



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Pamphlet: The International Negro Workers' Review Vol. 1 No. 1

Extracted on Mar-28-2024 04:19:28

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the National Museum of African American History and Culture as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the National Museum of African American History and Culture website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact National Museum of African American History and Culture or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the National Museum of African American History and Culture. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

natives were driven into the bush. A parliament, an army and an administrative apparatus were created in childish aping of the American pattern, and a new type of the "free Negro citizen" was born. American imperialism is now building an open door into Africa is backing the creation of Liberia and strengthening it by loans, by the rubber and cocoa monopoly, and by the control of the customs and police. This adds to the numerous shortcomings of the "trousered Negro" the arbitrary use of political power attained without struggle; the natives are being brutally exploited their ignorance of formalities and their illiteracy are utilised [[utilized]] to collect taxes three or four times etc. No revolutionary impetus may be expected from the Liberian rulers, as their interests are directed against the tribes of the interior; their liberal parties, at the best, are standing on the platform of the Garvey movement an organization of petty bourgeois and intellectual Negroes in America who dream of creating a black empire of capitalism in Africa. The republic is a tool of imperialism.

The revolutionary forces that will acquire some political significance in the development of Africa on the road to emancipation are as different as the economic changes that give birth to them.

1. The industrial development of South Africa permits the direct transgression of primitive forms of society to a Negro proletariat. Thus the proletariat gradually arises threatening the existence of the capitalist white South Africa. The government has already given some signs of fear: reprisals of the movement and the attempt to increase the gap between the black and the white workers.

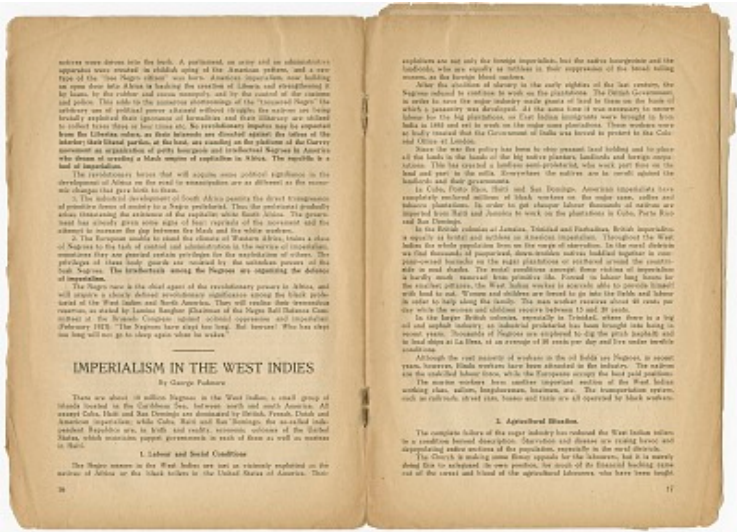
2. The European unable to stand the climate of Western Africa, trains a class of Negroes to the task of control and administration in the service of imperialism, sometimes they are granted certain privileges for the exploitation of others. The privileges of these body guards are resisted by the unbroken powers of the bush Negroes. The intellectuals among the Negroes are organizing the defence [[defense]] of imperialism.

The Negro race is the chief agent of the revolutionary powers in Africa, and will acquire a clearly defined revolutionary powers in Africa, and will acquire a clearly defined revolutionary significance among the black proletariat of the West Indies and North America. They will realise [[realize]] their tremendous reserves, as stated by Lamine Senghor (Chairman of the Negro Self Defence [[Defense]] Committee) at the Brussels Congress against colonial oppression and imperialism (February 1927): "The Negroes have slept too long. But beware! Who has slept too long will not go to sleep again when he wakes."

IMPERIALISM IN THE WEST INDIES
By George Padmore

There are about 10 million Negroes in the West Indies, a small group of islands located in the Caribbean Sea, between north and south America. All except Cuba, Haiti and San Domingo are dominated by British, French, Dutch and American imperialism; while Cuba, Haiti and San Domingo, the so-called independent Republics are, in truth and reality, economic colonies of the United States, which maintains puppet governments in each of them as well as marines in Haiti.

1. Labour and Social Conditions
The Negro masses in the West Indies are just as viciously exploited as



the natives of Africa or the black toilers in the United States of America.
Their

16

exploiters are not only the foreign imperialists, but the native bourgeoisie and the landlords, who are equally ruthless in their suppression of the broad toiling masses, as the foreign blood suckers.

After the abolition of slavery in the early eighties of the last century, the Negroes refused to continue to work on the plantations. The British Government, in order to save the sugar industry made grants of land to them on the basis of which a peasantry was developed. At the same time it was necessary to secure labour for the big plantations, so East Indian immigrants were brought in from India in 1845 and set to work on the sugar cane plantations. These workers were so badly treated that the Government of India was forced to protest to the Colonial Office at London.

Since the war the policy has been to stop peasant land holding and to place all the lands in the hands of the big native planters, landlords and foreign corporations. This has created a landless semi-proletariat, who work part time on the land and part in the mills. Everywhere the natives are in revolt against the landlords and their governments.

In Cuba, Porto Rico, Haiti and San Domingo, American imperialists have completely enslaved millions of black workers on the sugar cane, coffee and tobacco plantations. In order to get cheaper labour thousands of natives are imported from Haiti and Jamaica to work on the plantations in Cuba, Porto Rico and San Domingo.

In the British colonies of Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbadoes [[Barbados]], British imperialism is equally as brutal and ruthless as American imperialism. Throughout the West Indies the whole population lives on the verge of starvation. In the rural districts we find thousands of pauperized, down-trodden natives huddled together in the company-owned barracks on the sugar plantations or scattered around the countryside in mud shacks. The social conditions amongst these victims of imperialism is hardly much removed from primitive life. Forced to labour long hours for the smallest pittance, the West Indian worker is scarcely able to provide himself with food to eat. Women and children are forced to go into the fields and labour in order to help along the family. The man worker receives about 40 cents per day while the women and children receive between 15 and 30 cents.

In the larger British colonies, especially in Trinidad, where there is a big oil and asphalt industry, an industrial proletariat has been brought into being in recent years. Thousands of Negroes are employed to dig the pitch (asphalt) and to load ships at La Brea, at an average of 50 cents per day and live under terrible conditions.

Although the vast majority of workers in the oil fields are Negroes, in recent years, however, Hindu workers have been attracted to the

industry. The natives are the unskilled labour force, while the Europeans occupy the best paid positions.

The marine workers form another important section of the West Indian working class, sailors, longshoremen, boatmen, etc. The transportation system, such as railroads, street cars, busses and taxis are all operated by black workers.

2. Agricultural Situation

The complete failure of the sugar industry has reduced the West Indian toilers to a condition beyond description. Starvation and disease are raising havoc and depopulating entire sections of the population, especially in the rural districts.

The Church is making some flimsy appeals fro the labourers [[laborers]], but it is merely doing this to safeguard its own position, for much of its financial backing came out of the sweat and blood of the agricultural labourers [[laborers]], who have been taught



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)