

# THE NEGRO WORKER

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## Editorial Notes

### Soviets For Peace — Capitalists For War

For fifteen years the Soviet Government has struggled for peace. When the workers and peasants seized power in Russia in November 1917, their first act was to send over the radio a **message to the world, calling for peace**. The wireless stations of Europe, listening anxiously for war news from Russia heard this call — and promptly jammed the ether, so that the workers would not know what was going on.

On the following day the Soviet Government issued a series of decrees outlining its policy on all questions. The second of these decrees invited "all belligerent nations and their Governments to begin immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace. The only response from the Allies was cries of "Traitor" and curses for "deserting" the cause of mass slaughter.

Three weeks later the Soviet Government announced that it refused to continue "this unreasonable and pointless massacre" and proposed to open **peace negotiations with Germany**. Twice were these negotiations postponed to give the Allies an opportunity to join in. The only response was a more intense use of poison gas on the Western Front.

When peace between the Soviets and Germany was concluded, the Allies promptly broke off diplomatic relations and sent expeditionary forces into Russia. Through three years of intervention the Soviet Government took every excuse for proposing an end to the conflict, even going so far as to reply through its press to anonymous telegrams on the question.

But peace only came with the defeat of the Allies and their "White" puppets.

In 1921 the Soviet Government called a meeting of Baltic States to discuss a reduction of armaments, and offered to reduce the Red Army to 200,000 men (that is, to one quarter of its then size) within eighteen months, if the other Baltic powers would reduce their armies in proportion. This proposal was evaded, however, and the Conference broke up with a joint declaration that it would "fully support the principle of limitation of armaments". (Since then the Baltic powers have been supplied with more and more armaments by Britain and France under the pretence that they are needed against "Soviet aggression".)

In the following year the Soviet Union was invited to take part in a European conference at Genoa. At the first session of the Conference, Chicherin, head of the Soviet delegation, demanded that Disarmament be made the first item on the agenda. The reply of the Imperialists came through the mouth of Barthou, the French representative: "This question cannot be discussed. It has

been removed from the agenda of the Commission . . . I now categorically reply No!"

For five years thereafter the Soviet Union did everything to encourage normal friendly relations with its neighbours, particularly Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, and China. The unequal treaties of tsarist days had long ago been abolished by the Soviet power and replaced by just agreements. These agreements were revised and put into proper shape.

Then, in 1927, the Soviets were again invited to a European Conference, at Geneva to discuss disarmament. Litvinoff was the Soviet representative, and it was here he made his famous proposal; that the way to prevent wars was — simply to disarm! He showed how complete universal disarmament could — if



*Litvinoff, Commissary for Foreign Affairs of  
the Soviet Union*

the nations really desired it — be carried out within a period of four years, and offered that the Soviets would take the lead in carrying it out.

**Total universal scrapping of all forms of armaments was and remains the fundamental principle of the Soviet Union on the question of disarmament.**

On that occasion the proposal was rejected, amid the contempt of the capitalist statesmen and the sneers of reformist leaders.

Litvinoff thereupon outlined a new practical proposal for partial all-round disarmament. The imperialist statesmen hastily adjourned the session to prevent their hypocrisy being still further exposed.

Since then, the Soviet Union has taken the initiative in securing **non-aggression pacts** with several of its capitalist neighbours. Japan — significantly enough — refuses to sign such a pact. Why, Because she is now preparing to attack the Soviet Union on the Manchurian frontier.

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At the present disarmament conference in Geneva, Litvinoff has again put forward the demand for total all-round disarmament.

In addressing the Conference he said:

The Soviet Government, from the very first days of its existence, condemned war as an instrument of national policy . . . **Once war is excluded as an instrument of national policy the Soviet Government sees no need for maintaining armies and other armed forces . . .** The Soviet Delegation considers that we must endeavor to make war itself impossible since it is the people **who suffer**, both in the victorious and defeated countries, in fact as the last war has shown us, the people in all countries . . . (This is a very significant statement which every worker must understand. — Ed.)

. . . The sole aim of the Soviet Government is the building up of socialism on the territory of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union requires neither the increase of territory, nor interference in the affairs of other nations, to achieve its aim (of peaceful economic construction), and could therefore do without army, navy, military aviation and all other forms of armed forces. It does, however require the assurance that there will be no attempts against Soviet territory; it will only feel this assurance if other states also agree to give up their armed forces.

This statement of Foreign Commissar Litvinoff tells simply, boldly, without diplomatic tricks, that the Soviet Union wants peace, aims at no conquest of foreign territory, stands ready to abolish its army and navy, if the other powers do likewise.

The capitalist politicians knew that Litvinoff spoke in the name not only of the workers and peasants of the U. S. S. R. but of millions of toilers throughout the world. And still, only one country, Turkey, supported the Soviet proposal. After all, acceptance would mean a speedy end to the war in China, and the attempts of the Japanese, with the support of British, French, and American imperialisms to attack the Soviet Union.

The Negro workers in Africa, America, and the West Indies, who have been used as cannon-fodder in the last war must not let themselves be misled again. They must join with the workers of the rest of the world in supporting the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union in their struggle for peace.

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### French Rule In The Colonies.

The opinion is widespread among the Negro petty bourgeois intellectuals in the United States, as well as in the British African colonies, that the French imperialists treat "their" colonial peoples "better" than the American, British, Belgian, Japanese and other imperialists. They have the belief that the Negroes in the French colonies are all considered as "hundred percent" French citizens, and are not discriminated against. Therefore, much would be gained, if only Negroes could obtain everywhere the same "liberty" and "equality" as their brothers in the French colonies. This is one of the most dangerous illusions which the French imperialist propagandists have been able to "put over" the middle class Negroes who live under other imperialistic yokes.

It may be true, that African princes, sons of chiefs, and upper class Negroes studying in France, or visiting Paris are treated more politely than is by usual the custom in America or England. And it may also happen, that the French capitalists and militarists, in order to more effectively rob the African peasants of their land and mobilize them into the army as cannon-fodder, as in the last world war, occasionally appoint a black faced lackey, like the traitor Blaise Diagne, to an important position in the state apparatus. But it would be a

fatal error for the Negro workers in America or the West Indies to believe that these hypocritical gestures of the French imperialists, these little Parisian courtesies (which, by the way, is good propa<sup>g</sup>anda and better business for hotel managers and restaurant keepers) do not really mean a damn to the 56 millions of colonial toilers in Africa, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and other colonial lands, enslaved by French imperialism.

The Negro workers must understand, that the system of imperialism, — whether it disguises itself in "Stars and Stripes", the "Tricolore", the "Union Jack", the "Rising Sun", or any other symbol of oppression, — is everywhere crushing down with the same cruelty upon the colonial masses.

Elsewhere in this issue of the "Negro worker" we are pleased to publish an article on Madagascar, which will serve to expose the French imperialists who have not only stolen the island from the natives, but are treating them worse than slaves.

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### Darrow — Defender Of Lynch Law

Clarence Darrow, self styled "friend of the Negroes" and the idol of Negro middle class intellectuals like Dubois, Pickens and Walter White, is now in the Hawaiian islands actively engaged in helping four white American bourgeois lynchiers in "beating" the law.

At the age of 75, this much boosted "humanitarian" and "liberal", after pocketing the "trifling" sum of 2,000 dollars out of the lickspittle leaders of the N. A. A. C. P. under the lying pretext that he was in sympathy with the Scottsboro boys, stands openly exposed before the toiling masses, not only of America, but throughout the world, as a hypocrite, mountebank, and upholder of lynch law.

No sooner had Darrow pocketed the money subscribed out of the sweat and toil of Negro workers to defend nine black children who are today faced with the most bloody frame up in the history of American imperialism, he sailed away to the tropical isles to defend the very system of mob law that he was supposed to condemn in Alabama. It is a truism, that "you may fool some of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time".

And Darrow, like the other so-called white liberal "friends" of the Negro toiling masses, thanks to the sharpening of class lines in America, due to the economic crisis, are more and more exposing themselves for what they are — the vilest enemies of the Negro masses, the upholders of lynch law, and jim-crowism and the slanderers of colored men as "rapists".

There is no argument for the lynch-law system of the white oppressors that Darrow has overlooked. His first move was to obtain a typical Southern lynch-law jury — a jury from which all dark-skinned people would be barred. By peremptory challenges, he managed to keep off the jury most of the dark-skinned people. That he did not manage to get a completely "Nordic" jury-box is not Darrow's fault.

Darrow fought to inject into the trial the "rape" angle of the case — the usual lying charge of the Southern lynchiers against Negroes.

In order to justify this brutal, cold blood murder, Darrow tried to "prove" that the four aristocratic white lynchiers suffered from "temporary insanity". Some weeks ago, a white American bourgeois lawyer shot a Negro worker by the name of Willi Patterson through the bars of the jail in Birmingham, Alabama, in the presence of the prison officials and was later acquitted by an all white jury on the ground that he suffered from "temporary insanity".

The line of defense adopted in the Hawaiian case will be welcomed by the capitalists and landlords of the Southern States of America for it will afford

them freer scope in spreading mob law among the Negro workers and farmers, assured that as long as they are able to engage the services of a charlatan like Darrow, lily-white juries will be guaranteed and "temporary insanity" pleaded.

The present lynch-terror against native workers in Hawaii is following a course familiar to Negroes in the United States. Beginning with the lynching of Kahahawai, the capitalist press of the U. S. set in motion a series of vile slanders against the native Hawaiians, claiming that they are especially prone to "rape" — the usual fake excuse of the white exploiters to lynch Negro workers in America.

A special committee of the U. S. Senate was set up to "investigate" conditions in Hawaii. Their report and their recommendations are all in the direction of more iron rule to suppress the workers of the Pacific.

The white boss press is attempting to make of the events in Hawaii, a war of races. What these events actually show is the determined efforts of the American bosses to crush the native workers. The U. S. has an eye to preparation for a coming war, and Hawaii is the most powerful naval base that this country has in the Pacific. It is not accidental that war maneouvers have recently been in process there, and that the United States has now decided to concentrate its entire fleet in Pacific waters.

Darrow's appearance in Hawaii is aiding the Yankee imperialists in carrying through their plans. The Negro masses in America must not only repudiate Darrow, but must denounce the misleaders of the N. A. A. C. P., the bootlickers and servile worshippers of this unscrupulous Chicago lawyer.

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### Trouble In The West Indies

We have repeatedly pointed out in the columns of this journal, the terrible economic exploitation and imperialist policy of oppressive taxation imposed upon the workers and peasant masses in the Caribbees, and the burning necessity for the West Indian workers at home and abroad to wake up and take a more active part in the building up of an anti-imperialist movement which will alone enable them to meet the tyrants on an equal footing.

Elsewhere in this issue appears an appeal by the Editor of the "**Grenada West Indian**" which confirms the warning which we have always given to the West Indian workers. The "Negro Worker" is in profound sympathy with the toiling masses of Grenada, but we do not agree with the methods of meeting this imperialist offensive, as indicated by Mr. Marryshow.

We have absolutely no illusions about sending a delegation to the Colonial Office. We have seen too many of these useless excursions coming to London, not only from the West Indies, but from the African colonies. Not many weeks ago we happened to run across a group of these "loyal subjects of the King" from Trinidad. From all indication it appears that all that came out of this mission was, that two lawyers and a labour fakir — who for years played the role of lackey to such notorious Labour imperialists as MacDonald and Passfield — got a free trip across the Atlantic out of funds subscribed by a starving population.

It is high time that West Indians who pose as leaders stop this kow-towing business of sending memoranda, petitions, and deputations to England. It is no use kidding ourselves that we can at the same time fight our oppressors and beg them for favours. We must stop this "monkey" business of appealing from Cesar to Cesar. Furthermore, this kind of humbug merely creates much harm, for it helps to support the illusion which missionaries and other so-called friends of the colonial peoples try to foster among the masses that the Secretary of State is different to the bureaucrats on the spot. The truth is that such people

as Vans Best and Blood, the appointees of Downing Street, are only able to run amuck in Grenada, because they know damn well that they have the support, not only of that die-hard-red-neck Tory slave driver, Cunliffe Lister, but also such imperialist parasites, as Sir Samuel Wilson, the notorious ex-governor of Trinidad who is the real czar of the West Indies Department of the Colonial Office, and the very man under whom Vans Best served as Colonial Secretary in Trinidad. They are all birds of the some feathers.

West Indian workers, whether at home, in America or England, must learn from the experiences of India and Ireland. They must not put their faith in the lying promises of the British imperialists and their touts, whether white or black. They must depend upon their own organized might, which alone will enable them to rid their island homes of such bloodsuckers as Vans Best and Blood.

Workers, peasants and militant intellectuals of Grenada, organize your ranks into an anti-imperialist movement. Demonstrate on the streets, as you have recently done, in order to dramatise before the whole world the sufferings of a starving, bankrupt, ruthlessly crushed down and exploited people. If need be you must prepare to call a general strike. Grenada will have the sympathy and the support of the working class throughout the world, especially the British workers, who, after their bitter betrayal of the Labour Party, and their ever increasing misery are learning to realize that they will never be able to emancipate themselves unless they support the struggles of the colonial peoples for freedom and self-determination.

G. P.