Civil Rights and Politics

The Civil Rights Bill sponsored by the Eisenhower Administration appears to be enshrined in politics. The Republicans, themselves, are not pressing too hard for passage. To pass the Bill with enforcement measures would deprive the Republican Party of a vote-catching issue which they used to advantage in the last national elections. They would sooner see the issue dangling for as long as it is politically feasible.

The Democrats, too, are engaging in “politics” on this issue. First, the Roosevelt and then the Truman Administrations dallied with civil rights legislation to capture political “plums.” Now that the Democrats are hurt politically on this issue, they are in favor of an innocuous civil rights bill, one which would cause no threat.

The reason is obvious as the Democratic Party is split between North and South on that vital issue. They wish to preserve a semblance of unity for political purposes.

While the politicians in Congress boggle over that issue, the international interests of the U.S. capitalist class are handicapped and hurt. It is most difficult for the American ruling class to talk about equality to the peoples of Asia and Africa and at the same time practice inequality, racial discrimination against the Negroes here at home. U.S. capitalism is making a bid for the minds of the Asians and Africans for its way of life as against the appeal of communism. Whatever else the capitalists may fabricate against the communists they cannot falsify racial inequality on them. For communism has taken hold amongst colored peoples as in China just like amongst the Caucasians (white) race in Russia. Hence, U.S. capitalism finds itself painfully handicapped in international affairs and as a challenge to expanding communism.

So, while the material interests of the dominant section of the capitalist class call for a civil rights law, the material interests of politicians are elections, and at times they are at loggerheads with the class they represent. But the forces opposed to racial equality and obstructing civil rights legislation were and are nurtured by capitalism itself. Superior and inferior racial distinctions stem from class distinction in capitalist society. There is the upper (business) class and the lower (working) class—or the high rich and low poor. That is inherent in the system of capitalism. Capitalism breeds and nourishes inequality economically, politically, and racially. Racial inequality works to the advantage of the southern capitalists—for it serves to keep the workers divided along racial lines, hinders union organization, makes for lower wage scales and a source of abundant mental labor in the Negroes.

(Continued on page 4)

THUMBNAILS

CAPITALIST DOUBLE TALK
—As far as the Internal Revenue Service (income tax collectors to most of us) is concerned, the payment of bribes to foreign government officials by U.S. corporations is classified as “ordinary and necessary” business expenses and therefore deductible from income taxes.

Russell D. Harrington, I.R. commission, explained to protesting Senator Williams (R-Del.) that such bribes and kickbacks had nothing to do with State policies but were very expedient (the really meant necessary) and to regard them as illegitimate would mean they were “unnecessary expenditures,” therefore not deductible. There seemed nothing to do but declare them “ordinary and necessary.”

If this line of reasoning doesn’t make sense to the reader it could be due to a lack of understanding of the capitalist form of government under which we live. The Proletarian Party can help you to better understand the reasons for such skullduggery as described above and what the working class can do about it. We invite you to send for and read our Principles and Program as an introduction to joining our ranks.

PROGRESS AND POVERTY—Sales up—profits down. That headline is appearing more and more as an introduction to articles describing a terrible state of affairs in America’s economy.

We are seeing the fierce competition of capitalism forcing excesses in its products in order to make them outsell each other and even to lure dollars away from non-competitive commodities. Add a gadget here, tack on a feature there, and before you know it the price of things runs right out of sight.

The basic weakness of over production in capitalism now has a twin sister—over salesmanship. This includes fancy packaging, TV commercials, huge forces (with expense accounts); premiums, elaborate stores and offices, staggering advertising appropriations, new locations with parking spaces whose land value is often greater than the price of the store, factory, or office itself. These are just a few of the “come-ons” of salesmanship.

It follows from the above that high costs mean higher prices, but let the worker ask for a little more money to help pay for some of these white elephants hidden in the price of commodities and he gets blamed for the whole darn mess.

MONEY ISN’T EVERYTHING?
The University of Michigan’s Institute of Social Research reports four out of five employed Negro men would continue to work even if they suddenly had a million dollars. Three-fifths in the so-called middle class occupations and two-thirds of the country’s farmers wouldn’t even change jobs. Most manual workers

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by landlords and other types of individual income.”

At first glance this appears to be a variety of income. The Daily News doesn’t publish the income for each class or group received, except to state that the “Agricultural income fell $100 million between June and July to a total of $134.4 billion.” It is evident that the farmers, particularly the small ones, are not doing so well, because that “agricultural income” is less than one per cent of the total national income.

What about the other two sections of the population, that is, the capitalists and workers, how much did each receive of the nation’s total income? There was no breakdown into figures of these two parts or classes, reported by the press. For obvious reasons, no doubt, in view of the fact that the capitalists, particularly the big corporations, received the greatest share in the form of “dividends, interest” and “rent” which can all be summed up as profits.

As for the workers, it is a well known fact, that although they are the only class that produces the entire wealth of the nation, yet they receive a much smaller share than the capitalists, estimated, in the form of wages, than one-fifth or one-sixth of the total national income. Accurate figures of the workers’ “share” of the wealth are difficult to obtain even though each company or corporation does keep an accurate account of its “labor costs,” that is, how much it pays out in wages and salaries to its employees. But, just like an old maid in regard to her age, the capitalists are even more reluctant to open their books and reveal the real source of their wealth: the exploitation of wage-labor.

The Deceptive “Averages”

One of the favorite methods of deception used by the capitalist statisticians, in hiding the fact that the workers are exploited and many of them poverty stricken, is the device of “averages.” It is used to foster the delusion that the wealth of the nation is widespread.

For an example we quote again from the Chicago Daily News, to wit:

“Our basis of an estimated population of 171½ million, the
that they are living in the eats, what $1200 leave capital in the saddle. Has for so long exploited them. Especially permitted "pension" are indeed. Some of Social deceptions. We had witnessed. We had "unfit" to "reward" to "miracles," (Continued from previous issue) Society, like nature is in constant flux and development. Its workers have and are brought about not thru the will of men, often much against their will. In nature this process—and it is a natural one, has a history—is one of self-motion, dominantly thru internal contradictions. To be sure there are also external contradictions, but the determining, basic ones are the internal. For instance a tree might be destroyed by lightning. That is a clash of temporal (external to each other) forces, between the tree as a unity, and lightning. But the destruction of trees in their normal course of life comes largely thru internal contradictions, thru the gradual process of deterioration which set in to old age. Again in nature there is no consciousness, no conscious unity to contend with, No crises or rejoices when a tree dies and a new one born. Nor does any one fight over wills and inheritances.

In society it is a bit different, the same. It is the same in the respect that the social process is also one of self-motion thru contradictions. It is different, however, because thinking humans are involved. There is present a conscious element. Hence a struggle between wills. Some want to go along with the trend of capitalist movement, even desire to aid the change-process. Others fight like the blazes to retard the movement and trend. The first are called radicals; the second are the conservat­ives or reactionaries. In nature this self-motion is an objective, material one. In society, too, it is an objective, material one, but of a specific kind. The material move­ment, or contradictions, that count for most in society is the economic movement. The economic movement, or the effect on prices, no matter how "systematic" and such affect the course of change, but mostly it is the changes in the economic, in the tendency that contributes to the transformation of society.

Accordingly it will be observed that wherever the technology is low or relatively unchanging the people are socially backward and stagnating. By the same token a get from the government. However, many of them are too feeble to work. Furthermore, the capital­ist employers are reluctant to hire old, worn-out workers, especially these "pensioners" most of whom are beyond 65 years of age. It is not much of a life to look forward to, that of trying to earn living on "Social Security." Such a "reward" for giving the best years of their lives in the service of the capitalists, producing goods for them, is a meager one indeed. Some of these paupers regard it as a mockery, especially when it is daily dinned into their ears, that they are living in the changing and growing technology produces corresponding changes in the entire social superstructure, in the politics, ethics, family relations and even religious attitudes.

There are many social contradictions today. First of all we have the contradiction between labor and capital. No matter how much it is sought to extol the unity of capital and labor, that they are brothers, that it is the capitalist who has the upper hand over the poor brother, labor. Here, again, it is a unity and conflict of opposites. Capital can't get along without labor (that is exploiting it) and labor needs capital; for the job, of course. As long as capitalism lasts, with capital in complete and exclusive ownership of the produc­tion means, labor must come hat in hand seeking employment. That is a unity, to be sure, a capitalist can't live without labor. But to continue: suppose he has made his millions by constant bargaining, conflict, strikes, etc. It is not so much, then, the unity that is responsible for the progress of the human race.

The major advances that were made in technology were in response to the needs of capital. But to continue: the capitalist pattern of life now we come to EXTERNAL AL contradictions. First, that between the different capitalist na­tions themselves; this rivalry chiefly stemming from separate business interests. Secondly, the contradiction between the two rival social systems, socialism and capitalism. Thirdly, the contradic­tion between the advanced im­perialist countries and the rest of the world, and especially the "least developed" countries; this latter, because of their backwardness, former colonialism and their extreme poverty.

"best country" in the world, one of "freedom, opportunity and plenty." Karl Marx was correct when he wrote that the conflict between labor and capital is the basic cause of all progress, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. Here we see that the capitalist class has, indeed been the repository of the system (capitalism) that has for so long exploited them.

Al Wysocki
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PROLETARIAN NEWS

Changing Aspects of the Class Struggle

At no time in the past has the class division
throughout the world grown up so much as in
the present. Today, the entire class structure
of the world is being thrust into the open,
for everyone to see. This is not due to any
new developments, but to the fact that the
class struggle has reached a new level of intensity.

Class struggle is not a new phenomenon. It has
been going on since the birth of humanity. But
the current stage of the class struggle is
unique in its scope and intensity. The struggle
is no longer confined to the traditional areas
of industrial and political activity. It has
extended to all aspects of human life, from
the home to the workplace, from the
education system to the military. It is
a world-wide phenomenon, and it is
a threat to all who hold power.

It is important to understand that the
class struggle is not just about money
and power. It is about control. The
capitalists have control over the
means of production, and this
control means that they can
exploit the workers. The workers
are the true creators of wealth,
but they have no say in how it is
created or distributed.

The working class has
strength, and it is time for
us to stand up and fight
for our rights. The struggle
is not easy, but it is
worthwhile. We must
unite and fight for our
freedom. The future
of the world is at
stake, and we
must not
give up.

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Changing Aspects of the Class Struggle

(Continued from page 3)

L.B.-

...ical corruption...

...many new aspects of the class struggle will undoubtedly manifest themselves, phases that we cannot now visualize. But the prophetic statement of the Communist Manifesto seems to be more realistic than ever: "When the bourgeoisie, therefore producers, above all, are its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable."

John Keracher

ON UNDERSTANDING CONTRADICTIONS

(Continued from page 2)

ialist nations and the backward exploited peoples of the Near and Far East. All these and other contradictions, too numerous to mention, are social in character, invani-

bly stemming from the primary motivating base—economic class interest.

In class society, and that is what we have here, all contradictions are fundamentally of a class char-

acter. They arise from the system, from its internal self-movement.

What is the internal self-move-

ment of capitalism? Surplus value, not life is generally the one picked when the chips are down. This idea is born out from the other side of the fence. From our limited knowledge of those who do have a million dollars or more the idea of an honest day's work must seem almost as bad as the thoughts of a socialist America. We suspect they know they will have to go to work in order to survive when that
day comes. With this knowledge in mind it's a little hard to swallow that well worn line about them protecting us workers' jargon from the terror of socialism. L.D.

Labor Probe

The Senate Labor Committee investigating racketeering in the trade union movement continues to hit "pay dirt" in its search. On the west coast, in Oregon, the probe featured vice, gambling, prostitution tie-up with union leaders. In New York City the vic-

timizing of Puerto Rican and Negro workers and the collusion between corrupt union leadership and unscrupulous bosses seems to top the racket list.

Speaking before the last full-

filling convention of the Massa-

chusetts Federation of Labor, Senator John F. Kennedy, told that body "that racketeers in the labor movement don't operate suc-

cessfully without collusion of 'cor-

rupt employers.'" (Boston Globe- Aug. 8th) He went on to say:

"Johnny Dio (twice-convicted la-

bor extortionist) is a businessman. He owns nine union shops in New Jersey and he then infiltrated the trade unions."

In revealing the collusion be-

tween unscrupulous employers, who, likewise are tainted with the same brush, the labor probe un-

wittingly exposes the rottenness of the whole corrupt capitalist sys-

tem. Stripped of its ethical pro-

testations, the system of capitalism stands for profits, monetary suc-

cess in enterprise at any price. Is it any wonder that crookedness and nefarious businesses arise? It comes natural to the system.

While the government in Wash-

ington attempts to put forth the Rights Bill protecting Negro politi-

cal rights to save its international face, the civil wrong of exploiting

Negroes and Puerto Ricans with "sweetheart" agreements perpetu-

ates as workshops is exposed in the labor probe.

"A sweetheart arrangement be-

tween an employer and a union is made in secret without participa-

tion of the workers involved. It is used to exclude legitimate unions for the duration of the con-

tract. It results in money for crook-

ed union leaders and low operating costs for unscrupulous employers." (N.Y. Times-Aug. 10)

Capitalist democracy is preci-

ous, a sweetheart, to both cap-

italists and traitorous union lead-

ers. The brotherhood and kinship that those elements are so obvious. The promise of politicians to clean the house of labor is a hoax. The Democratic and Republican
candidates are sworn and dedi-
cated to protect the capitalist sys-

tem. Capitalism breeds and pro-

motes corruption. It corrupts some leaders of labor. The workers bring it and must put an end on treacherous trade unionists. To forestall corruption union labor must advance beyond its present
goals.

R.D.

Civil Rights and Politics

(Continued from page 1)

However, if and when a civil rights law is passed it wouldn't spring from some enlightened sentiment —rather it will be pushed across because the larger interests of capital-

ism demand it. Granted the Negro the right to vote, undeni-

ably a social advance for them, this necessarily, by itself, mean free-

dom for the colored peoples? No, if they use the franchise to just elect Negro politicians to minor political offices supporting the still exploiting capitalist system. No, if they use their votes in support of Negro wardheelers allied with political machines and manipulat-

ed by corrupt politicians.

If and when they get equal rights to vote they will still be un-

equal if they belong to the labor-

ing class. They as well as the white workers must arrive at working class consciousness to achieve genuine freedom, economic, politi-

cal and racial.

L.B.