

The Trade Unity Convention and the Negro Masses

By GEORGE PADMORE.

The forthcoming Trade Union Trade Union Educational League of Unity Convention sponsored by the America, to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, August 31st to September 2nd, will mark a turning point in the history of the labor movement of America, and will be a tremendous step forward in the struggle for the emancipation of the working class.

Among those terribly exploited slaves of capitalism are millions of Negro workers. These black toilers, most of whom are still in the South, where industrialization is rapidly taking place, are the victims of the most brutal aspects of the present social order.

They are not only exposed to the exploitation of the bosses, but are the targets of the most vicious attacks of race prejudice which assumes the form of police terrorism, lynching, jim-crowism, segregation, disfranchisement and peonage.

A. F. of L. Enemy of Negroes.

To these evils has been added the open betrayal of organized labor under the influence of the American Federation of Labor. Despite its declaration of non-discrimination, the Federation pursues a conscious policy of jim-crowism in the unions. Again, the A. F. of L. has never made a serious attempt to organize the Negroes, but has done everything possible to impede and hamper the development and growth of unionism among Negroes. A classic example is the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. When these men expressed by an almost unanimous vote to go on strike, William Green, President of the A. F. of L., himself sabotaged the strike by refusing to grant the organization a national charter. After months of filibustering, he, and the Negro traitor, A. Philip Randolph, former member of the socialist party, purged the organization of all its militant members as a guarantee that the rank and file would not take the situation in its own hands. This act of Randolph so pleased Green and Woll that in "appreciation" they granted the Brotherhood a local instead of a national charter. The whole history of the A. F. of L. shows that these bureaucrats have one use for Negro workers.

Left Wing; Champion of Negroes.

In view of the present situation the Negro workers who have become a factor in industry since the war and are destined to play a strategic role in the south will find it necessary to turn to the left wing of the labor movement for leadership. These leaders, unlike the A. F. of L. traitors, are the only ones who expose the corrupt policies of those who call themselves champions of the working class, like the socialists and the Musties, who behind high sounding phrases are doing everything in their power to enable men like Green, Woll, and John L. Lewis to continue to mislead the workers. These Musties are arch-hypocrites.

They simply play with "left" phrases in order to cover up their dirty deeds.

The brazen betrayal of the textile and rayon strikers in Elizabethton, Tennessee, under the Mustie-A. F. of L. leadership of McGrady and Hoffman, will go down in the history of American labor as one of the most treacherous acts of surrender. The Negro workers must learn to draw lessons from these events, and be aware of these fellows, for if they could betray the white workers so openly, one can easily imagine what attitude they will assume towards the Negroes.

The left unions led by the Trade Union Educational League not only fight for the admission of Negro workers into the existing unions, but also advocate full equality for Negro as well as white. They demand equal pay for equal work for the Negro. They demand the right of Negroes holding office in the unions, thereby helping to shape the policies of the organizations and

protecting the rights of the Negro members. They fight against separate unions for Negro and white, realizing that this jim-crowism policy pursued by the A. F. of L. weakens the united front of the working class.

The sincerity of this left wing leadership has already been tested. For example, when the new left wing industrial unions were organized they immediately put into effect what they advocate, by electing a Negro miner, William Boyce, as vice-president of the National Miners Union, which has taken the place of the defunct United Mine Workers Union of America. This is not an isolated case. In the needle trade industry we have two Negroes, Henry Rosemond and Virginia Allen, members of the General Executive Board of the newly organized Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union. In the South that stinks of race prejudice, the left wing controlled National Textile Workers Union raising the slogan of equality

in the union for Negro and white alike. As against this policy we find the United Textile Workers Union controlled by the A. F. of L. and the socialists, openly refused to admit the Negro textile workers. Both Green and McGrady have publicly promised the white business men of Dixie not to raise the question of organizing the Negroes for fear that it would offend the southern ruling class who look upon the Negro, even more so than the poor whites, as their special property to be exploited without interference.

In every A. F. of L. union where the left wingers have dared to raise their voices in protest against the policy of racial discrimination, they have been expelled as "Reds" "Nigger lovers." It is important that the Negro workers note this; for expulsion for advocating equality and fair play for the Negro workers is one of the best testimonies of the sincerity and militancy of the left wing leadership.

In view of this situation, it is little wonder that the American workers are today finding their standard of living getting worse and worse.

The Cleveland Convention pledges itself to take steps to fight against this shameful state of affairs, and calls upon all the workers, especially the Negroes, the most oppressed section of the working class to join in creating new unions and a Trade Union Center, under a genuine revolutionary and fighting left wing leadership.

In the struggles of the working class there will be several obstacles to overcome, especially on the part of the Negroes. On the one hand, they will have to unite with the class conscious white workers to wage a merciless fight against white chauvinism, remnants of which will try to assert itself even in the left wing unions; and on the other hand, the treacherous, sycophantic role of the petty-bourgeois, "Uncle Tom" Negroes who will attempt to discourage the colored workers from joining in the solidarity with the left wing trade unionists.

These Negro lickspittles are to be found largely in the ranks of preachers who prey upon the toil of the workers in return for doses of religious bunk about "pie in the sky by and by"; republican and democratic politicians, lawyers and newspaper editors, who with hat in hand are never tired selling their race to the political bosses in return for small favors; college professors and other so-called "high-brow" Negroes, who barter and compromise the fundamental political and social rights of the Negro masses to the white capitalist oppressors in order that they might maintain their servile middle-class position in society.

Negro workers must begin to expose these Judases, and fight against their leadership as resolutely as we will have to do against the A. F. of L., the Musties, the socialists and other labor fakers. Our

The National Guard

BY JOHN STEELE

As the class struggle sharpens the National Guard together with all of the armed forces of the capitalist class will play an ever increasing role.

Due to the fact that in the past the National Guard has seldom proven a trustworthy (for the capitalists) weapon and has refused to turn its guns upon the workers as in New Bedford and in Gastonia, the military czars are making strenuous efforts to convert the Guard into a more reliable machine of suppression.

They do this by bringing economic pressure to bear upon the individual members of the guard forcing the most exploited sections of the working youth out and filling their places with petti-bourgeoisie students and workers from the ranks of the labor aristocracy who have a few dollars pocket money and are able to buy tailor-made uniforms and otherwise meet the outrageous demands put upon their pocket books by the officers.

From time to time the Daily Worker has published accounts of such robberies where the Guardsmen are being deprived of their pay as guardsmen and often a portion of their earnings as workers.

The Communist Party has a tremendous role to play in exposing these robberies and organizing the guardsmen against them.

This must be done by a careful and systematic study of the conditions in the different units and using them as an approach to the men to lead up to political demands.

Many splendid leaflets have been issued by the New York District to the guard units leaving for camp and returning.

So effective have been these units that one fat paunched captain, frothing at the mouth whined, "These God damned things make my men discontented and hard to manage."

Such an approach antagonizes the average soldier, for it must be borne in mind that these men would not be in the guard if they did not have an excessive dose of that poison called patriotism.

Our approach must be upon the specific troubles of the individual battery or company and progress from this to an explanation of what the Soviet Union is and a call for its defense.

Especially applicable are excerpts on the Red army and the fact that factories sponsor the regiments and that the factory workers are the members of the regiments.

These things are understandable to the average soldier while DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION is a dash of cold water upon a sleeping mind, and only rouses antagonism against not only the Soviet Union but the Communist Party which is after all the Guardman's only friend.

When the proper approach is made to the National Guardsman it is a very easy matter to find recruits for the league or party and to completely demoralize the organization and we MUST GUARANTEE THAT THE NATIONAL GUARD KNOWS WHICH DIRECTION TO TURN ITS GUNS.