

SOME ASPECTS OF THE FIGHT FOR NEGRO RIGHTS

By WILLIAM PATTERSON

For years we Americans have lived with the problem of securing for the Negro people the rights which are theirs by right of birth—rights paid for with the blood they spilled in the Revolutionary War that this nation “conceived in liberty” might be established, and later in the Civil War that it might endure one and indivisible.

These struggles for civil rights, civil liberties and respect for human dignity are as old as American democracy. They have been an organic part of every struggle participated in by Americans, the objectives of which were, or were alleged to be, justice, liberty and human freedom. Yet for more than three-quarters of a century we have achieved no outstanding successes in this field except for the Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954. The reason is not due to a lack of love for human freedom on the part of the American people but rather to the failure to make this fundamental fact the property of all;— what is good for the Negro people is good for America.

From birth to death, through every media of propaganda—the stage, the movie, television and the press—the rulers of America indeed assert the myths of white supremacy. The impact of this “big lie” upon America has been to confuse and to destroy unity among white and Negro masses.

The reality of American racism is that it daily does violence to the Bill of Rights and the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution. It subverts our legal system, as in the trial of the murderers of Emmett Till, and provokes mob violence through the organization of the Ku Klux Klan and the White Citizens Councils. Its reality nullifies the effects of fundamental declarations, which become Fourth of July exhibits.

The struggle for Negro rights has never been exclusively “a struggle for Negro rights.” The racist concepts of American white supremacy have had direct bearing on national morality and integrity and, in a very special way, upon the unity, interests and rights of labor in that they became instruments through which to divide the labor movement along the color line. The anti-racist discussions that featured the Bandung Conference of Asia and Africa, the racist overtones that emerged in the Egyptian-Arabian-Israeli conflict give proof of the bearing white supremacy has upon America's foreign relations and the cause of peace.

It is therefore true that only American monopoly capital can gain by a narrow interpretation of the struggle for Negro rights. When this struggle is narrowly

posed, the self interests of labor and all other Americans become obscured. The result is that the aid which organized labor and others should bring to civil rights, and the struggle for Negro rights, is not forthcoming in the volume it ought to attain; and association and unity with the Negro people in formulating action programs and perfecting divisions of work sometimes comes to be viewed as matters of charity or philanthropy, rather than of self-interest.

It is a profound error, that will defeat the people's interests, to counterpose the role, interests and position of socially oppressed and exploited groups. To do so now, when from such groups the major forces of the anti-monopoly front in America must be drawn, is to compound the injury to democracy. It is also wrong because such a posing of the question hides the tides of struggle that bring one group and then another to the forefront and thus lacks political dynamic.

Labor and the Negro people stand in the forefront of the social forces making for a progressive democratic America. The unity in struggle of these two is indispensable to a people's victory and the realization of a “government of the people, by the people and for the people.” The rights and interests of labor and the Negro people are inseparably related. Their destinies are inextricably interwoven. Yet labor and the Negro people are separate entities. It is, however, a dangerous fallacy to see in that individuality a barrier to united action.

The priority of labor as a decisive social force for progress ought never be questioned, but today in the U.S.A. the struggle for Negro rights, for civil rights, is the best organized, most vital and dynamic, most fiercely waged political struggle against American reaction and impinges upon all other struggles for human rights and privileges. This front of battle is the most sensitive and vulnerable spot of reaction. The significance of this fight as a major segment of the world battle against monopoly must not be underestimated; already linked ideologically with the struggle against colonialism, it can be linked organically with that struggle.

Treating of this matter from the interests of monopoly, two of its outstanding servitors can be quoted.

C. L. Sulzberger, a leading political commentator for the New York Times, said in 1956, under the title, “Practice What We Preach, the Big Issue,”:

“The most important issue facing the United States during the next four years is that of racial

U. S. Educator on Soviet

By ALVIN C. EURICH
(Written for United Press)

The Russian looking at our educational system would probably say, “pretty soft.”

In Russia, the school's are in session six days a week 10 months a year. For the ninth and 10th grades, youngsters are in class

about seven hours a day. They are expected to spend another five hours or so on homework.

By 1960, all Russian youth will be required to complete secondary education which extends from ages seven to 17. Such compulsory education is now in effect about 70 percent of the young

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Says Inspection Can't Be Fool-Proof

Editor, Daily Worker:

The first editorial in today's issue on “Cynical Reuben” ends up in a very wrong way, I believe through a slip-up, when it presses for “progress toward big power disarmament under fool-proof aerial and ground inspection.”

There is no such thing as fool-proof inspection. Under this impossible pretext Dulles has been blocking all steps toward disarmament and even dis-

continuation of H-bomb tests. Committee.—X.

Welcome Treat

PROVIDENCE, R. I.
Editor, Daily Worker:

Alan Max's humor is a welcome treat to those who have lost their sense of humor.

Enclosed find \$5 for the Fund Drive—to be credited to the New England Freedom of the Press

I think the slip-up should be promptly corrected.

CHARLES DIRBA

integration on a basis of full equality. . . .

“We cannot hope to assert world leadership unless we resolve this tragic and perplexing question. Asia and Africa have become key continents whose future political sympathies will fix the international balance.”

What alarmed Mr. Sulzberger? He saw the ideological merger of the fight against the myths of white superiority and the struggle against colonialism as changing the relation of forces against those whose interests are his interests and foresaw the probable organic unity of these struggles. He appreciates that in the development of this struggle American imperialism will stand out as the major enemy, and this exposure frightens him. He seeks to hide the true role of American imperialism.

Vice President Richard Nixon said recently:

“We cannot talk equality to the peoples of Africa and Asia and practice inequality in the U. S.”

The hypocrisy inherent in the equality talk of imperialism is clarified by the continuation of its inequality practice. But “inequality” is the essence of imperialist action. Through this hypocrisy, which is the flesh and blood of imperialism, its true nature can be exposed. In this struggle, to a greater degree than through any other confronting us at this moment, possibilities exist for realizing an anti-monopoly front of unlimited proportions.

Racism is a most divisive force. The struggle to eradicate its poison from the body politics immeasurably strengthens the fight for adequate schools, housing, increased wages, decreased taxation and the

battle to purify the moral fibre and steel the fighting spirit of the American people.

The fight to eradicate the poison of racism from the foreign policy of world imperialism strengthens immeasurably the battle for coexistence and world peace.

There are mass movements emerging from the struggles Negroes are leading that affect the destiny of our country. Out of these struggles can come a solution of the problems which American slavery brought here and to the world.

Life demands of the American people an intensification of the struggle for civil rights, civil liberties and respect for human dignity. Failure to press forward in greater numbers and at an increased tempo will bring disastrous political effects such as have been sustained from time to time in the struggle to pass remedial civil rights legislation.

The strength of the Dixiecrats in Congress and the passivity of the Executive branch of government in the face of just demands of Negro leadership for equality of opportunity support this conclusion. The most reactionary elements amongst American monopolists stand behind their political spokesmen, who are mouthing subversive racist filth in Congress and in Southern legislative bodies.

The combination of these forces may appear today to an immediate solution of the problems. But the prerequisites for eliminating racial restrictions through the establishment of broad unified cultural and political actions of the people exist. Given this unity of the Negro people, labor and their allies, victory can be realized.