

Mobs Take 34 Lives on Hitler's Day in Detroit

Monday, June 21, was Hitler's Day in Detroit.

On that day, mobs of hoodlums took control of the streets; 34 lives were lost, many of them persons who were completely innocent of any participation in the rioting. Workers' homes and hundreds of small businesses were wrecked. Hundreds of persons were injured, most of them also innocent of any participation in the rioting.

Hitler's Day in Detroit was a replica of Nazi riots against trade unionists and racial minorities in cities and countries where Hitler's mobsters have operated in the past. It should be remembered as a day of shame in Detroit and America.

THE UAW'S RECORD

While white and Negro hoodlums roamed the streets of Detroit, the membership of the UAW-CIO gave a demonstration of the kind of Americanism which made similar violence in the plants impossible. White and Negro workers continued to work side by side, ignoring the incitement of hoodlums and deliberate or hysterical circulators of wild rumors which were even worse than the actualities, horrible as they were.

The only constructive proposals

Thomas Offers Program to Prevent Renewal of Vicious Race Warfare

made thus far to prevent repetition of the outbreak of violence between white and Negro Americans have been put forth by R. J. Thomas, president of the UAW-CIO. An eight-point program issued by Thomas has received nation-wide publicity and commendation.

President Thomas issued his program not with the purpose of softening punishment of those actually responsible for the deaths and injuries and destruction of property, but rather in an effort to get at basic causes. His program was designed also to solve housing and recreation problems of white workers as well as Negroes.

BACKED BY PRESS

The Detroit Free Press in an editorial endorsed Thomas' program to the hilt. A meeting of the Detroit Metropolitan Council of Churches voiced similar support. Here is the program offered by Thomas in an effort to avert

another Hitler Day in Detroit or any other American city:

1—Creation of a special Grand Jury to investigate the causes of the riots and to return justifiable indictments. All Detroit citizens should be asked to furnish whatever pertinent evidence or information they may have. A competent Negro attorney should be appointed as an assistant prosecutor to work with the prosecuting attorney's office and the grand jury.

2—Immediate construction and opening of new park and recreation facilities for white and blacks. It is a disgrace to the city that the normal, inadequate park space was permitted to be overtaxed further by the influx of hundreds of thousands of new war workers. It is not surprising that the riots started at Belle Isle Park.

3—Immediate and practical plans for rehousing Negro slum dwellers in decent, Federal-financed housing developments.

4—Insistence that plant managements as well as workers recognize the right of Negroes to jobs in line with their skill and seniority.

5—A full investigation by the special Grand Jury of the conduct of the Police Department during the riots. While many policemen individually showed heroism and respect for their oath by trying to protect innocent victims of the riots, the work of the police department as a whole was weak and ineffective. I believe that any decent police work could have cleared Woodward Avenue early yesterday and not have permitted mobs to form and reform constantly throughout the day.

6—Special care by the courts in dealing with the many persons arrested. Those found guilty should be severely punished. There must be no discrimination between white and Negro rioters.

7—The loss of homes and small businesses, as well as personal

injuries, is the responsibility of the entire community. The city should create a fund to make good these losses of innocent men, women and children, so that the resentment which will be an aftermath of the riots may be minimized.

8—Creation by the Mayor of a special bi-racial committee of ten to make further recommendations looking toward elimination of racial differences and friction. This committee will have a special job in connection with our high schools where racial hatred has been permitted to grow and thrive in recent years.

Thomas added:

"These are reasonable and just recommendations. They should be enacted while Detroit's indignation over mob rule is still hot. The sense of outrage which virtually all of Detroit feels should not be permitted to give way to complacency.

"I should like to compliment the members, committeemen and local officers of the UAW-CIO. The fact that there was no friction or trouble in the plants showed that our membership, white and colored, realized their highest responsibilities and carried them out."

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