

WORKERS' FORUM

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about?—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

Worker Asks Information Demands Equal Rights From Petty-Bourgeois Revisionist Group

Editor: Here is a copy of a letter I have sent to the so-called Workers Party.

Editor Labor Action: November 4, 1940.

John L. Lewis has just concluded a political pact with the Republican Party, the more reactionary tendency in American capitalism, just as Stalin made a pact with the Nazis, the most reactionary tendency in world imperialism. Both Lewis and Stalin were prompted by purely opportunistic aims and motives. They acted in the most brutal and bureaucratic manner, injuring the interests and arousing the resentment and revulsion of workers everywhere.

I should now like to ask you petty-bourgeois revisionists who split away from the Fourth International because of its unconditional support to the Soviet Union when involved in war with a capitalist country the following questions:

1. In view of the reactionary policies and actions of John L. Lewis in the present presidential conflict, does the CIO still remain a worker's organization?

2. If a CIO union, say the United Mine Workers, led by Lewis, should initiate an attack upon a company union controlled by the bosses or their immediate agents, which side should we support?

3. With Lewis in control of its leadership, can we assert in advance that, as revolutionists, we unconditionally support the CIO in any conflict with the bosses?

4. How could the cause of the workers be best defended in such a struggle? By remaining neutral? Or by demanding, as a precondition for participation on the CIO side the removal of Lewis? Or by fighting against the bosses and their agents at the side of the CIO members, while explaining to them the necessity of ridding themselves of their reactionary leaders, like Lewis?

5. How does your position on these questions of labor politics harmonize with your attitude of indifference or hostility toward the analogous problem of the defense of the Soviet Union?

G. E. P.S. If possible could I have an authoritative answer from your expert on this question, Professor Burnham?

Stalinist Henchmen Follow Lewis In Giving Support to Wilkie

By LYDIA BYDELL

Dirtiest and most cynical of all the political opportunists trailing in John L. Lewis's wake are the Stalinists and their CIO henchmen. Ever since October 25 when Lewis made his historical radio broadcast of American labor, the Kremlin boys have been outdoing themselves in the art of double-dealing.

The Daily Worker blossoms out before its startled public one day with a full-page advertisement for Wilkie and a Voice of the People speaks up in the columns of its brother sheet, Freiheit, wondering how come. Whereupon the editors of Freiheit "explain." The Communist party, they say, cannot be held responsible for sources of income through the sale of ads by the Daily Worker, since the paper was "sold" and is now owned by two old ladies of virginal political innocence (the third of the trio having recently died and turned up in her obituary as a member of the Communist party.)

Stalinist stooge Len De Caux, editor of the CIO News, in its issue of November 4 throws the party line around like a rope artist. The paper beams with praise of Lewis and his "great role," "courageous leadership" and "constant wise guidance."

One after another of the second and third-rank leadership of the CIO (known through sad experience to the rank and file as close "fellow travelers" if not actual members of the C. P.) comes forward in its pages with wreaths and garlands to place on the brow and lay at the feet of their "great leader," John L. Lewis. Sometimes one almost feels they have him confused with another opportunist betrayer of labor named Joseph Stalin.

HARRY BRIDGES FOR WILKIE

Loudest and most obscene of them is Harry Bridges who on November 1st stood up and did his well-known trained seal act before 700 members of the CIO Industrial Union Council in San Francisco. He repeated for Wilkie's benefit the little trick of sell-out he perfected in 1936 when he conducted his labor agitation under the slogan of "Defeat Landon at all costs" and used his influence to postpone strike action of the Maritime Federation in order not to embarrass Roosevelt, then running for a second term.

Although "not endorsing any candidate," Bridges made it very plain that the most important job before labor was to see that Lewis remained as president of the CIO. Since John L. himself has already declared he will resign from the CIO presidency if Wilkie loses, the conclusion is obvious that Stalinist Harry is asking for votes for the Republican candidate.

"The New Deal doesn't like me," wails Bridges, "and wants to get rid of me—and soon will if I haven't got the support of organized labor and its leaders." Having thus belatedly admitted—and only because his own miserable hide is in danger apparently—that not the bourgeois government but the strong fist of organized labor is the only guarantee of protection to the trade union movement, Bridges pulls the knife out of one side of the back of labor and plunges it into the other by asking support for Wilkie.

IN ADDITION: The Negro faces the certainty that bosses' control will be used to maintain and further the system of Jim Crowism in the armed forces.

JIM CROWISM IN THE ARMY

(3.) The system of Jim Crowism in the armed forces demonstrates very clearly to the Negro the hypocrisy of slogans about "war for democracy." But the ruling class maintains Jim Crowism in the armed forces. For it cannot wipe out this system in the armed forces without endangering the whole system of Jim Crowism practiced in "civilian life": in industry, in civil service, on relief, at the ballot booth, in housing, theaters, restaurants—economically, politically, socially. The capitalists fear that NO NEGRO TRAINED TO HANDLE A GUN WOULD PEACEFULLY GO BACK TO THE OLD LIFE OF DISCRIMINATION, SEGREGATION, DISFRANCHISEMENT AND INSULT AFTER TRAINING IN AN ARMY WHERE HE WAS TREATED AS AN EQUAL WITH WHITE SOLDIERS.

In the last war, when Jim Crowism was also the established policy in the forces of the United States, the general staff's fears that the Negro soldiers might become instilled with ideas of equality from their contact with French soldiers reached the point where they sent out the in-

terests of Wall Street may be more open and outspoken, but it is not more effective than that of the Roosevelt Democrats? Must they now edit out the sentence on page 13 which correctly declares the Republican party to be "the party of the Associated Farmers and the open shoppers"? Do they still want to mouth the statement—still impeccably true—that "both parties are war parties, M-Day parties, parties of imperialism, reaction and hunger"?

IN LINE WITH THE CP

The CIO NEWS of November 4 reports some 5,000 wires received at Lewis's office, 90% of them acclaiming his stand. The list of signers of these love-letters reads like a roll-call of Stalinist stooges in the CIO, including such well-known figures as Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, Michael Quill, president of the Transport Workers Union, Edward T. Cheyfitz, national executive secretary of the National Association of Die Casting Workers Union, Lewis Merrill, president of the United Office and Professional Workers Union, Henry Johnson, assistant director of the Packing-house Workers Organization, and J. F. Jurich, president of the International Fishermen and Allied Workers of America.

PANEGYRICS TO THE "LEADER"

If there were any doubt as to the source of inspiration for many of the telegrams reproduced, one look at their wording is a dead give-away. "Congratulations on the most glorious and courageous position taken by a real leader of labor. I wholeheartedly support your objectives." (Jurich, International Fishermen). "We... pledge our unstinted and wholehearted support to follow his (Lewis's) great leadership and to go along with the policies as outlined in this presidential election." (Packinghouse Workers' officers). "We declare our sincere belief that the millions of workers and their families will... bring about an overwhelming defeat of F. D.

Roosevelt." (N.M.U.). "Your leadership needed more than ever. Count me in as one of those who stand solidly behind you." (Edward T. Cheyfitz). "I am in complete agreement with your objectives." (Lewis Merrill). "Endorse your stand 100% and urge all our members to vote for Wilkie." (Utility Workers Organizing Committee). "Congratulations on your stand in refusing endorsement to Roosevelt because of his failure to fulfill obligations and promises to labor." (Michael Quill). "The officers of this local will exhaust every avenue to convince our membership that your position is correct." (United Rubber Workers). "We shall do everything possible to make your speech come true and also make it impossible for you to resign as president of the CIO." (Robb, Indiana Industrial Union Council). "I associate myself with you and all that you have said and approve without reservations." (Berry, Printing Pressmen).

These opportunists and lickspittles! How they trample each other in the mud to get on the bandwagon. They long ago lost all regard for principle and all concern for the basic political interests of the working class. Now they have left only that cheap consideration which is the one item in the baggage of every opportunist: "Who can pay me the most; to him I shall sell out!"

SELLING THE APPEAL

MINN. SPECIAL EDITION

10,000 COPIES!!! All branches this week will receive (along with their bills) a sample copy of the Minnesota Edition of the SOCIALIST APPEAL. 10,000 of these special APPEALS, with a completely different front page designed for the local campaign issues were ordered by the Twin Cities two weeks ago. The appearance of the impressive MINNESOTA APPEAL climaxed a genuinely Bolshevik propaganda campaign around the senatorial candidacy of Dr. Grace Carlson.

All during the months of the campaign the large Minnesota bundle-orders had been utilized to further election work. However, when the 10,000 Specials hit town, forces in the Twin Cities were mobilized to get every single paper into a working-class home. Maps of selected areas in working class districts had previously been prepared, squads organized to cover them. These squads leaped into action, and before the week was over had successfully completed their task. The Minnesota comrades at the same time never for a moment forgot the problems of the center in their zeal. The money for the issue reached us even before the bundles arrived in Minneapolis. (With that type of cooperation, comrades, we can put out a different special edition every week.)

JERSEY POLL ATTRACTS ST. PAUL UNIONISTS

ST. PAUL, Minn.—"The headline on the New Jersey Conscription Poll was a very attractive one for the Trade Unionists here. I sold that issue at the CIO Packing-house Union," writes I. S., "and they took the paper eagerly and stumbled up the stairs reading it. The few who spurned the paper were told by other unionists that they were making a mistake. In the words of one of them, 'You ought to read it. It would be good for you.'"

BUFFALO JOINS APPEAL ARMY

BUFFALO, N. Y.—"Here's some more money on our bill," write our industrious APPEAL workers in Buffalo. "Had a small Red Sunday yesterday—collected

the abuses of the armed forces under control of the bosses which impel the white workers to fight for workers' control of military training apply even more acutely to the Negro.

For the Negro worker as well as the white worker then, the main question today is taking control away from the bosses and placing it in the hands of the workers, through their class organizations, the trade unions.

Since the Negro, however, has a special problem in the armed forces, just as he has in civilian life (that is, he suffers extra oppression and persecution because he is a Negro), the Socialist Workers Party must so concretize its general slogans as to express the special needs of the Negro in the struggle for union control of military training. This will make it easier for Negro workers-soldiers to join in the general struggle.

These slogans can be formulated as follows:

Abolish Jim Crow in the Army and Navy!

End segregation! Stop shoving Negroes into separate regiments where they can be most easily discriminated against!

Open the doors for Negroes in

"National Defense" Costs

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—The Agricultural Dept. today advised consumers to expect a "moderate" increase in food costs during 1941. Meats, dairy and poultry products, fruits and vegetables—including most of the food staples—are in line for price increases.

As for the Stalinists who first supported Roosevelt with their Peoples' Front policy and then switched into the camp of Wilkie, they will feel the inevitable repercussions of their opportunist policies: further exposure in the labor movement of their complete bankruptcy, stiffer blows in their direction from Washington. Nothing but a pawn in Stalin's foreign policy, further development of the war will swiftly eliminate them from the political board.

The task before the labor movement is posed clearly. All the class contradictions in the coming period will sharpen at greatly increased tempo. The very existence of the trade unions themselves will be at stake. If they follow a bold policy, striking out courageously with a militant program on the road for an independent labor party and a workers and farmers government they can play an inestimable part in the preservation and development of civilization. If they follow the Lewis-Hillman-Green type of politics, it will mean their certain doom. Under the policies of these fakery they will be strangled as the trade unions have been strangled in Europe.

Against the venal politics of the trade union bureaucracy must be organized a nation-wide drive for trade union control of military training, for an independent labor party, and for a workers and farmers government in Washington.

There remains another hypothesis: the withdrawals are designed as pressure on the negotiators at Moscow, a warning that Japan can move forces north as well as south in case of need. Further, they might be designed to weaken the Soviet hand at Chungking.

In any event, important developments portend on a front that is likely to be of even greater importance from the standpoint of American workers than the war front in Europe.

(6.) It is clear then that all

Negro Resolution on War

(Resolution adopted by the Political Committee of the Socialist workers Party.)

(1.) Militarization of the United States, including conscription poses before the workers in a more acute form all the problems involved in the death agony of capitalism. The main political answers and the corresponding tactical approach were outlined in the resolution on military policy adopted by the Chicago Conference of the Socialist Workers Party.

This resolution analyzed the falseness and complete bankruptcy of all the old liberal capitalist, reformist, Stalinist and pacifist programs and movements in the face of the death agony of capitalism. It analyzed their role in weakening and disarming the workers and turning them over their hand and foot to their enemies. It pointed out that "in the epoch of militarism great questions can be decided only by military means," that "the epoch of the death agony of capitalism... can be brought to an end only by the definitive victory of the proletariat."

(2.) This is true for the working class as a whole, and applies with especial force for the Negro people.

As long as the bosses control military training, the Negro faces the same dangers as the white worker: that the armed forces will be used against his interests; that the officer caste may capitulate, sabotaging the struggle of the workers; that it will be used to establish a military dictatorship in war time; that it will throw away millions of workers' lives in imperialist adventures.

IN ADDITION: The Negro faces the certainty that bosses' control will be used to maintain and further the system of Jim Crowism in the armed forces.

JIM CROWISM IN THE ARMY

(3.) The system of Jim Crowism in the armed forces demonstrates very clearly to the Negro the hypocrisy of slogans about "war for democracy." But the ruling class maintains Jim Crowism in the armed forces. For it cannot wipe out this system in the armed forces without endangering the whole system of Jim Crowism practiced in "civilian life": in industry, in civil service, on relief, at the ballot booth, in housing, theaters, restaurants—economically, politically, socially. The capitalists fear that NO NEGRO TRAINED TO HANDLE A GUN WOULD PEACEFULLY GO BACK TO THE OLD LIFE OF DISCRIMINATION, SEGREGATION, DISFRANCHISEMENT AND INSULT AFTER TRAINING IN AN ARMY WHERE HE WAS TREATED AS AN EQUAL WITH WHITE SOLDIERS.

In the last war, when Jim Crowism was also the established policy in the forces of the United States, the general staff's fears that the Negro soldiers might become instilled with ideas of equality from their contact with French soldiers reached the point where they sent out the in-

famous "Secret Information Concerning Black American Troops," in which they cautioned the French not to treat Negroes as equals or with respect, since they might entertain "undesirable aspirations."

It is because of this, and because the general staff fears solidarity between black and white soldiers in the same way a boss fears such solidarity in his factory, that Jim Crow continues in the armed forces in wartime as an extension of its use in civilian life in peace time.

Consequently, the Negro suffers everything the white soldier does, and in addition he finds the general staff adapting "peace-time Jim Crow" to the conditions of war and conscription as follows:

OFFICIAL ARMY POLICY

(4.) "The policy of the war department is not to intermingle colored and white enlisted personnel in the same regimental organizations. This policy has proved satisfactory over a long period of years, and to make changes would produce situations destructive to morale and detrimental to the preparations for national defense," declared Commander-in-Chief, Roosevelt, in a recent statement.

That is, in those branches of the service where Negroes are admitted they are segregated into Jim Crow regiments, and Negro soldiers are not permitted in the same regiments as white. (This is the policy in the national defense training program of the National Youth Administration and of the Civilian Conservation Camps.)

Negroes are barred from enlisting in most of the branches of the service. This practice prevents them from exercising free choice in designating the branch of the service in which they wish training, as white enlistees are permitted to do.

"Negro Engineers" is only another name for labor battalions. The few cavalry regiments of Negroes are "principally used as chambermaids for cadets" and officers' horses and equipment at the military academy and the various service schools.

Negroes are permitted in the infantry where the greatest number of casualties occur, and to a limited extent, the artillery, the quartermaster corps and the medical corps.

But they are not admitted into the air corps, the marine corps, the tank corps, the coast guard, the signal corps, the chemical warfare service. These branches of the service are completely lily-white. No colored men may enlist in them, no colored men in other branches may even transfer to them as white soldiers are often permitted to do.

In the Navy, the same general policy is followed, although life aboard ship does not permit exactly the same procedure. Negroes are admitted only into the mess attendants' division, can rise no higher than officers' cook or steward, cannot become petty officers or chief petty officers. Consequently, they receive lower pay ratings and are denied the opportunity that white men have to learn and practice a trade. While others learn mechanics and other useful trades, they can learn only

how to be a waiter, cook or valet. They are not permitted to attend the naval academy at Annapolis.

Negroes in the infantry are used principally for two kinds of work: as laborers in the labor battalions where they dig trenches, fortifications and latrines, or as suicide squads in the most dangerous sections of the front.

Only a small percentage of the Negroes are permitted to become officers, and they are Jim Crowed, too. Regiments which are all Negro are usually officered by whites, not Negroes, and white regiments are never officered by Negroes. Negroes are not wanted in the higher councils of the Army, where the Jim Crow policies are formulated. Only one has ever risen higher than the rank of colonel, and this exception was dictated by the momentary political needs of the Administration, not because of any fundamental change in the rule.

RIGHT TO DECIDE

(5.) Because many Negroes have had personal experience of discrimination and segregation inflicted on them by backward workers in factories and in trade unions, a sentiment may arise in the course of the struggle for union control of military training for the right of Negro soldiers to choose for themselves whether they shall be in mixed regiments or in all-Negro regiments. In such a case we must pledge ourselves to support the right of the Negro soldiers to determine the question for themselves.

If the question of separate regiments arises we must explain that the bosses never give the Negroes the right to determine this question for themselves they just shunt them off on the side where they can use them for their own reactionary ends. Unlike the bosses, the Socialist Workers Party supports their right to decide this question for themselves. At the same time that we tell them we recognize their right to choose what they want, we sincerely and cordially urge them to join us in mixed regiments, free of discrimination. The very fact that we do this is additional proof that we not only consider them equal and brothers, but that we want to be side by side with them in the struggle against Jim Crowism.

In short, we differentiate between segregation under bosses' control, and self-determination under workers' control. We are against the first, we are for the right of the second. It is part of our program, but is not a field for extensive agitation at this time.

We must take the occasion, wherever possible, to show why it is that the officer caste insists on separate regiments (to keep the workers divided, to make it easier for them to assign the Negroes as a group for dirty or dangerous work, to re-enforce the system of Jim Crowism in civilian life). We must point out that success in the struggle for mixed regiments can protect the Negroes from special selection as a group for dirty or dangerous work, can unite the soldiers and build up a solidarity of Negro and white, can help to undermine the system of Jim Crowism everywhere.

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\$1.22 house-to-house. Only two of us out, and BOTH TOGETHER. And this on 30 papers—about ten or more given away! That's the best I've done here at one time." We rather think your average must be something comrades elsewhere would like to attain. G.

GOOD WORK IN MILWAUKEE

MILWAUKEE, Wisc.—"Our sale of Appeals at Seaman Body, UAW-CIO has caused a ripple in the plant and among CP'ers who are powerful there," writes the new and youthful Milwaukee branch. "We have contacted a leading militant who is very much interested in what the Appeal has to say. He purchased several last week and passed them around in the plant and a large number of members are reported to have seen it. We are planning a real Appeal concentration at the plant next week... Send on a report of how it worked out comrades, and don't hesitate to ask if at anytime you desire additional cooperation at this end..."

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TROTSKY MEMORIAL FUND

The following additional contributions to the Trotsky Memorial Fund have come in this week:

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Milwaukee 1.00, Baltimore 10.00, New York 60.00, Minneapolis 100.00, Newark 10.00.

TOTAL \$181.00 Pittsburgh has just made a pledge of \$10

Table with 4 columns: Branch, Quota, Amount paid, %. Lists various branches and their contributions towards the Trotsky Memorial Fund.

Branches which have not made pledges up to date are as follows: Allentown, Fresno, Houston, Oakland, Omaha, Rochester, Sacramento, San Diego, Seattle.