

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

The New York Age in an editorial (July 20) "France Becomes a Dictatorship", comments in part as follows:

"Unless Hitler can complete his invasion of England before the winter sets in he will be faced with both famine and revolution in practically all of the conquered territory under his dominion... The French colonies in Africa, which had a measure of self rule and which had their own representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, may not like the idea of dictatorship, and may take this opportunity to declare their independence. Other French possessions in other parts of the world may do likewise.

"Hitler and Mussolini have declared their intention of making a new Europe but in imposing their will on other nations and peoples they have undertaken a job which may prove bigger than they can handle.

"Liberty, like truth, crushed to the earth will rise again, and it is our opinion that another French revolution is imminent and that once again the French people in their anger will rise and crush their oppressors and restore their most cherished possessions of liberty, equality and fraternity."

The fact is that the dictatorship that the French colonialists will experience under the Fascist regime of Marshall Petain will differ only in degree from that of "democratic" France. The French colonial peoples had but a very small measure of self-government and that represented not the masses of the exploited natives but the small "elite" of government employees and the native bourgeoisie and chiefs.

Yes, the French people will rise in a new revolution but this time it can only be the socialist revolution. That is the only road open for the masses of the French workers and the imperialist rule.

The appointment of Henry Lemery, Senator from Martinique, as colonial minister in the new French cabinet, is an attempt to hold the loyalty of the millions of blacks in the colonies. Fascism in its own interests drops at least for the moment its color bar policy. Lemery, as is true of the other Negroes who in the past have served in high positions in the French government, is not really a representative of the colonial peoples, but only a stooge for France's 400 families. Lemery has in the past contributed next to nothing to the cause of the Negro peoples. His sympathies have always been with the rulers of France. We are sure that this move will fool but few of the millions of exploited natives in the colonies.

Margaret Sanger, president of the National Birth Control Federation, bitterly assailed the Catholic Church last week for its use of political power to force the cancellation of a birth control exhibit at the American Negro Exposition in Chicago. The exhibit had been arranged by the Federation at the invitation of an official of the Negro Exposition; but the Federation was then notified that the exhibit could not be held "because of changes in floor space"; several officials of the exposition explained, however, that it was the pressure of the Catholic Church that caused the cancellation. The Catholic Church threatened to use its influence to get the grants given by the Federal and the Illinois state government to the Exposition withdrawn if the birth control exhibit remained.

Margaret Sanger in a statement said: "The time has come to determine whether the Catholic Church or any other minority group shall be permitted to use political power to prevent the spread of knowledge which has become a recognized part of public health education and accepted medical practice."

**NEGROES OPEN DOORS OF LILY-WHITE UNION**

The Negro workers in Seattle, Washington have won a twelve weeks fight in an effort to force the Boeing Aircraft Co., to employ Negroes. On July 18 the Company issued a statement that it would hire qualified Negroes. The following day the company issued employment applications to two Negroes.

Boeing officials said the company would hire qualified Negroes who are members of the Aeronautical Mechanics Union No. 751, with which it has a contract. Concurrently with that announcement the Union said it would take vigorous action against a clause in the constitution of the International Union limiting membership to whites only. The Union said the matter would have to come before the International Association of Mechanics but pointed out that there is no discriminatory clause in the present agreement with the company.

**BRITISH 'DEMOCRACY' AT WORK**

George Padmore, secretary of the International African Service Bureau, writes us that "the editorial staff of the 'African Standard' of Sierra Leone, West Africa—George Thomas, J. D. Bailey and S. M. O'Boyle were arrested and sent to jail for sedition because they reprinted an article from the Socialist Appeal dealing with the case of their leader, Wallace Johnson." Due to the censorship imposed by the British, we have been unable to secure any further information or details regarding this action by the British authorities in West Africa.

The Appeal article referred to, appeared in this column on March 23 and quoted in part the article for which Wallace Johnson, secretary of the West African Youth League and the Sierra Leone Trade Union Congress was convicted of sedition.

**Pacifist Fakery On Conscription**

*Bourgeois Pacifists Argue They Are Better Defenders Of Capitalism, Workers Object to Bourgeois Conscription But Should Learn Military Arts.*

It is imperative for every American worker to understand what is involved in the drive toward conscription, what are the real nature of the forces engaged in the controversies around the question, and what attitude should be taken toward military training. The lives and futures of the workers and the most important political problems of our time are bound together in this issue.

Thus a movement of protest against conscription has arisen within the ranks of the capitalist class itself, especially among those conservative and middle-class elements, who, despite their whole-hearted devotion to American capitalism, cannot yet bring themselves to support all the harsh dictatorial means it needs for its defense. The position of these bourgeois pacifists has been stated in the "Declaration Against

Conscription" recently issued by 240 educators, writers, religious leaders, professional and business men and women. In an advertisement in the *New York Times* on July 12th Norman Thomas' "Keep America Out Of War Congress" repeated their arguments. The bourgeois-pacifists advance four arguments against "peace-time military conscription." They first declare that compulsory military service is anti-democratic, dictatorial, and threatens the liberties of the people. We do not dispute this fact. Capitalist conscription must be autocratic and totalitarian.

The bourgeois pacifists would have us believe, however, that our capitalist regime can preserve the old democratic forms and institutions, and yet prepare for the coming war and conduct it in a non-totalitarian manner. This is impossible. In the last war the United States enacted conscription as soon as possible after the declaration of war together with

many other oppressive measures. Now it must, like England, do the same even before war is actually under way. The bourgeois-pacifist position is based upon the illusion that American imperialism will not have to resort to conscription. They thereby deceive themselves and others.

They argue secondly, that peace-time conscription is incompatible with American democracy. Again we are not concerned to deny this. But it is not incompatible with American capitalism—and this factor is decisive. Whenever the interests of the capitalists and the institutions of democracy clash, democracy must yield.

Finding no support for their position in the future and little in the present, the pacifists then appeal to the past. This is their third argument. Military conscription in peacetime, they say, is a radical departure from American tradition. In the present emergency, however, we may be sure that American imperialism

will shatter many more such traditions, especially those connected with its pacifist past. The militarists will be only too glad to leave the past in safe-keeping of the pacifists while they control the future policies of the country. Least anyone misunderstand their loyalty to capitalism, the pacifists assure the powers that be that they are "as ardently concerned for the safety of our beloved Republic as an advocate of universal service can be." These pure patriots are simply having a family quarrel about the best methods of defending capitalism.

This is demonstrated by their final argument which abandons the lofty grounds of individual freedom and glorious tradition for a crass appeal to the material interests of American business men. They are against conscription because it is bad for business! "The military regimentation of the entire manpower of our nation will inevitably result in widespread dislocation in business, industry,

agriculture and higher education."

Here is the real reason for the anti-conscription of this pack of preachers, writers and professors. It will disturb the normal ways of doing business, including higher education, the business of the professional educators. Among the liberties endangered by the Burke-Wadsworth Bill, Norman Thomas's Committee singles out "free enterprise."

Like Liberty Leaguers, these "rugged individualists" frankly prefer the old methods of capitalist defense. "If the personnel need is for higher trained permanent forces... we contend that this need can best be met by voluntary enlistments under pay schedules sufficiently attractive to induce the required number to enroll." They prefer a small professional army to huge conscript armies for precisely the same reasons that business men want a small bureaucracy at Washington instead of a swollen one. It is cheaper and less burdensome.

We have saved the joker for the last. These people state that they are opposed to conscription only in peacetime! They would presumably support it in war. Opposition to conscription during wartime means treason to the capitalist state—and this they would never be guilty of.

Here the fakery and futility of the bourgeois-pacifist opposition is exposed to full view. They have only a superficial and fleeting difference of opinion with the militarists on this particular question. The pacifists are more dangerous than the militarists whom they shield. The actions of the war-makers are easier to observe and to explain. But the pacifists spread the worst illusions among the workers, play upon their anti-war and anti-imperialist sentiments, and divert them from the real struggle against war and the capitalist system. In the end, as in England and in the last World War, the pacifists will deliver their followers to the militarists, leaving them disoriented and unprepared to defend themselves and their interest. We openly warn the workers against the bourgeois-pacifist betrayers.

**WE ARE NOT PACIFISTS**

Let us make clear our own position on this question. We are absolutely opposed to the measures of conscription which the Roosevelt regime intends to impose upon the American people. They are dictated by and will be used, not to defend the legitimate interests of the American people, but to abuse them in the interests of American imperialism. But our opposition to capitalist conscription has nothing in common with that of the bourgeois-pacifists.

While we are concerned with the defense of the interests of the working class, the bourgeois-pacifists are concerned with defending capitalist interests. This is demonstrated by their support of a small professional army. This means of military defense is far more anti-democratic than mass conscript armies. The officers and specially selected soldiers of the small professional armies have constituted nests of reaction and the mainstay of dictatorship in every country, including the United States.

Unlike the pacifists we do not identify bourgeois conscription with universal military training. Bourgeois conscription is one form of reactionary military service; the small professional force is another. But there is a third form of universal military training that we advocate and support: the military training of the masses under the supervision and control of their own leaders and organizations.

In this warring world nothing is so futile as pacifism. The workers must be ready to defend their homes, their lives and their jobs against enemies at home or abroad. But they cannot leave this task of self-defense to the bosses or the bosses' state any more than they can entrust the defense of their economic interest to the bosses or a company union.

The workers of the United States should demand the right to military training under their own auspices. They should have their own training camps. Worker's Plattsburghs, where they could go and learn the military arts and sciences. They should organize their own Union Guards to defend themselves against attacks from Fascist and reactionary quarters. This is a matter of life and death for the trade-unions and for every American worker.

**Sidney Hook: Recruiting Sergeant**

*THE PROFESSOR IS A NEW, BUT TYPICAL CONVERT TO WAR*

By FELIX MORROW

Sidney Hook has written an article in the July 20 *New Leader* which formally records his transition to the camp of social-chauvinism. This will surprise no one who has watched him join the intellectuals in retreat from Marxism during the last five years. Nevertheless, Hook's first open avowal of support of the "democratic" imperialists meant for me a moment of personal sadness. We had been friends for many years. It is one thing to be aware of the statistics that a good many girls become prostitutes; it is something very different to see your own sister do it.

And how easily and with what scorn the Hook of ten years ago, with his fine intellectual scapel, would have cut to shreds the shabby logical structure by which today's Hook justifies supporting the "democracies" against German imperialism! The Hook of those days would have demanded first of all that, when a man abandons concepts he has avowedly held for some 23 years, he should give an intellectual accounting of why he has dropped them. During these years Hook avowed the international socialist position on war; with Liebknecht he said: "The main enemy is in your own country."

That wars are inevitable under capitalism; that the stakes are markets, sources of raw materials and spheres for capital investment and not the ideological fig-leaves proclaimed by either side; that the state is the executive committee of the ruling class, whatever the difference in the forms of rule of the contending classes; that the working class shall support neither side in a war between the powers but in each country the working class shall take advantage of the war conditions to overthrow its "own" rulers—all this Hook had avowed. Yet now he throws this overboard silently, without explanation! From his article it would be impossible to discover that he had ever believed these or, for that matter, that he had ever heard of these concepts!

**HOOK'S THEORY FOR SUPPORTING THE "DEMOCRACIES"**

Hook's present position, like that of all the more "idealistic" supporters of the one imperialist camp against the other, is based on constructing a basic difference between the two. The *New York Herald Tribune* can call for war against Germany on the basis of cold-blooded references to America's "national interests"; this base metal must be transmuted by the Hooks into hollower stuff. Here is an outline of Hook's theory:

(1). Nazism is not what "the dogma of all Leninist schools—Trotsky, Dutt, Guerin, etc." claims it is—the last phase of finance capitalism. "Functionally defined" property no longer is capitalist. "Power has been transferred from the capitalists"; therefore "the basic instruments of production are owned by the party bureaucracy." For "Finance capitalists—insofar as there are any left in Germany today—take their orders from the Nazi party and not vice versa. Nor is there any evidence that their counsel has greater weight in Nazi party

circles than that of other social groups."

(2). This new, Nazi system of property relations is fundamentally hostile to the ideals of which capitalism arose. "Every one of the ideals of the French Revolution, with one possible exception, is anathema to the Nazi philosophy of life... The one possible exception is fanatical nationalism which did not emerge with the French Revolution but with Napoleon, who arrested even as he consolidated some of its gains... The Nazi critique of capitalism was, and is, that it (capitalism) abides by these ideals even in their very imperfect forms. Hitler is well aware of this. 'Democracy of the West today,' he tells us, 'is the forerunner of Marxism which would be inconceivable without it.'"

(3). "It follows at once that every democrat and socialist must be an irreconcilable opponent of Nazism... Insofar, then, as Nazism wages war against the existing democracies, it is an elementary duty of socialists not merely to join the fight against it but to lead in that fight... It may be true that the most effective struggle against Nazism can be conducted only by a socialist or labor government. But that is no reason for jaggling in support of any government which is genuinely fighting Nazism. It is foolish when we cannot have the best to choose the worst."

It is difficult to believe that Hook cannot be aware of the gaping flaws in his logic:

(1). If his "functional" definition of property were true, Britain like Germany is no longer capitalist. British finance capitalists today take their orders from the government as much as German finance capitalists take their orders from the Hitler government. In both cases this apparent contradiction of the supremacy of private property under capitalism arises from the same cause; the desperation of the capitalist class. The desperation was evidenced earlier in Germany: a defeated capitalist class which had to expand or die and therefore accepted fascist centralization for the task.

In Britain imminent prospect of defeat faces the British capitalists, and it accepts state centralization for the task of resistance. Hook's so-called "functional" definition of property does not really define forms of property. Both Germany and Britain remain domains of private property.

This fact is made most obvious by reference to France. Yesterday France was one of the "democracies"; today it is a fascist regime, avowing itself explicitly opposed to the "liberty, equality, fraternity" of the French revolution. Yet the same system of property continues as before, and the same class continues to rule. There is no Chinese Wall between capitalist democracy and fascism; they are different forms of capitalist rule. Hook's elaborate distinction between the two systems falls to the ground.

(2). It is true that Nazism is fundamentally hostile to the ideals of the French Revolution. But so is "democratic" capitalism. If the ideals of the French Revolution were any factor at all in the war, how explain the capitula-

tion of France? It is obvious that the French ruling class could have abandoned continental France and continued the war from the French colonies. If democratic ideals were a factor, they would have done that. Instead, they preferred to remain in France, to make peace with Hitler, adapt themselves to him, turn the regime into a fascist one. Where, then, is the Chinese Wall between fascism and democracy?

Hook's reference to the introduction of "fanatical nationalism" by Napoleon exposes Hook's false method. Napoleon, let us recall, was the defender of the new property forms of the French Revolution; he represented progress as against his feudal and semi-feudal enemies; he battled away much of the feudal remains throughout France. Yet even with Napoleon, Hook is really admitting the love-purity of the ideals of the French Revolution were beginning to fade!

Since then a century and a quarter have passed, in which capitalism long ago reached its highest point, long ago entered its decline, long ago began to drag humanity down with it. Long ago capitalism by the logic of its development and its degeneration became the enemy of every ideal of its own youth. The whole thing is summed up in the fact that the remnants of democracy now exist only in the most wealthy, the most aristocratic capitalist states, those which, by virtue of keeping hundreds of millions of peoples in slavery in their colonies can therefore still pay the overhead of some democratic forms in the metropolitan centers.

It is a vile lie that Hook perpetrates when he propounds the thesis that the American and British empires today defend against Hitler the ideals of the French Revolution. For every country in which Hitler extirpated those ideals, there is another in which the American or the British rulers extirpated them. Look at South America, Africa and Asia!

**HOOK USED TO EXPOSE FALLACY OF 'LESSER EVIL'**

(3). Because we are enemies of Nazism it does not at all follow that we should join the existing democracies in their war against Germany. That no more follows than that, as socialist enemies of "democratic" capitalism we should join the Nazis in their war against the "democracies." Hook once knew this well; he wrote at that time able polemics against the Stalinist "Popular Front" line and against its twin-brother, the social-democratic theory of the "lesser evil." Yet now he tells us that "it is foolish when we cannot have the best to choose the worst."

Very well, then, we should like to see him apply his mealy-mouthed aphorism to France. The workers should have supported the French government in its war against Hitler, he says. But such support—as Hook once well understood—means inevitably the weakening of the working class. The capitalist class does not cease its pressure upon the workers during the war; striking blows at their unions, cutting wages, conducting propaganda against working class-consciousness, etc. The only real response the workers

can make is to conduct the class struggle. But that means strikes, conflict with the government, that is, interference with the war. Hence if support of the war is necessary, that means no strikes, no resistance of the workers to the pressure of the bosses and the government.

Presumably when the government and the bosses capitulated to Hitler, at that point Hook would have advised the workers to resist, to take over control of France and to continue the struggle against Hitler. But the workers might then have said, to their advisor, Hook:

"When we still had strength, you told us to subordinate ourselves to the democratic government in the name of the fight against fascism. We did as you said. As a result, our organizations ceased to have any power. Today, when we are, thanks to your advice, at our lowest ebb, you tell us: 'Take power.' With what, Professor Hook? With the strength which the capitalists took away from us during the course of the war? With the morale which oozed out of us as a result of the blows we endured without answering by strikes which would have interfered with the thousands of militants who were jailed during the war and whom we could only have saved by political strikes which would have interfered with the war?"

**HOOK ONCE KNEW BETTER; BUT SOMETHING CHANGED**

What answer could Hook give to these accusing questions? None. Like his colleagues of the *New Leader*, he can only turn his back on the French workers, ignore and distort the plain meaning of the lessons of the French experience, and call on the American workers to repeat the mistakes of the French workers.

How can Hook be blind to these obvious facts? one may ask. The answer is that there are none so blind as those who will not see. Hook is merely the latest of that numerous strata of intellectuals who have succumbed to the pressure of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. They have succumbed because they were vulnerable to bourgeois pressure. Their mental capacities, indubitable and potentially of such enormous value to the working class, are perverted in the service of the "democratic" imperialists. And perverted because the alternative—ostracism by "public" opinion, the loss of comfortable jobs—was one they could not face.

"It won't last," Hook laughed, when he was first appointed chairman of the Department of Philosophy of Washington Square College, New University. "How long can a revolutionist hold such a job?" Then later on there was a second stage, when he grinned and said: "You party men will have to take the rap, but I won't. I have no party responsibilities. I can keep quiet when the war comes." And now—oh happy accident, oh fortunate coincidence—he has evolved a political position which in no way interferes with his chairmanship. The power of the human mind is evidenced in the evolution of Sidney Hook. Or, to put it plainly, renegeage has its explanation.

**Sovietization Of The Baltic Step Forward**

By ALBERT GOLDMAN

When the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., at its next meeting, will grant the petitions of the Parliaments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to be incorporated into the Soviet Union (and no doubt exists but that it will), it will once more be evidence of the fact that the foundations of the October Revolution are still operative in spite of Stalin. The basic achievement of the October Revolution, the nationalization of private property in the means of production, is extended to other territories and no class-conscious worker can raise any objection to that.

The Sovietization of the Baltic states reminds us of the controversy that raged in our party before the minority, unwilling to remain a minority and coarsure of the correctness of its fantastic theories, decided to set up a little shop of its own.

When Stalin first sent the Red Army into the Baltic states and limited himself to stationing soldiers at important bases, the minority gleefully pointed out that Stalin was leaving capitalist relations in those states intact. Which would prove, according to the leaders of the minority, that Stalin was not interested in destroying capitalism, a position which we never contradicted.

What the leaders of the minority failed to see was that once Stalin for any reason whatever acquires control over territory where capitalist property relations exist, the tendency must be for him to incorporate such territory into the Soviet Union and, upon incorporation, capitalist property relations must be destroyed and displaced by nationalized property.

Stalin is not interested in extending the social revolution. He is interested primarily in the rule of the bureaucracy which he represents. But since Stalin heads a state based on nationalized property any territory acquired by that state cannot be left under capitalist property relations.

The ruling clique in the Soviet Union cannot afford to divide its power with an alien ruling class.

Should Stalin permit capitalism to function in any territory that had become part of the Soviet Union it would mean that he was actually determined to bring capitalism back to the Soviet Union.

**'Theory' of 'Soviet Imperialism'**

How grotesque and senseless "theory" of Soviet imperialism must appear to any one who thinks in Marxist terms. Every piece of territory into which Stalin sent his armed forces and which has been incorporated into the Soviet Union has been wrested from imperialism, the only kind of imperialism that Marxists know of as existing at the present time, the expansionist policy of finance capitalism.

The resources of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania are no longer open to imperialist exploitation unless they are taken away from the Soviet Union.

And superficial wisecracks will still contend that there is no difference between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany! But these people have never yet explained why it is that Hitler has never called the Reichstag to proclaim the nationalization of land, banking and industry in any conquered territory.

Individual capitalists, especially Jewish capitalists, run away from Hitler's rule. The capitalist class as such is expropriated under Stalin's rule.

We do not like bureaucratic socialization of industry. We would much rather prefer socialization of industry coming as a result of a social revolution than as a result of the conquest of territory by the Red Army under Stalin. And it is obvious that Stalin's bureaucratic method can only conquer small countries.

But as against capitalism even bureaucratic socialization is a step forward and we shall support it as against all people who for any pretext whatever will defend capitalism.

**Baltic Masses None Too Pleased**

That the working masses of the Baltic countries are as enthusiastic about their incorporation into the Soviet Union as the Stalinist press would want us to believe can be seriously doubted. They live too close to the Soviet Union and they therefore know too much about real conditions there to be enthusiastic about the happy life promised them under the leadership of the Kremlin despot.

But the lot of the workers and peasants of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia under capitalism has been a miserable one at best. Probably hundreds of thousands of them cannot picture anything worse than what they have experienced.

The class-conscious workers of the Baltic countries, however, understand that capitalism throughout the world must be destroyed, that it offers nothing but fascism and war. These workers will support the nationalization of industry. And together with their class brothers in the Soviet Union they will continue the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The corruption of Stalinism must be destroyed in order to make the Soviet Union the powerfully attractive force that it should be for the masses throughout the world.