

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Negro-Jewish Relations

Editor, Daily Worker:

The merit of A. W. Berry's column in the Feb. 26 Daily Worker is that it was a serious attempt to deal with a very real problem of relations between the Jewish and Negro peoples in America, as a consequence of the Israeli-Arab conflict. Certainly that is an immediate and practical concern of our Party as it plunges into mass activities, particularly in New York where we have the largest urban population of both Negro and Jewish Americans in the country.

Essentially, Berry argues for more flexibility in tactics. When one thinks of our past mistakes in this regard, and considers too the new times and the high level of cooperation between Negro and Jewish communities around the struggle for Negro rights, one can only say "Amen!"

Berry sums up the attitude of the Negroes toward the Arab-Israeli conflict in this way: that it is one of "frustration"; "that the Negroes are for the advance of both sides in the conflict"; or that the Negroes "want a fundamental solution of the Arab-Israeli," which, in a sense, I certainly think they do.

And here, in my judgment, comes the demerit of the column. First, I do not think Berry's limited observations are sufficiently representative of the Negro people. Secondly, the column leaves the impression of a neutralist position on the Israeli-Arab conflict. Instead of the usual plague-on-both-your-houses, it implies a sort of bouquet-on-both-your-houses. In either case, it's a straddle.

Thirdly, the column invites passivity, as if the conflict will work itself out somehow, lest an active stand strain relations between Negro and Jewish Americans on the home front. American Negroes will want to do much more than "hope for a peaceful solution" of a conflict in which world peace is involved, and in which imperialism—the ideological source of racism and white supremacy—is to be strengthened or weakened.

The March 2, issue of the Amsterdam News, declared editorially that there was "no other choice" than that "the UN Charter should be enforced against Israel. . ." The Los Angeles Herald-Dispatch, to name one other Negro weekly, has taken a similarly strong stand. A like sympathy could be inferred, I believe, from the strong condemnation by the Negro press of Mavor Wagner's insulting snub to Ibn Saud.

Moreover, if one looks beneath the surface of Negro newspaperdom, one finds a strong pro-Egyptian sentiment among the Negro masses, expressed in part, for example, in the increasing growth of Moslem influence and organization in Negro communities, but by no means confined to such organization.

Support for the Egyptian struggle is quite natural among the Negro people, who are overwhelmingly opposed to colonialism, and who recognize an identity with the Egyptians on this score, as well as on the score of racism and white supremacy which are the hallmarks of imperialism, especial-

ly of "our own."

Although I don't think complete unanimity will be found among any people, I venture to say that Negroes are anything but neutral in this matter. I believe that they are mostly pro-Egyptian and that they're right; and that they're pro-Egyptian in the sense that they're anti-colonial, not anti-Semitic.

It is the tasks of Communists, it seems to me, to assist in actively involving the masses of American workers and peoples generally—Jew and Gentile, Negro and white—in fighting for a people's anti-colonial policy in this situation, and to press this policy upon imperialism, in the first place "our own"—to the end that the Arabs might be freed of colonial bondage, and that the Israeli people might be saved the menace of having their government act as a tool for "our" or any other imperialism. This must be done with due regard for the complexities of any given situation and with respect for sentiments and relations of peoples in our own country.

It is a misconception to assume that a people's government of this sort will necessarily rock the boat of Negro-Jewish collaboration. Such collaboration did not fall out of thin air, to be vaporized at the first little breeze of controversy. It arose from many factors, the essence of which was exchange of ideas and struggle. Negro and Jewish workers standing together on the picket lines and in the polling booths, have had profound effects upon all strata of their respective peoples, not to mention their common cause against reaction, jimcrow and anti-Semitism.

—Benjamin J. Davis.

P.S. The Daily Worker did a good job on Ghana and Dr. Du Bois.

Conditions of

A Job Presser

Editor, Daily Worker:

I want to express my thanks for printing my letter of March 1

about my union local 23, Printing. The letter went to a few other N.Y. papers, one of which prints "all the news that's fit to print," and one was a liberal paper, but they didn't print it. Only the Daily Worker is the newspaper of the workingmen and the broad masses of Americans. Every worker should read the Worker, Daily and Sunday.

Permit me to say a little more about my conditions in my union. It is not only the \$66 a week take-home more or less for a job feeder or assistant, but conditions in general. There is no real shop chairman, and the speedup is terrific, especially in the financial shops, where it is on the brink of slavery.

A job press feeder or assistant is supposed to feed the press after the pressman has made the job ready to be printed, but in many shops the feeder also has the pressman's work without a cent extra in pay. No union agent ever comes to the job to check up on conditions. I worked in shops for many years and never saw a union agent.

The boss and the foreman, they are the union, while the workers have nothing to say, but if you don't pay the \$8 a month dues, you get prompt notice. The union is also heard from only at election time.

When I tried to see my president he was out, and so were the other officers, and if you persist you are labeled a "red" and you are out!

The pressman looks upon the feeder as a slave, and refuses to help him when, after work, the presses must be washed so that the ink on the rollers should not dry up. The job pressman's pay is \$80 take-home, but this should not make him act like a "king" over the lower-paid feeder. But where there is no real union, no brotherhood, there is no harmony or respect. The only gainers from this are the bosses, who like to see the workers divided.

A government investigation, as I wrote in my last letter, would wake up my union brothers to build a strong, progressive and democratic organization.

I appeal to my brothers in Local 23 and in the pressman's Local 51 to write to the Daily Worker about my letters and about conditions in general.—BILL

CHARGE AID TO RACISTS BY VISITING S. AFRICA CLERIC

A white South African minister studying here at Union Theological Seminary has been praised by Alabama White Citizens Council leader for aiding the racist cause, according to a story appearing in the current Amsterdam News, Harlem weekly newspaper.

The article revealed that the Amsterdam News has turned over to immigration authorities a letter to the Rev. Gerhard J. Swart, the visiting minister, from Sam M. Engelhardt, Jr., head of the Citizens Council of Alabama. While visiting Montgomery, Ala., on a recent "field trip," the Rev. Swart attended a White Citizens Council meeting and stated in a newspaper interview that in South Africa the

leges in the South, was backed financially by the Phelps Stokes Fund.

Dr. Ralph Hyslop, director of advanced religious studies at Union Theological Seminary, said that Dr. Swart had been a "constructive critic" on moral and ethical grounds of South Africa's racial policies, the Amsterdam News story revealed. But it quoted eminary officials as saying that Dr. Swart's opposition to racial policies was "not political."

The accused minister was reported to be "upset" over the outcome of his southern visit and his alleged vocal support to racism as he witnessed it on his field trip.