

Is Self-Determination Jim-Crowism?

By CYRIL BRIGGS

WOULD it be jim-crowism for the Negro majorities of the "Black Belt" of the South to control the government of that territory where they constitute the majority of the population?

In an editorial in its April issue, captioned "Communist Jim-Crowism," the Pittsburgh Courier quotes a sentence from one of the documents of the historic 8th Convention of the Communist Party, which met recently in Cleveland:

"The Negro people will obtain full equality and the right to govern as they see fit in the black belt of the South where they are a majority."

With shameless dishonesty, the Courier proceeds to read into this sentence, wrested from its context, the distorted meaning that full equality for the Negro people, under a proletarian dictatorship in this country, would be limited to those territories where they constitute a majority, stating:

"This sounds very much like the 49th State idea. Negroes should be grateful to the Communists for letting them know in advance that only in some sections of the South where Negroes constitute the majority of the population will they be vouchsafed full equality after the Revolution."

Courier Realizes Difficulty of De-

This is a lie, and the Courier

knows it—as evidenced in its admission, albeit made in reactionary mockery of the revolutionary struggle for proletarian internationalism and solidarity of all toilers, that the Communist program calls for the wiping out of all color lines and national and racial oppression:

"We had erroneously assumed that in the Communist Valhalla race lines would be obliterated; that there would be no black or white, but simply American workers skipping together in the streets and tossing nosegays hither and yon."

The Communist program of self-determination and universal equality for the Negro people has been brought forward not merely in words, but in hundreds of struggles led by Communist workers, against segregation, lynching and all forms of Negro oppression, persecution and inequalities imposed upon the Negro people under capitalism. Moreover, there is the living example of the Soviet Union, where, national oppression has been abolished along with unemployment and the exploitation of man by man. "Facts are stubborn things," and before these facts the Courier editors are forced to reveal their fear that they can no longer deceive the Negro masses on the Communist program, or divert them from the necessary revolutionary struggle for "Equality, Land and Freedom."

Negroes Would Enjoy Full Rights in a Soviet America

In a Soviet America, the Negro people will enjoy full and unconditional equality throughout the whole country. Such equality necessarily includes the right of the Negro majorities in the Black Belt to determine and control the form of government in that territory. Without this democratic right, equality would be a mockery. This need not necessarily mean that these Negro majorities will set up a separate government, apart from the government of the Negro and white workers and farmers in the rest of the country. That, however, is a question they themselves will decide, with democratic guarantees to the toiling white minorities in the Black Belt territory, who now suffer only in a lesser degree from the predatory rule of the white landlord-capitalists.

These rights will not be "vouchsafed" to, or conferred upon the Negro people, but will be won by the Negro workers in joint revolutionary struggle together with the white workers.

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