

**The Negro Question**  
by Robert L. Birchman

**British "Aid" to Haile Selassie**  
Britain is making overtures to Haile Selassie, exiled King of Ethiopia. Reports in the Negro press are that consultations are taking place daily at Selassie's residence in Bath.

As the tension grows in the Mediterranean and Italy's entry into the war on the side of Germany becomes a fact, the British hope to use Haile Selassie as a rallying force to appeal to the colored peoples of her colonial empire for support of the war. This is of importance since the colonial peoples are not rallying so readily to Britain's war.

Sir Sidney Barton, former British ambassador to Addis Ababa recently headed a delegation from the Abyssinia Association (a white group) that interviewed the ex-king and assure him of the association's support to restore him to his throne—under an Anglo-French protectorate!—after the Italians are expelled from Ethiopia.

The colored people of the entire world must support the Ethiopians in their struggle for independence. But they must be warned that to put any dependence upon France or England in this struggle will not mean independence but only a new form of slavery, merely exchanging an Anglo-French yoke for Italy's.

The Ethiopian masses can only win their independence by an unremitting struggle waged first of all of course against their present oppressor Italy, but waged with the perspective of preventing any other imperialist power from replacing Italy as master of Ethiopia. Such a struggle will inspire the other oppressed colonial peoples in their struggle against French and British imperialism. The hundreds of thousands of colonial troops, many of them now in the Near East, would rally to the support of colonial revolts directed against all the imperialists.

One indication that this is a real possibility is the report that appeared in the Negro press last fall to the effect that the black Eritrean troops of Italy turned on the white Italian soldiers, and after killing them all, went off to join the Ethiopian General Hiwot, taking with them all their arms and ammunition.

Let Haile Selassie get arms from the British. But any promises he makes in return for the arms should not be binding on the Ethiopian people. British workers should cheerfully transmit such arms to a colonial people, for these arms can be used by the Ethiopians to win their freedom. The revolutionary struggle against imperialist war is aided by successful military action of any colonial people against the imperialist power which dominates that colored people—if that colonial people conducts that war for its own independence and not as a tool of one of the imperialist powers.

**Negro Aid to France Is Denounced by George Schuyler**

"Of all the incredible nonsense of which so-called American Negroes have been guilty, I think the palm must go to the 'Five for France' campaign which has its headquarters at Atlanta university," says George Schuyler in the Pittsburgh Courier (June 8), in reference to the plan to collect five cents each from Negro students "to give something, no matter how little, to the brave Senegalese and West Indian soldiers who are fighting to save the noblest country in Europe."

So far only \$103.05 has been collected and we are told that "The response from adults, however, has been less encouraging," Schuyler continues: "I think it is a very encouraging sign that Negro adults have not wasted their nickels in this manner; but depressing to learn that Negro youngsters are depriving themselves of chocolate bars, milk and soda pop to dump money into the lap of French plutocracy."

"Why the Senegalese and French West Indians should fight to save France is a mystery. Both have been unmercifully exploited by the hard-fisted Gauls, the former for over a century and the latter for about three centuries. Both have done the dirty work of French imperialism all over the world, wallowing in mud and blood to enrich the bankers, industrialists and tradesmen who run the Republic and received little except worthless medals for it."

"It is my personal opinion that Negroes dying for France are stooges and saps. The aggression called Hitlerism, which they are now stupidly battling, differs only in name from the aggression which the French have visited upon numerous African nations and the people of Indo-China, than which there is none more ground down."

"If it is merely a matter of sending money to Negro soldiers, why not take up a collection for the troopers in England's West African Frontier force or the dark regiments in her Indian army? Or why neglect Belgium's black slave catchers in the Congo? Or the uniformed dark minions of Queen Wilhelmina? Or for that matter, the 50,000 black Italian soldiers in East Africa? None of these countries is more imperialist than France. Their black soldiers, like those of France, are used, not to defend democracy, but to keep down 'unrest' in their colonial slave pens and to help, when necessary, to defend the property and money of the respective gangs of plutocratic masters."

These black French soldiers deserve no reward for risking their lives to perpetuate a pernicious system, just as American Negro soldiers deserved no reward from Negroes for helping to slaughter Indians and Filipinos to further America's 'Manifest Destiny.'

"The nobility of France is to be judged by Negroes from a Negro point of view and not from the point of view of the intellectual gendarmie of capitalist imperialism. As an exploiter of Negroes, France has no peer. True, it flatters and sops over a picked handful of Negroes and has boosted isolated blackmoors to high positions as a reward for misdirecting and betraying their people. But so have a few Negroes everywhere, even in the United States, won their 30 pieces of silver. We cannot judge the position of the bulk of blacks under the Third Republic by the treatment accorded a handful, no more than we can judge the position of the American Negro sharecroppers and slum dwellers by that of a small number of sleek, immaculate and well-housed college professors, doctors, undertakers and numbers barons."

**ILGWU Convention Ruled by War-Mongers**

By A DELEGATE  
The fortieth anniversary convention of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union adjourned on June 7 after twelve days of bureaucratic steamrolling through of resolutions advocating a third term, unlimited aid to the Allies (short of war[?]), reaffiliation with the AFL and many other reactionary measures not consistent with a supposedly progressive trade union.

President Dubinsky keyed the convention at the opening session at Madison Square Garden May 27 with a war-mongering speech that might easily have been written by corporation lawyers from the house of Morgan, Standard Oil, the Rockefeller interests and their ilk. From then on, during the days that followed, each successive speaker seemed to be trying to start in where the last speaker left off.

Each expressed in his own inimitable way that labor and capital must cooperate, that labor, above all, must not strike, that World War 2 is different than the last war in that this is a just war on the part of the same Allies, etc. One speaker rationalized it by saying that if Germany had won the last war she would have demanded colonies, but if Germany wins this war she will demand civilization.

**Delegates Intimidated**  
The reaffiliation of the ILGWU with the AFL was achieved amidst a reign of intimidation comparable only to that which brought about the passing of the war resolution. Although sixteen resolutions representing over 40,000 members were presented to

the convention advocating an independent status, only twelve delegates who refused to be intimidated rose to vote against affiliation. On the basis of a fraction over two delegates to each thousand members, there should have been at least 80 votes against. The twelve who voted against affiliation were called Communists by Dubinsky—a performing he repeated on other votes.

The resolution advocating a third term for Roosevelt was greeted with a planned demonstration that lasted at least 15 minutes. This time, the "Communists" and "fifth columnists" that had the gall to oppose the Dubinsky administration numbered only four.

**Anti-War Vote**  
There were two minority reports on the war situation—one by the Stalinists, and one by Louis Nelson of the New York knitgoods workers representing a loose bloc of non-Stalinist opponents of the pro-war orientation of the Dubinsky administration. The Stalinist report was far more reformist, "isolationist" in formulation, than the other minority report and silent, of course, on Stalin's role in Poland and Finland. It got seven votes. Nelson's report got seventeen votes.

Although the Nelson report was backed by International vice-president Rose Pesota and other otherwise close collaborators of the administration, it got a re-

ception from the administration which made clear that the Stalinists are merely at the moment the most vulnerable victims, but woe to anybody who talks against war!

Charles S. Zimmerman, manager of Local 22 and leading Lovestoneite, was not to be heard on the war, third term and AFL questions. So far as the naked eye could discern, he was voting with the administration, while other Lovestoneites were voting against. The only sign of the Socialist Party was Gross' proposal for nationalization of the munitions industry—offered as an amendment to the majority's pro-Ally report!

Zimmerman played a particularly foul role when the resolutions committee brought in this proposal on continuance of the Dies Committee: "We believe that a reorganization of that Committee, making it a joint congressional committee of persons interested, not in grinding their own political axes, but in doing a job for good government, will prove of inestimable value."

Zimmerman was chairman for the day and had the last word. He was in an ideal position to rally opposition to this reactionary proposal, so dangerous in its implications for the labor movement. Instead he made the final speech for it!

The proposed Congressional committee, said Zimmerman,

would "make a real investigation of un-American activities, including Father Coughlin, the Ku Klux Klan, the Silver Shirts, and all other subversive or reactionary un-American activities. And if," concluded Zimmerman with cheap malice addressing the Stalinists, "as you claim, the work of the Communist party is an open book, then there is no reason why you should oppose the recommendation of the Committee." And this scoundrel has been passing himself off as a revolutionist!

**Stalinist "Strategy"**

On a number of questions a few consistent progressives had to vote with the Stalinists, but the Stalinists made it well-nigh impossible to win the votes of the average progressive delegate. An example was the administration resolution advocating replacement of the Dies Committee by a joint Congressional committee which would have the same purpose as the Dies Committee, i.e., investigation of the Communist party. It was a thoroughly reactionary resolution, and one against which it might have been possible to rally advanced workers.

Instead of attacking the resolution and the role of such a Congressional committee, however, the Stalinist delegates devoted themselves to whitewashing the Communist party. They made the issue one of for or against the C.P. In that light the delegates

voted, and only two or three non-Stalinists voted against the resolution.

The burning questions of the trade that confronts the union? Except for a few perfunctory resolutions the union's tasks were shunted aside. The convention was dominated by the war-mongering speakers with whom Dubinsky flooded the platform, day after day.

**Union "Babies" Learn**

But there was more to the convention than the Dubinsky gang. There were many demonstrations during the convention by the old time cloakmakers, the newer element of dressmakers, and perhaps most interesting of all, the so-called babies of the union from its newly organized locals in the Midwest and the Eastern out-of-town department. It was heartening to see these young people, full of their fresh solidarity with the trade union movement. They proved to the convention that they had what it takes to win strikes. They left no doubt in the minds of the delegates what their actions would be if called upon to strike again and again. The recognized the class line between themselves and their bosses.

All these young people came to the convention, as was natural for people who have recently discovered unionism, as ardent administration supporters. But most of them went away with a new thought or two. They sat aghast as Dubinsky shut up delegates, denounced all opposition as Communist, and railroaded the convention. Dubinsky will pay for that hysterical performance.

**Technique of Drive Against Alien Workers**

by SAM MARCY  
The campaign against "aliens" has reached such proportions that a call for mass murder has issued directly from the floor of the United States Congress. Representative Robert F. Rich (Rep., Pa.) on May 29 made the following remarks (Congressional Record, page 10811):

"I think we ought to make every effort in this country to find those people who came to this country who are trying to overthrow our government and nothing should stop this Congress from either deporting them or putting them in concentration camps, and if we know they are going to do anything to overthrow our government, we ought to find a good brick wall, put them up against it, and get our bayonets out, and if necessary use them."

On May 30, Attorney General Ellis Arnall of Georgia proposed to Georgia Congressmen to remove the guarantee of the United States Constitution which formally gives rights to all residents of the country, irrespective of place of birth or citizenship status. Along with this comes the Smith Bill providing for finger-printing of immigrants, for deportation of non-citizens who belonged to a proscribed organization at any time in the past.

Such is the situation in the land which for centuries was known as the traditional asylum for the persecuted of all lands. Such is the situation in the land which during the days of capitalist progress invited more than 37,000,000 immigrants, to dig its coal, make its steel, build its railroads, pick its crops, cultivate its fields and produce riches for the wealthy. Many of these immigrants were brought by soliciting companies, thousands of others were kidnapped and shipped here in loads. "Give me your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" is still the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty. Now that the capitalist class is in a blind alley, madly racing towards war, it seeks to turn all its wrath against those who created its wealth.

**Arrested Aliens Get No Real Trial**

When an alien worker is arrested by the Immigration Service for deportation he is not even accorded a trial by court or jury. He is tried by an immigration inspector, who acts both as judge, prosecutor and jury, who alone finds the facts and makes the record. He then presents them to the Secretary of Labor. There is no review directly from the Secretary's order to any court. It is final so long as it has been shown that there was merely some evidence to support the decision and the hearing not grossly unfair.

And yet Congress has just passed a law transferring the Immigration Service from the Department of Labor to the Department of Justice, on the ground that the Labor Department "does not adequately enforce the immigration laws"! This measure is calculated to put the supervision of the alien workers directly under the FBI. Roosevelt's request for speedy enactment of this law prevented any public hearing on the bill by any committee of Congress. What a strange contrast to the LaFollette Bill which attempted to remove certain oppressive labor practices—such as labor spying, etc., which took more than three years for passage by the Senate. And when passed it is saddled with an amendment forbidding the employment of more than 10% of non-citizen workers in any interstate industry, and other reactionary features.

With regard to these anti-alien bills now pending, it is very important to point out an extremely significant feature of this legislation, which at just a glance may appear to be entirely remote from the subject. It is the relation between the poll-tax and these anti-alien bills. The overwhelming mass of the anti-alien legislation comes precisely from those districts where alien workers are almost unknown and the foreign-born population negligible.

**The Mechanism of Alien-Baiting**

One would think that if the foreign-born workers represented a real danger to the bosses, the Congressional representatives of the big industrial areas, where the foreign-born workers are concentrated, would be the logical ones to propose these anti-alien measures. On the contrary, however, these Congressional lackeys of the bosses, are to a considerable degree still dependent on the votes of the foreign-born workers. Hence there is a nefarious division of labor between representatives of the large industrial states and those Southern states where the vote is very restricted by poll taxes and other requirements, which work particularly well in disfranchising native workers, especially Negroes.

Below are listed four of the most prominent alien-baiters who are responsible for the bulk of the most vicious anti-alien legislation, and the total vote by which they were elected. They are all representatives from states where the suffrage is very restricted, where Negroes are systematically disfranchised and where poll-tax systems are a venerable tradition.

- Rep. Joe Stevens..... 9,853
- Rep. Sam Hobbs..... 12,603
- Rep. Martin Dies..... 12,824
- Rep. Howard Smith..... 13,852

Congressman Lee E. Geyer, of California, who supplied the above figures, contrasts them with the number cast in an election for a representative who opposed the anti-alien bills, Magnusson of Washington, who polled 177,061—fifteen and twenty times the number of votes polled by the alien-baiters!

It is also noteworthy, that the poll tax states (Texas, Virginia, South Carolina, Tenn., Georgia, Alabama Mississippi and Arkansas, wield the greatest amount of power in Congress. They furnish 28% of the committee chairmen in the House, and 33% of the committee chairmen in the Senate, in addition to the presiding officers in both houses. They also supply 45% of the chairmen of the eleven leading standing committees of the Senate.

Thus the systematic disfranchisement of the native population goes hand in hand with the most brazen attack on the foreign-born. In fact it can be fairly said that, in order to more intensely exploit the native workers, it is necessary for the bosses to begin with the foreign-born workers.

**Citing Documents Is a Dangerous Business, Mr. Earl Browder!**

Earl Browder, in his closing speech to the Communist party convention, said:

"Is there any other party in America today that can bring forth the documents and the advice that it gave America two, three and four years ago, and ask America—if you America, had followed the advice we gave you then, is it not entirely possible that America could have been the force to prevent this horrible slaughter that is engulfing the world? No! There is no other party that wants to resurrect its documents of two or three years ago. All it asks is that these documents be forgotten as quickly as possible. What other party can pass such a test of comparing its past proposals with the principle needs of the world." (Daily Worker, June 6, 1940).

All right, Mr. Browder. "Browder, in addition, swore by Washington and Jefferson, that he owed allegiance only to the American flag." (N. Y. Post, Oct. 1, 1937).

"In the rising movement throughout the world to halt Hitler and to save world peace the U.S. is playing a more active role." (Daily Worker, Sept. 29, 1938—editorial).

"And we (the Communist party) support the peace policy of President Roosevelt as one of the most hopeful factors for world

peace and the peace of America. "Concretely today, our country is uniting its people for a real fight for peace and progress. We reject the cowardly and hypocritical theories of isolation and neutrality which have aided the fascist war-makers."

"All America is rallying to the call of President Roosevelt to throw the weight of our country into the scales on the side of security, justice, peace and international order for all peoples." (Browder speech, Daily Worker, Aug. 27, 1938).

"The issue in the world situation is fascist war-making aggression and its allies, against the peace-loving and democratic peoples. And that is the issue and alignment in our own November elections. The democracy of the U.S. is faced with the necessary choice either to surrender or fight. To surrender is simple: 'peace' of the Munich type can always be purchased so long as people are ready to pay the price, and then Hitler will solve all other problems for us. To fight, and to win through to victory, is hard and difficult, and requires the close alliance and unity of all forces that can be rallied, in America and throughout the world. As we march to the polls to cast our ballots for progress and Democracy against reaction and fascism..." (Browder speech supporting Roosevelt, Daily Worker, Nov. 5, 1938).

"At his press conference, Browder was asked to give his opinion of the policy of increased armaments for continental defense policy recently outlined by President Roosevelt."

"But I say that armaments are not enough," he emphasized, "particularly in a world where great expenditures for arms are followed by concessions to the fascist powers. If along with armaments came a positive program for combatting fascist aggression, armaments would not be bad." (Daily Worker, Nov. 28, 1938).

"Why do we need a navy in Latin America? Because we deserted Spain which would have saved Latin America."

"We Communists, traditionally opposed to armaments, withdraw our objections to armaments on one condition—that the armaments be used to call a halt to the fascist aggressors." (Browder speech, Daily Worker, Nov. 29, 1938).

"All Aid to the Heroic Polish People. Support Poland and all those who are helping the Polish people save their independence from Nazi barbarism." (Daily Worker, Sept. 11, 1939).

"I knows it, Browder; 'I knows it, Browder; 'Our line has changed again."

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**CLARKE SPEAKS IN LOS ANGELES**

SAN FRANCISCO—George Clarke, member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, spent the past week here on his coast-to-coast tour.

Next week Comrade Clarke will be in Los Angeles. On Thursday, June 20, he speaks at the Embassy Auditorium of Assembly Hall, 843 Grand Street, Los Angeles, on "War and the American Workers." The meeting is at 8 p.m.

On Thursday, June 27, he speaks at the Los Angeles Labor Temple, 7315 South San Pedro Street, on "Trade Unions and the War." A third meeting will be held in the Wilmington-San Pedro harbor area.

**Militant Worker Gets 25 Years by Frame-up**

SYRACUSE, N. Y.—Chris Poppof, a militant trade unionist, a Macedonian immigrant who has devoted most of his life to the labor movement, and who has been blacklisted on job after job because he insisted on fighting the bosses, has been sentenced to FIFTEEN YEARS TO TWENTY-FIVE in the state prison on a trumped-up charge of second degree attempted arson and conspiracy to commit arson.

The charge grew out of an alleged attempted burning of a restaurant in Watertown, N. Y., on Feb. 4, 1940.

Three men were arrested in the case. One of them, Peter Gregor, the owner of the restaurant, died before the trial.

Peter Panagiotatos, also known as Peter Burdabas, a confessed firebug who for years has been setting fires for money, turned states' evidence, implicating Poppof.

**Not Charged With Fire!**

According to Burdabas, the three men are supposed to have met in the restaurant on two separate occasions. On January 28, they met there and Gregor allegedly went off to get the \$150 additional money for the job which was to have brought \$200. The other two men are supposed to have busied themselves spreading inflammable liquids, but when Gregor failed to return, mopped up the stuff, returned the \$50 already paid them, and left the keys with Gregor's brother, Thomas.

Then on February 4 they are supposed to have returned and again made the preparations. The fire failed to materialize, however.

The restaurant finally did burn down on February 13, but Poppof was not indicted for this.

**Framed by Provocateur**

Another witness against Poppof, a man named Lampros, was an agent provocateur, hired by a Greek detective Poppo, who in turn works for the National Board of Fire Underwriters.

The only other witness offered by the state denied on the witness stand that he had any court record. Letters from Poppo's attorney state that this man was

convicted and served time for grand larceny.

Chris Poppof's attorney offered only three witnesses for his defense. One, Thomas Gregor, brother of the deceased restaurant owner, testifying regarding the alleged motive for the crime—breaking the lease—said that it was absolutely unnecessary for any such action as the landlord had told him that Gregor could move anytime, as the place would bring much more rent than Gregor was paying.

Paul Vasil, a cousin of the Gregors, said that although he had been a frequent visitor at the restaurant, he had never seen Poppof or Burdabas, and that he had not been present, as alleged by Burdabas, when the keys and the money were returned!

**Cops Hated Poppof**

Further evidence that the case against Poppof is a frame-up is a slip made by the Syracuse police when they visited Poppof in his cell in the Watertown jail.

They told him that "if he beat this case they would hook him on something else as soon as he came back to Syracuse." For they know him and hate him as a militant worker.

**Framed Once Before**

This is not the first time Poppof has been framed. The Immigration Department seized upon a technicality to try to deport him. He had had a previous conviction. They had him on a Greek boat, ready to sail when, at the last moment, a pardon for the previous conviction arrived, signed by Governor Lehman.

It is more than significant, also, that while Poppof received a sentence of from fifteen to twenty-five years, his alleged conspirator, Peter Burdabas, a confessed arsonist of long standing, got only two years.

It is likewise significant that while Poppof was unable to raise the \$5,000 bail set for him, his alleged conspirator, Burdabas, for whom a public defendant had also to be appointed, was able to raise the bail money and enjoyed his freedom pending the trial.

Poppof is a class-war victim, just as surely as if he were struck down by the cops on the picket line.