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L BROWDER

*A Talk
About the
Communist
Party*

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A Talk About the Communist Party

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Introduction

THIS pamphlet contains two speeches made by Earl Browder, General Secretary and foremost leader of the Communist Party, a year ago in Detroit and a few weeks ago in Chicago, to small gatherings of party leaders. Both speeches are in the intimate style that is natural when a highly gifted and greatly loved leader of the people talks to comrades with whom his life's work is shared. Those who heard his remarks insisted that, though not spoken for publication, they have an equally great value for many thousands of other serious men and women—especially of the trade unions—who are profoundly stirred by the war and who wish to find the best way to help to shape our course to the victory of our country and its allies and the triumph of democracy and human welfare.

We hope this pamphlet may help both to convince many fine men and women who are not yet members that they can contribute most to their highest purposes by joining the Communist Party, and to broaden the view of the Communist Party members as to the political perspective.

There is a vast new perspective opening before our country with the tremendous military events of the past year and those being prepared. The hardest part of the war is immediately ahead. But the certainty of victory has been created, and waits only for the all-out blow delivered from across the Channel by the main force of American, British and Canadian armies now in England, to coordinate with the superb action of the Soviet Red Army. And this coordinated military action is assured by the Moscow Agreements.

These Agreements and the Tehran Conference are unique in history, not alone for their establishment of the alliance for military

action, but for their extension of the coalition beyond the period of military action and into long-time collaboration for order, security and economic solutions.

For the first time in centuries there is created the possibility of prolonged world peace. For the first time all of the countries of the Continent of Europe will enjoy a degree of democracy which alone can give the possibility of peaceful social advance. The Moscow Agreements do much more than that. Through world-wide marketing and credit arrangements between states forecast in them, there is created the possibility to continue full industrial and agricultural production of all countries, instead of going into a world economic crisis and chaos as a result of closing down our industries and bringing unemployment to tens of millions. The enormous consequences of these Agreements will penetrate to the smallest village, to every farm and every home of a factory worker in every country in the world.

We are already in the beginning of a new ascendancy of effective use of democratic processes within our country and others as an outcome of the very necessity to defend these institutions in war, and of the prospect of victory. There is opening a period such as we have not seen before, that calls for the united efforts of the people first of all to secure the victory by all-out war and all-out war production. Secondly, we have a perspective as never before of bettering, even drastically bettering, the conditions of life of the people, through effective use of parliamentary democracy and of the enormously improved capacities of the trade union movement. The municipal elections in New York, Cleveland and other cities are proof of a new determination of the people to utilize the democratic institutions that we are defending from the Hitler assault.

But the efforts cannot *wait* until after the victory. On the contrary, they are part of the price of victory. We have to use our democratic institutions now in defense of the war of our country and the rights of millions now in the armed forces.

It is a strange fact that we do not yet fully possess the right of *universal* suffrage in our country. Successful military operations in the Old World will bring in both Europe and Asia a peoples' democracy with universal suffrage extending almost surely to every

man and woman from eighteen years of age and without the restrictions against transient workers of industry and agriculture. The assurance of popular suffrage contained in the Italian Agreement by the three great powers, the prototype to be extended to all nations liberated—*does not provide a poll tax!* Yet in the United States—the greatest and most advanced country in all the world in many respects—such an essential measure of democracy as universal suffrage remains to be won for a large part of our nation. The utterly un-American character of our reactionaries is shown by their fierce drive to deny the right to vote to millions of American soldiers now fighting upon foreign battlefields on the ground that they are Negroes or that they have not paid a poll tax—the reactionaries being driven by fear that these young men will vote as they fight—in the single interest of our country's victory. In England, the release of Hitler's thug Oswald Mosley has aroused all British patriots; but in America we have not yet ceased to have, for instance, a "Mosley" at the head of a Congressional Committee to supervise the political thinking of our country; and our Attorney General takes pride in "toleration" of a fifth column that organizes race riots to disrupt our war production; while a large part of our press is used every day in the interest of our country's foreign military enemies.

The greatest need on the home front is for the people to utilize the democratic processes of our country with new skill in support of the war.

The Communist Party has an indispensable part in the people's full use of the democratic process—particularly for the workers and members of the labor movement, as Browder so eloquently shows in this pamphlet.

We need to recruit to our party the finest men and women in the labor movement, and those who rightfully regard the labor movement as the spearhead of our social progress. We need men and women who see with us that the superb armed forces of our nation must be backed up by all the rest of our nation, backed up by a huge political movement supporting the war measures that lead to victory. We must have in our party the fine men and women of the Negro people who can see the vast meaning of the

election of the Communist Negro leader, Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., to the City Council of New York by the combined votes of trade unionists, Negro people and white progressives. We want our party to give greater strength to the men and women of all religious faiths—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish—who will not allow the nation to be torn with political division through persecution of any for their religious faith. Their place is in the Communist Party.

We want in the Communist Party the thousands of men and women in the factories and workshops and the trade unions who understand what is at stake in this war. The right to enjoy in our country a peaceful democratic procedure, the right to preserve and develop our American democracy so that we may find peaceful solutions of our American problems by means of universal suffrage and by unified action of the trade unions—is at stake in this war. It is among what Lenin called the "great questions in the life of nations" that can be "settled only by force"—in this war of survival.

All of us must learn from the great American leader Browder and the Communist Party something more about the proper employment of the American machinery of elections. For in the given situation the ballot is becoming for this new time what Engels called it at another historic moment in Europe long ago—one of the "sharpest weapons" of the people of the workshops and on the farms. With it we must defend the home front to uphold the good sharp military weapons of our ten million boys in the Army and Navy.

ROBERT MINOR

*New York, on the anniversary of
Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1943.*

A Different Kind of Party

(An address of Earl Browder on November 13, 1942, at a meeting of Detroit Communist Party leaders the day after he had spoken at a mass meeting of 3,000 Detroiters at Greystone Ballroom.)

MY FUNCTION tonight is to listen, and one of the reasons why I came here is to be able to learn concretely how your problems look to you, I did not come to tell you how you are going to solve your problems. You are going to solve them on the basis of your own experiences and the general line of the party.

From your discussion and from what I have seen in the meeting and in the various contacts that I have been able to make in these two days, I feel that the party is beginning to take hold of its problems in a serious manner. If you continue along this road, you are going to make increasing progress.

I think perhaps what I could contribute to your discussion at this moment would be not so much to try to discuss your particular questions here, but to just give some offhand observations as to the meaning of the party. What is our conception of the party? How do we understand the party? What is the relation of the party to our community and to the nation?

Comrades have said that last night's meeting at the Greystone Ballroom was a landmark in the history of the party here in Detroit. I think that we should understand last night's meeting as very important. We should study it.

But how are we to interpret this meeting and its significance? I think it would be a great mistake if you just considered that we

had an opportunity to have Browder come to town and that made the meeting possible. That would be very shallow. We must think deeper. Why was Browder's coming to town significant? The only significance was that I represent the party; and through the course of years my name has become known to everyone who is interested in the party. So that when you mentioned my name the people all knew that that meant the Communist Party. That meeting last night was a measurement of the widespread interest in the Communist Party.

Why is there widespread interest in our party? Because over years there has grown the realization among wide circles of the American people that the Communist Party is something which affects their lives, which affects the country, which influences the course of history. Large numbers of people who are not in our party know about it, know it is important and know they want to hear what the party has to say. You should always remember that when you are functioning as a leader of the Communist Party. You are representing this standing and prestige that our party has before a large section of the country and a large section of your own community.

When you go about your work, no matter what it may be—whether it is a meeting of your branch, a contact with a neighbor, an interview with a prospective new member, getting a sub to *The Worker*—you should always go about it with that understanding, that you are acting as a representative of the Communist Party, and your task is to make use of that standing, that prestige that our party has, and raise it higher. You have a very responsible task when you do that.

What is it that makes our party an influence in the community and in the nation? In spite of all our work, after all these years, we remain a small party, a small minority. Why is it that this particular small minority gets the attention of the community and of the nation?

It is because our party has proven itself to be a different kind of a party. Is there any other party as small as ours that could get the respectful hearing from the community that ours gets? Surely there is not.

What is it that makes our small group in the population stand out and command the respect of all, even our enemies? It is the special character of our party. We are a party which has two distinguishing characteristics that mark us off from all others. One is that we are a very closely integrated party. We think together and we give a unified answer to the problems that face the people.

What other party does that?

Whenever you speak about the Republican Party, does that mean, to the people generally, any set of ideas or proposals or methods of work? No. When you speak of the Republican Party, you speak of a party that, so far as political ideas and proposals for the solution of problems are concerned, represents chaos. What is there in common between Vandenberg and Willkie? The only thing they have in common is that they both call themselves Republicans, but on every issue of the day they are on opposite sides.

When you speak of the Democratic Party, does that bring to the ordinary mind of the man in the street an idea of a unified method of work or consistent proposals for the solution of problems? A little bit more than Republicans, but still chaos.

Here I will give you an example of New York. The Democratic Party means not only Roosevelt, Commander-in-Chief and President. Jim Farley, a boss of the Democratic Party, is organizing a revolt on a national scale against the President within the Democratic Party. Clearly, the Democratic Party does not have before the masses the position and standing of a party with a policy and a way of solving their problems.

Is it necessary to speak of the Socialist Party? The Socialist Party has almost eliminated itself from the political scene by the fact that it has no answer to anything.

A Party of Thought and Action

But the Communist Party represents a coherent set of ideas, a political understanding of our community, of our nation and of the workers, which gives a clear, practical answer to every question that the masses are interested in. That is the first distinguishing

characteristic of our party that marks it off from all others. No other party has that characteristic.

The second characteristic of our party is that, while being a small, well-knit group, thinking and working collectively in a way that makes it act different from any other party and different from the masses, at the same time, if it is really functioning as the Communist Party, it is always in the closest contact with the masses. What other party is in contact with the masses?

Other parties maintain their contact with the masses through a more or less inspired guessing of their leaders as to what the masses are thinking and wanting.

What other party has its roots directly among the masses, in the shops and in the neighborhoods? Do you ever hear of a Democratic Party branch in a shop? And do you ever see a Democratic Party club in a neighborhood that functions as a political leadership in solving the problems of the neighborhood, that functions in any way except as a vote-gathering machine at election time?

Here I must make one qualification, that in many centers of population we still have something to learn from Democratic Party clubs. For in some ways, not in a political way, not in the way we work, but in the problem of getting close to the neighborhood, I have seen many Democratic Party clubs from which we can well learn, provided we use their technique in *our* political way. They use their technique for political purposes, not in our sense at all, but in the sense merely of gathering votes for their ticket on election day. We want to gather votes also, though our purpose is different. Therefore, we learn their technique from the Democrats and incorporate it into our political system.

It is a distinguishing characteristic of our party that from top to bottom we have constant contact with the masses, without losing ourselves among the masses, keeping ourselves a distinct political body that raises itself above the dead level and takes the masses with it. Our party is a body of political thinking and of a particular method of work among the masses.

Now when you go out to build the party and get new members, what is your problem? If you want to get a new member, you first of all want to get that person to begin to think along our lines, you

want to give him the political thought of the party. He cannot get that automatically, out of the air. He can only get it by contact with the party, with party members, with party literature and in party meetings. He begins to get this political thinking of our party and becomes conscious that this is something new; and he begins to come to us for answers to the problems. There you have a possible recruit. Such a person is ready to be invited to join the party. If you invite him without that, you have not got a member yet, even though he signs up. If you have your new member without that political preparation, then you have to give him that preparation after he comes into the branch.

A large part of the weakness in building our party has been this, that many of our new recruits were not prepared and after they came in we did not think they needed development. In our branches, we never give enough attention to our political thinking. In our branches, where party members come together, besides the routine of business, dues, literature distribution and other matters, all of which is important, there should always be some political discussion. Not always much; sometimes ten or twenty minutes of simple, clear presentation of an issue of the day. This is sufficient to enliven the discussion and have the result of binding the members closely together. But we should never forget that this is the very lifeblood and essence of our party, without which we could not exist at all.

Further, about our method of work. It is true we are not on the whole experts in our method of work. Often we do it clumsily and badly, but even when we do it clumsily we still are much further advanced than other political groups in the country; we are more influential than any group of similar proportions in the country. When we become experts in our method of work, we become powerful. A few people, properly working as an organized group, can enlighten and therefore influence the direction of the thoughts and actions of hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands, particularly in times like these when events are breaking up all other political groupings and schools of thought.

This method of our work is based upon political thought. Our program is the most powerful thing in the political life of our country today, the most powerful thing in the world today. We are

planting it in America so that it grows right out of the ground of our own country and our own community. Our party is strong because of this, strong beyond its numbers, because although we grow slowly in numbers, we grow by leaps and bounds in our influence upon the political thought of our country. The reason we have to talk about building the party is because our political influence has grown far beyond our numbers and now we have to begin to catch up with it.

A Party Close to the People

Our party needs to grow now. Although for a considerable time we are going to be a minority party and are not yet facing the task of building a socialist system in our country, today we have to grow and grow much faster than we ever have before. More and more the solution of the problems of our nation and of the whole world is falling upon the Communists to solve. We are not solving them alone, and let us always carefully avoid the tendency to boast that we separate ourselves from other people. Everything we do today we are doing more and more in collaboration with larger numbers of people. But we are the conscious element in this process. We are the ones who always know what we are doing and where we are going. All the other people who are collaborating with us may even know more about a particular problem than we do, and when they do we must acknowledge this and give them help in leadership. But where they know about one thing, we know basically about many things.

Therefore, even when we are dealing with people who on a particular question know more than we do, and we support them, we are still stronger than they are, because the moment they get off their particular issue they are weak and we are strong on every question.

So we have a tremendous responsibility today. Upon our party depends to a large extent the fate of our country today, small as we are. There is no question that the work of our party has contributed much to make it possible for the United States to meet the tests of the war even as well as we have. If you could think of

our country without the Communist Party in this last year, you would have to think of a picture of chaos far beyond anything that we have today. Our party has been a great factor in preventing in the country a really critical breakdown from the stress of war for which the country was not prepared.

It is true that during part of this period we even had to stand for many misconceptions about our party. There were many misconceptions before we were able to establish the full understanding in our labor movement that strike action was no longer considered permissible by us for solving our problems. That was a difficult test. Incidentally, we made a few little mistakes on the way. We are not afraid of that. We had one job to carry through and we did carry it through.

Now we have, especially today, the task that goes right along with that, to work out alternative ways of solving the economic problems of the workers. The capitalists are not going to do it. In fact many of them are going to continue to exploit the situation, not all of them, but enough of them to make it a more serious problem, and especially in the mass production industry.

The government is not going on its own initiative to solve these problems. The government is going to solve these problems when and as the people are going to press the government to solve the problems. The solution must come from the labor movement and within the labor movement and toward this solution the Communists in the labor movement have a great responsibility, not because individually we are any better than the other people but because we have one great advantage over the other people. They work alone. We work together and we think together and this gives us a strength far beyond any individuals and enables us to incorporate into ourselves all the individual contributions that spring up from the masses because we are the only ones that bring all the ideas together and organize them.

Take the Tolan Committee report. I am not disclosing any secrets when I tell you that the basic thought of the necessity of centralization and control of the national economy as a whole for war purposes was brought forward by the Communists long before. That basic thought is gathering momentum and is gathering sup-

port from big capitalists, farmers, small businessmen, the labor movement, all sections of the population. The A. F. of L. is going along this road, as well as the C.I.O.—all orientating themselves to the solution of these problems.

We of the labor movement, and particularly of the Communist Party, still have the biggest part of the job to do. This task is only begun, but we have a very clear foundation for it and we must find the ways of connecting every economic problem of the day to the solution of the problem of winning the war. It cannot be done simply by repeating, by copying from one problem to the other. It must be done through the careful examination of facts, analyzing each problem in relation to the general problems.

This is the task of our party. This is the thing that will make our recruiting campaign such a powerful one. While the process of growth of our party may be slow at first, as we master these problems and get the solutions to them, we have the possibility of becoming a real mass party, not on a scale of getting hundreds of members but hundreds of thousands in the period ahead of us.

Why the People Need the Communist Party

(An address of Earl Browder to a group of Communist Party members in Chicago on September 25, 1943.)

DURING the past one or two years many new members have come into our party. They see the party as it is at this moment, from the viewpoint of their immediate participation in its work, but they do not have the benefit of the long years of experience of the building of our party; they do not automatically acquire the full depth and richness of this experience which must be transmitted to all the members of our party. For, after all, the essential distinction between new and old members is not the number of months they have been in the party—most people after they have been in the party three or four months begin to consider themselves old members, and properly so—but the extent of their experience in the party, the time they have had to grow and mature with the party and absorb its political and intellectual riches.

An Educational Institution

Our party is something more than just another organization. It has many features similar to those of other organizations, but it is a special kind of organization. It is this first of all because, as a Marxist party of the working class, its policies are based on science and are the product of science. It is this because it strives to free the material and intellectual forces of production from all obstacles to their unlimited development in the service of mankind, because it strives to keep the path of progress open and, as such, is the

champion and transmitter of all that is best and enduring in human culture, thought and knowledge.

Sometimes this is missed by people who are very close to us and of us, because they have been accustomed to think of culture purely in terms of the big established universities. But our party not only bases its own theory and practice on the achievements of modern science, it not only anchors its policies in scientific thought, but, by its character, program and aspirations it stands and fights for the preservation and development of the best achievements of human culture for society as a whole. As a political party which is concerned with grasping and solving the main problems of how to live on this earth, our party fights for the social, political and economic prerequisites for scientific and cultural progress for all mankind. It is in this sense, and because of this relation to culture and science, that our party, a Marxist party, is the most complete bearer of the great achievements of tens of centuries of the rise of the human mind and its mastery of the earth.

Now that is a very high conception of our party. And as you begin to understand our party in that way, you have to deepen your understanding of the responsibilities and rewards of party membership.

The first responsibility of party membership is that each one of us has to systematically improve his own mind. Each one of us has the duty to educate himself and his co-workers at the same time in the whole process of the political struggle which is our everyday business.

The party is an immense educational institution, not in the formal sense, of course, but in the much deeper sense that its members, striving to base their activities on thought and knowledge, must constantly learn from experience in the struggle. I don't suppose that all of our party members are conscious that they are thus educating themselves more and more. But all of them are doing it more or less, consciously or unconsciously, and those who do not constantly educate themselves sooner or later fall away from the party. The more they educate themselves and the more consciously they organize their own self-education, the stronger they emerge as party members and party leaders; the more firmly they bind the party

together into an unbreakable instrument for the shaping of the future history of our country and of mankind.

Clearly we cannot play our role without education. But regardless of how much previous education we got, the most essential part of our education is what we get in the party and from the party.

Think for Yourself

The first thing that we have to strive for in the conscious process of self-education is to learn how to think for ourselves, each of us standing on his own feet. That is a very difficult demand to place on any one, but it is the indispensable condition of true education.

One of the shallow misconceptions of the party is that once you join the party you can stop thinking for yourself; that the party does the thinking for you and hands down the decisions, and all you have to do is be a disciplined member and carry them out. That is what many people on the outside think of the Communist Party. Not very many Communists think that. But sometimes that conception even enters into our party by the back door till it is swept out again.

We value our discipline in the party. We value the ability of our party to stand together under any and all conditions and meet any kind of blows from the outside without flinching. And even when people do not fully understand sometimes, we value the faith they acquire in the party which enables them to unite with the party on issues. But that is only one side of the process.

The other and more important side of the process is that even those who stand with the party on issues on which they are not entirely clear do so only because they have learned through experience to expect the party to be right; they do so because they expect to be able to prove to themselves by their own thinking in the course of the struggle that the party was right when they went along with it. If, in the course of experience, the party should begin to show that it was wrong, it would politically lose all of its power of discipline over anyone.

Thus, the foundation even of that discipline which appears to

rest entirely on faith is the ability to think out questions for oneself and come to correct answers.

There is the idea quite considerably developed in the United States, even more than in other countries, that thinking things out for oneself means arriving at different conclusions from everyone else; that if 100 people think things out for themselves there will be 100 conclusions, or maybe 101. That is the idealistic philosophy which regards the conclusion as the exclusive product of each individual's brain.

We have a different method of thinking and a different philosophy and approach to life. Our theory of knowledge teaches us that the thought process in the human brain corresponds to the phenomena of the objective world outside. We say that if 100 people, given a common experience and training, really think a problem out, each one for himself, they are almost certain to come out with the same conclusion. This is because the objective, outside world exists independently of men's consciousness of it.

It is well established in the field of science that while there may be all sorts of different opinions in the course of working out scientific problems, the scientific validity of the final solution will be evidenced not only by its practical results, but also, usually, by the degree of *agreement* and *unanimity* of all the leading workers in that field with respect to the final objectively verifiable conclusions. If there is any field of human research in which such unanimity is not possible, and is not even conceivable as a goal to work towards, then it certainly is not a field of science.

In the course of working out the economic, political and theoretical problems of society, as in all other scientific problems, the validity of the final solution depends on *how it works* in the real world in the test of actual practice. The economics, the politics and the theory of our party have met this test of science and have been proven correct. The unanimity of a great mass political party in our country on this basis has become possible. And when it is a case, not of 100, but of hundreds of thousands of people of the most advanced class of modern society—thinking each for himself, pooling their thought in one organization, making use of the most modern scientific theory—then these people are invincible.

Collective Improvement Requires Individual Improvement

In the science of politics, of human development, the individual minds working on its problems along scientific lines and with systematic checkup of the results of their thinking, will inevitably produce more and more uniformity of thought and more and more unanimity of conclusions; more and more a cohesive, collective thinking, but a *collective thinking which is not the negation of the individual, but is based precisely upon a constant improvement of the individual in that process.*

And no individual can really contribute to the collective thought unless he is able, or can learn, to think for himself.

I think it would be a very good part of the process of self-education of all of our members, if each member, facing the problems of his daily life in his own shop or neighborhood as well as the problems of the nation in the present complex situation, would try to give himself the answers to every new question before he gets the answer from the party. And when he gets the party's collective answer, let him check up to see how close he was individually to the collective answer of the party.

A large part of our party does that, I know—an increasingly large part of our party. But we shall not be satisfied until every party member does that, until he trains himself to think out and answer these questions before they have been solved for him. When enough of our party members do that, the whole quality of our party will be raised. It will be raised because the members will demand a lot more and get a lot more from the leadership which it elects to the center of our party.

Our party constantly strives to raise its quality and its standards of thought and work because it is based on science, on the objectivity of science and the recognition of the laws of social development. To us practical politics is something much deeper than the politics of any other group. We relate all the questions of our practical politics, from the smallest to the largest, to our whole philosophy of history and to our deepening understanding of all of the problems of social development. And our ideal is to constantly shape our politics more and more into the form of a prac-

tical working science, guided by our understanding, just as scientific as that of a worker in a laboratory in the industries or the universities. And even more practical.

We set ourselves to be scientists in a field where most of our fellow citizens still assume that empirical art and inspiration are the only guide. We know that the sure light of scientific understanding is the best and only sure guide leading humanity to the solution of its critical problems. And we are in the midst of a world crisis, the most profound that history has ever produced. Tremendous changes are maturing in the world. And only those who have been educated, and who have been educating themselves, to understand the process of social and historical change, will be able to influence and guide these changes as they take place.

Those to whom these changes make no sense and are merely vexatious and difficult problems and fearful things—those will be completely unable to guide these changes. The most that they can do is to resist the changes, but surely they cannot guide them.

Therefore, without indulging in wishful thinking or messianic complex, without thinking that we are the chosen people upon whom fate has placed some great commission—we can be certain that our party has a great and responsible role to play, now and in the future. Our party is a special kind of organization precisely because we are the only people who employ the method of modern science in the field of sociology. This can only be the science of Marxism-Leninism, the only science that exists in the field of social relationships between men. This method of science is the powerful instrument further developed by Stalin, which is being used now by the Socialist State with an effect that astonishes the world. Only the scientific method can effectively deal with the enormous problems of the present time either in the labor movement or in society as a whole. It is by this method that we are systematically studying the processes of social change, understanding its laws and understanding also the art of applying this knowledge in practical life in such a way as to affect the whole process of history.

That is why everyone in our society who begins to think in those terms inevitably turns to our party.

We Can't Neglect Organization

Unfortunately, we are not keeping up with the pace of history. Historical development is moving so fast today that American society is producing 100 people every day who are hungry for our party. They may not know what it is, but they are searching for it. And we are reaping only a small part of this immense harvest of people who want to be a part of our movement. We are small in number but there is a great and constantly enlarging number who must be given our understanding and be enlisted in our effort.

To bring that about we have to organize ourselves. We have to organize our party; we have to make available the results of the thinking and the work of everyone in the party for the benefit of the strengthening of each party individual, making each individual's work and thought a contribution to the party whole.

That is a complicated process of organization. It requires time. It requires effort. And the constant problem that we have to solve more and more efficiently as we go forward is to get these organizational results without wasting the time and energy of people. It is unfortunately a fact that when we begin to organize we can get lost in the machinery of organization. We can begin to spend so much time on organization that the thing we are organizing for just gets lost in the process. Every one of us, especially the old timers whose experience goes back into the early twenties and before, can remember the interminable and dreary meetings we had to go through, year after year, before we began to get a party which, on the whole, was capable of effective organization.

We haven't entirely outlived that past yet. There is still too much time wasted in our organizational processes. There is not enough thought given to saving time, that precious human commodity, of which we each have such a strictly limited part. Each one of us has just so much time and no more. The exact time for each one of us may be regulated up or down. But no matter how much we regulate it, it is still a strictly limited amount with none to waste.

Our problem is to learn how to get efficient results in the working out of effective policies for the task in hand with a minimum

expenditure of time and energy. If we can place that goal definitely and clearly before all of our party members, we can bring about a revolutionary improvement in our party life.

The problem is how to get more directly to the conclusion of the task at hand with a maximum amount of clarity and agreement and a minimum of useless discussion, so that as much time as possible can be turned to that creative discussion which is not directed to the overcoming of immediate organizational difficulties, but to the deepening of our understanding and application of our correct political principles among the broad masses.

Big Events Require a Stronger Party

You may think I have, in our discussion today, run away from the big political events. It is the big political events that have forced me to think of these problems. I pick up this morning's papers and see that the Red Army has moved into three or four more big places, the last remaining Nazi strong points on the line they reached two years ago. In the last nine months the Red Army has driven the Nazis back to where they were three months after they launched their attack in the East.

Just imagine if we and the rest of the world could be making just the same kind of an offensive against the Nazis or even half as good an offensive! Why, as far as the military struggle is concerned, the problem would be solved already, and we would all be deep into the problems that follow, the military struggle, the problems of how to bring a new ordered relationship into the world. That is going to be a very interesting time, too, when we come to it. We can't waste much time about it now because, although the Red Army is approaching the hour of a definite decision on the Eastern front, we in the West are lagging so far behind that it threatens to create a new kind of crisis which will be very complicated and very difficult.

The question is, why do we lag so far behind, in Britain and in America? And after putting all the blame we possibly can everywhere else, we finally have to turn to our party. For surely, we have to bear some of the responsibility, too! If we claim to be the most

understanding group in our country, we certainly must bear a heavy share of the responsibility for the lagging of our own country in the solving of the international problems of the day. We have to bear a large share of the responsibility for the failure of Britain and America to open up the Second Front, which could have brought victory last year, and which certainly could have brought victory by the anti-Hitler coalition this year.

The pressure of history for these actions is so great that no matter how small we are as a party, if we were working more efficiently, we would certainly have helped to produce greater results.

So my thoughts are turned by the pressure of the international events to the examination of our own party, to the extent of its political education and preparedness, and the degree of its maturity in the art of organization. And I think we must turn the thought of the whole party to this problem of improving our own work, of deepening it politically, improving our education, each individual for himself, by his own efforts, and all of us collectively, and in this way enhancing the effectiveness, authority and prestige of the party in the country as a whole. We must turn our thought to mastering, much more than we have, the difficult art of the organization of our forces, the direction of our efforts along concerted channels.

I don't want to give any formulas which will solve the question for you. I only want to stimulate, as much as my voice can, the attention and thinking of each and every one of us, so that all of us together, thinking hard along these lines, will produce a better party, a more understanding party, a more efficient party. And because we have such a high estimate of the party as it is, we demand much better. And with all of us working along that line, with all of us thinking in those terms, I am certain we are going to create a much more powerful party in the United States in the course of the next few months and years.

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