

A Negro Leader from Bilbo's State

By CLAUDIA JONES

In famous Paseo Park, in the heart of Kansas City, Mo., 13 years ago, a 21-year old Negro youth stood before an immense crowd listening to white and Negro speakers tell about the fight to free the Scottsboro boys.

On the speakers rostrum were Herb March and Abner Berry. They mirrored in their words what was then becoming an international fight, led by Communists, not alone for justice, but for the full economic, political and social equality of 13 million Negro Americans.

Two kinds of petitions were passed among the crowd which this Negro youth signed. One was a Communist Party petition to free the Scottsboro Boys; the other an appeal to join the Communist Party. The Negro youth, known as Henry Winston, signed them both.

SAW TERROR

From then on, Henry Winston's life reads like an American working class saga. For 11 years a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, veteran of World War II, and Secretary of the National Negro Commission of the CP, he is one of the scheduled speakers at the forthcoming Lenin Memorial Rally, next Tuesday, Jan. 16, at Madison Square Garden.



HENRY WINSTON
During Army Service

Winston born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, not far from Bilbo's home, had himself been witness to terror and injustice of the feudal politaxers and lynchers in the Black Belt; he too had experienced the plight of Negro sharecroppers and workers.

These were the days of hunger marches; the days of the fight for unemployment relief. And "Winnie," as his friends call him, was in that fight. He told me with

pride how deeply he felt when a Negro youth in Texas, Barney Ross, framed much like the Scottsboro boys, had his life sentence commuted by the Governor of Texas, as a result of the activities of his Communist co-workers. "We could both fight and win," he said.

Henry became active in the YCL. Holding many posts, not alone in Kansas City, but in Ohio, in Harlem as director of the YCL, and in Brooklyn, he was elected to the National Committee of the YCL in 1935. Shortly before this, he went abroad to visit the Soviet Union, France and England.

"I found in France and England much of the same kind of problems as those faced by the American working class," said Winnie. "In the Soviet Union I saw how Socialism works. I brought back a lasting impression that freedom of all peoples and internationalism—true inter-racial brotherhood, has been achieved there since racial discrimination is punishable under Socialist laws and customs."

Author of many pamphlets and articles, Winston pioneered in the movements which developed in the last decade, as a result of the growing political maturity of the Negro people. He helped found the Southern Negro Congress, the National Negro Congress, and

participated in both the American and World Youth Congresses.

Winston enlisted in the Army shortly after Pearl Harbor, serving over 3 years, in the American and European war theatres. He received the Certificate of Merit, highest regimental award, and the Certificate of Proficiency. He served as army correspondent, and as assistant to the Educational office. He was responsible for orientation classes, helping to prepare the men for return to civilian life.

In an interview on the coming Lenin Memorial meeting, Winston emphasized Lenin's contributions to the fight against national oppression.

"Lenin," he said, "was first of all an internationalist. The cornerstone of his teachings is that of proletarian internationalism. It was this that led him to understand not only the problems of Russia but those of oppressed peoples everywhere. As far back as 1913, he made a study of the national oppression of the Negro people which had within it the elements of solving the Negro question in the United States. Today in our country, Lenin's internationalism lies in the unity of Negro and white—a unity against monopoly capitalist oppression of the working class and its imperialist oppression against the Negro people."