

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

There is no evil without good. What the Negro means to the American revolution and the world revolution is being demonstrated with unmistakable clarity by the actions of the Stalinists in Harlem, in Chicago and on the West Coast. With their new line of "down with the imperialist war," they feel they can once more appeal to the Negroes.

For years they have been discredited among thinking Negroes everywhere. They lived entirely on the remnants of their past reputation. In their press they concentrated on Negro singers, Negro athletes, Negro parsons. But politics, particularly revolutionary politics, occupied a distinctly minor part of their propaganda and agitation.

They reached their lowest ebb during the weeks that followed the beginning of the war. In Harlem for instance, they practically disappeared. You could not walk along Lenox Avenue or Seventh without running into groups of Negroes discussing the war and the role of the Negroes. There were West Indians denouncing Britain, Garveyites denouncing all whites and praising Japan, Americans sneering at Roosevelt's war for "democracy"—these and other groups were well represented. But you could not find a Stalinist. They stayed at home, and not only because of the mental effort of unravelling the new line. Militant Harlem Negroes showed an inclination to beat them up, in other words, to apply to them that kind of liberation from Stalinism that Stalinism had just applied to the Poles in western Ukraine. James Ford wrote a letter to the Amsterdam News. The Amsterdam News did not publish it for weeks, and then only when Ford was attacked by someone who had read Ford in the Daily Worker and denounced him in a letter to the News.

Stalinist Name Is Mud

All this was not due entirely to the Hitler-Stalin pact and the invasion of Poland. The Stalinists' name had been mud in Harlem for a long, long time. The Negroes had watched them boost the League of Nations as a means of saving Ethiopia, and had seen the deflation and collapse of that balloon. The Negroes had been able to compare the relative values of Litvinov's speeches on the side of Ethiopia and the oil Stalin sold to Italy. They had been ignorant and backward enough to believe that to make speeches on behalf of an attacked colonial country and to sell oil to the attacking imperialist country might be very good Stalinism but was no more than a base betrayal of the Negro people. The Stalinists said that to denounce such a two-faced policy was Trotskyism. But without caring what the Stalinists called it the Negroes left the Communist party.

Political dishonesty leads inevitably to personal and organizational corruption. In order to meet the pressure of Negroes hostile to their policy, the Stalinists had to take such organizational measures inside the party as drove from them even those Negroes who had been faithful to them for many years. They set out on their crusade to make America fight a war against Hitler, at that time Stalin's enemy. They changed their make-up from red to stars and stripes, and began their seduction of the intellectuals and all the petty-bourgeois democrats.

But in these new circles they found the Negroes to be an encumbrance. All these New Dealers, singers of the Star-Spangled Banner, and believers in Americanism, whose paths into the Communist party were strewn with roses by Browder, Hathaway, and Amter—all these people brought with them, as an indispensable part of their American "democracy," the ill-disguised prejudices of the American "democrat" against the Negro. Between the rival claims of American "democrats" and the American Negro masses, the Communist party did not hesitate.

They were out to get the "democrats", so they shoved their Negro sympathizers into the Negro Congress and they invited a body of Negro parsons and bishops, newspaper editors, and small business men into the Congress in order to be sure to staff Negro militancy. They discovered a basis for Negro emancipation in Father Divine. Altogether, between 1935 and 1939, they disrupted and corrupted the Negro revolutionary movement as thoroughly as they ruined the revolution in Spain and the revolution in France. The Negroes retaliated by leaving them in thousands. During the last two years they lost some 1,600 Negro members in New York State, about 80 per cent of their Negro membership. The Hitler-Stalin pact and the Stalinist invasion of Poland were merely a climax to a series of events which had thoroughly exposed Stalinism among the Negro people.

Venture into Public Agn

Then a few weeks ago came the change in the Stalinist policy. Stalin tied the Soviet regime to Hitler, and in the present stage, a Stalinist for Hitler is an essential part of Stalin's policy. The Stalinists had disrupted and confused the revolutionary movement among black and white workers by their incessant propaganda and agitation for Roosevelt and the New Deal and Roosevelt's war for "democracy." All this in obedience to Stalin. So now, still obedient to their Moscow master, they are striving tooth and nail to keep America from intervening on the side of the "democracies," to stir up anti-war agitation among the British and French workers and colonialists—in other words, to help Hitler as much as possible. In this activity, as in their previous period of calling all who opposed a war for the "democracies" Trotskyite-fascists, they are acting merely as agents of the Moscow bureaucracy and not as leaders of the revolutionary movement.

What is most noticeable and most revealing, however, is that after crawling in the grass and sneaking around in the byways and alleys of the Negro areas for some years, they are now once more out in full blast. "Down with the imperialist war!" "The Negroes have nothing to gain by this war!" "War for democracy is a fraud!" "The war is a war between two bloated groups of capitalists!" Day after day in the Daily Worker the Stalinists thunder these irreproachable sentences. They hold meetings. They distribute leaflets. They beg for money. We can expect not only the continuance but the intensification of this renewed activity among the Negroes.

And why? Because they know that by the exposure of the conditions of Negroes in Africa, by the exposure of the fraud that African Negroes have anything to gain by fighting for British and French imperialism, by exposing the imperialist character of the war, they have the possibility of gaining a greater response among the oppressed Negro people than among any other section of the American workers and farmers. This is indeed the depth of political dishonesty and degradation for Ford and the Negro Stalinists in particular. They seek to use Negro militancy for the sake of Hitler's victory.

Any Negro who understands what the Stalinists are after must make it his duty unflinchingly to expose them. The Fourth International, the Socialist Workers Party, have never doubted the tremendous revolutionary energy that is bottled up in the Negro masses. We claim particularly that our special theoretical contribution to the Marxist understanding of the Negro question, is that the Negro's place is not at the tail but in the very vanguard of the revolutionary struggle against capitalism. But it is their very eagerness and response to the revolutionary appeal against the war that make the Negro masses so susceptible to this most recent Stalinist maneuver. The Stalinists have come most hopefully out of their holes and corners. They know that this new policy gives them a chance.

We therefore have to show that the last thing they are thinking of is the emancipation of workers, white and black. We of the Socialist Workers Party shall point out that the Negroes and the white workers must fight against the imperialists, both gangs of them, in war as in peace. But we must not for one single moment neglect the exposure of the new Stalinist line. We must analyze it to its roots and point out that whatever these people may say at a given moment, however sincere may be the Stalinist rank and file, yet those who are responsible for their policy are thinking of nothing else but how best to preserve the power and privileges of the bloated and murderous bureaucracy of Stalin.

Special Committee Aids Shachtman, Paine Anti-War Election Campaign

(Continued from Page 1) dacy within six days, the challenge to be held before an open session of the Board of Elections. The Campaign Committee issued the following statement late today on the challenge:

"In view of the fact that the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party in the present Councilmanic Campaign stand committed to an uncompromising struggle against war and American participation in it, certain leading reactionary forces in this city have tried to deny them a place on the ballot. These maneuvers, especially those made by Tammany Hall at the opening of the campaign, are in violation of the democratic right of minority parties to a place on the ballot. The thousands of workers in this city who have already signed the petitions nominating Max Shachtman for the City Council must meet the reactionary offensive begun against its anti-war candidate by protesting to the Board of Elections any step to remove his name from the ballot. Moreover, every worker must see in this reactionary maneuver an attempt to remove the only candidate for whom an anti-war vote may be registered. Rally behind the anti-war candidates! Support, vote and fight with the anti-war party, the Socialist Workers Party."

ALP Role

Commenting on the American Labor Party's role in the present elections, Shachtman and Paine today declared, "The top leadership of the ALP is in for a rude shock in the coming election. They apparently expect under the cover of an altogether belated and fraudulent 'struggle' against Stalin's agents in this country—the Communist party—to corral votes in support of Roosevelt's policies to drag the United States into war by easy stages, much after Wilson's pattern. Thousands of workers who recognize Stalinism for what it is—the mortal enemy of labor the world over—will not be duped by this latest maneuver. These workers will vote for the genuine anti-war and anti-fascist candidates of the Socialist Workers Party."

National Campaign

At another in the series of

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LEGION WHOOPS IT UP FOR U. S. WARRECRUITING

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) WASHINGTON, D. C.—Going the whole hog on President Roosevelt's proclamation of a state of limited national emergency, the American Legion, actively cooperating with a government department, has made the nation's capital the center of a heretofore unheard of and energetic recruiting drive. On stationery supplied by the Department of Agriculture, the Legion has issued a circular urging the recruitment of 500 men into a newly formed anti-aircraft battery.

The circular, bearing the imprimatur of both the Department of Agriculture and the American Legion, and dated October 10, states: "President Roosevelt has declared the existence of a limited national emergency, and as one of the emergency steps, he has authorized an expansion of the nation's military services." Leaving no doubt as to where the administration stands with relation to private agencies in the drive to expand the nation's war machine, the American Legion circular notes, "The Department of Agriculture has been called to cooperate in the campaign for recruiting which is now under way."

No Accident Declining, perhaps out of fear, to state the brutal rigors of service with the National Guard, of which the anti-aircraft battery is a unit, the circular paints a pretty picture of life with the military, declaring that the anti-aircraft "moves comparatively little and eats regularly." Unable to solve the perennially agitating problem of unemployment, the Roosevelt Administration urges the youth to join the armed forces if it wants to "eat regularly."

Accompanying the leaflet is a "live" demonstration of the anti-aircraft service on the streets of Washington. Stationed before the Department of Agriculture Building is a three inch anti-aircraft gun flanked by two huge searchlights which rake the skies at night in search of "enemy invaders." It is no mere accident that this fancy recruiting campaign comes at a time when the Senate is engaged in important debate on the Arms Embargo. The recruiting campaign and the anti-aircraft demonstration, as if by design, might remind recalcitrant Senators of their patriotism in the face of the "European danger." It is the same part of that scheme in which the eagle eyes of the President "sight" submarines off the Coast of Miami.

Shachtman campaign rallies in the Bronx, George Clarke, speaking at Elsemere Hall, 170 Street and Morris Avenue, Wednesday night, Oct. 11, declared, "The present Councilmanic campaign, although it is given scant attention in the press, is of tremendous national importance. For the first time since the war started in Europe, the workers will have an opportunity to declare themselves on it. For the first time since that war began they will have the chance to solidarize themselves with the THIRD camp: with the anti-war camp, against the war, against its instigators, against its apologists, for the Socialist Revolution."

A Summary of the War Steps Taken By the Roosevelt Administration

By SHERMAN STANLEY

A brief survey of the steps already taken or in process of being taken by the Roosevelt government shows how far the American government has gone in its war aims.

We list some of the highlights in the plans of FDR to drag us into the World War on the side of the "Allied" imperialist powers.

(1) Proposed repeal of the Arms Embargo Act. This is scheduled to be completed shortly and then the Allies will begin purchase of arms, munitions, implements of war, etc. in Germany, of course, can purchase nothing. The "debate" of America's doddering, old Senators has degenerated into a tragic farce already. One by one, the "isolationists" fold up, or reduce their opposition to a pathetic squawking. The results of the debate are cut-and-dried.

"CREDIT AND CAREY"—THE OLD MORGAN GAME

(2) Proposed 90-day credit clause in the "Title and Carry" provision of the Repeal Act. This gives the Allies needed credit, plus the fact that actual ownership of the goods remains with the American capitalists during the danger period of transit.

This 90-day credit provision, calculated to assure an early entry into the war, is the 1939 equivalent of J. P. Morgan's long-term credits of 1914.

(3) Proposed exemption of the Canadian-United States border from the "Title and Carry" provisions of the Act. This leaves the Canadian border wide open as an entry through which Americans can carry all forms of supplies bound for the Allies. Let it be remembered that Canada is at war already!

(4) The "Declaration of Panama" establishing a zone around the two American continents, in some places extending 600 miles out to sea. This will protect the British and French merchant marine as well as protect colonial possessions of the Allies within the Caribbean area, in actuality, however, extending US imperialist hegemony over Latin America.

COMMITTED TO ALLIED CAUSE

(5) In addition, there are a series of "minor" facts, all of which taken together further raise the sum total of commitment to the Anglo-French imperial cause: (a) government censorship of information on ship cargoes and sailings; (b) the drive against German-Nazi agents, while British propagandists are untouched; (c) the ac-

streets of Washington. Stationed before the Department of Agriculture Building is a three inch anti-aircraft gun flanked by two huge searchlights which rake the skies at night in search of "enemy invaders." It is no mere accident that this fancy recruiting campaign comes at a time when the Senate is engaged in important debate on the Arms Embargo. The recruiting campaign and the anti-aircraft demonstration, as if by design, might remind recalcitrant Senators of their patriotism in the face of the "European danger." It is the same part of that scheme in which the eagle eyes of the President "sight" submarines off the Coast of Miami.

Economic Consequences of the Stalin-Hitler Pact Soviet Economy Cracking Under War Strain

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

Since September 11, one week prior to the issuance of orders to the Red Army to march into Poland, the official Moscow press has ceased publishing all data relating to the daily production in key industries: iron, steel, rolled steel, freight car loadings, and the automotive industry. Never before has the publication of these figures been suspended for so long a period. No official information whatsoever is now available relating to the progress of the Third Five Year Plan inasmuch as the publication of all other data was suspended early in 1938. The only possible interpretation for this veil of secrecy is that production is on the verge of breakdown, if it has not already collapsed.

The figures previously published—for August and the first week in September—unmistakably denoted a decline in production, in some instances below 1936 levels. The decline since then has apparently assumed catastrophic proportions. LABOR SHORTAGE DEEPENS CRISIS One of the primary reasons for the current crisis, as the Socialist Appeal has already reported, is an acute shortage of labor, accompanied by enormous labor turnover and aggravated by the mobilization of the army which has made further inroads into the already inadequate labor force. The situation is so grave that the official press has carried unequivocal confirmation of it. The crisis in oil production is depicted in great detail in Pravda for September 8, where we find the following significant statement:

"In Azneft (one of Baku's biggest oil fields—JGW) the labor turnover has been enormous. In the past seven months the trusts have hired 12,960

workers but have dismissed 14,144. Among those who leave are not infrequently members of the engineering and technical staff. The turnover is to a large measure due to the impossibility of providing living quarters for all."

V. Malyshev, People's Commissar of Heavy Machine Building, is also quite outspoken about the crisis in his department. He writes: "At the present time only 84% of the workers scheduled by the plan are working in the enterprises of our Commissariat, 10% less than the total employed in the same period last year. Yet our program has grown 20% as compared with last year." (Pravda, September 16.)

HUGE TURNOVER IN LABOR CRITICIZED Eloquent as these admissions are, they pale in comparison with a statement printed in Pravda in connection with a review of a book just issued by the Institute of Economics and entitled: "Labor in Socialist Society." In a review of this book, the author is criticized sharply for slurring over "self-criticism and analysis of the shortcomings in the organization of labor in recent years."

"The causes of these shortcomings," thunders the reviewer, "are reduced by the author almost exclusively to the consequences of Trotskyist-Bukharin and other agents of capitalism. . . . But it is a mistake to reduce all our failings and lapses solely to wrecking. For instance, on the very important question of the labor turnover, the author gives a very detailed and interesting analysis of the causes of turnover in the period of intervention and civil war. But in illuminating this very same question for the recent years, he confines himself to data relating to a decline in labor turnover which began in 1932. Meanwhile, in 1938 and 1939 we have witnessed a considerable increase of labor turnover in a number of the most important branches of industry, especially in coal mining, iron ore production, heavy metallurgy, etc. Furthermore, this turnover has been one of the vital reasons for the failure of these branches of industry to fulfill the plans. The labor turnover is due primarily to shortcomings in the organization of labor and of wages, lack of attention to new workers, lag in light mechanization and so on." (Pravda, September 14.)

PROPAGANDA COMING THICK AND FAST

(8) General War and Pro-Ally Propaganda: Many American workers are conscious of the fact that they are daily deluged with pro-war and pro-Ally propaganda. Every boss newspaper in America uses its pages to blare forth war news heavily loaded from official British and French sources.

The movie—here all we have to do is list some of the current Hollywood productions—"Nurse Edith Cavell," "Confessions of a Nazi Spy," "Four Feathers," "Beau Geste," "U-Boat," etc.). The radio—news broadcasts are heavily tainted; speakers (whether of "isolationist" leanings or not) are all for the Allied imperialists; radio plays and sketches; patriotic jam sessions, etc.—all alike shout for war.

These are the main reasons why the capitalist United States of America is not merely a driving force in making the current war take on wider military aspects, but also the reasons why, if FDR has his way, an early entrance will occur.

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has carried a great deal of this hypocritical indignation over the "shortcomings in the organization of labor and wages" and the living conditions of workers. But to remedy this, the bureaucrats must clamp down on their own privileges. And since this is out of the question they have sought to solve the crisis by intensifying the speed up. Since June, the workers have been forced to run two, ten, and as many as 30 lathes in the machine shops (Pravda, September 15). All this under the slogan of "Extend Stakhanovism!" Stakhanov, together with other figureheads, has toured the USSR in a rabid campaign to put this speed up over. It has obviously failed. It has obviously met with resistance on the part of the workers.

LIVING CONDITIONS BECOMING WORSE Instead of improving, the living conditions of the workers are worsening. While food shortages are being vigorously denied as "slanders," the papers carry reports of trials of speculators, food hoarders and "disorganizers of trade." All such cases must be investigated and brought to trial within three days (Pravda, September 14). In his "historic" radio speech announcing the invasion of Poland, Molotov was compelled to devote time to warn against speculation and to reassure the populace that there was no shortage of necessities and that rationing was not being envisaged.

Since the invasion of Poland, the press has carried only triumphant and patriotic articles, and glowing accounts of mass meetings in factories where resolutions are passed acclaiming the progress of the Red Army and pledging new records in production.

But the admissions as well as the even more eloquent reticences of the official press bespeak a situation that is diametrically opposite to the one Stalin seeks to depict. In our opinion it is by no means excluded that strikes are once again taking place in factories. The last time there were strikes was early in January, immediately after the passage of the Draconic labor laws, the primary intent of which was precisely to halt the labor turnover. In January, too Pravda ceased for a few days to publish the key data for production. Stalin's latest "victories" are proving to be the most disastrous for his regime.

West Coast Sailors Chalk Up New Victory

(Continued from Page 1) was a clear case of giving the shipowners the advantage. The shipowners wanted to negotiate in mid-winter when shipping is at its lowest point. Also the shipowners recognize the bootlicking policy of Bridges and hoped to make the S.U.P. dependent upon the money Communist party line.

By holding out and preparing to strike the Coast if necessary the S.U.P. completely reversed

Militancy the Key The S.U.P. proved again that militant action can force the bosses into line. It proved that the 60-day extension was a farce—a money demand. Further, the 60-day extension signed by the Stalinists merely serves to demoralize the ranks of the Longshoremen and other maritime unions. The membership of these unions can now see the situation clearly. The whole attempt of the Stalinists and shipowners to dump the Sailors Union of the Pacific proved to be a boomerang.

CHAMBERLAIN REJECTS HITLER TERMS

(Continued from Page 1) united front against Russia, and the aspiration of all the bandit empires to reduce the Soviet Union to a colony divided among themselves, remains to be seen.

Battle Moves Meanwhile, the Stalinist regime is continuing its course of expansion and consolidation of position in and around the Baltic sea and lands. After having imposed "mutual assistance" pacts upon Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, it is now preparing to proceed full steam ahead against Finland. It is still too early to say whether or not the Finnish bourgeoisie will carry out its declaration that it will not "surrender its sovereignty" without an armed struggle. In any case, its "independence" and "sovereignty" have been pretty mythical since 1917-1918, when it separated from Russia, and became a mere satellite of one or another of the big imperialist powers. The alternative for the Finnish bourgeoisie is now to continue its function of old, or to come under the none-too-gentle heel of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

opportunity for intervening a little more deeply in the European conflict, has made one of his customary hypocritical appeals for "justice" in the form of a declaration to the Moscow government on behalf of Finland. Ambassador Steinhardt apparently conveyed the Roosevelt view on Finland to the Soviet government in his interview with Molotov.

So far as is known, Roosevelt has not protested against the continuing suppression of Puerto Rican independence and sovereignty which is being carried out by his own government and its armed forces. That (and similar things) is evidently a horse of a different color.

Roosevelt, ready to seize any