

# The Negro Struggle

By ALBERT PARKER

## HILLMAN IGNORES JIM CROW

It is not only on the question of awards to corporations guilty of refusing to recognize the rights of trade unions that Sidney Hillman is being attacked nowadays. It is also because he has taken no steps to do anything about the war production industries' almost universal policy to refuse to hire colored workers at all, or to hire them only as porters, etc.

One instance after another has been widely publicized in the Negro press, giving names of scores of the largest corporations receiving contracts from the federal government, that openly announce their Jim Crow hiring policies.

Hillman has not done a thing about it to date, any more than he has done anything else generally for the working class in his post of Labor Commissioner of the National Defense Council.

His announced intention of resigning as vice-president of the CIO in order to devote himself fully to protecting the bosses' interests in the labor field should produce no tears from workers, Negro and white, for whose interests he has shown by his actions he has no intention of fighting.

## HARRISON APPOINTMENT PROTESTED

Vigorous protests were entered this week against the rumored appointment of George M. Harrison as next Secretary of Labor by both the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Harrison is the grand president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, and his policies and record in the labor movement with regard to Negro workers were offered as more than adequate reasons why he should not be permitted to receive a post where he would have wider jurisdiction for his Jim Crow policies.

Harrison, according to the Urban League, has as head of this union, concurred in its membership policies which shut colored railway clerks off into "auxiliary locals" where they pay the same dues as the white workers but have no voice in the determination of union policy and no representation on the policy-making bodies, or conventions.

It was also pointed out that Harrison had played a prominent smelly role in the fight against colored freight-handlers (reported in the article below.) The NAACP telegram to Roosevelt said, "Negro Americans and their white fellow workers who are seeking full democracy in the labor movement view with justified alarm possibility of having as Secretary of Labor a man who believes that Negroes are not entitled to full membership in organized unions."

Both organizations also objected to the "trade union segregationists" who is already in the Department of Labor, Dan Tracy, head of the AFL Electrical Workers Union.

## SEEK SHOWDOWN AT AFL CONVENTION

Efforts were being made this week to bring to the floor of the AFL convention the story of a fight being conducted by the colored National Council of Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, representing about 50 federal union locals and 2,000 workers throughout the country, to protect their rights as union members.

After six years of struggle to establish these federal locals, during which they received no help whatever from the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, and during which they obtained contracts from a number of important railroads, they were ordered last September by William Green to comply with the order of Harrison, head of the BRC, to turn in their charters and their treasuries and join powerless, Jim Crow auxiliaries.

Meeting in Cincinnati at that time, delegates from these locals voted not to abide by Green's order. They demanded either a separate international charter from the AFL or the right to join the BRC with the same rights that other members enjoyed. In the meantime they decided to continue their work under the National Council plan.

Harrison has indicated that "we will not surrender jurisdiction over these workers" in his letter to Arthur Williams, head of the Council. Green is backing him, of course, in spite of the fact that the AFL's official position, as written down on paper at several conventions, condemns all forms of discrimination on account of race or color.

## JIM CROW WOMEN TOO

It's not only men who get Jim-Crowed by the Army. Women are eligible for this treatment too. An example will show that women can be hurt pretty hard by this kind of treatment too.

Mrs. Burmeda Coleman and Miss Hattie Combre, employed by the Louisiana Industrial Insurance Company in New Orleans, took a civil service examination for tabulating machine operators at Camp Beauregard, near Alexandria, La.

On November 7 they received telegrams from the Camp to report for work. They then quit their jobs, which were relatively quite good ones, and spent a bit of money travelling from New Orleans to Alexandria.

When they got there on November 11, however, they were met by Major Dupont, commanding officer in charge of the camp, who told them that it was not known that they were Negroes, and that Negroes could not be used in that capacity at the camp.

So there they were, Jim Crowed as hard as any private in a separate regiment, without any reimbursement for the expenses they had incurred, and no jobs. It's a great country!

# Highlights of the C. I. O. Convention

One of the most wonderful things about the convention was complete absence of speeches by government officials and other capitalist politicians, such as filled the first week of the AFL convention. Whatever motivation John L. Lewis may have had for thus arranging things, the net result was fine. Think of it! A trade union convention in which only trade unionists talk!

In its own way the capitalist press indicated which convention it considered most important. The crackerjacks came to Atlantic City, while the second-string men were sent to New Orleans. A total of 105 reporters registered with the press committee.

That 43-minute ovation to John L. Lewis on the first day was a pretty mechanical affair, engineered by the Stalinists and perfunctorily participated in by the rest. But, make no mistake about it, the ovations he got during and after his Tuesday afternoon speech on "labor unity" were the real thing. Lewis made the greatest come-back I have ever seen. He could get practically anything out of that convention—except one thing: re-election to the presidency. He made it quite clear, however, that he'll be back for that next year. And in his speech after election, Murray made clear—in an almost-involuntary ejaculation which was edited out of the stenographic record—that he was under no illusions as to the "quirk of fate" which had given him the job.

The Stalinists were crazy enough to try to persuade Lewis to stand for re-election. After the "Draft Lewis" resolutions, passed in whatever locals they could manage it, the Stalinists flooded the convention with enormous buttons bearing the legend, "Forward with Lewis and CIO." Lewis poured cold water on all this in his very first speech on the first day, but the Stalinists still kept hoping. None of them, however, dared to take the floor and make the proposal. Nor, for

that matter, any other proposal of their own. They were conspicuous by their silence. Matles, Quill and Curran were their only big-guns who took the floor and then only to agree with administration proposals. The only time their Fur Workers delegation sent a man to the microphone was to speak for a resolution against the government's frame-up of the union's leadership. And Harry Bridges never once took the floor!

With the national elections over and done with, an attempt by the clothing workers' delegates to work up some indignation against the CIO NEWS' failure to print pro-Roosevelt speeches was a flop. One of them dramatically (so he thought) pointed to the fact that the post-election number was "perhaps the only paper in the U. S. that didn't carry Roosevelt's picture." He got very little applause for his pains. A Negro delegate followed him to the mike and asked him why the CIO "should cringe before the powers that be"; the applause was good and strong.

The Hillman crowd had proposed a constitutional amendment barring Communists from paid office. Fortunately it didn't get very far. Nor did the Hillmanites carry the issue to the floor. Unfortunately, however, the Lewis-controlled resolutions committee brought in a thoroughly reactionary resolution denouncing communism, a resolution which can easily become the base for a red-baiting campaign in any CIO union. As the vote was called for, a grinning SWOC organizer called out: "Watch the commies vote for it." They did.

Next to the debate on "labor unity," the high point of the convention was the discussion on the poll tax. The way in which it enables a tiny handful of Bourbons to perpetuate a naked dictatorship over the eight Southern states where the poll tax still is in force; to send to Congress the stark-

est reactionaries of all, who through long tenure in Congress rise to hold most of the all-powerful committee chairmanships in Congress and thereby spread their rule over the whole country—all this was brought out by a series of dramatic speeches by Negro and white delegates from the South.

Incidentally they showed how deep is the bond of black and white solidarity in the CIO—it was just a matter of course to them and the rest of the convention that a delegate was a brother no matter what the color of his skin. What a contrast to that painful moment at an AFL convention, when the lone Negro delegate, A. Philip Randolph, of the Railroad Porters, rises to plead for the "hily white" craft unionists for justice for his race!

The high point—carefully prepared for and finally reached—of Hillman's speech was his declaration that he had the "full confidence of the President of the United States." He stopped and waited for the applause. It was pretty tepid. The speech was a supreme effort by Hillman, but it fell flat. Hillman's strong point is committee-room and string-pulling stuff; he is neither an orator nor has he the necessary presence for the platform. In addition, of course, he had a very bad line to sell—the duPont-Morgan Defense Commission.

John L. Lewis has the best poker-face in the business. He gave no sign of any kind during Hillman's speech, but kept doing two things as he sat on the platform facing the audience. He kept teetering back in his chair until he had to grab something to save himself from falling. And he kept spitting on the floor.

Hillman scored off Lewis just once, but that was very effective. That was when Hillman, in the course of his speech, reminded the delegates that the United Mine Workers' constitution bars communists from membership. "What's

good enough for the UMW is good enough for the CIO," said Hillman. Needless to say, the Stalinists have never, in this whole period, ever published that disgraceful fact about the constitution which John L. Lewis rules over.

For long, dreary hours the convention would drone along, drugged in routine. Then, suddenly, some delegate would come alive at the microphone and rouse the entire convention, sometimes with just a single sentence. As when a Negro delegate, speaking on the need for more democracy, told what happened

to him in 1918 when he came back from France to the South-east town from which he had been drafted. "They ripped the medal from my breast and the uniform from my body and drove me back to the cotton fields." There were enough moments like that in the convention to make it more than worth while. Never mind the "responsible" speeches of Lewis and Murray and their associates, their talk of collaboration with the employers, etc. etc. That convention was as much a part of the class struggle as any picket line that ever slapped down a fink.

F. M.

# SOCIETY NOTES

The Waldorf-Astoria is seething with social consciousness. The National Association of Day Nurseries holds its second annual conference under the aegis—as who does not these days—of national preparedness. The Rev. Dr. Ralph W. Sockman told the delegates how "the child is the first line of defense" and assured his mink-craped audience that day nurseries are an important link in the nation's preparedness program. Paraphrasing these bourgeois' Munitions must be made for papa! to use on the nasty enemy. Mama wants take papa's place in the factory. But something has to be done with junior. So the Day Nursery springs into action as a munitions-plant auxiliary. Who says Park Avenue isn't doing its bit?

**SALVATION AT LAST**  
Grace had been said. Sixty-three starved, homeless men sat around the breakfast board at the Salvation Army Social Service Center in Pittsburgh. Amen had hardly been uttered when they dug ravenously into a meal including angel-food cake and pancakes. In a few minutes two of them rose from the table, staggered across a hall and fell dead. Nine more died in hospital beds, and fifty-two others lay retching and writhing for days. Roach poison had been served in the pancakes. The Salvation Army had at last solved the unemploy-

ment problem for at least eleven men.

**PAINLESS PRINTS**  
The move to help big business build better blacklists was given a delicate shove forward on November 14 when members of the Architectural League of New York interrupted a pleasant luncheon to be finger-printed by Detective James F. Kenny, purely in the interests of the "anthropometric method of identification." They were photographed in radiant smiles, presumably to show that finger-printing doesn't hurt. It doesn't. It's the use to which the prints are put that does.

**ANOTHER WAY OUT**  
Domenic Stevens, 23 and a native of Belgium, was hauled into a psychopathic ward after having made several attempts to get himself run down and killed by automobiles. His parents were murdered by the Nazi invaders of Belgium and he had been torpedoed on his way here. He found it pretty hard to laugh at fascism and war.

**SCALP BELTS**  
A fancy shop advertises "scalp belts" of leather with eight dazzling gilt disks, on each of which is engraved the initials of "one of the men in your life." How about tattooing this data around the waistline? It's just as colorful and can't be changed each week.

# TROTSKY MEMORIAL FUND

The following additional contributions to the Trotsky Memorial Fund have come during the last two weeks:

Boston	32.50
Rockville	\$ 2.00
Lynn	8.00
Detroit	50.00
Los Angeles	29.15
Milwaukee	1.00
St. Paul and Minneapolis	130.00
Individual Contributions	2.30
Newark	20.50
Youngstown	6.00
Toledo	15.00
Chicago	20.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$316.45</b>

Buffalo has pledged \$25.00 to the fund. Allentown pledges \$15.00 and Texas \$5.00. CHICAGO INCREASED ITS PLEDGE TO

Branch	Quota	Amount paid	%
Baltimore	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	100%
Rockville	7.00	7.00	100%
Toledo	50.00	50.00	100%
Lynn	100.00	83.00	83%
Boston	100.00	59.50	60%
Detroit	200.00	115.00	58%
Chicago and Indiana Harbor	200.00	105.07	53%
Newark	150.00	70.50	47%
Allentown	15.00	6.00	40%
Milwaukee	5.00	2.00	40%
Flint	150.00	56.00	37%
San Francisco	100.00	35.00	35%
Los Angeles	190.00	49.15	33%
New York	1000.00	255.00	26%
Minneapolis & St. Paul	1000.00	230.00	23%
Milwaukee	5.00	1.00	20%
New Haven	20.00	3.50	18%
Youngstown	50.00	6.00	12%
Akron	10.00	0.00	00
Buffalo	25.00	0.00	00
Cleveland	70.00	0.00	00
Hutchinson	10.00	0.00	00
Philadelphia	30.00	0.00	00
Pittsburgh	10.00	0.00	00
Portland	10.00	0.00	00
Quakertown	7.00	0.00	00
Reading	5.00	0.00	00
Rochester	15.00	0.00	00
St. Louis	5.00	0.00	00
Texas	5.00	0.00	00
Individual Contributions		2.30	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$3507.00</b>	<b>1145.02</b>	<b>33%</b>

## To All Branches---

Pioneer Publishers announces that the new pamphlet "Defend the Negro Sailors" by Albert Parker will be available to the branches in bundle orders at 1½¢ per COPY PLUS POSTAGE. A fortunate circumstance makes it possible to offer this pamphlet at this low price. However it is imperative that the entire press run be gotten into the hands of the branches for immediate distribution as this pamphlet deals with a subject which is very current. The pamphlet will lose much of its value to you unless it is used now!!! Get your orders with cash in at once!

# NOTEBOOK Of an Agitator

## "BANDIERA ROSSA"

The biggest and most important news that has yet come out of the bloody and destructive war of the imperialists is contained in a little news item tucked away in the corner of the paper last Friday. A United Press dispatch from Athens, dated November 22nd, says: "News of Koritz's fall, given to several thousand Italian prisoners in camps here, started off a spontaneous demonstration. Anti-Fascist Italians sang 'Bandiera Rossa', the Italian revolutionary song."

What a message of hope and promise for tomorrow that brief item contains! And what testimony to the real feelings of the Italian soldiers which found tumultuous expression at the first opportunity. Now the world can know the real meaning of the defeats of the Italian army. The brave soldiers who sang that song to celebrate Mussolini's defeat at Koritz were saying for all the world to hear that they have no interest in the tyrant's war of conquest and that for them, as for the oppressed masses in all imperialist countries, the main enemy is at home.

## RESOUNDS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Above the sound of the biggest guns that message resounds throughout the world today. For eighteen long and ferocious years now the Italian masses have known the yoke of fascist tyranny. But deep in the hearts of the enslaved there abides the memory of their song of freedom. At the first opportunity it came spontaneously to the lips of the imprisoned Italian soldiers in Greece.

When the journalists and commentators speculate about the further progress of the war, they are in the habit of considering only the pronouncements and plans and schemes of the statesmen and generals in the rival camps. They leave out the people. It is customary also for cynics, capitalists and renegades to rule out the people—the workers—in the fascist countries as an independent factor in coming events. The people haven't spoken yet but they are going to say the final and decisive word. The revolutionary song of the Italian soldiers in the Greek prison camp is a signal. The explosive which will blow the fascist tyrants to hell is located in their own countries.

## HEROIC ITALIAN WORKERS

The heroic Italian proletariat showed its mettle in 1921. The workers occupied the factories and were ready for the next decisive steps. Betrayed by pusillanimous leaders, and lacking a strong party of Bolshevism which alone could lead the resolute struggle for power to the very end, the great movement of the Italian workers suffered defeat. In the reaction from that defeat they fell under the iron heel of fascism. But we must believe that they have lived all these terrible years on the memory of their great hope that the people will yet go forward ("Avanti o popolo") under the scarlet banner ("Bandiera Rossa").

## A POIGNANT MEMORY

The brief dispatch from Athens recalled to me the poignant memory of the departure of the Italian delegation from the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in Moscow, at the end of 1922. The news of the fascist coup d'etat had arrived and the delegates were returning home to take up the underground fight. The great hall in the Kremlin resounded to their song, "Bandiera Rossa," in which the delegates of all the other countries joined. Many of those communist fighters went to their death; and so did thousands and tens of thousands of others of the flower of the Italian proletariat, in the course of these eighteen tragic years.

## SEED OF COMING REVOLUTION

But the blood of these martyrs is the seed of the coming revolution. It flowered spontaneously in Greece the other day for the first time, at the first opportunity. We have ground to believe that those Italian soldiers in the Greek prison camp expressed the profoundest sentiments of the enslaved masses at home and the equally enslaved soldiers in Mussolini's army of conquest. In that sentiment in the hearts of the workers in all the warring countries—and in that alone—resides the hope and the confidence that the bloody and terrible war into which the imperialists have plunged the world will be brought to an end by a victory of the people. "Avanti o popolo!"—go forward, people, under the scarlet banner! "Bandiera Rossa trionfera!"

J. P. C.

## An Analysis of the Two Conventions

# AFL---CIO and WAR

What are the differences separating the AFL and CIO? Will there be unity between them? Are the bosses preparing to crack down on American Labor? Will the trade unions survive the war?

Speaker:

**FARRELL DOBBS**  
Labor Secretary, S. W. P.

**Wednesday, December 8:30 P.M.**

**IRVING PLAZA**  
Irving Place and 15th Street