

The Shrewd Strategy Is Unity

By Claudia Jones

Lester Granger, executive secretary of the National Urban League, recently answered an article of mine (*The Worker*, June 16) in which I took issue with his call for a "shrewd racial strategy."

Mr. Granger held that such a policy was the one which the Negro people should follow in connection with the anti-labor legislation proposals of President Truman and his breaking of the railway strike.

I argued that such a policy was shortsighted, negated Negro-white unity, and in reality, urged the Negro people to "go it alone."

It was surprising that Lester Granger, who is generally considered a part of the Negro-Labor-Democratic coalition, could advocate such a policy.

MUCH IN COMMON

It appears that substantial agreement exists between Granger's and our position that the rail unions' discrimination against Negro workers must be ended.

We both agree that such undemocratic practices are disastrous to labor, to Negro-white unity and to the nation as a whole. No difference of emphasis exists. Both in Mr. Granger's original *Amsterdam News* article and in *The Worker* article, this point was made.

The question is: How can such a fight be successful?

Clearly only if the Negro people conduct this fight within—and not apart from—the alliance of labor and the Negro people.

Any Negro worker will confirm the truth of this statement from his experience in the trade union movement.

WE FIGHT JIMCROW

To put it another way: We hold no brief for any trade unionist who fails to fight Jimcrow in his own union.

In fact, Communists conduct a fight with unionists who fail to do so. This is based on our entire history of struggle for equal status for the Negro worker in the trade union movement and in all spheres of life.

This is so because, as befits our vanguard role, it is rooted in our Marxist - Leninist understanding that white workers cannot be free from exploitation, where Negro

workers are penalized and discriminated against because of the color of their skin.

There remain, however, some differences between our position and that of Mr. Granger.

For example, Granger asks:

"Why should Negroes in an hour of crisis which affects the interests of the whole country refrain from putting the finger squarely on the two principal figures in that crisis who have been guilty personally of trying to drive every Negro worker out of the field of railway employment?"

CRISIS

It is indeed an hour of crisis, a crisis which affects both the Negro people and the labor movement. Anti-labor measures affect the Negro people, just as anti-Negro measures and practices affect labor.

What are those measures? They include: a reign of lynch-police terror, against Negro veterans and the Negro people in all spheres and repression of their economic, political and social wartime gains. This drive is concurrent with a wholesale assault against the living standards of the American people as a whole.

They include also the effort to deprive labor of its right to bargain collectively, to strike for better living conditions.

Hence, both the labor movement and the Negro people, democ-

racy's two most reliable forces, are under fierce attack.

Who backs them? Truman, Byrnes, Vandenberg, the Bilbos and Rankins.

LOSING STRATEGY

No "finger can be squarely put" in this moment of crisis without singling out these forces, whose aim is to follow a "shrewd strategy" that would divide Negro from white and thus more easily achieve their aims.

Mr. Granger also expresses the idea that the Negro-labor "alignment" is a transient, temporary phenomenon. To so do, is to fail to recognize that the heart and core of the democratic forces which alone can curb the trusts, the Ku Klux politax crew, is labor allied with the Negro people and other democratic forces.

Finally, Mr. Granger warns that "The Negro worker of today is living in an economic jungle full of sinister enemies lurking in the underbrush opposed to all the Negro holds dear."

There can be no disagreement that such "sinister enemies" exist. But our job as Communists and anti-fascists is to define who they are, to expose them, and thus help the Negro and his allies to curb and finally crush them.

If this is seen, there can be no possible resort to a "shrewd racial strategy" as opposed to Negro-white unity—and unity among the Negro people—to achieve such a goal.

Worth Repeating

Discussing the plan to partition Palestine, Meir Vilner, Palestinian Communist, said: "We feel it our duty to sound a warning against all intrigues aiming at the partition of this country. First of all, it would strangle any possible economic development. Secondly, it would strengthen the imperialist regime, since partition would mean dependence of both 'states' upon the imperialist British rulers. Thirdly, such an arrangement would widen the gulf between Jews and Arabs.

"The colonial power is interested in having the Jews demand a Jewish state and the Arabs an Arab state. The inevitable result of both these demands is the continuation of colonial rule over Jews and Arabs alike."—Political Affairs, June, 1946.