

THE NEGRO QUESTION

"LABOR WITH A WHITE SKIN CAN NOT EMANCIPATE ITSELF WHERE LABOR WITH A BLACK SKIN IS BRANDED"—KARL MARX.

By J. R. JOHNSON

The Negro and the War

III

Let us take, one by one, the arguments put forward by the war-mongers. A Republican like Landon, a Democrat like Roosevelt, or a member of the Communist Party like Earl Browder and James Ford, tells everybody, (including the Negro of course,) that the war now being fought in Europe is a war against aggression, a war for "democracy," for the "preservation of human liberties," and the like. They say this because, although they are talking about peace, they are really preparing the minds of the workers for war.

The average Negro lives the life of an outcast in the North. He has little enough "democracy" there. But let Browder and Ford go to Memphis, Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, Jacksonville, Birmingham, Mobile, all the South, where some nine or ten million Negroes live, and tell those Negroes to fight for "democracy." Such is the "democracy" of the South that in many towns the Negroes wouldn't be able to sit in the same room with the whites to hear why they should die for "democracy." There are hundreds of places in the South where if James Ford dared to stand on a platform to talk about anything, he'd be torn limb from limb, Vice-Presidential candidate though he is. There are a thousand hotels in the South where if he showed his nose at the front entrance, three janitors would fall on him and throw him out into the gutter, after which the police would beat him up and take him to jail. In many cities, if he went near the polling booth he would risk being beaten up and perhaps shot. He must come out of the rear entrance of a bus in many Southern cities, or any white cop nearby would riddle him with bullets. If Ford got a job as a butler in the South, and a friend of his rang up the house and asked for Mr. Ford, his friend would be fined and imprisoned for disorderly conduct, as happened in this year of "democracy" 1939. In the South, Ford is plain Ford, no Mr. for Negroes. In Memphis you can go to the zoo only once a week, when whites are not there.

Roosevelt's Party Rules Us in the South

And it is the Democratic Party, Franklin Roosevelt's party which controls the state government in the South. Argue with these Democrats about the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, which "guarantee" the political rights of the Negroes. If you insist you will get fourteen or fifteen bullets. That is the only kind of amendment the Southern Democrats have allowed the Negroes for many years. So that the vast majority of Negroes in the South will tell Roosevelt and James Ford, "What is this democracy I am to fight for? Where is it? Since when are Cotton Ed Smith and Senator Bilbo and the Democratic Party of Franklin Roosevelt my good friends? Why must I die for them? I am not afraid to fight. Negroes have been some of the greatest fighters in history. But the democracy that I want to fight for, Hitler is not depriving me of. I know the people who have kept me away from it for seventy-five years by rifles and revolvers, by state-law and lynch law! You, Franklin Roosevelt, James Ford and Earl Browder, tell us why we must go and shed our blood for something that we have never had."

"We Americans must fight against aggression," says James Ford and Franklin Roosevelt, seeking to drive American workers, white and black, into war. No wonder all of these politicians are so scared of raising the question of war directly to the Negroes. Every word they say turns to ashes in their mouths. Let us agree that Negroes must fight against aggression. But who are the aggressors against the Negroes? Hitler? Nonsense. The Southerners of the Democratic Party are the greatest aggressors against the Negroes in American history, and the North is not far behind them. "Oh! but we mean aggression in foreign countries, aggression by Mussolini, Hitler and Japan," say Roosevelt and Ford. The Negro will immediately reply, "And why if you so hate aggression, didn't you help Ethiopia?"

What these Democrats Did to Ethiopia

Ethiopia was the last little bit of Africa left free. Mussolini decided that he wanted it. The League of Nations had sworn to defend it. Every Negro with a spark of pride knows what happened, and remembers it with justified bitterness. Not only did they not protect Ethiopia as they had sworn to do, but instead they prevented arms from going to her while they bargained with Mussolini. They stabbed Ethiopia in the back—Britain, France, America, these great democracies. And Stalin, who is Ford's paymaster and boss, sold oil to Italy all through the Italian campaign. Now Roosevelt comes running, and Ford with him, to tell all good Americans (Negroes included of course), that they must fight against aggression.

And who is going to do the fighting against this aggression? The workers as always. Chamberlain, Daladier, and Roosevelt are getting ready to push the workers in America into the war. These are the very men who actively collaborated with Mussolini in destroying the last independent African state.

Why Should Negroes Trust These Rulers?

On again a Negro will ask, "Why should I trust you? You who have betrayed the last African state? Am I to go fighting for Poland to retain Danzig and prevent Hitler from getting it? Have I nothing else to fight for? I am not such a fool as not to know that international affairs are important. If Africans in Africa are fighting for freedom as Ethiopians fought, and are still fighting, I'll do all I can to help. The Indians are an oppressed people, and when they fight to drive Britain out, I am with them. Negroes went to fight in Spain against Franco. That was a good thing to do. As people who for centuries have suffered from oppression, Negroes must and will assist struggles against

War Deal Issues Decrees Striking At Liberties of American People

Restriction on Civil Liberty Through the "Emergency Decrees" Goes Hand in Hand With Increases in the Army and Navy

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Not to get a definite commitment in advance from "opposition" leaders that the Neutrality Act will be killed, but also to choke off all discussion. The whole deal will be pulled off behind the scenes, in backstairs conferences between the President and a handful of Congressional leaders. The actual session of Congress, if Franklin D. Roosevelt has his way, will be as much a "coordinated" sham as Hitler's Reichstag. The issue of war-or-peace is too vital to the interests of American capitalism to be settled by the irresponsible representatives of the people. Only the highest governmental circles can be entrusted with it.

WANTED: ONE FIRST-CLASS ATROCITY

The real question which will go before the special session of Congress, or rather will be privately settled beforehand, is "the degree of participation in war which the American people will tolerate," to quote the frank formulation of the N. Y. Times. The Administration is biding its time until public opinion "crystallizes" a little more in favor of sending aid to the Allies. Roosevelt has told friends that he considers the whole business of repealing the Neutrality Act "an extremely delicate subject." Like the skillful political surgeon he is, he wants to wait until the patient is well-prepared for the shock before proceeding to operate. A few good atrocity episodes will help enormously. The Athenian was a good beginning.

HIS MAJESTY'S LOYAL OPPOSITION

The Republicans are opposing the Administration's War Deal with all the fervor of the

British Labor Party's present opposition to the Chamberlain government. Senator McNary coyly refused to reveal his stand on repeal of the Neutrality Act. He did admit, however, that he was doing all he could to bring the matter to an early vote, which was tantamount to saying he was for repeal.

Kenneth Simpson, New York Republican leader and head of the "liberal" group in the Party, came out strongly for repeal in a speech to the New York Young Republican clubs. He was backed by Congressman James J. Wadsworth and Bruce Barton, both from New York and both well-known spokesmen for Wall Street.

There is still an Old Guard section of the Party, led by Hoover and Vandenberg, which is formally opposed to repeal. But it is by now fairly certain that, when it comes to a vote, the only real opposition will come from the liberal, bitter-end isolationists in the Party, led by Senators Nye, Borah, Hiram Johnson, LaFollette, and Norris. And even this group may well keep silent at the crucial moment, judging from past performances.

PREPAREDNESS—FOR NEUTRALITY

Meanwhile, Neutrality Act or no Neutrality Act, the War Deal grinds on. Recruiting campaigns have been speeded up in the Army and Navy, "to keep pace with demands for neutrality enforcement." Coast Guard and naval patrols now extend several hundred miles out to sea. A new batch of "dollar-a-year" business men have been taken into the Treasury and the War Resources Board.

The N. Y. Daily News, which until war actually came had an isolationist policy, has restored to its masthead Stephen Decatur's "MY COUNTRY RIGHT OR WRONG!" Quite possibly not without some hint from the White House, the newsreel companies have picked out for reproduction on the screen the most pro-war and anti-isolationist passages of the President's "neutrality" radio address. The Stock Exchange continued its wild boom.

ATTENTION! NEW YORK READERS

The APPEAL now appears on New York City newsstands on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. If you want the APPEAL placed on any newsstand notify the Business Manager of the APPEAL by mail.

ler and Poland are quarrelling over Danzig and East Prussia? When Czechoslovakia was cut up into pieces, it was fascist Germany, Hungary, and this same Poland that divided it. Now Germany and Poland begin fighting over one bone. Britain and France know that this is only the beginning of a struggle for world wide power. So they come in at once. But tell me, Franklin Roosevelt, and James Ford, why must I, a Negro, follow you into that?"

The Biggest Lie of All

Then will come the last argument. "It is not a question of Germany and Poland and Danzig. But freedom, civilization and liberty are in danger against fascist aggression, and the people of Britain, France, America, Belgium and the Soviet Union must unite to fight against aggression." But of all the big lies that are being told to push the people into war, this one about the war for civilization is the biggest.

There are today over 150 million Negroes in the world. There are fifteen million in America. They are the lowest paid, most humiliated, most despised people in the country, and in the South where four-fifths of them live they are treated like the Jews in Germany. We know how this great democracy terrorizes Negroes in the South and how it discriminates against them in the North.

When Roosevelt and other so-called lovers of democracy protested to Hitler against his treatment of the Jews, Hitler laughed scornfully and replied, "Look at how you treat the Negroes. I learned how to persecute Jews by studying the manner in which you Americans persecute Negroes." Roosevelt has no answer to that. Yet he will call upon Negroes to go to war against Hitler.

The "Democratic" Rule in Africa

War in defense of democracy and civilization? But it is when we look at Africa that we see how shameless is the lie that Belgium, France and America will fight any war for liberty and civilization. For it is in Africa that Negroes have for years suffered and still suffer today the vilest fascist tortures. And at the hands of whom? Not Hitler and German imperialism. Germany hasn't an inch of land in Africa. That is one of the things this war is about. Who is to have Africa? Hitler wants some of Africa, but up to now at any rate he has none. Japan has not an inch in Africa and today is much too busy trying to steal half of China. Mussolini controls a certain number of Africans. Who is it, then, that has taken Africa from the Africans? Who else but Great Britain with sixty million African slaves, and France with another forty millions, and "democratic" little Belgium, little in Europe, but with a large piece of Africa and twelve million Negroes under her control.

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War Is Heaven -- For Some People

The current issue of the Importer's Guide, an authoritative trade magazine published by Sitterley & Sons in New York City, prints an article under the streaming headline:

A SHARP UPWARD TREND IN AMERICAN EXPORT TRADE CAN BE EXPECTED AS A RESULT OF THE PRESENT EUROPEAN SITUATION BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

A few of the "following facts" are well worth quoting. "3. Germany and Poland are the only markets entirely eliminated. . . . The entire Far East, Africa, Australia, South and Central America, neutral European nations as well as England and France must now look to the United States as their main source of supply.

"5. The Neutrality Act will, undoubtedly, be changed to provide the sale of war materials to all belligerents on a basis of cash purchase here and transport in the consignee's own bottoms. There is no embargo on the shipment of materials not of a military nature and none will be imposed.

"6. Insurance and freight rates will be adjusted on a stable basis as soon as convoy methods have been definitely established, and shipments to all parts of the world will be possible in view of Britain's sea power.

"9. In view of the above, and in light of our export experiences in 1914, it is obvious that increased demands will be placed on the export departments of American industry and that we are entering a period where export volume in practically all lines of trade will rise sharply."

And how will the world, and particularly the Allies, pay for all these goods? The answer is given in a current U. S. Government survey of French and British resources over here. The potential war credits of these two nations in the United States come to some \$4,000,000,000. This sum is made up of French and British private holdings of American securities, deposits in American banks, short and long-term credits, and direct investments in American industrial plants. Add \$5,000,000,000 gold reserves now owned by the French and British central banks, and you have a war chest of \$9,000,000,000 to finance Allied purchases of American goods. This is over ten per cent of our national income in 1938. No wonder the Importers' Guide is bullish about war trade.

ST. LOUIS SWP BLASTS LEGION PLAN TO BREAK UP CP MEETING

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

ST. LOUIS, Sept. 3.—The St. Louis Local Executive Committee of the Socialist Workers Party today issued the following statement, copies of which were sent to the daily press, the St. Louis Civil Liberties Committee, and the Communist Party:

"The Socialist Workers Party has received information from a reliable source that the American Legion, at post meetings last week, laid plans to mobilize its membership for the purpose of breaking up the Communist Party meeting scheduled for next Thursday night at the Municipal Auditorium, at which Wm. Z. Foster will speak. The Legion spokesmen urged the members to 'make the San Antonio affair look like a Sunday School picnic.'"

"The Socialist Workers Party has no connection with the Communist Party; we are political opponents of the Communist Party, and consider that the Hitler-Stalin Pact, which we predicted last year, is final proof of the Stalinist betrayal of the cause of the international working class. The Stalinists have for years carried on a continuous campaign of slander and abuse directed at us, the 'Trotskyists', and have in many parts of the country broken up our meetings with hooligan tactics."

"Nevertheless, we stand un-

reservedly for the right of every workers' organization, including the Communist Party, to hold meetings unmolested and to exercise all its constitutional rights. The rising tide of war hysteria will, in the near future, produce many examples of gangster attacks on elementary democratic rights by fascist forces masquerading under the guise of 'patriotism'. Every sincere supporter of these democratic rights must resist to the last ditch these attacks whether coming from the American Legion or any other source. We believe that such resistance can best be organized in the form of Workers' Defense Guards, built up by the trade unions. But pressure must be brought to bear on all the organs of public opinion to force them to speak out against such fascist gangsterism; and every trade unionist and every liberal, every believer in free speech and free assembly, must make it his duty to combat the tendency to resort to Hitlerite tactics, wherever and whenever the tendency shows itself, and under whatever name.

"It is to be hoped that St. Louis will not be disgraced by a repetition of the display of mob insanity which recently put San Antonio on the front pages of the newspapers. We make public the information we have received with this in mind."

SWP in Big Push on All Anti-War Drive Fronts

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in are: Toledo, Hartford, Calais, Me., and Rochester. In addition, San Francisco, Youngstown, Washington, D. C., and Akron have pulled themselves out of the \$60.00 class and have shipped in their first instalments on their quotas.

The New York series of neighborhood mass meetings covering the whole city were held on Thursday and Friday, September 7-8, with uniform success. As scheduled, rallies were held by the Needle Trades branch, in the Bronx, Astoria, Brownsville, Downtown Manhattan and the Lower East Side. The audiences included a large number of young men of draft age and many Stalinists; the questions and lively discussion which followed the main speeches were sufficiently indicative of the anti-war temper of the workers, many of whom had never before come to listen to us.

The preceding day, on Wednesday, a New York Party membership meeting was held at Irving Plaza with an almost capacity attendance of the membership. Comrade Cannon,

National Secretary of the Party, reported on some of the problems raised in the present war crisis and on the tasks of the Party.

Some of the Party rallies which have been held, according to our latest reports, are as follows.

Other Cities

Los Angeles . . . mass meeting in Embassy Hall on the Stalin-Hitler deal and the war crisis, August 30. As was true of the other meetings, numbers of workers in the hall asked to be informed of other activities of the Socialist Workers Party. St. Louis . . . Indoor meetings on August 29, with a larger rally planned for September 8.

St. Paul . . . The Socialist Workers Party branch in this city has introduced the innovation of holding street meetings, such meetings not having been organized by any party in St. Paul for years.

Philadelphia . . . Felix Morrow on September 8. Rochester . . . public meeting on the war with Hal Draper as speaker, September 3. Worcester . . . highly successful meeting on the war and the

Stop Fascism In America!

Will Father Coughlin Become Dictator of the United States?

By JOSEPH HANSEN

(ELEVENTH INSTALLMENT)

Norman Thomas, an American adherent of the Second International, even went so far as to send an appealing letter directly to the Radio Priest—Norman rested elbows devoutly on a pulpit himself—asking if the Radio Priest wouldn't please remind his followers to desist immediately from further violence and disturbance.

The entire strategy of these self-anointed representatives of the working class can be summarized: "Help democratic capitalism stop Fascism!"

The situation which existed in Germany and Italy is being repeated and is reaching a dangerous stage in the United States—and that leads sharply to the question: How stop Fascism in America?

There is only one real answer: Socialism. A planned socialist economy. The working people must take the national industries and resources away from the Morgans, the Rockefellers, the Fords, DuPonts, Mellons, Girdlers—the Sixty Families—who now operate the mines and factories and railroads only if and when it pays them a profit.

The working people must end PRIVATE PROPERTY in the means of production and operate America's huge industries for the benefit of the toiling masses. This would mean, contrary to the lies of the Radio Priest, an unprecedented flow of consumers' goods for the private enjoyment of every individual in the nation.

America's capacity to produce is unlimited. Even today, without increasing efficiency one iota or even bringing the present factories up to full producing capacity, it is possible to guarantee every man a job at not less than \$2,500 a year.

What could be done with all the unemployed holding down jobs and all the workers exercising their ingenuity and enthusiasm to produce the greatest possible quantity of the good things of life for themselves—not even the boldest minds have foreshadowed the coming possibilities!

Socialism is feasible right today in the United States!

But Big Business in America is not different from Big Business in Italy or Germany.

It too will fight like a blinded python.

Already the fascist gangsters are forming nuclei over the entire country.

It is necessary to take energetic steps and to take them immediately. It is not only a question of establishing socialism. It is an immediate question of life or death.

There is only one way to meet the menace of fascism in America, and that is by organizing TRADE UNION DEFENSE GUARDS right now.

Every trade union local in the country must begin organizing its Defense Guard right now.

No more time can be wasted.

Study the program of Mussolini and the program of Hitler and then study the program of their American disciple.

Remember the terror and violence that desolated Italy and Germany.

And then take action FIRST.

Don't wait for the concentration camps.

BUILD TRADE UNION DEFENSE GUARDS.

The fact that Father Coughlin spent his entire discourse on July 9, 1939, attacking the very idea of organizing Trade Union Defense Guards sounds a most grim and ominous warning as to his program and his intentions and his knowledge of the only force which can stop him.

On Sunday, July 30, 1939, in a discourse entitled "The Call to Action," the Radio Priest hurled down the gauntlet to the labor movement in the United States:

"It is a death struggle. . . . You are either with me or against me. . . . You will see such a defense mechanism as the world has never seen. (A defense mechanism like that in Italy and Germany.) Do you know that units of the 'Christian Front' are forming in New York and elsewhere in the country? . . . The 'Christian Front' is not a debating society, it is an ACTION society. . . . We will fight you in Franco's way!"

The Socialist Workers Party, affiliated with the Fourth International, has dedicated itself to stopping fascism from ever gaining power in America.

But let there be no illusions—the fascist beast cannot be stopped with postcards!

IT IS A DEATH STRUGGLE.

It is a death struggle that will require the whole heart and mind of labor, all its devotion, all its self-sacrifice, every last ounce of its fighting strength.

The Socialist Workers Party appeals to every militant worker to throw himself into this titanic struggle.

Every working man who is seriously concerned about protecting himself, his family and his union from fascism in the United States must become a CRUSADER for TRADE UNION DEFENSE GUARDS.

Every person who has the courage and the daring to dedicate his life to the greatest of all ideals—the emancipation of mankind—must come forward and take his place in the ranks of the Socialist Workers Party.

(THE END)

Stalin pact, September 2.

Minneapolis . . . Several hundred people heard Max Shachtman in the spacious hall of the S.W.P. headquarters on Marquette Street, on September 1. . . . We are also informed that radio station KSTP, which had scheduled a forum on "Let the People Vote on War" with an S.W.P. representative and State Commander Briggs of the American Legion as opposing speaker, has called it off. The

reason is: on account of the war crisis!

Youngstown . . . Another successful stop in the speaking tour of B. J. Widick, national labor secretary of the Party, was made here on September 5, with a capacity audience and many contacts made.

All branches are urged to send in announcements of all meetings and rallies which are scheduled, and reports of all outdoor and indoor meetings.