

Toward Freedom

By DOXEY WILKERSON

THE curious notion that a long war would aid the cause of Negro freedom is gaining currency in the Negro community and among liberal white friends of the Negro. This essentially reactionary doctrine rests upon a deceptive fallacy which must be thoroughly exposed. Its general acceptance would not only imperil the one wartime program which can assure the progressive liberation of the Negro people; it would also greatly strengthen our nation's most serious enemies here at home.



The basis of the "long war" appeal to the Negro people is wholly understandable. Traditionally barred from desirable lines of employment, socially proscribed, his civic and political rights abridged, the Negro now sees a

"New World A-Coming." Confronted with the iron necessities of war, the nation is impelled progressively to enlarge the area of Negro freedom. Traditional bars of discrimination are cracking under the impact of the war, and the Negro people are moving rapidly toward the freedom to which they aspire. It is no wonder that many Negroes are coming to embrace the slogan, "Lord, don't let this war end too soon."

To attribute the current progress of the Negro people to the necessities of war is entirely correct. Conscious mass struggles for Negro freedom have helped. The implacable opposition of Southern Bourbons and Axis-inspired anti-Negro incitements have been a hindrance. But the decisive force has been the imperative requirement of victory for a nation which is struggling for its very existence.

From this basic fact, a spurious line of reasoning tends to emerge. It is argued: If the war is now advancing the cause of Negro freedom, then more and more war should bring more and more freedom to the Negro people. This is where the fallacy enters. To assume a simple and continuing cause-effect relationship between more war and greater Negro freedom is to ignore other more probable results of a long war which would completely destroy all the social and economic gains the Negro people have thus far made. The danger is very real.

The American defeatists and appeasers want a

The Negro's Stake In a Short War

long, drawn-out war, and are working frantically to prevent an early victory. But their interests are far removed from the freedom of the Negro or any other people. They seek nothing less than a dominant and aggressive American imperialism in the post-war world, supported by a domestic fascism here at home.

The strategy of this imperialist clique becomes more apparent every day. They employ every trick of demagoguery to sabotage the win-the-war program of our Commander-in-Chief. They strive to create antagonisms within the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition, and to prolong the war by delaying the opening of the Second Front. They seek to substitute a "negotiated peace" for the Casablanca policy of "unconditional surrender." They hope to preserve fascist governments in Germany and the rest of Europe as a bulwark against the democratic upsurge of liberated peoples. They expect, thus, to establish the most favorable conditions for the rise of a fascist-imperialist regime in America. These enemies of our nation, whom Vice President Wallace calls the "American Fascists," are determined to seize control of our government in 1944.

This is the traitorous conspiracy into which any general acceptance of the "long war" hypothesis would lead the Negro people. Nothing would more surely defeat their goals of freedom. The Negro's substantial wartime gains would be engulfed and destroyed in the onrush of American fascism.

The future of Negro freedom depends upon the triumph of the democratic win-the-war forces behind the Commander-in-Chief, and the defeat of the imperialist-appeaser bloc which now struggles for supremacy. A long war would enhance the danger of a "negotiated peace" with fascism; it would enormously strengthen the reactionary enemies of the Negro people. A short war would assure the unconditional surrender of the Axis and the destruction of fascist governments; it would tremendously strengthen the democratic labor and progressive forces who are the most effective allies of the Negro people.

It should be clear that the growing popular struggle for all-out coalition warfare to defeat Hitler in 1943—for the immediate opening of the Second Front in Western Europe—is fundamentally a struggle which the Negro and all other freedom-loving people must support. Here lies the path along which the related struggle for Negro freedom must proceed.