on Wednesday is nothing more than a sleazy trick to rescue his Republican colleagues from their implicit guilt together with the filibusterers. It couldn't be more suited to the purposes of the Bilbos and Eastlands if Republican Senators Morse, Ball and Smith are successful in their amendment proposals—which for all purposes would make the FEPC bill ineffective.

The people will remember this as they fight for the FEPC's bill's passage. And they have learned that the debate on Capitol Hill has already made the FEPC bill a major political campaign issue in the '46 elections.