

# CP's New Line Woos the Negroes

By GEORGE POST

The Communist Party is in the midst of making another "turn," or change of line, on the "Negro question," and once again the reasons for it are transparent. The reasons have nothing to do with the interests of the Negro people themselves.

In the present case the source of the new line is in the recent 20th Congress of the Russian party, not anything that happened in America; but as always, the CP works hard to convey the impression that it is a militant and consistent defender of Negro rights.

Such changes of line are inherent in the way all Communist Parties are organized and directed.

After the American CP was Stalinized in the 1930s, it adopted a fantastic program called "self-determination for the Negro People in the Black Belt" of the South. According to this notion, Southern Negroes were supposed to look forward to the creation of a separate Negro republic. It was all based on a mechanical parroting of Stalin's pronouncements on independence for national minorities.

This was a *reactionary* program, in point of reality, as compared with the real efforts of the Negro people, who were not fighting for separation from the nation but for *integration* into it. But it sounded militant.

This nonsense was put aside in the course of World War II. In the first part of the war, while the Hitler-Stalin Pact was in force, the Stalinists here were militantly "anti-war"; but when Russia shifted sides as a result of Hitler's attack, the CP found itself allied with the White House. Then, typically, the CP dropped all pretenses at militancy and went all-out to stop any kind of home struggle at all.

To the Negro, during this period, they counseled "moderation" and do-

nothing, since they were busy being war-patrioteers. They would not fight for FEPC, since this would be "divisive." They would not fight for anything (except a Second Front to help Russia) since any real fight for the people's interests would "hurt the war effort," they claimed.

It was the "March on Washington" movement led by A. Philip Randolph which compelled the government to head it off by granting FEPC; and the CP was reluctant to support the March on Washington.

## SELLOUT AGAIN

By 1945, when relations with Russia became hostile, the CP began to swing back to the "self-determination for the Black Belt" line. This idea was still a ghetto-policy, but any opposition to it was denounced as "Browderism."

Now the Communist Party is again in travail, for since the 20th Party Congress of the Russian dictators, it has been instructed to take a "soft" line—which, as before, means soft-pedaling any struggle.

As before, its only fixed aim is to influence the U. S. in the direction of the Kremlin's foreign policy. The leaders

in the Kremlin are talking "soft"—about agreements and deals and arrangements with its rival American imperialism. Whenever the Russians make a deal they sell out someone they were previously supporting—like all other imperialists and power-politics cynics.

## A PAWN FOR THE DEMOS

Now, just as the Negro struggle is reaching new heights, and just as the Democratic Party and its leaders are being put on the spot, unmercifully—the Communist Party is turning toward support precisely of the Democrats.

The CP has indicated clearly that it is getting ready to support virtually any Democratic Party presidential candidate, even if he runs on the program of "moderation" (so-called) on civil rights—that is, even if he is pledged not to support the Negro people's rights to end segregation.

The reason for the CP's election policy (published in the *Sunday Worker* on the 13th) is, it says, to "influence the direction of the Democratic Party." What they are basically concerned with is its foreign policy, only. For their purposes, the civil-rights issue is a *bargaining point*, a pawn to be traded.

"Give us what we want in a soft policy toward Moscow, and we will reciprocate by calling off the dogs on you"—this is how they think of their interest in the segregation issue, even while they talk militantly about it.

Of course, fortunately, the Communist Party no longer has any big influence to speak of among American Negroes. Let's keep it that way. The big thing is that the American Negroes are fighting, bravely and effectively. The Stalinists would only stand in their way.