

Class Against Class in the South

By GILBERT LEWIS.

IN its campaign of reaching the Negro masses of the South and winning them for the revolutionary movement, the Party and trade unions under its leadership cannot raise too sharply the issue of class against class. Every opportunity must be utilized to impress upon the mass of the Negro proletariat the utter hostility of its interests to those of the upper and middle class Negro. For the petty-bourgeois Negro of the South, as well as his brother of the North, is definitely lined up with the white bourgeoisie and actively supporting its campaign of suppression and exploitation of the working class, to the extent of segregation, jim-crowism and by their passivity, even lynching.

Recent facts will serve to bear out the above statement. When the Trade Union Unity League opened its headquarters in Chattanooga, Tenn., and began carrying out its program of organizing both Negro and white workers into the same unions on a basis of absolute equality, the Negro misleaders were among the first to come forward in a bitter attack upon us.

The Chattanooga headquarters of the Trade Union Unity League (T.U.U.L.) was opened on February 1, with a mass meeting of some 250 workers, of whom 185 were Negro proletarians from the railroad shops and metal plants in the vicinity. It was beyond a doubt the largest gathering of Negro and white workers ever assembled in one hall in the South. The white workers were composed of skilled and semi-skilled workers from the metal plants and furniture factories, with a small number from the textile centers.

It was a decidedly responsive group and hung upon every word of Negro and white speakers as well, applauding enthusiastically whenever any of the basic principles of the TUUL was outlined. After the meeting the workers crowded around the organizers eager to join the TUUL or leave their names to receive literature.

The following morning the southern ruling class, frightened stiff at our appearance in this part of the South, lost no time in mobilizing its agents in an effort to smash our organization; the Negro misleaders were among the first of these agents to be enlisted! **Negro Bourgeoisie Attack TUUL.**

In the February 4 issue of the Chattanooga "Times," a newspaper boasting the same ownership as the supremely reactionary New York Times, we find that one Milton S. Hampton, Negro secretary of the Southern States Educational Committee, is calling a special meeting of the organization to "lay plans to counteract the activities of the Reds here." Says this petty-bourgeois traitor: "The Negro shall never be a party in any attack upon private property, for we have as much to lose proportionally as the American white man."

A little later we get an item which should prove very revealing to both Negro and white workers who still think in terms of race instead of class. After voicing his opposition to the TUUL and stating that the Negro wants the sort of "harmony" that "the better class of whites" are striving for, one D. C. Harper, referred to by the "Times" as a leader of his race, declares: "Of course, we are not asking for social equality, but we do want, more than anything else, to get along with the white people and this I think will help us all. I am asking every Negro pastor in Chattanooga to instruct his congregation next Sunday against these Communists."

That this tool Harper kept his word and that there were Negro pastors in Chattanooga quite willing and eager to comply with his request is shown by the following item which appeared in the "Times" for February 8. Under the caption: "Minister Suggests Negroes Shun Reds," and vicious subtitle: "Rev. Hill issues open appeal and calls attention to lurking danger," we find the Rev. P. B. Hill, pastor of Union Hill Baptist Church, declaring: "I wish to advise you against the movement that is launched by the Communists to organize white and Negro labor, and I wish to advise that you do not take part in it, as it is not for the best and will do nothing to promote your advancement. . . . It would be unrighteous and ungodly for a poor man to rise up against a rich man. . . ."

When one considers the influence of the church in the South, the grip that religion

has over large sections of the Negro (and white) proletariat, one can readily realize just what such doctrines mean. One instantly realizes that in just so many words do the Negro middle class not only condone the whole category of segregation, discrimination, class and race oppression but lend moral support to the bourgeoisie in its campaign of violence, mob-rule and lynch law.

Much more can and will be said about the Negro traitors and the southern Negro proletariat in this article. However, the forces of black reaction formed such a complete united front in their attack upon the TUUL when it opened its southern headquarters, that a word about it will not be out of place here.

The press, the Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, the Klan, the police, the American Federation of Labor, the church, the Negro politicians were all joined hand in hand.

After a slimy attempt on February 2, to ridicule our meeting, held the night before, the bourgeois press openly showed its fangs and on Feb. 3, the "Times" blazed forth with the following headline: "Labor leaders keeping watch on Communists." Reading through the body of the article we find this: "Observers of the Saturday night meeting stated yesterday that the speakers awayed the crowd and that the propaganda being preached here by the trio representing the Trade Union Unity League is a menace to the peace of the community."

In the Chattanooga "News" for February 4, under an editorial entitled: "No Cause for Alarm," we find: "Chattanooga labor is far too advanced for the Communist agitation to be considered seriously. Then, too, the eye of the agitators who have appeared here appears to be centered on the amount of money contributed when they pass the hat. Those who wish to pay to hear violence preached may lend them an ear. Others—sensible laboring men—will not be bothered." Opposite this dribble is a long editorial welcoming William Green and the A. F. of L. to the city. Following the long list of betrayals and sell-outs of the working class by Green and the A. F. of L. every worker knows why Green is welcomed while the Communists are attacked.

Attacks by various other agents of the ruling class came in rapid succession. The Chamber of Commerce announced its intention of investigating our literature, the chief of police declared that his department would conduct an investigation of the appearance here of a group of Communists if it were deemed advisable. The American Legion called a special meeting to decide on the most feasible plan of driving us out of town.

Labor Bureaucrats Join Chorus.

The fakers of the American Federation of Labor, leaping to the crack of the whip of its capitalist masters, joined the chorus in a loud howl against us. Says Robert M. Cooke: "Organized labor can be depended upon to do its part in blocking the progress of Communism and class hatred in Chattanooga. . . ." The part of "organized labor" in blocking the progress of the TUUL in Chattanooga was to mobilize a band of thugs to smash our meeting the following Saturday night. When, however, the thugs saw the powerful following of Negro and white workers that had been won to our program they immediately changed their minds.

A. F. Whitney, grand president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, (A. F. of L.), after being welcomed to the city by the mayor and feted at the city's finest hotel, declared, in a bitter attack upon the Daily Worker for exposing Hoover's fascist "Economic Council" and the Hoover-Green pact, that "the president very wisely stepped in and made an effort to stem the tide of business reaction." In this manner do the so-called "leaders" of labor not only betray the workers by fighting a real workers' organization but actually defend the bosses in their attack upon the living standards of the workers.

(To be Continued)

TALK to your fellow worker in your shop about the Daily Worker. Sell him a copy every day for a week. Then ask him to