

**HARRY
HAYWOOD**

**THE
ROAD
TO
NEGRO
LIBERATION**



10c

Report to the
Eighth Convention of the
Communist Party of the U.S.A.

To have a clear understanding of
The STRUGGLES of the NEGRO PEOPLE
for equal rights and for
the right to self-determination in the Black Belt,

R E A D

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The Road to Negro Liberation

The Tasks of the Communist Party in
Winning Working Class Leadership of the
Negro Liberation Struggles, and the Fight
Against Reactionary Nationalist-Reformist
Movements Among the Negro People.

By HARRY HAYWOOD

*Report to the Eighth Convention of the
Communist Party of the U. S. A.,
Cleveland, April 2-8, 1934.*

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I. NEGRO REFORMISM—AGENT OF U. S. IMPERIALISM

COMRADE BROWDER in his excellent report outlined in the clearest fashion the position of the Party on the Negro question, and laid the basis for a correct approach to our task in work among Negroes in the present period. Comrade Browder stressed the importance of the fight on two fronts against white chauvinism as the main danger and against petty bourgeois nationalism, which he correctly called the "reverse side of white chauvinism."

In my report I wish to elaborate on this question of the fight on two fronts, particularly in relation to the fight against the Negro reformist danger, which, in the present period, has become acute and menacing.

An outstanding characteristic of the present moment is the sharp increase in the activities of the Negro bourgeois reformists and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders among the Negro masses. We find that these activities have not only been intensified, but are assuming more varied and subtle forms. In addition to the official bourgeois reformist organizations and their activities, there has appeared upon the scene in the recent period numerous petty bourgeois nationalist movements. We also witness definite attempts to crystallize "Left" reformist Negro movements.

This phenomenon is directly connected with the sharpening class struggle and growing radicalization of the Negro toilers. Only on this basis can it be explained. We might say that the increased activities of the Negro reformists, their attempts to strengthen nationalism among the masses, take place in direct proportion to the increase of our revolu-

tionary influence among the Negro masses. We see that wherever we begin serious work among the Negroes, wherever our influence is extended among them, we find ourselves confronted sharply with the problem of the struggle against Negro reformism as an immediate obstacle in the revolutionization of the Negro masses, as for example, in Chicago, in St. Louis, the South, in connection with the Scottsboro campaign and the struggle against lynching. Everywhere, Negro reformists and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders of all shades, under the cover of the most cunning demagoguery, are feverishly working.

What is the object of these activities? It is clear that their object is to halt the growing revolutionary drift of the Negro masses, to hinder the growing unity of Negro and white toilers in the struggle against rising fascist reaction, to hold the masses under the influence of bourgeois reformism, petty bourgeois nationalism, which means objectively, to hold them to the shackles of imperialism. It is now becoming clearer than ever that Negro reformism is the main enemy within the ranks of the Negro people, the chief social support of imperialist Jim-Crow reaction among the Negro masses. Therefore, the struggle against and exposure of the Negro reformists and the petty bourgeois nationalist leaders, their isolation from the masses, is a central, most urgent task of our Party and the revolutionary movement at the present time. Involved in this fight for the liberation of the masses from the treacherous influences of the Negro reformists and their organizations, is the whole question of proletarian hegemony and Party leadership in the rising national revolutionary movement of the Negro people. It is a question of who will beat whom. What policy shall prevail? Our proletarian class policy of a revolutionary alliance between the Negro masses and the white working class for the overthrow of American imperialism and the

realization of the rights of Negroes or the reformist policy of surrender to imperialism, the policy which substitutes reactionary utopian illusions in place of revolutionary struggle, a policy which can lead only to defeat, and to strengthening the yoke of imperialist oppression upon the masses of Negro toilers and the white toilers as well.

The Object of Negro Reformism

Let us examine some of the activities of the Negro bourgeois reformists, petty bourgeois nationalist organizations in the present situation. Among the Negro reformist organizations we find the chief role is still allotted to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In the leadership of this organization, we find Negro bourgeois reformists of the type of Walter White, Pickens, Schuyler, DuBois en bloc, with white liberals ("enlightened" imperialist elements) of the type of Spingarn, Mary White Ovington, etc., and even outspoken imperialist politicians such as Senator Capper, Governor General Murphy of the Philippines, etc.; also open Negro reactionaries of the type of Dr. Moton of Tuskegee. It is these imperialist elements that govern the policies of the organization. The composition of the leadership of the N.A.A.C.P. thus gives a clear indication of this policy.

What is this policy?

The guiding theory on which the policy is based is that: The Negro question can be solved within the confines of the present capitalist imperialist social order without revolutionary struggle. That the fate of the Negro masses is bound up with the maintenance of capitalism, or as Kelly Miller, outspoken Negro conservative expresses it: "Capital is the Negro's friend; white labor is his enemy." Therefore, according to this, the winning of Negro rights does not entail a fight against capital, *i.e.*, imperialism; on the

contrary, it implies the collaboration with the white imperialist rulers, or in the words of the N.A.A.C.P. leaders, "united front of the 'best' elements of both races." Against whom? Against the rising mass movement of Negro and white toilers, particularly against its leaders—the Communists.

This is the core of Negro bourgeois reformism. From this flows its tactical line of reliance on bourgeois courts, legislative bodies, its treacherous compromises with the white ruling class, its reactionary sabotage of the revolutionary struggles for Negro rights. "The Constitution is the ship, all else is the sea," says Kelly Miller.

In the present period of sharpening class struggles and political awakening of the Negro peoples, this policy implies the active supplementing of the ruling class tactic of split and division in the ranks of the working class; it implies active alliance with all reactionary forces against the rising national liberation movement of the Negro masses, against the revolutionary labor movement, and its leaders, the Communist Party. Negro reformism has become an active agent of the ruling imperialist bourgeoisie in helping to prepare the way for fascism.

The division of the toiling masses along lines of race and nationality, above all, the fostering of friction between black and white workers—this is the very heart of the strategy of rising fascism. This is definitely the meaning of the present campaign of white chauvinism and anti-Negro feeling launched by the bourgeoisie. Its object is to split off the rising struggle of the Negro masses from the revolutionary movement—to deprive the revolutionary working class of one of its main reserves. This is why Negro reformism with its policy of collaboration with the white ruling class oppressors, its anti-labor activities, its doctrines of Jim-Crow nationalism and racial seclusion, complement completely the program of fascism. It is but the reverse side of

the fascist coin. This is why, at the present moment, American imperialism, as it proceeds with its policy of fascization, is consciously building up Negro reformism as its best agent within the ranks of the Negro people. It is not accidental, therefore, that just at this moment the imperialist government in Washington has embarked upon a policy of drawing Negro reformists and bourgeois politicians directly into the government apparatus and the N.R.A. machinery. This is not only recognition on the part of imperialism of the services of its Negro lackeys. This policy of corruption of Negro upper class elements is intended to strengthen the social base of the imperialist rulers among the Negro middle classes, to use sections of them as an effective buffer to ward off the gathering mass movement and to make easier the carrying through of its policy of increased plunder of the Negro masses.

A whole series of this sort of "promotions" has been made in the recent period. A so-called "Black Cabinet" of the Roosevelt administration has been formed. It includes such names as Eugene Kinckle Jones, former head of the National Urban League, now assistant to Daniel Roper, Secretary of Commerce; Robert L. Vann, head of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, is now special assistant to the Attorney General's office; Henry Hunt, prominent Southern Negro educator, assistant to the governor of the Federal Agricultural Administration; Forrester B. Washington of Philadelphia, director of Negro work in the Federal Emergency Relief unit; Theophilus Mann of Chicago, a legal advisor of the Public Works Administration, etc., etc.

An Aid to the Roosevelt New Deal

Thus we find the Negro reformist leaders supporting every fascist maneuver of the Roosevelt New Deal administration, albeit this support is camouflaged by demagogic phrases,

represented as in the interest of the Negro people. The New Deal and the N.R.A. is hailed by them as a New Deal for the Negroes. The *Pittsburgh Courier*, unofficial mouthpiece of the N.A.A.C.P., is at the same time the foremost spokesman in support of the New Deal policies among Negroes. Its pages and editorials literally scream with pæans of praise for the Roosevelt New Deal administration. The sharpening of national oppression under the New Deal, the legalized discrimination and lower status of the Negro workers in the N.R.A. codes, the chauvinistic policy of wholesale replacement of Negroes by white workers further to divide the Negro and white toilers, particularly in the South, the legalized robbery and plunder of the Negro farming masses through the cotton plow-under program and the vicious Bankhead Bill—all of this (according to these leaders), is not the fundamental objective of the whole New Deal policy. This worsening of the living conditions of the Negro masses, this further attack upon their political rights is represented merely as the result of "individual injustices" in the local application of the New Deal policy. Thus, the fight of the Negro toilers is made to appear not a fight against the fascist New Deal policy, but merely a fight for fairness in the application of this policy. Thus, the Joint Committee on National Recovery—a united front of Negro reformist organizations, sponsored by the N.A.A.C.P. and the National Urban League, with headquarters in Washington, has as its declared policy the fight for "fair play for Negroes within the N.R.A." through co-operation with the administrators of the N.R.A., C.W.A., P.W.A., etc., bringing to the attention of these officials grievances of Negro toilers, acting in an unofficial advisory capacity of the New Deal administration. Of course, all this activity of the Negro reformist leaders around the New Deal has for its purpose the disorganizing and confusing of the Negro masses in their grow-

ing resentment to these fascist policies, and is designed also to distort the aims of the rising movement among the Negroes, thereby crippling their growing opposition to the advancing fascist reaction of the Roosevelt New Deal.

The Costigan-Wagner "Anti-Lynching" Bill — Weapon of the Lynchers

Of a similar nature is the latest maneuver of the N.A.A. C.P. leaders in regard to the struggle against lynching—the so-called Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynching Bill. According to its sponsors, the lynching of Negroes will be stopped by the mere enactment of another law. This, in face of the fact that the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments of the U. S. Constitution, purporting to guarantee civil rights to Negroes, remain but scraps of paper; in face of the fact that numerous civil rights laws adorning the statutes of various States, supposedly to guarantee the rights of the Negroes, are daily violated; in face of the fact that even so-called anti-lynching laws in a number of States have by no means halted the work of the lynchers. But this is not all! The Costigan-Wagner Bill not only fosters illusions; the sinister and reactionary purposes of this bill, its fascist character as a weapon against labor and against the Negro masses, is most clearly revealed in the clause defining a "mob." A "mob" is defined as "three or more people acting in concert without the authority of the law for the purpose of depriving any person of his life or doing him physical injury." Is it not clear that this clause puts a weapon in the hands of the lynchers of the Negro people? Any mass demonstration of workers, picketing in a strike, a demonstration of sharecroppers against the local landlord, or for that matter, a mass defense action against lynching itself, could be defined as a "mob," and the participants prosecuted under this so-called "anti-lynch law." The law would legalize the shooting down

of Negroes, white toilers, as at Camp Hill, Reeltown, as in the eviction demonstrations in Chicago, Cleveland, etc. Any such demonstration could be defined as a "mob" "acting in concert without authority of the law" for the purpose of doing "physical injury" to the capitalist oppressors. Actual experience bears this out. We need but bring forward the fact that the Virginia Anti-Lynch Law which also includes such a definition was used only once, and that not against lynchers, but for smashing the mass picketing of the textile strikers in Danville, Virginia. It is clear, therefore, that this bill, demagogically supported by the Negro reformists as a solution for lynching, is in actuality a legal weapon of lynch terror! It is an instrument directed to the physical suppression of the Negro masses and the working class.

In addition to its purpose as a weapon of outright physical violence against the masses, it also, like all other reformist measures, is directed toward bolstering up the waning faith of the masses in capitalist institutions—courts, legislative bodies, *i.e.*, in the very instruments of ruling class oppression.

Now that local courts, as a result of Scottsboro, Tuscaloosa, etc., have been exposed before wide masses as instruments of the lynchers, the reformists seek to perpetuate the illusions regarding the impartiality of bourgeois legal machinery by recourse to the Federal courts. They imply that the higher courts are impartial and cannot be influenced by vulgar class or national prejudice. By this maneuver, they seek to conceal the true role of the Washington imperialist government which stands at the head of the whole system of national oppression of the Negro masses, a system of which lynching is an inseparable part. This objective support to the lynchers is further seen in the fact that in this bill lynching is treated, not as a part of the whole system of national and social persecution of the Negro people, but as

something entirely separate and apart from this system. In this manner, Negro reformist leaders seek to foster the lie that lynching can be successfully fought without, at the same time, attacking the social and economic base from which it arises. It is not accidental, therefore, that this Bill contains no provisions for legal lynchings or frame-ups, because in these courtroom lynchings the courts themselves actually carry out the work of the lynchers.

It is quite clear that the purpose of the Costigan-Wagner Bill is to disarm the masses of Negro and white toilers in the face of the growing fascist lynch terror. Under the guise of a fight against lynching, the N.A.A.C.P. leaders, in effect, give practical support to the lynchers.

It is not accidental that at a time when the movement against lynching is gaining fresh momentum throughout the country, when popular indignation is rising everywhere against these barbarous attacks, at a time when the illusions of the masses in bourgeois democracy are being rapidly shattered, and when in ever greater numbers the masses are taking the path of revolutionary struggle against lynching and oppression, outside of bourgeois courts and legislative bodies, and under the leadership of the C.P. and revolutionary organizations—it is not accidental that the bourgeois reformists and their imperialist masters, pick precisely such a time to come forward with the proposals for a *new law*, supposedly against lynching, but in reality to stifle the rising movement of the masses, to dissipate its revolutionary energy, to ensnare the masses in the trap of bourgeois legalism.

At the same time, this bill is a cunning maneuver on the part of the imperialists and their N.A.A.C.P. agents to retain the waning prestige of the Negro bourgeois reformist leaders among the masses. This prestige has been sharply undermined as a result of our activities, particularly our mass campaign of action and exposure around the Scotts-

boro issue. It is a maneuver of the bourgeoisie to strengthen the position of this leadership as against the growing influence of the revolutionary movement among Negroes. In fact, this was the very essence of the speeches of the reformist leaders at the recent hearings before the Senate Committee on the Costigan-Wagner Bill. These speeches showed clearly that the main interest of these misleaders in the passage of this bill was not to stop lynching, but to restore the faith of the Negro masses in capitalist justice as against the growing influence of the Communists. This was clearly expressed by them in their statements before the Senate hearing on the Costigan-Wagner Bill.

On that occasion Mr. Walter White, National Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., stated:

"Twelve million Negroes who have been the chief sufferers from this evil are today anxiously looking to this committee and to Congress for the passage of this Bill. Energetic and long continued efforts have been made by *certain radical movements* to convince the American Negro that his hope of justice under the present form of government is useless and that he must lend his aid in helping to overthrow this government and to establish a new one. . . . It is for this committee and for this Congress either to demonstrate that this hope is not a futile one, or else to give weight to those who contend that such a hope is idiotic . . . refusal based upon figments of expediency or constitutionality to afford Federal aid against lynching will inevitably result in a deepening of this resentment *which America would do well to consider.*"
[My emphasis—H.H.]

Here, his main emphasis is not against lynching, but against the growing revolutionary movement of the Negro and white toilers, which is breaking through reformist illusions. It is a plea for more support from his imperialist masters in the fight of the Negro reformists against the rising revolutionary movement.

In view of all this, it is small wonder that we find behind

this bill a united front of the most reactionary elements, ranging from Senator Wagner (sponsor of the fascist, strikebreaking "Wagner Bill"), the professional red-baiter Hamilton Fish, Southern reactionaries of the Inter-racial Committees, down to the social-fascist leaders—all united to defend the Negro masses, not against lynching and growing imperialist oppression, but against Communism, against the revolutionary struggle for national liberation.

The Bill of Civil Rights for the Negro People

Against these treacherous maneuvers of the Negro reformists, we must bring forward more energetically the "Bill of Civil Rights for the Negro People," proposed by the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

The "Bill of Civil Rights" differs radically from the reactionary Costigan-Wagner Bill in that:

1. It contains a clear class definition of lynching. Lynching is treated in connection with the whole network of social and national persecution under which the Negroes in this country suffer. The abolition of lynching is inseparably tied up with the entire question of real enforcement of democratic rights for Negroes. This treatment of lynching as a part of the larger question of social and political rights for Negroes, implies that the struggle against lynching can be successfully fought only when connected with the fight against the whole system of Negro persecution. This basic truth has been brilliantly confirmed by the world-wide struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys.

2. The basic difference, however, lies in the radically opposite purposes behind these two bills. In contrast to these reformist proposals, the L.S.N.R. Bill is not presented as a cure-all for lynching. We have no illusions that the mere passage of the Bill will in itself abolish lynching. On the

contrary, we know that even the most "perfect" bill means nothing unless backed by a revolutionary policy.

What is a revolutionary policy against lynching? Such a policy must have as its primary aim the mass mobilization of Negro and white toilers in revolutionary struggle against the lynchers, outside of bourgeois courts and legislative bodies. This alone can guarantee the defeat of the lynchers. Our Bill is not a substitute for struggle. On the contrary, it is an instrument for stirring up mass struggles; a weapon with which to clarify and mobilize the toilers in militant mass defense action outside of and against all bourgeois legal traps which are in reality the tools of the lynchers. Precisely in this lies the basic difference between our revolutionary tactics and the tactics of the reformists. The best "bill" against lynching is militant demonstrations of tens of thousands of white and Negro toilers on the streets and in the factories, beating back the lynchers.

It is urgently necessary that we seriously undertake the development of the widest campaign for the L.S.N.R. "Bill of Civil Rights." A nation-wide signature drive in support of this Bill must be immediately launched. The Bill must be brought before all toilers, Negro and white, into the shops, mines, factories, all mass organizations. Resolutions should be adopted. Delegations of Negro and white workers must present this Bill before Senators, Congressmen, State and local officials, demanding that they endorse this measure. It must be brought forward in every struggle, strike, and demonstration. At the same time, the Bill must be used as an instrument for developing militant mass actions of Negro and white toilers in all localities for the immediate and specific demands of the Negro masses against the Jim Crow and lynch system.

The campaign around this Bill must result in the building up of the L.S.N.R. into a real mass organization uniting

Negro and white toilers in the struggle for Negro liberation. In this task of building up the L.S.N.R., we must once for all depart from the stage of resolutions and decisions on paper to the actual organization of mass struggles for Negro rights. And in this, the campaign against lynching and for civil rights gives us an excellent opportunity. The L.S.N.R. can be built up only in such struggles.

The Program for a Jim-Crow Federation of Labor

The activities of the Negro reformists in the present situation are not only confined to the field of politics. More and more they are increasing their activities in the field of economic struggles of the Negro workers. As the Negro proletariat advance towards hegemony in the Negro liberation struggle, the Negro reformists attempt to stave off this advance. We find now the N.A.A.C.P. leaders issuing demagogic telegrams to Roosevelt and N.R.A. administrators, "protesting" against isolated cases of maltreatment of Negro workers under the N.R.A. codes, C.W.A., P.W.A., sending of delegations to participate in code hearings in the various industries where masses of Negroes are employed. This they do in order to pose as the friends of the Negro workers. These activities also include participation in local and regional N.R.A. boards, setting up of Emergency Advisory Committees on the Recovery Program. Of course, in every strike situation involving masses of Negro workers, local Negro reformists have been called in by the capitalists to play a strikebreaking role—Chicago, Detroit, Birmingham, etc.

But now, the nation-wide mass movement of workers for the establishment of trade unions is involving hundreds of thousands of Negro workers in the basic industries of the country. This has impelled the Negro reformist leaders to embark upon an active campaign of organizing Negro toilers

in the industries along Jim-Crow lines. Thus it is not accidental that precisely at this moment the National Urban League ("industrial specialists" of the Negro bourgeois reformists), comes forward with a "new labor program." According to the official statement of Arnold Hill, acting secretary, "this program is designed to create an effective instrument of Negro labor throughout the country by bringing together both organized and unorganized labor into a common federation. . . ." The statement goes on to say "the experience of the National Urban League through its local branches and its Emergency Advisory Councils in the Recovery Program, has demonstrated beyond doubt that Negro labor will be *left out in the cold*, unless some effective nation-wide solidarity is created by them, and the Urban League is undertaking to bring this about." (*Pittsburgh Courier*, March 31, 1934.) It is clear that these misleaders are apprehensive not that the Negro workers will be "left out in the cold," but that they, themselves, will be left out in the cold. What will be the program of this Jim-Crow Federation of Labor?

In a recent telegram to President Roosevelt on the strike situation in the automobile industry, Walter White, national secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., said:

"Under open shop the Negro has received greater opportunities in the automotive industry than in any other, both in number of jobs and chances for advancement." Then against unions: "Unhappily, the Negro in some industries has joined unions and then after going on strike has been replaced with white unionists." Then finally: "In your notable efforts to help organized labor obtain a voice in industry, we ask you to remind labor unions they with ill grace can ask benefits for white labor, while these unions discriminate against black labor."

Of course, comrades, this is so and cannot be denied. The A. F. of L. bureaucracy has consistently applied the Jim-Crow policy of American imperialism in the unions.

But this truth is deliberately brought forth by the reformists to obscure the real issue.

What is the deception that these misleaders wish to put across on the Negro workers? It is that organized labor is identical with the A. F. of L. bureaucracy; that is, the masses of white workers have the same interests as their reactionary top officials. Of course, this merely concretizes the basic Negro reformist nationalist concept that the interests of the Negro and white workers are not identical but antagonistic. To bolster up this deception, these misleaders try to hide from the Negro masses the existence of the revolutionary trade union movement with its policy of solidarity of Negro and white workers and in defense of the demands of the Negroes, its policy of struggle against the Jim-Crow A. F. of L. bureaucracy. This line is even more clearly expressed in an editorial of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, captioned, "Watch This Open Shop Business":

"We deplore the fact that the A. F. of L. closed shop has generally been closed to Negro labor, while the open shop has so frequently been open to Negro labor, but we cannot deny its reality."

Here is the whole line: Negro workers should support the open shop, which means the strikebreaking, union-busting policy of the capitalists and A. F. of L. fakers.

Thus the policy of this new federation can be no other than that of class collaboration, full co-operation with the strikebreaking, open shop, company union policy of the N.R.A. and National Labor Board, full endorsement of every fascist measure attempted against Negro and white workers, a policy of split and division in the labor movement. It will be an active supplement to the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. This much is clear.

Here also Negro reformism with singular exactness adapts itself to the specific needs of American imperialism at the

present moment. By indiscriminately branding all unions as natural enemies of the Negro workers, by blurring over the role of the Communists and revolutionary trade unions, the only force fighting for the rights of the Negro toilers on the economic field and against the reactionary trade union A. F. of L. bureaucracy—this means not only to deceive the Negro workers, but to sabotage their struggle against Jim-Crowism on the job, in the shops, factories, etc., to give direct support to the capitalists and the fascist A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

At the same time, in this editorial, the gate is left open for an active collaboration of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and Negro reformists.

“We are in principle behind the A. F. of L. in its efforts to organize the automobile workers and establish closed shop. . . . Unfortunately, while the A. F. of L. stands for *democracy and equal rights for all labor in principle*, it has not done so in practice. . . . We shall believe more firmly in the A. F. of L. when it changes its policy of segregation and discrimination existing in most of its affiliated organizations.” [Emphasis mine—H. H.]

According to this, Jim-Crowism is not a fundamental policy of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. Oh, no! This bureaucracy stands for “democracy and equal rights for all labor”. Where then rests the responsibility for Jim-Crowism? This, we are given to understand, rests with the prejudice of the rank-and-file members of the various unions. The innocent A. F. of L. bureaucrats have merely succumbed to the pressure of this prejudice of the rank and file! This is what the A. F. of L. bureaucrats would have the Negro workers believe.

Sharper Struggle for Everyday Demands!

Comrades, all of this means that the Negro reformists are out definitely to challenge our influence and leadership over the Negro workers in the trade union field. It is quite

clear that this can be combatted only on the basis of more serious and energetic work by our trade unions among Negroes, more energetic struggle in defense of the demands of the Negro workers by our unions and oppositions in the A. F. of L. We must seriously begin an active campaign of recruiting thousands of Negro workers into our revolutionary trade unions, to make the revolutionary trade unions the "main levers for the organization of the Negro masses," as called for in the Resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum of our Central Committee. We must now seriously undertake the task of building up a revolutionary trade union opposition in the Jim-Crow locals of the A. F. of L. Our white comrades in the revolutionary opposition in the A. F. of L. must come to the fore as a leading force in the fight against the Jim-Crow policies of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats. Similarly, our white comrades in the independent unions must energetically advance the struggle for the specific demands of the Negro workers. One of the most important duties of our revolutionary trade union opposition is to bring forward fearlessly and unhesitatingly the specific demands of the Negro toilers against Jim-Crowism and for the unity of the Negro and white toilers in the struggle against the capitalists. It is to the greatest interest of the white workers to defeat the Jim-Crow policy of the A. F. of L. fakers, since it is just this policy which is one of the main instruments of the bosses to paralyze and demoralize the struggles of the entire working class.

We must establish our groups and fractions within all so-called Negro independent unions. Any white chauvinistic slurring over the special demands of the Negro workers is more dangerous than ever. It plays directly into the hands of the capitalist oppressors. It is equivalent to desertion of the masses to the bourgeois nationalists, to give direct support to the fascist strikebreaking efforts of the bourgeoisie and the A. F. of L. fakers.

II. THE GROWTH OF PETTY-BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM

N the present situation, we have to deal not only with the open clear-cut bourgeois reformist movements of the type of the N.A.A.C.P., National Urban League, Ministers' Alliances, etc. In the present period, these organizations, with their openly declared policy of collaboration with the white rulers, are not sufficient to corral the Negro masses. The leaders of these organizations are finding it increasingly difficult to halt the Leftward drift of the masses, to keep them chained to their leadership and hence to imperialist reaction. Under the sharpening blows of the Jim-Crow lynch offensive of the white ruling classes, and as a result of the increasing activities of our Party and revolutionary organizations, Negroes are becoming disillusioned with the reformist panaceas and are increasingly taking up the path of revolutionary struggle under our leadership. The reformist leadership over the toilers is being sharply threatened. For example: already in the N.A.A.C.P., there is developing a strong undercurrent of oppositional sentiment to the treacherous policies of the leadership. A rank-and-file Left Wing is striving to crystallize itself.

The official bourgeois reformist leadership is attempting to meet this situation through more cunning demogogy, through combining "Left" phrases with desperate appeals to the nationalist moods of the Negro masses, emphasizing more than ever the slogans of race loyalty, solidarity, etc. At the same time a whole series of petty-bourgeois nationalist movements are springing up, advocating the wildest re-

actionary and utopian schemes as a way out of the misery and suffering of the Negro people under the crisis. These movements for the most part advocate a voluntary acceptance of segregation and Jim-Crowism as inevitable. The fight against it is folly; make the best of it. The Negroes must draw into themselves, build up their own life within the Jim-Crow ghettos. Hence, they propose fantastic schemes for building up self-sufficing economy among Negroes within the walls of segregation, in the Black Belt of the cities, under the leadership of business men and professionals, advancing all sorts of illusory schemes for the establishment of co-operatives and industry along Jim-Crow lines, holding forth the bourgeois utopian perspective of eventually establishing industries which will be owned and operated by Negroes and furnish employment to Negro workers.

At the same time a number of neo-Garveyist movements (new editions of Garveyism—proposals for mass migration out of the country, "Peaceful Return to Africa") are gaining ground among the Negro masses as a solution for the ills of the Negro people. These movements, in some cases, are masked with anti-imperialist slogans, and even adopt quasi-Communist coloring, as for example, the American-Liberian plan, being initiated by William N. Jones of the *Baltimore Afro-American*.

The social base for this spread of petty-bourgeois nationalism lies in the masses of petty bourgeoisie, small business men, shopkeepers, whose economic base is being undermined and destroyed by the ravages of the crisis, and in the growing army of the unemployed Negro petty bourgeois intellectuals. These latter, in the main, furnish the leading cadres of all these petty-bourgeois nationalist movements.

At the bottom of all of these reactionary segregational schemes is reflected the desperation of the Negro petty bourgeoisie, driven to despair by the ruthless encroachments

of imperialism on their already meagre markets in the Jim-Crow districts of the cities. It reflects an attempt on the part of these elements, under the leadership of petty-bourgeois visionaries, to find escape from their plight. This they seek to do by desperate appeals for race loyalty and solidarity, etc., and through advocating mass migration either to a Jim-Crow utopia within the country, or back to Africa. Here, presumably, they will have the opportunity of exploiting "their own masses", free from imperialistic competition, and develop into a full-fledged bourgeoisie. In support of these reactionary and illusory dreams, the petty bourgeois nationalist leaders are making feverish attempts to establish a mass base among the Negro poor farmers and the most politically backward sections of the working class, particularly among the unemployed.

At the same time, the growth of these movements reveals the breaking away of sections of petty bourgeois intellectuals, formerly adhering to the leadership of official Negro bourgeois reformism as represented in the N.A.A.C.P., National Urban League, etc. It reflects an attempt on the part of these elements to formulate an independent program. But we know that the petty bourgeoisie as an intermediary class isn't capable of formulating an independent policy. It must either follow the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat or inevitably be drawn under the influence of imperialist reaction.

Thus, while apparently voicing opposition to the official bourgeois reformist leadership, these petty bourgeois nationalist leaders objectively represent the interests of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, objectively these movements reflect an attempt on the part of the petty-bourgeois leaders to seize the leadership of the rising movement of the Negro masses against oppression in order to throttle it by diverting it into reactionary utopian channels, away from revolutionary

struggle, and hence back into the fold of the bourgeois reformists.

This emphasizes the need for the further strengthening of the hegemony of the Negro proletariat and the leadership of the Communist Party in the Negro liberation movement along the lines laid down in the Convention Resolution. The leadership of the working class alone can guarantee victory to the Negro masses in their struggle for national liberation; the leadership of any other class will inevitably lead to betrayal and defeat.

The Crisis in the N.A.A.C.P. Leadership

This situation, the growth of our influence and prestige among wide strata of Negro masses, on the one hand, the defection of sections of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals and their attempt to formulate an independent policy, on the other—all this has resulted in a profound crisis in the top leadership of the N.A.A.C.P. This is the significance of the present squabbles among the N.A.A.C.P. leaders. This is the significance of the so-called "Left" opposition of Dr. DuBois to the N.A.A.C.P. leading group. Dr. DuBois and his friends pretend to criticize the Walter White-Spingarn leadership from the Left. This criticism has been along the following lines:

Accusations that the Walter White-Spingarn leadership is a self-perpetuating clique; that policies for the "welfare" of Negroes are being worked out in small committees responsible to no one; DuBois calls for more democracy, more autonomy to the local branches, that the organization cease its orientation on "the cultured few and turn towards the masses"; he advocates drawing of young blood into the leadership, etc., etc. According to him, the present conditions necessitate a radical change in the whole set-up of the organization "if it is to fulfill its historical role" (that is, of course, if it is to continue to be an effective agent of the

white ruling class among Negroes). Is there any real fundamental difference between DuBois and his friends and the leading group of the N.A.A.C.P.? Of course not. There is no difference in principle—merely tactical differences. Differences on how best to carry out the interests of the white rulers among the Negro masses; on how best to betray the masses in conditions of rising revolutionary upsurge and growing influence of the Communist Party. Let us see what is the real program of DuBois behind these demagogic phrases? This program was revealed most clearly in the symposium conducted in the last four issues of *The Crisis*. In this symposium the White-Spingarn leadership attempts demagogically to represent the controversy within the N.A.A.C.P. leadership as differences between the “militant” stand of that organization for Negro rights and against segregation as opposed to the Dr. DuBois’s group which wants to revise the policy and retreat before Jim-Crowism. In answering this in the April issue of *The Crisis*, Dr. DuBois unwittingly exposes the demagogic pretenses of the N.A.A.C.P. leadership and its bankruptcy; at the same time he comes forth with the clearest formulation of bourgeois nationalism yet advanced—a program of voluntary segregation. Dr. DuBois says:

“No matter how much we may fulminate about ‘No segregation,’ there stand the flat facts. Moreover, this situation has in the last quarter century been steadily growing worse.”

Then Dr. DuBois explodes the false pretenses upon which the N.A.A.C.P. operates. He says:

“If, as Spingarn asserts, the N.A.A.C.P. has conducted a quarter-century campaign against segregation, then the net result has been little less than nothing.”

Continues DuBois:

“When we were living in times of prosperity; when we were

making post-war incomes; when our labor was in demand, we perhaps could afford to wait. But today, faced by starvation and economic upheaval, and by the question of being able to survive at all in this land in the reconstruction that is upon us, it is ridiculous not to see, and criminal not to tell the colored people, that they cannot base their salvation upon the empty reiteration of a slogan."

What then is the way out? The learned Doctor answers:

"The only thing that we not only can, but must do, is voluntarily and insistently to organize our economic and social power, no matter how much segregation it involves. Learn to associate with ourselves and to train ourselves for effective association. Organize our strength as consumers; learn to cooperate and use machines and power as producers; train ourselves in methods of democratic control within our own group. Run and support our own institutions."

The Role of the DuBois "Opposition"

The question raised and answered by Dr. DuBois in this controversy is as follows: Can we keep on fooling the masses by the old formula? Dr. DuBois' answer is no. These old panaceas have already outlived their time, they are obsolete. In the present situation of growing political awakening of the Negro masses, we must find new ways, invent new devices if we are to hold these masses under our leadership and thence for capitalism. This is the meaning of Dr. DuBois' "opposition".

The wily Dr. DuBois sees the growth of petty-bourgeois nationalist movements springing up on all sides. He feels that the N.A.A.C.P. can retain its leadership and prestige among the masses only if it comes forward with a more clear-cut, nationalist program, by stronger appeals to race loyalty, race solidarity. In fact, Dr. DuBois' proposal is in reality that the N.A.A.C.P. should actually take over the leadership as well as the program of the petty-bourgeois nationalist movements. This means also that the N.A.A.C.P.

leadership must carry through a less open policy of collaboration at the top with the white ruling class elements. The dictation of policies for the N.A.A.C.P. by the imperialists must be carried through in a more concealed manner. In other words, he is for making the N.A.A.C.P. more authentically a Negro nationalist organization, an organization which will be able to embrace the numerous petty-bourgeois nationalist movements now cropping up. This is what he means by "fundamental reorganization of the N.A.A.C.P.", "turn to the masses", etc. In other words, DuBois' "opposition" is but another maneuver to catch the masses, to hold them back from revolutionary struggle. Truly, petty-bourgeois nationalism has found a cunning spokesman in the person of Dr. DuBois.

Moreover, the opposition of DuBois and his friends has brought out clearly the growing demoralization within the top ranks of the Negro middle class leadership, a real crisis of Negro bourgeois reformism. It shows that the sharpening imperialist offensive against the Negro masses, the growth of the revolutionary movement among them is shattering the basic props of Negro bourgeois reformism, as well as its pet slogans—dependence upon the white rulers and, as DuBois expressed it, the doctrine that "obvious deserve and accomplishment by Negroes can break down prejudice", etc. The ideological confusion in the top leadership of the N.A.A.C.P. is clearly shown in a recent issue of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, unofficial mouthpiece of that organization. For example, on the front page in big headlines we read, "DuBois Defends Segregation", the front page article launches a sharp attack against him while the leading editorial in the same issue comes to his defense.

Comrades, for our Party this situation reveals tremendous possibilities. On the basis of the sharpened and sustained offensive in our agitation, in our polemics with these mislead-

ers, coupled with the more energetic pushing forward of our struggle for Negro rights on all fronts, and in this the application of the united front from below tactic—there can be no doubt that we can make the heaviest inroads among the masses of the N.A.A.C.P. followers.

The "Jobs for Negroes" Movement

Let us now briefly analyze some of the new petty-bourgeois nationalist movements. It is precisely against these movements that we shall more and more have to direct our fire in the coming period.

An exceedingly dangerous movement is the petty-bourgeois movement "for jobs" cropping up in a number of cities throughout the country. This movement appears in different places under various names. For example: In Baltimore, it is called the Costoni movement; in Washington, D. C., the Negro Alliance, etc., etc. The petty-bourgeois charlatans at the head of this movement confine their efforts strictly to the Negro neighborhoods. The fight for jobs for Negroes is directed against individual establishments in these Negro centers. It is clear that at best such tactics could only result in securing a limited number of jobs for Negroes, and would not in any way bring real relief to the suffering unemployed masses.

But the counter-revolutionary kernel of this movement consists precisely in the fact that not only does it sabotage the real struggle of the Negro toilers for real unemployment relief and insurance, against job discrimination, etc., by confining this struggle to the Negro ghettos. But, by advocating the replacement of white workers employed in Negro neighborhoods by Negroes, the leaders of this movement seek to direct the rising resentment of the Negro toilers, not against the white rulers and their government, but against the white working class. By this policy they actually promote riots

between Negroes and white toilers, thus playing directly into the hands of the fascist lynchers.

Neo-Garveyism—New "Back-to-Africa" Movements

Among the latest petty-bourgeois movements are several new editions of Garveyism—neo-Garveyism, Negro Zionism. For example: The Nationalist Movement for the Establishment of a Forty-Ninth State (headquarters in Chicago). In its program, the leaders of this organization cite the various proscriptions suffered by the Negro masses in this country, displacements under the N.R.A., etc., concluding that all of this is natural and inevitable. Therefore, they propose that "the Federal government acquire a territory from the existent States (adequate in size and fertile in soil) and dispose of this land and its resources to Negroes willing to settle."

This Jim-Crow defeatist scheme, according to its leaders, will not only solve the Negro question, but, we are informed, "*will do much to relieve the economic stress throughout the country due to the vast oversupply of workers who can't find work*".

Another movement of this type, also originating in Chicago, is the Peace Movement to Liberia. The leaders of this organization claim 4,000,000 members who have signed a petition addressed to the President, asking that the government pay the expenses of transportation to Liberia, or Ethiopia, to settle. The signers of the petition, according to the leaders, state that "they hold themselves in readiness to be eliminated from the impossibly competitive labor market here, by transportation in government transports to Africa". Further, the release states, "*an exodus of the poorest people will benefit both races, improve labor conditions for those remaining and promote the long-deferred economic recovery*". But to leave no doubt in the minds of their imperialist masters as to the peaceful, non-revolutionary character of this movement, of its utter subservience to imperialism,

particularly to American imperialism, and that the support of this reactionary scheme entails no complications with foreign imperialist powers, the leaders make it clear that they are not out to set up an independent State. Oh, no! Their intention is merely to become "law-abiding citizens under the government to which they migrate—be it either Liberia or Abyssinia".

These two movements, calling for mass exodus either to Liberia or to a Jim-Crow Forty-Ninth State within the country, have in common the same reactionary features. The mass migration of Negroes is presented not only as a solution of the Negro problem, but as a step towards the solution of the question of unemployment for the white toilers. *This shows a complete acceptance by the petty-bourgeois traitors at the head of these movements of the Negro-baiting doctrines of the fascist demagogues of the K.K.K., Black Shirts, White Legion, etc. These fascists also maintain that the Negro toilers are responsible for the sufferings of the white toilers in the South. On the basis of this, they seek to dupe the backward white workers into support of all sorts of reactionary provocations against Negroes.*

It is clear, therefore, that these schemes of the Negro petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders fit precisely into the whole program of the fascist lynchers and aid in the development of fascism. In these utopian plans held forth as solutions for the ills confronting the Negro masses in this country, there exists an objective basis for an alliance between fascism and neo-Garveyism against the struggle of the Negro masses for national liberation, against the revolutionary movement in general.

The Liberian Plan and U. S. Imperialism

But the most subtle and refined edition of neo-Garveyism, and therefore the most dangerous, is seen in the so-called *Liberian-American Plan*. The movement around this plan

is being initiated by certain Negro petty-bourgeois nationalist groups in London, Paris, and the U. S. A., with the help and leadership of certain Negro renegades from Communism. Foremost among these latter is the renegade Padmore, who is undoubtedly the ideological head of the whole movement. The chief spokesman for this plan among American Negroes is none other than William N. Jones of the *Baltimore Afro-American*, our erstwhile "fellow traveler" during the 1932 Presidential Election Campaign. Undoubtedly Mr. Jones found the program of revolutionary struggle advocated by the Communist Party too rocky a road for his wavering petty-bourgeois feet. In his quest for an "easier way", he found a guide in the renegade Padmore.

Mr. Jones, it will be remembered, has just returned from a "good will mission" to Liberia. In conversation with Liberian government officials during his stay there, the basis of a plan for the "assistance" of Liberia by the Negro people in the U. S. A. and other parts of the world was worked out. Returning from Liberia via London, Mr. Jones was drawn into conference with the above-mentioned groups and the plan was further developed and rounded out.

Let us briefly review the situation in Liberia in order to get a clear idea of the counter-revolutionary nature of the proposed plan. The so-called Independent Republic of Liberia has long been a virtual colony of United States imperialism. American imperialism, represented chiefly by Harvey Firestone interests, completely dominates the main economic and financial resources of the country. The inhabitants of Liberia can be divided into two main groups: (1) the indigenous population numbering about 2,000,000 and composed of various tribes, and (2) about 20,000 Americo-Liberians, Negroes who are descendants of American ex-slaves. These settled in the country during the early days of colonization. This latter group comprises the native

bourgeois and intellectual classes, chiefly occupied as trading capitalists, plantation owners, and government officials. This Americanized Black bourgeoisie in alliance with the native chiefs has set itself up as an oligarchy, imposing its will upon the native population. Its government at Monrovia, represented at present by President Barclay, acts as policeman for the interests of American imperialism and the Harvey Firestone Corporation in the country.

Although American finance capital long ago invaded Liberia, its economic and political grip upon the Liberian people was finally clinched through the agreement between the Liberian government and Harvey Firestone Corp., concluded in 1925. By the terms of this robber agreement, Liberia was definitely reduced to a vassal State of Wall Street imperialism. The terms of this agreement were as follows: (1) The Firestone Corp. secured a concession of 1,000,000 acres of rubber-producing land. This land, which will produce a crop of 250,000 tons of rubber per year, was leased for the ridiculous price of 6 cents an acre. (2) The Firestone Corp., through its agent, the American Finance Corp., of New York City, forced a loan of \$5,000,000 upon the Liberian people at the rate of 7 per cent interest. (3) The agreement further stipulated, as security for this loan, that the control of customs as well as the internal revenues of the country be placed in the hands of an American Financial Advisor. This Advisor was to control the disbursements of the loan, of which according to the terms, half was to be expended for the construction of railways, motor roads, improvement of the harbor, etc. (public works). Of course, this provision has as its primary purpose to facilitate the imperialistic exploitation of the rubber monopoly by Harvey Firestone interests. The other half of this money was to be used to pay off "certain" outstanding public debts. These public debts were none other than the International Loan

forced upon Liberia by American, British, and German bankers in 1912, at the instance of American imperialism. The carrying through of this imperialist project of large scale rubber plantations has necessarily been accompanied by wholesale expropriation of native tribal lands which have been turned over to Harvey Firestone. The natives, forcibly ejected from their lands, have been converted into colonial wage slaves. In this imperialist banditry, the Liberian government has been the main instrument of the imperialists. A number of uprisings on the part of the natives in resistance to these encroachments have been brutally suppressed by the Liberian Military Force.

In this manner, American imperialism, operating through the machinations of the corrupt native bourgeois politicians, was able to secure a stranglehold over the resources of the country and reduce the Liberian masses to downright colonial slavery.

The economic crisis and the imperialist offensive taking place against this background is having the most ruinous effects. The strengthening of imperialist oppression has led to widespread unrest among the Liberian toilers. The deepening revolutionary ferment among the masses has been expressed in a series of sporadic revolts among the native tribes in the hinterland as well as strikes among the Kroos (seamen in the coastal regions). These revolutionary demonstrations are taking place against the vicious system of colonial taxation and forced labor recruitment carried through by the native bourgeois puppets of American imperialism. The continued draining of the country's finances by the Wall Street bandits has resulted in a severe financial crisis, as reflected in the enormous deficit in the national budget. This situation, the deepening of the economic and financial crisis on the one hand, and the growing rebellion of the masses on the other hand, has precipitated a crisis in

the Liberian upper classes. The governmental crisis was brought to a head in the ousting of former President King and his replacement by President Barclay.

In these difficulties, the Liberian government not only defaulted in the payment of the loan contracted with the American Finance Corp., demanding modifications of the terms of this loan, but requested a further loan. This request was rejected by the American government and the Harvey Firestone interests, which insisted upon Liberia's living up to the terms of the original agreement. In a maneuver to strengthen its position, and to exert pressure upon the American government to modify its demands, the new Liberian government sought to utilize the conflict between American and British imperialism regarding the Liberian rubber monopoly. In this the Liberian government embarked upon a policy of flirting with the League of Nations, tool of British and French imperialism. The League of Nations in its turn sought to utilize this controversy between the Liberian bourgeoisie and American imperialism to further the aims of British and French imperialism in Liberia. Therefore, upon the appearance of the representative of the Liberian government before that body, he was informed that the League could give no assistance unless the demands of American imperialism were modified. Feeling strengthened by this "support"; the Liberian Legislature forthwith declared a moratorium on the American debt. The American government and Harvey Firestone interests immediately responded by raising the charge of "slave traffic" in Liberia. By this it sought to discredit the Barclay government and to place in power those sections of the Liberian bourgeoisie more amenable to its claims. But the League of Nations, not ready to defy American imperialism on this question, soon arrived at a mutual understanding with the latter. Therefore the "League of Nations Plan of Assistance

for Liberia", the final outcome of these maneuvers, actually incorporates the claims of American imperialism and the Harvey Firestone interests.

The Liberian bourgeoisie, defeated in its maneuver, was now forced to turn once more to American imperialism, raising again the question of modification of the demands of the latter. But American imperialism still insists upon strict adherence by the Liberian government to the terms of the original agreement.

The Liberian bourgeoisie is now seeking to use the Negro question in the United States for the purpose of exerting "pressure" upon American imperialism to bring about a modification of its demands and also to help it out of its financial difficulties generally. This is the situation behind the so-called "Liberian-American Plan of Cooperation" proposed by Mr. William N. Jones. This plan is in fact a proposal for an alliance between the Liberian government and the Negro bourgeois and petty-bourgeois groups in America for the purpose of rallying mass support for the Liberian bourgeoisie in its reactionary bargaining with American imperialism and at the same time, to secure financial help for the Liberian government among the Negroes in the United States. This is clearly shown in a "confidential" prospectus sent out by Mr. William N. Jones. The basis of this proposed alliance between the Liberian government and the Negro bourgeois groups in the U. S. A. is a plan for a business partnership between these two groups for the joint promotion of business enterprises and industries in Liberia and in the U. S. A. In other words, the Liberian bourgeoisie agrees to let its American Negro class brothers "in on the spoils" accruing from the plunder of the Liberian masses. Thus, the proposed program calls for nationwide organization around the following points:

"1. The organization by this present committee of a permanent commission to work with a similar commission appointed by the

Liberian government in coordinating a permanent Liberian-American plan of cooperation and of maintaining the proper relations between the governments of the two countries.

"2. The organization of a Liberian-American trading company. The Liberian government would cooperate with such a company in establishing a banking and insurance business and agencies in both countries which would promote trade between the two countries.

"3. The establishment of a number of scholarships in our institutions which would train young men and women for Liberian and other foreign service. There are at present sixty diplomatic posts which Liberia controls in foreign countries, most of which are filled by white persons. President Barclay has pointed out to us his desire to have these important posts filled by colored persons. These posts would form a mighty factor in working out a better status for people of color throughout the world. Young men trained as administrators, industrialists and engineers are needed at once, and under this ten-year program would be welcomed by the Liberian government.

"4. The organization of an international relations group which would seek to coordinate the efforts of colored people throughout the world to improve their general economic, social and civic status. Such an organization to be promoted mainly among younger men and women and stimulated by an educational movement which will point out to our boys and girls their relations to Liberians and colored folk in other countries."

All of this, we are informed, will be a "mighty factor in working out a better status for the Negro people throughout the world".

It is quite clear that the American Negro bourgeoisie sees in this plan an opportunity to attain realization of its long cherished dreams for industrial expansion. This is expressed in the most enthusiastic terms by Mr. Jones in his column in the *Baltimore Afro-American*. He says:

"We are beating our hearts and souls trying to break through the thick walls of prejudice which bar us from the higher brackets of big industry here in America, when there is a virgin field which we could develop in Africa."

To carry through their part of the agreement, the American group undertakes the following:

1. The development of a mass campaign to bring pressure upon the United States government to modify its demands on Liberia. This campaign is already under way and is being accompanied by the most cunning demagogy. The cry is being raised that "the integrity and freedom of Liberia is being menaced by England and France". Whereas, in fact, the League of Nations Plan, which, as we have seen, really represents the interests of American imperialism and Harvey Firestone, is cunningly represented as a threat against Liberian "independence", not by American imperialism, but by British and French imperialism. The campaign is being accompanied by strenuous appeals to race solidarity, unity of the darker races; hypocritical pleas are being made to the Negro peoples to rally to the defense of the "last stronghold of Negro freedom", etc., etc.

2. This campaign is to be connected with the raising of \$150,000 among the Negro masses in this country "to assist the Liberian government in its present difficulties". This, we are informed, will show "good faith on the part of the American Negro in his desire to help Liberia".

3. These pretentious schemes are to be carried through by a "nationwide organization comprising the heads of all organizations now interested in Liberia, also churches, lodges, civic and business organizations", on the basis of a Ten-Year Program. The next immediate step is the organization of a delegation of "prominent" Negroes to intercede with President Roosevelt and the State Department on "behalf" of Liberia and to persuade them to accept the above Plan in lieu of the Plan of the League of Nations.

Let us examine the rosy utopia presented in this program. Does this plan actually aim at the freedom of the Liberian people? Let us see.

This Liberian-American movement, which parades under

the slogan of "freedom of Liberia", is in actuality but a scheme for fastening the yoke of American imperialism and its reactionary bourgeois puppets still tighter upon the backs of the Liberian masses. It is an attempt to deceive the Negro toilers in the U. S. A. into a scheme directed to maintain the subjugation of the Liberian people by American imperialism. At the same time, under the cloak of promoting the welfare of the Negro masses in the United States, the Liberian-American Plan is but another device on the part of the Negro bourgeoisie to further their own reactionary class interests at the expense of the masses of Negro toilers.

Let us have no illusions. The strivings of the Negro bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois intellectuals for economic expansion are not directed against American imperialism; on the contrary, every one of these schemes fully coincides with the interests of American imperialism. The Negro bourgeoisie fully understands that its class interests are bound up with the maintenance of American imperialism, that its only hope for development is under the wings of the latter. Therefore, the supporters of this plan do not question the right of American imperialism as chief slaveholder of the Liberian masses; on the contrary, the carrying through of the Plan includes the active support of American imperialism, which, in their own terms, is depicted as a "Big brother of the Liberian people". William N. Jones and his friends merely offer their services together with the Liberian bourgeoisie as overseers of American imperialist interests in Liberia. Thus the Liberian-American Plan is an active instrument for the further expansion of American imperialism in Liberia as well as in Africa as a whole. Mr. Jones makes this very clear in his column in the *Baltimore Afro-American*. He says:

"... if our own 'brain trust' in Washington is alert, it will make a strenuous effort to see that our government takes enough

interest in the *keeping of an open trade door in Africa. . .*"
[My emphasis—H.H.]

Thus behind this whole utopian scheme stand the bayonets and warships of American imperialism! It is Negro Zionism in its most subtle and refined form. Although lacking the primitiveness of Garvey's "Negro Kingdom", it nevertheless contains all the reactionary features of the latter. It is a counter-revolutionary movement aimed to divert the Negro masses from struggle against imperialism.

Padmore—Theoretician of Neo-Garveyism

But this is not all. To strengthen its mass appeal the proponents of this reactionary utopian project seek to cover it with a cloak of pseudo-Communist phrases. Undoubtedly this has been furnished by the renegade Padmore. We are informed that the intentions of Mr. Jones and his friends are to build up eventually a Negro Socialist State in Liberia! They would have us believe that the situation in Liberia is such that it is possible to achieve this without revolutionary struggle against imperialism and its native bourgeois lackeys. In support of this false theory they advance the following argument: (1) That the native tribal organization in the Liberian hinterland is really Communistic in form, that the native tribal councils are themselves a form of village Soviets! (2) That a native capitalist class is non-existent in Liberia in as much as the native upper classes are neither industrialists nor financiers. "They are even friendly to Communism!" Therefore, the question of freedom of Liberia according to these people, is reduced to the simple question of buying off American imperialism and Harvey Firestone and the introduction of Socialism without a struggle.

First, in regard to the contention that the native tribal system is Communistic, that the tribal councils are actually a form of Soviets, etc. What are the facts? The facts are,

that the primitive tribal institutions of the natives are now being artificially preserved and perpetuated by imperialism and used as instruments for the imperialist exploitation and oppression of the masses. The chiefs, who formerly held their authority on the basis of the popular will of the tribe, have now not only become, in most cases, landlords and usurers (having with the aid of the imperialists stolen large tracts of the tribal lands), but active agents of imperialism in the Liberian hinterland. Not only are they tax gatherers for the Liberian government, but they act also as recruiters of forced labor for the plantations of Harvey Firestone. Their authority is now imposed on the native tribesmen at the point of bayonets of the *Liberian Constabulary*.

It is this system of robbery which is depicted by Padmore and his friends as "resembling village Soviets", as "Communistic in form"! What is the purpose of this fraud? Its purpose is to hide the brutal plunder of the Liberian masses by United States imperialism and its native lackeys. At the same time, this idea that the native tribal system is Communistic, that the native tribesmen are "natural Communists", etc., is another attempt to revive the reactionary theory advanced by the old Russian Populists, the idea against which Lenin fought; namely, that the peasantry are the leading class in the struggle for Socialism. Translated to the situation in Liberia, this theory means not only the denial of the role of the native working class as bearers of Socialism. It also means the denial of the role of the Liberian working class as the chief driving force in the fight for national independence against imperialism.

The issue brings up the question of primitive Communism. Padmore et al., claim for Liberia a Communist economic and social form—of primitive Communism. In the first place, the status of primitive communism cannot be applied to a territory or people living under the yoke of imperialism. But,

even if we left this out of the argument, what is the renegade Padmore trying to do? He is trying treacherously to confound primitive Communism with scientific Communism, only with the purpose of showing that there is no need for revolutionary struggle, since, as he tries to befuddle the Negro toilers, "we have already Communism in Liberia". But any class-conscious worker knows that scientific Communism is the ultimate stage of development through class struggle, from the insufficiency of primitive Communism to the economic and cultural plenty of scientific Communism, when the means and the high level of production developed under capitalism will have become socialized after the revolutionary seizure of power by the working class.

Secondly, regarding the contention that in Liberia there is no active capitalist class, that the Liberian upper classes are sympathetic to Communism. This, of course, is a downright lie. True, in Liberia there is no real native *industrial* bourgeoisie. The Liberian upper class, the descendants of American slaves, live chiefly in the coastal towns and are engaged mainly in trading and usury. This class in alliance with the native chiefs have established themselves as an oligarchy over the indigenous tribes in the interior. Their government in Monrovia has become a "policeman" for imperialism in the robbery and rape of the Liberian masses. At the behest of American imperialism they have carried through the forceful expropriation of the tribal lands of the natives which have been turned over to the imperialist enterprises, Harvey Firestone Rubber Plantations, etc. They are the chief recruiting agencies for Harvey Firestone. They impose oppressive taxes and fines of all kinds on the native population. But this is not all; they are actively engaged in slave traffic, recruiting slaves among the native masses for the Portuguese slave traders. Moreover, they have carried out a series of bloody punitive expeditions against the

numerous rebellions of the natives in the interior. It is these parasites and slave dealers, these murderers of the Liberian masses which Padmore and his friends seek to represent as sympathetic to Communism! Thus the whole system of slavish oppression and torture of the Liberian people by imperialism and its lackeys is sanctioned in the name of Socialism!

Finally, contained in this whole reactionary theory of establishment of Socialism in Liberia without a revolutionary struggle, is a crude attempt to distort a fundamental thesis of our Leninist program on the national colonial question, namely, the possibility of the "non-capitalist path of development for the colonies". Marxism-Leninism teaches us that it is possible for the colonies and backward nations to avoid the capitalist stage of development and pass over directly to Socialism on the basis of a victorious revolution in the advanced imperialistic countries. This has been brilliantly confirmed in the Soviet Union. Under the leadership of the victorious working class in the Soviet Union, scores of oppressed peoples, kept in the most primitive backwardness by the centuries-old oppression of Czarism, have experienced in the sixteen years since the October Revolution unparalleled economic and cultural development. Under the leadership of the proletarian dictatorship and the workers' and farmers' government in the Soviet Union, these peoples were guided from the most backward and slavish conditions on to the road of Socialism, completely avoiding the whole bloody, torturous stage of capitalism.

On the basis of the Soviet example, it is clear that the avoidance of the capitalist stage of development by the colonial peoples is possible only on the basis of revolutionary struggle on the part of the masses in the colonial countries for national independence, in alliance with the working class of the advanced countries, for the overthrow of the im-

perialist yoke. Certainly not on the basis of a reactionary compromise with imperialism as proposed by Padmore and his friends.

Padmore's complete desertion from Communism to the camp of petty-bourgeois nationalism is further revealed in his recent articles. In the article, "Ethiopia Today", published in the anthology, *Negro*, edited by Nancy Cunard, Padmore, with the enthusiasm of the most frantic Garvey leader, extols the "virtues" of the Emperor of Abyssinia and the "progress" and "advancement" of the Abyssinian people under his "enlightened" rule. In this he blurs over class lines among the Abyssinian people and represents the reactionary slave-holding feudal ruling classes, allies of imperialism, as a progressive factor in the country. At the same time in this article he gives support to the reactionary petty-bourgeois idea of race against race. The defeat of Italy at the hands of Abyssinia at the end of the last century is represented by Padmore not as a defeat of Italian imperialism by the Abyssinian people, but as a defeat of the "white race at arms". It is small wonder, therefore, that in the same article Padmore also gives support to the counter-revolutionary idea of Japan as the "champion of the dark races". Padmore characterizes the recent commercial treaty between Japan and Abyssinia as "an alliance which might have tremendous and far-reaching importance not only for Ethiopia but for all *Black Africa*". This same petty-bourgeois line is continued in his articles on Africa appearing in the recent issues of the *Baltimore Afro-American*. In regard to the increasing plunder of the African peoples by imperialism, Padmore exclaims: "*White Europe* is killing Africa!" Truly, petty-bourgeois nationalism has found a wily spokesman in George Padmore. He undoubtedly stands out as the chief theoretician of neo-Garveyism.

In what consists the counter-revolutionary kernel of all these neo-Garveyist movements?

1. By holding forth the reactionary utopia of escape from oppression by peaceful migration, they tend to draw the masses of Negroes out of the struggles for their rights in the U. S. A. against the white ruling class, thus disarming them in the face of growing fascist reaction and national oppression.

2. At the same time, through their emphasis on the petty-bourgeois nationalist slogans of race solidarity, race unity, etc., as opposed to the class solidarity of the Negro and white toilers, as against the revolutionary alliance of the Negro people and white working class, for the overthrow of the common oppressor—imperialism—they tend to strengthen the division between Negro and white and in this manner hinder the formation of a common front of the toilers against the rising fascist offensive.

The Relation of Neo-Garveyism to Fascism

The relation of these Garveyist and neo-Garveyist movements to fascism is very clear. For example, it is no accident that we find certain Garvey leaders coming out in open support of Hitler's fascism and fascist organizations in the U. S. A., contending that fascism will help the integration of the Negro race, foster "race consciousness", and hence forward the struggle for national liberation! A precedent for the practical alliance between Garveyism and fascism was already set by Garvey in 1924, at which time he sought to effect a united front with Colonel Simmons of the Ku Klux Klan on the basis that he (Garvey) would discourage the fight for social equality of Negroes in the United States if Simmons would aid him in his reactionary schemes for the migration of the Negro peoples to Africa. A striking historic parallel is seen in the old Zionist movement during the Czarist regime in the attempt of Doctor Hertz, father of Jewish Zionism, to effect an agreement with Czar-

ism. Hertzels approached Pleve, Czarist minister, leader of the "Black Hundreds" and organizer of pogroms against the Jews, with the proposal that he would help Czarism in its fight against the revolutionary movement among the Jews, *i.e.*, against the struggle for Jewish rights in Russia, in return for support by Czarism of his reactionary project for migration of the Jews to Palestine. This counter-revolutionary alliance between Zionism and Czarist reaction was continued in the active alliance between the Zionist leader Zhabotinsky (at present leader of the Zionist Revisionist group) and the White Guard pogromist, Petlura, during the Civil War in the Ukraine.

At the present time Zionism, which was originally a movement of the Jewish petty-bourgeoisie, has now become an active agency of British imperialism and international Jewish bankers for the subjugation and robbery of the Arabian masses as well as for the bitter exploitation and degradation of the Jewish toilers in Palestine. Such is the historical course not only of Zionism, but also of its prototypes among the Negroes—Garveyism and neo-Garveyism. Under phrases of Negro liberation, freedom of Africa, the inevitable trend of these movements is to an active alliance with the most reactionary imperialist groups against the national liberation movement of the Negro peoples both in Africa and in the Americas, against the revolutionary movement in general.

Only the Communists Really Fight for Negro Freedom

Against these counter-revolutionary schemes for the solution of the Negro question, we must put forth our full program on the Negro question in the U. S. A. as well as in Africa. We must advance and popularize the revolutionary way out of the crisis for the Negro people, through an alliance with the revolutionary working class of the imperialist nations, for equal rights and the right of self-

determination for the Negroes in the U. S. A., for complete independence of the Negro colonies in Africa and the West Indies, through the establishment of independent native republics. This alone is the only path to real freedom for the oppressed Negro peoples throughout the world.

Any attempt to draw the Negro masses away from struggle, from coming to grips with the imperialist masters, can lead only to defeat and to the tightening of the shackles of oppression upon them. In exposing these petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders, it is absolutely necessary to make clear that we Communists not only recognize the aspirations of the Negro toilers in this movement as authentic, but that the Communists *alone* are the only *true champions of Negro freedom*, that we alone have the correct program by which oppression can be abolished and these aspirations fulfilled.

In our exposure of these Negro traitors, the chief emphasis must be placed on the fact that their treachery consists precisely in the fact that they are betraying the national liberation aspirations of the Negro people. Our slogan must be: No reactionary utopian dream of "back to Africa" or a Jim-Crow State in the U. S. A.! These are only reactionary caricatures of real self-determination. But revolutionary struggle in alliance with the white toilers and under the leadership of the Communist Party for the overthrow of American imperialism, for the establishment of equal rights for Negroes all over the country and self-determination for the Negro nation in the Southern Black Belt.

In our agitation an important weapon must be the widest popularization of the solution of the national question in the Soviet Union. We must show how the establishment of the proletarian State through the overthrow of Czarist imperialism permitted for the first time the real establishment of complete equality and self-determination for the formerly oppressed national minorities within the Soviet Union. We

must show that only this step made possible the tremendous economic and cultural development of the numerous nationalities once held in slavery by Czarism.

Japanese Imperialism as "Champion of the Darker Races"

Perhaps the most dangerous of all of these petty-bourgeois nationalist movements is the so-called Pacific Movement of the Eastern World, with its slogan of "United Front of Darker Races Under Leadership of Japan". Japan is here presented as the "champion of the Dark Races" against the white imperialist nations. This movement is developing directly in connection with the growing threat of war between Japanese and American imperialisms. Thus, in the last period we witnessed the rapid spread of this movement among Negroes and the development of mass organization in a number of cities—Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit, Kansas City, Cincinnati, etc.,—and the spread of the propaganda of this movement to all centers. This movement represents an attempt on the part of Japanese imperialism in alliance with certain sections of the Negro petty-bourgeois intellectuals for the purpose of exploiting the growing national liberation movement among the Negroes and to divert it into counter-revolutionary channels of support of Japanese imperialism, not only against its American imperialist rival, but also in support of its aggression against the Chinese revolution and in support of its counter-revolutionary plans for intervention in the Soviet Union.

It is not at all surprising that Japan in preparation for the approaching struggle with American imperialism for the domination of the Pacific would seek to use the Negro question in the U. S. A. in the interests of strengthening its own position. During the World War, in his article "The Irish Uprising", in which he polemized against Comrade Radek on the appraisal of the Irish rebellion, Comrade Lenin said:

"All the general army headquarters are making strenuous efforts during the present war to utilize each and every kind of national and revolutionary movement in the camp of their enemies: Germans—the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. And they act correctly from their own point of view. You cannot take seriously the very serious problem of war without utilizing even the smallest weakness of your adversary. . . ."

We cannot doubt that Japanese imperialism is acting precisely on this basis in regard to the Negro question in the United States. It could not be expected that the Japanese militarists would be so foolish as to overlook the national liberation movement of twelve million Negroes and its potentialities for weakening American imperialism in case of war. It is clear, however, that this "Pacific Movement of the Eastern World" is hostile to the interests of the Negro masses and the revolutionary movement in general.

1. Its program of race unity as against working class unity and the unity of toilers of all races against imperialism, fosters a sort of "darker race chauvinism", which is but the reverse side of white chauvinist race theories. It therefore tends to strengthen petty-bourgeois nationalism. In this manner, it fosters divisions in the ranks of the Negro and white working class, hinders working class unity, and hence weakens the struggle against American imperialist oppression of the Negro people. Thus, the slogan of "united front of the darker races under the leadership of Japan" while supposedly directed against American imperialism, objectively strengthens American imperialism in its oppression of the Negro people. The utilization of this movement also as an active agent of American capitalist reaction against the liberation struggles of the Negro peoples, can be confirmed by the experiences of many local comrades here, who have found this movement an obstacle in the organization of struggles for the immediate demands of the Negro masses. An outstanding example is St. Louis, where the petty-bour-

geois leaders of this Pacific movement were most active in attempting to defeat the strike of the Negro and white nut-pickers. It is not accidental, therefore, that while the movement is led by certain sections of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, that even the official Negro bourgeois reformists are attempting to flirt with the idea of darker race unity under the leadership of Japan. In this, they seek by raising the bogey of a defection of the Negro masses in case of war with Japan to win concessions from American imperialism in the furtherance of their own narrow class aims. Thus, Charles Houston, N.A.A.C.P. leader, in his speech before the Senate Committee on the Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynch Bill, outlined the activities of Japanese agents among the Negro masses, seeking in this manner to "frighten" the administration into support for the Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynch Bill.

2. The counter-revolutionary essence of this movement is further seen in the fact that it is aimed against the Soviet Union and the liberation struggles of the Chinese and Korean masses.

In this, they attempt to present the Soviet Union as a white imperialistic nation and to hide the solution of the national question there as well as the role of the Soviet Union as champion of the struggles of oppressed nations against imperialism.

Here also, we see that this dangerous counter-revolutionary movement can only be successfully fought by putting forth our full program for the liberation of the Negro and colonial peoples, and through the popularization of the solution of the national question in the Soviet Union. In our fight against the reactionary leaders of this movement, we must make it absolutely clear to the Negro people that the Communist Party supports any effort on the part of the Negro masses to take advantage of difficulties

of the American white ruling class (such as would accrue from a war situation), to strike a blow for their own liberation, for equal rights, confiscation of the land, and the right of self-determination in the Black Belt. In this we must paraphrase the slogan of the Irish revolutionaries: "American imperialism's difficulties are the Negroes' opportunities." But we must convince the Negro masses that such attempts to use the difficulties of American imperialism can only be successful on the basis of our revolutionary program, i.e., of revolutionary alliance of the Negro people and white toilers under the leadership of the revolutionary working class for the overthrow of the common enemy—American imperialism, and in support of the struggles of the exploited colonial masses in China, Manchuria, Korea, the heroic struggles of the Japanese workers and peasants against Japanese imperialism, and finally for the defense of the Soviet Union, champion of the oppressed masses throughout the world. Further, we must convince the Negro masses on the basis of concrete facts that any alliance with Japanese imperialists can only mean defeat and the fastening of the imperialist yoke still tighter on the backs of the Negro peoples. For example, we must bring forward the experiences of similar alliances concluded between the imperialist powers and the bourgeoisie of oppressed nations. For example: The liberation movement of the Arabs against Turkey, "championed" by British imperialism during the last war. The Arabs were released from the yoke of Turkey, only to fall under the yoke of British imperialism through the League of Nations. The rebellions in the German colonies, fostered by the Allies during the war, which resulted only in changing the shackles of German imperialism for those of British, French and Italian imperialism, etc., etc.

III. THE STRUGGLE FOR PROLETARIAN LEADERSHIP OF THE NEGRO LIBERATION MOVEMENT

COMRADES, it is clear from all of this, the widespread growth of the petty bourgeois nationalist movements and the increased activities of the Negro reformists of all shades, that we are urgently confronted with the task of seriously strengthening and radically improving our methods of struggle against the Negro reformists and petty bourgeois nationalists. We must develop a more concrete, popular and sustained exposure of these misleaders through our agitation in the press and every medium at our disposal. This agitation and propaganda must be aimed at shaking the faith of the masses in their reactionary doctrines and exposing their true character as agents of imperialism within the ranks of the Negro people. In this, it is necessary to bring forward more energetically the struggle for the immediate special demands of the Negro toilers in every phase of our activities. First of all, this demands an all-around strengthening by the Party and trade unions of our work in the shops, in the factories, mines, the bringing forward of the struggle for the demands of the Negro unemployed. All of this should be coupled with a stronger campaign for the civil and political rights of Negro masses, against lynching, for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, etc., etc. However, the successful combatting of these poisonous influences can only be achieved on the basis of the widest application of our policy of united front from below. In connection with this, we must carry forward a bold policy of penetrating these organizations, building up our oppositions from within on

the basis of struggle for the immediate demands of the Negroes and exposure and isolation of the Negro reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders. In this, we must direct our main fire against the petty bourgeois nationalists as the main danger. Their role is to head the growing mass movement against reaction in order to behead it, by putting forth reactionary Utopias, Back to Africa, etc., etc., creating illusions of a peaceful way out of the crisis, and in this manner to bring the masses back within the fold of official bourgeois reformism and imperialism.

Unless we are able to isolate these misleaders, to liberate the masses from their counter-revolutionary influence, we will not be able to carry through the task imposed upon us by the present situation. We will not be able to weld that unbreakable solidarity between the Negro and white workers, which is a pre-condition for successful struggles against the rising forces of fascism and war, an important part of preparing the masses for the revolutionary seizure of power.

The Fight on Two Fronts

At the same time this upsurge of petty bourgeois nationalist movements, as well as the spread of white chauvinism among the masses, calls for an all-around strengthening of the fight on two fronts: within the ranks of the Party and the revolutionary movement; against white chauvinist influences as the main danger, and at the same time conducting a more consistent struggle against the influence of the petty bourgeois nationalists within our ranks.

We have spoken much about white chauvinism and our task in relation to it. There has been, undoubtedly, a considerable strengthening of this fight. Of course, there is still much room for improvement on this score, particularly in view of the present situation of the spread of white chauvinist poisoning among the masses of white population. But

in regard to petty bourgeois nationalist influences in our ranks, we have spoken very little. I wish to deal briefly with this angle of our fight on two fronts. Comrades, there is no Chinese wall between the masses of Negro people and our Negro Party membership. Therefore, it is quite natural that the pressure of the growing wave of petty bourgeois nationalism also finds its expression in our ranks, in tendencies to surrender to the propaganda of the petty bourgeois nationalists.

Concretely, this tendency is expressed in: (a) The attitude of distrust and suspicion in regard to the integrity of the Party and its leaders of the Negro question. This is extended also to leading Negro comrades who seriously strive to carry out the Party line, the tendency to regard them as "Uncle Toms". (b) Pessimism and doubt as to the possibility of building the unity of Negro and white workers in the struggle for Negro rights, doubt as to the possibilities of drawing in white workers in support of this struggle. (c) In the false and mechanical conception that nothing can be done in the development of Negro work until white chauvinist tendencies are completely eliminated from our ranks. Whereas, it should be clear that the struggle against white chauvinism will remain on the order of the day long after the proletarian revolution in this country. To make the complete elimination of white chauvinist tendencies from our ranks a condition for the development of any struggle, is certainly incorrect and in practice, is really a surrender to white chauvinism. This idea reveals a failure to understand that white chauvinism, as all forms of patriotism, can only be finally broken down in the process of struggle. The propaganda and agitation against it must, in the first place, be directed to the organization of joint struggles of Negro and white workers against the capitalists and their agents. (d) And finally, in connection with this, the tendency on the

part of individual Negro comrades to vulgarize the fight against white chauvinism by raising the cry of white chauvinism to cover up their shortcomings and weaknesses as well as their petty bourgeois nationalist tendencies.

However, the most glaring expression of petty bourgeois nationalism was seen in the attitude of certain Negro comrades in Harlem in connection with the campaign for jobs for Negroes. The Section Committee, under the leadership of Comrade Ford, undertook the development of a campaign for jobs for Negroes, concretizing the demand for Negroes to work at all jobs to the situation in Harlem where Negroes are excluded from employment in many establishments and institutions. The Section worked out a correct line, avoiding the petty bourgeois nationalist pitfall of creating friction between Negro and white workers.

The line of the Section Committee was based on the development of a united front of Negro workers with the white workers in those institutions against which a struggle was being conducted. This was to be carried through on the following basis: simultaneously with the demand for jobs for Negroes, to raise the demands of the white workers employed in these places, *i.e.*, not to demand the removal of white workers as do the petty bourgeois nationalists, but on the contrary, to demand a reduction in hours without a reduction in wages for the white workers on these jobs, and that the jobs created as a result of this, be given to Negro workers, and that in the future employment of workers by these establishments, workers shall be hired on the basis of "first come, first served," without discrimination against Negroes, etc. The line of the Section was not to confine this movement to Harlem but to make it a starting point for the development of a real drive throughout the city for the right of Negroes to work on all jobs, in all trades and professions, against all forms of discrimination, as the jobs in

connection with relief work and in the issuance of unemployment relief, etc.

Against this correct line of the Section Committee, certain comrades brought forward the petty bourgeois nationalist line of replacement of white workers by Negroes. They argued: "Why all this talk about antagonizing the white workers? Are not these white workers in Negro neighborhoods living on the backs of the Negro masses? Are they not occupying jobs that rightfully belong to Negroes?" These comrades forgot about the fight against Jim-Crowism in other parts of the city and tended to regard Harlem as "our territory," playing directly into the segregation policies of the Negro nationalists and the white ruling class. The only logical conclusion flowing from this false conception that "the whites were on the backs of the Negroes" is that the struggle of the Negro toilers for the betterment of their conditions must be directed, not against the capitalists and the government, but against the white workers! Here comrades, we see a complete surrender to petty bourgeois nationalism. Such a line would play directly into the hands of the fascist lynchers of the Negro people. It is clear that the work could only move forward on the basis of a determined struggle and the defeat of this dangerous tendency.

The Question of the "Main Danger"

In defense of this petty bourgeois nationalist idea, and in resistance to the struggle carried forward by the Section against it, a number of false ideas were put forward, ideas which tended to distort our position on the question of the struggle on two fronts, and to weaken the fight against both petty bourgeois nationalism and white chauvinism. Certain comrades began to cry: "Is not white chauvinism the main danger? By all of this noise about petty bourgeois nationalism, are you not furnishing a cloak for the white

chauvinists?" Of course, comrades, such counter-posing of the fight against white chauvinism and the struggle against petty bourgeois nationalism is incorrect and serves only the purpose of hampering the struggle against both. The question of white chauvinism is used by these comrades to cover up and conceal the question of the fight against petty bourgeois nationalism. Of course, white chauvinism is the main danger. But we cannot be contented with a mere formula. Comrade Stalin in his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. in dealing with the controversy regarding which was the main danger, Great Russian nationalism or local nationalism, correctly stated:

"It would be absurd to attempt to give ready-made recipes for the major and minor dangers that would be suitable for all times and for all conditions. Such recipes do not exist. The major danger is the deviation against which we have ceased to fight and thereby enabled it to grow. . . ."

The fact that white chauvinism is the main danger, by no means implies that petty bourgeois nationalism, under certain conditions, in a particular situation, at a given moment, cannot become the main danger in the development of our work among Negroes. St. Louis is a good example of this. We had there a situation where the Party and the revolutionary trade unions were carrying on a real fight for the daily needs of the Negroes, mobilizing thousands of Negro and white workers in the struggle for the immediate demands of the Negro toilers (nut pickers' strike). This movement withstood the sharpest terror and most cunning demagogy on the part of the local ruling class; but they could not defeat it. Therefore, at a certain time they brought in their Negro reformist agents in the form of a Pacific Movement of the Eastern World in an attempt to break the strike, in an attempt to split the unity of the workers. The petty bourgeois nationalist leaders of this organization car-

ried through the most intense campaign of disruption, both within and without the movement, even influencing certain sections of our Negro comrades—in fact, winning one of the outstanding Negro leaders to their side.

Comrades, was it not clear that in that particular situation at that particular moment, petty bourgeois nationalism was the main danger? Therefore, while recognizing white chauvinism as the main danger, it is not excluded that with the sharpening of the struggle, with the intensification of the activities of the petty bourgeois nationalists, that the petty bourgeois nationalist danger can under certain conditions, at a given moment, in a particular situation, become the main danger.

Another idea brought forth in defense of petty bourgeois nationalist deviation, is the idea that “petty bourgeois nationalism arises as the result of the *weakening* of our struggle against white chauvinism and for Negro rights.” The logic of this idea is that we must completely eliminate white chauvinism from our ranks before we can even speak about the fight against petty bourgeois nationalism. Comrades, just the reverse is true. As Comrade Earl Browder correctly emphasized in his report, the spread of petty bourgeois nationalism at the present time is taking place precisely as a result of the growing radicalization of the Negro masses and the growing influence of the Communist Party and the revolutionary movement among them.

Again, in defense of petty bourgeois nationalism, we hear the cry “white chauvinism strengthens petty bourgeois nationalism.” Comrades, this is true. Every concession to white chauvinism plays into hands of petty bourgeois nationalism. But it is not the whole truth. We must also see the other side of the question—namely, that petty bourgeois nationalism also strengthens white chauvinism. Why? Because petty bourgeois nationalism is also an instrument of

imperialism. Hence, the necessity of simultaneously conducting the fight on two fronts.

In this one-sided formulation, we see another effort to blur over the fight against petty bourgeois nationalism and distort our general line of fight on two fronts.

This underestimation of the petty bourgeois nationalist danger, this distortion of our line of fight on two fronts, arises, in the main, from a lack of understanding of the class essence of Negro reformism and petty bourgeois nationalism, the failure to understand it as the class ideology of the Negro bourgeoisie, *i.e.*, as an agency of imperialism within the ranks of the Negro toilers. In this there is a failure to understand the common class character of *both* white chauvinism and petty bourgeois nationalism as agencies of imperialism among the white and Negro workers, that all deviations in the direction of nationalism, be it white chauvinism or Negro petty bourgeois nationalism, represent a departure from our line of proletarian internationalism. Therefore, as Stalin correctly stated: "If you want to keep both dangers under fire, then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism..."

Concealed Petty Bourgeois Nationalism

But the most dangerous form of petty bourgeois nationalist influences in the Party is not its open expression. Whenever petty bourgeois nationalist ideas express themselves in an open form, they can easily be met and defeated. It is the concealed, hidden forms that are the most dangerous, the kind that does not dare come out into the open, but works under cover. How? Through subtle insinuations, fostering distrust and suspicion among less developed comrades as to the integrity of the Party and its leaders regarding the Negro question; veiled inferences that the leading Negro comrades, those who are seriously carrying out the work

of the Party are "Uncle Toms"; and in an underhand method, seek to use all difficulties of the Party, all of its shortcomings, for the purpose of disruption and factionalism.

An example of this is seen in the activities of Comrade Nowell of Detroit. The Central Committee has definite and conclusive information that Comrade Nowell has established himself as a hidden center around which petty bourgeois nationalist tendencies in the Party gravitate, a center where all such sentiments find ready support, where less-developed comrades who err in the direction of petty bourgeois nationalism, find the greatest encouragement. Comrade Nowell's activities are not confined to Detroit alone. He seeks to influence comrades in other places. This activity of Comrade Nowell serves only the purpose of demoralizing our Negro comrades, making impossible the mobilization of the Party forces for the carrying through of our work. It serves directly the class enemy, and has no place in our movement. (*Prolonged applause.*) It creates an atmosphere wherein stool-pigeons and provocateurs can carry on their best work. But the question of Comrade Nowell is not only a question of petty bourgeois nationalism. It is a question of political dishonesty, double bookkeeping, factionalism of the worst sort, of the most unprincipled kind. Such pernicious activity must be ruthlessly rooted out of our ranks.

Comrades, this Convention must demand a clear-cut, frank statement from Comrade Nowell in regard to his disruptive activity and factional work, as well as frank self-criticism in regard to his petty bourgeois nationalist views. In a situation where the Party is being subjected to the most vicious attacks by its class enemies, ranging from the fascist lynchers to the reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist agents—at such a time the Party cannot tolerate such poison in its ranks. (*Applause.*)

The example of Padmore should be a warning to Comrade

Nowell. Palmore rose to a very prominent position in our movement. But Padmore, by social origin a petty bourgeois intellectual, never succeeded in freeing himself from the influences of petty bourgeois nationalism. He never attained a real proletarian outlook. Padmore's attitude was always one of suspicion and skepticism as to the integrity of the Party and its leadership. He passed from this to distrust of the C.I., repeating the worst slander of the bourgeoisie, as to the "desertion of the C.I. from its Negro program." From this he rapidly and completely slipped down into the mire of counter-revolutionary petty bourgeois nationalism. He now appears as an active agent of imperialism against the revolutionary movement. Such, comrades, is the logic of the struggle. Such is the path of all those who attempt to fight the Party. (Applause).

In conclusion comrades, all of this sharply emphasizes the necessity for waging a Bolshevik fight on two fronts: against white chauvinism as the main danger but at the same time carrying on a determined fight against all petty bourgeois nationalist influences. This struggle on two fronts can be carried out only on the basis of the correct Bolshevik division of tasks between Negro and white comrades. It is the special duty of the white comrades to step to the forefront of the fight against white chauvinism and for the rights of Negro comrades to wage a consistent fight against petty Negro comrades to wage a consistent fight against petty-bourgeois nationalism in all of its forms among the Negro masses.

Next Steps in Our Work Among the Negroes

It is clear that the struggle against Negro reformism and petty bourgeois nationalist influences can go forward only on the basis of an all-round strengthening of our work among the Negro masses in every field. The increased activities of the Negro reformist leaders can only be met and

defeated on the basis of the widest application of our tactic of united front from below. In this we must penetrate the reformist mass organizations, proposing joint struggle with the masses of toilers in these organizations on the basis of their immediate, specific demands and drawing these masses into struggle over the heads of the treacherous reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders.

This whole situation confronts us with the necessity of immediately strengthening the leadership of the proletariat and the Party in the liberation movement of the Negro people. This, first of all, calls for a radical improvement in our trade union and shop work by energetically taking up the struggle for the day-to-day demands of the Negro toilers in the shops, factories, etc. In this connection it is necessary that our Party, trade unions, and shop organizations take especial pains to formulate the demands of the Negro workers in every struggle and in the preparation for struggles. This must also be done by the Unemployment Councils. On this basis we must immediately carry through energetic and sustained recruitment of Negro toilers into our revolutionary trade unions, into the revolutionary opposition within the A. F. of L. Simultaneously, it is necessary to carry through a bold policy of drawing the most militant elements among the Negro workers into the leadership in trade union and unemployed work. The whole question of developing cadres among Negroes must be more rapidly pushed forward in the Party as well as in the revolutionary mass organization.

This drive for the strengthening of our work among the basic sections of the Negro working class in the shops, factories, etc., must be connected with the intensification of the struggle along the whole front of Negro liberation. In this we must immediately push forward the campaign for political rights for the Negroes, against lynch-terror and all forms

of persecution for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, Angelo Herndon, etc. This campaign should center around the L.S.N.R. Bill of Civil Rights for the Negro People. A mass drive for signatures to the petition for the Bill of Civil Rights should immediately be launched and should be connected with the development of mass actions in all localities.

In the South, we must strengthen our concentration work in the key industries, steel, coal, textile, tobacco, etc., build up the Party, revolutionary trade unions, and opposition movement within the A. F. of L. on the basis of drawing the Negro and white toilers into joint struggle for their day-to-day needs, against the N.R.A. differentials, discrimination against Negroes, increased fascist attacks upon the rights of the Negro and white toilers. Simultaneously, we must take steps to strengthen the movement of sharecroppers and poor farmers against the cotton plow-under, the Bankhead Bill, against the whole system of semi-feudal slavery of the agrarian masses. It is necessary that we further develop our revolutionary agrarian program in the center of which must be the slogan of "confiscation of the land of the big white landlords and capitalists" in favor of the Negro and white toilers.

In all this work it is necessary to bring forth more energetically our full program for Negro liberation, equal rights, right of self-determination, confiscation of the land. We carry through the widest popularization of the achievements of the Soviet Union in the solution of the national question. Likewise, it becomes important not only to popularize the program of the C.I. for the Negro colonies, Africa, West Indies, but to develop solidarity actions in support of the revolutionary movement in these colonies against imperialism.

In the application of our tactic of the united front from

below with the masses of Negro toilers in the reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist organizations, we must take care to guard against any "leftist" distortion of our line, *i.e.*, any tendency to lump the masses in these organizations together with their leaders, which means to play into the hands of these petty bourgeois misleaders, inevitably leading to our isolation. On the contrary, it is absolutely necessary in our approach to these masses to make a clear differentiation between them and their petty bourgeois nationalist leaders. At the same time we must be equally alert against the right opportunist tendency to underestimate the class role of Negro reformism and petty bourgeois nationalism. Such a tendency would lead to lagging at the tail of Negro reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders and to the weakening of proletarian hegemony and Party leadership in the Negro liberation movement.

An effective struggle against reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders and the winning of the masses from their reactionary influences, demands once for all that we seriously take up the task of building the L.S.N.R. into an independent mass organization around the Party's program of struggles for Negro liberation.

The L.S.N.R. can become an important instrument in carrying through our united front policy on the field of Negro rights. The Party and L.S.N.R. should undertake to build up oppositions within all important reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist mass organizations, the setting up of L.S.N.R. fractions within them, in this way, establishing positions inside from which to carry out the struggle against and exposure of the misleaders and rally the masses under our leadership. At the same time the L.S.N.R. should carry through a campaign for the affiliation of all possible Negro organizations on the basis of its program. As an extremely important weapon for the struggle on this field,

the *Liberator* must immediately be built into a mass popular paper. It must become a leader and organizer of the struggles for Negro liberation, and for the most effective and sustained exposure of the Negro reformist and petty bourgeois nationalist leaders.

Comrades: Only on the basis of building up our work along these lines, together with strengthening our fight on two fronts, ~~against white chauvinism as the main danger, as well as a more determined fight against petty bourgeois nationalism~~; only in this way shall we be able to weld that unbreakable unity of Negro and white toilers, a necessary condition for the successful carrying through of the great tasks that confront our Party in the present situation. (*Prolonged applause.*)

THE LIBERATION STRUGGLES OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE are a part of the whole struggle of the American masses, both black and white, against American capitalism, against American imperialism. For a clearer insight into these struggles, read the materials of the

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