

DUSTIN'

—off the—

NEWS

—By—

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EVERY BLACK MAN A COMMUNIST, BUT DOESN'T KNOW IT

IN UNCLE JOE'S JOURNAL we find this comment on the colored man, dwelling in a so-called Democracy, lending a kind ear to the plea of Communism:

"Dey is considerable talk goin' roun' 'bout de black man turnin' 'Red'. Well, heah is de whole entire matter in a goober-shell: whenever you see a black man tryin' to turn 'Red,' it's cause de white folks is made it so 'BLUE' fer him." That's more truth than poetry.

The question of Communism was brought to the forefront at the Third Convention of the National Negro Congress which met in Washington, D. C., recently when A. Philip Randolph, once Socialist leader and organizer of the Pullman Porters' union, refused reelection because of that body's position on certain policies involving its faith and convictions. His masterful speech in disagreement astounded his audience. He blasted the Soviet Union, where there is no race prejudice, and condemned American Communists who have shown none.

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IT WAS A NEW Randolph, bereft of his earlier Socialistic ideas that hoisted him above Trotter and DuBois, contemporary agitators for social and economic justice, some 15 years ago as a radical of the first rank, and the "Voice of the New Negro." Has he proven in his Washington rebellion that as time speeds by and progress straps on new and firmer wings that the radical of today is the conservative of tomorrow?

Randolph owes his allegiance and rise to fame to the revolutionary thought movement which he now alarmingly condemns. He joined the Socialist party in the days of Eugene V. Debs and was made editor of the Messenger. Randolph's trenchant pen made it an iconoclastic journal against that period's Negro leadership. He asked whether Trotter and DuBois were "Figures or Failures." He made it hotter for them than the Chicago fire. He became the first "New Negro."

The white South, boiling to action against his radical proclamations and advice to his people, sent him by parcel post the withered hand of a lynched Negro. Once he advised the Negro "to sell his vote," a paradoxical treatment on the dilemma in which the black man found himself trying to make a choice in a national election between Democrats and Republicans, the parties unfaithful to promises. His main purpose, however, was to increase radical thought among his people.

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WHEN THE SOCIALIST party divided in its St. Louis convention on property rights, Randolph went with the private ownership group and soon thereafter the Messenger suspended publication. Keen in the art of debate; logical in thought and possessing poise, character and ability as a speaker, he turned his attention to labor. This is the question he faced—can the black man reach the point of self-determination by affiliating himself with capital or allying himself with labor? He put it up to the Pullman porters; they courted labor along with Randolph instead of capital. Twelve years from the day he started, his organization was recognized as the collective bargaining agent between the porter and the powerful Pullman company.

After labor wins its battle, rares back to rest and a good dues paying system has been inaugurated, its leaders often accept the silk hat and the stiff shirt. Sam Gompers did it and is buried a few paces from J. Pierpoint Morgan. William Green, his successor, and artful dodger on the Negro question in labor, is a bosom friend of the capitalist. The twilight of the A. F. of L., now under his direction, is seen in the rise to power of the C. I. O., under John L. Lewis. Mr. Green once said: "Any labor organization that does not accord full recognition to its members has already begun to decay." He permits the Negro to be barred out of some; segregated

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in others and to walk around with cards and no jobs. His unions are infested with gangsters and ex-convicts. Ironically, his prophecy is coming true.

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MR. RANDOLPH, deceived from within and without his organization during his stormy years, has remained decent and honest with his followers. He could have "sold out" long ago had he chosen to take the path of the usual "race leader," but he saw in those early days that labor had not the vision of capital nor the strength, and he knew that the black man, most humble of all, needed both vision and strength. This contribution of his to the Pullman porter has been faithful and heroic. Whatever course he takes in the future may injure his own prestige, but it cannot destroy the work he has thus far so nobly completed.

Potentially, every black man in America is a Communist. He wants this discriminatory form of government corrected. Some are brave enough to admit it and openly join the party voicing that program; others agree in part with its platform, but for the sake of bread and butter, keep quiet on the issue; still others too cowardly to fight for their own rights silently applaud communistic bombardments against American race prejudice. Fact of the matter is that the Communist has given shape and form to the Negro's previously unorganized fight for his rights as an American citizen and actually frightened him in trying to carry it out. If Democracy fully functioned in behalf of the black man; if the Constitution meant what it says, Communism would offer no attraction. Had you thought of that? America is still half free and half slave.

In the irresistible surge of progress, we hope that Mr. Randolph hasn't lost hold, and that he will continue to look forward rather than backward.