

Negro Paper's Attack on C.I. Congress Based on Distortions

By CYRIL BRIGGS

The decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, centering chiefly on the united fight against fascism and war, are of vital importance to the American people, and particularly to that section which stands to suffer most from the growth of fascist reaction in this country: the oppressed Negro population.

It is a healthy sign, therefore, to see the Negro press taking an active interest in the discussions and decisions of the Congress. It is regrettable, however, that Negro papers should depend for their information on the Congress upon that same prostituted boss press that systematically slanders alike the Negro people, the Soviet Union and the great world party of the international working class and the oppressed Negro and colonial peoples.

It is this naive trust in the reports of the anti-Negro, anti-labor press that undoubtedly accounts for the editorial charge of the Pittsburgh Crusader, in its issue of August 16, that the Seventh Congress, still in session on that date, was dodging the Negro question.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The central point of the Congress, which closed its sessions last Wednesday, was the struggle against fascism and war and, in this connection, the rallying of the masses everywhere to defeat Mussolini's war of plunder against the Ethiopian people.

We Communists have always pointed out that the fight against Negro oppression in this country, Africa, West Indies, etc., must necessarily be directed against the imperialist bandits, and is inseparable from the struggle for the social emancipation of ALL the toiling population. It was in this light that detailed reports on the life and death problems confronting the Negro peoples were made at the Congress by Negro and white leaders of the Communist Party of the United States, and the Negro leadership of the South African party.

Ben Caruthers, a Negro Communist leader from the home city of the editor of the Pittsburgh Crusader, on August 3 surveyed for the Congress the work of the American party in the fight for the Scottsboro boys, Angelo Herndon

and the civil rights of the Negro people—a fight waged in every corner of the earth by the world Communist movement.

World-Wide Fight

In his report on August 11, Comrade Pyazetski of the Communist fraction in the International Red Aid, to which the International Labor Defense in this country, headed by the Negro leader, William L. Patterson, is affiliated, also stressed the world-wide fight for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and the growing solidarity that is being forged under Communist leadership between the Negro and white masses in the United States, South Africa and other countries.

Ercoli, leader of the heroic underground Communist Party of Italy, sounded the call at the Congress for a world-wide struggle against war and fascism, for the military defeat of the armies of fascist Italy in Ethiopia. The numerous revolts of Italian soldiers and peasants attest to the effectiveness with which the Italian party is pushing its objective to convert the war into a civil war for the overthrow of the bloody fascist dictatorship, for the freedom of the

Italian and Ethiopian peoples.

On August 3, Pravda, organ of the mighty Communist Party of the Soviet Union, pointed out the connection between the struggle for peace and the defense of Ethiopia and other small nations, denouncing at the same time the chauvinist race hatred propaganda of the fascist war-mongers.

"Fighting for peace means defending the national independence of small nations. Fighting for peace means serving the vital interests of mankind, defending culture from fascist barbarity and the convulsions of war. Fighting for peace means fighting for proletarian internationalism against national and racial differences—the vile weapon of fascism.

"For peace and for Socialism, against fascism and war."

Facts Accessible

These facts were easily accessible to the editor of the Pittsburgh Crusader. They clearly show that the Seventh Congress not only did not dodge the Negro issue, as the Crusader charges, but gave the greatest emphasis to the united fight in defense of Ethiopia, for the national liberation of the Negro

peoples of this country and Africa. It is clear that the capitalist press slanders against the Communist International and the Soviet Union are directed toward disrupting that united front struggle, a struggle supported, we are glad to note, by the Crusader.

With the statement of the Crusader that an explanation is in order we are in complete agreement, but that explanation is due not from the Communist Party of the U. S. A. or from the Communist International, of which it is the American section. The explanation is due from the Crusader. Certainly neither the C. I. nor the American Communist Party is responsible for the fact that the editor of the Crusader based his charges on the prejudiced, garbled and incomplete reports on the Congress appearing in the capitalist press. The editor of the Crusader is under the self-imposed obligation of explaining to his readers why he gave substance to these lying reports which have as their purpose the disruption of the united fight for peace, for the defense of the Soviet Union and the Ethiopian people.