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EQUAL RIGHTS
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TIMES EDITORIALS

Communists and the U.S. Negro

Notably unsuccessful in their efforts to win support among American Negroes in the 1930s and '40s, U.S. Communists nonetheless have continued to look for ways to twist Negro discontent and aspirations to their own evil and alien purposes.

The Communists failed earlier basically because they were clumsy in approach, condescending in attitude and—most importantly—sublimely ignorant of what American Negroes wanted. Dogma-bound, they tried to treat Negroes as victims of colonialism while the Negro—then as now—was seeking only equal opportunity and a rightful place in society.

There is no doubt that in the last quarter-century the Communist approach to the Negro has grown in sophistication. Thus the danger in this area has increased, not because the Communist appeal has become more attractive, but because it has become more subtle and hence less easily detected.

There has, for example, been some Communist infiltration of the civil rights movement. Responsible Negro leaders have rejected Communist support in no uncertain terms, and efforts are being made within the major rights organizations to guard against Red

penetration. Communist efforts to subvert continue, however, in the civil rights field as elsewhere.

Thus James E. Jackson, identified as a former Communist Party secretary for Negro and southern affairs, writes glowingly in the *World Marxist Review* of what he sees as opportunities to exploit the American Negro to foment class warfare.

Jackson feels that the high concentration of Negroes in certain industries, when coupled with militant discontent, offers the hope of fomenting both industrial and civil strife. So far there have been few signs of success for the Communists. But clearly they are trying.

Lenin long ago laid down the rule that has guided Communists ever since: Improvement in social and economic conditions in a non-Communist society is to be fought, for such improvement undercuts the theoretical basis for revolution.

Thus Communist infiltration of the Negro movement, as anywhere else, is intended to provoke, to stir up hatred and ultimately to discredit. Progress for the Negro is the farthest thing from the Communist mind. Such penetration must be assiduously guarded against, for its sole aim is to use the Negro, not to help him.