

WHY THE WORKING WOMAN NEEDS A LABOR PARTY

By VERA BUCH.

The position of the American working woman today is a particularly bad one. The bosses are using her labor power to lower wages for the whole working class. The speed-up, the long hours, the general wear and tear of modern industry are hitting her harder than the man worker.

The woman worker is struggling, too, with the problem of keeping house and bringing up children without enough money and in a wretched environment. In a hundred ways in which she is oppressed, the working woman can find in a Labor Party some help for her difficulties.

Woman's Minimum Wage Law.

Perhaps the first need of the working woman is for a minimum wage law. The low wages paid to women workers in some lines are almost unbelievable. The studies of the U. S. Women's Bureau bring to light such remarkable facts as these:

In Ohio, of 30,735 women studied, half earned less than \$13.80 a week.

In Mississippi, out of 2,853 working women, half the white women earned less than \$8.60 a week and half the Negro women less than \$5.75.

In Oklahoma, of 4,135 women workers, half the white women earned less than \$13.00 and half the colored women less than \$8.20.

Low Wages for Women, Lower Standard for Men.

Low wages are not merely the concern of the women who receive them. In certain industries women are being hired in recent years for half the wages of men, for the same work. Thus we see in New York City that women in the stone, clay and glass products industry are receiving an average of \$16.24 a week, and men \$44.02. In wood manufacturing, women are getting \$17.02 and men \$35.76. In chemicals, oils and paints, women's wages are \$16.64 and men's \$30.55. And so on down the line. It is plain that there is a tendency, at least in certain trades, for women to replace men at a lower wage. Thus the standard of pay for the whole industry is threatened.

Courts Kill Minimum Wage Laws.

In the face of these facts, do we see anything being done to protect women's wages? Do we see minimum wage laws being enacted, under the guidance of the republican and democratic parties? On the contrary, within recent years, court decisions are more and more wiping out such minimum wage laws as did exist for the protection of women and child workers. Such laws exist now in only eleven States, and even there they are not the best kind of laws.

Women's Working Hours Long.

In the matters of hours of labor, there is again the same lack of protection for women workers. The states of New Jersey, Maryland and South Carolina have a legal working day of ten hours for women, while in Alabama and Iowa there is no limit to the hours which a woman may legally be made to work.

Women Workers Do Two Jobs.

When we consider the hours that women work at their job, it must be kept in mind always that many thousands of working women—in fact, a quarter of all of them—are married women and are keeping up a home. The factory job is not the only job for these married women workers. Several hours of housework await them when the day in the mill is over.

Health of Woman Worker.

We must keep in mind, too, that women are mothers or potential mothers, and that anything which injures their health is threatening the health of their children also. Long hours, speed-up—these conditions oppress

men workers, too, but are far more serious for women.

The poisons in industry, and the diseases resulting from them, are increasing daily. These too have a more serious effect upon women. Women are more susceptible to poisoning than men, they become poisoned more easily and suffer worse effects. Their child-bearing function is affected. Women suffering from lead poisoning, for instance, become sterile or subject to miscarriages.

Middle Class vs. Working Women.

All the conditions of working women point to their need of special protection under the law. And yet we have the National Women's Party, that group of middle class ladies of leisure, propagandizing the country to the effect that women must have "equality," they must be treated just the same as men under the law, there must be no restrictions placed upon their jobs. In other words, women should be delivered over helpless to the employer, to be worked ten and twelve hours a day, paid half the wages of men, speeded up so that they drop with exhaustion.

Let these middle class ladies go to work at the jobs they talk so much

about, and they will sing a very different tune about the "equality" of working women.

"Home" Life of Women Worker.

In her life outside of the factory, more difficulties and troubles surround the working woman, and here too she suffers more keenly than the men. It falls upon the woman, even if she is a worker, to keep together that miserable farce which the working man's home usually is. In most big cities, and in small industrial towns too, the workers live in wretched houses. Bare, uncomfortable shacks or black dens called "apartments" at high rents are the workers' so-called homes.

Cities Should Build Workers' Homes.

In some cities, as in New York, the housing question comes perennially before the workers, and perennially, like the flowers of spring, bloom the rosy promises of the old party politicians. But is the housing improved? On the contrary, it grows worse and worse as time goes on. Municipal housing, houses built by the city and rented at low rates, is the only solution for this evil. Certainly no republican or democratic candidates ever advocated this.

The traffic accidents of the city streets, the mowing down of the workers' children by automobiles, are another painful consideration to the working mother whose children must run loose while she slaves at her job. More city playgrounds for children, nurseries maintained by the city government for the young children of working mothers, better regulation of traffic, of these things the working mother dreams.

What Woman Worker Must Demand.

The needs of the working woman can find place only in the platform of a party of the working class. Minimum wage laws, limitation of hours, prohibition of night work, protection against poisons, better homes through municipal housing, city playgrounds for children and city nurseries for the babies of working women, these demands are all among the demands of the Labor Party.

The intelligent working woman who is looking for relief from the almost overwhelming difficulties of her life, should earnestly support any campaign in her city or state to establish a labor party.

It is at least a step in the right direction.

The Ohio Governor's Appeal

By I. AMTER

CLEVELAND, Jan. 23.—The governor of the State of Ohio, Vic Donahey, has sent out an appeal to the people of the state to furnish clothing and food for the needy miners' families, especially in the Hocking Valley. He has ordered the national guard units to participate in the gathering of these essentials, and has designated the armories throughout the state as the centers for collections.

Donahey emphasizes the need of the miners: Their impoverishment, the fact that the children receive no food, have no clothes or shoes and consequently must remain away from school by the hundreds. His picture is more pessimistic than many a miner would depict it.

Why is the governor suddenly so interested in the miners?

Donahey "Good Man."

First of all the miners have been great supporters of Donahey—for he is a "popular" governor. Although Donahey has announced that he will run for no office this year, one cannot tell what he has up his sleeve. Then the outlook for the democratic party is none too bright, and any little plan that may retain or bring it some thousands of votes must not be scorned.

How can one take Donahey's appeal as a sincere move? Donahey called the miners and operators into conference a few weeks ago. The operators refused to attend—Although the miners accept the call. The operators declared that there was nothing to consider, that they had made an offer to the miners months ago, and that this offer still held good.

But Helps Break Strike.

At the same time, the Hocking Valley operators made a new offer to the miners which meant the break-up of the union, and the formation of a kind of company union, which would prohibit any and every strike. That seemed perfectly reasonable to the operators, but the miners would not listen to it.

What did Donahey do when the operators turned down his call? Did he attack them and threaten to take over the mines? He did not. He merely "regretted" the attitude of the operators. Had the miners' representatives refused to heed the call, they would have been denounced as betraying their men and handing them

over to the bitter pangs of hunger.

But the operators must be treated much more leniently, for they are the owners of the mines and nobody can bluff them.

Helps Herd Scabs.

That is not all. This same governor Donahey has viewed the sending in of sheriffs and U. S. marshalls with equanimity, while they protected the importation of scabs throughout the Ohio coal fields. Only the other day in South-Eastern Ohio, scabs were brought in, and sheriffs were on hand to protect them. There was a little skirmish; nevertheless, according to report, the effort will be made to open the mine non-union.

This same Governor Donahey only a few months ago was preparing to send in national guardsmen to guard the mines of the operators. The mine

owners declared that the sheriffs could not supply sufficient protection, but the sheriffs and U. S. marshalls declared that there was not yet any need of the national guard. The governor was picking a select company

And in the meantime, the officials of the American Federation of Labor, through their "great" efforts have collected the paltry sum of about \$170,000 since Nov. 14. If ever there was a disgrace lying upon the American Federation of Labor officials, this is one of the most appalling. From 3,000,000 men belonging to the A. F. of L., such an insignificant sum has been gathered for these 90,000 miners and their families who are fighting for the life of the American labor movement! This shame of the officialdom of the A. F. of L. will not be forgotten!

Reader from Colorado Nails Lies of Press

Editor, The DAILY WORKER:

The Denver Post, Jan. 9, jeered at a miners' march called a funeral at which guns were carried. On its face this has no news value for many of the readers of The DAILY WORKER.

It is a waste of words to brand all such items as this one as a lie, but there is more to the article than the lies it tells, and I want to bring it to the notice of the readers of The DAILY WORKER, so they can see some of the things the striking miners of Colorado are up against.

True enough there was a funeral with over a thousand strikers marching and about sixty cars behind them paying respect and fraternal feelings to their departed, a young seventeen year old striking miner.

There was one arrested with firearms on him. But he wasn't taken from the line of march. If the Denver Post was capable of telling the truth they would inform their readers that Marvin Jarman, the arrested man, also had a police badge on him at the time of arrest. He is a character the strike committee got wise to as a wolf in sheep's clothing by posing as a striking miner.

Pete Vaughn referred to is a colored fellow worker. He was released. He was arrested Sunday morning and taken first to the Kline Hotel there to C. F. & I. and bullied and abused by R. R. Maiden, assistant chief of the State Police.

R. R. Maiden, assistant chief of the cossacks, told Vaughn that what he needed and deserved was a real old southern K. K. K. beating that would leave scars that he would carry to the grave. Maiden also said that he intended to close the hall in Walsenburg even if he had to shed plenty of blood to accomplish it.

"All those striking miners are ignorant foreigners, very few of them are American citizens." As a matter of record, many of these miners of Spanish blood fought in France. According to Maiden all committee men and speakers are ex-convicts. He and his subordinates don't deserve to be classed as ex-convicts for ex-convicts have atoned for their crimes. If the cossacks got their just deserts they would long since have had their necks stretched in a noose. Murder has been an every day crime.

The striking miners are still holding firm. They are more determined to win now than they ever were.

The odds against them are terrible, but they are surmounting them.

Persecution is increasing which is a sure sign that they have the operators worried.

Help the worry along by aiding and encouraging the miners and their forty thousand dependants.

Food, Clothing, Shoes, Groceries, Medicine and Money. A quick response means an early victory.

Yours for the Workers,

—HARRY CLAYTON.