

THE NEGRO QUESTION

By J. R. JOHNSON

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

"Hundreds of thousands of Negro soldiers face the danger of having to shed their blood for the greater glory, the greater profits, of the bloated money kings of London and Paris in this imperialist war, the purpose of which is to tighten the yoke of oppression more closely around the necks of all toilers."

This is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Where does it come from? The readers of this column and of the Socialist Appeal might think it comes from our new pamphlet "WHY NEGROES SHOULD OPPOSE THE WAR" (by J. R. Johnson, 32 pages, 5 cents). But that extract is not from our party literature at all. It comes from an interview given by James Ford, the Stalinist Commissar of Harlem, to the Daily Worker, October 9, 1939. The same issue carries another interview given by Dr. Max Yergan, executive secretary of the International Committee on African Affairs. During the Spanish war this committee worked in close collaboration with the Stalinist organization, the League for Spanish Democracy. On behalf of Harlem Negroes, the committee presented an ambulance to the Spanish people.

Sounds Good—But Is It?

It looks good, like the red of an apple rotten at the heart. It sounds good, like the words a prostitute whispers in the ear of a traveler, while robbers creep behind to stab him in the back.

For proof, let us take one great tragedy for Africans and the friends of Africa—the case of Spanish Morocco. The Moors are not Negroes, but they are an oppressed colonial people. If they had won their freedom, a mighty blow would have been struck at imperialism. The victory of the Moors could have acted as a clarion call to revolutionaries in Europe and to all oppressed and groaning Africa.

Now you gain your freedom when your enemy is weak and your enemy is weakest when he is fighting for his life. When the Spanish revolution broke out, it was the chance of the Moors. The correct policy for the Moors was to say to the Spanish workers and peasants: "You want to break the necks of the ruling class. We want our independence, but this we can get only by breaking the neck of the same ruling class. We support you, you support us. You declare that you support the independence of Spanish Morocco. We shall fight against Franco and be your loyal comrades and allies."

That was the policy for the Moors. But it was still more the duty of all who were friends of African independence to proclaim that policy and agitate for it among the Spanish workers and peasants. "The independence of Spanish Morocco." "Moors, take up arms and fight for your own country." These are the slogans that should have been on the lips of every true revolutionary, of every genuine fighter for African independence in the days when every class, every group in Spain, was fighting for its own interests, on one side or the other.

What did James Ford and his Communist Party say in those days? What did Max Yergan say? You will search columns of the Stalinist press and not find one clear call, "Moors, use your arms for your independence." They sent men to fight, they sent ambulances, Yergan agitated for Spanish democracy. But "the independence of Spanish Morocco?" Not a word. And why? Because they did not want to overthrow Spanish imperialism; they wanted to maintain Spanish "democracy." With Spanish Morocco as a colony of this "democracy" just as East Africa is a colony of British "democracy" and the Belgian Congo is a colony of Belgian "democracy." Independence for Morocco? Under no circumstances, said Stalin: "I want an alliance with Britain and France against Germany. A socialist Spain? An independent Morocco? If I or my Communist Party fought for such a policy, I would never get my alliance with Chamberlain and Daladier. They would say I was a Red."

The Trotskyists in Spain fought against Franco, but they urged that the only way to beat Franco was for the workers and peasants to struggle for socialism and for the Moors to fight for their independence, in other words capitalism had to be broken at home and abroad. For saying this they were called traitors by the Stalinists, persecuted and murdered as agents of Franco. The Moors, getting promises from Franco and not even a promise from the Spanish Loyalists, fought with Franco. At home and abroad the Spanish revolution was beaten.

The Stalinist Line Changes

Today, however, Stalin no longer wants any alliance with Britain and France. He is tied up with Hitler. Hitler has no colonies. But Britain and France have. Stalin wants to embarrass the British and French governments in their conduct of the war. He wants to prevent America from assisting Hitler's enemy, Britain. So Ford and Yergan, Browder and Patterson, take the field. The war is an imperialist war. Down with the war. These conscienceless scoundrels want to use the Negroes to help Hitler's peace; they shout for peace. But peace means Hitler's peace, with Stalin keeping his piece of Poland. That is why they say this is an imperialist war, which is true, and then add Russia did the right thing, which is false.

The Fourth International denounces these servile corrupters of the Negro people. We do not support the capitalist war; we do not support the capitalist peace. We say: "Negroes, war or peace, fight against all the imperialists, today by a mass demonstration, tomorrow by strike, and when enough have rifles fight with rifles too."

But what does Yergan say today? In the interview in the Daily Worker he says that it is necessary for "the democratic labor forces of Europe and America to press for the reopening of the whole colonial question in the interest of a secure world peace." There you see the naked reaction of Yergan. What does he mean by "reopening the whole colonial question." Who closed it? Does he want a conference to talk over things? With whom? With Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, and Stalin? Is this the peace that the Stalinists are shouting for? Will one single colonial be freed by this peace? Peace, by all means. We denounce their murderous war. But do the workers want Chamberlain and Daladier to "reopen" the colonial question?

It is Hitler who wants to "reopen" it, in other words, bargain for Africa. For the revolutionary Negroes, that question is always open. No peace with imperialism, whether fascist or "democratic." Tomorrow, according to how Stalin moves, Ford and Yergan will shout again, "War for democracy." Traitors yesterday and traitors tomorrow, they are traitors today, however revolutionary they may sound. The Negroes must not be blinded by them, but should mercilessly expose this unscrupulous deception of an oppressed people.

WPA Prisoners' Morale Splendid as Minneapolis Frame-Up Trial Opens

(Continued from Page 1) cians Union, able chairman of the AFL's WPA Defense Committee, was chosen a delegate to the convention of the American Federation of Labor by the recent meeting of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union. Murk is now in Cincinnati. He has already met with Green and the executive council, and it is certain that the Minneapolis defense case will come up on the floor of the Cincinnati convention. It is understood the AFL council is preparing a resolution on the Minneapolis case to be presented to convention delegates.

Tag Day Plans Fixed Over four hundred union women and girls have volunteered to sell Labor Defense Tags throughout Minneapolis tonight and tomorrow, to raise funds for the defense. The Tag Day is sponsored by the AFL defense committee, and hundreds of dollars are expected to be raised by this means.

FBI agents are now continuing their stool pigeoning, this time in St. Paul, gathering evidence to present to the federal grand jury when it reconvenes October 23 to continue its investigation into the WPA strike. The St. Paul union movement is bracing its feet for the anticipated attack, and the WPA Defense Committee set up by the Trades and Labor Assembly is already raising property and funds to be used as bail.

Trials May Last Months The present trial is expected to last for several weeks. There will be at least nine more trials, involving from two to ninety

defendants (the "conspiracy" case de luxe). With yet more indictments in the wind, it is obvious that the Minneapolis WPA defense case will drag out for many months—if Murphy and Roosevelt dare to carry through the frame-up to the bitter end. And with the Minneapolis frame-up becoming a national issue in the American labor movement, the million-headed protest of the workers may yet tear the hands of the War Deal from the throats of the militant local union movement.

Shachtman and Paine Charge Boss Candidates Evade the Main Issue

(Continued from Page 1) when it was founded twenty years ago. Once a working class revolutionary party, it is today an appendage of the Soviet foreign office."

That the Communist Party is nothing more than a propaganda agency for the Kremlin was amplified by Shachtman when he illustrated how the Communist Party follows closely in the wake of Soviet diplomacy.

The ALP and War Discussing the close collaboration of Stalin with Hitler, Shachtman stated, "It is interesting to note in connection with the peace terms submitted by Hitler that no one would give active backing to the im-

THE MINNEAPOLIS WAY



Hundreds of union women and girls wore this tag on Saturday, October 7, when they went out collecting funds for the defense of the Minneapolis W.P.A. prisoners, those now on trial, and those yet to be tried, for their activities in the W.P.A. strike. We haven't yet received a report on how much was collected, but we hope the fund was big enough to enable the Defense Committee to smash the Roosevelt-strike-break machine in Minneapolis.

perialist peace of Hitler — no one except Stalin."

Referring to the resolution adopted by the American Labor Party on the war and on the Stalin-Hitler pact, Shachtman declared, "After a few years of public pleading for nothing more than good municipal government, not to mention its private horse trades with the Democratic and Republican parties, the American Labor Party suddenly discovered the rest of the world."

"The ALP leadership, with a remarkable suddenness and without recourse to ordinary democratic procedure, adopted a resolution which brazenly declares for a democratic war against Germany."

"Similarly," the speaker went on, "with a remarkable suddenness, Rose, Antonini and Company discovered, after all these years, that the ranks of the ALP contained Communist Party members. The expulsion of the Stalinists from the ALP is bureaucratic from beginning to end," Shachtman charged, "because the manner of that expulsion drive is borrowed from the book of Stalinism itself."

Quill's Stand Commenting on the threatened rejection of Michael Quill as the official ALP Councilman candidate for the Bronx, Shachtman stated, "Previously, in exchange for the work done by the Stalinists in building the district clubs of the ALP, Rose and Antonini gave the Stalinists a representative or two on its election slate. That is how Michael Quill happened to get elected to the City Council. The present differences between Rose and Antonini on the one hand and Quill on the other hand," Shachtman explained, "is that the former support the war aims of Wall Street while Quill supports Stalin's joint war with Hitler. These differences are the differences of two sets of agents in the service of two different bands of oppressors," Shachtman declared.

Counting Fists "In Manhattan and the Bronx the workers have the opportunity to vote for a revolu-

tionary anti-war party and its candidates. "Voting for the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party is not a matter of counting noses but of counting fists; of counting the fists of workers whose antagonism to the war is so great, so profound, so revolutionary that the imperialist war-makers will stop a moment and ponder on their rotten schemes for annihilating the working class in another world slaughter for superprofits. A hundred votes for the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party as a demonstration against American participation in the war is worth more than a 1000 votes for any other party. Vote as you strike. Vote as you fight. Vote for the anti-war candidates of the Socialist Workers Party," Shachtman concluded.

Petitions Filed Edward Frank, organizer of Local New York of the SWP, announced today that the nominating petitions for Shachtman and George Lyman Paine, Councilman candidate for Manhattan, had been filed with the Board of Elections. More than 6,000 signatures of registered Bronx voters have been secured for the nomination of Shachtman on the Councilman ballot, Frank announced, while over 3,000 signatures were secured for the nomination of Paine.

Both candidates today expressed their gratitude to the thousands of workers who signed the nominating petitions and expressed their praise of the Bronx and Manhattan Branches of the Party for putting the nominating drive over the top.

Register Now Voters are urged to register this week, October 9 to 14, with the Board of Elections in order to be able to vote for the anti-war candidates of the Socialist Workers Party on November 5.

Shachtman will speak Wednesday night, October 11, at Elsemere Hall, 170 Street and Morris Avenue. Maxwell T. Burt, Organizer of the Bronx Branch, announced a mass campaign rally this Saturday night at Fordham Road and Valentine Avenue, scene of many clashes in the past with the Coughlinites.

Latin American Notes

No. 6 of Boletín de Información, bulletin of the Pan-American and Oriental Bureau, sub-secretariat of the Fourth International, has recently been issued and No. 7 is about to be published. No. 6 of the Boletín contains the Bureau's Manifesto on the War and its Application to the Latin American and colonial countries. No. 7 will contain articles on recent developments, a statement of resignation from the Communist Party of Cuba by one of its leading members, comrade Jose A. Guerra, and some documents from Brazil. Anyone interested in Latin American problems can get copies of these bulletins or other literature in Spanish by writing in for them.

PERU From Peru comes an interesting story about the Stalinist "communists." According to the August 15 issue of the Buenos Aires daily, Vanguardia, the leader of the Communist Party of Peru, Eudocio Ravinez, who is forced by the reactionary dictatorship of President Benavides to live in exile, issued a pamphlet in Chile giving support to Benavides' candidate in the coming presidential elections! Ravinez calls this candidate "the leader of democratic Benavidesism!"

It's too bad Stalin is changing the line so soon; the Stalinists groveling at the feet of the various dictatorial agents of "democratic" imperialism was fast developing into an interesting study for psychopathologists. Benavides, who keeps over 5,000 political prisoners in his jails, who outlaws the Communist party and forces its leaders into exile, is rewarded with the royal support! He joins the list with Dictator Vargas in Brazil, Dictator Batista in Cuba, (but still aspiring)—Dictator General Ibanez in Chile and now of course Hitler himself. The one good note in the story is the report in Vanguardia that "the [C.P.] organizations in Arequipa and Cuzco [cities of Peru] have revolted against the line of collaboration with tyranny put forward by Senor Ravinez in his recent pamphlet."

Argentina From Argentina comes a new pamphlet, "La Revolución Mundial y la Traición Stalinista," and the news that that "great American democracy" has just issued an order barring from the mails a pamphlet published previously, "Por el Socialismo Revolucionario y por la 4d Internacional". We have also received a printed manifesto distributed by the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario, 4th Internationalist, dealing with the war and the Stalin-Hitler pact.

Uruguay Similar leaflets have arrived from the Bolshevik-Leninists of

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOOKS BOUGHT in lots or in single volumes. Estimates given on request. Write or visit Labor Bookshop, 116 University Place, N.Y.C.

An attractive poster has been prepared to advertise the column in the Socialist Appeal by J. R. Johnson on "The Negro Question". The use of these posters on newsstands and at meetings will help to increase the sale of the paper to the Negro workers. The posters are on sale for five cents by the National Negro Dept., 116 University Place, New York City.

Minimum Guaranteed Earnings!! WANTED—Men, Women and Students to sell the Socialist Appeal as a part time job. Socialist Appeal now selling very fast on the streets. One dollar a day guaranteed. Possible to make much more. Apply all day from 12 o'clock on at 116 University Pl., Abe Miller.

Bound Volume of SOCIALIST APPEAL NOW AVAILABLE First 6 months of 1939 (52 issues) \$2.00, including postage Order now from: SOCIALIST APPEAL 116 University Pl. New York City

FUN and GAIETY at a NIGHT in HARLEM Sat., Oct. 14, 9 p.m. at the Mimo Club 2327 Seventh Avenue Tickets: 50c On Sale At: S.W.P., 116 University Pl. Sponsors: National Negro Department, Socialist Workers Party

IMPORTANT BOOKS V. I. LENIN—Theory of the Agrarian Question \$2.75 V. I. LENIN—Theoretical Principles of Marxism 2.75 BORIS SOUVARINE—Stalin 3.75 EUGENE LYONS—Assignment in Utopia (\$3.50) 1.69 MARX and ENGELS—German Ideology 2.50 ARTHUR ROSENBERG—Democracy and Socialism 3.50 LEON TROTSKY—History of the Russian Revolution (\$3.00) 2.60 FERDINAND LUNDBERG—Sixty Families (\$3.50) 1.39 (Add 3 cents per book for postage) LABOR BOOKSHOP 116 UNIVERSITY PL., N. Y. C.

Trotsky Analysis of U. S. S. R. in War Highlights November New International

"THE U.S.S.R. IN WAR," by Leon Trotsky, will be featured in the forthcoming November issue of The New Internationalist, which will be out in a few days. In his most penetrating manner Trotsky discusses in detail the role of Stalin and the U.S.S.R. in the imperialist war and also takes up the perspectives and prospects in the next period of the international labor and revolutionary movement. Among the questions discus-

ed by Trotsky in this brilliant analysis are the following: 1. The German-Soviet Pact and the Character of the U.S.S.R. 2. The Nature of the Soviet State. 3. Is the Soviet State a Cancerous Growth or a New Organ? 4. The Early Degeneration of the Bureaucracy. 5. The Conditions for the Omnipotence and Fall of the Soviet Oligarchy. 6. What if the Socialist Revolution is Not Accomplished? 7. The Present War and the Future of Modern Society. 8. New Conceptions of the State: The Theory of "Bureaucratic Collectivism." 9. Totalitarian Dictatorship—A Condition of Acute Crisis and Not a Stable Regime. 10. The Orientation Toward World Revolution and the Regeneration of the U.S.S.R. 11. Defense of the U.S.S.R. and the Class Struggle. 12. The Question of the Occupied Territories.

13. The Soviet Union and its Relation to the World Proletarian Revolution. The above outline of the contents of Leon Trotsky's penetrating article indicates the depth and scope of Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union, the war, the future of the labor movement and the international socialist revolution. Negro Articles Because of the timeliness and great significance of Trotsky's article, a change is being made, in part, in the contents of the November issue, which was originally slated to be largely a Negro number. Important articles on the Negro question will appear in the November issue, but also in subsequent numbers of the magazine. To be sure that everyone interested in Trotsky's analysis obtains a copy of the November issue, the Management urges that extra orders be immediately placed in advance. The subscription rate remains at \$2.00 per year and single copies may be purchased at 20 cents. Address: THE NEW INTERNATIONAL 116 University Place New York City, N.Y.

Socialist Appeal 116 University Place New York City. I would like to get better acquainted with your paper, the Socialist Appeal. Please send me sample copies for the next few weeks. Name Address City