

the same purpose. This will be clear when one compares the oppression of the Negroes and of the Filipinos by American imperialism. The Filipinos are also an oppressed people. Yet there is not as much prejudice in the United States against Filipinos as against Negroes. The reason is that about 5,000 miles of ocean prevent the Filipino masses from carrying on daily struggles in immediate contact with the American masses. On the other hand, the whites and Negroes come into daily and constant contact in the United States, often exploited by the same boss or planter and engaging in common struggles for their daily needs. The ruling class has therefore used extreme and severe methods to keep them apart.

Let us now consider briefly education and health.

The public school system is supposed to be open to all. We should remember that the Negroes were principally responsible for starting a system of free public education in the South immediately after the Civil War. The first superintendents of the public school system in many Southern states were Negroes.

Today, the Negro is the outcast of the public school system. One million Negro children of school age are not in school at all. More than a third of the Negro pupils never get beyond the first grade and three-fourths never advance beyond the fourth. In many sections of the plantation country schools are open only for two or three months during the year.

More than half the population of Mississippi is Negro. Yet the state spends only \$5.45 a year for the education of the Negro child as compared with \$45.34 for a white pupil. In one county in Alabama it was \$57 per white child and \$1.51 per Negro.

Today, many of the Negro schools have been closed down for lack of funds. Capitalism is sacrificing the education of millions of children.

The high disease and death rates among the Negro people reveal the severity of capitalist exploitation. In Milwaukee, for instance, the death rate from tuberculosis among Negroes was eight times as great as among whites; in Harlem three times as great as compared with New York City as a whole. Deaths from heart disease are twice as great among Negroes as among whites. In Manhattan, where the Negroes constitute only 12 per cent of the total population, almost one-fourth of all infant deaths occurred among Negroes.

This high death and disease rate is due to the hard exploitation of Negroes, to lack of hospitals and of care, to the crowding of the segregated sections.

In view of these appalling facts, knowing all the bitter details of our daily existence, is there any reason why we should permit capitalism to continue?

The Reformers and the "Race Criers"

There are still those who would have the Negro masses believe that capitalism can do better than it has in the past. These people range from out-and-out reactionaries to those who cover reactionary policies with radical drapings. Let us see what they have to say as to the way out.

The Bootstrap Lifters

There are still many followers of Booker T. Washington today who would have us lift ourselves up by our bootstraps, when many of us do not even have boots.

But we have already seen, from 75 years of experience, that capitalism has permitted only very few to rise—at the expense of the rest of the people. Today, when the crisis is denying millions even the barest necessities of life, only a quack or an out-and-out reactionary can give such counsel.

But this kind of agitation is still very strong. Pick up almost any Negro newspaper, listen to many of the "race leaders" and you will be advised to help build Negro business. This will solve all our problems, we are told. The executive secretary of the National Negro Business League tells us: "Business points the way to a breakdown of the barriers and handicaps which retard Negro progress." He, and many others, call upon the Negro masses to patronize Negro business, as the most effective means to protect themselves against persecution.

How futile, how bankrupt is this advice! Everywhere the capitalists are *cutting down* production, have closed factories, reduced crops. The big monopolies and trusts are getting greater control of manufacturing and of the market. Small businessmen everywhere are going bankrupt. Even the largest Negro banks and insurance companies, the pride of the followers of Washington, have crashed: the two largest Negro banks, the Binga State and the Douglass National; the "Capstone of Negro business"—the National Benefit Life Insurance Company of Washington.