

The Negro Struggle

by Robert L. Birchman

Negro People Hold the Balance

The 1940 elections are of tremendous importance to the colored race. They take place in the midst of world shaking events. The war in Europe sharpens and the day comes closer when workers, colored and white, will be called on to give their lives to protect Wall Street's profits.

All these things affect the lives and conditions of every worker. They affect the colored worker most of all because he is always hardest hit in every crisis. The Negro people cannot ignore these things, they have to do something about them. But in order to know what to do, they must understand what the situation really is, and why.

The first step on the Negro's road to freedom is an intensified participation in politics. An old argument against this is: "We don't have enough political strength to gain anything." Recent studies by the Gallup Poll prove this argument completely false. In May this Poll found that there are eleven states in which the Negro vote is the decisive one, the vote which will probably swing these states. They were Delaware, Indiana, New York, Minnesota, Illinois, New Jersey, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Connecticut and Nebraska.

True, the colored man has not benefited much from politics so far. But that is because he has used his political strength against his own interests. A majority of the colored workers have always voted for either the Democratic or Republican Parties. A brief examination of these parties and their presidential candidates will show why this has been a tragic mistake. Here we will not take up at this time their policies in regard to the general questions of war, low wages, unemployment, etc. Just analyzing their policies in regard to the special problems of the colored race is enough to expose them for what they are. In the words of Roosevelt, "Let's look at the record." Let's look at his record.

The Roosevelt Record

During almost eight years in office Roosevelt developed the idea of "must legislation". By this was meant the bills in Congress that he badly wanted passed, and on many occasions he has publicly thrown his weight behind such bills. Often he has made the proposals himself, on such things as money for armaments, conscription, etc. During these eight years several versions of the Anti-Lynch Bill were introduced. Not once did he offer a single word in favor of such bills! Each time he was as mum as a dummy while his party joined hands with the Republicans to kill the bill. In his years of office he has made hundreds of speeches, talked on thousands of things—but never once a speech, or a sentence, or a word about the Anti-Lynch Bill.

Eight southern states use a poll tax to keep the colored people from voting. Several bills, supported by Negroes and the labor movement, have been introduced in Congress to eliminate this vicious legislation. They all went where the Anti-Lynch Bill went. And Roosevelt continued to make speeches about democracy... in Europe. From him, not a word, not a syllable, only the silence of the grave, on the poll tax.

Jim Crow Is a General

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Roosevelt has much to say about its policies. No important decisions are made without his approval. But the history of the Army under Roosevelt is the same history of discrimination against colored soldiers and applicants as under the Republicans before him. Negroes are given the dirtiest jobs in the Army, they are denied the opportunity to advance themselves, they suffer insult and segregation. Jim Crow is a general in the Army, but the Commander-in-Chief has never been heard to say a word about it.

All this absolute silence from a man who talks so much means only one thing: Roosevelt favors the policy of discrimination!

Roosevelt was not elected and re-elected on the basis of his smile alone. His election was made possible by a political machine. This machine is well known as the Democratic Party. Its main source of strength comes from one place, the "solid south". There the Democratic Party rules supreme. There the Negro suffers everything but legal slavery. There is the home of the lynch mob. There such good Democrats as Senator Bilbo, who wants to ship the colored people back to Africa, and Cotton Ed Smith, and the other Ku-Kluxers and night-riders, are the masters, and when they say, "A third term for Roosevelt," it means something. What self-respecting colored worker can deliver them his vote?

The Democratic Party belongs to these men. Support them and you will be supporting the whole system of Jim Crow. Put them back in office and you will be putting them in a position where they can tighten the chains of opposition around you. Fight for them and you will be fighting to keep the Anti-Lynch Bill and other progressive legislation in the drawer. Vote for them and you will be voting for discrimination in private employment, on relief, civil service and in the armed forces.

(Next week: The Republicans)

Trotsky's Assassin "Doesn't Remember"

(Continued from Page 1)

show you that they were not asked of you before?

A: I will not answer because you want to make me fall into contradictions. I will answer no more than what I have already said: I don't remember the dates nor the subjects of conversations nor the number of conversations I had with Trotsky.

JUDGE: If you are answering truthfully, then you should not fear that you will fall into any contradictions by repeating your answers.

The whole fraud of Jackson's explanation, designed solely to cover up the GPU, is summed up in the final question and answer of this afternoon:

Q: You claim, then, that you never received any letter of recommendation from the alleged member of the Bureau of the Fourth International to Trotsky; you claim further that Trotsky knew that you did not speak Russian and that he knew you were not an organizer in the Fourth International and not even a member of the Fourth International; you claim further, that within six weeks or so after you first met Trotsky, he told you to proceed to Russia to organize acts of sabotage and make attempts on the life of Stalin and other leaders of the bureaucracy, and you claim also that Trotsky did not give you any details but simply told you to go ahead and do those things. Is that right?

A: Yes, I didn't know what was in Trotsky's mind and I didn't make any calculations.

The assassin, as can be seen, is extremely cautious and extremely hard; it is doubtful if more can be done with him than to prove that he is lying. But that is being proved to the hilt! And it is of course clear to all honest people that the only purpose he has in lying is to cover up his GPU roots.

New C. P. Moves

Unlike the attacks on Cardenas appearing in the U. S. Daily Worker, the Stalinist party here is crawling on its belly to Cardenas. A C. P. delegation waited hat in hand to see him yesterday, but he would not receive them. The delegation met one of his secretaries and waited for an hour about their support of Cardenas. He, of course, stands by his denunciation of the "agents of a foreign power" who murdered Trotsky.

Having cautiously waited for three weeks to make sure that Jackson's accomplices were not caught—they have undoubtedly fled the country by now—and having assured themselves that Jackson won't spill anything, the Communist Party officials have come out proposing an investigation of the C. P. to establish their innocence. Since a systematic investigation of the assassination is already going on, and since an equally systematic investigation is being carried out concerning the May 24 attempt on Trotsky, for which David Serrano, member of the Political Bureau of the C. P. is being held for trial, it costs the C. P. exactly nothing to make this public proposal for an investigation.

Simultaneously, however, the C. P. has issued a special edition of La Voz de Mexico with another line of defense. It consists of one long spurge about Almazan, the key to which is this sentence: "The Communist Party ardently calls on all the people to concentrate all its forces in the decisive fight against the seditious and reactionary plans of Almazan." And forget about the assassination of Trotsky, naturally. While yesterday these scoundrels claimed that the anti-Communist propaganda was being used as a red herring to divert attention away from Almazan, today they are themselves using Almazan as a red herring to divert attention from their own crime.

A civil war in Mexico today would be a godsend to the Stalinists!

Trotsky's Last Work

MANIFESTO OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL on the IMPERIALIST WAR and the PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

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Siqueiros, Leader of May 24 Attempt On Trotsky, Defends His Foul Deed

By WALTER ROURKE

MEXICO CITY, Sept. 14—The Mexican public has been witness to the curious spectacle of a GPU agent writing to the press in order to defend his crime and revile his victim. David Alfaro Siqueiros, admitted leader in the May 24th assault on the Trotsky house and fugitive from justice, has written four letters and articles from his hiding place.

He repeats the usual Stalinist slanders against Trotsky, criticizes the Cardenas Government for "persecuting" the guilty, and insists that the Communist Party had nothing to do with the crime. He says that the only reason that he is in hiding is his fear of being caught in jail if Almazan revolts and thereby he would be prevented from participating in the struggle against the reaction.

The Communist Party of Mexico, of course, disowns Siqueiros. But he is a product of Stalinist "training," a member who was "expelled" because he had bigger things to do; he was to serve in Stalin's secret police.

The writings of Siqueiros may be accepted as the voice of the GPU; either Siqueiros himself has written these articles and letters or the instructions of superiors—or other agents are writing them and forging Siqueiros' name.

In either case the signature really reads "GPC". These signed documents present with surprising frankness the real Stalinist policy as known by that highest organ of Stalinism—its secret murder society, the GPU.

STALIN'S COMPLAINT AGAINST CARDENAS

In an article entitled "The Real Political Identity of the Cardenas Government" published in a weekly, HOY, Siqueiros discusses the reasons for Cardenas' "persecution" of the assassins. Cardenas, he says, is the "... loyal, mechanical executor of the violent repressions and condemnation by that (bourgeois-democratic) State against the transgressors of its Law, without stopping to consider the political propositions and the human reasons for their procedure. Without considering also the political position of these persons." And why did Cardenas act so arbitrarily? In order to demonstrate that "... his Government... was not a Bolshevik Government, the insolent Socialist Government that the noisy campaign of the extreme right of the North American press talks about..."

Siqueiros' criterion of a progressive government is the degree of freedom the GPU is allowed—the degree to which being an agent of Stalin excuses crimes against the working class. The GPU's conception of a "Bolshevik" Gov't is one on the Russian pattern where frame-up and legalized murder is developed to a high technique. Cardenas should take into consideration that "... the supposed responsible persons for the assault were not professional delinquents, but rather recognized fighters of the Revolution, who had fought in Mexico and abroad..." for the same principles as those supported by Cardenas. (We might ask who "recognizes" as fighters for the revolution such agents as the Arenal brothers, Serrano, Carlos Contreras, Siqueiros and the murderer himself—Jackson.)

The GPU insists through Siqueiros that a "progressive" government should give its members the same rights they have in Russia—to murder opponents with impunity in the name of the "Revolution." Such is the service of the Stalinists to the cause of Bolshevism. A more frightful slander of the significance of Bolshevism could not be devised by the most reactionary members of the capitalist class.

It will be remembered that after the May 24th attack, the GPU, following its usual practice, attempted to frame the victim and make him appear as the culprit; it tried to turn accuser into accused. The official and unofficial Stalinist press developed the theory of "self-assault." i. e. that Trotsky had shot up his own house. This theory was no doubt a substitute for the original intention to frame the guards in the event that the attack had succeeded in killing Trotsky. How-

\*Mike Gold, apparently ignorant of the fact that his Mexican comrades had conceded Siqueiros' responsibility for the attempt on Trotsky and had disowned Siqueiros, wrote in the Daily Worker a defense of Siqueiros' innocence and said: "Siqueiros, I understand, was not a member of the Communist Party, but he accepted its leadership, the outstanding Mexican intellectual to do so." (Daily Worker, Sept. 2, 1940). Now the Stalinists will have to disown Mike Gold!

ever, we can be sure that the GPU had several alternative stories, just as it had several alternative plans to carry out the murder. Siqueiros reveals one of those stories which, although it never came into actual use, has the unmistakable earmarks of a GPU lie.

In the event of civil strife or trouble, the GPU planned to attack Trotsky's house in the role of enraged citizens instead of policemen: "... complacencies and lack of legal energy on the part of the State before its reactionary and imperialistic opposition inevitably carries with it the 'illegal' sporadic force of the base of the people..." It is, of course, ridiculous for Siqueiros to pretend that an attack of twenty-five gangsters, showing an intimate knowledge of the interior of the house, with five cars, several machine guns, uniforms of the police and army, with the aid of women spies who operated for months before the attack was a "sporadic" act of the "base of the people." What Siqueiros describes to us is an unused alibi of the Stalinists. Following the intense campaign in LA VOZ DE MEXICO (official C.P. organ) and

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EL POPULAR and FUTURO (unofficial organs) calling Trotsky an enemy of Mexico in 57 different varieties, an attack on the Trotsky house could have been named a "sporadic" act of the "base of the people." Since no difficulties arose over the elections by the time of the first GPU attack, this excuse was dropped.

The remainder of Siqueiros' articles is simply a repetition of the Communist Party line from which he diverges only to justify the murder. Thus in a certain sense he is more honest than official policy. In words as in action, Siqueiros carries this policy one more step to its logical conclusion. He not only accepted the lies of Stalin that Trotsky was the greatest renegade in history, a friend of Almazan, a counter-revolutionist etc., but also accepted the order of Stalin—to murder his most uncompromising enemy. "Without anti-Stalinism," says Siqueiros, "Trotsky would have died from hunger"; this should read "Due to Stalinism, Trotsky did die from a pickaxe."

Not only did he accept the murder assignment but he also defends his crime. Why does he

write such self-incriminating letters? Possibly the GPU hopes to distract attention from Serrano—a member of the Political Committee who has been detained by the police since June for the May attack. If Siqueiros is out of the country, this course would present little danger for him.

Or is the GPU planning to kill Siqueiros? If so, they may hope to blame friends of Trotsky as the murderers; thus they could have him write his slanders and self-incriminating letters against Trotsky in order to provide a "motive." Or do they think that such letters will convince the world that there is no connection between Siqueiros and the Communist Party? In any case they will fail. A mere distraction is of little value. If Siqueiros is killed, everyone will know that it was not the revengeful hand of Trotskyists, but the silencing hand of the GPU that did the job. And no one will permit the Communist Party to free itself of responsibility by announcing that Siqueiros was "expelled." His words are those of a GPU agent and his acts the fulfillment of an order from Stalin.

SIDNEY HILLMAN

Today He Is the Chief Lieutenant Of the Bosses in Labor's Ranks

As the war crisis deepens, Big Business no longer cares to exercise its rule through their puppet politicians. Politicians are greedy and undependable. Big Business moves directly to the control room of the government.

The control room in the defense program is the National Defense Advisory Commission. This group is in charge of organizing the production and purchasing the goods needed by the war machine. What can be more pleasantly profitable and patriotic than leaving a \$100,000-a-year job in industry to become a dollar-a-year man on the Commission or one of its staffs—and making millions by ordering goods from one's own firm or utilizing the stock market moves prepared in the Commission?

The National Defense Commission is Big Business personified, at the control room in Washington. BUSINESS WEEK for August 10 lists the personnel of the Commission and of its staffs, administrations and divisions. Among the corporations represented are: General Motors; U. S. Steel; Burlington & Quincy; Air Reduction; J. G. White Engineering; S.K.F. Industries (mining); Eastman Kodak; Malcolm Bell & Co. (tin); Chas. Hardy & Co. (antimony); Mica Insulator; Union Carbide & Carbon; Bethlehem Steel; General Foods; J. P. Stevens (textiles); Wellington Sears (cotton); du Pont; Scott Paper; Mellon Institute (chemical and coal products); Union Pacific; N. Y. Central; Libbey-Owens-Ford; United Aircraft; Curtiss-Wright; Ethyl Gasoline; Studebaker; McGraw-Hill; Motch & Merryweather Machinery; Giddings & Lewis Machine Tool; American Telephone & Telegraph; General Electric; Union Cargo Line (barges); Columbia Broadcasting; R. H. Macy, etc.

Among the trade associations represented are: Rubber Manufacturers; Iron & Steel Institute; Edison Electric Institute; Wool Manufacturers; Tanners Council; Association of American Railroads; Lake Carriers; National Association of Motor Bus Operators; American Trucking; National Petroleum; Federal Reserve Board; Millers National Federation; Russell Sage Foundation, etc.

HILLMAN HELPS TO MASK ALL THIS In ordinary times the people would be alarmed at the prospect of the banks, the stock exchange and the employers' associations descending on Washington to install themselves in the seats of power. The concept of national defense helps mask the move. The fact that President Roosevelt, still popular, invites Big Business to take its place at the festive board, helps. The fact that one member of organized labor was induced to join the seven-man board, helps.

Sidney Hillman was designated for a post on the National Defense Advisory Commission because he is labor's outstanding statesman; that is, he can sell out his followers smoother and slicker and with less conscience than al-

most any other figure in the labor movement. Hillman's Socialist-Democratic training accentuates these qualities.

The industrialists who serve on the Commission are there for one purpose: To Get. They mean to get orders for themselves and the corporations they represent, and to get concessions from Congress.

Sidney Hillman and his fellow labor statesmen are on the Commission for one purpose only: To Give. Their sole task is to induce organized labor to bow to the war-time needs of Big Business, to give up one condition after another, one weapon after another, and above all, not to resist. The garment workers have raised Hillman as high above their heads as they can reach. It is Hillman's task to betray them and the whole working class. He must induce the workers to accept the speed-up; to give up their best weapon, the strike; to give their sons to the army; to give their loyalty to the employers and the government that rob them and organize their misery and death.

Hillman has made a career of this sort of job. For thirty years he has been an expert class-collaborationist. He can have no illusions about his functions on the National Defense Commission. His own paper, THE ADVANCE, published by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, reprints Lundwell Denny's article from the WORLD-TELEGRAM:

"Hillman is supposed to keep labor in step with the defense production speed-up—and organized labor does not like speed-up and stretch-outs. He is supposed to prevent stoppages and strikes—and unions rely on strikes as their legitimate and best weapon... He is supposed to develop wholesale apprentice training in war industries—while unions restrict their rigid apprentice systems to control labor supply and wage rates, and oppose governmental interference..."

"His chief asset is the confidence he inspires. He is trusted almost as widely in business as in labor circles... His chief weakness is that his loyalty to the President is a blank check—if it is Roosevelt, it's right!"

Indeed Hillman is understood and trusted by business. The July issue of THE ADVANCE publishes editorial excerpts from fifteen large daily papers lauding Hillman the labor statesman!

The August issue of the same paper boldly describes a phase of Hillman's activity: "At 4 o'clock the morning of July 4, Sidney Hillman put down his telephone, relieved himself with a happy sigh, turned out the lights and went to bed. His intervention, by long distance, had been successful. There would be no strike of CIO cooks and stewards on

American merchant ships. A truce had been declared in San Francisco."

There were no happy sighs from the cooks and stewards, who had to go to work with their demands unmet.

WHAT HILLMAN DID TO THE BOEING STRIKE

A typical Hillman job is the threatened strike of 6,000 members of the AFL Machinists Union at the Boeing Aircraft Company. If ever a strike was justified, it was this strike, voted by 97% of the unionists involved, in a situation where the company was proposing to slash the hourly wages for flying-in from 62 1/2c. to 55c. The Machinists were demanding a wage scale more nearly comparable with the scale paid for similar work in other industries. This situation was important not only to the Boeing workers but to all workers in war industries.

As Lundquist, leader of the Aeronautical Mechanics Union Local 751, said in his press release:

"The union recognizes that the successful conclusion of its negotiations with the employers will act as an opening wedge in a nation-wide campaign by workers in war industries to gain for themselves a fair share of the enormous armament expenditures. The establishment of wage standards and working conditions as demanded by the union will serve as a model for the rest of the industry, and as a vivid example to workers everywhere. On the other hand, failure to gain these basic principles will be a set-back not only to aircraft workers, but will possibly encourage employer-interests to attempt to lower still more the living standards of all workers."

Hillman and Knudsen, working together with the president of the International Association of Machinists, first put through a ten-day truce, and then maneuvered the union back to work with its unmet demands to be thrown into arbitration. Instead of the Boeing struggle providing an inspiration and a rallying point for workers in defense industry, the outcome of that fight has been a set-back for all workers.

In one of his last messages to his comrades in the United States, Leon Trotsky warned that life in this period will revolve around the war, that the war will develop centralization and military dictatorship; that during the war, the bourgeoisie cannot allow the workers any new concessions, and must rescind old concessions; that unless there is an awakening of the spirit of criticism and independence of the war machine, the unions will be reduced to sort of philanthropic institutions; and that if the workers don't place themselves and their unions on a military basis, the unions will be doomed.

Hillman's road is the road of disintegration and death for the unions. Only the road of struggle and independence can save labor now.

The Chinese Get a Lesson In Democracy

By GEORGE STERN

Thirty-six Chinese seamen last Saturday completed an elementary course in Anglo-American democracy at Pier 97, North River.

These men signed on the British freighter Silverlarch a year and a half ago for two years' service in Far Eastern waters. They were periodically in home ports and could renew among their own people the self-respect and integrity so brutally trampled on by their British masters.

When the war came, however, the vessel was transferred to the trans-Atlantic run. The Chinese crew had to go along willy-nilly. They ran the submarine gauntlet in convoys running between American and British ports. To their miserable quarters and paltry pay the British masters added the risks of war and virtual imprisonment aboard ship.

For in Britain and Canada wartime laws hemmed them in and in United States ports no Chinese may land—on pain of a \$1,000 fine for any shipmaster that lets him set foot ashore.

The United States, great and good friend of dear, heroic China, is like the anti-Semite whose best friends are Jews. Morally and physically syphilitic refugee millionaires from Europe are welcome with their sacks of money and gems. But no Chinese—excepting an occasional student, business man, or diplomat, may defile these shores.

The Chinese seamen on the Silverlarch, however, had no more stomach for breasting the perils of Britain's war. Chinese seamen, better than most workers of the Pacific, know that Britain's battle is no battle of theirs! They were in the first and front ranks of China's own battle against Britain not so many years ago. And there is battling enough to do at home in China's own cause.

So they started off in a body from the Silverlarch to try to see the Chinese consul, to state their grievances, and somehow to get back home.

At the foot of the gangplank they met American democracy. To them it materialized in the form of two gun muzzles, pointed in their direction. As they tried to make their peaceful and reasonable intent plain, screaming sirens announced reinforcements for the gun muzzles. Three radio cars and eighteen cops. By this small army they were backed up the gangplank.

THE SINS OF THESE CHINESE

British officers told police a sneering story. The Chinese seamen were "upset" when anti-aircraft guns were put aboard and tested at Singapore. They saw several ships torpedoed. "That was about all the Chinese nerves could stand..." The British official press is all aglow about its own "nerves" under the Nazi air attack. But Chinese nerves have been braced against Japan's equally brutal assault for more than three years and were braced before that for a hundred years against the repeated shock of British steel against Chinese flesh.

But the Chinese aboard were not only sinning in trying to keep out of the way of German bombs meant for British ships. They were also, it seems, getting a little tired of the arrogance of the white man's burden-bearers. Here's how it is told by the Herald Tribune:

"The Chinese were a bit more cheeky than they have been before, (a) man from the ship said. One Chinese who waits on table for the ship's apprentices, young men serving a four-year stretch preparatory to becoming officers, told one apprentice he did not want to be called 'Boy' anymore but wished to be addressed as 'Mr. Kong.'"

"One of the apprentices said later they felt there was no use in knocking the Chinese down when he made the remark, but decided instead to report the incident to the steward and have his pay docked for insubordination."

BRITAIN'S REAL FACE SHOWS

Out of this little story stares the face of British imperial rule over its Oriental slaves. In China inflated British clerks can employ Chinese servants for decades and never know them by any other name than 'Boy'. Hewers of wood and bearers of water are not persons entitled to names. And lo, should one of them demand of his masters to be called by his name instead of a tag, it is time to show the famous British self-control. Don't knock him down—just have his pay docked...for insubordination! In the old days on the China coast the mess boy Kong would probably have had his head smashed for his impudence. But right now the British are fighting for democracy. So Kong is merely kept an unwilling prisoner and gets his pay docked.

Through this single tiny incident runs all the threads that make up the ugly pattern of imperialist rule and inter-imperialist conflict, bourgeois morals, and bourgeois lies and prejudices.

Britain fighting for its "democratic" empire lashes its colonial slaves in its galleys. "Democratic" America—its press and politicians bleating about "tolerance"—showed on Pier 97 the real face of its racial hatreds and prejudices, exalted in the laws of the land and represented by its guns.

The thirty-six Chinese seamen on the Silverlarch are learning about "democracy". It is good to remember that the staunchest fighters of the Chinese revolution came from the ranks of the thousands of Chinese workers taken to France, during the last war to do "coolie work" behind the lines. They, too, learned about "democracy."

Join the Socialist Workers Party