

IMPERIALISTS AND NEGRO "GOLD STAR" MOTHERS

By CYRIL BRIGGS.

THE brazen action of the U. S. war department and a half dozen steamship companies in Jim Crowing the very "gold star" Negro mothers whom it was trying to use to make propaganda for war is a lesson to every worker, Negro or white, who may be enticed into the next war trap. These were women who had given at least one son or husband to the Flanders fields, to die raising a good crop of dollars for American imperialist capitalism. They were barred from the ships the white mothers were sent on, they were offered cheaper, slower, ships, and worse accommodations abroad. Credit is due them that they rebelled.

Imperialism seeks to justify its crimes against the Negro masses by promoting the idea that Negroes are an inferior race, that they are incapable of progress and, of course, incapable of self-government, that they are not as sensitive to insults and oppression as the white races, etc.

This imperialist ideology is used to foster white chauvinism among the white workers, to justify the specially brutal exploitation of the Negro masses and by inciting the white workers to contempt and hatred of the non-white peoples to prevent international working class solidarity and secure recruits from the working class for the armed forces of imperialism and for its fascist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, etc. The imperialist ideology of race inferiority, race hatred and racial separation is one of the main props of the imperialist system of plunder and oppression. Without this ideology it would be impossible to get white workers for murder expeditions to Haiti, the Virgin Islands, the Philippines, etc., or response to the lynching incitement of the southern bosses.

So important is this ideology to the imperialist system that we find the entire machinery of United States imperialism which, in addition to the subject populations in its colonies and semi-colonies, has within the home territory an oppressed minority nationality of over 12,000,000 people, utilized for the injection into the minds of the white workers of the virus of race prejudice and hatred.

Jim-Crowing Negro Mothers.

We find in the South the unwritten but strictly observed Jim Crow laws, laws prohibiting Negroes to eat in the same restaurants, travel in the same trains, or attend the same theatres or churches as the whites. This division is to be found in every step of social life and is enforced by a systematic white terror and mob lynchings. It permeates the whole life and thought of the South.

It is to maintain this imperialist ideology that the imperialist government of the United States has deliberately cast the slur of inferiority on Negroes and goes out of its way to insult and degrade the Negro Gold Star Mothers by segregating them on their trip to visit the graves of the sons who were betrayed into fighting for imperialism and against their own class and race interests in the last imperialist war.

Even in its campaign to whoop up the war spirit in preparation for the next imperialist slaughter, United States imperialism does not forget the importance of the ideology of Negro inferiority and race hatred in dividing the working class and isolating the Negro masses.

And in this campaign of insult and degradation the Negro petty bourgeoisie are giving their full support, as witness their participation in the plans at City Hall Saturday. The first group of Negro Gold Star mothers sailed Saturday, July 12. They sailed on a Jim Crow trip. At City Hall, they were given a Jim Crow reception. The fascist American Legion, which, with the Ku Klux Klan, lays down lynch law for the southern Negro masses, participated in the reception. The United States marines, notorious throughout the Caribbean as the murderers of countless Haitian and Latin American workers, also took part in the reception. And, cooperating, as usual, with the oppressors and murderers of the Negro masses was the ever ready betrayers of these masses, the Negro petty bourgeoisie: the professional and business classes within the race. Alderman Fred R. Moore presented the Jim Crowed mothers to Mayor Walker, the chauvinist who tried to introduce American Jim Crowism into Europe. Clifford Hawkins, another of the treacherous Negro petty bourgeoisie, was on hand to do his act. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, highest ranking Negro officer in the Jim Crow United States Army, was selected by the imperialists to give "face" to the proceedings. The enemies and oppressors of the Negro masses turned out with a mask of "friendliness" in the effort to put over as smoothly as possible the segregation policy of an imperialist government. And the treacherous Negro petty bourgeoisie were on hand in their traditional role of defenders and apologists of the very system under which Negroes are oppressed, segregated and murdered.

The Negro masses must answer this insult to the mothers of victims of the last imperialist war with a determined struggle for full political, economic and social equality and for the right of self-determination as the logical continuation and highest expression of the struggle for equality. They must unequivocally demand the right to have their own government in those sections of the country where, as is the case in many parts of the South, we constitute the majority of the population. Together with the white workers, we must intensify the struggle against lynching, against unemployment and hunger, against wage cuts and inhuman speed-up, against the entire imperialist system of robbery and exploitation, and for the liberation of the colonial masses and the establishment in the United States of a Workers' and Farmers' Government, which will abolish lynching, race prejudice and hatred and the entire ideology which imperialism finds necessary for its existence.

Negro mothers and widows! Refuse to be Jim-Crowed! Fight imperialist discrimination and oppression!