

Haywood:

I want to say that I am fully in agreement with the reports of Comrades Weinstone and Browder. I want to specifically deal with the question of our Negro work. There is no doubt about the fact that the Party has made tremendous progress in this field of work since the last Plenum. We have extended our influence over thousands

of Negro toilers. On the Scottsboro issue. We succeeded in involving thousands of Negro and white toilers in the struggle for Negro rights. In the Camp Hill struggle we began organisation of the share-croppers in the South. In Chicago we successfully linked up the struggle against eviction with the struggle for Negro rights. We succeeded in involving 6,000 Negro miners, 20% of the workers involved in the miners' strike. This is the largest number of Negro workers ever involved in organised action under the leadership of our Party and the revolutionary trade union movement.

The Party has made great strides in carrying out the turn in Negro work called for by the Comintern resolution. The Scottsboro case is of tremendous historic importance in the development of the labour movement in the United States. We have had hundreds of such cases, as Comrade Stachel correctly said, but they were not considered problems of the labour movement. Remnants of this social-democratic viewpoint were in our Party also. The taking up of this case energetically by the Party marked the death of this Menshevik theory and for the first time demonstrated in practice what was before theory in theory — that the struggle of the Negro masses was part and parcel of the struggle of the American working class.

Shortly before the last Plenum of the ECCI, two important articles appeared in the *Imprecorr* by Comrade Kuusinen, calling for an examination of the national programmes of the Communist Parties. Scottsboro affords us a great opportunity for checking up on the carrying out of our Negro programme. Our achievements are: 1) The Scottsboro case demonstrated before the masses of toilers the connection between the struggles of Negro peoples and the class struggle of the American working class; 2) it strengthened working class solidarity and was a great step forward in the international education of the American working class. 3) Sharpened class ~~struggles~~ among the Negroes and laid a firmer basis for revolutionary hegemony in the struggles of the Negroes. The impact of the joint struggle of the Negroes and whites around Scottsboro have hastened the departure of the Negro bourgeois reformist to the camp of the imperialist bourgeoisie. 4) It broke the ground for successful work in our organisations among the Negroes.

It contributed greatly to successes we had in Chicago and other places on the unemployment question in the miners' struggle we were able to utilise Scottsboro campaign in drawing Negro workers into the strike and into our Unions.

The negative side of the campaign. While taking note of these positive achievements, we must recognise serious mistakes and Right wing errors in this campaign. First, the campaign was too narrow and not sufficiently linked up with the basic demands of the Negro masses. This was so particularly in the first stages of the campaign. It was confined almost solely to a question of release of the boys, a defence case, and our national programme on the Negro question — struggle for land and right of self-determination was not brought forward sharply enough. Then, again in several districts there was a united front from above with Negro reformists, as is mentioned in the resolution. The crassest example of this is what happened in Cincinnati, where our comrades approach-

ed the Methodist Negro preachers on the Scottsboro campaign. They refused to participate so we turned to the Baptist preachers and were also rejected.

Our attitude towards the Negro press -- in a number of articles in the Daily Worker and the Liberator we made no class distinction at all between the various Negro press, e.g. headlines such as "Negro press lines up with our campaign". Another indication is the attitude towards Pickens. This mass movement we were able to organise around the Scottsboro issue brought about a sharp division in the ranks of the Negro organisations. Through our campaign we were able to develop an opposition against the top leadership of NAACP and other reformist organisations.

Pickens placed himself at the head of this opposition in order to head it. First he made a formal endorsement of our campaign. We printed this letter in the Daily Worker with practically no criticism, under the following caption: "Pickens Joins The Struggle." This, despite the fact that we know already beforehand of the treacherous role of Pickens in the liberation struggles of the Negroes. We know that Pickens, together with Rodgers Baldwin and others led the opposition in the II Congress of the League for Struggle Against Imperialism at Frankfurt on Main against the Negro resolution of this conference and objected to the point in the resolution that called for immediate evacuation of the colonies by the imperialist armed forces because it would "not be good for the Negroes in the colonies". Despite this and other betrayals we printed the statement without criticism.

Now, comrades, Pickens role in my estimation, which is clear in the light of subsequent events, was to place himself at the head of the opposition against the top leaders and through Left phrases to turn this opposition from our movement and direct it back again under the leadership of these reformist misleaders. That was the role. We helped him to a considerable extent.

In the course of the development of the campaign, many of these mistakes were partially overcome. But it is necessary for us to analyse the causes of these mistakes and I believe the discussion has not sufficiently done this. What are the causes of these mistakes? In my opinion they flow from an under-estimation of the role of the Negro reformism on the part of some of our comrades, based in turn on an under-estimation of the class differences among the Negroes, leading to a following in the tail of Negro reformism. The crassest example of this was shown in two articles that recently appeared by Comrade Amis, an editorial in the Liberator, where we call on the editors of the Negro press to take up more seriously the struggle on the Scottsboro issue. The editorial reads:

"To the Editors of the Negro press.

"I desire to draw to your attention the urgent necessity of using the full power of the Negro press to rally the persecuted and oppressed masses of our people to stubbornly resist the increasing waves of terror of the white ruling class and their lackeys."

Then another quotation from some article:

"Certain editors of the Negro press have taken a bold and courageous stand in denouncing the consistent persecution of our people. Others are vacillating and are not following a **PERSISTENT POLICY THAT WILL WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE NEGRO MASSES**. Still others are cold and luke warm **AS IF THEY ARE NOT CONCERNED IN OUR STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY** (my emphasis).

This, comrades, is absolutely a classless editorial. It considers the Negro people as a unified whole without class differentiations. It would appear that Comrade Amis considers these Negro reformists, as still having revolutionary potentialities! Comrade Amis indulged in self-criticism on his article and I agree with that criticism, but what he failed to explain is now it could happen that such an article could be written especially at the present stage of our campaign, in view of our experiences with the Negro bourgeoisie, as represented in the "Pittsburgh Courier", in the "New York Age" and other papers. It is clear that Negro bourgeoisie have deserted the liberation struggle of the Negroes. In their paper they are launching attacks on the Communist Party, upon our Scottsboro activities, which vie in viciousness with articles of the Southern ruling class press. And in spite of this we make such a plea to them. How can this be explained?

Before I go further into the criticism here, I want to cite another article by Comrade Minor: (July Communist, "The Negro and his Judases"). In this article Comrade Minor undoubtedly intended to analyse Negro reformism in connection with the Scottsboro case. After a careful reading of this article, one could come to the conclusion, that the Negro reformist betrayed the masses, in the Scottsboro frame-up NOT because of their own specific class interests (which in view of the mass movement coincides at present with the interests of American imperialism) but because the Negro reformists are a bunch of treacherous scoundrels!!! Of course this is not a class analysis. It is clear that Comrade Minor conceives the Negro reformists as merely petty-bourgeois hangers on of American imperialism. He does not realise that in the betrayal of the Negro masses they are not alone serving the interest of American imperialism but their own class interests as well.

Comrade Minor's article shows a complete lack of understanding of the position of the Negro bourgeoisie. Of course the Negro bourgeoisie is not an industrial bourgeoisie it is weak and parasitic, and easily susceptible to corruption by imperialism.

The Negro bourgeoisie is connected with segregation, its interest is fundamentally bound up with the preservation of Jim Crow districts of the cities, as a necessary basis of its existence -- its market. But it has industrial aspirations. It wants to develop a sort of segregated economy in the Negro ghettos in which it would have a larger share in the exploitation of Negro toilers.

This segregational interest of the Negro bourgeoisie coincides with the interest of American imperialism. But its interest is developing its own market conflicts with the interest of imperialist monopoly! This contradiction is the basis of its reformist opposition to imperialism. However, the joint mass movement of Negro and white workers (Scottsboro) threatens its segregated market and drives it into reactionary imperialist camp and against the Negro masses.



Because the contradiction between it and the Negro masses is more fundamental, than that between it and the imperialist bourgeoisie.

This is why the Negro bourgeois reformists could not act in any other way but as they are acting in the Scottsboro issue. And this is the point that is not sufficiently understood by our comrades. This is the reason we find such expressions in Comrade Miner's article as the following:

"The NAACP was unable even to conceive of such a thing as the great, the profound and historic social significance of the case!!

Presuming undoubtedly that if they had they would have acted differently. On the contrary, I think that they were fully aware of the social significance of the case and they could not have acted in any other way. On the contrary, the Negro reformists are fully aware of the significance of this case and they could not have acted in any other way. Not understanding the class role of the Negro bourgeoisie and considered them just as a sort of petty-bourgeois adjunct of the American imperialism, it is quite natural that Comrade Minor is amazed at their attitude in this case. Here for instance, we have another quotation in the same article, which says, as follows: "It seems AMAZING that a supposed leader of Negro people could sink so low as to disporage the necessity course of history in even the abolition of slavery." (Emphasis mine).

Comrades, I think that we cannot call these mistakes, this is already an indication of a line, and just as I said before, this line is based upon under-estimation to see class divisions of degree of class differentiations among Negroes and consequently the under-estimation of the role of the Negro reformism leading to lagging in the tail of bourgeois reformism. If persisted in, it would lead to seriously hampering the development of proletarian hegemony and the Party's leadership in Negro liberation struggles.

Therefore, I think it is necessary to sharpen the point in the resolution on Right tendencies in the Scottsboro campaign we must include the under-estimation of the role of Negro reformism as the basis of many Right mistakes made in our Scottsboro campaign.

The under-estimation of the role of Negro reformism is a real Right danger in the Negro question. In conclusion, a great deal of these mistakes in the Scottsboro case can be attributed to the fact that we have no functioning Negro department in the Centre. The resolution correctly calls for a fight against the bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is also shown in our Negro work despite the tremendous activities among Negroes which our Party has carried on recently. The Negro Department has not functioned. In the last 4 months, it has met twice. It does not function as a department, its members are not drawn in the formation of policies for the Political Bureau, the Negro question it has degenerated into a one man's department. This must be overcome, the department must be made to function and under the direction of the Central Committee developed as a real directing and guiding centre for our work among the Negroes.

A couple of words in relation to the trade union work among the Negroes. We are just making our first real beginning in our trade union work, in the miners' strike. 6,000 Negro miners participated

in that strike. The greatest solidarity displayed between the Negro and white workers in the strike, the Negroes participated actively on all strike committees, on the picket line, the relief committees and in all other phases of strike and union activity, constituting a large section of the leadership in that strike.

We now are trying to place our work among the Negro miners, upon a real organised basis. We have formed Negro departments in the National Miners' Union, developed a programme of work which calls for the setting up of committees for work among the Negro miners. Every local of the Union will have the job of preparing this question for the corresponding union executive, the concretisation to the demands of the Negro miners, and third, the politicalisation of the economic struggles of the Negro miners, the fight against chauvinism, etc. It is necessary at the present time, to carry this programme into life, set up Negro committees. In connection with this we must also stabilise our Negro Department of the TUUL centre. We must see that this Negro Department actually functions, we have partially worked out a National programme, of course this programme was general, it is necessary to further concretise the programme on the basis of recent experiences and carry it into life. Comrades, just one word upon the question of the South and I will be finished. I didn't quite understand Comrade Amis' polemic here yesterday about the perspective of insurrection in the South. It seems to me quite clear that we should have the perspective of a big and sharp struggle in the South, uprisings of the Negro toilers in the black belt. We must have this as an immediate perspective in view of the deepening cotton crisis.

We all know about how frantic the bourgeoisie is in relation to the cotton crisis. The proposals of the farm board to systematically destroy 1/3 of cotton crop. The meaning of the vicious terror carried on at the present time, is an attempt to head off this movement of the Negro toilers. Therefore we must strengthen our work in the South, send in more forces, and be prepared for these struggles, and not losing sight of the fact pointed out in the last resolution of the CI, namely, that Negro rebellions in the South is not dependent upon the maturing of a revolutionary situation in the country as a whole.