

The Negro Question

By J. R. JOHNSON

The Stalinists are now whipping up a furious campaign on "Gone With the Wind." Their methods are an exact replica of the methods of the Moscow bureaucracy.

In its issue of January 5th, the Daily Worker prints nearly two columns of letters, of which the following quotation characterizes the tone: "Well, I simply can't hold it back any longer."

Recalling Another Film!

"Gone With the Wind," however, is not the first film that deals with Negro conditions in the Old South, and a little knowledge will be sufficient to show that, behind all this noisy parade, the Stalinists, here as elsewhere, are deceiving the Negro people, and serving exclusively the interests of their paymasters in the Kremlin.

Some ten years ago, when the Moscow bureaucracy had not yet entirely broken with the revolutionary doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky, it invited some Negroes to Moscow to make a film which would depict lynching and the other features of Negro life in America.

The Moscow bureaucracy reacted in characteristic fashion. It capitulated before the capitalists. It sought to deceive and browbeat the workers. The Negroes who had gone to Moscow were told that it was impossible for the Soviet production studios to find time and room to make the film.

Langston Hughes' Role Among the Negroes who went to Moscow to help in the making of the film was Langston Hughes, the Negro poet. Hughes is one of the most pertinacious fellow-travelers of the Stalinists.

But the Kremlin's policy changes, and with it changes everything, from the clothes the Stalinists wear to their attitude to Negro films. Not so long ago Hollywood wanted to produce a film on the Old South. This film, "Way Down South," portrayed the old Southern slaveowners as fine and gallant gentlemen, and showed the slaves as being contented with their slavery.

"Rediscovered" Negro Question

In 1929 it was the policy of Moscow to carry on a vicious campaign against all capitalists, and every section of the labor movement that was not Stalinist. That was their notorious third period. In accordance with this line, they were prepared to make the film exposing American capitalism.

With the Hitler-Stalin pact this "fourth period" came to an end. Stalin now wishes them to build as much opposition as possible in the camp of the "democracies" in order to assist the victory of the Hitler-Stalin camp.

Some Pertinent History-Past and Present

"POOR LITTLE FINLAND"

By CHRIS ANDREWS

The German General Luidendorf advised his officers: "Finland is the lock to Russia. Give me the keys to Finland, and I will open the door to Russia."

For five weeks Stalin has been waging war against the Finnish state, seeking to conquer by arms what he could not obtain by negotiation—military bases in Finland which would give him control of the main sea entrances to European Russia and to Leningrad, second largest Soviet city.

The brutality and stupidity of Stalin's attack, the clumsiness of his campaign, have given the world bourgeoisie a long-awaited opportunity to attack the Soviet Union upon moral grounds. Day in and day out, their conscious agents and their unconscious lickspittles, from Herbert Hoover on the right to Norman Thomas on the left, have denounced "Communist imperialism," and praised "Finnish heroism, Finnish patriotism, Finnish democracy" ad nauseum.

It is necessary to consider—what is Finland? Is it a democracy? Do class lines exist in Finland? Are the reverses of the Red Army due to the methods of the Stalinist bureaucracy, or to the infuriated defense put up by the workers and peasants? Are the Finns a united people behind General Mannerheim? Do they have something to defend? Does the class struggle exist in Finland?

FINNISH HISTORY—THE BACKGROUND OF TODAY

The Finns were conquered by the Swedes and exploited by them for 700 years. The descendants of the Swedish rulers are still the ruling class today. They constitute only one tenth of the population, but are the vast majority of the ruling bourgeoisie.

The Industrial Revolution brought to the peasantry of Finland the same horrors as in England—so powerfully described by Marx in "Capital". Their common land was ruthlessly seized by the landlords; they became landless laborers. Some fled to

In 1809 Finland was annexed to Russia by Tsar Alexander I, who left the local government in the hands of the Swedo-Finnish bourgeoisie. The Industrial Revolution brought to the peasantry of Finland the same horrors as in England—so powerfully described by Marx in "Capital".

In Rumania, where only yesterday there was a mood of capitulation to pressure from the Kremlin and from Berlin, King Carol now sings a new defiant tune. Italy has made it quite plain that extension of the war into the Balkans will bring her into the war, in effect on the side of the Allies.

On the Far Eastern front—the major theater of American interest—the combinations are still in a highly fluid state. The Kremlin's haste in yielding important concessions to the Japanese in their negotiations is proof that Washington's pressure on Japan is bearing fruit.

Nothing loath to snap up such cheaply-won gains, the Japanese have at the same time apparently indicated to Washington that they will not let their flirtation

the exploitation of the city; the others became the helpless victims of the landed gentry, and lived in squalor and misery. Without liberties, without unions, without regulations of labor, for a Finnish peasant, bound to his landlord, a sixteen hour day was the rule—not the exception.

From a social basis of such misery a new political force, the Social Democratic Party, finally emerged by 1902 and grew rapidly. It became also the party of the rural poor. On the outbreak of the Russian Revolution of 1905, the Swedo-Finnish ruling class revealed their impotence when they were unable to take advantage of the events to strike out toward independence from Tsarist Russia.

THE BOLSHEVIKS OF FINLAND

The Social Democrats advanced rapidly and by 1916 the class struggle in Finland had reached such a high level, the rural and city proletariat had become so politically mature, that in spite of the obstacles of the bourgeois parliamentary system, the Social Democrats got 103 seats in a Diet of 200, the only Socialist Party in the world ever to receive a parliamentary majority.

The workers and peasants then received an object lesson in class rule. The bourgeoisie prevented the assembling of the Diet.

In 1917 the revolutionary movement in Russia and Finland moved along parallel lines, with the Bolshevik section of the Finnish Social Democratic Party even pressing ahead of their Russian comrades. Kerensky threatened the Finnish Soviets with military action and denied them independence. Lenin advocated their right to independence; he had the highest admiration for the Finnish proletariat, and knew they would not break from a Bolshevik Russia.

Of this period, Trotsky writes in his "History of the Russian Revolution": "Finland became from the first a thorn in the flesh of the February regime. Thanks to the bitterness of the agrarian problem, in Finland a problem of 'torpars'—that is, small enslaved tenants—the industrial workers, although comprising only 14 per cent of the population, carried the rural population with them."

By September 1917 the Finns with Moscow go too far. Only some such assurance can lie behind the tentative wait-and-see policy adopted by Roosevelt with respect to the expiration of the Japanese-American trade treaty on Jan. 26. Instead of going right ahead with discriminatory levies aimed at Japanese trade, the administration has dug up a moth eaten ruling dating back to the days of President Grant to justify a "modus vivendi" leaving matters approximately stationary until a new pact is arranged with Japan.

Behind the Lines

(Continued from Page 1)

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The reference to a "taste" shows that the sender of the note was involved in the attempted kidnapping and blackjacking of Mrs. Saterley in July, 1938. In view of the whole past record of the case, her associates in the union have persuaded Mrs. Saterley to notify all labor papers of the situation in order as far as possible to publicize the facts and thus hamper those whom they believe responsible for threatening her: the Stalinists.

Here is the record: Fought Stalinist Betrayals 1. Mrs. Saterley, mother of two grown children, joined the Public Works and Unemployed Union in

It is upon this bloody pile of slaughtered workers and peasants that the new Finnish "Republic" rests. It happened only 22 years ago, and there live today in Finland thousands of revolutionary men and women of the proletariat who took part in the struggle, were imprisoned and suffered in the camps, lost brothers, sisters, fathers and mothers in the White Terror—yet the shameless scribblers and orators of the bourgeoisie would have us believe that the Finns are a united people.

On January 27, 1918 the class struggle in Finland entered its highest point with the outbreak of the proletarian insurrection. Let a bourgeois historian, J. Hampdon Jackson, describe it: "... the struggle of January to May 1918 stands out as a Civil War of Finns against Finns, the old Finland of yeoman farm owners and pastors, led by the Swedish-speaking educated classes, against the proletariat of the towns helped by the landless peasants. It was fought with the terrible brutality which is peculiar to class conflicts."

The detailed story of this proletarian tragedy has been faithfully told in Victor Serge's account, reprinted in the Socialist Appeal of Dec. 9, and Dec. 16, 1939. The bourgeoisie had prepared their White Guards under General Mannerheim, the same butcher who commands the Finnish army today. They received arms and supplies from England, financial support from the United States, and the Germans sent a whole army corps to intervene against the workers.

Of 100,000 prisoners, men and women, taken by the bourgeoisie, they executed at least 15,000 in cold blood, and allowed 15,000 to 20,000 more to die of starvation and disease in their concentration camps—all this in a country of only 3,500,000 people. This is the documented record.

Hoover Whoops It Up For 'Holy War' In Finn Drive

Anti-Labor Forces Turn Out En Masse Backing Appeal for "Poor Little Finland"

By HAROLD SWANSON

MINNEAPOLIS—At a meeting assembled in the municipal auditorium here Dec. 29, Herbert Hoover launched his "Help Finland" fund drive. To the blare of drums and the strains of martial music, amid yards of colorful bunting and flowing streamers, accompanied by a lot of flag-waving, the meeting proved to be a propaganda device to whip up sentiment for a holy war against the Soviet Union.

Anti-Labor "Humanitarians" Hoover, as national chairman of the fund, played the leading role in this farce, ably seconded by a supporting cast of other politicians and lackeys of the bosses. There was Governor Stassen, of Anti-Labor-Bill fame, Mayor Leach, whose cops shot unarmed WPA strikers in the streets last summer, and the renegade, Senator Shipstead, who cast the determining vote in the Senate which cut the last relief appropriation.

Chairman of the meeting was Charles Bolles Rogers, treasurer of the Van Dusen-Harrington Co., grain firm. Patrons and patronesses of the cause include about seventy families of the upper

crust. Among them may be found members of the Associated Industries, citadel of the organized anti-labor forces of this city; publishers of the daily syndicate sheets, and high-salaried sky-pilots, besides leaders of Scandinavian-American patriotic groups. These "humanitarians" have fought every progressive movement of the working class in this area. In the famous Teamster's strikes of 1934, not one of them lifted a finger of protest when "Bloody Mike" Johannes, police chief, murdered unarmed strikers. Now they are all yelling for the conviction of the 162 WPA strikers who have been indicted.

Recall Hoover's Record When the veterans came to Washington to demand their bonus payment, Hoover dispersed them with tear gas. He condemned millions of the unemployed to starve while he poured billions of dollars down the rat-holes of insolvent banks and defunct corporations. As food administrator during the war, we remember him best for the meanness, wheateas days, and the high prices of sugar and butter. In and out of the presidency he is partner and parcel of the govern-

ment of the Sixty Families, which holds in oppression the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands, the Cubans, the Puerto Ricans, the Samoans, the Liberians, and exercises economic domination over Latin and South America. How much consideration has he ever manifested for the millions of underpaid workers in America, or the slow-starving sharecroppers of the deep South, or the Okies—the Dust Bowl victims—right in his own back yard?

Rest assured, however, that not all of the people at the meeting swallowed this pious fraud without a grain of salt. The renegade, Shipstead, made a reference to Germany's aid to capitalist Finland against the revolution twenty years ago. It wasn't much and it wasn't clear, but a ripple of applause greeted the remark, that must have given the fat boys a bit of a twinge! And there are any number of Finnish immigrants in these parts who recall like a chill what conditions were like in the Finland from whose shores they departed not so many years ago. They know full well that the workers have had to fight every inch of the way against the Mannerheims.

In response to peasant agitation, the bourgeoisie presented a farcical "land reform" program. For the land the landowners gave up, they received government bonds bearing 7% interest, which the peasants had to pay back to the government. A large section of the rural poor, "cottagers", who only received two hectares (5 acres) maximum, had to pay 9% interest. The bourgeoisie stated that the "cottagers" could pay extra interest as they worked in the lumber camps in the winter time and had cash.

In the agitation against this infamous scheme, the Communists played a leading role. With no compunctions about "democracy" the governing class silenced the protests in 1923 by arresting 140 leading members of the Party, including the 21 legally elected members of the Diet. More than 400 years of imprisonment were dealt to them. But in 1924, with a new party name, the Communists managed to receive 11.6 of the votes. And in spite of persecution, evading the ban by setting up a legal front under another name, in 1929 they were receiving almost 15% of the votes.

(Continued next week)

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Lovestone Shows Norman Thomas How to Do It

By FELIX MORROW

When, three months ago, the Norman Thomas Socialists and the Lovestone group voted with the American Labor Party leaders for a pro-Ally resolution on foreign policy, we predicted: they are taking the road to "democratic" patriotism. Verification of our prediction has come quickly enough; General Thomas and Colonel Lovestone are now enrolled in the American Expeditionary Force for Finland.

The social and ideological roots leading to this course did not of course, begin three months ago. The interested reader may find a critical history of the development (degeneration) of these groups by reading the polemics in the Trotskyist press against them at each stage of the last ten years. Even well-disposed readers of our press felt at times (I suspect) as they read these polemics, that there was in them a good deal of hair-splitting. The dismembered hair turns out, however, to be No Man's Land, with the contending groups in opposing trenches. They wear the uniform of capitalist intervention, we the uniform of the Red Army. Not a small difference.

Their Crushing Answer to Us

Thomas-Lovestone have a crushing reply to us: you are in the Red Army of Stalin. We have already answered that charge, not once, but thousands of times in the last ten years. Our fundamental starting point on the Russian question has been a basic distinction between the Soviet Union and the Stalinist bureaucracy. The economic conquests of the October revolution are the Soviet Union. The parasitic growth upon it of a degenerate bureaucracy is a fact which we Trotskyists analyzed and fought during many years when Thomas-Lovestone called us, as a consequence, anti-Soviet. To save the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy must be overthrown by a political revolution, arms in hand. But overthrown by the workers, and not by capitalist intervention. Against the capitalist world, we defend the Soviet Union. This has been our position consistently during the last years, and Thomas-Lovestone never dreamed of calling us allies of Stalin. Before they could make that charge, they had to go over bodily to the opposite trenches.

Thomas Was A Bit Hasty

Our standpoint is based, we repeat, on a fundamental distinction between Soviet economy and the Stalinist bureaucracy. Can Thomas-Lovestone suggest a similar fundamental distinction between Finnish economy and the Finnish bourgeoisie, as a justification for supporting the Finnish puppets of Chamberlain-Daladier-Roosevelt? Thomas seems to have sought such a distinction, with the result that the Socialist Call printed some weird fairy tales, in editorial form, about the economic paradise in which the Finnish workers and peasants live. There was a rather abrupt cessation of those editorials, however; maybe somebody read off to Thomas the League of Nations statistics on Finnish land ownership.

This is an old problem for "socialist" patriots—how to make a distinction between themselves and the capitalists when both are united in war aims. Much ingenuity was exercised on this problem during the first World War by the Social Democrats in distinguishing themselves from the Kaiser, Poincare, Lloyd George, etc.

Lovestone's "Clever" Formula

It must be readily conceded that Lovestone is far more clever at this game than Thomas. The Socialist Call rushed headlong into a series of indiscretions which it is now trying to cover up; while the Workers Age preserved a sly silence until a skillful formula could be found. That formula has finally been worked out and is presented in an editorial in the latest Workers Age (January 6). We give its salient portions:

"... we stand with the Finnish masses in their heroic fight to beat back the invader... We say frankly that we do not trust the Finnish government; we do not regard it as a reliable, steadfast champion of Finnish independence. The present ruling elements in Finland are bound very closely to the British Foreign Office, and to the British Foreign Office Finland is simply a pawn in the game of imperialist diplomacy. British diplomacy sacrificed Czechoslovakia to Hitler; a few weeks ago it offered to make a deal with Stalin at the expense of half of Poland. Who knows what intrigues are now being carried on by the agents of Downing Street at the expense of the Finns. No group in Finland that is so closely linked up with the British Foreign Office as are the bourgeois ruling circles of that country can be fully trusted to defend Finnish independence to the last."

A clever formula. It enables Lovestone to speak harshly about the Finnish bourgeoisie (whereas Thomas made the mistake of presenting them as house-broken), to characterize them as puppets of the imperialists (which Thomas had denied), and to "demand" that labor aid Finland "independently" of Hoover. A clever formula—but only for those who are seeking such formulas.

Lovestone Sets His Demands

For note its internal logic. The Finnish bourgeoisie cannot be trusted. Therefore overthrow them? Don't defend their Finland, but only a socialist Finland? Not a bit of it, says Lovestone: by all means defend bourgeois Finland. What he doesn't trust the bourgeoisie to do is just that—defend bourgeois Finland. He's afraid they will surrender to Stalin, as the Czechoslovaks surrendered to Hitler, at British insistence.

Suppose the British Foreign Office reassures Lovestone that it has no such intention. Suppose it gives him guarantees, by sending a fleet through the Dardanelles to strike through Odesa and another through Siberia. With such reassurance—and it appears to be coming—Lovestone will have no further reservations to make concerning the wholeheartedness of his alliance with the Finnish bourgeoisie.

Oakland Leader Gets Death Threat

OAKLAND, California—Ailene Saterley, one of the most active figures in the militant Federal Unemployed Union here, received an anonymous letter threatening her life, postmarked in Oakland Dec. 27.

The letter, consisting of words and letters cut out of newspapers and pasted together, reads: "Get out of the union before it's too late. You had a TASTE of what happens to REBELS. Don't count on your Trotsky friends."

The reference to a "taste" shows that the sender of the note was involved in the attempted kidnapping and blackjacking of Mrs. Saterley in July, 1938. In view of the whole past record of the case, her associates in the union have persuaded Mrs. Saterley to notify all labor papers of the situation in order as far as possible to publicize the facts and thus hamper those whom they believe responsible for threatening her: the Stalinists.

Here is the record: Fought Stalinist Betrayals 1. Mrs. Saterley, mother of two grown children, joined the Public Works and Unemployed Union in

Oakland early in 1935 when she first received relief. She soon became known as an active militant in the struggle for better conditions for the unemployed and as a fighter against the Communist party machine which ruthlessly controlled that union. In the fall of 1935 she and fifteen other workers resigned from the PW-UU because of the betrayals of the unemployed by the Stalinists.

2. That winter the PWUU was dissolved into the newly-formed Workers Alliance. A bookbinder by trade, Mrs. Saterley got a job on the WPA project, and immediately joined the new union. She was the first worker on her project to join and helped organize the project. In April, 1936, there was a WPA strike and Mrs. Saterley became known as a real fighter on the picket line. She fought the Stalinists and they began a two-fold campaign against her. On the one hand they tried to win her to join the CP, on the other hand they began a campaign of slander and threats against her.

3. Following the strike Mrs. Saterley became the center of a fight for democracy in the union.

The Stalinists increased their threats. In July, 1938, Mrs. Saterley was kidnapped by a man she had never seen, and at the point of a knife taken from the corner of 12th and Clay St. to a house near the corner of 14th and Linden. Outside the house she broke loose. Her kidnapper beat her with a blackjack but she managed to break away and fled. At the hospital where she was treated the police were called to investigate. Recognizing her as a militant union organizer, they demanded names of union members. She refused and the police gave up the investigation.

4. Prior to and after this blackjacking, Mrs. Saterley was "advised" by "friends" to abandon the struggle against the Stalinists. Her car was tampered with frequently, eavesdroppers kept watch on her, her rooms were searched, etc.

Given Moscow Trial 5. Finally in June, 1939, the Communist party machine gave her a typical Moscow trial in the union (the Socialist Appeal reported the story at that time). She was charged as a Trotskyist,

disrupter, etc., and was given no opportunity to answer the charges. Following the trial, the Youth Local of the Workers Alliance was also expelled, for introducing an anti-war program. Hundreds of workers from all locals in the East Bay either resigned or just walked out of the Alliance.

6. The Federal Unemployed Union was then organized with the aid and leadership of Mrs. Saterley and began to grow. The Workers Alliance, on the other hand, has dwindled to almost nothing in the East Bay where it was once very strong.

Guarded by Union Members 7. Union members are on constant guard at Mrs. Saterley's house. On the night of Dec. 27, while the union member on guard was away, a man attempted to get into the house. He failed. The next day the threatening note arrived.

Since the GPU rats dread the light of day, exposing this in the labor press may save Mrs. Saterley. The Federal Unemployed Union intends to issue a leaflet for distribution through the East Bay to safeguard Mrs. Saterley.