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THE THIRD PARTY AND THE BIG SWITCH OF '48

In his Chicago speech of Dec. 29th, Henry Wallace announced his independent candidacy for President and his support for a 3rd party in 1948. Unfortunately, Henry Wallace, himself, has contributed much to the great confusion which threatens the success of the 3rd party. PCA, similar liberal groupings, and pro-3rd party union leaders have done the same. The key to all this confusion is the confusion peddled by the fake Communist Party in this country.

The 3rd party is beset by the curious disease of "prenatal old age". For two years, all constructive attempts at building the 3rd party have been defeated by a CPUSA-formulated cry of "premature". Effective immediately with Wallace's announcement of Dec. 29th, all pre-maturity counselors divided into two groups. One group, suddenly for a 3rd party, conveniently forgot all its sabotaging arguments against the 3rd party. The other group, now frantically opposed to the 3rd party, switched its part of the pre-maturity gag to "too late".

We, who want a 3rd party and not a farce, must expose the intentions of our friendly enemies who first restricted the 3rd party movement to the prenatal and now restrict it to old age. The problem is more complicated than this. How can the newly convinced supporters of the 3rd party effectively combat the old age counselors unless they carefully analyze and openly criticize their own past records in strangling all 3rd party growth while waiting patiently for it to be built by those very elements who have turned out to be its strongest opposition. Only such criticism can dispel the confusion, and it has to come soon because the 3rd party opposition is painstakingly using the seasoned anti-3rd party arguments of those now fighting for the 3rd party. If this is complicated, it is nonetheless true--as true as all the other complicated wreckage of progressive and radical movements in the U.S.

Despite its shortcomings and dangers, the PR Club and other expelled Communists wholeheartedly support the 3rd party and consider it an important--though not yet secure--turning point in the U.S. in the fight against American Imperialism, Fascism, and War. It is the most hopeful sign yet from the American people to the people of the world.

Our analysis of the 3rd party situation is an attempt to rally open-eyed support, conscious of the great dangers of scuttling and sellout. It tries to convince certain groups of expelled Communists of the necessity for building a correct 3rd party--an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, non-rebaiting 3rd party with a solid working-class base--a 3rd party whose integrity is insured by a far-seeing real Communist core.

Reception

The reception the 3rd party movement is getting from the Republican and Democratic Parties is a farcical verification of the 3rd party argument that there are no differences between the 2 parties. The Republican Party has greeted the 3rd party as a "boon" which will sap Democratic strength. The Democratic Party has greeted the 3rd party as a "boon" which will remove the stigma of red from its support. And yet, as both parties greet the "boon", they grate their teeth in a real frenzy of fear. There is more instructive spice in this farce. The Republican Party threatens that this sapping of Democratic strength makes it possible for them to nominate a most unpalatable candidate such as Taft or Vandenberg instead of a more expedient one such as Eisenhower or Dewey. (Is this bragging or complaining?) The punch line appears when the Democrats frantically burp out exactly the same threat--the irresponsibility of Republican nomination made possible by the emergence of the 3rd party. Such unified, bipartisan argument is again poetically expressive of the true one-party character of our elections.

Having harmoniously greeted the 3rd party "boon" (we are indebted to the N.Y. Times for the delicate choice of "boon"), both parties announce a rebaiting campaign to the death against the 3rd party. They will ruthlessly destroy this threat to the American election "look". How often are we reminded that so much of the world can vote for only one party, how often that so much of the world faces the confusion of too many parties? Now we have been reminded that 3rd parties are a disorganizing force. Less than two, more than two, and three having been denounced as heathen, the number two emerges as the holy sign of election-Americanism. Not only holy, but magic--2 in 1.

PM Deception

The fear of the emerging 3rd party is caused by its threat to the bipartisan, imperialist war plans. The commissioned philosopher in dispelling this fear is PM's Lerner (more accurately--Marshall Field's Lerner). His ageless technique of the "friendly" enemy cajoles 3rd party waverers with: you have a point there, your principle is perhaps correct--in fact, do it; BUT don't do it too soon, too late, or on time if it turns out to be orders from Belgrade. A brief examination of Lerner's answer to PCA's Baldwin in PM of Dec. 28th can be instructive in removing many weak points in the 3rd party picture. Lerner attacks insidiously exactly where the 3rd party is weakest, exactly where it has been weakened by the Social Democratic theories of Lerner (and in subtle form, of the CPUSA).

Lerner insists that there are differences between the 2 parties worth working on which the promotion of the 3rd party would destroy. Where did Lerner get this angle?--From two years of 3rd party double-talk which said exactly that--on the advice of the Daily Worker editorials which bore rotten fruit all over the U.S. Didn't Wallace propound this idea for the 15 months he toured? Lerner warns that the 3rd party project will elect the Republicans. Here too, Lerner blows the 3rd party supporters down with their own bad breath. Lerner who supports the good points of the Marshall plan can snicker at Wallace who also boasts of his support of the "humanitarian" angles of the plan. If Lerner denounces Russia, Wallace, also, is careful to chastize the U.S. and the S.U. in the same breath. If Lerner viciously attacks a "Molotov plan", Wallace does his daily "expediency" in references to Russian "extremists"--in a controlled sort of way. When Lerner moves into real newspaper slime with the warning that a 3rd party defeat will mean a "get tougher" policy with Russia, he is merely echoing the timidity of the CP advice which convinced all progressives in America not to venture a decisive step because war was imminent --a factor which forced them to keep astride the good points of the Truman administration rather than lose all to the Tafts and the Vandenberg's. You see, Lerner only knows what he reads(--in the Daily Worker?)

Lerner pursues his plan unswervingly of kill 'em with their own weak meat: oh, the 3rd party is O.K. if it's only a temporary pressure threat on Truman which will dutifully remove itself sometime before Nov. 9th, and throw the show to the Democrats. Lerner knows too well that this possibility exists and threatens to destroy the 3rd party on seconds' notice. He fears that the transitional pressure period of the 3rd-party movement is about to end and both parties will be damned and a new party built. Then Lerner won't get his war on Russia. He snivels that he can understand a strong 3rd party taking the field, --but you boys are too weak. Fatherly advice from the enemy. Lerner sagely offers advice he swiped ^{from} the people he hates; too soon, too late, too little; you have been prenatal, you are now dead--and under such conditions it is rather vulgar of you to move. More Lernerese: obviously conditions for a 3rd party don't exist or a PCA would not have to rally support. In fact, the whole shebang is adventurist. Cynical old Lerner--swiping all his ideas and all his words from the D.W. to imprison all the heretofore self-destroying ideas of the 3rd party within the 3rd party.

Lerner's attack can be valuable in teaching those who are really for a third-party to build in a hurry and clearly reject all the mistakes of the past. It should effectively teach the 3rd party to be aware of these friends who want a 3rd party--but not at the moment. An insight into PM's position can be gained from reference to its editorial of Sept. 13, 1946 which backed the present ideas of Wallace then because he was using them only to back the Meads and the Lehman's and hold back the 3rd party.

PM's wisdom also covers a very real fear. As the 3rd party gathers momentum, PM will face one of two awful choices: either fight

the 3rd party all the way and sometime before the elections become a complete World-Telegram outfit, thereby losing readers and market (and Field won't like that, Lerner),--or be forced to react to the proven force of the 3rd party and switch back to it. That's why Lerner is thinking awfully hard these days.

So---the Democrats, the Rpublicans, and the various Social Democrats (Lerner, ADA, the anti-3rd party bloc of former supporters in PCA, ALP and the unions) are all clear on the meaning of the 3rd party and how to fight it. All the progressive world looks with new hope to the news from America, and hopes that, win or lose in '48, the 3rd party will kill the war plans.

Against the clarity of the opposition and the steadfast support of the common people of the world, we find the tragedy of confusion only among those who support the 3rd party. This confusion comes from the opportunist theories of retreat offered by the CPUSA which has demoralized every progressive advance in the U.S. Because of the endlessness of CP double-talk, many expelled Communists and others have become so wary of 3rd parties, coalitions and progressive movements of varied types, that today, they are paralyzed by mistrust. The CP which held back the 3rd party for so long switched to noble support only when Wallace made up his mind, but even now, it supports a 3rd party with the same old cautious ifs and buts. On the other hand, we who were expelled for fighting the CP's opportunism (including the 3rd party delay), will work for the 3rd party but with a special responsibility of trying to insure the correct 3rd party. Before attempting to explain these complicated relations, it is necessary to extract from the loose talk and the lies the actual state of the 3rd party program now.

The 3rd Party Program

Unfortunately, the 3rd party program--as yet-- has been expounded mainly by Wallace, and as a 3rd party program only since the Chicago speech. The strength and weaknesses of the Wallace-3rd party line are contained in the Chicago speech and in the 7 pt. program offered the next day by Wallace. No part of this is accidental or casual because it was all repeated consistently throughout Wallace's 15 month tour of the U.S. and Europe. Basically, the Chicago speech was excellent and important to the whole world, and this mustn't be obscured by the typical Wallace faults. Wallace's faults are not the worst in the picture.

In Chicago, Wallace said that in his 15-month tour he found the face of America to be confusion, uncertainty, and fear--fear of the approaching war and depression. Wallace spoke against monopoly capitalism and its war mission today. (The fact that Wallace is a great exponent of "progressive" capitalism makes this no less important.) He attacked the scourges of America: yellow journalism, racial bigotry, current Hitlerite methods, attacks on civil rights, and redbaiting. He called for the saving of the U.N., for a real U.N., not a U.S. caucus. He demanded a disarmament conference without the atomic reservations.

of the U.S., a real no-tough-bluff understanding with Russia, and against the hemming-in of Russia. He called for help to Europe through the U.N.--not by the U.S. unilaterally. He wants this help given with priority to the nations that suffered the most from Fascist aggression and without discrimination against the internal politics or social institutions of those countries. He defended the independence of these countries and ruled out economic blackmail and military supplies. He saw the necessity for guarantees to prevent the rebuilding of Germany as an aggressor nation and consideration of the justifiable Russian fears of aggression. He spoke for peace, security, and progress for the whole world. Wallace knows that we must recognize the necessity of the peaceable coexistence of the systems of Capitalism and Socialism, or commit suicide. Wallace has labeled American "agents" the worst.

Wallace now sees no differences between the two parties, both controlled by the industrial giants. He sees the 3rd party as a peace need--in terms of a new political alignment. To that end, he declared his candidacy. He understands that an electoral victory is not necessary in '48 to make the 3rd party a success. The real success is the registering of an unmistakable peace vote to show to the whole world that we will not allow America to plunge the world into another war. He correctly pointed to the prevention of UMT as a key attack in this direction. Knowing all this, he says baloney to the red scare, and warns his friends not to succumb when they are called Russian tools, etc. Wallace announces the expected departure of the fearful and feels certain that thousands of new fighters will take their places--and win. When the press put him on the spot regarding red support, he faced the question pretty well and welcomed any support from those standing for peace.

Certainly, any real Communist will have to admit that this much of the Wallace-3rd party program is a good beginning. What part, therefore, is weak or incorrect? Mainly, the danger to the 3rd party lies outside the limits of the words of its program. The danger lies in the arena of actions. But even this is indicated by weaknesses present in Wallace's speeches.

If Wallace is usually unafraid of redbaiting, he is at least too "expediency" conscious. If Wallace thinks he confuses his opposition when he boasts of his support for the "humanitarian" angles of the Marshall plan, when he pits the Marshall plan against the Truman plan, or when he criticizes Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia for not joining the Marshall plan,--he's sadly mistaken. All he accomplishes through this is the confounding of his own forces--which he has done. How needless this is, is illustrated by Wallace's own effective expose of the complete imperialist nature of the Marshall plan. Although he insists on friendly relations with Russia, his opposition worries him into references to Russian "extremists". Who these "extremists" are who disagree with Wallace's own peace ideas not even Wallace can specify.

Can one blame Wallace so much when one remembers that the D.W.'s expediency is worse? Although the N.Y. Times reports Wallace's support

of the Marshall plan, the D.W. finds it expedient in reporting the same speech to omit this fact completely. Such considerate censorship tends to eliminate any worry among the rank and file about the dangers of following Wallace's every hiccup blindly.

If Wallace bravely exposes discrimination, bigotry, and the un-american witchhunt, why does he, hat in hand, have to solemnly intone the statistics of his ancestry--his real American ancestry. America excels in producing expert politicians who are superb in the stark monologue: "America, thou art a complex, beautiful melting pot to me-- but I want to make it clear to all reporters present that I, myself, am a real American. My ancestors came here in..." Such pains won't even net Wallace the vote of --the American Indian. He doesn't have the vote; he came too soon--and from Asia, perhaps?

Wallace did not clarify the exact meaning of his "independent candidacy", and he did not stress the organization of the 3rd party enough. This cannot be explained by the technical non-existence of the national 3rd party at the moment. The fact is that a fraction of an inch below the surface of America today is a 3rd party with a lot of available organizational strength. All that is needed is a national convention to launch it. But Wallace has still to prove that he has not some reserve energy left for finagling with the Democratic machine. In this respect, only the motion of the 3rd party can speak eloquently--and move the Wallaces. The 3rd party has to discontinue its idle maneuvers, its dreaming ifs and buts, its conditions for Democratic support. Who cannot but suspect that any superficial Democrat change would be merely a desperate vote-grabbing gag, terminating on election day. Wallace has not yet convinced America that he won't fall for this. This is the dangerous state of the 3rd party. Damn both parties and no reservations; refuse support to any Democrat who sticks it out with his old machine because he thereby perpetuates the 2-party monopoly and sabotages the 3rd party.

At the moment, Wallace's speeches represent the 3rd party too completely because too many are merely following when Wallace moves and waiting while Wallace thinks. This party had better not be one man. It had better not generate another idol in place of a program and an organization controlled by its membership.

This brings us to a leading question. If Wallace pursued the same train of thought with the same virtues and faults for 15 months (with the liberals and the CP liberals following faithfully), what produced the new advance announced Dec. 29th? Wallace was finally forced to decide one way or the other by the pressure of events and people. Time was awasting and organizational preparations had to be made. If some supporters of the 3rd party know little of the dangers of eternal waiting, they at least know enough of the technical problems of elections to know that Wallace wasn't giving them much time to even get petitions signed for a place on the ballot. More basically, behind this was a growing spontaneous movement for a 3rd party with or without Wallace.

This is the only way that the 3rd party will advance--through the pressure of a movement and not through the maneuvers of a handful of men. If Wallace has decided to run and build a 3rd party, he has yet to complete his gravitation to that "new political alignment" he speaks about, and away from his past. It is only necessary to mention the Wallace-Jesse Jones mess which Roosevelt couldn't handle, so Wallace took it on the chin, Jesse Jones won and Roosevelt saved face. There is also the matter of the Democratic Convention Roosevelt worried about, so Wallace evaporated, Truman ran, Roosevelt saved more face. In truth, Henry helped to give us Harry. This wavering still shows in Wallace.

Let the 3rd party back and build the 3rd party. Let us build a membership party from the bottom so that no sellouts, no sudden shocks in the course of the election can become an inevitability.

Real Communists and the 3rd Party

The PR Club feels that real Communists in the U.S. must work to build the 3rd party while they build a real Communist Party. There is no contradiction between these --and many more--responsibilities. Certainly, this makes it tough, it's the rare day in an unsleeping Communist's life when he can tackle problems one by one. The correct work invested in building a 3rd party with the best people in the U.S. can logically turn into a valuable inventory for a real Communist Party's recruits. In the course of this work, we can find the best elements in the CPUSA now, and prove the facts and disprove the fairytales about loyalty and renegades. We will rediscove the long-disillusioned Communists and those who never joined for understandable reasons.

It is true that there is nothing more important than building a real Communist Party. It is true that nothing can be successful without a real CP. This is all the more reason for not dreaming-up fake reasons for inactivity. We have to build a CP in the course of work in varied spheres-- and not in the abstract limbo which in its nakedness means: I do nothing til I get a real CP, because it would all be wasted effort. Underneath all this sophistry is simply lack of Communist understanding of the People's Front idea. Of course, all expelled Communists in the movement for a real CP say that they stand for the People's Front, etc., etc. Only--this is not the right period. They put the People's Front in history books--not in their current theories or actions. The Dunces, Darcys, and Dowlings say Fascism is dead--the People's Front does not apply.

Tito exposed this foolishness and much more at the recent People's Front Congress in Yugoslavia:

"What do we see today? We see that international reaction is embarking upon new experiments. A reactionary, aggressive, terrorist, fascist ideology is best suited to aggressive and insatiable imperialisms for the purpose of preserving their existing positions and conquering new ones. With the help of this ideology, imperialism

wishes to arrest the spread of progressive human thought in contemporary society, to prevent the formation of genuine democratic states, faced as it is with the impossibility of destroying the great Socialist state--the Soviet Union.

"International reaction, headed at the present time by American financial magnates, is again starting its former experiment. It is again striving, tirelessly, with all means, to resurrect fascism in various countries, including Western Germany...Nevertheless, we consider that international reaction will again be defeated in spite of the fact that in the U.S. itself, fascism is gaining more and more ground."

"Many people think today that People's Fronts are something obsolete, something superfluous at this stage of development; but this is wrong...they are today more necessary, but they have to be given a new substance ..."

"Consequently, the People's Fronts are merging into a world peace front."

Against this, consider Dowling's attack on the PR Club's position on the 3rd party:

"We do not go along with those who say that 'Fascism would be prerequisite for the waging of an anti-Soviet war'.

"For one thing, let us bear in mind that the Hitlerite and Mussolini formulae for Fascism have failed, have been crushed, have been demonstrated as 'impractical' even to the bourgeoisie."

Having made such an imposing start, Dowling enters that labyrinth of advice against the 3rd party which we have quoted at length and analyzed in SPARK #3. But let us be of service in offering the latest Dowling poetic license on this subject.

"You work to build a 'third' nationwide political party. The payoff is that, after a few years, you will probably succeed--and that is the hell of it. " Or--

"Feverish preparations for war will be in progress while the 'third' party officials coo softly of 'peace'. In short, you will have arrived at exactly the goal you set for yourself, and when you get there you will find out that it is not where you really wanted to go. The second approach (and this is the correct one, we believe) is entirely different. You pick your goal first, the correct one. This goal is the replacement of capitalism by socialism." Or--now the pretzel-play:

"Suppose a worker says, 'from what you say, to which I agree in general, it seems to me that I shouldn't vote for any of the presidential candidates.' Well, what's wrong with that? If he decides to vote for none of the candidates on the basis of agreeing with what you say, in general, that's fine. Or suppose he says, 'I agree with what you say, but I think I should vote for Wallace anyway so that everybody will have a chance to find out that it won't work that way.' Well, what's wrong with that? If he takes such a decision on the basis of agreeing with the Communist analysis, well and good. His feeling, indeed, that he knows Wallace is

not the answer but wants many others to find it out too is a very advanced position, and does him credit."

"NCP urges readers to address themselves to the problem of building the first Party, not a 'third' party."

Such irresponsible hash comes from the worst demagogue of the expelled movement, who never tried fighting it out in the CPUSA and now offers his intellectual guidance-without pay, he boasts.

Dunne hands the whole 3rd party movement to the CPUSA opportunists when he says in his pamphlet:

"For 1948 these strategists of confusion, defeatism and surrender in the ranks of the working class propose a 'third party', a people's party, a 'progressive party', a 'labor progressive party', a 'labor party', etc. etc.--anything and everything but a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class..."

And Darcy applauds--well put.

However, there are more serious people who think that while the the People's Front idea is correct and timely in the rest of the world, it cannot be applied in America today because there is no CP. The element of truth in this is that there can be no successful unity of any kind in this country until we produce a real CP. But from here on, we can't disregard the fact that a war is being planned, and that even as we work for crystal clear leadership, we also have to help the American workers forge the beginning of the unity they want and are trying to achieve. Consider the present good program of our weak 3rd party. Even many of its inside enemies have done us the service of pulling out in their attempt to kill it in birth. This helps the 3rd party start as a non-redbaiting party, quite an unusual event in America. As for the weak points and dangers outside its program, which we tried to explain above, --that is certainly never an excuse for Communists to ignore basically correct beginnings. The good points of the 3rd party in the U.S. today have come not through the intelligence of its shifty leaders but rather through the terrific pressure of world events and worried people.

What is the correct conception of the People's Front in America today? From its SOS on through SPARK, the PR Club has insisted on the application of the ideas in Dimitroff's "United Front Against Fascism". Every day now, the best Communist leaders in the world are analyzing the various problems of the People's Front. Much of this is available in "For A Lasting Peace, For A People's Democracy", organ of the Communist Information Bureau in Belgrade.

If American Communists study carefully the Dimitroff and Tito reports, read New Times, and follow the reports of Communist leaders all over the world, they can find a sure key to the solution for America.

And now--if all the Communists in the world greet the new advance of the 3rd party in the U.S., we find some expelled Communists opposing it, and the CPUSA offering the support of "general confusion" as it stages the greatest switch in its switchy history.

..... "They" - The Big Switch

To the CPUSA it's all very simple: change your vocabulary and blame your old vocabulary on someone else. Unfortunately the printing press is the root of all evil. If only the CPUSA hadn't put its naked opportunism into a damning record with its own presses! We can offer only a few choice morsels from a veritable mountain of repetition. If the alternating current distracts you, use mirrors and you'll come out on top - with Morris, Gordon & Co.

"TRUMAN A 'LESSER EVIL'? HIS RECORD SAYS NO!" an article by Max Gordon was headlined in the Worker, January 4, 1948. In the same day's paper George Morris wrote:

"The trouble with many of our labor leaders especially in the CIO is that they have not yet made up their mind that FDR is dead. For a decade or more many of them learned to rely more on White House Nursing bottles (when such was forthcoming) than upon the fighting strength of their members....

"But they are making the big mistake that they made in the 1946 elections which brought us the Taft-Hartley and Marshall Plan Congress. They then tried to mobilize votes for candidates who hardly differed from GOP reactionaries. Millions of workers refused to turn out to vote (our italics)

Let's turn to the pages of the Daily Worker at that time - in 1946:

"They many PAC workers saw the election as one between the Democrats and the Republicans and to many Truman symbolized the Democrats. Since they could not see much difference between Truman and the Republicans, they stayed home....

"I submit their reasoning was wrong. There was a difference between the bulk of the candidates of the GOP for congressional and state office and those of the Democrats." from "PAC and the Elections" by Max Gordon, (Daily Worker November 16, 1946).

Let's try again. Now the D.W. says:

"Finally among the little events since May 1946, was the congressional election in which most voters had a choice between a reactionary Democrat and a Tory Republican. That election gave conclusive proof of the limitations on and bankruptcy of the perspective of turning one of the two parties into a 'liberal' party." (George Morris, D.W. Jan. 9, '48)

But on September 20, 1946 in an article eloquently labeled "A Dangerous Tendency", Max Gordon warned:

"Briefly the claim is made that there is no difference between a Truman and a Vandenberg. Thus there is no difference between a Mead and a Dewey in N.Y. Thus there is no reason why we should be at all interested in whether Dewey or Mead wins the election....

"The people who think that way insist that the ALP should have put an independent ticket into the field....

"The basic assumption that there is solid unity between the two major parties on questions of foreign policy is wrong and dangerous."

Is the CPUSA for the third party? Well it depends - take your choice of the following official views. In 1946, in an editorial entitled "Extreme Falsehoods About the 'Extrema Left'" in the D.W. of June 8th, the Alsops were taken to task because:

"...on the third party, they falsify the Communist view..."

"Professional rea-baiters, Trotskyites, phony Socialists' alone are whooping it up for a 'third party' right now in order to discredit the idea by premature actions. The Communists--and the Alsops could easily find this if they wanted the truth - urge political unity of labor today..."

In the Worker of July 13, 1947, Dennis was reported as giving his views at the National Plenum as follows:

"Not all those who are fighting in this loose coalition today are as yet convinced of the need for a third party. Therefore we must help both to cement the coalition and build the third party movement in such a way that we do not divide or alienate the broader forces."

But with the New Year and Wallace's fait accompli (for the C.P. at least) we read in the editorial "Outlook for 1948 and the Third Party" in the January 1948 Political Affairs:

"All those who are ready to join in this movement, including the left, should act without waiting. There can be no reliance upon, and no waiting for those who oppose the third party and the independent presidential ticket."

But what about the "broader forces", Comrades of the National Committee - or are they relegated to George Morris' anonymous "they"? When George Morris criticises "they" who "tried to mobilize votes for candidates who hardly differed from GOP reactionaries", he obviously doesn't mean the Daily Worker, the C.P. leadership, Max Gordon or himself. What role "we" played in 1946 and 1947 it is hoped will be forgotten and thus forgiven. Unfortunately the words (but not the policy) are "gone but not forgotten." They were written into the documents expelling the best Communists from the CPUSA in 1946. They were printed with feverish repetition in the columns of the D.W. They were shouted at the "left sectarians" of the PR Club by such as William Weinstone, Carl Vearo, Israel Amter, Bill Norman, Isidore Begun, Alberto Moreau and others who will remember our "disrespectfulness, leftism, sheer stupidity" in not accepting the party explanation for supporting the Democratic Party.

They fought Truman - Begun told the New York Times. Horrors! Do Comrades Morris, Foster, Dennis and Stachel think Begun made a big mistake in 1946 -- and did they?

Comrade Max Gordon seems to find Comrade Max Gordon pretty stupid. Didn't he know Truman was no lesser evil? Didn't he know there was no difference between a Truman and a Vandenberg? Really, Comrade Gordon might like to correct his mistakes openly - and draw the proper lessons.

Perhaps he doesn't think so -- but Comrade Stachel intones against those who:

"Admit that which can no longer be concealed but without admitting a single mistake in his policy, theory or even judgment." D.W. Dec. 30, '47.

Pardon us! Comrade Stachel says that doesn't apply to Comrade Gordon, or to him or the CPUSA - but to the CPUSA's alter ego, Earl Browder. What a convenient scapegoat Browder is. "We" say everything about him "We" would rather not say about "ourselves."

The C.P. castigates the CIO and AFL leadership for its opposition to the third party:

"The bulk of the top officials of the trade unions... will appeal on the equally dangerous ground that Truman is the 'lesser evil' as against the Republicans. All of them by such a stand will be betraying the interests of the workers." (Political Affairs, Jan. 1948, p.7)

Thus the CPUSA tries to obscure its own betrayal of the workers:

"...the Republican party is and remains the main party of reaction and monopoly capital" and "...the Truman administration ... is still sensitive to certain mass pressures. It still wavers and hesitates whenever labor and the people aggressively assert themselves." (Political Affairs, Sept. 1946, Dennis Report.)

The labor leaders and the watery liberals like Kingdon who resigned from the PCA, the compromisers like Blumberg who resigned from the ALP (with flowery speeches from the C.P. hacks) all learned their lessons well from the C.P. Beware the dangers of "prematurity", beware "splitting the coalition", beware "the leftist danger of 'going it alone.'"

Fortunately the American worker, the rank and file trade unionist had little contact with the C.P. leadership, that aristocracy if not vanguard of the labor movement. But among the trade union bureaucrats, the "Dr.'s" and the radio commentators the party spread its fears. That is why so many worthless "big names" who never belonged at the head of the progressive movement are leaving it. The strength of the third party movement is however, the rank and file American worker who was never quite so "premature" or "unadvanced" as the CPUSA pretended. Even its present switch is merely tailing after Wallace and the American people. The C.P. is again carrying out its main line of following. It accepts a de facto third party which it sabotaged until now and which it has already begun to sabotage again.

Already the D.W. presents Wallace as the "strong man", the alpha and the omega of the movement. The party allows "the supporters of the third party ticket, where they find it advisable to support a Congressional candidate of one of the old parties, despite the fact that this candidate does not support the third party ticket." (Political Affairs January 1948, p.10). (Our italics.) New words--old phrases; new phrases--old positions. If the CPUSA has its way, the American people will still "find it advisable" to suffocate in the Democratic-Republican pocket.

The fake switch is not confined to the third party issue. We believe it is important to point out the apparently deeper change in C.P. word-politics. This change has the appearance of an attack on "trade union opportunism", "class collaboration", "the ideology of the class enemy" and all the stock in trade of the C.P. opportunists themselves. Before going into the important reasons for this lipservice, we offer a few examples. With the New Year, Political Affairs comes up with a sprinkling of quotes at the end of each article. Each of these quotes if taken seriously would result in the ousting of the present N.C. Among them is the pointed statement by Lenin on bourgeois and socialist ideology which we quoted in our S.O.S. in October 1946 as well as references to self-criticism and the importance of ideological and organizational unity of the working class.

It should be noted, however, that P.A. has practically no circulation among party members, so there is little danger that these quotes will arouse their curiosity about the works from which they are reprinted. P.A. is read by a few party functionaries who like to see themselves in print, ^{and by} various government information-gathering offices, but mainly it is printed for the consumption of the foreign C.P.'s in hope it will mislead them. Especially since the formation of the Communist Information Bureau, P.A. editorializes in the following manner:

"More than anything else the infiltration of the class enemy's ideology into the ranks of labor holds the trade unions back from fulfilling their historic obligation to lead all the democratic sections of the people in defense of the Bill of Rights." (P.A., Jan. 1948, p. 11)

All those who know the C.P.'s "defense of the Bill of Rights" know that the party itself made redbaiting respectable in its drafting of the CIO red-baiting resolution in 1946. One has only to compare the ultra-constitutional and farcical defense of Eugene Dennis (P.A. December 1947) with Vern Smith's courageous statement (reprinted in the December SPARK) to recognize which stand is based on Communist ideology. What a farce it is when the General Secretary of the CPUSA instead of attacking the Un-American Activities Committee on the basis of his Communist beliefs, sidesteps into a tangential defense worthy of a pettifogging lawyer. Instead of clarifying the issues, he obscures them by insisting that the reason he refused to testify before the Congressional Committee was simply that it was not a Congressional Committee because Rankin was not legally elected. In other words, if the Committee is judged to be a duly elected one, Dennis is automatically guilty on the basis of his own defense. Perhaps he believes in the "impartiality" of the courts? This is playing at legalities with a vengeance but it has nothing to do with fighting the ideology of class enemy in defense of the Bill of Rights.

The CPUSA pursues an expose of "class collaboration" (no doubt in keeping with the appropriate section of the Manifesto of the C.I.B.). Thus, Stachel sets up his straw man, Earl Browder, his former comrade-in-arms, the epitome of all the C.P. believes, and proceeds to knock him down. In the midst of a rather innocuous article which does not quote Browder too fully for fear of exposing the resemblance of Browder's:

ideas to the C.P.'s, Stachel militantly proclaims: "One must not confuse a temporary coincidence of interest for common interests and thus replace the class struggle with class collaboration." (D.W. Jan. 2, 1948)

He ought to know! From Gitlow on, he fulfilled his obligations to his employers (Wall Street) even by betraying his "fronts". Stachel (the man who loses his friends) might well say a la Hamlet:

"Alas, poor Gitlow, I knew him well..."

Alas, poor Lovestone, I knew him well..."

Alas, poor Browder, I knew him well..."

--and soon..."

Alas poor Dennis, I knew him well!"

Stachel, right hand man of right opportunism, and the Badaux of switching efficiency, always sees the light in time and sidesteps. Recently, having prepared the C.P. trade union debauch of unity with red baiters, he switched from Trade Union Director to National Education Director, from which excellent vantage point he was able to be disturbed if need be by "trade union opportunism", while spouting pseudo-Marxist jargon.

The CPUSA has now come all-out against trade union opportunism. Having already tapped Merrill on the wrist for carrying out C.P. policy "not wisely but too well" -- it now writes ideological criticisms of the TWU leaders who are attempting to saddle all N.Y.C. workers with a subway fare increase. So discreetly bold is the D.W. that it censors Quill's "no interference please" growl at the C.P. in its news of the State-CIO meeting.

"Leftwingers" should not have "allowed themselves to be momentarily intimidated" on the CIO 1947 foreign policy resolution, writes John Williamson in the Dec. P.A. on "The AF of L & CIO Conventions". Thus he lauds "delegates Potash and Kehoe, in supporting the resolution and refuting the Reuther-Baldanzi slanders" (our emphasis), although "this was a compromise resolution, which pleased neither the reactionary nor progressive forces."

Thus, those who supported this notorious "compromise" resolution openly were praised by the party, while those who did so silently were criticised! This is the extent of its criticism on the most important question facing America today. The slogan of the CPUSA is, "Retreat, but please retreat with explanations!"

However there is one sphere in which the Party trade unionists show their "militancy" to the point of walking out of conventions and other such measures. They are "real militant" when it comes to losing a well-paid position; witness the walkout at the UE Convention in N.J., and Stack's "I never meant to get nasty to Joe" at the NMU Convention.

But in the line of trade union opportunism, it is our old "expert" George Morris who reaches into its slimy depths and comes up with this in his column "Murray Will Never Get 'Unity' for Truman" (but George

Morriz Will): "There is no reason why CIO ranks cannot be basically united on such crucial struggles as the wage fight, the struggle against the Taft-Hartley law and upon election of Congressmen pledged to repeal the T-H law."

"Regardless of differences on a presidential choice, unionists can unite on the congressional and state elections. The objectives really within reach of labor can be won. It would be a tragedy if differences in the political campaign harmed labor's immediate struggle for wage increases and against encroachments of the Taft-Hartley law...

"...It doesn't take a political genius to realize that talk of purging the Taft-Hartleyites in New York and other states is useless unless both the right and left get together on the best congressional endorsements on any of the THREE tickets, regardless of their differences on the presidential race." (All emphasis in original) (D.W. Jan 12, 1948).

So far, at least, there has been no attempt to justify the C.P. policy on the third party for the past two years. The data on strike-breaking and warmongering, given in the Daily Worker itself, proves that the reactionary positions of the Trumans, Meads and Lehmans were known before the 1946 elections in which the C.P. supported them. And yet, not one bit of self-criticism is forthcoming.

Perhaps the bureaucracy relies on bad memories. What if the memories grow feet and walk about in broad daylight. What, for instance, if we hark back to Election Day in 1946 when the CPUSA via "spokesmen at the Bronx County Committee of the party" informed the New York Times that the PR Club was expelled for making "onesided attacks on the Democratic Party." Like other important personages these "spokesmen" were nameless, but they did not deign to deny an interview to the N.Y. Times exposing their own former members. Although the following is hardly accurate of our policy it is eloquent of what the C.P.'s was. Speaking of our expulsion the statement in the Daily Worker on Nov. 5, 1946 said:

"This faction, however, has made the Truman Administration the exclusive and main center of attack..."

"By its exaggeration that the Truman Administration is virtually a fascist government, and by its one-sided attacks on the Democratic Party, this faction diverts attention from the danger of the main centers of reaction, represented by the Hoover-Dewey Republicans, lessens the fight against this camp, and thus, despite all its shouting about the fascist danger, in fact weakens the fight against this danger. On the basis of a false and alarmist analysis of the situation, it denounced the National Committee during the summer for failure to call for a nationwide political strike against the Case Bill - a tactic which could lead only to the isolation of the Party from the progressive labor movement.

"...it advocates a course calculated to lead to narrow splinter groupings which under the false label of a third party would in fact, doom the possibility of unity of the advanced forces in the labor and progressive movement fighting for a third party with other progressive forces moving in this direction today."

(Although we did not consider the Truman administration ~~fascist~~ we had underestimated the direction in which it was moving. The reference to the Case Bill is a deliberate distortion - we were speaking of the Truman Bill to draft strikers, the threat of which actually did break the Railroad Strike in June 1946.)

The N.C. has the alternative of proving its past policy correct (and this is impossible) or giving lipservice to self-criticism. The latter is possible, but it involves the danger of proving the expelled Communists correct, and this means exposing the bureaucracy of the leadership. Furthermore the C.P. has now left itself no excuse for not holding a National Convention immediately. In the words of the Daily Worker, the Nat'l Convention was postponed "so that the Communist Party can make its final decisions concerning the 1948 elections at the time when other political parties will be making theirs." (D.W. July 13, 1947)

But since the January Political Affairs says, "But the record is already in, and nothing that happens at these conventions can change it" nothing should prevent an immediate convention from being called with a discussion period starting immediately. In fact, in the light of the above quotes, an immediate national convention is essential to organize the drive for a third party. Such a convention must of course include those who held the correct position when the Party did not. It must include all whom the party expelled in the past period. Naturally the National Committee will have none of this.

However the D.W. does headline self-criticism -- the self-criticism by foreign parties. What is honest reevaluation in the foreign parties becomes slander and gossip in the lurid D.W. versions. The Polish Communist Party's purge--mainly of opportunist elements-- is so frightening to the D.W. that it "Hearsts" the following headline:

"Polish CP Expels Drunken Members."

The angry D.W. refused to be as accurate as the N.Y. Times headline: "Opportunists to Go."

What are the causes of this new pretense of anti-opportunism "in all spheres"? (Cominform organ) The National Committee had to face the fact that the expelled movement did not dribble out. Although the N.C. sticks to its "silence is golden" rule regarding recent expulsions, we have made some modest but important advances--in membership and in clarity. Within the CP, the boycott of the Cominform has become an instructive dividing point among the rank and file. Those who are not completely corrupt begin to think about cowardice or Communism. Basically, the current theoretical frenzy in the CP is caused by the Communist Information Bureau. Although the CPUSA can't join the Bureau because it would irritate Wall St., it still has to give lipservice here and there. Tito pointedly reminds us:

"We are again in need of a fierce and stubborn struggle against reaction and fascism, i.e., against the warmongers." This time we have to make a strict assessment of all the errors made in the past, because the Popular Fronts in certain countries did not live up to their tasks on the eve and in the course of the war of liberation." (P.A. Jan. '48, P. 8)

Not only will not the CPUSA be overlooked in this "assessment", but it will finally occupy the center of attraction. The CPUSA will be the example of the height of dishonesty and hypocrisy in the revolutionary movement. Only one factor holds up this basic assessment. It cannot be made until we in the U.S. produce a national "core" of real Communists--in effect, a committee for a real Communist Party. At such a point, foreign CP's can speak bluntly about the CPUSA because then their words will help send awakening CP members in a correct direction. In the absence of a national grouping of real Communists, the CP rank and file would face utter confusion. Inevitably, they would look back to the present leaders who would give appropriate lip-service, damn their last period, and proceed with their "business as usual". This is the logic to the current world Communist silence on the CPUSA.

Communists inside and outside the CPUSA must continually force their "leadership" in the U.S. towards the Communist Information Bureau. This, in effect, is forcing them into impossible positions. Even an ad placed in PM by the PR Club last week which offered the organ of the Cominform caused a few "revelations" to CP members. Now, with Harrison George's book ("Crisis in the CPUSA"--to be reviewed in our next issue) some irrefutable facts and arguments face the CP rank and file--and from a leader. In the expulsions up to date, former national leaders like Dunne and Darcy have merely multiplied the confusion. With Harrison George, for the first time, a national leader and charter member of the CPUSA fights it out --with the correct line.

This book will help bring chaos out of the confusion in some CP minds. After all, those who followed the CP election policies up to now so faithfully are disturbed and glum. The switch was too violent and unprepared. Some of these will say: oh, well, another inconsistency to swallow. But the honest CP members who really want a fighting CP to organize against war and fascism and for Socialism will begin to turn towards a reevaluation of the party's record and their own.

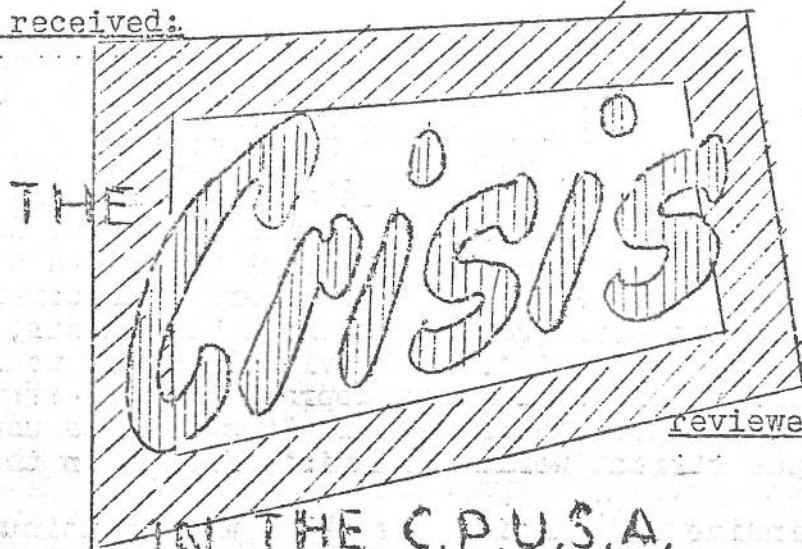
These Comrades should raise some key points which represent and involve the whole story of opportunism:

- 1-Why doesn't the CPUSA want to affiliate to the Communist Information Bureau? Why does it bury the organ of the bureau?
- 2-Why can't a CPUSA convention be held --with a prediscussion period starting now?
- 3-Why does the CPUSA still tail after 3rd Party developments?

Comrades should drag the Marxist-Leninist literature back to the branch meetings--especially the literature on opportunism. They should circulate the correct literature of the expelled movement in the U.S. and important foreign literature. If CP'ers will break through their fears and forebodings and open one eye to read for a while, if the expelled movement learns to work with the CP'ers and we thereby produce a coordination of open work outside and illegal work inside,--then there will be a few good switches in 1948.

Let's switch the American people from the two-party brawl. Let's switch American Communists from the fake CPUSA leadership. In this way, we, the everlastingly backward American Communists, can finally switch the world from its fear of war. Make '48 the birth-year of a real CP.

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(errata: p. 10, line 22 should read: "They/ many PCA workers/saw the" etc.)