

The Negro Question
by Robert L. Birchman

A Negro Paper on the War

The California Eagle (Los Angeles, June 20) has a two column editorial entitled "The Stakes: Africa," which follows in part:

"Today the great continent of Africa is the stake for which millions of men are dying on the battlefields of Europe. Empire and empire alone is the guiding spirit of World War II.

"Differences of political structure between the Allies and the Italo-German bloc are important, but are dwarfed beside the weight of motivating economic causes. What President Roosevelt, Senator Pepper (of Florida, no less), Senator Pittman and others have been pointing out for the past few weeks—namely that democracy is threatened—is only incidentally true. The so-called democratic nations, functioning on the basis of liberal federal governments, have represented in the economic field a direct paradox to their political systems. On the one hand theirs is federalized, representative government; on the other, the most highly centralized and dictatorial administration. Britain's parliament may be a fortress of liberties, but her Bank of England is a battlement of despotism."

The editorial concludes:

"Economic development of the world's resources cannot be left in the hands of power-mad dictators thriving on the theory of nationalism and incidentally, race superiority; nor can it be left to the hit-or-miss capitalistic system that we have known. . . . The welfare of humanity itself depends upon the creation of an efficient world economic system. The day of status quo and balance of power must end. A British victory based upon the old notion of 'Mighty Me' would be as harmful as a Nazi triumph. Economic prosperity cannot successfully exist in any part of the modern world, while there is poverty somewhere else. The channels of trade are too delicately interlaced to permit it. When there is prosperity for all—and it is not an impossible dream—there will be peace for all, since the cause of war will have been destroyed."

But what does the Eagle concretely propose as a solution to the problem? Certainly not a streamlined capitalist system—which would be fascism. The only way to solve the problem of economic security, to build an economic system that makes war impossible is for the Negroes and the entire working class to join with the Socialist Workers Party in organizing to overthrow the capitalist system in both its fascist and democratic forms and build a socialist society.

Sharecroppers Called Fifth Column!!!

The Chicago Defender (June 29) reports editorially that: "From Oklahoma comes the report that Attorney General Holt of Arkansas in a statement to the press intimated that Negro sharecroppers fighting against eviction and mass starvation and against open and violent robbery of their share of the crop by the landlords, are 'fifth columnists' and subversive elements."

"We warned against this. We foresaw it in the very logic of things. To hide the robbery of black men and women, to silence their outcry against the poll tax and the denial of their constitutional rights, the spokesmen of the landlords will declare these loyal Americans to be fifth columnists."

Race Equality in the Army

The Pittsburgh Courier reports that the Burke Bill for conscription means that "some 4,000,444 Negroes will have to register and at least 2,300,000 would be liable to be called for military service."

"Something over a million of our people between the ages of 21 and 35 would be surely called."

The Pittsburgh Courier is not opposed to conscription and military training. Their complaint is:

"Now if we are to have conscription, if our colored men are to be called up by the million to risk their lives in the defense of their country, they must not be subjected to insult, discrimination and segregation."

"No conscription law must be passed that does not contain a specific provision that no citizen called for military service shall be excluded from service in any branch or division of the Army or Navy because of race, color, or creed."

"Yes, let us have conscription, but without any color line."

We are opposed to Jim-crow policies in the armed forces of the nation and everywhere else that it may rear its ugly head. We stand for full economic, political and social equality for the Negro people.

We are for military training. But the question is, for what? The military training that we want is that undertaken by the organizations of the workers—both Negro and white—the trade unions. This training will be for the purpose of defending the interests of the workers and of the exploited and oppressed Negro peoples. Not a war for "democracy" which neither the Negro nor the working class of all races and colors have had in either peace or war time. No. Our war is to secure the democratic rights that have been denied us. To stop lynching, Jim-crowism, segregation and for jobs and economic security.

Only an army controlled by the workers, fighting to defend and extend the interests of the workers, will eliminate Jim-crowism. That is the only army that the Negroes should join and not the army of those fighting to protect and extend their right to exploit and oppress the common people.

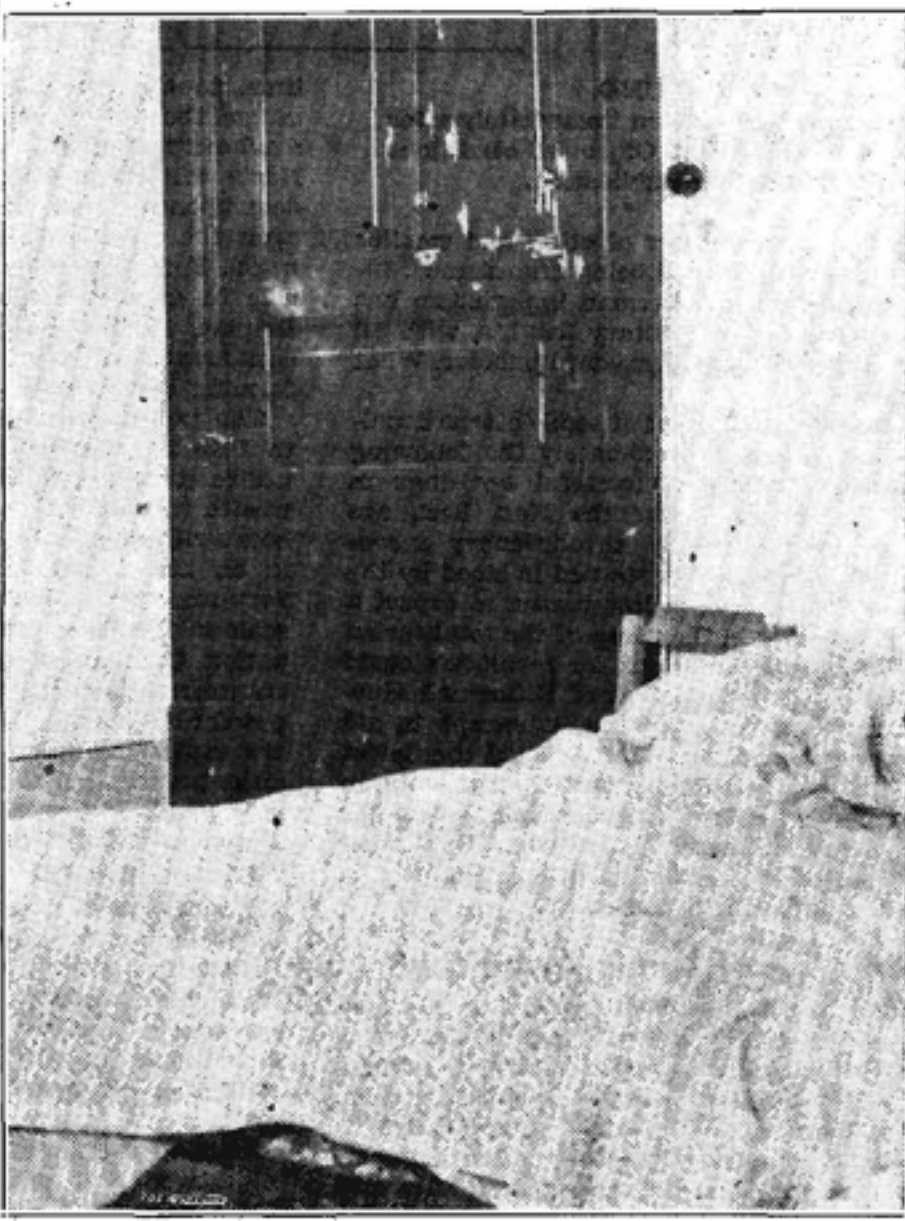
The Chicago Defender in an editorial (April 27) stated: "Now in principle, we are not against the creation of Negro soldiers. The Negro should know how to fight, he must know how to fight. But the Negro must be a fighter for democracy; 1917 is not to be forgotten."

"Most assuredly, we must learn to fight. But the victims we speak of have not been created by Europeans, workers and farmers in uniform. We have nothing against the people of Germany, France or England. They however, must deal with the leaders who have dragged them into a war which has nothing of democracy about it. That is not our task. We must deal with those who deny democracy to us."

Harte Murdered During Attack on Trotsky

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murderers in one of two possible ways. One of the police whom Harte knew as assigned to guard the household and who was in league with the assailants may have persuaded Harte to open the door on some pretext, and behind the policeman rushed in the assailants. Or the assailants had found a certain weakness in the surrounding wall which enabled a skillful attacker to get in and strike Harte from behind.

The third possibility, which the police had entertained and which was bolstered by confessions of those who have been arrested, is now destroyed by the finding of his body.



One of the Doors of Trotsky's Bedroom, Riddled With the Bullets of the Assassins Sent by the GPU.

GPU Discouraged Search

It must be said that the GPU and its friends had done their job well. So successfully had they propagated the idea that young Harte was an agent of the GPU who had now fled the country, that the police investigators were seeking some word of him in Guatemala or in the United States—anywhere except the short distance from the Trotsky household where he was actually found. That was precisely the purpose of the GPU—spread slander against the boy—to discourage any search for his body.

It was not in a search for it that the body was found. It was found while the police were searching for the police uniforms and arms used by the attackers.

The ill-kept farmhouse in whose cellar Sheldon Harte was found buried came under the scrutiny of the police in two ways. Neighbors reported seeing some men living there for a few days who had left May 24th, the day of the attack on Trotsky. Police paid more attention to this report when they had gotten a new hint of the ramifications of the conspiracy from Mariano Herrera Vazquez. He was the sweetheart of Ana Lopez Chavez, the woman who with Julia Barradas de Serrano had had the task of corrupting the police guarding the Trotsky household.

[The confessions made by the two women, both Stalinists, were reported in detail in last week's Appeal.]

GPU Rented All!

Vazquez minimized his own role in the affair. Through his sweetheart he had been hired, first to keep watch on a certain house in Coyoacan and then to live in a house on Viena Street—right alongside of Trotsky's—and then another, etc. In painting himself in the modest colors of a caretaker Vazquez gave the police their first realization of what afterward unfolded in an astonishing picture—that the GPU had rented practically every house which became empty in the whole neighborhood of Trotsky's house!

As this picture became clear, the police proceeded to examine carefully every house in the area which might have been used by the attackers in their conspiracy. In the course of this systematic work the farmhouse, not very far from Coyoacan, was examined Monday.

In the cellar a close examination discovered a spot where the earth had been recently disturbed. It was a likely place to hide arms and the uniforms, thought the police, and they began digging. Soon they were assailed by the odor of a decaying human corpse. Higher officials were hastily called, including General Nunez, chief of police, and Colonel Salazar, head of the secret service.

Clothes and a lock of hair from the disinterred body were brought at 12:15 a.m. to the Trotsky household. These were immediately identified by two of Sheldon Harte's co-workers who showed police in Sheldon's belongings an undershirt identical to one from the body. His co-workers were then taken to see the body and there could no longer be any doubt—they knew him too well and his distinctive features, including his kinky red hair, were unmistakable.

But his father, Jesse Harte of New York City, notified by wire by his son's friends, still hoped that the body was not Sheldon's. Mr. Harte called Trotsky by long-distance telephone; would Trotsky himself go see the body? Trotsky agreed and went to the morgue; he had to tell the father, there was no mistake.

GPU Guit Established

Eight of those arrested have admitted their complicity. All of these are C.P. members or closely associated with the C.P. They have named as the leaders of the armed band David Alfaro Siqueiros, his brother Jesus, Antonio Pujol, Juan Zuniga Camacho—all figures known for many years as Stalinists, men who were in the Stalinist apparatus in Loyalist Spain. The Stalinist party is now engaged in frantically disassociating itself from these four, but cannot. In addition the facts already known have implicated David Serrano and Luis Mateos Martinez, well-known C.P. members closely associated with the present C.P. leadership. Still further, clues are now pointing to the higher-ups from whom Siqueiros and his men took their orders—foreign officials of the GPU.

From now on the investigation takes on darker hues. It is no longer the question of an attempted assassination of Leon Trotsky. Now, in addition, it is the story of how the GPU ruthlessly murdered Leon Trotsky's secretary, Robert Sheldon Harte.

The Arenal brothers, Luis and Leopoldo, lieutenants of Siqueiros, had dismissed him (Vazquez). The design of Vazquez' story was to paint a picture of young Harte as an accomplice of the attackers, alive after the attack and killed presumably by the Arenal brothers. Why? Those who took Vazquez' story seriously could only propose such preposterous hypotheses as that Harte was then killed for the big sum of money he had been paid. But that could only make sense if Harte had been in the plot for the money—and he was the son of a very wealthy man, a boy who had given up a life of ease and comfort for the hard life of the revolutionary movement.

BIG BUSINESS OPENLY BACKS WILKIE

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It is clear that most of the delegates, anxious to get votes rather than to formulate correct policies, were of the opinion that they could garner a lot of votes if they would only come out of the convention parading as a "peace" party. They knew that the masses did not want to go to war and were willing to give the masses a chance to vote the Republicans into power in the expectation that the Republican party would keep the country out of war.

Wilkie a God-sent

The dramatic phase of the convention consisted of the nomination of a presidential candidate. The mediocre character of the available candidates among the old-line politicians was obvious and gave serious concern to the capitalists who really run the party. The responsible people behind the party were in a real dilemma. They are all for Roosevelt's pro-war policy and could not trust a second-rate politician in the presidential chair at a time when momentous decisions will have to be made daily.

On the other hand their hostility to Roosevelt for his social reformism is still smoldering. They were in a panic lest the nomination of a Dewey or a Taft would compel them to support Roosevelt for a third term.

Join the Socialist Workers Party

HARTE MEMORY IS SPOTLESS, WRITES TROTSKY

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costs in other countries, amounted to not less than \$10,000.

The solving of the crimes of the GPU, because of this, presents tremendous difficulties. In no other country of the world, not in France, not in Switzerland, not in Spain, have any of the crimes of the GPU been brought to light with such thoroughness as is being done before us with this one, the assault of May 24 in Mexico. The body of Bob Sheldon in all certainty will shed a supplementary light on all the devices of this complicated conspiracy.

In two of its announcements, the Central Committee of the "Communist" Party has repeated that the participation of Sheldon casts a "suspicious" light on the assault. In reality the penetration of an agent of Stalin into my household could have indicated solely that the GPU had succeeded in deceiving my friends in New York, who recommended Bob Sheldon to me. Every informed person knows that the GPU floods its agents into all the workers' organizations and state institutions throughout the world. For this it spends annually tens of millions of dollars. But the version that Sheldon was an agent of the GPU is completely crushed. His body is a convincing argument. Bob perished because he placed himself in the road of the assassins. He died for the ideas in which he believed. His memory is spotless.

Qui Prodest? asks the old and wise maxim of Roman law. Who is interested in slandering Bob Harte and leading the investigation astray? The answer is clear: the GPU and its agents. The discovery of the source of the false declarations in reference to Bob will certainly reveal one of the staffs in the plot.

Bob is not the first of those close to me who has fallen at the hands of the mercenary assassins of Stalin. I leave aside the members of my family, two daughters and two sons brought to their death by the GPU. I do not speak of the thousands of my partisans exposed to physical extermination in the USSR and other countries. I limit myself solely to my secretaries in various countries who have been led to suicide by persecution, who have been shot or assassinated by the agents of the GPU—seven persons: M. Glasman, G. Butov, Y. Blumkin, N. Seremuks, I. Poznasky, R. Klement, E. Wolf. In this list Robert (Bob) Sheldon Harte occupies the eighth, but I fear not the last place.

After this, the political agents of the GPU can speak of my "persecution mania."

Coyoacan, D.F. June 25, 1940

Join the Socialist Workers Party

HAIKYS IDENTIFIED AS GPU CHIEFTAIN IN MEXICO

MEXICO CITY, June 28—The "man with a French accent" from whom Siqueiros took orders, and whom Siqueiros introduced to one of his hirelings as "my chief," is identified as Leon Haikys, first secretary of the Soviet Legation in Mexico during the presidency of General Obregon, according to two articles appearing yesterday and today in "Excelsior," Mexico City daily.

"Excelsior" claims that one of its reporters has been able to ascertain that Haikys has been in Mexico for some time, without an official mission. Haikys is also not listed as serving anywhere today in the Soviet diplomatic service.

During the Spanish civil war the Soviet ambassador in Loyalist Spain, Rosenberg, was recalled to Moscow and executed. Haikys took his place at Valencia as Stalin's spokesman to Loyalist leaders, but remained in the background, unknown publicly.

other two chauffeurs ratified their declarations, which all had made on June 23.

The chauffeurs' declarations stated that Siqueiros, whom they knew well, had arranged with them for what, they insisted, was presented to them as a task of transporting police to Leon Trotsky's house. The considerable armament which the assailants carried, including machine guns, was described by the chauffeurs, who concluded that the commission the police were about to execute was an extremely perilous one, but that did not cause them to be suspicious. Not until they heard the shots inside the patio and the assailants came out did they realize, the chauffeurs claim, that an attack had been made and that the occupants of their cars were not real policemen.

But the chauffeurs were "paid splendidly." Chauffeur Castaneda was hired personally by Siqueiros immediately afterward. He drove him, his brother, Siqueiros' sweetheart and her two brothers, Luis and Leopoldo Arenal, about for several days, finally taking them to Guadalajara.

FOUR DRIVERS CONFESS ROLES IN SHOOTING

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Ratifies Confession

Nestor Sanchez Hernandez, who last week made a clean breast of his role as one of the armed attackers, after police had found in his valise one of the police uniforms used and a pistol which Hernandez had taken from one of the real police guarding Trotsky's house, today ratified his previous declaration in toto.

[It was published in last week's APPEAL.]

Capital Drives Women Out of Home to Industry

By ANTOINETTE F. KONIKOW, M.D.

Machinery in industry or the industrial era caused considerable change in the life of women. All agree that the home of today is not what it used to be. The home is "breaking up," people say, and of course we socialists are blamed for it. The passing of the present home with its drudgery, worries and uncertainty of income would not grieve me. For such a home I would shed no tears; but neither would I or any socialist accept responsibility for undermining it. Incredible as it may appear, the very people who accuse us, the bosses and their agents, they are the real culprits. They did the job very effectively with their gigantic privately-owned machinery and factories.

Many young women today consider work in the factory or office just a transitory, temporary stage for they are certain it will cease with marriage. That is why it is often difficult to organize women workers into the unions. But after marriage (and contrary to the movies they rarely marry the boss or boss's son) they often discover that it may be better to work a little longer to compensate for the small wages of the husband. Then illness occurs or the husband loses his job, and the wife's work becomes a necessity. In many industries like textile goods, the whole family must work to cover expenses; even statistics present us with a record of "family wages" instead of individual ones.

Women Changed By Industry

Yet all this had a compensating aspect. The drudgery and monotony of domestic life kept a woman isolated, ignorant of world realities. She was concerned mainly with her own narrow, family interests. Her work outside the home awakened her to a new outlook. It was not the kiss of Prince Charming which stirred her slumber, it was the whistle of the factory and the rumbling of machinery. As she works and mingles with others under modern industrial conditions her very character is altered. At home she was bashful, self-conscious, lacked confidence in her own ability—the so-called "clinging vine." She soon acquires a backbone, and begins to assert herself. She learns to think and act independently and likes it.

How did this affect the home? Desperately women try to combine work with married life. The wife now has on her slender shoulders a double yoke; work in the office, factory, or profession and the care of the home and often children. When a woman comes home from work, she cleans house, prepares supper and cares for the children. The young husband often wonders why the cheerful, peppy girl he married is now always tired and depressed.

In "Recent Social Trends," the report of the President's Research Committee, 1932, it was revealed that in 1930 there were three million married women engaged in gainful occupation, also that from 1900 to 1930 the total number of women employed doubled while the number of married women engaged in work quadrupled. One-third of all women employed in gainful occupations were married. These statistics are ten years old but the trend has not changed.

Lately a movement has started to prevent married women from working, hoping thus to alleviate unemployment. That is what happened to women in Germany. First Hitler ordered all married women to stay at home and attend the three "k's": kinder, kuche, kirch, which means—children, kitchen, and church. Then as men are needed in the army, he ordered them back into industry again!

Industrialism has created new conditions in woman's life. Is this change altogether detrimental to women? By no means! True, women work harder, their health often suffers, their nerves go to pieces—but in the schooling of this new life they have gained in experience, self-reliance, knowledge and if they are workers they learn to defend their rights and become class conscious.

The Promised Land For Women

It is said that when Moses led the Israelites to the Promised Land, he took forty years wandering through the deserts because he wanted them to forget the slavery in Egypt so that they would come to the Promised Land with a new generation which had never known slavery. I think we women should consider our tramping through the jungles of capitalism in the same way. Despite its hardships, it has a progressive, valuable aspect for women. Involved in the problems of labor, women begin to understand more clearly than can ever be learned from books the crying need of changing this capitalist world of insecurity, suffering and struggle into a new world of socialism. Then the dream of real home-building may be realized.

Women envisage a home not of monotonous work and worry but a place where their services as wife and mother will assume the status of labor in the cooperative society and be valued as all other services and paid for and regulated.

Will there be private homes under socialism? An interesting problem which will be solved best by trial and experience under the new system. Some may prefer a form of cooperative home life and others will cherish their privacy even if it may mean a little more work. Experience we have at present seems to prove that children thrive best in private homes, not institutions however perfect, and need the personal interest and love of their parents.

No one can predict details or complete plans of our future homes. That will be an interesting phase of our planning and education after the socialist revolution. Only one thing we can state with assurance—however homes will be planned and home life arranged, the basis will not be the exploitation of women.

Fourth International Conference Resolution on S. W. P. Internal Struggle

(The following is one of the resolutions adopted by the May 19-26 Emergency Conference of the Fourth International.)

1. The recent split in the Socialist Workers Party, official section of the Fourth International in the United States, came as the result of an attempt by a petty-bourgeois minority to revise the fundamental program of the Fourth International on unconditional defense of the Soviet Union and the refusal of this minority to abide by the decisions of the majority in the convention called to decide the issues in dispute.

2. In attempting to revise our program calling for unconditional defense of the Soviet Union without at the same time relating the proposed revision to the question of the class character of the Soviet Union, which the Fourth International has exhaustively analyzed as a degenerated workers' State, the petty-bourgeois opposition was guilty of a fundamental revision of the methodology of Marxism. On the part of James

Burnham, ideological leader of the group, this attempt at revisionism was extended to complete rejection of the basic principles of scientific socialism as first propounded by Marx and Engels and subsequently developed by Lenin and Trotsky.

3. The attempted revision of our fundamental principles was begun by the petty-bourgeois opposition immediately after the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact and gained impetus with the outbreak of the second World War, thus clearly indicating that the force pushing the petty-bourgeois elements of the party into opposition to the Fourth International was the war pressure of the democratic bourgeoisie.

4. Not only did the petty-bourgeois opposition attempt to revise the fundamental principles and political conclusions of the Fourth International, they attempted also to revise its Bolshevik organizational methods. They participated in the April convention of the Socialist Work-

ers Party, thus recognizing its authoritativeness and its validity. Nevertheless they rejected the majority decisions and in flagrant violation of democratic centralism launched an independent press in order to appeal to the public in its attack against the Fourth International.

In view of the previous discussion which was conducted with the fullest democracy in accordance with the best tradition of Bolshevism, and in view of the guarantees for the minority to continue its factional existence, to present its views to the party in an Internal Bulletin even after the convention adjourned, and to hold posts in all the leading bodies regardless of their views and without penalty for their previous infractions of party discipline, this rejection of the convention decisions and their subsequent desertion from the party can be interpreted in no other way than as additional evidence of the petty-bourgeois character of the opposition.

The Emergency Conference of the Fourth International endorses the action of the American section of the Fourth International in suspending all those who violated the decisions of its April convention. The Conference suggests to the N.C. of the S.W.P. that it set a definite time limit of one month after publication of Conference decisions within which the suspended members must signify their acceptance of the Convention decisions under penalty of unconditional expulsion from the party.

5. The Emergency Conference of the Fourth International views the struggle of the proletarian majority in the Socialist Workers Party as a struggle in defense of the program of the Fourth International from the heights of its Marxist theory right down to its Bolshevik organizational principles. The Emergency Conference calls upon all the sections of the Fourth International to solidarize themselves with the Socialist Workers Party in this struggle.