Earl Browder Replies

YOUR October issue carried, as a special article, “An Open Letter to Earl Browder,” by Mr. George Padmore. Allow me to thank you for your letter agreeing to publish a reply in your December issue. This reply is an unpleasant duty, for I would much prefer to write a constructive article upon how we might be working jointly to establish Negro rights and to defend Ethiopia.

First of all, may I inquire why Mr. Padmore’s letter was held for 18 months, and only published now? Was it because your journal was also publishing the editorial, “Soviet Russia Aids Italy,” and were afraid that this attack needed reinforcement from some self-styled “Communist” source? Or did you need to slander the Soviet Union in order to back up Padmore’s “Open Letter?”

Now for Mr. Padmore’s points: Padmore, when a member of the C.P.U.S.A., accepted an appointment as secretary to the Negro Trade Union Committee, but later turned against its policies. When, as a result, he was removed, he declared this was a “liquidation” of the Committee. This is clearly a case of “delusion of grandeur,” for it was only Padmore who was “liquidated.” The Committee has continued its work, and more fruitfully than under Padmore’s administration. Its organ, the Negro Worker, is still being published. The Crisis surely receives it regularly.

The central issue upon which Mr. Padmore parted company with the Communists, was his acceptance of the Japanese Imperialist propaganda that the Mikado is the guardian of the “darker races,” that his conquest of Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, and North China (all “darker races”) are “for their own good,” and that the road to liberation of the Negroes lies through race war of these “darker races” against the whites. This policy is tenable only from the viewpoint of the landowners the bourgeoisie of the “darker races,” but not from the viewpoint of the interests of the masses, the workers, farmers, and other toilers. Our explanation of this, to those whom Padmore was trying to lead into the same swamp, is what he describes as “slanders and lies,” but he carefully avoids this central issue. In his “Open Letter” he hides his political opinions, while himself slandering all those who had made him important enough to be able to write his letter at all. Mr. Padmore even refused to discuss these questions with the Negro Trade Union Committee, yet he now has the effrontery to talk about being denied “his day in court. He tries to make his removal a question of “white against Negro,” but hides the fact that he was appointed and removed by Negro comrades. His predecessor as Secretary of the Trade Union Committee was James W. Ford, who later was Communist candidate for vice-president of the United States, and is now one of the most prominent leaders of the C.P.U.S.A.

His successor was Otto Huiswood, long known in the United States and for the last few years working in Europe. These, with other members of the Committee, such as Harry Haywood, now in Chicago, and Wm. L. Patterson, secretary of the International Labor Defense for some years until illness forced his retirement for a while from active work, were the men who condemned and removed Padmore from his position.

Mr. Padmore resisted his removal. When he failed, and began to publicly attack his former associates, many of them, who had been previously helping him smuggle “The Negro Worker” into Africa, suddenly and unaccountably fell into the hands of the police. I have no means of knowing if Mr. Padmore was conscious of the consequences of his acts, but there is not the slightest doubt that this was caused, if not by Padmore directly, by his new associates to whom he made available his knowledge.

Mr. Padmore threatens “to take legal action” to defend himself. His letter was written 18 months ago, but he has not followed up his threat. Instead he has remained in France, with his new found friends, firing his guns from the safe fortress of the Parisian cafes. His letter would never have merited an answer, except that for some unexplained reason, you dug it out of your files as a weapon to attack the Soviet Union and the Communists at the moment when we are exerting all energies to build a mass movement in defense of Ethiopia against a bestial fascist assault.

Would it not be better if, instead of attacking us, you would combine forces with us in fighting for Negro rights, for Angelo Herndon and the Scottsboro boys, and for the defense of Ethiopia? We would welcome co-operation with you for these things, in place of having to answer your attacks, which is indeed an unpleasant duty. 

Earl Browder

- Buy N.A.A.C.P. Christmas Seals -

Ethiopia

(Continued from page 361)

boring 2,000 refugees from India who had escaped from Indian prisons, where they had been placed by the British for working for the independence of India.

In spite of the hypocrisy of Great Britain, however, nations will have to find a technique by which to deal with unemployment for nations, and in the present situation, it is essential that fascism, which inevitably leads to war, should be defeated. But a technique which depends on military action is as dangerous as fascism itself. A war to make the world safe for democracy brought at its end a world in which democracy was left dying and fascism arising. A war to end militarism brought more militarism than the world had ever known. And therefore a war to end fascism might be the very means of giving it greater strength.

The prevention of war depends not only on finding non-military techniques of coercion, but also, and primarily, on definite economic adjustments throughout the world. Otherwise, the action of the League in the present situation, and in future crises, will be merely an effort to perpetuate the status quo. The best protection for the Ethiopias and Manchurias of the world would be to take the necessary steps to make these adjustments, while at the same time standing firmly for the complete independence of Ethiopia against any possible imperialist solution.

Universities

(Continued from page 370)

without a single unpleasant incident. White students sit on either side of him. He receives like any other student. He minds his business; they mind theirs.

If the South will look at the question calmly it should see that there is no reason why the experience of the school law of the University of Maryland with Murray could not be duplicated in every state university below the Mason-Dixon line. Negros want better education so that they may lead fuller lives and become better citizens. They are not interested in settling old grudges but in building a new America of real democracy of opportunity for all.

I Saw . . . .

By FANIA KRUGER

What is it strikes and tears my heart
Like a beetle caught within a mesh?
I saw a Negro lynched . . . I saw . . .
On crimson ground his bits of flesh . . .