

# American Civilization on Trial Emancipation Proclamation -- 100 Years After

Statement of the National Editorial Board

## PART II

### Imperialism, Racism vs. Labor and Minorities

"Subversive" is a favorite expression of the F.B.I., the Presidency, the Attorney General, and Congress. J. Edgar Hoover, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, not to mention Congress and the mad dog it considers its watchdog—the House Un-American Activities Committee — are certainly armed with immense, with world-shaking powers, which they, in their search, harassment, and persecution of what they conceive to be subversives, use individually and collectively.

Yet all these kings' horses and all these kings' men can't seem to uncover the most openly read and popular hate sheet calling itself "Rebel Underground," circulated on the University of Mississippi campus, which highly touts such seditious issues as (1) calling for the execution of President Kennedy; (2) referring to United States Marshals executing a Supreme Court Decision for desegregating schools as "murderous paranoids"; (3) hinting, in no uncertain terms however, that Sidna Brower, the courageous editor of the student paper which dared criticize the mobs that reign over that campus, is a "foul" wench; (4) making life an unbearable ordeal not only for the Negro James H. Meredith, but for any whites whose attitudes are a shade less racist than their own moronic stew of bigotry; and (5) frothing at the mouth against "the anti-Christ Supreme Court." This isn't "just kids' stuff." This is the voice of those who were responsible for two actual murders, one of a foreign correspondent accredited, not to a battlefield in the Congo, but to the United States to report on "the American way of life." This is the voice of the Governor, not only of Mississippi, but of Alabama; and the voice of their counterparts in the Southern bloc in Congress, as well.

In January 1963, a new Governor came to the helm in a state that vies with the magnolia jungle as the staunchest outpost of racism on this side of diamond apartheid, shouting his sedition for all the world to hear. Not only, says this paragon of "law and order" in the state of Alabama, is he, Governor Wallace, for "Segregation today, tomorrow and forever," but he will organize to spread this doctrine to the North. He judges by the manner in which the KKK, after World I, spread North. He forgets that this ambition of his is out of tune with these times—and beyond his capacities. This is so not because of the established powers at Washington, D.C., but because the self-activity of the Negroes has made it so. Indeed all this white Southern howling at the winds is due to the unbridgeable gulf between the post-World War I era and the post-World War II age when the Negro, far from running defensively away from lynching, has taken the offensive for his full rights on all fronts, and most of all in the South.

In contrast to the initiative of the Southern Negro, the whole world is witness to the shilly-shallying, dilly-dallying of the Kennedy Administration. At a time when the world crisis and challenge from totalitarian Russia demands the very essence of total democracy, and his own "will" would like to express itself with a New England rather than a Southern twang, the peculiar American capitalism that has been both raised up, and thrown back by the belatedness of its revolution, compels him to bridle his "will." Capitalism, not capitalism in general, but



Picture reprinted from News & Letters, December, 1956

American capitalism as it expanded after the Civil War, sharpened the basic contradictions of the historic environment in which it functioned for this capitalism was tied to the cotton plantations. As we wrote in Part I, "What the Southern bloc bellows in congress may irritate the sensitive ears of the Harvard man in the White House, but when he comes down South they tell him what to do."

### Of Patriots, Scoundrels And Slave-Masters

For global power's sake the Administration presently tries to explain away the tortoise pace on the civil rights front on the ground that, when the chips are down, the white South becomes at once transformed into "pure patriots." Samuel Johnson has long ago noted that patriotism has ever been the last resort of scoundrels. Nowhere and at no time was this truer than in the benighted South of today.

Even so conservative a writer as the Swedish scholar, Gunnar Myrdal, had to write that the war,

which had increased the militancy of the Negro, had only one effect on the Southern white liberals—they refused to continue the little cooperation they had started with the Negro intellectuals against discrimination unless the latter accepted, nay, avowed, social segregation. So myopic of view is that region that the following passed for the words of a liberal! It is Mark Etheridge, ex-chairman of the FEPC, writing in *The Virginia Quarterly* of July, 1942: "There is no power in the world—not even the mechanized armies of the earth, the Allied and the Axis—which can now force the Southern white people to abandonment of social segregation. It's a cruel disillusionment, bearing germs of strife and perhaps tragedy, for any of their (Negroes) leaders to tell them that they can expect it, or that they can exact it, as the price of their participation in the war." Mr. Myrdal had to conclude on the following note:

"... The region is exceptional in Western non-fascist civilization since the Enlightenment in that

## AN APPEAL TO OUR READERS

In this issue we bring you the second part of **AMERICAN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL: The Emancipation Proclamation, 100 Years After**. It draws together all the lines of theory and struggle for freedom which have gone into the making of the American mind, and shows why it is the urgent task of our age to fulfill the still unfulfilled promise of Emancipation.

As part of meeting that challenge, we propose to publish Part I, which appeared in the January issue, and Parts II, III and IV which appear as this special issue, in pamphlet-form.

Too long has the truth of the American Negroes' contributions to freedom in shaping the past and present history of this nation been disregarded,

distorted or maligned by historians. This is nowhere seen more clearly than in Detroit, where the Negro community is rightly aroused and is at this moment organizing an offensive against the white supremacist interpretation of American history that runs rampant in the textbooks used to teach children in the Detroit school system. There is nothing that has ever been printed before that can more effectively destroy this kind of teaching of racial bigotry than the wide circulation and reading of this proposed pamphlet.

**AMERICAN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL is our true history. Help us to publish the pamphlet NOW by making your contribution as generous as possible.**

In Celebration of the  
Emancipation Centennial

Miss Pauline Myers

in

"The World of My America"

Saturday, March 2 9:00 p.m.

at

Ethical Culture Center

837 S. Parkview, Los Angeles, Calif.

Donation—\$1.50

In the Next Issue:

"LET LABOR CLEAN ITS OWN HOUSE"

Negro workers write on  
discrimination in their  
shops and union.

Also

An Analysis of the New DeGaulle-  
Adenauer Axis by Raya Dunayevskaya

News & Letters — 8751 Grand River,  
Detroit 4, Michigan

I enclose \$ ..... (cash, check or money order)  
to help publish the forthcoming News & Letters  
pamphlet, *The Emancipation Proclamation, 100  
Years After*.

Name .....

Address .....

City..... Zone..... State.....

it lacks every trace of radical thought. In the South all progressive thinking going further than mild liberalism has been practically non-existent for a century." (1)

It should be obvious that the South's patriotism lasts only so long as the Negroes don't insist that the white South give up its slave master mentality.

The blindness to all this on the part of the Administration is self-induced even as its impotence is self-imposed. There is no need whatever for the Federal power—truly an awesome world might—to shy away at the challenge of a single state, especially when that state is so dependent on military contracts from the Federal Government for the major part of what economic power it has, were it not for its own desire. The Ford management-trained Secretary of Defense can tell the President the exact extent of Federal aid if Mr. Kennedy didn't know that—and the politics behind it.

"Aye, there is the rub!" This is what he sets, and it took a great deal of digging by his Harvard-trained historian to come up with the obscure, inconsequential Lucius Q. C. Lamar as a "liberal" Southern hero of the past which the present needs to emulate. (2) It would have been a great deal easier to find the quotation from Wendell Phillips that told the simple truth: "Cotton fibre was a rod of empire such as Caesar never wielded. It fattened into obedience pulpit and rostrum, court, market-place and college and lashed New York and Chicago to its chair of State." It still does.

Though cotton is king no longer, the politics based on racism reigns supreme in the South and fills the Halls of Congress with the abnormal might that comes from despotic social relations, quasi-totalitarian politics that would topple easily enough if the Negro got his freedom. But thereby would also be exposed the truth of American democracy; that the racism which is the basis of the political rule of the South is acceptable to the North, and has been so ever since it withdrew the Federal troops from the South in 1877.

Betrayal though that was of the Negro, it was in the interests not only of Southern politics, but of Northern capital. The counter-revolution came naturally to a capitalist government which had been compelled to issue an Emancipation Proclamation only because it couldn't win the war without it. And now that it can't win the Cold War without some show of democracy to its Negro citizens it is fully satisfied when it gains no more than token-ism. Because this is all it aims for, J. Edgar Hoover, (who won his spurs finding "subversives in the underground" during the infamous Palmer Raids in the early 1920's) cannot find the single sheet in the hands of students sitting ostentatiously in the sunshine on the benches of the Ole Miss campus. No wonder we have advanced so little from 1877 when Union, "one and indivisible," meant unity forged in the struggle against labor for imperialist adventures. To understand today's racism as well as tokenism, it is necessary to return to that page in history when the "gentleman's agreement" of Northern capital with the South set the stage for the unbridled violence against labor.

## I. Northern Labor Struggles to Break Capital's Stranglehold, 1877-1897

1877, the year the Federal troops were removed from the South, was the year they were used to crush the railroad strikes stretching from Pennsylvania to Texas. The Pennsylvania Governor not only threatened labor with "a sharp use of bayonet and musket," but the Federal Government did exactly that at the behest of the captains of industry. The peace pact with the Southern bourgeois meant unrestrained violence on the part of the rulers, both North and South, against labor.

On the other hand, labor began the decade of the 1870's in Europe with the Paris Commune, the first workers' state in world history. So numerous were the American followers of the Paris Commune that Wendell Phillips said that all that was needed to meet a Communard is "to scratch a New Yorker."

The ruthlessness with which capital asserted its rule over labor that worked long hours for little pay, which was further cut at the will of the factory owners every time a financial crisis hit the country, drove labor underground. The first National Labor Union had a very short span of life. The Knights of Labor that replaced it organized white and black alike, with the result that, at its height (1886) out of a total membership of one million no less than 90,000 were Negroes. Nevertheless, no Northern organization could possibly get to the mass base of Negroes who remained overwhelmingly, preponderantly in the South. For, along with being freed from slavery, the Negroes were freed also from a way to make a living. Landless were the new freedmen, and penniless.

As the 1869 Congress Resolution of the National Labor Union put it, "American citizenship for the black man is a complete failure if he is proscribed from the workshops of the country." When Northern labor emerged as a new force in the 1877 railroad strikes, Negro labor was still South and still in agriculture.

The severe financial crisis of 1873 dealt a death



Picture Reprinted from News & Letters, March 30, 1956

blow to the Eight Hour Leagues, but not to the idea for an eight-hour day. In 1884 not only the idea, but the actions to put it into effect, were once again initiated, this time by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, later to be known as the American Federation of Labor.

The struggle for the eight hour day during the decade of 1880's, however, got a blood bath from the counter-revolution initiated by the capitalist corporations aided amply by the government. The anarchist labor leaders, Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel, were railroaded to the gallows.

The year was 1886, a year which became the dividing line in American labor. On the one hand, it was the year when no less than 80,000 were out on strike for the eight-hour day. On the other hand, it was the year in which the counter-revolution succeeded in breaking the back of the most militant sections of the labor movement through the hanging and imprisonment of its leaders.

It was the year the A.F. of L. "took over" the struggle for the eight-hour day. On the one hand it was undeterred by the hysteria or the backing away from the movement by the Knights of Labor which in that year reached its highest point of development and began its decline. On the other hand, the union restricted labor organization to a craft basis. Its reliance on the upper stratum of labor—its skilled trades—was to impel it toward "business unionism" and acceptance, with capital, of membership in so-called civic federations. It was itself involved in racism with its demand for the "Chinese Exclusion" act, not to mention racially separate locals for Negroes. Its disinterest in the unskilled was to cause such isolation from the Negro that it would become impossible to organize heavy industry without breaking away from that craft union stranglehold.

And yet in the 1880's it formed the transition from diffuse to concentrated labor struggles. During the heart-breaking 1890's such historic battles were fought as the steel battle of Homestead, Pa., 1892; the silver mines at Coeur d'Alene in Idaho; and the great Pullman (Illinois) strike of 1894, led by Eugene V. Debs who, while in jail, was to be won over to socialism. As he put it:

"In the gleam of every bayonet and the flash of every rifle the class struggle was revealed. The capitalist class. The working class. The class struggle."

In retrospect, even bourgeois historians have had to record: "If the Homestead skirmish introduced the nation to the use of private armies by captains of industry, the Pullman conflict made it familiar with two powerful engines of the federal government—the judicial ukase, known as the writ of injunction, and the use of regular soldiers in industrial dispute." (3)

During the late 1880's and 1890's too, despite Gompers' concept of "pure and simple trade unions" without political overtones, much less international relations, it was the A.F. of L. which sent delegates to the newly formed second Marxist International and got it to approve the American suggestion for a general strike, world-wide if possible, for the eight-hour day.

"Since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon for May 1, 1889," read the International Resolution, "this day is accepted for the international demonstration." As we see, far from May 1 having been "imported" from Russia, it was exported the world over by American labor.

## Populism

The unbridled violence of private capital—its Pinkerton detectives and armed thugs as strike-breakers; the Supreme Court, with its use of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, not against the corporations armed to the teeth, but against the unarmed strikers battling for the elementary right to a livelihood; all finding their full class expression in the use of troops by the Federal Government, compelled both labor and agriculture to challenge capital's monopoly of the seats of governments. It did so with a new mass party—the People's Party—more popularly called Populism, which reached its highest point in the 1896 election.

The class struggles of the two decades, 1877 to 1897, had shaken up capital. While labor did not succeed in freeing itself from capital's stranglehold, it had seriously challenged its dominance. During the same period agrarian discontent resulting from the agrarian depressions of the '80's and '90's completely overturned the uninhibited rule of the

Southern plantocracy. Despite the removal of the Federal troops, despite its now unlimited power, the violence of the KKK and the more bestial lynchings, the new South experienced a greater overturn in social relations than during the Civil War itself. And, as we saw in Part I of this Statement (News & Letters, Jan. 1963), this civil war didn't come there on the point of a Yankee bayonet. It was internal and it succeeded in establishing white and black solidarity under the banner of Populism, at the very time when the class struggles in the North gave socialism its native roots among workers and farmers.

## Intellectual Ferment

The emergence of labor as a new power affected every aspect of life. The resulting intellectual ferment gave birth to muckrakers as well as theoreticians, to writers of utopias as well as such professional associations as the American Economic Association (AEA). The associations were born under a leadership that stressed the need to abandon ruthless "laissez faire," and instead "to humanize" economics.

As founder of the AEA, Richard T. Ely had praised Marx's CAPITAL as one of the "ablest politico-economic treatises ever written." His colleague, John R. Commons, laid entirely new foundations for a world view of American history with his 11 volume *Documentary History of Industrial Society* and two volume *History of Labor*. He had also laid a totally new basis for education with his advice to his students "to visit workingmen in their homes and to join a labor union for only then could the needs and aspiration of the working class be really understood" since "books did not teach and educated man did not know reasons for workingmen's behavior." (4)

The penny-a-liners, however, followed big capital in judging Richard T. Ely's *The Labor Movement in America* as "ravings of an anarchist or the dream of a socialist."

The fathers of American sociology were certainly not unaware of the class struggles and the need to humanize social relations. As against the penny-a-liners, the muckrakers even more than sociologists, historians and theoreticians did indeed produce as great a disturbance in "public opinion" as the labor struggles did in inspiring the formation of professional movements and, above all, establishing their own political movement.

It was not any single event like the utopias spawned by Bellamy in his *Looking Backward*, or a theory like Henry George's single tax (though his *Progress and Property* certainly stirred up a political movement), or an expose of Standard Oil by Henry Demarest Lloyd. (5) In *Wealth Against Commonwealth* his exposure of private capital was interlaced with attacks on legislature, like the statement that "Standard Oil had done everything with the Pennsylvania legislature except to refine it."

It was that all together their attacks on "invisible government"—monopoly's stranglehold on all life—brought to the light of day the corruption in government, shook up legislatures as well as public opinion. Unfortunately the muckrakers were so busy searching for the invisible government that they didn't see the very visible march of monopoly toward imperialism. They wanted government "cleansed of corruption," not shorn of its organism, its class composition, even as the professional societies wished to "humanize" economics, not to establish a humanism, that is to say, a classless, non-exploitative society. Monopoly's expansion into imperialistic adventures took them by surprise.

## 2. Rise of Monopoly Capital

The United States' plunge into imperialism in 1898 came so suddenly that Populism hardly noticed it. Although for a decade and more Populism had fought monopoly capital which gave birth to imperialism, it was not weighted down by an awareness of any connection between the two. This was not the result only of the deflection of the struggle of the people vs. monopoly into the narrower channel of free silver vs. banker. Behind the apparent suddenness of the rise of imperialism stands the spectacular industrial development after the Civil War. The unprecedented rate of industrialization telescoped its victory over agriculture and its transformation from competitive to monopoly capital.

Because monopoly capital had appeared first in transportation—the Mid-Western wheat belt as well

as the post-Reconstruction South resented their veritable bondage to the railroads that controlled the outlet of, and thus set the prices for, their products—the agricultural population had been the first to revolt; the first to organize into a new political party, and the ones mainly responsible for getting the first sham anti-trust Acts of 1887 and 1890.

It was this precisely which so shook up the Southern oligarchy that it quickly gave up its resentment of Northern capital's victory over agrarianism in order to unite with its former war enemy to destroy their mutual class enemy, Populism. Together, North and South pulled out all stops—the violence of Northern capital against labor was more than matched by the Southern oligarchy's encouragement of the revival of the rule of rope and faggot against a mythical "Negro domination" inherent in Populism.

That additive of color, moreover, now had a promissory note attached to it: a veritable heaven on earth was promised the poor whites in the new white-only enterprise — textiles. So began "the great slaughter of the innocents" (6) that will first in the late 1920's explode into the unwritten civil war of unarmed, starving textile workers against armed, well-fed Southern monopolists — the great Gastonia North Carolina strike. But for the late 1890's, the Southern monopolists—in agriculture as in industry—became so frightened over the explosive force contained in Populism, the threat to their rule, that they happily embraced the North, Northern capital.

Monopoly capital appeared first in transportation before it appeared in industry, but from the first it was built on Andrew Carnegie's principle: "Pioneering doesn't pay." Empire building through consolidations did. Swallowing up of smaller capital, destruction of cut-throat competition alongside of monopolization, not to mention cheating on top of exploitation—that was the way of all great American fortunes built by means more foul than fair during those two decisive decades. Four times as much acreage as had been taken up by homesteaders was given to railroad companies. Bourgeois historians must record what even bourgeois politicians finally had to admit—after the fact, of course. In *Rise of American Civilization*, Charles A. Beard states: "The public land office of the United States was little more than a centre of the distribution of plunder; according to President Roosevelt's land commission, hardly a single great western estate had a title untainted by fraud."

Monopoly was on its way in all fields and with just as unclean hands (7)—Rockefeller started the oil trust; Carnegie steel; Morgan banking; while Jay Gould, Leland Stanford, James J. Hill, Cornelius Vanderbilt first kept to railroads and then spread tentacles outward until all together they impelled the Federal Government to its imperialist path.

### Slavery And Capitalism

Long before American capital's discovery of the easy road to wealth, Marx had described European capital's birth: "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalized the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre . . . Great fortunes sprung up like mushrooms in a day; primitive accumulation went on without the advance of a shilling."

The capitalist leopard couldn't change its spots in the United States even though its primitive accumulation had to be achieved within the confines of its own land. Direct slavery was still the method of developing Southern agriculture, wage labor that of developing industry. Despite the famous free farmer in the West and its seemingly endless frontier, free land was still more, greatly, fantastically more, at the disposal of railroad magnates than available to homesteaders, and that fact held though the "magnates" were first to become such. Here too "great fortunes sprang up like mushrooms in a day" not for every man but for those who knew how to get government to help new industrialism, hot-house fashion, to blossom forth into monopoly form.

It is no historic secret that the later the bourgeois revolution against feudalism or slavery takes place, the less complete it is, due to the height of class opposition between capital and labor. The lateness in the abolition of slavery in the United States accounts for the tenacious economic survivals of slavery which still exist in the country.

### 3. Plunge Into Imperialism

Nevertheless, as the strength of Populism and the solidarity of black and white that it forged showed, the economic survival of slavery couldn't have persisted, much less dominated the life of the Negroes North as well as South, IF they hadn't been re-inforced by the "new" Northern capital. It was not the "psychology of Jim Crowism" that did the reinforcing. The "psychology of Jim Crowism" is itself the result, not the cause, of monopoly capital extending its tentacles into the Caribbean and the Pacific as it became transformed into imperialism, with the Spanish-American War.

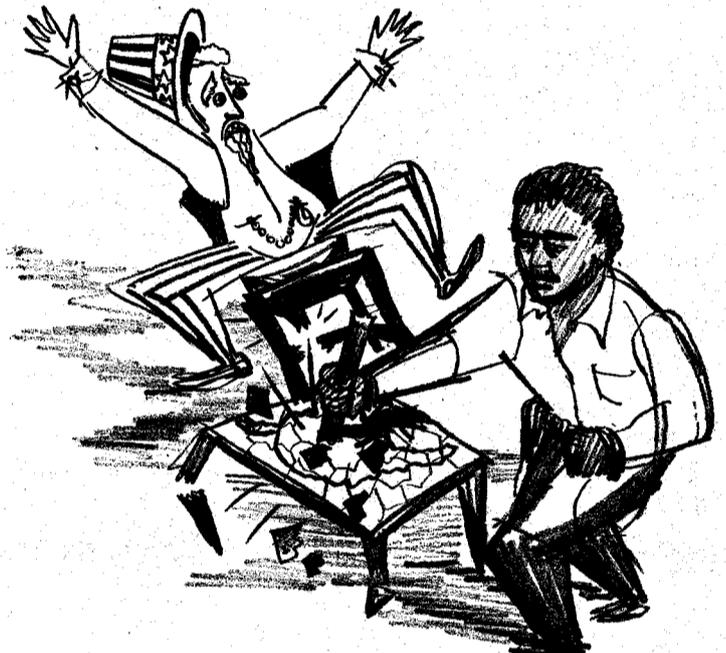
So great, however, was the corruption of capitalism that the muckrakers were blinded by it; that

is to say, diverted by it from grasping capitalism's organic exploitative nature that would naturally transform itself into quasi-totalitarian imperialism. The result was that when the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, it had the appearance of a sudden manifestation out of nowhere. In truth, it was long building up, and Latin America had, ever since the Monroe Doctrine of 1820, known that where it can protect it from European invasion, it could not protect it from American aggression for which it was designed. And were we even to exclude the imperialistic adventure of the Mexican-American War of 1848 on the excuse that it had been instigated, not by Northern capital but by the Southern wish to expand the territory for slavery, these facts that are incontrovertible preceded the Spanish-American War:

(1) three full decades of phenomenal industrial expansion followed the end of the Civil War; (2) three full decades of undeclared civil war were waged against labor in the North; and (3) the combined might of Northern capital and the Southern aristocracy was used against the challenge from agriculture—Populism. The removal of the Federal troops was only the first of the steps in this unholy alliance which two decades later jointly ventured into imperialism.

It could not be otherwise: The capitalistic mentality and the slavemaster mentality are not very far apart when the domination of the exploiters is challenged by the working people. Indeed, monopoly capital needed Southern racism for its plunge into empire. North and South, the thirst for empire was brilliantly white.

"Every independence movement in Latin America is immediately linked with a revolutionary demand for the redistribution of farmland and the expropriation of the immense holdings of U.S. capitalists."



Picture and Editorial Excerpt Reprinted from News & Letters, January, 1960

As America shouldered the "White Man's Burden" she took up at the same time many Southern attitudes on the subject of race. "If the stronger and cleverer race," said the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, "is free to impose its will upon 'new-caught, sullen peoples' on the other side of the globe, why not in South Carolina and Mississippi?" (8) Professor C. Vann Woodward notes that "These adventures in the Pacific and the Caribbean suddenly brought under the jurisdiction of the United States some eight million people of the colored races, 'a varied assortment of inferior races,' as the *Nation* described them, 'which, of course, could not be allowed to vote.'"

The *Atlantic Monthly* was no exception, Professor Woodward reminds us once again, this time in his article in the *Progressive* (Dec., 1962): "In the pages of Harper's, Scribner's, Century, the *North American Review* can be found all the shibboleths of white supremacy." The daily press, of course, was no different:

"The *Boston Evening Transcript* of 14 January, 1899, admitted that Southern race policy was 'now the policy of the Administration of the very party which carried the country into and through a civil war to free the slave.' And *The New York Times* of 10 May, 1900, reported editorially that 'Northern men . . . no longer denounce the suppression of the Negro vote (in the South) as it used to be denounced in the reconstruction days. The necessity of it under the supreme law of self-preservation is candidly recognized.'"

Nor does that mean that the academic world that "should" know better was any different in New York than in Mississippi: "The doctrines of Anglo-Saxon superiority by which Professor John W. Burgess of Columbia University, Captain Alfred T. Mahan of the United States Navy, and Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana justified and rationalized American imperialism in the Philippines, Hawaii, and Cuba differed in no essentials from the race theories by which Senator Benjamin R. Tillman of South Carolina and Senator James K. Vardaman of Mississippi justified white supremacy in the South."

### Racism

This poison in the air from the smell of empire pervaded North as well as South even as it had already pervaded Europe as it had set about carving

up Africa in the previous decade. It is true that, despite dollar diplomacy's "lapses" in not sticking only to the dollar profits but participating both in marine landings and actual occupation, American imperialism was not on the level of the spoliation and barbarism of Europe's conquest of Africa.

The greater truth, however, is that Theodore Roosevelt's "manifest destiny" does not fundamentally differ from Britain's jingoistic "white man's burden" or from the French "mission civilisatrice" or the German "kultur." All white civilization showed its barbarism in the conquest of the whole Afro-Asian, Latin American and Middle Eastern worlds. (9)

The debate over whether imperialism means a search for exports and investments or imports and "consumer choice" sheds no illumination on the roots of racism and its persistence over the decades so that by now the hollowness of American democracy reverberates around the globe and makes the newly awakened giants of freedom in the economically underdeveloped world look sympathetically to the totalitarian Sino-Soviet orbit which had not directly oppressed it. Whether imperialism's exploitation was due to the need for cotton or copper, coffee or copra, cocoa or diamonds, super-profits for finance capital or "prestige" for national governments, its inhumanity to man is what assured its return home to roost on native racist as well as exploitative grounds.

The Spanish-American War was no sooner over than the United States began forcing the door open to trade in China. The 1900 election campaign was built around this imperialistic note. It was not

merely out of the lips of a young senator from Indiana that we heard jubilation (10): "The Philippines are ours forever . . . And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either . . . We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race . . ." When McKinley was assassinated there came to rule over this new empire from Latin America to the Philippines, and from Hawaii to some open doors in China and Japan, Theodore Roosevelt—that alleged trust buster and very real empire builder.

Racism, in the United States and/or abroad, helped pave the way for totalitarianism with its cult of "Aryanism" and its bestial destruction of an entire white race in the very heart of Europe. (11) Those who wish to forget that at the root of present-day apartheid South Africa was the "civilizing mission" of the white race—which meant, in fact, such horrors as the extermination of the Hottentot tribes by the Boers, or Leopold II's reduction of 20 to 40 million peaceful Congolese to 8 million—are the ones who took the extermination of the Jews in Nazi Germany "in stride"—until the Nazi search for "lebensraum" meant a challenge to their own area of exploitation.

Surely, on the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation when the holocaust of World War II is still fresh within the memory of living men, it is high time to stop playing psychological games with racism. It is precisely such playing with the question as to whether the Civil War was to be limited only to the question of Union, and not extended to the abolition of slavery, which both prolonged the war and left the revolution in human relations in so unfinished a state that to this day we suffer from its state of incompleteness. In 1905 labor made one more try for a fundamental change.

### 4. A New Awakening of Labor, The I.W.W.

The imperialist mark of the 20th century did not for long go unchallenged.

First, the South: while light industry by-passed the Negro, heavy industry did not. Being at the very bottom of the social structure, capitalist society pushed the Negro into the worst paid industries. Since, however, as capitalist industrialization de-

veloped, those very industries — the heavy industries of coal, steel, iron—became pivotal to the whole movement, the Negro was very strategically placed in industry. There will be no mass migration north until World War I, but in the South the Negro did become an integral part of labor from the earliest days of heavy industrialization—and a militant member of whatever unions took root there.

Between the two extremes—textiles which employed no Negroes in the direct process of production, and mines and steel mills in which Negroes are more or less equal in number to whites—there were the so-called strictly "Negro jobs"—saw mills, fertilizer plants, etc. These employed mainly Negroes. They remained unorganized. They are located rurally so that the Negro is as much isolated as a factory worker as if he were a peasant still. Nevertheless the break from share-cropping and personal dependence on planter-merchant had been made, and neither South nor North will ever again be able to return to its old ways.

By 1900 the United Mine Workers claimed one-third of the total organized Negro labor force. By no accident, the discontent with the craft unionism of the A.F. of L. came first of all from the Western Federation of Miners, which became the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) in 1905. It was built on militant class struggle lines, industrial unionism 30 years ahead of the C.I.O., and also had, first, a socialist, and then a syndicalist philosophy of "one big union" which would not merely fight to better conditions of labor and raise wages, but to control production.

At the height of its power, the I.W.W. claimed one million members, 100,000 of whom were Negroes. The most important of the I.W.W. unions among Negroes were precisely in the prejudice-ridden South, in the lumber industries in Louisiana and Texas and among the longshoremen and dockworkers in Baltimore, Norfolk and Philadelphia. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers in the lumber camps of Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas had 35,000 members in 1910, 50 per cent of whom were Negroes.

1905 is a year that opens a new page in the role of labor not only in America. It is the year of the first Russian Revolution. It is the year of the first victory of a yellow race over a white one—with Japan's victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War; however, neither Japanese labor nor Russian followed their own governments. Instead the Social Democratic leaders in both countries shook hands against capitalism and chauvinism in each country.

In the United States, too, we see the vanguard role of the I.W.W. not only as labor in general, but specifically in relationship to Negro labor who thereby not only as "mass" but as reason refashioned American unionism. The most prominent of the Negro I.W.W. organizers was Ben Fletcher who was jailed with the founders of the I.W.W., Haywood, Chaplin and others for their opposition to World War I. (12)

Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of the Negroes — no less than 86.7 percent in 1900 — had remained in agriculture and were thus unaffected by the rise of the I.W.W. The Negro will experience no serious proletarianization and urbanization until the first World War, when the flow of immigrant labor will be shut off and Northern capital will be compelled to comb the South for labor needed in war industries. By then the war hysteria, persecution by the government and imprisonment of its leaders will have brought about the decline of the I.W.W. The only thing that will await the Negro in the North will be isolation and extreme frustration.

## A. Nationalism: Phase I

### 1. The Negro Moves North

*"There is no use calling on the Lord—  
He never hears."—Casey in Uncle Tom's  
Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe*

One and one-half million Negroes left Southern farms to come North during and immediately after World War I. These two unprecedented waves of migration in 1916-1918 and again in 1921-1924 brought about an unparalleled population explosion that seemed to have happened over-night, whether it was such a phenomenal growth in Negro population as in Gary, Ind., which experienced a 1,200 per cent growth or "only" a 66.3 per cent increase in New York from 91,709 to 151,847. Detroit's Negro population between 1910-1920 jumped from a mere 5,741 to 40,838, a 611.3 per cent increase.

Far from finding paradise "up North," however, the Negroes soon discovered that they had been brought from Southern plantations to take the most ill-paid, back-breaking jobs in Chicago stockyards, Pittsburgh steel mills, Detroit auto factories, Philadelphia docks. Sometimes they had been brought in to break a strike, and in any case they found the union doors as closed to them as industry had been hitherto. Indeed, so long as basic industries remained unorganized, the Negro couldn't become an integral part of the trade unions which

were divided by crafts limited to the skilled workers. The color bar was thus both industry and union made.

The second shock that hit the migrant worker was that the move from country to city was not really to the big city but to the small, overcrowded ghetto, where he was surrounded on all sides by prejudiced whites. Unemployment would soon, with the end of the war, reinforce the prejudice through competition for jobs. And the Klan had followed the Negroes North to organize anti-Negro prejudices and outright attacks, whipped up further by anti-foreign, anti-Red hysteria following the end of the war and the success of the Russian Revolution which had had such a great impact the world over, including the United States.

The social humiliation to which the Negroes were subjected daily, in and out of the factory, in and out of the ghetto, in and out of stores and places of entertainment, were not limited to Negro migrants. Whatever generation had got lost in Paris, the black veteran had to return from fighting a war "to save democracy" to face a Jim Crow America where bigotry and intolerance seemed to reign supreme.

Bloody race riots and a barbaric outburst of lynchings climaxed the move North. "Red Summer 1919" was a description, not of the extension of the Russian Revolution, but of the fantastic number of race riots—no less than 26 in the last months of 1919.

The Negroes did not take all this lying down. They gave as good as they got. And then they searched for an organization, a philosophy that would express not only their frustrations and profound disillusionment, but their spirit of revolt and desire for total freedom. But they found neither an existing Negro organization nor a Negro leadership. The so-called "talented tenth" might as well speak Greek as English. Communication between leadership—self-styled and otherwise—and mass had broken down.

Into this great divide within the American Negro, a West Indian printer and orator named Marcus Garvey stepped with a dream of "uniting all the Negro peoples of the world into one great body to establish a country and Government absolutely their own."

## 2. Garveyism vs. American Negro Intellectual Insularity

*"We are the descendants of a suffering people; we are the descendants of a people determined to suffer no longer."*

—Marcus Garvey

In January 1918 Marcus Garvey began to publish a weekly called NEGRO WORLD, claiming to reach "the mass of Negroes throughout the world." Very nearly overnight it attained a circulation of 50,000, and at its height in 1920-1921 claimed 200,000. It literally shook up also the colonial world and was banned in much of Africa. (13)

Its internationalism did not exhaust itself by its West Indian editorship, nor by its home in the United States, nor its appeal to Africa. Sections of it were printed in French and Spanish for the benefit of other West Indian and Central American Negroes. Garvey's editorials were always front-paged, and addressed to the "Fellowmen of the Negro Race." Its pages stirred with pride over the heroes of the Negro: from tales of Negro slave revolts in America to the Zulu Revolt of 1906 against British rule; from the rise of the Ethiopian empire to Toussaint L'Ouverture's victory against the French in Haiti.

There were, as well, newly-told tales of great African civilization "when Europe was inhabited by a race of cannibals, a race of savages, naked men, heathens and pagans . . . Black men, you were once great: you shall be great again. Lose not courage, lose not faith, go forward. The thing to do is get organized; keep separated and you will be exploited, you will be robbed, you will be killed. Get organized, and you will compel the world to respect you. If the world fails to give you consideration, because you are black men, because you are Negroes, four hundred millions of you shall through organization, shake the pillars of the universe and bring down creation, even as Samson brought down the temple upon his head and upon the heads of the Philistines." (14)

Garvey set about organizing the American Negroes and immediately disproved the myth that they "couldn't be organized." Literally by the millions they flocked into his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). This was the first time that a Negro organization was established on a countrywide basis. At its height in 1920-1921, it claimed six million. It was overwhelmingly proletarian. Marcus Garvey had appealed to the American Negro over the heads of the established Negro leaders who lived in a world far removed from the daily lives of the Negro mass. Where they were preoccupied with themselves as the "talented tenth," or, at best, participated in long-drawn-out legal battles, Garvey spoke of what to do here and now.

It was easy for the Negro intellectual to expose the fakery in such schemes as "the Black Star Line" that would take the American Negro "back to Africa," as well as "to prove" that the Negro wanted

to integrate into, not separate from, the mainstream of American life. But thereby the Negro intellectuals also proved how isolated they were from the profound unrest stirring the mass of Negroes, their total despair of ever achieving full democracy within the post-World War I American civilization.

Where they had urged and were proud of the Negro's participation in the war, Garvey lashed out: "We are going to organize ourselves all over the world that when the white men say—any white man wants a black man to die in the future, they have to tell us what we are going to die for. (Applause). The first dying that is to be done by the black man in the future will be done to make himself free." (15)

Long before the African revolutionaries came onto the historic scene, Marcus Garvey raised the slogan "Africa for the Africans." Impractical as were the specifics of the "Back to Africa" scheme in the historic context of an Africa divided up among the European imperialist powers, the concept of "Africa for the African" was not only ahead of its time regarding the African revolutions that would put an end to colonialism, but totally opposed to the Pan-Africanism of the "talented tenth" of Du Bois and Diagne. Where they were appealing to the League of Nations for "partial self-determination of natives of the German colonies" (my emphasis), asking the League to hold "the land and its natural resources . . . in trust for the natives," Garvey declared it "null and void as far as the Negro is concerned, in that it seeks to deprive the Negroes of their liberty." In its stead he demanded that black men themselves, here and now, establish "Africa for the Africans."

Though vociferously denied by the "talented tenth," the flowering of its genius in music and in literature; the rediscovery of its African heritage as well as its American nativism from sport to the dance, from biographical writing to historic, from the protest movement to the protest press; in a word, what became known as the "New Negro" owes its existence precisely to the great unrest among the Negroes during and immediately following World War I, which had found embodiment in Garveyism, or, more precisely put, the mass movement of the Negro Americans. They do not owe their voice to the talented tenth. Rather it is to THEM that the Harlem Renaissance owes ITS voice, and even the spelling of Negro with a capital N. (16)

It was not the fakery in Garvey's schemes, like the money collected for the Black Star line, that made Du Bois, along with almost all other Negro intellectuals, actually sign a petition addressed to the United States Department of Justice, demanding his deportation. It was that the American Negro intellectual had never been able to break through to the Negro masses, (17) where Garvey most certainly had. In retrospect, W. E. B. DuBois finally saw it and had to write: "It was a grandiose and bombastic scheme, utterly impracticable as a whole, but it was sincere and had some practical features; and Garvey proved not only an astonishingly popular leader, but a master of propaganda. Within a few years, news of his movement, of his promises and plans, reached Europe and Asia, and penetrated every corner of Africa." (18)

To other intellectuals, like Ralph Bunche, Garveyism remained beyond comprehension even as late as 1940 when he wrote: "When the curtain dropped on the Garvey theatricals, the black man of America was exactly where Garvey had found him, though a little bit sadder, perhaps a bit poorer—if not wiser." (19) Mr. Bunche, clearly, was no wiser.

## B. Marxism: Internationalism

"When in 1920 the American government started to investigate and to suppress radical propaganda among Negroes, the small radical Negro groups in America retaliated by publishing the fact that the Socialists stood for the emancipation of the Negroes, and that reformist America could do nothing for them. Then, I think, for the first time in American history, the American Negroes found that Karl Marx had been interested in their emancipation, and had fought valiantly for it." (20)

### Claude McKay

The speaker was the great Negro poet, Claude McKay. The place was Moscow. The year was 1922, long before Communism had become transformed into today's totalitarianism. At the previous Con-

## News & Letters

VOL. 8, No. 2

February, 1963

News & Letters is published every month except during the summer months when issues appear June-July, August-September, by News & Letters, 8751 Grand River, Detroit 4, Mich. Telephone: TYler 8-7053. Subscription: \$1 for 12 issues; single copy—10c; for bulk order of ten or more—6c each

Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairman  
National Editorial Board

Charles Denby ..... Editor  
I. Rogers ..... Managing Editor

Second Class Postage Paid  
at Detroit, Michigan

gress, in 1920, Lenin had presented his special **Theses on the National and Colonial Questions**, preliminary to that Congress he had included Ireland and "the Negro in America" as part of the National Question and asked "all comrades, particularly those who have defined comrades on any of these very complicated questions, to express their opinion and make suggestions for amendments or additions . . ."

Lenin used the word, "nation," in its broad sense of oppressed nations and minority groups; and included both national minorities and colonial majorities in the **Theses**. In his very numerous polemics on the National Question, throughout World War I, and again in his 1920 **Theses** after he had gained power in Russia, Lenin emphasized that concrete historic situations, not abstract considerations, formed the focal point of both the theory and the actions on the National Question.

The decisive thing was that "all national oppression calls forth resistance of the broad masses of people." It is insufficient to state that revolutionists would support these movements, he maintained. It is not only a question of support. It is a question of support and the development of national struggles, not for abstract reasons, but because these struggles **must inevitably develop along the lines of independent mass activity.**

Ever since his study of **Imperialism** in 1916, Lenin held that imperialism has brought about a differentiation not only between the oppressor nations and the oppressed ones, but also within the proletariat. Lenin was especially adamant on this point in his polemics with his Bolshevik colleagues.

In his polemics with Pyatakov on the National Question, Lenin defended a "dualism" of propaganda on the ground that the proletariat in the oppressor nation differs from the proletariat in the oppressed nation "all along the line": economically, the worker of the oppressor nation more easily becomes part of the labor aristocracy; politically, he participates more fully in the life of the country; and intellectually, he feels superior because he is; and intellectually for the laborer of the oppressed nation. (21)

The proletariat of the oppressing country occupies a superior position to the proletariat of the oppressed country. This aspect is not peculiar to the United States. Wherever there is a dual oppression—whether that be in so easily recognized a nation as the Irish, or a racial minority like the ghettoized Jew in Poland, or the Negro in the United States—there Marxists must conduct a **dual propaganda.**

At those Marxists who failed to recognize the National Question as a special movement meriting their support, Lenin threw the accusation that they had capitulated to "national egoism." The problem of national egoism does not, of course, resolve itself merely into the fact that the proletariat of the oppressing nation is taught disdain for the worker of the oppressed nation. National egoism has a former basis; an economic foundation. The point of specific political implication in Lenin's **Imperialism** is that, owing to the super-profits of imperialism, imperialism is able to bribe a section of its own proletariat and thereby lay the basis of political opportunism.

### Facing The Negro Question

This precisely applied to the American Socialists and Communists. (22) Claude McKay said that "they are not willing to face the Negro question."

Much has since been written of the sameness of the Negro and American culture in order to prove that the Negroes are not a nation. But what these writers have failed to show is: why, then, does there nevertheless exist a Negro problem? The sameness of the Negro and American culture does not explain this. And that is the hub of the matter.

It is the general success of assimilation in the historic development of a country like the United States that lends credence to the type of ultra-left phraseology behind which lurks national egoism. In Europe the national minorities fought for independence from the larger society. But in the United States the national minorities that came to this country fought for integration within the larger line of society. They, the immigrants, more or less succeeded. The exception to the integration is the Negro. Why? Surely it isn't the Negro's doing; he only wants his assimilation accepted. We see that here is a complex pattern that cannot be solved by abstract criteria as to what constitutes a nation.

It is the Negro's special oppression, the deprivation of his political rights, the discrimination against him on the job, Jim Crowism and racial segregation that makes of him "a problem."

The fact that the Negro masses could embrace so utopian a scheme as "Back to Africa"—a utopianism all the more suicidal since their customs, language, and culture are American—reveals both how frustrated the Negroes feel at ever achieving full democratic rights in America and how desperately repressed they feel as a national minority. And, what is more important, they mean to do something about this.

If the movement developed into diversionary channels, as the Garvey movement did, and if the socialists were unable to make a dent in its ranks, it only proves that the only way to influence masses in motion is by understanding the underlying, economic, philisophic and social causes, not by throwing epithets at them.

Those who failed to understand that the principles of the Marxist approach to the National Question apply to the Negro struggle for assimila-

tion into the national culture as much as to the European national struggle for independence from the national culture of the oppressing nation are the very ones who were disoriented when the African Revolutions in our era opened both as national revolutions and under a banner of Marxist Humanism and internationalism.

Until the Communists began to vie for this third new world in our era, Lenin's 1920 **Theses on the National and Colonial Question** seemed to have been "lost." Their "rediscovery" of the **Theses** in Khrushchev's time was for the same purpose as their "application" of it to the American Negro in 1928 when it was sloganized as "Self-Determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt." This sounded to the Negroes as yet one other form of segregation. By the time of World War II it became outright betrayal.

## PART III

### From the Depression Through World War II

The dream part of American civilization, with its mass production, "non-entanglement in Europe," and jazz era ballyhoo about the "new capitalism" whose prosperity would be endless because its "exceptionalism" made it immune to economic crisis, came crashing down on everyone's head with the economic collapse in 1929.

Production had come to a near-standstill. The unemployed reached fantastic proportions—17 million. Fully one third of the nation—the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, had to admit—was ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clothed. It was also ill-paid when it did work, for the conditions of labor, with the introduction of the belt-line system of labor in the rationalized production of the 1920's, had worsened. It remained what Marx had described the English factory to have been—"a House of Terror," its barrack-like life made the more unbearable with a speed-up Marx had never witnessed in his life-time. What, above all, President Roosevelt did not admit, although it most certainly was the underlying philosophy of the New Deal, out to teach capitalism sufficient class consciousness to give up some of its despotic demands, so that capitalism, as a system, might be saved, was this: **the workers' disillusionment with capitalism was total.**

No one any longer believed what the rulers told them—whether that concerned "peace, prosperity and progress," or the speed of the production line, or racism. Along with the rest of white America, labor may have been blind to the Negro as the touchstone of American civilization, but with the Depression in the early 1930's, labor experienced so profound a disillusionment with capitalist society, that it reached over into the trade union which, along with the color bar, withheld its skill to keep itself isolated from the overwhelming majority of the labor force—the semi-skilled and unskilled. Along with the depotism of capital, craft unionism had to go.

### 1. The CIO Changes The Face of The Nation and Makes A Break In Negro 'Nationalism'

New passions and new forces coalesced in the upheavals of the 1930's to give birth to the CIO. This was not simply a trade union organization that finally established industrial unionism in the United States. The speed with which this was done—1935-1937—when in Europe it had taken decades—brought it up to the state of organization of Europe's socialist trade unions. And, though each had spontaneously, arrived at a new method of struggle, the point is that the simultaneousness of THE SIT-DOWN electrified the world of labor and shook capitalism to its very foundations.

Everything was new about the CIO (23): For the first time, on a national scale, white and black labor had united to gain union recognition. For the first time, organized labor struck where it hurt capital most in all the basic industries—rubber, coal, steel, auto. For the first time, employed and unemployed did not work at cross purposes. On the contrary, the unemployed would often, along with another new phenomenon—women's auxiliaries—man the picket lines while the workers sat down inside. For the first time, control over the conditions of labor—the recognition of the union—predominated over all other demands, even of wages. Nowhere more than in America had the capitalist outcry about "the invasion of private property" produced a greater militancy than among the workers who insisted on sitting down at those machines they had always worked but never controlled.

The CIO changed the industrial face of the nation. It created a break also in the "nationalism" of the Negro.

### Black Labor And Talented Tenth (24)

Just as, during the first phase of "Nationalism," Garveyism, the Negro worker found himself opposed by his "talented tenth," so this time too. This time it couldn't find "fakery." Although it itself has nowhere enough capital or power actually to do the exploitation of labor and must satisfy itself just with the crumbs from capital's table, the talented tenth nevertheless easily fell into the argument that "the best friend" of the Negro is the capitalist. Many added that the "most prejudiced" among the whites is the laborer. There is nothing new about this argument; it has been passed around by the slavocracy from time immemorial. (25)

Not all the talented tenth and established Negro organizations opposed black labor making common cause with white labor. There were notable exceptions, the most outstanding being the **Pittsburgh Courier**. Both its editor, Robert L. Vann, and columnist, George S. Schuyler, in 1937, not only did the best reportorial job on the organization of the CIO and the movement toward white and black solidarity, but lashed out against established Negro leaders. Considering Schuyler's present reactionary stance, it is important to see how differently he spoke under the impact of the CIO:

"Nowhere were the 'educated' classes cooperating with the unions to aid the work of organization, save in a few notable instances, and there by only one or two individuals . . . Their desertion of the struggling Negro workers in this crisis constitutes one of the most shameful chapters in our recent history. The new position Negro labor has won in this past year has been gained in spite of the old leadership. It has been won with new leadership; militant young men and women from the ranks of labor and grizzled black veterans of the pick and shovel and the blast furnace." (26)

It is true that, without the Negro, the CIO could not have organized the basic industries where Negro labor was pivotal. It is no less true that labor's unity was a fact that could never again be controverted, not even when the Negro once again strikes out on his own during World War II and presently.

### 2. Nationalism, Phase II: Class Racism vs. Communism

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 and the gearing of the American factories for war output very nearly wiped out unemployment—white unemployment. But nearly 25 per cent of the Negro work force remained unemployed in 1940. The very fact that both South and North the Negro had become urbanized and unionized only sharpened his sense of oppression as a national minority. The very potency within the trade unions made this ghettoization and unemployment outside the more frustrating. This time the great unrest among the Negroes did not go unheeded by the American Negro leadership.

A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, organized a March on Washington Movement. This all-Negro mass organization planned to mobilize 100,000 for its march on the nation's capital. Under its pressure President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 which barred discrimination in war industries. While this small version Fair Employment Practices Act did stop the march on the capital, it did not stop the movement as an organization which then proceeded to transform itself into a Committee to End Jim Crow in the Army. (27)

Again, the winning of some of his demands only sharpened the Negro's sense of lacking all rights. In housing, especially, conditions became unbearable as more and more thousands of workers, white and Negro, moved into the industrial centers. Neither the CIO which by now had about one and one-half million Negro members, nor the March on Washington Movement in a narrower field, had achieved what the Negro was fighting for—full democratic rights. They seemed impossible to achieve.

However, this time, far from either joining any "Back to Africa" movement, or taking the defensive when attacked by KKK and such racist elements, the Negroes took the offensive. In the year 1943 there was an outburst of mass Negro demonstrations in New York, Chicago, Detroit. It was the year also of the first great wartime strike among miners, which, inevitably, had a great number of Negro members. The American Negro took the offensive and showed great discrimination in what it attacked.

Something new occurred also in the sense that there were instances of white solidarity especially in Detroit where the CIO undertook to have white and Negro work in and out of the factory alongside of each other. Above all, none dared attack it as unpatriotic. None that is except the Communists.

### 3. The Communists Oppose All Independent Negro Movements

At the beginning of World War II, the slogan of the American Communists was "The Yanks Are Not Coming." Hitler duplicating the treachery of the Stalin-Hitler Pact by joining with the fascistic "America Firsters"—to Communists, anything at all which would keep America from entering the war on the side of the Allies was justifiable. If they

opposed anything at all in the original organization of the March on Washington Movement, it was that it was not militant enough because it allowed itself to be led by A. Philip Randolph. All this was changed overnight when, in June, 1941, Germany invaded Russia. The imperialist war was now declared by these quick-change artists who undeviatingly follow Russian foreign policy lines to have become "a war of national liberation," and they began demanding the immediate establishment of "a second front"—everywhere, that is, except for Negroes in the United States.

Now they began to attack A. Philip Randolph as a veritable "subversive" and the March on Washington Movement as being "too belligerent." By its fight for jobs for Negroes, said James Ford, it was "creating confusing and dangerous moods in the ranks of the Negro people and utilizing their justified grievances as a weapon of opposition to the Administration's war program . . ."

These "justified grievances" didn't seem to warrant, in the eyes of Communists, even so mild a program as that of the Pittsburgh Courier which had launched the slogan of the "Double V": "double victory for democracy at home and abroad." This, said the Daily Worker, in its special symposium on the Negro question in March, 1942, destroys national unity! "Hitler is the main enemy and the foes of Negro rights in this country should be considered as secondary."

Many a sympathizer of the Communists and what they had done on such cases as the Scottsboro Boys in the 1930's were taken aback. As George Schuyler put it: "Whereas at one time they were all for stopping production because of Jim Crow employment policies, low pay or bad working conditions, they are now all-out for the Government's policy of no wartime strikes and have actually endorsed labor conscription, i.e., human slavery. Everything must be done to save Russia even if Negroes' rights have to go by the board." (28)

The Communists proceeded also to rewrite Negro history. Robert Minor, in "The Heritage of the Communist Political Association," discovered that "the abolition of national oppression is a bourgeois-democratic reform" and therefore is achievable within the framework of American capitalism so long as the "Negro people pursue the correct course—the Frederick Douglass course of full support of the war . . ."

Outside of the slanderous statement about that great Negro Abolitionist, Frederick Douglass as if he uncritically supported the Civil War, the Civil War did finally turn into a revolutionary war which abolished slavery and thus merited also the support of the international working class, as was evidenced by the support the International Workingmen's Association gave it, whereas World War II remained an imperialist war, as was evident by the type of support given it by American Communists who came out (1) in support of the no-strike pledge by the trade unions, not to mention being for company incentive plans; (2) against any independent activities by Negroes for their rights either on the job, or in the army, or on the civil rights front anywhere; (3) helping railroad the Trotskyists to jail under the Smith Act, and (4) vying with the D.A.R. in its "patriotism," that is to say, pointing its finger to all who disagreed with them as "subversive"; even the NAACP had become too militant for them.

*(Not only was Frederick Douglass a leader of the Abolitionist movement which did not stop its independent activity during the Civil War, but even though he unequivocally supported Lincoln just as soon as he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, here is how he summed up his measure of Lincoln at the unveiling of the Freedmen's Monument to Lincoln: "It must be admitted, truth compels me to admit, even here in the presence of the monument we have erected to his memory, Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. In his interests, in his associations, in his habits of thought, and in his prejudices, he was a white man. He was pre-eminently the white man's President, entirely devoted to the welfare of white men . . . You are the children of Abraham Lincoln. We are at best only his stepchildren; children by adoption, children by force of circumstance and necessity. But . . . we entreat you to despise not the humble offering we this day unveil to view; for while Abraham Lincoln saved for you a country, he delivered us from a bondage, according to Jefferson, one hour of which was worse than ages of the oppression your fathers rose in rebellion to oppose.")*

During the 1943 mass demonstrations, the Communist Councilman Benjamin A. Davis appeared with Mayor La Guardia in Harlem and on the same platform spoke against the Negro outburst.

According to Earl Browder: "The immediate achievement in this period under the present American system of complete equality for the Negroes, has been made possible by the crisis and by the character of this war as a people's war of national liberation." And just in case you had any illusion about the "complete equality for the Negroes" requiring any activity, they had their Negro Communist, Doxey A. Wilkerson spell it out

for all as no more, and no less, than the "full support of the win-the-war policies of our Commander-in-Chief."

So ever-eager were they in their support of the Roosevelt Administration that they spoke not only of "war-time unity" but post-war plans, and we don't mean those of the Cold War that they did not anticipate. No, in that same 1944 pamphlet, *What The Negro Wants*, Wilkerson wrote "To draft idealistic war plans for the Negroes . . . tends to divert much needed energy from the really urgent task of today: to win the war." Shades of our Bourbon South!

No wonder the Negroes by the thousands—for they had joined the Communist Party during the 1930's—tore up their Communist Party cards and were not again fooled by the new change in line that came with the Moscow Cold War which made the American Communists once again (for how long?) come out "for the Negro liberation."

#### 4. Nationalism, Phase III

*(Because of space consideration and desire to complete the pamphlet-to-be, "Emancipation Proclamation—100 Years After" with this issue we have left this part out. The general lines that will be developed in this section can be gleaned from these three pamphlets already published by us: "Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions", "Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves", and "Workers Battle Automation.")*

## PART IV

### What Now? Philosophy Needed to Give Action Its Direction

Rip Van Winkle awoke after twenty years; the old radicals sleep on 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation as they did at the outbreak of the Civil War. Marx considered the high-sounding "Marxist" opposition to wage "as well as" chattel slavery as no more than an escapism from the reality, the concrete opposition to which is the only way to overcome its contradictions and move humanity forward. After Marx's death, Friedrich Engels, his life-long collaborator, was so aroused against the American socialists for isolating themselves from the existing trade unions, that he wrote a friend that Bismark's anti-socialist laws "were a misfortune, not for Germany, but for America to which they consigned the Knoten."

Insofar as American Marxism is concerned, the 20th century was no improvement on the 19th. Just as the world significance of the struggle to abolish slavery and the national importance of the existing trade unions escaped them in the 1860's and 1880's, so did the new national-international pivot of the Negro struggle in the early 1920's. Neither the actual struggles led by Marcus Garvey, nor the prolific writings of Lenin on the National Question could arouse them from the torpor on the "Negro Question."

By 1941 the policy of jingoistic American Communists bore no resemblance whatever to the Marxist theory of liberation either on the question of the emancipation of labor or the self-determination of oppressed nations. Long before this transformation into opposite, however, Claude McKay rightly accused American Communists of being unwilling "to face the Negro Question." In a word, they too were products of the bourgeois society in which they live and thus do not see in full the contradictory foundation of American Civilization; its Achilles heel is enclosed not in the "general" class struggle, but in the specifics of the "additive" of color in these class struggles. Precisely because of this the theory of liberation must be as comprehensive as when Marx first unfurled the banner of humanism.

From its birth in 1843, Marx, at one and the same time, fought capitalism and "vulgar communism"; exposed alienation at its root—not alone in ownership of property or even in exploitation of labor, but also in the fetishisms in its whole philosophy and "popular culture" as well as in its political superstructure. It is this total underlying philosophy of the ruling class which assumes the "fixity" of a law of nature. (29) It must be abolished, uprooted. Abolition of the profit motive and transformation of private into state property could not achieve this unless what was most degrading of all in class societies—the division between mental and manual labor—were abolished and a new society established on truly human foundations. Truly human foundations meant the self-development of the individual, as the motive force of society.

It is a sad commentary on our times that what needs to be added, 120 years later, especially so when one deals with American Civilization, is that self-development of the individual means one freed from an exploitative society and its alienated culture. The negating force which manifests this in its totality is the Negro.

## I. Negro as Touchstone of American Civilization

Because slavery had stained American civilization as it wrenched freedom from Great Britain, the Negro could give the lie to its democracy. At first he was alone in so doing. But with the birth of Abolitionism, and for three stormy decades thereafter, American civilization was placed on trial by whites as well who focused on the antagonism between the ideal of freedom and the reality of slavery. The Negro became the touchstone of this class-ridden, color-conscious, defaced civilization which had an ever-expanding frontier but no unifying philosophy.

To achieve unity between North and South not only did a Civil War become inevitable but it was compelled to unfurl a new banner—Emancipation Proclamation—before it could win this long, bloody war. Thereby it also proved that, at bottom, the sectional struggle was in fact a class struggle. For those who thought that this truth was limited to the struggle between North and South, but did not hold for the "classless" Western democracy, where "everyman" could become a property owner, an independent farmer, the agricultural crises of the 1880's and 1890's came as a greater shock than the Civil War.

For the first time since this country achieved its independence, it became clear to all that capital, rather than the pioneer in the covered wagon, put its mark on this nation. The theoretician of the frontier—the historian, Frederick J. Turner—rightly records this mark upon the expansion westward which dominated the development of this new nation "conceived in liberty":

"But when the arid lands and the mineral resources of the Far West were reached, no conquest was possible by the old individual pioneer methods. Here expansive irrigation works must be constructed, cooperative activity was demanded in utilization of the water supply, capital beyond the reach of the small farmer was required. . . . Iron and coal mines, transportation fleets, railroad systems, and iron manufactories are concentrated in a few corporations, principally the United States Steel Corporation. The world has never seen such a consolidation of capital and so complete a systematization of economic processes."

What Professor Turner does not record is that, with the destruction of Populism, the frontier dream "passed into" monopoly capital. That is to say, from being the distinguishing mark of the American civilization, the frontier disappeared as a way out from the class-begotten civilization. Monopoly capital and its thrust into imperialism, no doubt, did not mean for the white working people what it meant for the Negroes: the total collapse of its aspirations. That's precisely why the Negro remained the Achilles heel of this civilization.

But while material progress and "reforms" may have helped sustain an illusion long since passed among the rest of the population, the frontier became an illusion, not the reality of American civilization which by the turn of the century, took its place alongside the other capitalist civilizations carving empires out of the African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American countries. What is pivotal to the study of the role of the Negro in American civilization is that, at each turning point in its history, it anticipates the next stage of development of labor in its relationship with capital. Because of its dual oppression, it could not be otherwise.

Take the present shift of the Negro struggle from the North to the South. Although at the moment it seems predominately student youth in leadership, this new force did not arise in a vacuum. It arose within the context of a growing urbanization and industrialization of the South. The most important effect of the post-war industrialization of the South has been that cotton is no longer the main source of Southern wealth. Although it maintains a not inconspicuous place by remaining the second most important crop in the United States, the cotton culture—so permeated with the ideology stemming from first, slavery and then, its economic remains which had dominated the South from 1790 to 1940—cannot hold on to the quasi-totalitarian relations when its economic basis has gone. Of eleven and two thirds million production workers in the United States (all categories of employees numbered 16 million) in 1958, three million production workers were in the South (all employees were 3,828,000 (!); and in the deep South there were two million production workers (all employees: two and three-quarter million).

By 1959, there was an increase of halfmillion production workers in the United States (total: 12,238,000); the number remained substantially unchanged in the Southern border states and in the Deep South there was a 10 per cent increase, to 2.2 million.

#### Urbanization Of Negroes

The urbanization of the Negro, at the very time when for the first time in his history there is a slight majority of Negroes living North, has meant a phenomenal move from country to city right within the South. Between 1950 to 1960 the move of the Negro population has been most dramatic as it fell in rural areas from 37 per cent to 27 per cent. Indeed, both North and South the Negro is presently more urban-

ized than the white: 72 per cent for the Negro against 70 per cent whites.

This movement from country to city shows itself in white civilian labor force 14 years old and over. (In this case, the term "non-white" includes also American Indians, Orientals, etc., which total less than one per cent of the population, even after the inclusion of Alaska and Hawaii since 1960.)

In 1950, this group numbered almost 40 per cent of the total non-white population, or about six million out of some 16 million. Of these, more than four million, or about 69 per cent, were urban, and nearly two million, or about 31 per cent were rural. By 1960, this group had dropped to 35 per cent of the total non-white, or seven and a quarter million out of twenty and a half million; but its urban-rural ratio had increased to 78 per cent urban as against 22 per cent rural, or five and three quarter million to one and a half million. In 1950 17½ per cent of this group worked in agriculture; ten years later it was only seven and a half per cent. That 92½ per cent of the non-white labor force over 14 years of age is either working or looking for work in America's cities is the imperative human motive force behind the unfolding struggle in the South.

If the great strength and surge of the Negro struggle, from the post-World War I years to the post-World War II years was centered North, and at the beginning of World War II, it was Far West, (30) the great strength and surge of the past decade has been in the South where the Negro masses are remaining to fight for new human relations in the very heart and strong-hold of American repression. The new stage of Negro struggle that began with the Montgomery, Ala. Bus Boycott movement revealed the proletarian stamp of organization of both the protest—50,000 Negroes walked for one year—and the creative self-activity of organizing its own transport and weekly mass meetings to assure and develop its own working existence.

The new stage of struggle developed a further dimension when high school youths in Greensboro, North Carolina on February 1960 sat down at a corner drug store counter. (31) From an entirely different source, it was as spontaneous as the refusal of Mrs. Rosa Parks to move to the back in the Montgomery bus. The climax these struggles reached when the Freedom Rides did finally also originate North and include whites as well as Negroes were inspired by the movement in the South. The South, not the North, led. The committees which sprang up to coordinate the work followed, rather than led, these spontaneous movements which all were outside the scope of the established organizations.

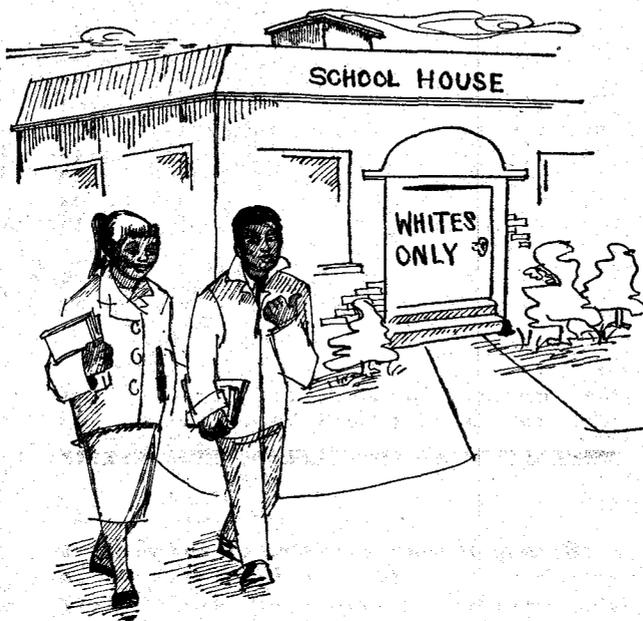
This is true not only in relationship to the still-birth of the CIO called "Operation Dixie", but also of the Negro organizations from the NAACP to the CORE, from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). All followed the spontaneously evolving movements. None anticipated either the Bus Boycott of 1956 or the Sit-Ins of 1960 or Freedom Rides of 1961. As the movement which first arose around a working-woman, then sprang up among high school youth, and now seems most predominant among college youth, there is, however, also more of a tendency to make it appear as an individual's fight for education rather than a people's fight for total democracy, economic as well as political, educational as well as social.

All one has to do to see the insubstantiality of the illusion, and the substantiality but still hidden social dynamite with which the South is charged is to return to the background against which these movements are taking place—the industrialization of the South—and hold fast to the truth that in the South, even more than the North, the proletarianization, and even trade unionization of the Negro neither raises him to the status of the white proletariat nor dissolves his struggle for elementary democratic rights into the general class struggle. Wage differentials, seniority, upgrading have by no means been abolished.

There is not the illusion of 1937 when the birth of the CIO seemed to open a totally new life. The national trade union leadership, long since transformed into a bureaucracy, seems to live on a different planet altogether. It is too busy travelling all over the globe—all over that is except South USA—too busy selling the State Department line on "The American way of life", to be overly concerned with white labor, much less the Negro, though he numbers no less than one and one half million within the AFL-CIO and many more unorganized outside.

The Negro is still the last to be hired and the first to be fired. The duality of this era of proletarianization when the new stage in production—Automation—is daily throwing people by the thousands and tens of thousands into a permanent army of unemployed intensifies the Negro's feeling of frustration both against capitalism and the labor bureaucracy.

In its report of August 1962, the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that, as compared to a 4.6 per cent of the white labor force being unemployed, the Negro unemployed number 11.4 per cent. But it is precisely around Automation, and precisely among miners where the Negro is most numerous and most integrated that the American worker has, ever since 1950, raised the most fundamental question of any



"Let's Give This One a Try!"

Picture reprinted from News & Letters, November 28, 1958

society: what kind of labor must man perform, why must there be such a division between thinking and doing, between work and life.

## 2. The Self-Determination of People and of Ideas

*"The self-determination therefore in which alone the Idea is, is to bear itself speak."*

— G. W. F. Hegel, Science of Logic — Vol. II, Ch. III, "The Absolute Idea," p. 487.

A new stage of Negro struggle opened the same year as the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Many a radical who acknowledges the high stage of world development by the outbreak of the latter, refuses so much as to mention the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the same breath. For those who think that the snobbery is due to the act that the Hungarian Revolution, culminated in such recognizable proletarian forms of struggle as Workers' Councils as against Montgomery, Ala. transport committees decided upon in mass meetings held in a church are blind entirely to the underlying philosophy of both—a new type of humanism—which likewise remains unacknowledged by these self-proclaimed "vanguardists."

The truth is old radicals are forever blind to the positive, the subjective new dimensions of any spontaneous struggle. But let there be a negative outbreak—whether it be the Russian counter-revolution against the Hungarian Revolution, or the Faubus-inspired riots at Little Rock, Ark., the following year, and the passion of the "againters" does rise to new levels while the level of what they are for is muted so that, in the end, each struggle is fought out in separateness, and remains isolated for, while the way to hell may be paved with Little Rocks, the way to a new society must have totally new foundations not alone in action but in thought.

### The New Voices We Heard

New voices have been heard since 1943, the year of the growth of the National Resistance Movement in Europe, the year of the miners' strike and Negro demonstrations in the United States. For the first time in American history right in the midst of a war, a section of the proletariat and a minority grouping representing one-tenth of the nation, were saying: our main enemy is at home. As has happened throughout U.S. history, an activity by the Negroes demanded all others "take sides". Whereupon the American Communists showed up on the same platform as the police and the established forces of "law and order" demanding the demonstrators "go home." The Negro intelligentsia kept hands off and mouths shut—or gave their views like any Uncle Tom to a Swedish scholar (Gunnar Myrdal) to make of them what he will in his comprehensive study of the Negro question which is, however, encrusted with "value premises" and called *An American Dilemma*. And what the professor wills is the enfranchisement of the Negroes, starting with "the higher strata of the Negro population." (sic!) As we wrote then: "The appeal of the social scientist is not a challenge; it is a whimper.

"Here you have the political formula of this massive work in a nutshell! Here is a scholar who has digested the major part of the available literature on the subject of the Negro problem, who has conducted field studies and case histories, all of which lead him to uphold 'value premises' that demand the full participation of the Negro in all aspects of American life, who holds no brief for intellectual Uncle Tomism of either Negro or white variety, who says the South is as backward intellectually as economically, that its ignorance is, in fact, unique in non-fascist Western civilization, and yet so bourgeois is he that his class instinct prevails upon him to produce so impotent, so ludicrous a

'solution' as to turn the American tragedy into a Swedish farce!"

Too obvious to need to be told is that what was crucial in the situation were not "value premises"—either the immoral ones of the white South or the moral ones of Sweden's Gunnar Myrdal.

The way, the only way, a historic tradition can persist for a century is through being fed and nourished on economic roots deeply embedded in the community. And to get "reborn" each generation it must feed on new, national, life-giving economic sustenance. This it gets now, as it did, at the turn of the century, from imperialism, reinforced by the totalitarianism in the air!

However, Myrdal would not concern us were it not for the ideological treachery of very nearly the entire talented tenth that did a great deal of the research and preparation for the work before it was published, and then, after they saw what conclusions he had drawn from their research, still praised him to the sky. Much as it may surprise those of today who are used to the conservative U.N. Undersecretary, Ralph Bunche in those years was a radical and, as such, presented the sorriest spectacle. Our review of *American Dilemma* continued: "The sorriest spectacle of the Negro 'talented tenth' is presented by Ralph Bunche. Mr. Bunche is critical not only of the economic, political and social status of the Negro, but of all existing Negro organizations that strive to ameliorate this condition. He calls them 'philosophic and programmatic paupers.' In his pamphlet, *A World View of Race*, he even comes up with a solution to the Negro problem:

"The Negro must develop, therefore, a consciousness of class interest and purpose and must strive for an alliance with the white working class in a common struggle for the economic and political equality and justice."

Yet this most radical of radicals found it permissible to shelve his more radical conclusions in the Schomburg collection, while his research data are used by Mr. Myrdal for his own conservative ends. This is not at all accidental. Mr. Bunche's revolutionary thunder is no more than radicalism of the chair.

Mr. Myrdal at least did see that not only is there nothing to fear from such professorial radicalism but that a study of the one Negro leader that was part of a mass movement, Marcus Garvey, could not be entrusted to such hands. Why Mr. Myrdal himself had not undertaken "intensive historical investigation" for a study lasting four years, covering 1,400 pages of text, into which the Carnegie Corporation sank a quarter of a million dollars, may remain inexplicable to most readers. But we correctly concluded then: "To anyone who is concerned about the Negro question today, this neglect of the Garvey movement has just about reached its end.

"There is stirring in the Negro people in the United States today a racial consciousness which has at present found its most extreme expression in the writings of Richard Wright, Wilfred H. Kerr, co-chairman of the Lynn Committee to Abolish Segregation in the Armed Forces, has noted the phenomenon, which he calls 'Negroism.' These are portents on the horizon which can be ignored only to the peril of the labor movement."

*("Our review" does not refer to News & Letters which did not appear until June, 1955. But some of us who founded News & Letters had read of these Marxist-Humanist views of the role of the Negro in American history in 1943 and because we consider it as part of our present heritage, the views quoted here from "Negro Intellectuals in Dilemma" were reprinted in News & Letters, February, 1961.)*

### Who We Are

Because we did foresee the portents on the horizon of the Negro's national and international development, we foresaw the dynamism of ideas that would arise both from the African independence movements and from the American class struggles. Thus by 1950, when once again the miners, a great proportion of whom are Negroes, came out on general strike, this time against what later came to be known as Automation, we had our ears attuned to a new humanism, in the great tradition of Marxism and Abolitionism, but on a much higher historical level since the participants of the struggles of our era had absorbed in them the rich experiences of nearly 100 years.

This time the proletariat was out not merely to abolish chattel slavery but alienated labor under capitalism, searching for ways to unite in the worker himself all his talents, manual and mental. As one Negro miner put it during that strike: "There is a time for praying. We do that on Sundays. There is a time for acting. We took matters in our hands during the Depression, building up our union and seeing that our families did not starve. There is a time for thinking. The time is now. What I want to know is: how and when will the working man—all working men—have such confidence in their own abilities to make a better world that they will not let others do their thinking for them."

This desire to break with those who are used to do the thinking for the workers—the labor leaders made into labor bureaucrats—led to the break between the rank and file and John L. Lewis when he asked them to return to work, but they remained out, demanding answers to this new man-killer, the continuous miner. They didn't win, it

is true, but the process of doing their own thinking on the question of Automation started something entirely new on the part of workers in all other industries, and not only on the question of labor, but on civil rights and African revolutions, on war and peace, on new human relations.

Consider this discussion in an auto factory in Detroit:

"Three years in a row Automation has reduced the number of weeks we worked. It sure gives you time to think. The other day I read where a scientist in California said that it didn't really matter who threw the first H-bomb. Once it's released, we would be only 'one-half hour away from total annihilation'."

A Negro then began talking about the last war: "You don't think I would have gone to war if I had a choice. I didn't want to give my life. I almost dropped dead when they swore me in. I almost said, 'No.'"

"I couldn't say I had a recognition in this country. I'm not classed as a first-class citizen. Other people come here and they get first-class citizenship. We're born here, my mother and her mother before her and she could list four generations before that. Still we're not first-class citizens."

"I didn't class myself as an American. I was just thinking of myself as a man. They're integrated since then but we were strictly segregated. Even if you went to the front line you were separated. You might fight next to whites and sleep in the mud with them, but when you got back, you were segregated."

"I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. I know the way here. But I want conditions to be improved one hundred percent. It makes you think what the college kids are doing down South." (See *Workers Battle Automation*, p. 57.)

And our own columnist, Angela Terrano, wrote: "It has been said that 'Revolution is evolution in the fulness of time.' It seems to me that evolution has now reached that point of change where men can thrust forward in a way that will leave the H-bomb, sputniks, and the like as part of the 'pre-history of man.' The youth of the world in the year 1960, with the Hungarian Revolution and its Workers' Councils behind them, facing guns and demanding that their voices be heard are putting Marxist Humanism into practice."

"A new man will emerge. A new society."

"I feel like I can almost hold it in my hand or taste it—I believe it to be so close."

"At the moment I think the form of organization of the workers is all in their thinking. They are organizing their thinking."

Unfortunately, intellectuals seem unable to believe workers have thoughts of their own, much less are they capable of listening to them. This of course is not restricted to the United States. Until 1953, all one heard about totalitarian regimes outside of the horror it is to live under them concerned their invincibility and success in brainwashing the people, and particularly so the workers. Suddenly, in one single day—June 17—the East German workers exploded against the work norms, raised the slogan of "Bread and Freedom" and put an end not only to the myths both of invincibility of totalitarianism and their ability to brainwash workers but thereby they opened an entirely new page in world history.

The very people who said it could never happen now began to play down what did happen. In contrast both to those who were blind to the continuous daily revolts of workers against capitalism, private or state, before the revolts in Eastern Europe which included also the forced labor camps inside of Russia itself, our very analysis of how Russia, from a workers' state had been transformed into its opposite—a state-capitalist society—led us to see the new form of workers' revolts, both as workers and as an oppressed nationality. (32)

Above all, we saw the one-worldedness and the new humanist thinking of all oppressed from the East German worker to the West Virginia miner; from the Hungarian revolutionary to the Montgomery, Ala. bus boycotter; as well as from the North Carolina sit-inner to the African freedom fighter. The elements of the new society, submerged the world over by the might of capital, were emerging in all sorts of unexpected and unrelated places. What was missing was the unity of these movements from practice—whether "mere" sit-ins or actual revolutions—with the movement from theory into an overall philosophy that could form the foundation of a totally new social order. That is why we wrote in *Marxism and Freedom*:

"The modern intellectuals will lose their sense of guilt and bondage when they will react to 'the compulsion of thought to proceed to these concrete truths'—the actions of the Negro school children in Little Rock, Arkansas, to break down segregation, the wildcats in Detroit for a different kind of labor than that under present-day Automation, the struggles the world over for freedom. The alignment precisely with such struggles in the days of the Abolitionists and of Marx is what gave these intellectuals that extra dimension as theoreticians and as human beings which enabled them to become part of the new society. It will do so again . . ."

"A new unity of theory and practice can evolve only when the movement from theory to practice meets the movement from practice to theory. The totality of the world crisis has a new form—fear at

the 'beep-beep' from the new man-made moon. The American rush 'to catch up' with the sputnik, like the Russian determination to be the first to launch the satellite, is not in the interest of 'pure science' but for the purpose of total war. Launching satellites into outer space cannot solve the problems of this earth. The challenge of our times is not to machines, but to men. Intercontinental missiles can destroy mankind, they cannot solve its human relations. The creation of a new society remains the human endeavor. The totality of the crisis demands, and will create, a total solution. It can be nothing short of a New Humanism."

**A New Unity: A New Humanism**

The hour is late. The revolution left unfinished by an Emancipation Proclamation which straddled the fence between human liberation and a union of states will be left in the same state of suspended animation in this year of its centennial by a new President who thinks that token-ism can meet the challenge of 100 years of struggle on the part of the Negro people for full freedom NOW.

At the same time it must be clear to today's freedom fighters that the many separate organizations in the struggle lack a unifying philosophy. It is wrong to think that all that is needed is a "coordination", "one to lead".

Great as are the forces of the student youth that are writing this dramatic page in Southern history, these are only the manifestations of the forces gathering below the surface to put American civilization on trial. What is needed as you dig deeper into both the struggles and aspirations of the Negroes is not still another organization "to coordinate" the work. The lack of coordination between labor and student youth is not due to the lack of an organization, but lack of a unifying philosophy.

It is this which had enabled us in the years of our existence not only to follow and to participate in the Negro struggles, but in some ways to anticipate their development. As one of our Freedom Riders put it: "I feel that because the Negro question has always been the most critical one in the United States, Civil Rights is the name of Freedom in this country for both black and white, and for both student and worker. Since the mid '50's there has been no other movement which has expressed such creativity and determination to be free Now. This is why I think that whether the Freedom Rides continue, or whether the struggle to end segregation and discrimination once and for all takes a different form, the fight for freedom will not stop until we have torn up the old, from root to branch, and established truly new human relations based on new beginnings. I think that the Freedom Rides, and whatever may come after them, are a form of just such new beginnings!"

It is high time now to proceed to a middle—a theory—and an end—the culmination of the creative drama of human liberation into a new society freed from exploitation and discrimination and the wars that go with it. Only then can all man's innate talents first develop and man gain a new dimension that puts an end once and for all to his pre-history in class societies.

**FOOTNOTES**

- (1) *An American Dilemma*, by Gunnar Myrdal, p. 469.
- (2) "Who is Lucius Q. C. Lamar?", *News & Letters*, Oct. 1962.
- (3) *The Rise of American Civilization*, by Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, 1945 edition.
- (4) *The Economic Mind in American Civilization*, Vol III, 1865-1914, by Joseph Dorfman.
- (5) The most comprehensive study is the famous work of Ida Tarbell, *History of Standard Oil*.
- (6) See *History of Great American Fortunes*, by Gustavus Myers.
- (7) *Capital*, by Karl Marx. Marx had been referring to the factory system in England, but it holds as well for America. The full quotation reads: "Colonial system, public debts, heavy taxes, protection, commercial wars, etc.—these children of the true manufacturing period, increase gigantically during the infancy of Modern Industry. The birth of the latter is heralded by a great slaughter of the innocents."
- (8) *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, by C. Vann Woodward, 1961 Galaxy book edition. It is a sad commentary on the state of Northern scholarship that this expose of the academic world and press in the North, as well as of the Supreme Court's bending to those racist trends, comes from the pen of a Southern historian who is doing it, at least in part, only in order to excuse the slowness of desegregation in the South. Since no one can possibly consider a century-old struggle a race with time, much less "majestic instance," the Professor tries to whittle down the concept of 100 years by showing that Jim Crowism didn't get fully established until the beginning of the 20th century, as if the stench of white supremacy by any other name, like slavery, black codes, lynchings, does not smell as bad!
- (9) Because we are limiting ourselves to U.S. imperialism's effects on racism, we cannot here go into the details of its conquests. There are many good books on the subject. One of the latest details how "The U.S. reduced 5 of the Latin-American nations to the status of quasi-protectorates within less than 2 decades . . . The Cuban protectorate was set up in 1902 with a naval base and the security of foreign investments as the main goal . . ." Even, when with the New Deal, the Good Neighbor policy was established and direct rule given up, we at no time, even to this day, did anything to free the countries from being one-crop or one-mineral economies subordinated to America. See *Imperialism and World Politics*, by Parker Thomas Moon, 1926, as the old standard; and for a later and moderate view, *A History of the Modern World*, by Joel Colton, revised 1962 edition, Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y.
- (10) The reference is to Senator Albert J. Beveridge, quoted in Foster Rhea Dulle's "The U.S. Since 1865," University of Michigan Press, 1959, p. 173.
- (11) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, by Hannah Arendt.
- (12) See *The Black Workers*, by Sterling D. Spero and Abraham L. Harris; and *Negro Labor in the U.S.*, by Charles H. Wesley.
- (13) Mr. George Shepperson, a professor in Scotland who has specialized on the African, (especially Nyasaland) independence movements, and the "triangular trade" of ideas between America, the West Indies and Africa, states that it is not altogether out of bounds. For example, the migratory labor cycle between Nyasaland and South Africa did help disseminate Garveyism as seen from the case of the African "who was sentenced to three years' hard labor in September

1926 for importing into the Protectorate two copies of *The Worker's Herald* and six of *The Negro World . . .*" (Phylon, Fall 1961). See also "Notes on Negro American Influence on the Emergence of African Nationalism" by George Shepperson in the *Journal of African History* (1-2, 1960).

- (14) *Black Moses*, by Edmund David Cronon, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1955, has the best biography, in which many of Garvey's speeches are included and the general historic period is analyzed. But it is no substitute for *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, edited by his widow, Mrs. Amy Jacques Garvey, the first volume of which was published in 1923 and the second in 1926. (Universal Publishing House, N.Y.)
- (15) *Revolutionary Radicalism*, Report of the Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, Filed April 24, 1920, in the Senate of the State of New York, Part I Revolutionary and Subversive Movement Abroad and at Home, Vol. II, Ch. V, Propaganda Among Negroes, pp. 1476-1520. There are several speeches by Marcus Garvey; the one quoted here appears on p. 1514. There is a most valuable section on A. Philip Randolph and the remarkable magazine, *Messenger*, with some beautiful cartoons, as well as a report on the I.W.W. and Ben Fletcher. Considering the reactionary nature as well as pure stupidity of this infamous Lusk Committee it is all the more surprising that such valuable source material can be gotten here. Published at Albany, N.Y.
- (16) In *Black Moses* Cronon quotes Garvey's "Declaration of the Rights of the Negro People of the World" which deals with the capitalization of the word "Negro". He also includes the 1929 New York State Board of Education's order that this be done, as well as the New York Times report in 1930 explaining that it was done, in "recognition of racial self-respect for those who have been for generations in the lower case."
- (17) The American Negro scholar, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of The Association for The Study of Negro History, did yeoman's work here as well as in establishing Negro History Week.
- (18) For the Harlem Renaissance in general, see *The New Negro* by Alain Locke, and also *Anthology of American Negro Literature*, Modern Library book, 1944.
- (19) Henry Lee Moon did recognize this division between "talented tenth" and the masses, when he summed up, in retrospect, the Niagara Movement led by DuBois, himself and others in 1903: "Their cause was just, their motives pure, their goals noble and practical; but they were perhaps too far removed from the masses to inspire them to action—too conscious of their own privileged position as a black elite." *Balance of Power*.
- (20) *Dusk of Dawn*, by W. E. B. Du Bois.
- (21) *A World View of Race*, submitted as manuscript for Myrdal's *An American Dilemma*, available in Schomburg Collection.
- (22) *Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, *Abridged Report of Meetings held at Petrograd and Moscow*, November 7-December 3, 1922. McKay's speech appears on pages 260-261. Published in Great Britain. The previous report of the American delegates in which L. Fraina and John Reed appeared on the same subject can be obtained from the Stenographic Report, Second Congress of the Communist International, 1921, but that is available only in Russian. Consult especially pp. 131-132.
- (23) *Lenin, Collected Works Vol. XIX, p. 248*. See also *Selected Works, Vol. X*, for the Preliminary Draft of "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," and for the Report of the Commission, pp. 231-244.
- (24) The Communists were not the only ones who could not understand the Negro as a "National Question." The Socialists could not either. Nor was it only a question of being white and thus insensitive to the duality and intensity of the oppression of the Negro. The Debsian 1903 formula—"Properly speaking, there is no Negro question outside the labor question." (*International Socialist Review*, Vol. VI, 1903, p. 1113)—dominated A. Philip Randolph as well during the very height of Garveyism. It would take another 20 years and another World War, and especially the new ending Depression, before A. Philip Randolph would act on this specialized basis both in the organization of the March on Washington, and Committee to End Jim Crowism in the Army.
- (25) *Sitdown*, by Joel Seidman, League for Industrial Democracy Pamphlet, New York City. See also *The CIO and the Negro Worker, Together for Victory*, Congress of Industrial Organization, Washington, D.C., pamphlet.
- (26) *Black Workers and the New Union*, by Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, Univ. of N. Carolina Press, 1939; consult also *Negro Labor* by Robert C. Weaver, Harcourt, Brace and Co., N.Y., 1946.
- (27) *In Caste, Class, and Race*, the distinguished Negro sociologist, Dr. Oliver Cromwell Cox, analyses how artfully the Southern "aristocrats" maintained their power through playing the poor whites against the Negro and vice versa. He adds: "It should be emphasized that the guardians of the economic and social order in the South are not poor whites; indeed, it is sheer nonsense to think that the poor whites are the perpetrators of the social system of the South. The fierce filibustering in the national Congress against the passage of an anti-lynching bill, or against the abolition of the poll tax; the hurried conference of governors to devise means of emasculating a Supreme Court decision for equal educational opportunities; the meeting of attorneys general for the purpose of side-tracking an anti-Jim Crow decision for railroads; the attitude of Southern judges toward Negroes in courtrooms—these are obviously the real controlling factors in the Southern order. The poor whites are not only incapable but evidently also have no immediate interest in doing of such things." (p. 377).
- (28) "Reflections of Negro Leadership," *Crisis*, Nov. 1937.
- (29) *The War's Greatest Scandal! The Story of Jim Crow in Uniform*, published by the March on Washington Movement.
- (30) *The Negro and the Communist Party*, by Wilson Record, University of N. Carolina, 1951, is the best book on all the changes in the Communist Party line for the period of 1941-45. Many of the quotations here are obtained from that book. Also to be consulted, however, are the individual writings of the Communists, especially Doxey A. Wilkerson, "What the Negro Wants," and Robert Minor, "The Heritage of the Communist Political Association."
- (31) See chapter on "Fetishism of Commodities" in *Capital*, by Karl Marx, Vol. I.
- (32) See the special issue of *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, November, 1945, which was devoted to "Race Relations on the Pacific Coast," edited by L. D. Reddick.
- (33) *Unfinished Revolution*, by Tom Kahn, New York, 1960, has a chronological list of sit-in and other protest demonstrations from Feb. 1 through August 1, 1960.
- (34) See Chapter 15 "The Beginning of the End of Russian Totalitarianism" in *Marxism and Freedom*, by Raya Dunayevskaya.

DON'T MISS AN ISSUE! SUBSCRIBE  
**NEWS and LETTERS**  
8751 Grand River, Detroit 4, Michigan  
Please send me **NEWS & LETTERS**  
12 issues, \$1   
My monthly contribution will be .....

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY .....ZONE.....STATE.....

Date: ..... Initial Here:.....