

Earl Browder Replies

YOUR October issue carried, as a special article, "An Open Letter to Earl Browder," by Mr. George Padmore. Allow me to thank you for your letter agreeing to publish a reply in your December issue. This reply is an unpleasant duty, for I would much prefer to write a constructive article upon how we might be working jointly to establish Negro rights and to defend Ethiopia.

First of all, may I inquire why Mr. Padmore's letter was held for 18 months, and only published now? Was it because your journal was also publishing the editorial, "Soviet Russia Aids Italy," and were afraid that this attack needed reinforcement from some self-styled "Communist" source? Or did you need to slander the Soviet Union in order to back up Padmore's "Open Letter?"

Now for Mr. Padmore's points: Padmore, when a member of the C.P.U.S.A., accepted an appointment as secretary to the Negro Trade Union Committee, but later turned against its policies. When, as a result, he was removed, he declared this was a "liquidation" of the Committee. This is clearly a case of "delusion of grandeur," for it was only Padmore who was "liquidated." The Committee has continued its work, and more fruitfully than under Padmore's administration. Its organ, the *Negro Worker*, is still being published. **THE CRISIS** surely receives it regularly.

The central issue upon which Mr. Padmore parted company with the Communists, was his acceptance of the Japanese Imperialist propaganda that the Mikado is the guardian of the "darker races," that his conquest of Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, and North China (all "darker races") are "for their own good," and that the road to liberation of the Negroes, lies through race war of these "darker races" against the whites. This policy is tenable only from the viewpoint of the landowners the bourgeoisie of the "darker races," but not from the viewpoint of the interests of the masses, the workers, farmers, and other toilers. Our explanation of this, to those whom Padmore was trying to lead into the same swamp, is what he describes as "slanders and lies," but he carefully avoids this central issue. In his "Open Letter" he hides his political opinions, while himself slandering all those who had made him important enough to be able to write his letter at all. Mr. Padmore even refused to discuss these questions with the Negro Trade

Union Committee, yet he now has the effrontery to talk about being denied "his day in court." He tries to make his removal a question of "white against Negro," but hides the fact that he was *appointed and removed* by Negro comrades. His predecessor as Secretary of the Trade Union Committee was James W. Ford, who later was Communist candidate for vice-president of the United States, and is now one of the most prominent leaders of the C.P.U.S.A. His successor was Otto Huiswood, long known in the United States and for the last few years working in Europe. These, with other members of the Committee, such as Harry Haywood, now in Chicago, and Wm. L. Patterson, secretary of the International Labor Defense for some years until illness forced his retirement for a while from active work, were the men who condemned and removed Padmore from his position.

Mr. Padmore resisted his removal. When he failed, and began to publicly attack his former associates, many seamen, who had been previously helping him smuggle "The Negro Worker" into Africa, suddenly and unaccountably fell into the hands of the police. I have no means of knowing if Mr. Padmore was conscious of the consequences of his acts, but there is not the slightest doubt that this was caused, if not by Padmore directly, then by his new associates to whom he made available his knowledge.

Mr. Padmore threatens "to take legal action" to defend himself. His letter was written 18 months ago, but he has not followed up his threat. Instead he has remained in France, with his new found friends, firing his guns from the safe fortress of the Parisian cafes. His letter would never have merited an answer, except that for some unexplained reason, you dug it out of your files as a weapon to attack the Soviet Union and the Communists at the moment when we are exerting all energies to build a mass movement in defense of Ethiopia against a bestial fascist assault.

Would it not be better if, instead of attacking us, you would combine forces with us in fighting for Negro rights, for Angelo Herndon and the Scottsboro boys, and for the defense of Ethiopia? We would welcome co-operation with you for these things, in place of having to answer your attacks, which is indeed an unpleasant duty.

EARL BROWDER