

Negroes and Moscow Pacts

By Doxey Wilkerson

Negro Americans have special reason to join enthusiastically in the American - Soviet Friendship celebrations being held this month throughout the nation.

November calls to mind several milestones in recent world history which are also, in a very real sense, major strides forward toward Negro freedom.

(1) November 7, 1917: The first socialist state in the world, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, was born.

For the first time in history, there emerged a great nation which used the full power of government for the complete destruction of all forms of racial and national discrimination. The traditional Czarist exploitation and suppression of minority peoples was thoroughly uprooted from Soviet life. To even the weakest and most "backward" national groups, previously held down by colonial oppression, there was extended the right of self-determination, the right of each people—backed by Soviet power—to organize their government, social and cultural life as they see fit.

The bloody pogroms against the Jews, which in Imperialist Russia rivaled even those of late-day Hitler in their brutality, disappeared completely from Soviet life.

The principle of equal rights for all men became the fundamental law of the new socialist state. Article 123 of the Constitution of the USSR reads:

"Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nation-

ality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law."

The Soviet Union, in the organization of its own society, has charted the path for the ultimate liberation of the Negro and all other oppressed peoples of the world.

(2) November 16, 1933: American-Soviet diplomatic relationships were established. Under the wise leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the stupid policy of refusing even to recognize the existence of the great socialist state, rigidly adhered to by the Harding-Coolidge-Hoover regime, came to an end. The governments of these two great nations, which have so much in common, began to talk to each other, to enter into trade agreements, and to carry on normal diplomatic relations—to the mutual benefit of both.

The channels now began to open for the American people to learn the truth about the amazing new society which the Soviets were creating. Despite organized anti-Soviet slanders and hostility, the masses of Americans began slowly to understand and appreciate the tremendous benefits which the workers' government of the USSR was bringing to the formerly oppressed peoples of Russia. We began to catch new vistas of the freedom which is possible in our own land, a freedom which the Negro people and all others will share on the basis of complete equality.

(3) June 22, 1941: The treacherous Nazi attack upon the Soviet Union initiated that Anglo-Soviet-American cooperation which has now emerged into full coalition. The anti-Soviet, imperialist policies of Munich, which unleashed this terrible war upon the world, were now cast aside by the British and American governments. In the blood and smoke of battle, impelled by the imperative requirements of national survival, an imperialist war was transformed into a war of national liberation. There was forged an alliance of freedom-

loving nations which now promises the liberation of mankind.

Under the impact of war necessity, powerfully influenced by the socialist member of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition, the freedom of oppressed peoples has now become definitely the order of the day. China, traditional prey of imperialist powers the world over, now sits as an equal on the Pacific War Council. Ethiopia is again free, and the freedom of the Philippines is assured. With every new blow of the Red Army, the liberation of the occupied countries of Europe proceeds apace. The freedom of Puerto Rico, of the Arab peoples in North Africa, of India—these are now very urgent business of the United Nations.

Within our own country, likewise impelled by the liberating character of this war, the freedom of the Negro people has moved forward more rapidly than at any time since the Civil War. So long as the Anglo - Soviet - American coalition remains intact, thus guaranteeing a people's victory and a people's peace, the extension of freedom to the Negro people will continue at an accelerating rate.

(4) November 1, 1943: The Anglo-American-Soviet coalition was consolidated through agreements reached at the Moscow conference. The peoples of the world may now look forward with renewed confidence to even closer cooperation among the great powers, including China, for the shortening of the war, the destruction of fascism, the liberation of oppressed peoples, and the organization of a just and durable peace.

The reactionary defeatist attempt to save fascism by dividing the United Nations is not yet dead, but it has been struck a mortal blow. At the same time, the democratic forces of the world have been tremendously strengthened. The road to the ultimate triumph of the people, both in the war and in the peace, lies straight ahead. The progressive freedom of mankind, including the Negro people of America, is now more than ever assured.

