

# Reformists Main Enemy Within Ranks of Negro People

## NOWELL CRITICIZES HIMSELF FOR VIEWS HE FORMERLY HELD

### Admits His Mistakes Had Basis in Hangover from Petty Bourgeois Ideology—Scores Imperialist Theories of Renegade Padmore

At the 8th Convention of the Party Comrade William Nowell was found to be pursuing a petty bourgeois nationalist line in his work in the Detroit District. He had also gone to the extent of carrying on factional methods in his work.

The Negro Commission of the Convention severely criticized Comrade Nowell and he admitted his mistakes and tendencies. The Convention decided that Comrade Nowell should be removed from all leading work and to prove by practical work his overcoming of these mistakes.

The following article shows that Comrade Nowell is making a successful effort to overcome his mistakes.

By William Nowell

The 8th Convention of the Communist Party marked another historical advance in the clarification and execution of the revolutionary farthest-Leninist policy and program, and in the all-round consolidation and preparation of the Party or leadership in the big impending and developing struggles of the American workers, farmers and Negro People against the program of unger, fascism, and war of the American imperialist Roosevelt "New Deal," and towards Soviet power.

The convention marked not only a historic conquest for the Party in the clarification and consolidation of the Party and the revolutionary movement on questions and problems of general policy, but also, and especially, in clarifying the program and policy of national liberation for the Negro People.

The analyses in the reports, and the characterization by the C.C. of the Party of the rapid spread of white chauvinism among the white workers by the white ruling class, and the simultaneous spread of Negro nationalism and utopian reformist schemes and deceptions among the Negro workers by the Negro reformist agents of the capitalist class; their intensification, mutual connection and common purpose as counter measures designed to divide the struggle of the Negro and white workers into a struggle between races, following upon the increased activity of the Party among the masses; and hence the necessity of conducting a consistent struggle against both these ideas and practices, both within and outside the Party, found their verification in varying degrees of deviations from the Party line on the Negro question, against which the C. C. levelled a scathing criticism, warning of the danger of lowering the ideological and political barriers of the Party to these poisonous influences and practices of the ruling class.

#### The Renegade Padmore

In this connection the convention dealt concretely with two outstanding deviations from the line of the Party: one being my own deviation towards petty bourgeois Negro nationalism, and factionalism, which

it became clear to me in the course of the discussions in the convention, was serving only to aid the enemies of the Party, by undermining the morale, particularly of the younger Negro comrades in the Party, in their struggle against Negro reformism and the Negro reformists.

The other case dealt with was the role of the renegade from Communism, George Padmore, who prior to the convention, blatantly repudiated the line and program of the Party and the C.I. on the Negro and colonial question and went over "body and soul" into the camp of the Negro reformist agents of imperialism, who have been correctly characterized by the C. C. as the "main enemy within the ranks of the Negro People," and "the chief social support of imperialist Jim-crow reaction among the Negro masses." (Haywood's Report.)

#### Reformist Schemes

Padmore, who consistently pursued his petty bourgeois reformist schemes and deceptions into the ranks of the enemies of the working class and the Negro People, had already become the agent of Negro reformism within the ranks of the Communist Party. The logic of the class struggle and his pursuit of his erroneous views led him out of the Party.

The difference between my own deviation and the advanced role and betrayal of Padmore is one of degree rather than kind, as is the case with all departures from Marxism-Leninism, ultimately, and have their basis in the hangovers of petty bourgeois ideology.

The 8th Convention and subsequent clarifications and activities in the Detroit district have aided me tremendously, I feel, in changing my orientation and correcting my erroneous views, through directing the energies of the Party and consequently myself, outwardly in the struggle against Negro reformist misleadership and against the imperialists themselves.

The correctness of the line of the Party, was strikingly manifested and verified in the convention itself, in the increased representation of new Negro workers from the heavy industries and from remote sections of the country.

#### Negro Reactionary Groups

Negro reformism is influenced by the rise of the Japanese movement, "the Development of Our Own," with its program of "all dark races against all white," it expresses itself by the establishment of the Republican First Congressional Organization of Detroit, headed by Charles Roxborough, notorious Negro Republican reformist demagogue, red-baiting misleader of the Negro People; both of which are the direct opposite of the revolutionary class struggle program and policy of the Communist Party, of the unity and struggle of the workers and the toiling and oppressed of all races and nationalities against their common oppressors and robbers, of which the Republican lynch party of Hoover fame of the American

ruling class, and the Japanese imperialist butchers and robbers of the Japanese, Formosan and Korean workers and farmers are outstanding examples.

The Japanese idea was used to mobilize the Negro masses by a fraction of the Negro Jim-crow wing of the Republican Party and to sell them unsuspectingly into the Republican Party machine. In return for their services the representatives of the Japanese fraud, Mr. and Mrs. Takahashi, were amply paid for their services; and the politicians themselves are rewarded with handouts, the right to sell jobs, create systems of stool pigeons to spy on the Communist Party and the revolutionary organizations, powers of "fixer" and "go-between" the Negro racketeers and the prosecutor's office and the courts, and to carry out shake-downs. They were given a monopoly over the policy racket, bootlegging, prostitution and vice in general.

#### Fascist Auxiliary

Such practices and methods and organization form an important part of the creation of a fascist auxiliary apparatus among the Negro People which, when the race prejudice they spread, the sweet phrases and bribery fail, and in proportion as they fail to halt the leftward swing and the struggle and growing unity of Negro and white workers against starvation and robbery, police terror, frame-ups and lynching of the Negro People, come more and more openly as the direct aid and instigator of the bloody Hitler fascist slaughter of the Negro masses and the working class.

The method of misleading the Negro workers by subtle deception, the use of sweet and radical phrases, and at the same time carrying out the policy and program and developing movements of the most reactionary character, of downright betrayal and misleadership, has been carried to its highest point in the activities of Sweet and Roxborough of the Roxborough political machine.

In the period elapsing since the Eighth Convention of the Party, the Party in the Detroit district has made rapid strides forward in the field of Negro work, as well as the work of the Party in general; first, in the clarification of all erroneous views on the Negro question among the Party membership and the workers' organizations, the rooting out of pessimism, doubt, and underestimation of the possibility and necessity of developing joint struggles of Negro and white workers, and a mass movement among the Negro people for Negro rights; in bringing forward and consolidating new cadres of Negro and white comrades, the establishment of the L.S.N.R. and the penetration and development of activities within the Japanese movement, particularly in exposing the role of the reformist politicians and the sell-out of the leadership of the Japanese movement to the Negro Republican politicians in the last elections.

#### Critical Approval

However, the very fact of this critical approach to Negro work, and the intensification of the struggle for Negro rights around the needs and grievances of the Negro masses for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and Angelo Herndon, etc., has laid bare the major weaknesses of the work in the hangovers and development of petty bourgeois Negro nationalism, hooliganism, moral and political degeneration and irresponsible practices; and moreover, has exposed these irresponsible individuals of whom such practices are characteristic.

The Party in clarifying and consolidating its forces for its further activity in the field on Negro work

in our district has encountered the stiffened resistance and activities of Negro reformism, not only of the openly reactionary brand but also, and especially, the subtle, elusive, demagogic kind, which in the period preceding the Eighth Convention of the Party when the front of the Party in the struggle against Negro reformism was weak, made and maintained its connections inside the Party and developed more and more openly in the petty bourgeois Negro reformist activities of Joseph Billups, who became the agent within the Communist Party for the Negro reformists of Detroit.

#### The Case of Billups

The District Committee of the Communist Party of Detroit has expelled Billups from its ranks for his verified political and personal association with and subservience to Negro reformist politicians of Detroit, acting as agent-advisor, supplying information about the Party plan, tactics, organization and leadership; and for his well-known general political and moral degeneration.

Under the guise of "personal friend" and "client" of Dr. Ossian H. Sweet, Billups served as agent for Roxborough-Sweet during the election campaign.

The history of the loose and irresponsible activities and moral degenerate practices of Billups, and the attempts of the Party to check his obvious trend is not new. The Negro and white comrades that have worked with Billups during the period he was in the Communist Party, constantly recognized in him strong petty bourgeois reformist political racketeering tendencies as well as obviously loose practices which the Party strove to help Billups overcome by giving him the possibility to get a working-class education, and by placing him among the Party leadership in our district under the guidance and with the help of the leading committee of the district, in an attempt to rid him of the influence of his past life, and to develop him into a leader of the Negro masses and the working class.

The Party ran Billups for govern-

### AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE OF SOLIDARITY



Thousands of Negro and white workers greeted Angelo Herndon on his release from prison on bail. Left to right: Charles Krumbain, Clarence Hathaway, Angelo Herndon, Ben Davis and Robert Minor.

nor of the State of Michigan, the first time in the history of the state or of the United States since the period of reconstruction that any political Party had run a Negro for governor; imposing in Billups the trust and responsibility of the Party towards the Negro masses and as a representative of the struggle for the rights and freedom of the Negro people.

#### Went Backward

Instead of improving, Billups went definitely backward, until the Party, two years ago, found it necessary to remove him from all responsible activity for his general political and moral looseness and for conduct unbecoming a Communist, giving him the possibility to correct himself in mass work.

Instead of proving his capability to be a Communist, and of representing the program of the Party and carrying out the struggle for Negro rights and in the general interest of the working class, Billups betrayed the trust of the Party by his open collaboration with Dr. Sweet and other Negro reformists on the Scottsboro Committee. It became clear to the Negro comrades on the committee that it was the activities of Billups in supplying information about the Party to these reformists, and particularly his slanders against white comrades on the committee that it aroused an obvious antagonism and provoked an open attack by one of the reformists against a white comrade active in Negro work, which made it necessary for the Party to again attempt to check Billups' surrender of the principle of unity and class struggle of Negro and white, and his obvious political association with Negro reformism.

#### Placed on Trial

In recent months the Party placed Billups on trial again as Section Organizer in the Negro section, which post he abused by financial hooliganism and irresponsibility, and above all by forming closer ties with Dr. Sweet and other Negro reformist politicians, and then by deserting the post without notifying the Party, becoming a "Communist" at large, self-appointed representative of

the Party and plenipotentiary, accepting funds (bribes) in the name of Communism in return for supplying information to and acting as representative for Dr. Sweet and consequently to Roxborough of the First Congressional Republican organization and the Republican Party, of which Roxborough is the Jim-crow Negro reformist chief, and Harry Toy, Wayne County prosecutor, is chief in Wayne County.

The Sweet "left" Negro reformist type is characteristic of the more subtle reformist demagogues of the capitalist class who mouth radical phrases and pose as "friends" of the Party, the revolutionary movement and the Negro workers; while at the same time their main object is to attempt to utilize the movement for their own ends, working through those politically degenerate elements of the type of Billups to accomplish their aim.

It was on the basis of the publicity that Dr. Sweet received through the workers' press and organizations during the time of the association with the Scottsboro Committee of Detroit, the information he received from Billups about the working of the movement and the radical phrases and front that he was able to put up as a consequence that he was run on the Republican ticket for State Senator in one of the biggest Negro districts by the Roxborough Jim-Crow wing of the Republican Party, in an attempt to check the leftward swing of the Negro workers, while the police of Harry Toy, prosecutor and candidate for Attorney General, beat, framed and jailed starving Negro workers and barred the C. P. and the L. S. N. R. from the streets in the Negro section.

#### Sweet's Position

Dr. Sweet has posed as a sympathizer of the C. P. and the revolutionary movement for some time. Here is a sample of his "sympathies": When a white and a Negro comrade known to Dr. Sweet attended a meeting of the First Congressional organization, at which Sweet spoke, calling on the Negro workers to war politically against

## STRUGGLE AGAINST WHITE CHAUVINISM IS URGED AS VITAL

### Battle Must Be Fought Along With Attack on Reformists

the white workers, directly supporting the reactionary program of the Japanese movement and making overtures to the organizations; and when the comrades attempted to ask questions they were promptly ordered to leave the meeting by the chairman after he had been called into conference by Dr. Sweet.

Therefore the extent of the betrayal and anti-Party, anti-working class activities of Billups can only be properly estimated and appreciated on the basis of the analysis of the activities, program and connections of the Negro national reformist wing of the Republican lynch party of Hoover fame, for which Billups had become representative within the Communist Party.

The Party, the Negro masses and the revolutionary movement would misjudge and underestimate the danger of the activities of Billups if we did not reason in the following manner, on the basis of Billups' known connections and activities; the copying of Party forms and methods of organization by the Negro politicians and the attempt to use these forms and methods against the Party by Roxborough and Sweet; the fascist terror drive against the Party in the Negro section, while Sweet and Roxborough activities were protected by the police, especially preceding the primaries and up to the elections, the ordering of Communists from Sweet's and Roxborough's meetings and the general activity of the politicians and their knowledge about the inner activities of the Party, that; the information given to Sweet, Roxborough-Toy and the Republican Party of Wayne County and the State, became the property of and the guide to the tactics and attacks of the Republican Party, the prosecutor's office and the police. Consequently the Party, the Negro masses and the revolutionary movement can only understand the activities of Billups as directly stool-pigeoning for the Republican politicians, and indirectly for the police. Such is the inevitable trend of political irresponsibility, degeneration and betrayal against which the Party, the Negro masses and the revolutionary movement must constantly be on guard.

#### Proved His Role

Billups has proved his role more conclusively since his expulsion from the Communist Party by carrying on a campaign of slanders against the Communist Party, directly aiding the enemies of the Party and the workers in their furious drive against Communism, headed by the yellow chain of filthy sheets of William Randolph Hearst.

Therefore, under the present conditions in our district when the Party is mobilizing and consolidating its forces against the bitter attacks of the enemies of the revolutionary movement, against the fascist attacks of American capitalism against the Negro people and the working class; the Hearsts, the Father Coughlins and the whole host of fascist "New Deal" reaction; when the Negro reformist misleaders and betrayers of the rights of the Negro people stand ready, with sweet words in their mouths but with dagger in hand, to stab and throw into the cauldron of Democratic and Republican fascist stew for the beasts of American capitalism every young revolutionary attempt of the Negro masses to struggle from under the yoke of robbery, hunger, discrimination and lynch rule, the activities of Billups and all like him become the main danger to the unity of the Party and the development of joint struggles of Negro and white workers for the rights of the Negro people and in the general interest of the working class, and must be fought as such.

It is, above all, the task of the Negro Communists to expose the treacherous role of Billups to the Negro masses as the reason why it becomes necessary in the interest of the struggle for Negro rights and the liberation of the Negro people and the working class, to cut out these roots of race against race theories and practices that have wormed their way into the Party, in order that the Party may consolidate itself for the accomplishment of one of its major tasks in the struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and Angelo Herndon, against discrimination, robbery and lynching of the Negro masses; for the unity of the Negro and white workers in the struggle for equal rights and self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt of the South.

The political degeneration of Billups is characteristic of the process going on before our very eyes in capitalist society, and particularly among the Negro reformist agents of the capitalist class, and is an exact reflection of the same: that is the union of all forms of vice, crime, disease, prostitution, policy racket, bootlegging, etc., and the vendors of the vices, into systems and organizations, making them legitimate businesses as a part of the spoils system of the capitalist political parties, the monopoly over which, in the Negro section especially, is the privilege given