"'A Sickening Red Tinge': *The Daily Worker*'s Fight Against White Baseball"

Kelly Rusinack and Chris Lamb

In 1939, pitcher Webster McDonald of the Chicago American Giants signs The Daily Worker's petition to end segragation in baseball (from Black Baseball in Chicago, by Larry Lester, Sammy J. Miller and Dick Clark).

On Sunday, August 16, 1936, under the headline, "Fans Ask End of Jim Crow Baseball," the Sunday *Worker* pronounced: "Jim Crow baseball must end." Thus began the Communist Party newspaper's campaign to end discrimination in the national pastime.[1] The unbylined story, written by sports editor Lester Rodney, questioned the fairness of segregated baseball. Rodney believed that black ballplayers from the Negro Leagues would improve the quality of play in the major leagues. He appealed to readers to demand that the national pastime -- particularly team owners, or "magnates" as the

newspaper called them -- admit black ballplayers: "Fans, it's up to you! Tell the big league magnates that you're sick of the poor pitching in the American League." "Big league ball is on the downgrade, "Rodney declared, "You pay the high prices. Demand better ball. Demand Americanism in baseball, equal opportunities for Negro and white stars."2

Over the next decade, the *Daily Worker* brashly challenged the baseball establishment to permit black players; condemned white owners and managers for perpetuating the color ban; organized petition drives and distributed anti-discrimination pamphlets outside ballparks; and criticized the mainstream press for ignoring the race issue. The CP forced the issue in front of the baseball establishment, raised awareness about the color line among social progressives, and lobbied local and state politicians in New York. As Rodney explained: "We were the only non-black newspaper writing about it for a long time."3

3. In recent years, scholars have focused more and more on the role of the press in covering the integration of baseball -- one of the most influential civil rights stories in the years succeeding World War II.4 For example, Chris Lamb and Glen Bleske assert that in news accounts, equality on the baseball field became a metaphor for equality in civil rights.5

For black journalists and their readers, the story symbolized the hopes for and the dreams of true integration. Black sportswriters and their newspapers recognized and reported this critical juncture in the story of baseball and the fight for civil rights.6 No group had a greater responsibility as an organ of racial unity during and after World War II than the black press -- and "the extent to which it understood and met its responsibility," Bill Weaver wrote, "can be observed in its handling of the assault on professional baseball's 'color line.'"7 By contrast, white sportswriters, working for mainstream dailies, maintained a "conspiracy of silence" on the color line, either afraid of upsetting their editors and readers or convinced of the need for segregation on personal grounds.

As part of an overall neglect of the legacy of leftist politics in the United States, however, little has been said about the *Worker*'s crusade to end segregated baseball. A few writers noted that the Communists seized upon the issue of racial discrimination in baseball and for years campaigned to end the color line.8 Two *Worker* sportswriters -- Rodney and Bill Mardo -- told a conference commemorating the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's breaking major league baseball's color line that the newspaper stood up against racism in the national pastime. According to Rodney, the *Worker* was the "conscience of journalism."9

In his autobiography, civil rights activist William L. Patterson said that Rodney and the *Worker* "were second to no other voices in the United States in the fight to get Negroes on the rosters of Big League baseball clubs."10 David Falkner, in his biography of Jackie Robinson, also recognized Rodney's contributions. "I think Lester Rodney is one of the

unsung heroes of the effort to integrate baseball," he said, "Rodney and the *Worker* were at this all the way through the 1930s, and they never really let up."[11]

While there is agreement that the *Worker* played an active role in breaking baseball's color line, there has thus far been little attempt to identify what exactly the newspaper did. A more thorough analysis is needed if we hope to understand -- and to recognize -- what Mardo describes as "The *Daily Worker*['] 10-year campaign to break down Jim Crow baseball."[12] Besides writing hundreds of articles and columns over a decade, its sportswriters directly challenged the baseball establishment, questioning league and team executives in print and directly confronting owners, demanding that they give tryouts to black players. In short, the newspaper bluntly pointed out that the most American of sports was undemocratic. And it chastised league executives and team owners for praising the game as an embodiment of the American dream while denying opportunities to black players through outright discrimination.

The newspaper's sarcastic and even belligerent actions offended not just baseball's establishment but also many who supported integration, including many black sportswriters. These sportswriters may have agreed with the Communists but shunned their support for fear of being red-baited -- a tactic used by Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis and team owners, who dismissed the *Worker*'s campaign to integrate baseball as a Communist ploy.

The *Worker*, the main organ for the Communist Party, was truly an alternative press -- representing workers and not corporations. Whereas other editors, reporters, and columnists could not easily criticize the rich who controlled the press, the *Worker* had no such restrictions. It was not supported by advertising but by, in its own words, "the nickels, dimes and dollars of the men and women of labor."[13] There was no other daily like it in America. Unlike other dailies, it was supported by membership dues -- not advertising. In addition, its content was different from other daily newspapers. Ignoring the journalistic concept of objectivity, the *Worker* presented white, communist sympathizers an opportunity to rage at injustices against blacks. Its circulation, which included foreign-language editions, peaked at about 140,000 in the 1930s and then after World War II -- not coincidentally, this period coincided with the *Worker*'s campaign against baseball's color line.[14]

The Communist Party seized upon the issue of segregation in baseball because it represented one of the more obvious evidences of discrimination.[15] The *Worker*'s journalists understood that ending discrimination in baseball could make a truly revolutionary change in American society. While the CP was certainly interested in using sports to advance its own political philosophy, its most effective effort to influence American society -- the campaign against segregation in baseball -- emphasized democracy, not communism.[16] In addition, baseball, to the CP, represented all that was wrong with American capitalism.

As early as 1933, the *Worker*'s Ben Field commented on the injustice of racial segregation in major league baseball, describing a scene at a Brooklyn Dodgers' game at

Ebbets Field, where blacks worked at the stadium but none took the field. "You spot a few Negro fans. Negro workers make good athletes. But where are the Negroes on the field?" Field asked. "The big leagues will not admit Negro players. This is something else to chalk up against capitalist-controlled sports."17

However, the integration of baseball would not become a significant issue in the *Worker* until the introduction of a daily sports page in 1936. As with virtually all party matters, the decision to focus on baseball's racial problem had its origin in international party politics. In 1935, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International encouraged the American Communist Party to focus attention on the subject of capitalist sports in order to become more popular in American society. Communist Party sportswriters placed the U.S. professional sports establishment within the framework of capitalist exploitation, declaring that professional athletes, too, were workers, who labored but did not receive a fair share of the fruits of their labor.18

In essence, the *Worker*'s campaign to desegregate baseball posited three arguments. First, blacks had proven their worthiness to participate in American professional sports through their success in the recently completed Summer Olympics in Berlin. Adolf Hitler's snubbing of Jesse Owens, the black track star who had won four gold medals, provided the CP a clarion call for their campaign against discrimination in sports in general and baseball in particular. Secondly, the CP staunchly opposed racism, whether perpetuated by Nazi Germany or the United States. "There is not much difference between the Hitler who, like the coward he is, runs away before he will shake Jesse Owens' hand and the American coward, who won't give the same Negro equal rights, equal pay, and equal opportunities," the *Worker* editorialized.19 And thirdly, the newspaper's sportswriters argued that the addition of blacks would improve the level of competition in the big leagues. In short, discrimination did not merely prohibit blacks from organized baseball but also detracted from the overall quality of play.20 *Worker* sportswriters frequently denigrated the caliber of play in the major leagues while praising the talents of Negro League stars. The solution was obvious: let blacks play in the majors.

In August 1936, Rodney, then 25, became the newspaper's sports editor and he would stay with the paper until 1956 -- except for a stint in the Army during World War II.21 When he was made sports editor, he acquired a forum to advance his ideals of racial equality and the true meaning of democracy in American sports. Rodney helped to further legitimize sports as a social concern, and purposely gave a voice to the opinions of athletes formerly considered to be stupid and shallow.22

Rodney quickly realized that the story of baseball's color line was The *Daily Worker*'s and theirs alone -- by default. "It was wide open. No one was covering it," he said.23 Rodney, having grown up a Brooklyn Dodgers' fan, understood the significance of baseball to the American psyche. Thus separate leagues for white and black ballplayers were not just unfair or unsportsmanlike, but were un-American. "American sportsmanship can no more be denied than American democracy," he said. "They go together and grow together."24

Once Rodney and the *Worker* took on the issue of discrimination in major league baseball, they did not let up. Picking through decades-old Jim Crow rhetoric to expose the unfounded fears and gross stereotypes underlying the prohibition on signing blacks, the *Worker*'s sportswriters gained early rhetorical victories.25 On August 23, the newspaper published a statement from National League president Ford Frick who said there was no formal ban that prohibited major league teams from signing black ballplayers. "Beyond the fundamental requirement that a major league player must have unique ability and good character and habits," Frick said, "I do not recall one instance where baseball has allowed either race, creed or color to enter into the question of the selection of its players."26 To the *Worker*, Frick's statement was absurd. According to the newspaper, if character were an issue, then a number of white big leaguers also should be excluded from baseball. The rosters of big league teams, after all, were filled with brawlers, drunkards, and bigots. If ability were a determining condition, then a number of blacks should be in the big leagues. The newspaper periodically mocked the baseball executive, asking: If there was no ban, why were there no blacks in the big leagues?27

Worker sportswriters also wrote often about the talented stars of the Negro Leagues and urged readers to attend black baseball games to see for themselves what the color line was denying them. The newspaper also informed its readers of the history of the Negro Leagues and how major league managers, such as John McGraw of the New York Giants, had praised the talents of its stars and how McGraw himself had tried to sign a black player, Charlie Grant, in the early 1900s. From these stories, readers learned about the undiscovered world of black baseball.28

In his interview, Frick cautioned that the responsibility to sign black players lay with the team owners, not the game itself. In January 1937, sportswriter Mike Kantor quoted Brooklyn Dodgers' president Steven McKeever as saying he would like to sign blacks but such a decision would have to come from his manager, Burleigh Grimes. Grimes, in turn, said such a decision would have to come from Frick.29 To the *Worker*, if there were not a gentlemen's agreement prohibiting blacks, there was certainly a conspiracy whereby no one -- not Frick, McKeever, or Grimes -- would take responsibility.

Rodney remembers an interview with Grimes, who admitted he had been impressed with black players during off-season barnstorming games. "How would you feel about putting a Dodger uniform on Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson?" Rodney asked. The question made Grimes uncomfortable. "You're wasting your time," he answered. "That'll never happen as long as there are segregated trains and restaurants." Rodney then said, "Can I say how good you think these players are?" "No, no," Grimes answered. "He didn't want to stick his head out," Rodney said.30

The *Worker*, however, found a number of managers and players willing to go on record praising black players and even supporting integration, such as New York Yankee outfielder Joe Dimaggio, St. Louis Cardinal pitcher Dizzy Dean, retired Washington Senators pitcher Walter Johnson, and managers Leo Durocher and Bill McKechnie.

During September 1937, DiMaggio told Rodney about his off-season barnstorming games against Paige: "Satchel Paige is the greatest pitcher I ever batted against."31 Other white sportswriters heard DiMaggio's comment but did not print it. "I wasn't the only one he mentioned it to," Rodney recalled, "I was the only one who printed it."32

At the end of 1937, the *Worker* reported that by having Frick admit there was no color ban and by quoting Dimaggio's comment about Paige, it had forced other newspapers to take up the issue and had helped make the country aware of discrimination in the national pastime; integration was, therefore, imminent.33 Unfortunately, the *Worker*'s optimism was unfounded. As was often the case, the *Worker* exaggerated the impact of its campaign. Few newspapers ever mentioned the color line -- and those that did, like the New York *Daily News* and *Daily Mirror*, did not do so because they felt pressured by the *Worker*.

Worker sportswriters often reported that they were not alone in the belief that black stars belonged in the major leagues. Whenever possible, the newspaper published pro-integration columns from mainstream sportswriters such as Hugh Bradley of the New York Post, Dan Parker of the *Daily Mirror*, and Jimmy Powers of the *Daily News*, who Rodney called "the most articulate and consistent supporter of the Negro stars since the campaign to end Jim Crow baseball began to catch hold."34 However, the *Worker*'s joy at reading such articles in other newspapers was tempered somewhat by their infrequency.35 In fact, the *Worker* -- as Bill Mills did on April 20, 1938 -- was far more likely to scold sportswriters for not putting more pressure on the national pastime.36 In contrast, there was nothing half-hearted about the *Worker*'s campaign to end segregated baseball. In 1937, it published more than 50 articles on the issue; in 1938, nearly a hundred.37

But the *Worker* did not restrict itself to columns and articles. In February 1937, it reported the addition of other organizations in the fight to end Jim Crow in baseball. One article noted that the Communist-run Negro National Congress' Brooklyn branch sent a petition to the Dodgers to sign Paige.38 A week later, it reported that another Communist group, the Youth Council of the Vanguard Community, had written a letter to Grimes also suggesting that he sign Paige: "We think such an addition to the team would be in the best tradition of Americanism, because it would be a defeat for race prejudice."39

In 1938, the *Worker*, in conjunction with the Young Communist League, began to promote grass-roots support of the campaign. Beginning in 1939 and continuing until baseball was integrated, anti-discrimination pamphlets were distributed and petitions were circulated for signatures outside major league ballparks in New York City. The petitions were then sent to Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, National League president Ford Frick and American League president William Harridge. The CP attempted to shame baseball into ending segregation through petitions that read, in part: "Our country guarantees the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to all, regardless of race, creed, or color. Yet in our national sport we find discrimination against outstanding Negro baseball players who are equal to or surpass in skill many of

the present players in the National and American League." Tens of thousands of signatures went seemingly ignored by the baseball establishment.40

While baseball had thus far been able to turn a deaf ear to criticism of its color ban, it could neither dismiss nor deny the outcry over a racist remark made by a New York Yankee outfielder during a radio interview in late July 1938. After Jake Powell told a Chicago broadcaster that, in the offseason he was a policeman in Dayton, Ohio, he was asked how he kept in shape. "By cracking niggers over the head with my nightstick," Powell replied.41 Commissioner Landis suspended Powell for ten days, yet Landis and team owners had wielded their own sticks by prohibiting blacks from the big leagues for a half-century. This hypocrisy was not lost on Rodney, who called on the baseball establishment to suspend themselves.42 Rodney predicted -- incorrectly of course -- that the "recent Jake Powell rumpus" would force Landis and team owners to end discrimination in major league baseball.43

"L'Affaire Jake Powell," as the *Nation* called it, provided an opportunity for critics of the color line -- particularly Communist and black sportswriters -- to channel their collective and longstanding indignation at a single act of racism that represented the laws and customs of the country.44 William Rogosin suggested that not only did the incident solidify the sense of outrage against baseball's color line, it illustrated the instability of segregated baseball, where a single intemperate remark embroiled the sport in controversy.45 Until the signing of Robinson in October 1945, nothing brought together Communist and black sportswriters like Jake Powell.

Although black sportswriters may have had the same goal as the Communists, they did not want the Communists' cooperation. At least one sportswriter, Sam Lacy, who worked for the Chicago *Defender* and the Baltimore *Afro-American*, did not want to have anything to do with the CP -- or communism for that matter. "From the beginning, he would have nothing to do with the *Daily Worker*," Rodney said. "I don't want to get mixed up with that."46

Pittsburgh *Courier* sports editor Wendell Smith, who with Lacy comprised the two most influential black sportswriters of 1930s and 1940s, initially had a working relationship with Rodney. According to Rodney, the *Worker* and *Courier* had an arrangement to print one another's articles. In August 1939, Smith wrote Rodney a letter, praising his contributions.47 Rodney printed the letter, letting his readers know that the *Worker*'s efforts were being recognized in the *Courier*, which had the largest circulation of any black newspaper. By publishing the letter, the *Worker* could demonstrate that the Communist Party was winning acceptance in the black community.48

But Smith changed his mind when he began working with Brooklyn Dodgers' president Branch Rickey, an anti-Communist who denounced communism for interfering with baseball. Smith, himself, later wrote: "The Communists did more to delay the entrance of Negroes in big league baseball than any other single factor."49 Stung by the criticism, Rodney wrote Smith, reminding him of the letter he had written several years earlier and saying if he criticized the Communists again, the *Worker* would reprint the

letter. Smith did not repeat the criticism.

Black sportswriters generally steered away from direct confrontation with the white baseball establishment, conscious of the dangers of speaking their minds in Jim Crow America. Smith and Lacy, in particular, believed that they could best achieve their objective if they cautiously approached team executives. Their influence was limited largely to the black community because their columns were read only by blacks. In addition, black sportswriters were restricted in their access to players and managers because they were denied membership in the Baseball Writers Association -- and thus prohibited press cards.

But Rodney and other *Worker* sportswriters were members of the Baseball Writers Association. "This was a magic pass onto the field," he said.50 His membership card gave him access to locker rooms, dugouts, press boxes and the playing fields. He also ate and drank with mainstream sportswriters, who may have agreed with him on integration but could not or did not write about it. Rodney remembered sympathetic sportswriters seeking him out with stories they could not report in their newspapers: "I can't tell you how many times they would say, 'Here's a little something. I can't use it, but I'd love to see it in print.'"51

The beginning of World War II and the grim reality of international politics cast a shadow on the CP's cause. In fact, the instability in Europe affected the *Worker*'s sports pages. The anti-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union embarrassed and confused the U.S. Communist Party and the *Worker*. American Communists had steadfastly condemned fascism because it perpetuated racism -- and now the Soviet Union was allied with the fascist government of Germany. In reaction, the newspaper became less strident in its editorials and articles.52

The *Worker* published stories on the campaign to integrate baseball nearly every day during the summer of 1939; however, it did not write as often about baseball after the August 23 signing of the anti-aggression pact. When it did, it followed a watered-down strategy: praising black ballplayers and highlighting their achievements; quoting major league ballplayers and managers who said that blacks belonged in the big leagues; and urging fans to sign petitions and boycott ballparks. However, *Worker* comparisons between Nazi Germany and U.S. Jim Crow laws, once vivid features of the campaign, were not present from August 1938 until June 1941.53

In January 1941, Rodney appealed to his readers' sense of fairness. "Americans are sportsmen who hate discrimination and phony equality," he said. "American fandom is much bigger than the handful of reactionary magnates and their stooge Judge Landis."54

The *Worker* had collectively blamed Landis and team owners for perpetuating the color line, but in the early 1940s it identified Landis as the person singularly responsible for protecting segregation in baseball. In 1942, manager Leo Durocher said he would sign blacks if allowed. Landis responded that there was no color line and never had been in the two decades he had been commissioner.55 Other newspapers quoted Landis

without questioning him. But not the *Worker*. To Rodney, "Landis was a blatant liar when he said there was no rule forbidding black players in baseball."56

In December 1943, Landis agreed at the annual owners' meeting to hear the arguments for signing black players. The owners listened politely, then Landis ended the discussion and the matter was closed. Landis was no doubt annoyed that one of the speakers was Paul Robeson, the onetime All-American football star turned opera singer, who was one of the most outspoken communist sympathizers in the country. Baseball evidently could reject integration simply because of communist involvement. New York Yankee president and Sporting News editor J. G. Taylor Spink referred to the Communists as agitators.57

Only a few mainstream columnists criticized the color line in print; the rest maintained a conspiracy of silence. Meanwhile, the *Worker* continued to cry foul and went beyond its columns to end segregated baseball. During the summer of 1943, sportswriter Nat Low persuaded Pittsburgh Pirates' owner William Benswanger to give black stars Roy Campanella and Dave Barnhill tryouts. Benswanger agreed, then abruptly canceled the tryouts, citing unnamed "pressures."58 Two years later, the *Worker* and the Courier contacted Isadore Muchnick, a socially progressive councilman in Boston, who pressured the Red Sox into giving a tryout to three black players, including Jackie Robinson. The Red Sox gave the ballplayers a cursory look but nothing came of it.

Ten days earlier, Low, a *Worker* photographer, and *People's Voice* sportswriter Joe Bostic confronted Branch Rickey at Brooklyn's spring training camp and demanded that Rickey look at two black ballplayers. According to Rodney, the reporters got nothing out of it except "Rickey's cold rage."59 New York *Journal-American* sportswriter Bill Roeder wrote that the presence of a Communist photographer and sportswriter added "a sickening Red tinge."60 These abortive tryouts frustrated all involved. Yet they served to publicize the color line, breaking the conspiracy of silence that protected it.61

By the end of the war, Communists and others who wanted to integrate baseball found that social attitudes had begun to change, in large part because of World War II. After fighting and dying in a war over racism, black soldiers returned home and many demanded civil rights. New York City Councilman Benjamin Davis, a Communist, distributed a leaflet that showed two blacks -- one a soldier and the other a ballplayer. "Good enough to die for his country, but not good enough for organized baseball."62 In addition, the New York Legislature passed the Quinn-Ives Act, which banned discrimination in hiring and established a commission to investigate complaints, looking first at New York City's three baseball teams.63

Rickey, who was as savvy as anyone when it came to the politics of baseball, understood he could either integrate baseball on his own terms or be forced to do it on someone else's. Rickey secretly signed Robinson in late August, then waited to drop his bombshell on baseball. Brooklyn's top minor league team, the Montreal Royals, announced the signing on October 23, 1945.

This was a new day for baseball and society -- and the *Worker* praised itself and the Communist Party for helping to bring it about. Once again, they reminded their readers that they often had been the only daily newspaper to raise the issue. The *Worker* added that it would not be satisfied until there was no more segregation. "We must crusade and fight for justice even if we are alone," Mike Gold wrote. "We must never cease to be that 'nerve over which oppression's pains are felt, otherwise unrecorded.' We must keep on fighting until jim crow is ruined, finished, destroyed in every dirty root and fibre."64 In his article, Gold praised Rodney in particular for his role in ending segregation. "It was Lester Rodney, then sports editor of the *Daily Worker*, who started the campaign something like ten years ago," he wrote. "I hope this victory will gladden the lonesome days of Lester Rodney and make him remember that his life has been important in the anti-fascist struggle. We owe a big bouquet to Lester Rodney."

The *Worker* sent Bill Mardo, the newspaper's acting sports editor, to Florida to report on Robinson's first spring training in white baseball. (Rodney was finishing a four-year stint in the Army.) Communist and black sportswriters clearly understood the historic importance of the spring training of 1946; white sportswriters did not -- something Mardo clearly pointed out to his readers.65 Only a few sportswriters covered Robinson's first day of practice in Sanford, Florida, none from Florida or elsewhere in the South. "I suppose some people and some papers would need an atom bomb bursting about their heads," Mardo wrote, "before admitting that this world of ours does move on."66

The *Worker* closely followed Robinson's progress that spring and then during the regular season. A year later, a few days before the beginning of the season, Rodney and Mardo were in the Ebbets Field pressbox watching an exhibition game between Brooklyn and Montreal. During the sixth inning, another sportswriter tapped Mardo on the shoulder and told him that Brooklyn had purchased Robinson from Montreal, breaking major league baseball's color line. A couple New York sportswriters approached Rodney and told him he could be proud of that moment.67 In the next issue of the newspaper, Mardo wrote: "There's time tomorrow to remember that the good fight goes on. But, for today, let's just sit back and feel easy and warm. As that fellow in the press box said: " 'Robinson's a Dodger -- and it's a great day, isn't it?'"68

That day may have been delayed had it had been for the *Daily Worker*. From 1936 until 1947, *Worker* sportswriters pounded away at the sense of injustice, denial, and apathy that surrounded baseball; shamed the sport into defending itself against racism; and educated -- and even convinced -- many readers about the importance of their crusade. They made enemies, too, and were dismissed or criticized as "agitators." To some, like Sam Lacy, the communists were fringe journalists, nuisances and obstructionists. But we believe they deserve credit than that for their long campaign to end Jim Crow in baseball. When asked to assess the impact that the newspaper had on ending baseball's color ban, Mardo answered, "I think it had a major effect."69 Rodney, on the other hand, was more specific. "I'm not silly enough to think that it wasn't going to happen," he said. "I think we probably speeded up the process by a few years."70

It is difficult, probably impossible, to put the *Worker*'s contribution in terms of years, months, or weeks. One thing, however is clear: Communist Party sportswriters shouted over the din of prejudice while the nation's mainstream sportswriters remained silent, prolonging Jim Crow in baseball. At the very least, they succeeded to a remarkable degree in informing people of the existence and injustice of segregated baseball.71 But more than that, they helped end baseball's infamous color line, and thereby furthered the long struggle against Jim Crow.

Notes

1"Fans Ask End of Jim Crow Baseball," *Sunday Worker*, 16 August 1936, 1. See Kelly Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda: The *Daily* and *Sunday Worker* on the Desegregation of Major League Baseball, 1933 to 1947," master's thesis, Clemson University, 1995, pp. 1-16.

2 "Fans Ask End of Jim Crow Baseball," *Sunday Worker*, 16 August 1936, p. 15.

3 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

4 See Lamb and Bleske, "Democracy on the Field," *Journalism History*, pp. 51-59; Chris Lamb and Glen Bleske, "The Road to October 23, 1945: The Press and the Integration of Baseball," *Nine: A Journal of Baseball History and Social Policy Perspectives* 6 (Fall 1997): 48-68; Chris Lamb, "'I Never Want to Take Another Trip Like This One': Jackie Robinson's Journey to Integrate Baseball," *Journal of Sport History* 24 (Summer 1997): 177-191; Chris Lamb, " 'L'Affaire Jake Powell: The Minority Press Goes to Bat Against Segregated Baseball, *Journalism and Mass Community Quarterly* 76 (Spring 1999): 21-34; William Simons, "Jackie Robinson and the American Mind: Journalistic Perceptions of the Reintegration of Baseball," *Journal of Sport History* 12 (Spring 1985): 39-64; Bill L. Weaver, "The Black Press and the Assault on Professional Baseball's 'Color Line,' October 1945-April 1947, *Phylon* 40 (Winter 1979): 303-317; William Kelley, "Jackie Robinson and the Press, *Journalism Quarterly* 53 (Spring 1970): 139-139; Patrick Washburn, "New York Newspapers and Robinson's First Season," *Journalism Quarterly* 58 (Winter 1981): 640-644; and David K. Wiggins, "Wendell Smith, The Pittsburgh *Courier-Journal* and the Campaign to Include Blacks in Organized Baseball," *Journal of Sport History* 10 (Summer 1985): 5-29.

5 Lamb and Bleske, "Democracy on the Field," p. 58.

6 Lamb and Bleske, "Democracy on the Field," p. 58.

7 Bill Weaver, "The Black Press and the Assault on Professional Baseball's 'Color Line,'" p. 303.

8 See, Jules Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment* (New York: Oxford University, 1983), pp. 36-37.

9 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

10 William L. Patterson, "Against Jim Crow in Professional Baseball," p. 378. In *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, Volume IV, Herbert Aptheker, ed., (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1993).

11 Peter Duffy, "Red Rodney: The American Communist," *Village Voice*, 10 June 1997, p. 122.

12 Telephone interview with Bill Mardo, 18 November 1997.

13 *Fighting Words: Selections from Twenty-Five Years of the* Daily Worker (New York: New Century Publishers, 1949), pp. xi, xiii.

14 Robert Klein, "Sports Reporting in New York City, 1946-1960, by Two of the Era's Greatest and Most Influential Reporters -- Arthur Daley and Lester Rodney," *Nine*: *A Journal of Baseball History and Social Policy Perspectives* 6 (Fall 1997): 27.

15 Jules Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, pp. 36-37.

16 Mark Naison, "Lefties and Righties: The Communist Party and Sports During the Great Depression," *New Historical Perspectives*, Donald Spiver, ed., (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 130.

17 Ben Field, "The Brooklyn Dodgers Win a Game," *Daily Worker*, 29 August 1933.

18 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," pp. 4, 5, 10.

19 "Fans Ask End of Jim Crow Baseball," *Sunday Worker*, 16 August 1936, pp. 1, 15.

20 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," pp. 17-19.

21 Klein, "Sports Reporting in New York City," p. 20.

22 Kelly Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda: The *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* Journalistic Campaign to Desegregate Major League Baseball, 1933-1947," p. 78, in Joseph Dorinson and Joram Warmund, ed., *Jackie Robinson: Race, Sports, and the American Dream* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1998).

23 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

24 Klein, "Sports Reporting in New York City," p. 21. Also, see Naison, "Lefties and Righties," p. 138.

25 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," p. 20.

26 Ted Benson, ""League Open to Negroes' Frick," *Sunday Worker*, 23 August 1936.

27 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," p. 28.

28 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," pp. 19, 25.

29 Mike Kantor, "Dodgers Ready to Sign Negro Star: McKeever 'Is Ready' If Grimes O.K.'s," *Daily Worker*, 17 January 1937, p. 14.

30 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

31 Lester Rodney, "DiMaggio Calls Negro Greatest Pitcher," *Daily Worker*, 13 September 1937, p. 8.

32 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

33 Lester Rodney, "The *Daily Worker* Sports Page in '37,' " *Daily Worker*, 27 December 1937, p. 8.

34 Lester Rodney, "On the Scoreboard," *Daily Worker*, 13 September 1938, p. 8.

35 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," p. 39.

36 Bill Mills, "Why There Is Much Talk and No Action on Negro Stars," *Daily Worker*, 20 April 1938, p. 8.

37 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," pp. 31, 57.

38 "Youth Fights Jim Crow," *Sunday Worker*, 21 February 1937, p. 14.

39 Doc Daughterty, "Sez Doc," *Sunday Worker*, 28 February 1937, p. 14.

40 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," p. 100.

41 For more on the Jake Powell incident, see Lamb, "L'Affaire Jake Powell: The Minority Press Goes to Bat Against Segregated Baseball," pp. 21-34.

42 Lester Rodney, "Hanging Out the Sunday Wash," *Daily Worker*, 13 August 1938.

43 Bill Mills, "With the Negro Athletes," *Daily Worker*, 15 August 1938, p. 8.

44 Lamb, "L'Affaire Jake Powell," p. 27.

45 William Donn Rogosin, *Invisible Men* (NY: Kodanshu International, 1983), p. 192.

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47 *Sunday Worker*, 20 August 1939.

48 Rusinack, "Baseball on the Radical Agenda," p. 109.

49 Wendell Smith, "Sports Beat," Pittsburgh *Courier*, 23 August 1947, p. 12.

50 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

51 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

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54 Lester Rodney, "A Happy New Year to Sports Fans," *Daily Worker*, 1 January 1941.

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63 Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, p. 38.

64 Mike Gold, "Change the World," *Daily Worker*, 26 October 1945.

65 Lamb and Bleske, "Democracy on the Field."

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68 Bill Mardo, "Dodgers Sign Robinson," *Daily Worker*, 11 April 1947.

69 Telephone interview with Bill Mardo, 18 November 1997.

70 Telephone interview with Lester Rodney, 11 November 1997.

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