

## EDITORIAL PAGE

## Roosevelt Whitewashed at FEPC Meeting But Audience Senses Need For More Effective Action

By F. FOREST

NEW YORK—The National Council for a Permanent Fair Employment Practice Commission held a public rally in Town Hall on Monday, February 7. The Rev. Allan Knight Childers, co-chairman of the Council with A. Phillip Randolph, presided over the meeting, at which there were no less than twenty-nine speakers. Unfortunately, the twenty-nine speakers included only two trade union representatives: Mr. Minkoff of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, AFL, and Mr. Wolchok of the United Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Employees, CIO.

### A Bad Bill

The National Council for a Permanent FEPC is urging passage of the Scanlon-Dawson-Coffee-La Follette Bill (H. R. 3986), which would forbid discrimination in employment because of race, religion or nationality. However, the bill would also permit the meddling of the government into the practices of labor unions.

Readers of LABOR ACTION know that we have been consistent fighters against all discriminatory practices against Negroes or other minority groups and have urged labor to lead the nation in the fight against discrimination. But we do not want the government meddling in union affairs.

The government itself does not have clean hands. Its Army and Navy are the greatest offenders in this respect. Yet not a single speaker, including the socialist, Norman Thomas, had a word to say about the necessity to eliminate that clause from the bill. On the contrary, the representative from the Workers Defense League openly, and the other speakers implicitly, urged the passage of the bill in its entirety.

### Whitewashing Roosevelt

Representative Scanlon, one of the authors of the bill and one of the major speakers at this rally, revealed just exactly how tied this whole commission is to the Roosevelt regime. Mr. Scanlon's entire speech was a complete whitewash of the very man who heads the most vicious anti-Negro party in the South—the Democratic Party, to which Mr. Scanlon also belongs. Listening to Scanlon, one would have thought that it was not Roosevelt's "white man's" Democratic Party that ruled the Jim Crow South, nor that it was Roosevelt himself who is Commander-in-Chief of a Jim Crow Army and Navy and Air Force, but some unidentified villain.

But right there on the same platform with Representative Scanlon was a Negro nurse who stated that the fight for the employment of Negro nurses in the United States Army has gone on since 1941, but up to date there are only 292 Negro nurses in the armed forces. The govern-

ment's SOS for student nurses must sound hollow indeed to these trained nurses fighting to get work in this "democratic" Army.

Mr. Scanlon, on the other hand, claimed that no less than one million Negroes were "integrated into the war effort." He did not cite proof of this nor could he have, unless by "integrated into the war effort" he meant, not working in basic industries, but as soldiers in a Jim Crow Army.

Mr. Scanlon did, however, admit that those who were "integrated into the war effort" unfortunately occupied menial jobs. He failed to explain why it is that the President, if he is serious about his Executive Order 8802, "reaffirming the policy of the United States that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or in government because of race, creed, color or national origin," failed so much as to send a follow-up letter to his government agencies, asking why they were not putting the order into effect. Yet Representative Scanlon called the order nothing less than the "Emancipation Proclamation of the Twentieth Century."

But just as the Emancipation Proclamation only technically freed the Negroes while it kept them bound to the Southern plantation economy as semi-serfs, so the present Executive Order 8802 is not effective in bringing the mass of qualified Negroes into basic industry, and where they already work there, does nothing about upgrading them.

### How the Audience Felt

The reactions of the audience, though it was mainly middle class rather than working class, were quite instructive.

This was particularly noticeable in its attitude toward the speech of Roy Wilkins, assistant secretary of the NAACP. In appealing for funds to work for the passage of H. R. 3986, he pointed to the fact that the NAACP has been urging the passage of an anti-lynching bill for a quarter of a century and is still unsuccessful. However, he felt the tide of public opinion was turning against lynching. And then, regarding the stimulation of discussion about the rights of Negroes, he said, "There is nothing to stimulate discussion as a riot here and there." There was applause.

Mr. Wilkins quickly added that, of course, he did not advocate riots, and most assuredly was opposed to anyone in the audience ever rioting.

But the fact that this petty bourgeois Negro leader and the preponderantly petty bourgeois audience felt the effectiveness of direct action, was very significant. It showed that if Negro leaders really wished to lead a militant struggle against discrimination, not, of course, via so-called riots, but in such mass actions as a March on Washington, they would have both the Negro masses and white labor behind them.

## Willkie's Withhold

By GERTRUDE SHAW

In some circles Wendell Willkie is regarded as the "New Deal" Republican Party. Not only has information please" taken in his bosom as a "true liberal." Certain sections of the labor movement playing with the idea of accepting him as the very latest edition of Friend of Labor in the coming Camp."

When Mr. Willkie spoke the night before a conference on subject, "American Plans and Dreams," he was holding forth his political program in case the presidential nominee of the Republican Party in the coming election. What has he to offer?

For the war period Mr. Willkie's foremost idea is to raise \$16,000,000 additional annual tax revenue. This is a figure of the boldest proportions, considering that the Treasury asked for a mere \$10,500,000—while Congress saw fit to provide only the nite of something over \$10,000,000.

However, Mr. Willkie is not of any limit that we have hitherto imagined possible," he says. We "actually lower materially the American standard of living," he says. The New York Times editor claims Mr. Willkie's argument "unassailable."

### Workers Have Reached Limit

Immediately after Mr. Willkie's speech, a few arithmeticians picked up their pencils and calculated an additional annual tax of \$16,000,000 would mean EITHER WITHHOLDING TAX OF FORTY PER CENT OR A UNIVERSAL SALES TAX OF FIFTEEN PER CENT.

Speaking as a member of the privileged class, Mr. Willkie can not see how tight a squeeze the working people of this country are already in. "Take-home wages are actually far below the normal subsistence level set by economists. When he talks about "the change of our habits" the use of things that constitute ceaseless living," he is obviously talking like one used to luxuries.

As for the working class, IT IS NOW it cannot afford many of things "that constitute necessary living." That is why the organized labor movement has started the fight to bury the Little Steel form which freezes wages 28.5 per cent below the cost of living. What will happen to the workers' "way of life" if Mr. Willkie's tax plan were adopted and the workers were subjected to either a one hundred per cent increase in the withholding tax or a fifteen per cent sales tax?

Vaguely Willkie included "every group" in his zeal for "major and some cases dangerous sacrifices." Did he say a word about limiting salaries to \$25,000? Did he mention taxing all war profits into this global blood-letting? No, nor any other capitalist proposals for making the capitalist pay for the war—the only one who can afford to!

As for the workers of this country they have reached the limits of "labor" and "dangerous" sacrifices. From here on labor must defend

### Atrocity Posters For Speed-Up

Striking while the iron is hot, the Army has released for display in war factories, atrocity posters. These were printed some time ago but were being held for release at a propitious moment. The official report on Japanese horrors against war prisoners is evidently that moment.

The point of the posters is, of course, to stimulate a speed-up in production. One poster reads: "Make 'em pay—keep producing." Another says: "We'll make them pay if you keep up production."

# LABOR ACTION

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

**Municipal  
and  
aphanger**

## Max Shachtman On With Real Program

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## Harlem and Bilbo's Party

By F. FOREST

Harlem is aroused, and rightly so, over the Bilboization of Congress. What the Negro press, however, does not realize is that Bilbo's invidious attacks against the Negro, the Italian, the Jew and other minority attacks are not merely the ravings of one madman from Mississippi. Bilbo, as a member of the Democratic Party from the prejudice-ridden South, has a voice and an influence not only in Mississippi but in New York. He is a member of the same party that is seeking to foist William O'Dwyer onto the people of New York.

Bilbo is a member of the same party—this bigot from the "Solid South"—as the most liberal Henry (The Common Man) Wallace, who has thrown his support to the Tammany-supported O'Dwyer.

The fight against Bilbo cannot succeed by putting into power the party which he represents. That crucial point is conveniently forgotten by the Negro press, from the staid Amsterdam News to the "very radical" People's Voice. That point, however, is the issue in the mayoralty campaign now facing New York.

### WALLACE'S BLESSING

Recently Wallace caused a stir in the camp of mayoralty aspirants by coming out for the support of Tammany's Bill O'Dwyer on the supposed ground that had that "friend of labor" and "champion of



Backs Tammany minority groups," Franklin Delano Roosevelt, lived, his support would have gone to O'Dwyer. Of that we have no doubt. The man who forced the wage-freeze on labor, knifed the March on Washington Movement and was Commander-in-Chief of the Jim Crow armed

forces would doubtless have been much more interested in jobs for well-heeled politicians of Bilbo's party than in sixty million jobs for the masses.

Nevertheless, the myth of Roosevelt as a "friend of labor" is so persistent that the Liberal Party (not to mention the vociferous La Guardia of the silent No Deal Party) immediately challenged Wallace's support as based on an unwarranted assumption. For, you see, Judge Jonah Goldstein also was a Democrat and supporter of Roosevelt and, of course, a "good government man" as contrasted to a machine politician from graft-reeking Tammany Hall.

### DEMOCRAT OR EX-DEMOCRAT

New York is presented with the ludicrous choice of voting for a Democrat or an ex-Democrat. As if that weren't damning enough, the labor politicians in the American Labor Party and the Liberal Party have no garment they can call their own, but must hide behind Tammany Hall and Hoover's party—that is, the two old, familiar and infamous capitalist parties which brought New York's workers unemployment, slums and imperialist war.

Harlem is especially familiar with these "good government men." During the depression fully fifty per cent of Harlem was on the slow-starvation diet of the relief rolls. La Guardia, self-styled "champion of the people," not only did nothing to relieve the situation, but he suppressed even the findings of his own commission to investigate the 1935 riots in Harlem. They remain secret to this day.

Again it was La Guardia who, when the war did bring some employment, ac-

complished precious little in eliminating the slums of Harlem and the ghetto conditions of this fair city where seven and a half million people

are supposed "to enjoy the benefits of democracy." He did nothing to ameliorate the conditions which brought about the 1935 Harlem riots. Yes, the Negro workers know his deal well enough.

They booed him on that momentous night in 1943 and their failure on November 7, 1945, to vote for his No Deal Party will show him plainly enough that they have not changed their opinion of him.

Until 1932 the Negro masses, where they did vote, voted for the Republican Party. When they broke with the fake "two chickens in every pot" Hoover, they, along with white labor, lined up behind the Democratic Party, which promised them a "New Deal."

### NEW DEAL JIM CROW

However, the Jim Crow policy in the armed forces has been convincing more and more of the Negroes that the "New Deal" Party is only dishing out the same old raw deal of discrimination and segregation to them. A new trend away from both the old capitalist parties was shown in 1941, when many Negroes signed the Workers Party petition to put Max Shachtman on the ballot on an anti-war plank.

Today, with the end of the imperialist war and the realization that once again the Negro is subject to the old rule of being the last to be hired and the first to be fired, the most advanced Negro workers are looking for a way out. Hundreds of these are buying the Workers Party pamphlet, "How to Get Jobs for All," on the streets of Harlem.

These hundreds are spreading the message of the Workers Party platform of jobs for all, for a \$50 minimum weekly salary, for \$50 billion-a-year construction program, against all discrimination. Greater numbers are realizing that a vote for Shachtman is a vote for the only program to secure full employment, and security and equality through socialism.



Did Nothing

## ality Candidate

is always interested in  
of jobs for all, at least jobs  
satisfactory.

LABOR NEEDS ITS OWN PARTY!  
LABOR NEEDS CANDIDATES

## RADIO FUND FOR

MAX SHACHTMAN

