

political affairs

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Congratulations, Comrades, on your magnificent victory in the Pennsylvania Sedition Case! That victory strengthens the American, and world-wide, effort to defend democracy and the rights of the working people.



STEVE NELSON



JIM DOLSEN



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The Road to Socialism, II*

By William Z. Foster

The greatest of all examples, however, of the inborn and powerfully growing tendency of the workers to strangle and checkmate, in advance, the violence of the capitalists has been seen in the case of war. Imperialist war is incomparably the most gigantic and most terrible expression of employer violence. It was not so long ago that the warmakers had a pretty free hand in initiating their war violence, and although the workers protested against it, they could do but little to halt it. Now, however, with the new vast strength of international Socialism and with the tremendous growth of the workers' and general people's democratic organizations and governments all over the world, there is a very different story to be told.

The workers and other peace forces made a big fight to block the two world wars, especially the latter one. In neither case did they succeed.

Nevertheless, they made world capitalism pay very dearly for these murderous wars, by winning many countries for Socialism. However, in their fight against the danger of a third world war, which American imperialism, during the cold war period, has tried so hard to organize, the world peace forces, grown enormously more powerful in the meantime, have had much better success. That is, with a gigantic peace movement and a militant struggle, entirely without precedent in history, they have bankrupted the Wall Street war program, and for the time being at least, greatly eased the war danger. At the July, 1955, Big Four Conference in Geneva, the world's peoples let the monopoly capitalists understand that they would not permit the atomic war to take place that was being organized by American imperialism. This success in at least temporarily curbing

* The first half of this article appeared in our April issue. As stated there, the article was written prior to Khrushchev's Report to the XX Congress of the CPSU.

imperialist war, which is the ultimate form of capitalist violence, will have profound effects upon the future strategy and tactics of the labor and peace forces of the world, particularly in connection with their advance along the road to Socialism.

THE GENERAL QUESTION OF FORCE AND VIOLENCE

Communists, far from being wedded to violence, as to some sort of principle, always adopt peaceful and legal roads to Socialism whenever these become possible. As we have seen earlier, Marx and Engels agreed that there were such possibilities for establishing Socialism in Great Britain and the United States. No less significant, Lenin himself, who stressed so much the question of capitalist violence under imperialism, when the opportunity presented itself to him, also took the initiative in declaring for a peaceful advance to Socialism in revolutionary Russia.

During the interim period in Russia in 1917, between the bourgeois revolution of March and the proletarian revolution of November, the workers and peasants had succeeded in overthrowing Czarism and in setting up a bourgeois-democratic regime, with Soviets. Regarding this situation, Lenin said (*Toward the Seizure of Power*, p. 263): "Before the democracy of Russia, before the Soviets, before the S.R. and Menshevik parties, there opens up a possibility very seldom to be met with in

the history of revolutions, namely a possibility of securing the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date, without new delays, a possibility of securing the country against a military and economic catastrophe, a possibility of securing a peaceful development of the revolution." To meet this situation, Lenin advocated a systematic campaign of propaganda to win over the majority in the Soviets, which was still held by the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

Speaking of this general situation, Stalin later said (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 186):

This meant that Lenin was not calling for a revolt against the Provisional Government, which at the moment enjoyed the confidence of the Soviets, or that he was demanding its overthrow, but that he wanted, by means of explanatory and recruiting work, to win a majority in the Soviets and to alter the composition of the government. This was a line of envisaging a peaceful development of the Revolution in Russia.

The Kerensky Provisional Government, however, with its S.R. and Menshevik leadership, did not want Socialism, peaceful or otherwise. As capitalist governments hitherto have always done when they find their system threatened by advancing Socialism, this one tried to stamp out the Revolution by force and violence. The workers and peasants, led by Lenin and the Communist Party, fought back, and the general re-

sults were the most glorious pages in human history. The reactionary Kerensky government, which would not brook democracy, was itself wiped out, and the great Bolshevik Revolution went on to a world-shaking victory.

Characteristically, the Communist Party of China, led by the brilliant Mao Tse-tung, although it eventually had to fight through twenty-five years of imperialist and civil war in order to reach its goal of a people's government, nevertheless, along this hard route, on three well-known occasions, definitely strove to open up a peaceful road to Socialism in China. The first step was in the mid-1920's, when the Communist Party had a broad united front movement with the nationalist forces to fight feudal reaction; a front which in 1927 Chiang Kai-shek bloodily betrayed. The second of the Communist efforts towards a peaceful advance in China was in May 1936, when the Communist Party, in the strong people's front spirit of the period, offered again to form a national united front with the forces of Chiang Kai-shek, to be directed against the Japanese invaders. Eventually, the reluctant Chiang was literally forced into this front by the overwhelming pressure of the people, but he sabotaged it thoroughly. Again, in 1946, upon the successful ending of World War II, the Communist Party proposed to Chiang the formation of a united people's democracy, looking forward to a peaceful and orderly advance of

China. But Chiang rejected this offer also and, backed by U.S. imperialism, opened up a civil war. The result was that after three years, he was completely beaten and the present People's Republic of China was born. The Chiang government went the way of Kerensky's into the discard of history, and for the same general reasons.

As we have seen in preceding pages, it is the universal effort of the labor movement, including its most advanced Left sections, to seek to curb and repress employer violence, as a basic policy, as it goes forward in its fight for the people's daily demands, and also in its ultimate fight for Socialism.

As to the possibility of such methods succeeding in opening up a relatively peaceful road to Socialism, Stalin once made the following very significant statement. In defending Lenin's thesis that, "The proletarian revolution cannot take place without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and its replacement by a new machine" (*Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 117), Stalin added in 1924:

No doubt, in the distant future, if the proletariat has triumphed in the chief countries that are now capitalist, and if the present capitalist encirclement has given place to a Socialist encirclement, it will be possible for a 'peaceful' transition to be effected in certain capitalist countries when the capitalists, in view of the 'unfavorable' international situation, will deem it advisable 'of their own accord' to make extensive concessions to the proletariat.

But this is to look far ahead, to contemplate extremely hypothetical possibilities. As concerns the near future, there is no warrant for any such expectation.

This is an important contribution to the question of the road to Socialism during the decades in which we are living. What Stalin is saying here is that he foresees a time when, under favorable circumstances, it will be possible to make a relatively peaceful advance to Socialism. By his quotes on "peaceful," he obviously refers to "relatively peaceful"; by his quotes on the "unfavorable" international situation, he signalizes the pressure of the great forces of world democracy and Socialism against the capitalists; and by his quotes on "of their own accord," he clearly means that the employers would be restrained from violence by the curbing power of the workers at home and abroad.

During the thirty years that have elapsed since Stalin wrote the above significant words, the world's workers have indeed not achieved the advanced stage of progress, where, as he says, they have "triumphed in the chief countries that are now capitalist," and it would be absurd to allege that "the present capitalist encirclement has given place to a Socialist encirclement." But that the international democratic and Socialist movement, nevertheless, has made very substantial progress in this general direction is undeniable. With seventeen countries now either actu-

ally in Socialism or actively building it, and with unparalleled huge trade unions, workers' parties, and other democratic mass organizations in the capitalist countries—all operating in the midst of a decaying world capitalist system—the working class and its allies are now able to exert powerful curbing influences upon inherent capitalist violence, far and away beyond anything they could do when Stalin wrote the above stressed passages a generation ago. As world Socialism advances with giant strides and as capitalism goes deeper into general crisis, one of the most profound effects of this two-phased process is that the forces of labor and Socialism are becoming all the more able to curb and restrain the capitalist violence against the people, both on a national and an international scale.

THE STRUGGLE FOR A PEACEFUL ADVANCE TO SOCIALISM

Since the advent of the Russian Revolution in November 1917, the workers of the world have made a very considerable record, and not without marked success, in curbing the counter-revolutionary violence of the capitalists facing a working class marching towards, or building Socialism. They have thus clearly demonstrated that the formula that "in certain instances there exist the possibilities for a relatively peaceful advance to Socialism" is a correct one; one that has been proven in practice.

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In the industrialized countries the Communist parties are all orientating upon the perspective of the workers and their allies, organized upon essentially a people's front basis, electing democratic governments on the basis of the existing democratic franchise; governments which can open the road to Socialism. The exceptions, of course, are in those countries where extreme imperialist reaction is dominant, where colonialism prevails, or where fascism may be in power; that is, where democratic freedoms do not exist. To carry through people's front elections in a legal and substantially peaceful manner in the bourgeois democratic countries, the Communists count upon several factors, including the critical political situation in which, normally, people's front governments come to power; the elementary character of the people's demands, which set the vast masses of the people into political motion; the coalition-form of the movement, with the workers in the lead; the enormous new democratic strength of the working class and its allies; and the ability of the aroused masses, under working class leadership, to maintain in force the popular voting franchise, in the face of violent efforts of the bourgeoisie to weaken or destroy it.

The people's front movements everywhere in the bourgeois-democratic countries aim at winning for their program a big majority of the people. Characteristic of this profoundly democratic basis of the

movement, the *Daily Worker* of Jan. 18, 1956, points out that, "An absolute majority of seats were won in the last (French) elections by the Left-of-center parties to whom the Communists appealed for a popular front." The people's front type of movement, however, does not definitely give a guarantee, in the people's fight for a democratic government which will represent their interests, that the masses will positively be able to stifle and suppress the counter-revolutionary violence of employer-organized reaction and to elect a government under the bourgeois constitution. As the workers have learned to their cost, there is always the danger of fascism. It is a significant fact, however, that in a number of countries—Spain, France, Chile, Guatemala, British Guiana, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, etc.—the people's front masses have been able to elect democratic governments in the face of very powerful and military reactionary forces.

Once in power, and with control of the government legally in their hands, the people's front forces are obviously much better able to maintain peace and order as their constructive program develops. As Marx pointed out in connection with the situation in the American Civil War, they are then able to put the reactionary forces at the disadvantage of being rebels against the legitimately elected government. A people's front government may or may not be the beginning of the masses' march to Socialism, depending upon the po-

litical circumstances and the masses' strength and consciousness. But in the event that it does move decisively towards the Left, it will still, speaking in the name of the nation, be able legally to make such constitutional changes as are necessary to carry out its program and, eventually, to build Socialism. All this is a policy of the people, by democratic means, determining the fate of the nation. As the movement goes ahead, it strives to reduce counter-revolutionary employer violence to a minimum. In view of this general course of action, it is a monstrous lie, the charge of monopolist spokesmen, that the Communists advocate a program of violently overthrowing the capitalist governments under which they may live.

In the colonial and semi-colonial lands, the people's fronts, or often more properly, national fronts, composed of workers, peasants, intellectuals, and sections of the national bourgeoisie, confront a basic absence of democracy in the fight for people's governments and the independence of their countries. Consequently, in these countries, being less industrialized, having fewer civil liberties, and with a much weaker proletariat, the workers and peasants have to fight with what means are available against the ruthless imperialists and big land-owners. Therefore, the colonial and semi-colonial world, in recent years, has been wracked with bitter national colonial liberation wars.

Generally, in the semi-colonial countries—Brazil being a striking ex-

ample of this—the Communist parties have programs of strengthening the national democracy and of preventing the reactionary governments, controlled by dictator-stooges of foreign imperialists, from organizing putsches to stifle the limited democracy, especially during national elections. It has been possible recently for people's front and national front combinations to win electoral victories in Guatemala and British Guiana, although the workers were not strong enough to maintain political power in the face of the attacks of militant American and British imperialism.

In the fight of the peoples under capitalism generally, to establish democratic governments and to maintain order and democracy in the doing of this, another factor of vast and increasing importance has been coming into play during recent years. This is the heightened international solidarity of the world democratic and Socialist forces. This has already produced a powerful curbing, restraining, and defeating effect upon capitalist counter-democratic, counter-revolutionary violence in both national and international spheres, and its power in this respect is rapidly growing. The working out of this factor, of course, has never involved the "export of revolution" or armed intervention by world Socialist forces.

The tendencies of the world's workers to seek to curb the anti-Socialist violence of the employers and their allies were already beginning to be manifest during the course

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of the great Russian Revolution of 1917. This especially showed itself in their active restraining work after the new workers' government had been established, with particular regard to making futile the armed interventionist activities of world imperialism against the first Socialist state. This worker resistance was marked by strong protest agitation and strikes in Germany, France, Italy, England, and elsewhere. Among many such examples over the world, there was the refusal of the Pacific Coast longshoremen to load munitions for the imperialist counter-revolutionary regimes in Russia. The workers of Europe and this country were very radical at the time, and their opposition to their respective governments' attempts to overthrow the Soviet government was a decisive factor, as Lenin repeatedly stated, in weakening the armed interventionist attacks of the big powers, including the United States, against the young Socialist land. Thus, the workers of the world definitely eased the advance of the Soviets at this most crucial period.

Following World War II and the birth of the people's democracies in Eastern Europe, this tendency to curb the counter-revolutionary violence of the employers by the world's workers operated on a much higher level and with far greater effectiveness. That is, the nearby presence of the Soviet Union and its great Red Army definitely put a damper on the many attempts of the capitalist forces, both within and without

these countries, to overthrow the new and still weak people's governments of this area. What happened in Greece (which could not be so well protected)—its long civil war, with eventual disaster—gave a clear picture of the bitter struggles that Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and the other people's democracies otherwise would have had to face, had they not been shielded by the powerful Soviet Union. That in this case the advance to Socialism was rendered relatively more peaceful is so obvious as not to require further argument. The principle of the workers' forces curbing the counter-revolutionary violence of the employers and thus facilitating the advance to Socialism is also now being brilliantly demonstrated in People's China. The winning of that country for Socialism was a fundamental disaster for world capitalism, and the alarmed and enraged big capitalists of the world, particularly those in the United States, have wished nothing more devoutly than to deluge China with a great civil war, in order, they hope, to halt the advance of Socialism, or even to destroy it. This, notoriously, is still the policy of the U.S. government, with its wholesale arming of the "nationalist" counter-revolution, its plans to "unleash" Chiang Kai-shek, its arrogant occupation of Taiwan, and its desperate attempts to expand the Korean and Indo-China conflicts into a great atomic war against People's China. But the international solidarity of the forces of world So-

cialism, especially those of the Soviet Union, have prevented such a civil war, and even an effective economic blockade, from being launched against the young Chinese People's Republic. Thus, the tremendous advance of that huge country towards Socialism has most definitely been helped and rendered more peaceful.

Another of the main policies of the Eisenhower Administration is its so-called "liberation policy." The insolent and naked purpose of this counter-revolutionary activity is to cultivate and provoke civil wars in the countries of people's democracy and Socialism, including even the Soviet Union itself. The great danger in this policy was dramatized by the futile June 17, 1953 demonstration (an attempted insurrection) in East Germany, which could have set Europe afire. But this "liberation" civil war policy of Wall Street has been rendered inoperative by the curbing and defeating pressures used against it, principally by the Socialist group of nations. That this basic success tends to make relatively more peaceful the advance to Socialism in the countries directly concerned is also beyond question.

This same protective principle will apply, even more effectively in the future, with the rapid growth of the world Socialist and democratic forces. The workers' internationalism will rise to new victories, without in any sense attempting to force Socialism upon the world. The fundamentally peaceful and democratic masses will develop an even more immense power in preventing

the desperados of decaying monopoly capitalism from deluging the world with the blood of their national civil wars and international imperialist slaughters, in their frantic efforts to prolong the worse than useless existence of capitalism. The world labor and Communist movements have not yet reached the high stage of development, foreseen by Stalin in the quotation cited above, where they can stay the hands of the employers altogether, but their vast and increasing power is already a tremendous element in rendering relatively more peaceful and democratic the inevitable advance to Socialism in many countries.

PRESENT DAY PEOPLE'S FRONT MOVEMENTS

The people's front, in its several varieties, is the fundamental reaction of the workers, peasants, and other democratic masses, through the alliance of their powerful political parties, trade unions, and other organizations, against the intensified hardships, exploitation, oppression, and wars, brought about by the deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system. The people's front is the most effective means of combatting the immediate hardships of the masses, and it also opens up the path towards eventual Socialism.

The first form of the people's front, as we have seen, was born in the mid-1930's, in the historic united struggle to prevent fascism and the outbreak of World War II. The movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries at this time took

the shape of the national front, made up of workers, peasants, middle class elements, and sections of the bourgeoisie, with the fight for national independence at its center. The great international anti-fascist alliance, which fought through World War II, against fascist Germany, Italy, and Japan, was an extension of the people's front, which lay at its base. The movement of people's democracy, which developed at the end of World War II in many countries of Eastern Europe, was also a variety of the people's front. And so, too, was the tremendous post-war peace movement, which is blocking the war drive of American imperialism for world conquest and which came to dramatic fruition at the Geneva Big Four Conference in July 1955. In all these movements the Communist parties have played decisive roles.

The people's front has taken on these different forms in conformity with the specific mass tasks facing the people in their ever-increasing struggle against monopoly capital and the decaying capitalist system. At the present time, the people's front is reshaping itself, in accordance with the new situation brought about by the relaxing of war tensions at Geneva and by the new post-war problems facing the world's workers. The strongest developments in this direction are in such countries as France, Italy, Indonesia, and Brazil; but, undoubtedly, the worsening of the general economic situation, which surely stands ahead, will bring the people's front to broad expression in many other countries. The sharp

point of this mass movement is always directed against monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and their multiple evils. More and more, in capitalist countries, even in Great Britain, the question of national independence, against armed aggression, has also become a people's front issue.

The big obstacle in the workers' ranks against the people's front is the Right-wing Social Democracy. This fact has manifested itself in all the various forms and types of people's front movements listed above. But in these instances it was also a basic fact that the masses, set in political motion by the most urgent economic and political needs, eventually succeeded in breaking through the resistance of their opportunist Right-wing leaders. This has been all the more the case, because, as capitalism in general is weakening, so also are its tools, the Right Social Democrats, with the Left Social Democrats tending to unite with the Communists. The general crisis of capitalism is also, by the same token, the general crisis of Right Social Democracy.

All the major Communist parties in the capitalist countries, from Europe to Japan, have people's front programs, under different names and forms; in conformity with the specific national conditions under which they live and struggle. These all bear the characteristics, as analyzed above, of a joint electoral struggle around immediate demands by the toiling masses, supported by their mass organizations and aiming to

win political control of the state. Together with this, are the general implications of a Leftward orientation of the people's regime, the remodeling the state to fit the advancing needs of the movement, and the establishment of Socialism as the ultimate objective. The Communist parties are all aiming at the most peaceful and democratic advance possible to Socialism. Extended reviews of people's front programs and experiences in various countries are to be found in the Smith Act brief of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *et al.*, directed to the U.S. Court of Appeals in October 1953 (pages 98-147), from which a number of the quotations cited below are taken. They are typical examples of these present-day people's front programs.

The Italian Communist Party, the strongest in capitalist Europe, which stands in alliance with the Left-wing Socialist Party, has during the recent period repeatedly called for cooperation with other Left and progressive elements. Together, comprising a large majority of the Italian people, they would work jointly for the election of a progressive government, essentially along people's front lines. Palmiro Togliatti, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy, said on April 15, 1953:

What we demand, and for this we address ourselves to the Italian electorate, is to achieve through the medium of the election a situation which would permit the formation of a government capable of launching and of carrying through a great, incessant and

effective struggle against poverty, against the growing privations of the workers, office employees, handicraftsmen, peasants; against the economic degradation of Southern Italy and the islands, the mountain regions and other poorly developed areas. The economic measures envisaged by us go in the direction of social renovation, a direction which we unhesitatingly recognize as the road to Socialism.

In France, the Communist Party, the largest political party in the country, follows a similar people's front policy. It is now conducting a major struggle in that country, which is in deep crisis, to establish a Left-of-center people's front government, one that would begin to orientate the nation in a constructive direction. The major immediate aims of the French people's front movement are: a) freedom for Algeria and an end to the drain of French manpower in the colonial war; b) economic improvements in the conditions of the workers and greater social expenditures; c) policies leading to a further easing of international relations. Both the Italian and French Communist parties, as an elementary phase of their work, constantly struggle against the reactionary forces which would tear down the nation's democratic liberties in their efforts to make impossible an eventual electoral victory of the people's front within the present French Constitution.

In Great Britain, as in the various other capitalist countries, the Communist Party has an elaborate program along the lines of people's

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front and people's democracy: *The British Road to Socialism*. This program calls upon the workers and all their allies to organize "decisive action to win a Parliamentary majority and form a People's Government." The program states that "every effort of the capitalist class to defy the People's Government and Parliament will be resisted and defeated." Characteristically, the British Dominions—Canada, Union of South Africa, and Australia—have similar programs. The C.P. of Australia declares (*Australian Communist Review*, July, 1951): "New paths to Socialism were revealed in the post-war period. The People's Democracies of Eastern Europe have shown that the rule of the democratic masses, led by the working class, can be established in various ways." And Tim Buck, the leader of the Labor-Progressive Party in Canada, states in his book, *Thirty Years, 1922-1952* (pp. 221-23), that "Canada can advance to Socialism utilizing the parliamentary form of government equally as the workers and farmers of Central and South-eastern Europe did. . . . The working class cannot establish Socialism by simple electoral victory, but the parliamentary victory of such a broad alliance of democratic forces can transform capitalist democracy into real people's democracy."

In the American, British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Belgian colonies and semi-colonies, where there is hardly even a minimum of democratic freedoms, the

Communist parties, trade unions, and other people's mass organizations constantly face the most brutal repression from governments dominated by foreign imperialists, big landowners, bankers, and other reactionaries. Nevertheless, the Communist parties and their allies, as best they can under the severe circumstances, fight for the establishment of people's front and national front governments upon the basis of general elections. Such Left coalitions commonly include the non-imperialist sectors of the national bourgeoisie, and they are to be found widely in these countries.

For example, in Indonesia, which is the eighth most populous country in the world, the powerful Communist Party has been negotiating recently for the formation of a broad, anti-imperialist national front, to include the three major parties in the country—the Nationalists, Moslems, and Communists—to fight for complete national independence and for various urgent reform measures for the workers, peasants, and others—see *The Road to People's Democracy for Indonesia*, by D. N. Aidit, General Secretary of the Communist Party of that country.

In semi-colonial Brazil, in the Latin-American preserves of American imperialism, a similar situation prevails. The illegalized, semi-underground Brazilian Communist Party fights for a broad national democratic front. In *For a Lasting Peace* (September 16, 1955), General Secretary Carlos Prestes points out that

there is "a grave danger of a *coup d'état*, aimed at imposing upon the country a fascist military dictatorship of the lackeys of 'North American monopolies,' especially to balk the people's will in the approaching national elections." Prestes calls upon the masses to curb and defeat all such reactionary plans. Despite militant reaction, he adds that, "Under present conditions in Brazil, a united working class, in alliance with the other democratic and patriotic forces, could easily elect an honest patriot to the post of President of the Republic, one capable of carrying out a policy of peace and defense of national sovereignty." This is the general pattern of the movement throughout the wide expanse of Latin America.

THE AMERICAN ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The Communist Party of the United States, under the pressure of the big war-and-fascism drive of the Axis powers of the period, began its people's front orientation in 1935 and has continued, with variations, ever since. Already during the Spanish Civil War, the Party leaders, particularly Comrade Bittelman, discussed the possibility of the Spanish people's front government advancing on to Socialism. This idea is also expressed in the pamphlet, *Socialism* (1941) by Foster. This proposes (page 42) that, in addition to realizing the workers' immediate demands, "the government, once it is

firmly in the hands of the toiling people, with the working class in the lead, must strike the social evils at their roots by nationalizing all the important industries and the land, by abolishing capitalist exploitation, by developing planned production, by reorganizing society from the ground up on a Socialist basis."

The Party has called continuously for the crystallization of an American people's coalition of workers, farmers, intellectuals, and small business elements, led by the working class. In 1948 Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Party, stated thus the stage of the policy at that time: "We should bring forward a program that will give the working class and its popular allies a clear perspective and policy for drastically curbing the power of monopoly capital, and achieving governmental power for the people's coalition, and thus for effectively undermining the social and economic basis of fascism and extending democracy."

The first extended statement, however, definitely analyzing the people's front and people's democracy as the American road to Socialism, was contained in the pamphlet, *In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders* (Foster), published in July 1949, in connection with the current trial of the eleven C.P. National Board members. It was adopted as the official line of the trial on this specific question. The *History of the Communist Party* (1952) also outlines the matter extensively (pp. 549-557). The ques-

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tion was elaborately presented in the *Brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals*, October 1953, in the case of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and others. It was also developed in the Party *Program* in the national election campaign of 1954. The *Program* states (p. 28):

The Communist Party declares that Socialism will come into existence in the United States only when the majority of the American people decide to establish it. The Communist Party affirms its deep and abiding faith in the American people and their ultimate decision to establish Socialism. . . . The Communist Party advocates a peaceful path to Socialism in the U.S. It brands as a lie the charge that it advocates the use of force and violence in the pursuit of any of its immediate or long-range objectives.

Eugene Dennis, C.P. General Secretary, in his first public speech, on January 20, 1956, after doing a five-year term in prison under the Smith Act, thus stated the policy of the Party regarding the American road to Socialism:

When, and how, Socialism will be brought about is up to the majority of the American people. We Communists believe that ultimately some form of workers' and farmers' government, based on a united and class-conscious working class and a militant alliance of labor, the Negro people, and the toiling farmers, will effect the transition from capitalism to Socialism. Likewise, we are sure that this will be a truly American government. It will be headed by an American President and act through an American Congress, which would be—for the first time in our nation's

history—genuinely of, for, and by the people. And as for us Communists, we desire and advocate that this people's democracy shall be established by constitutional and democratic processes. (*Political Affairs*, February, 1956, p. 10.)

The people's front policy, of a general alliance of the working class and other democratic elements against monopoly capital, has deep roots in American history. Among these predecessor movements were the Granger, Greenback, and Populist parties of the general period of 1875-1900. These movements, mostly led by the poorer white farmers, had heavy participation by trade unionists, Negro sharecroppers, and lower middle class elements in the cities. The cutting edge of these movements was directed against rising monopoly capital. The big La Follette movement of the 1918-1924 period also took on the traditional farm-labor party pattern. In the broad Roosevelt New Deal movement of the 1932-1945 period, there were also distinct elements of the great mass anti-fascist alliance of the times internationally, although the movement was not led directly by the workers. Significantly also, at the seventh congress of the Comintern in 1935, the traditional labor-farmer party movement in the United States was characterized by Dimitrov as an American form of the people's front.

In the United States, the Communist Party foresees and fights for the democratic establishment of a people's front government which, as we have seen, could, in the essential

political circumstances, be the first steps towards people's democracy and Socialism. This means that the Party urges, when the majority of the American people so decide, a people's front government, whatever its specific form, within the framework of the present U.S. Constitution; that is, it should be established by legal, democratic action. Under present conditions in the United States, as in various other capitalist countries, such an election, based upon the broad democratic masses, fighting for elementary demands, is possible, providing always that these masses, led by the working class and the Communist Party, are able to protect the democratic election processes in the meantime from destructive reactionary attacks. There is no blueprint-road to Socialism; the American people will find their own specific road to this great historic goal.

A people's front government in the United States would assume the traditional constitutional forms of Congress, state legislatures, and the like. Such a government could be elected under the present constitutional set-up. But it would be an error to conclude that it would be possible to establish full Socialism in the United States under the Constitution as it now stands. Obviously, important amendments to it would be required. It is now just as true as ever, what Marx said after the Paris Commune—that the workers cannot seize upon the ready-made capitalist state machinery and utilize it for the building of Socialism. Hence, in

America, a people's front government, as it would move on to the Left, would be compelled to initiate certain constitutional changes, which would also be done in a legal manner. This, too, would be acting in full tune with American tradition. The American people have never looked upon the Constitution as a rigid, unchangeable document, never to be amended.

The British and Canadian Communist parties, with Harry Pollitt and Tim Buck at their heads respectively, in their programs give a clear picture of the political process, which would also be generally applicable to the United States. Thus, *The British Road to Socialism* explains that "the people of Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real People's Democracy, transforming Parliament, the product of Britain's historic struggle for democracy, into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of her people." Along the same line, the Canadian Labor-Progressive Party foresees that the people's front forces "can transform capitalist democracy into real people's democracy and make Parliament, which has developed as a result of the traditions and democratic struggle of the Canadian people, into an instrument of People's Democracy."

The central fact in this whole development would be that, with the people's front legally elected into control of the government, the entire process, from the original election, backed by the majority of the people, would be democratic and

constitutional. This would be true regarding such measures as the nationalization of industry, the democratization of the armed forces, etc., which would eventually become necessary. The capitalist opposition that should attempt to block this course by violence—if it did so—would be, as Marx pointed out about the United States in 1878, in the category of rebels against the legal existing order. This is the broad outline of political development foreseen and aimed at by the Communist Party of the United States, and it dovetails completely with the democratic traditions of the American people. To call it a program of the advocacy of the violent overthrow of the United States Government is nonsense.

Together with its aim of achieving the regular election of a people's government, whatever its specific form, by the majority of the American people, a government which would have the potentiality of moving Leftward towards people's democracy and Socialism, the Communist Party, in line with the workers' people's front movements all over the capitalist world, would seek to make this whole development as free of employer-organized violence as possible. Especially, the workers would undertake to prevent capitalist counter-revolutionary attacks from developing. The American people would adopt such safeguards to their democracy as they saw fit under the circumstances.

We have seen how the workers in

France, in the early phases of the Spanish movement, in Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere, were able to do this. There is every reason to suppose, too, that an awakened American proletariat, with its gigantic mass organizations, would similarly be able to maintain a democratic regime under any circumstances that might arise—that is, once these masses really understood that they have to take decisive steps forward. The recent curbing of the McCarthy pro-fascist menace by the American people augurs well for the future.

CONCLUSION

The Communist Party, as a Marxist-Leninist organization, realizes fully that American monopoly capital, the richest, strongest, most reactionary, and most ruthless in the world, would be certain to use every means within its power, legal and extra-legal, to try to beat back the advance of a militant movement of the working class and the masses of the people who were aiming at seriously curbing and ultimately breaking the political power of the monopolists. No other rational conclusion than this can be drawn from the big capitalists' long and lurid history of lawless repression of the workers during strikes, their cold-blooded slaughter of the toilers in needless industrial "accidents," their ruthless use of the courts against the people, their cynical corruption of the government, their prostitution of almost every institu-

tion in the country to their wolf-like profit-making, and their present leadership of world reaction. But the workers and other democratic elements, once in political motion, obviously would not give them a free hand to commit such violence against them, but would militantly undertake to curb them. Hence, the C.P. *Program*, speaking of an eventual, regularly elected "farmer-labor-anti-monopolist government," says realistically that, "Such a government would be called upon to take the most resolute measures to defend itself from the efforts of the monopolists to overthrow it." But Wall Street, facing Socialism as an immediate possibility, would be far less rich and powerful than it is now.

In their striving to achieve the most peaceful and orderly possible advance to inevitable Socialism, the workers and their allies in this country, as in other lands, would, in addition to their own efforts, have the advantage of the immense influence of ever-growing world Socialism and democracy. Obviously, while this influence is not yet so powerful as to cause the employers "of their own accord to make extensive concessions to the proletariat", as Stalin said would eventually take place, nevertheless the international democratic strength is already a tremendous force in the life of the world. We have seen above how it has only recently balked the imperialist war-makers and it is a most powerful barrier against fascism all over the world. Even U.S. imperialism, right

on its own home grounds, has to pay attention to this great new democratic influence in the world. This power it was, to a very large extent, that helped compel the Jim Crow government of this country recently to soften up a bit on Negro segregation in the schools, in the armed forces, and in passenger travel. And undoubtedly, the recent setback to McCarthyite fascism in the United States was very largely due to the tremendous hostility that developed against this reactionary demagogue all over the democratic and Socialist world. When the working class and their allies in this country finally come to elect a real people's government, undoubtedly one of the most decisive forces in protecting that government's safety will be the tremendous democratic spirit now inspiring the peoples of the world.

The Communist Party of the United States has never advocated force or violence. This was stated, at least in a general way, by the Supreme Court of the United States, in a rare burst of realism, in its decision in the Schneiderman case during World War II, in October 1942. After making an extended examination of Marxist-Leninist books, documents, and programs, the Court said:

A tenable conclusion from the foregoing is that the Party in 1927 desired to achieve its program by peaceful and democratic means, and as a theoretical matter, justified the use of force and violence only as a means of preventing an attempted forcible counter-overthrow once the Party had obtained control in

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a peaceful manner, or as a method of last resort to enforce the majority will if at some indefinite future time, because of peculiar circumstances, constitutional or peaceful channels were no longer open.

On numerous occasions C.P. spokesmen have accepted this definition as broadly correct, at least so far as it goes.

The Communist Party advocates and fights for the most peaceful possible and the legal establishment of Socialism in the United States, by means of a people's front—people's democracy course of development. Knowing so well the lawlessness and brutality of American monopoly capital, the Party has, however, never undertaken, in any sense, to say that such a consummation can be guaranteed or taken for granted. On the contrary, the Party realizes that all such major steps forward by the workers of this country can be won only on the basis of serious class struggle. Therefore, with regard to the possible election of a people's front government in the United States, the pamphlet, *In Defense of the Communist Party and Its Indicted Leaders*, said (p. 92):

This people's coalition, at all stages of its development, will have to face violent opposition from the monopolists and their hangers-on. . . . One can imagine the frenzy and desperation of the capitalist forces if a broad, advanced coalition party were really strong enough to menace big business' control of the Presidency and its majority in Congress. Such a party could be

electd only in the face of violent capitalist attacks.

The Party maintains, nevertheless, that such a democratic election, within the scope of the present Constitution, is quite possible. It holds that the working class and its allies, with strong trade unions and other mass organizations, along with powerful allies in the Negro people, poorer farmers, and other democratic elements, constituting together a great majority of the American people and moving ahead in fitting political conditions, will be able, despite the violence of the employers' opposition, to maintain intact the democratic franchise and to elect a people's government on a program of elementary democratic demands. This would open the door of the road to Socialism.

Of course, there is always the danger of anti-democratic fascism coming to power as the agency of monopoly capital. Indeed, in the recent spectacular rise of McCarthyism the United States has had a frightening experience in this general respect and it tasted the grim reality of the fascist danger. Had McCarthyism prevailed it would have wiped out real democratic liberties in the United States and made the Bill of Rights into a mockery. But it did not prevail. After much hesitancy and confusion, the democratic masses finally cracked down on McCarthy, although, in the meantime, general civil liberties suffered seriously. Although the fascist danger is still present, the Communist

Party does not consider fascism to be inevitable in the United States. Just the reverse, it has confidence in the democratic strength of the people, and it orientates upon the basic assumption that they will be able to maintain and develop their democratic rights through an eventual people's front movement.

American working-class political action, because of specific national conditions needless here to recapitulate, has taken a somewhat different course, in that, instead of early launching a broad labor party, as in Great Britain, it has crystallized its forces and activities in various forms and trends. Generally these still express themselves within the two bourgeois political organizations, primarily the Democratic Party. Consequently, the framework has not yet broken the political leading strings of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, it is now relatively rapidly on the way to the formation of a great mass political party, which will almost certainly take the familiar historic American form of a labor-farmer or people's party; but this time with the workers in the lead. It would be absurd to think that the present situation of 16,000,000 organized workers dominated by bourgeois politicians can long continue. The recent merger of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. was, at the same time, a long stride towards independent working class political action. In all likelihood the next real economic or political crisis in this country will bring the new party, now aborning, to fruition,

probably through a large-scale split in the Democratic Party.

At the present time, the political movement of the workers expresses itself chiefly through the channels of the Democratic Party, and there it has to be cultivated. But this, although now an extremely important necessity, can be only a temporary situation. One way or another, as the United States feels more and more the pressures and strains of the general crisis of world capitalism, the workers and their political allies, the poorer farmers, Negro masses, intellectuals, small business elements, etc., will find the means to break the present bourgeois political tutelage over them and to win control over their own political organization and destiny.

This is why it is so necessary, particularly for the Communist Party, in this rapidly ripening political situation, to keep before the workers the ultimate aim of independent political action and a great labor-farmer party, comprising a majority of the American people. In a world where the influence of world Socialism is growing by leaps and bounds, the American working class also will eventually find it indispensable to take the path of the people's front, the final end of which is Socialism. By cutting off the vast army of parasites, profiteers, and economic bloodsuckers, Socialism will open up the perspective for an enormous betterment in the living standards of the American working masses, and this fact the latter are historically bound eventually to grasp.

Historical Experiences of Proletarian Dictatorship*

From "People's Daily" (Peking)

THE 20TH CONGRESS of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union generalized the new experience gained in both international relations and construction within the Soviet Union. It made a number of vital decisions, including steadfast adherence to Lenin's policy of the possibility of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, the development of the Soviet system of democracy, thorough observance of the principle of collective leadership in the Party, criticism of shortcomings within the Party and the adoption of the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the development of the USSR.

The question of combating the cult of the individual occupied an important position in this Congress. In a very sharp fashion, the Congress exposed the spread of the cult of the individual which had been prevalent for a long time and had caused errors in work and had had bad effects on Soviet life. This courageous self-criticism by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of its errors demonstrated the highly

principled character of inner-Party life and the great vitality of Marxism-Leninism.

No governing political party or bloc in the service of the exploiting classes in history has ever dared or in contemporary capitalist states dares today expose its serious errors conscientiously before the mass of its own members and the people. Entirely different is the political party of the working class. The political party of the working class serves the broad mass of the people. Such a political party loses nothing by self-criticism but its errors, and, instead, gains the support of the broad mass of people.

During the past month and more, reactionaries throughout the world have been crowing happily about the Soviet Party's self-criticism of the cult of the individual. They say: Just look, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the first to build Socialism has committed a serious error and, what is more, it was J. V. Stalin, a greatly famed and honored leader, who committed it. The reactionaries think they have something that can discredit the Communist Parties in the Soviet Union and other countries. But their efforts will fi-

* This editorial appeared in the issue of April 5. It was preceded by a note stating that it was based on discussions held at an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. It is published here in full for the first time in English—Ed.

nally prove futile. What leading Marxist ever said in his writing that we could never commit mistakes or that any particular Communist could never commit mistakes? Is it not because we Marxist-Leninists deny that there can be any "miracle worker" who could not commit major or minor errors that we Communists use criticism and self-criticism in our inner-Party life? Would it be conceivable for the first Socialist state in history to practice the dictatorship of the proletariat without committing errors of this or that sort?

Lenin said in October 1921:

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind it, heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the erection of a state edifice of an unprecedented type! We shall struggle unremittingly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from perfect.

DIFFERENT CLASS DICTATORSHIPS

It is also inconceivable that certain mistakes made earlier preclude the possibility of certain other mistakes later or even of repetition of past mistakes to a greater or lesser extent. Since its division into an-

tagonistic classes, human society has witnessed for several thousand years the dictatorship of the slaveowners, of the feudal lords and of the bourgeoisie; only since the victory of the October Revolution has mankind begun to see the dictatorship of the proletariat. The first three forms of dictatorship are dictatorship by exploiting classes, though dictatorship by the feudal lords is somewhat more progressive than that of the slave-owners, and by the bourgeoisie somewhat more progressive than that of the feudal lords. These exploiting classes, which played a more or less progressive role in the history of social development, accumulated experience in ruling only by making many historical mistakes over considerable periods and by repeating these again and again; nevertheless, with the sharpening of the contradiction between the relations of production which they represented and the productive forces, they inevitably committed still more and greater mistakes, provoking large-scale resistance by the oppressed classes and the internal disintegration within their ranks that eventually brought about their destruction.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is entirely different in nature from any dictatorship of the exploiting classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the exploited class, a dictatorship of the majority over the minority, to create a socialist society in which there is no exploitation or poverty. It is the most progressive and the final dic-

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tatorship in history. But, since this dictatorship undertakes the greatest and the most difficult tasks and faces the most complicated struggle with the most diversified turns and twists in history, many mistakes in work cannot but occur, as Lenin said.

ON CORRECTING ERRORS

If some Communists indulge in self-exaltation and self-complacency and develop a rigidity of outlook, then they may even repeat their own or others' mistakes. We Communists must bear this in mind fully. To defeat the powerful enemy, the dictatorship of the proletariat must have highly centralized power which must be combined with a high level of democracy. When the system of centralization is emphasized one-sidedly, many mistakes will occur. This is quite understandable. But whatever the mistakes, for the popular masses the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat is always far superior to all the systems of dictatorship by the exploiting classes, to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Lenin was correct in saying: "If our enemies reproach us and say that Lenin himself admits that the Bolsheviks have done a host of foolish things, I want to reply by saying: Yes, but do you know that the foolish things we have done are entirely different from those you have done?"

The exploiting classes, out for plunder, all hoped to perpetuate their dictatorship, to sustain their rule to the end of time, and employed every

possible means to grind down the people. Their mistakes could not and cannot be overcome. On the other hand, the proletariat, with its goal the material and spiritual emancipation of the people, uses its dictatorship to achieve Communism and bring about harmony and equality among mankind and will allow its dictatorship to wither away gradually. Therefore it does its utmost to enable the popular masses to develop their initiative and play a positive role. Since the initiative and the positive role of the popular masses can be developed without limit under the dictatorship of the proletariat it is possible to correct all mistakes committed during the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Leaders of the Communist Parties and socialist states have the duty to do their utmost to reduce errors, avoid certain serious ones, endeavor to learn lessons from particular errors or those of limited duration or effect and make every effort to prevent these from developing into errors that affect the whole country or last a long period. To do this, every leader must be most modest and circumspect, keep close to the masses, consult them in all matters, go into the realities over and over again and make constant criticism and self-criticism appropriate to the situation and degree. Because of his failure to do precisely this, Stalin made certain serious mistakes in his work, in the latter part of his life, as a top leader of the Party and the state. He became conceited and not

circumspect. His thinking was subjective and one-sided and he made erroneous decisions on certain important questions, bringing about serious, harmful consequences.

THE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CPSU

With the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Soviet people and Communist Party, under the leadership of Lenin, founded the first socialist state on one-sixth of the earth. The Soviet Union speedily carried out socialist industrialization and agricultural collectivization, developed socialist science and culture, and built a solid union of many nationalities in the form of the U.S.S.R., and formerly backward nationalities in the Soviet Union became socialist. During the Second World War, the Soviet Union was the main force in defeating the fascists, saved European civilization, and helped the people in the East to defeat Japanese militarism.

All these glorious achievements indicated to humanity the bright future of Socialism and Communism, seriously shaking the rule of imperialism and making the Soviet Union the primary bulwark in the world struggle for lasting peace. The Soviet Union encouraged and supported the construction of all other socialist countries. It inspired the world socialist movements, the anti-colonialist movement and all movements for the progress of mankind. These are among the great historic achievements of the Soviet people and

the Soviet Communist Party. The man who showed the Soviet people and Communist Party the way to these great achievements was Lenin. In the struggle to carry out Lenin's principles, achievements have been made under the vigorous leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and among these are the indelible achievements of Stalin.

After Lenin's death, Stalin, as the chief leader of the Party and the State, creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism. In the struggle to defend the legacy of Leninism against the enemies of Leninism—the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and other bourgeois agents—Stalin expressed the will and wishes of the people and proved himself an outstanding champion of Marxism-Leninism. Stalin won the support of the Soviet people and played an important historic role first of all because, together with the other leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he defended Lenin's line on industrialization and agricultural collectivization of the Soviet state. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in carrying out this line, brought the triumph of Socialism in the Soviet Union and created conditions for victory by the Soviet Union in its war against Hitler.

INDIVIDUAL AUTHORITY AND COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

All these victories of the Soviet people conformed to the interests

of the working class of the world and all progressive mankind. Therefore, at the same time the name of Stalin enjoyed high honor throughout the world. However, after Stalin had won high prestige among the people, both within and outside the Soviet Union, by his correct application of the Leninist line, he indulged in inordinate exaltation of his own role and put his individual authority above that of the collective leadership. The result was a contradiction between certain of his actions and fundamental Marxist-Leninist points of view that he himself had disseminated. On the one hand, there was recognition of the masses of the people as the makers of history and of the necessity for the Party to maintain permanent contact with the people and develop inner-Party democracy and self-criticism and criticism from the lower levels upward. On the other hand, the cult of the individual was tolerated and encouraged and arbitrary individual decisions made. This led to a contradiction between Stalin's theory and practice on this question during the latter part of his life.

Marxism-Leninism acknowledges that leaders play an important role in history. The people and their Party need outstanding personalities who can represent the interests and will of the people and stand in the forefront of the historic struggle to lead them. To deny the role of the individual, the role of vanguards and leaders, is completely wrong. But when any leader of the

Party or the state places himself over and above the Party and the masses, instead of among them, when he alienates himself from the masses, he loses overall, penetrating insight into the affairs of the country. In such circumstances, even so outstanding a man as Stalin inevitably made unrealistic and wrong decisions on certain important matters. Stalin failed to draw the lessons from particular, local and temporary mistakes on certain issues and so failed to prevent them from becoming serious errors involving the whole nation over a long period of time.

During the latter part of his life, Stalin more and more indulged in the cult of the individual in violation of the Party's system of democratic centralism and the system of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility. As a result there were such important mistakes as excesses in the fight against adversaries, failure to take the necessary precautions on the eve of the anti-fascist war, and the failure to pay proper attention to the further development of agriculture and the material welfare of the peasantry; in respect to the international communist movement a number of mistakes were made, especially on the question of Yugoslavia. On these issues, Stalin was subjective and one-sided, and divorced himself from objective reality and from the masses.

The cult of the individual is a putrid carry-over from the long history of mankind. The cult of the individual has its roots not only in

the exploiting class but also in the small producers. It is recognized that paternalism is a product of the small-producer economy. After the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, even when the class of exploiters is eliminated, the small producer economy is replaced by a collective economy and socialist society founded, certain rotten, poisonous ideological remnants from the old society may still remain in the minds of the people for a very long period. "The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force" (Lenin). The cult of the individual is also a force of habit of millions and tens of millions. Since this force of habit still exists in society, it can influence many government functionaries, and even such a leader as Stalin was no exception. The cult of the individual is a reflection in the minds of people of a social phenomenon, and when such a Party and state leader as Stalin is also influenced by this backward ideology, it reacts on society, bringing losses to the cause and hampering the initiative and creativeness of the mass of the people.

CONTRADICTIONS AND SOCIALISM

Contradictions and conflicts increased between the developing productive forces, the economic and political system of Socialism and the life of the Party on the one hand, and this state of mind of the cult of the individual, on the other. The struggle against this cult, which was

launched during the 20th Soviet Congress, is a great and courageous fight by the members of the Communist Party and the people of the Soviet Union to clear away ideological obstacles in the way of their advance.

It is naive to assume that contradictions can no longer exist in a socialist society. To deny the existence of contradictions is to deny dialectics. The contradictions in various societies differ in character as do the forms of their solution. But society develops at all times amidst continual contradictions. Socialist society also develops amidst contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production. In a socialist or communist society, technical innovations and changes in the social system will continue to take place. Otherwise the development of society would come to a standstill and society could no longer advance. Humanity is still in its youth. The road it will yet traverse will be longer by no-one-knows how many times than the road it has already travelled. Contradictions, such as between progress and conservatism, advance and backwardness, positive and negative, will constantly arise under varying conditions and different circumstances.

Things will go like this: one contradiction will lead to another; and when old contradictions are solved new ones will arise. Some people maintain that the contradiction between idealism and materialism can be eliminated in a socialist or a communist society. It is clear that this

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view is incorrect. So long as contradictions exist between the subjective and objective, between the advanced and the backward, and between the productive forces and the relations of production, contradictions will continue between idealism and materialism in a socialist or communist society and will manifest themselves in various forms.

Since people live in society, they reflect in different circumstances and to varying degrees the contradictions existing in each form of society. Even in a communist society not everybody will necessarily be perfect since people will still have contradictions within themselves. There will still be good people and bad and people with comparatively correct thinking and others with comparatively incorrect thinking. There will still be struggle between people but its nature and form will be different from those in class society. Viewed in this light, the existence of contradictions between the individual and the collective in a socialist society is nothing strange. And any leader of the Party or state will inevitably become rigid in his thinking and consequently make grave mistakes if he isolates himself from collective leadership, from the masses of the people and from real life. We must be vigilant against the possibility that some people, who obtain the high confidence of the masses because of many achievements in the work of the Party or the state, may use this confidence to abuse their authority and make mistakes.

SOME CHINESE EXPERIENCES

The Chinese Communist Party congratulates the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on its important achievements in the historic struggle against the cult of the individual. The experience of the Chinese revolution, too, testifies to the fact that only by relying on the wisdom of the masses of the people, on democratic centralism and on the system of combining collective leadership with individual responsibility can our Party obtain great victories and achievements in times of revolution and in times of national construction.

The Chinese Communist Party has waged continuous struggle in the revolutionary ranks against elevating the individual above the masses, and against individual "heroes." Yet both these features will undoubtedly exist for a long period. Even when overcome, they re-emerge sometimes in one person, sometimes in another. When attention is centered on the role of the individual, the role of the masses and the collective is often ignored. That is why some people easily fall into the mistake of vainglory or superstitious faith in themselves or blind acceptance of others' mistakes. We must therefore give unremitting attention to opposing the elevating of the individual above the masses, individual "heroes" and the cult of the individual.

To counter subjectivism in the method of leadership, the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of China issued a decision in June, 1943 on methods of leadership. In discussing the question of collective leadership in the Party, it is still useful for all members of the Chinese Communist Party and its leaders to refer back to this decision which declared:

In all practical work of our Party, correct leadership can only be developed on the principle of "from the masses, to the masses." This means summing up (*i.e.*, scattered and unsystematic views), then taking the resulting ideas back to the masses, explaining and popularizing them, until the masses embrace the ideas as their own, stand up for them, and translate them into action and through the action of the masses their correctness is tested; then once more summing up the views of the masses, and once again taking the resulting ideas back to the masses for their wholehearted support . . . and so on, over and over again, so that each time these ideas emerge with greater correctness and become more vital and meaningful. This is what the Marxist theory of knowledge teaches us.

"THE MASS LINE"

For a long time, this method of leadership has been described in our Party by the popular name of "the mass line." The whole history of our work teaches us that whenever this line is followed, the work is always good, or comparatively good, and even if there are mistakes they are easy to rectify; and whenever this line is not followed, the work is

marred by setbacks. This is the Marxist-Leninist method of leadership, the Marxist-Leninist line of work. After the victory of the revolution, when the working class and the Communist Party have become the leading class and party in the state, there is the great danger that leading personnel of the Party and state, attacked by bureaucratism from many sides, may use the organs of state to take arbitrary action, alienate themselves from the masses and collective leadership, practice commandism in violation of Party and state democracy. Therefore, we must give fuller attention to using the mass line method of leadership, rather than neglecting it even to the slightest extent, if we do not want to be dragged down in such quicksand.

Definite systems have therefore to be set up to guarantee the thorough carrying out of the mass line and collective leadership, so as to prevent the elevation of the individual above the masses and individual heroism which mean divorce from the masses, and reduce to a minimum subjectivism and one-sidedness in our work which represent a departure from reality.

We must also learn from the struggle of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union against the cult of the individual and continue to develop the fight against dogmatism.

The working class and other sections of the people, guided by Marxism-Leninism, won the revolution

and achieved state power. The victory of the revolution and the establishment of the revolutionary regime have opened boundless vistas for the development of Marxism-Leninism. Yet because Marxism is seen by all as the guiding ideology in the country since the victory of the revolution, quite a number of our propagandists, usually relying on the administrative power and the prestige of the Party, disseminates Marxism-Leninism to the masses as dogma, instead of working hard, marshalling plenty of facts, using Marxist-Leninist methods of analysis and the language of the people to explain convincingly the unity of the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete situation in China.

Over several years, we have made some advances in research in philosophy, economics, history and literature and the arts, but generally speaking, there are many unhealthy phenomena. Many of our research workers still have the dogmatic habit, thinking by rote, lacking independence of mind and the creative spirit, and in certain respects are influenced by the individual worship of Stalin. It should be pointed out that the works of Stalin will still, as hitherto, be studied seriously. All that is of benefit in his works, especially much of his writing in defense of Leninism and in correctly summarizing Soviet experience in construction, we should take as an important historical legacy. To do otherwise would be a mistake.

MARXISM VERSUS DOGMATISM

But there are two methods of studying them: the Marxist method and the method of dogmatism. Some people treat the works of Stalin dogmatically with the result that they cannot analyze what is correct and what is incorrect, and even what is correct they take as a panacea and apply indiscriminately. Inevitably, they make mistakes. For instance, Stalin presented a formula that in different revolutionary periods, the direction of the main blow was to isolate the middle-of-the-road social and political forces of the period. We must examine this formula of Stalin's according to circumstances from a critical Marxist point of view. In certain circumstances, it can be correct to isolate the middle-of-the-road forces, but it is not always correct to isolate them in all circumstances. According to our experience, the direction of the main blow in the revolution should be toward the major enemy and his isolation. To the middle-of-the-road forces, we should adopt the policy of both uniting with them and struggling against them, at least to neutralize them, making efforts, when circumstances permit, to change them from a position of neutrality to one of alliance with us, in order to help the development of the revolution.

But there was a period (the ten years of civil war from 1927 to 1936) in which some of our comrades crudely applied this formula of

Stalin's to China's revolution by directing the main blow at the middle-of-the-road forces, describing them as the most dangerous enemy. The result was that instead of isolating the real enemy we isolated ourselves and inflicted losses on ourselves while benefiting the real enemy. With this dogmatic error in mind, in order to defeat the Japanese aggressors, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China during the years of the Anti-Japanese War put forward the principle of "developing the progressive forces, winning over the middle-of-the-road forces and opposing the die-hard forces." The progressive forces referred to here were the forces of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals led by or capable of being influenced by the Communist Party. The middle-of-the-road forces were the national bourgeoisie, all democratic parties and groups and non-party democrats. The die-hard forces were the compradore-feudal forces headed by Chiang Kai-shek that practiced passive resistance to Japanese aggression and active opposition to the Communists. Experience in practice proved that this principle of the Communist Party of China was suitable in the circumstances of China's revolution and was correct.

The fact always is that dogmatism is valued only by those who are mentally lazy. So far from being of any use, it does incalculable harm to the revolution, to the people and to Marxism-Leninism. In the matter of raising the consciousness of the mass

of the people, inspiring in them a vigorous spirit of initiative and bringing about the rapid development of practical and theoretical work, it is now still necessary to destroy the superstitious belief in dogmatism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat (which, in China, is the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class) has now achieved great victories within areas populated by 900,000,000 people. Whether it is the Soviet Union, China, or any other People's Democracy, each has its own experience in success and experience in errors. We should continuously sum up such experiences. We must be vigilant to the possibility that we may still commit errors in the future. The important lesson is that the leading organ of our Party should confine errors to particular, local, temporary errors, and should not let particular, local errors or those that have just shown themselves grow into nation-wide errors or errors of long duration.

The history of the Communist Party of China contains the experience of committing serious mistakes on several occasions. During the revolutionary period from 1924 to 1927, there appeared in our Party the erroneous line represented by Chen Tu-hsiu's Rightist opportunism. During the revolutionary period from 1927 to 1936, there appeared in our Party on three occasions the erroneous line of "Leftist" opportunism. Of these, the most serious were the Li Li-san line and the Wang Ming

line. The former occurred in 1930 and the latter from 1931 to 1934. The damage caused to the revolution by the Wang Ming line was particularly serious. In this period, in an important revolutionary base there also occurred the erroneous Chang Kuo-tao Right-opportunist line which opposed the Party's Central Committee and the Party. This wrong line did serious damage to an important section of the revolutionary forces.

With the exception of Chang Kuo-tao's line, which was an error confined to an important revolutionary base, all the errors committed within those two periods were nation-wide. During the war of resistance to Japanese aggression, there again emerged within our Party the wrong line of Rightist-opportunism represented by Comrade Wang Ming. But because our Party had drawn the lessons from the previous two revolutionary periods we did not allow this wrong line to develop and it was set right by the Party's Central Committee within a comparatively short period. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Kao Wang-Jao Shu-shih anti-Party alliance developed in our Party in 1953. This anti-Party alliance represented the forces of reaction at home and abroad whose aim was to endanger the cause of the revolution. Had it not been for the Central Committee's early discovery and timely destruction of this anti-Party alliance, incalculable damage could have been

done to the Party and the revolutionary cause.

From this it will be seen that our Party's historical experience also is that of being tempered in the course of its own struggle against various erroneous lines and because of this achieved great victories in the revolution and in construction. Local and particular mistakes often occur in work. It is solely due to reliance on the collective wisdom of the Party and the wisdom of the mass of the people, and the prompt exposing and overcoming of these mistakes, that they have no chance to grow and become nation-wide, protracted mistakes and do not become major errors endangering the people.

FOR AN HISTORIC VIEW

Communists should adopt an analytical attitude to errors in the Communist movement. Some people consider that Stalin was wrong in everything. This is a grave misunderstanding. Stalin was a great Marxist-Leninist, yet at the same time a Marxist-Leninist who committed several gross errors without recognizing them for what they were. We should view Stalin from the historical standpoint, make an all-round, appropriate analysis of his rights and wrongs and draw beneficial lessons from it. Both his rights and wrongs were features of the international communist movement and bear the imprint of the times.

The international communist movement is only a little over 100

years old and it is only 39 years since the victory of the October Revolution; experience in much of the revolutionary work is still inadequate. We have great achievements, but also defects and errors. As the emergence of one achievement is followed by the creation of another, so the overcoming of one defect or mistake may be followed by a new one which must in turn be overcome. Achievements always come in greater number than defects, the rights always in greater number than the wrongs and the defects and mistakes will inevitably be overcome. Good leadership consists not in committing no mistakes but in treating mistakes seriously. There has never been anyone in the world who made no mistakes. Lenin said:

Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious Party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the class, and then the masses.

Following the behest of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is dealing seriously with certain grave mistakes committed by Stalin in directing the building of Socialism, and also the consequences of

his mistakes. Because of the gravity of the consequences, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, while affirming the great merits of Stalin, deemed it necessary to expose sharply the essence of his mistakes and call upon the entire Party to take them as a warning and work resolutely to eliminate their unfavorable consequences. We Chinese Communists are convinced that through the sharp criticism at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, all the positive factors which were stultified before by certain erroneous policies will undoubtedly come to life generally and that the Party and the people of the Soviet Union will be firmer than ever in their unity to struggle for the construction of a great communist society such as mankind has never yet witnessed and for lasting worldwide peace.

The reactionary forces of the world are pouring ridicule on this event; they jeer at the fact that we are overcoming mistakes made within our camp. What will be the outcome? There is not the slightest doubt that they will find facing them a still more powerful, an ever invincible, great camp of peace and Socialism headed by the Soviet Union, while the misanthropic cause of those who express this ridicule will be in a far from happy position.

Dennis' "Letters from Prison"

By Claude Lightfoot

(Comrade Lightfoot, Chairman of the Illinois Communist Party, has himself been sentenced to five years in prison under the membership section of the Smith Act. His case is now on appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court.)

IN 1950 THERE appeared Comrade Dennis' volume, *Ideas They Cannot Jail*, which dealt in a most searching way with major problems confronting our country. Shortly after the appearance of this work, Comrade Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, together with several of his fellow members of the National Committee, were sent to jail under the Smith Act. Now we have before us a book* made up of many of the letters that Comrade Dennis sent to his wife and to his young son while he was a political prisoner.

This book is itself proof of how true it is that there are "ideas they cannot jail." It is proof, too, that even in prison, Comrade Dennis pondered these ideas and applied them and enriched them. It is clear from this volume that Comrade Dennis spent most of his time while away not simply cultivating vegetables in the prison hot-houses but also cultivating his own understanding and his own learning.

Several letters to his boy give the reader a clue as to what motivated and guided the daily prison routine of Eugene Dennis. Thus, shortly before he was released from jail, he wrote the lad:

After all, while the past five years have been a difficult and trying period for us, and also for the American people, we have all learned a great deal and have been strengthened in many ways. In times of adversity and hardship all but weaklings become tempered and more mature and responsible, and in varying degrees are stimulated to think more deeply and clearly, and in the long run should be able to contribute more than previously to the common welfare and world peace, to helping achieve a better life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. And I'm sure that the Dennis family won't be found wanting in this respect.

Though going to jail is no pleasant matter, the Dennis letters prove that something can be gained even under such adverse conditions. However, it is evident that Eugene Dennis could not have perfected and refined

* Eugene Dennis, *Letters from Prison*, International Publishers, 160 pp., \$1.

his knowledge under conditions of prison without the able assistance of his wife, Peggy. Her selflessness and steadfast devotion are seen throughout the book. It was she who kept him posted on all important happenings and contributed toward rounding out his thoughts on many complicated matters. The quality of this marriage is acknowledged by Eugene Dennis on the occasion of their twenty-fifth anniversary when he wrote from jail:

We have observed many anniversaries together. All of them were dear to us. But this September 4th has an exceptional meaning for me. This is not only because of the special circumstances that exist today; nor merely because it signifies that we have lived and worked together for a quarter of a century. For what is truly significant about any marriage and comradeship is not so much the span of time covered in itself, but the quality of the bonds that bring and hold a man and woman together. Measured in these terms our relationship is something precious with a future, as well as a present and a past.

Letters From Prison represents a commentary on most of the political, social and economic problems between the years of 1951 and 1956. The subject matter is so vast that it is not possible in these comments to discuss all the problems raised by the author. I shall confine this review to a few of the author's views on such major questions as that of war or peace, the menace of Mc-

Carthyism, trade-union unity, the democratic rights of the Negro people, and electoral problems.

ON THE DANGERS OF WAR AND FASCISM

One of the things that characterized Eugene Dennis' approach to the problem of war and peace was his sense of balance and faith in the American people. He did not become panicky at moments of crisis or complacent when things appeared more normal. For example, on February 1, 1953, when the Eisenhower Administration gave the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa the green light for an attack on the Chinese mainland, Dennis wrote:

The executive order lifting the "neutralization role" of the Seventh Fleet is an ominous development. It constitutes an act of further aggression and an extension of American military intervention against China and all the peoples of Asia. . . . while grasping the new war moves and dangers, organized labor and all democratic forces cannot fall victim to the belief that World War II is "just around the corner" or that war is inevitable. The new war policy of the Administration and the giant trusts can be challenged and defeated. It is possible for the people to compel Messrs. Dulles, Eisenhower, Wilson, Aldrich, Byrnes, *et al.* to do more than pull in their horns slightly.

This forecast, which events have subsequently proved to be correct, shows the loss that America suffered

as a result of Dennis' imprisonment. To have had a voice such as his free to warn the American people of the pitfalls of the Administration's warlike policies would have facilitated a quickened reaction to all such policies. But, of course, that is the reason why he and his co-workers were put in jail in the first place. His imprisonment represented a loss not only to the American people generally, but to the Communist movement particularly. We were deprived of his analytical abilities, and we made a number of errors which could have otherwise been avoided.

For example, in assessing the war and fascist danger in our Party's program, we mistakenly concluded that the only way to bar the path to war and fascism was the election in 1956 of a new type of Administration which would neither be the old Truman type nor the present Cadillac cabinet under President Eisenhower. Such an Administration, we said, would come via the Democratic Party and would pick up where the New Deal left off. Obviously such an Administration is still desirable. But meanwhile serious checks on the trend toward war and fascism have been accomplished even under a reactionary Eisenhower Administration.

Eugene Dennis foresaw this possibility in the aforementioned statement. The reasons for our miscalculations require a more basic examination than I am prepared to make at this time. With the same clarity

of direction in respect to the fascist danger, Dennis in a letter dated March 11, 1952 wrote: "The post-war offensive of monopoly capital is far from over and the end is not yet in sight. But from this it would be a mistake to conclude that this extremely dangerous situation is hopeless, or that it is impossible to check the crucifiers of the Bill of Rights, until reaction 'has run its course.'" He stated further:

Some may be further intimidated and disoriented in the period ahead. Many more, however, will shed their lingering illusions and sole reliance on the Supreme Court and the Administration and, despite the position of most of the top labor and social-reformist leaders, will move towards common action and many-sided, mass political and economic struggles—even though the going will get rougher and tougher before the political situation changes for the better.

The correctness of those observations has been proven in life.

ON LABOR UNITY

In respect to the necessity for labor unity, Dennis wrote on November 12th:

In this situation, the class struggle, despite its unevenness, will develop more rapidly and extensively. The struggle between the war instigators, the most bellicose monopolies, and all democratic forces will become sharper. The rank and file of labor and also some of the trade-union leadership

will be compelled to adopt a more militant and independent policy in pure self-defense and to seek mutual solidarity and unity of action with other Democratic forces. *Obviously, the Left and other progressives will have to understand this trend. They need to re-examine and develop all tactics and united front approaches and relationship in such a way as to encourage and facilitate this development. . . .*" (Emphasis added.)

Had those of us who were responsible for shaping Party policy during the years of absence of Eugene Dennis and his co-workers been fully possessed of this approach, the Party could have played a much greater role in promoting a united labor movement. We could have narrowed down considerably our present isolation in the labor movement. In this connection, too, a deeper analysis will shortly be presented to the Party for discussion.

Eugene Dennis in commenting on electoral policies made equally penetrating and profound analyses. His comments on the outcome of the 1952 elections, in a letter dated November 17th, are pertinent to the situation we still face in 1956. He wrote:

Placing the outcome of the elections in such a doctrinaire way as "it makes no difference" tends to minimize the increased dangers flowing from the election results and confronting the people and the cause of world peace in the post-election period ahead. It is a sectarian approach. [Further:] It passes over, or does not take into account,

the rivalries and differences and contradictions within the ranks of the bourgeoisie and their major parties, including certain differences of emphasis, tempo and methods to be used in pursuing their common imperialist objectives and monopoly's bi-partisan war program.

Those of us who were responsible for policy in this period made, perhaps, the greatest contribution in this period. In analyzing the outcome of the 1952 elections, we made essentially the same point. And we also rooted the mistakes in 1952 to sectarian approaches in 1948.

ON NEGRO RIGHTS

In respect to the struggle for Negro rights, the Dennis letters offer comments on almost all the problems during the years under review. Most pertinent, however, was his comment on the Supreme Court decision on desegregation in the public schools. He wrote: "This decision constitutes an historic blow against the white supremacists and the whole barbaric system of jim-crow." Further: "Of course no thinking person can minimize the political struggle required to ensure effective enforcing decrees federally and in the various states." Unfortunately there were many who underestimated what was required to carry out this decree. Even today, with the tremendous struggles being waged in the South and the extreme measures being employed by southern reaction, there are those in the North who advise "moderation."

These are some of the central thoughts culled from *Letters From Prison*. They prove that it is possible not only to ascertain the way things stand at a given moment but, through the correct application of the Marxist method, to predict the future. They show the growth of Eugene Dennis as a Marxist thinker and augur well that his contributions to the cause of the people will continue to grow.

* * *

The growth and maturity of the thoughts we discern in *Letters From Prison* exist despite many past mistakes—mistakes which have been costly. No one is more aware of this than Eugene Dennis. Most of the errors which his co-workers committed during his absence are deeply rooted in the past when Dennis and other members of the National Committee were present. One of the cardinal ways for leaders to grow is the ability to look objectively at errors of the past and to take corrective measures for the present and future. Eugene Dennis and his co-workers of the National Committee are at present preoccupied with just that. Such an examination will undoubtedly result in a stronger Marxist movement in this country and will greatly strengthen the American workers and people.

The total value of *Letters From Prison* will not be determined by what the author had to say about events that have passed, but rather as these remarks help solve the problems we face presently. The

chief characteristic of all of Eugene Dennis' letters was not only his accurate description of the main problems the country faced, but above all it was the clarity with which he showed what had to be done in order to resolve them. Underlying all his comments on various questions, he always stressed the supreme necessity for Communist and non-Communist, for labor, the farmers, and the Negro people, as well as small business to unite their forces in a common struggle against the big monopolists. The unity of the democratic masses, he pointed out, was a key to the solution to everything.

THE NEED FOR MASS UNITY

An examination of whatever progress was made in these years to curb McCarthyism, to promote the cause of peace, as well as the improvement of the living standards of the toiling masses, and the advancement of the struggles for Negro rights, will show that only to the extent that the people fought unitedly, was progress made. Also, one will find the answer as to why some victories were not more complete and why others were lost in the extent to which unity was not achieved. Thus, the building of the people's democratic coalition, as pointed out by Eugene Dennis in his letters, was and is the indispensable tool with which present unresolved problems must be tackled.

In the past few years the people's

organizations have been greatly strengthened. We have witnessed the merger of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., creating a powerful organization of 16 million strong. Among the Negro people, the efforts of the NAACP are being supplemented by the united actions of the most powerful of Negro organizations—the churches. The farmers are strengthening their organizations in order to enhance their fighting ability.

Notwithstanding these important facts, pro-democratic forces face serious problems in uniting their efforts in a common direction in the 1956 elections. All these forces—labor, farmers and the Negro people—have common aspirations and face a common foe. But at this time it is not guaranteed that they will stand unitedly at the polls in November 1956. In recent months we have seen a series of developments which should make all progressive-minded people pause and become concerned.

The Primary races which have already taken place in several states present a paradoxical picture. There is every indication that the farmers—especially the poor farmers, who in 1952 shifted and made possible the Eisenhower GOP victory—are now shifting their political direction. They are protesting against the policies of the Eisenhower Administration. This was seen particularly in the support to the Kefauver candidacy in the Minnesota and Wisconsin primaries. But results in these and other elections show that the Eisen-

hower Administration and the GOP are making inroads into the ranks of labor and the Negro people. If this tendency continues to grow, then there can be no perspective for a people's victory at the polls in November. It is, therefore, incumbent upon progressives to assess the situation and embark upon a program to reverse the present state of affairs.

Several months ago, labor held forth the perspective of defeating the Cadillac cabinet of President Eisenhower. Generally speaking, there was enthusiasm for achieving this objective. At this moment, for various reasons, no such enthusiasm is being expressed.

With regard to the Negro people the situation is even more serious. In the absence of an effective alternative to the Dixiecrats within the Democratic Party there is talk of switching to the Republican Party. Roy Wilkins, National Executive Secretary of the NAACP, at a recent meeting in Chicago inadvertently called for such a switch. The primaries in Milwaukee revealed a considerable shift of Negro voters to the Eisenhower candidacy.

DIXIECRATS AND DEMOCRATS

From the foregoing it is clear that the possibility exists that while, on the one hand, many farmers may shift from the GOP to the Democrats, on the other hand, labor may remain passive and in some instances vote for Eisenhower, and there may be a considerable shift of Negro

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voters in that direction. If this occurs then whatever partial successes were possible will be lost and the reactionaries in both parties will emerge victorious. The main reason for the dilemma facing labor and the people's movements, aside from class considerations, is the mistaken notion, on the part of many northern Democrats and especially pro-Stevenson elements, that the road to victory for the Democrats in 1956 requires the unity of the Democratic Party, inclusive of the Dixiecrats. Apparently they feel that labor and the Negro people are in their vest pockets, and that all they need to do is to win the farmers and keep the Dixiecrats intact. Evidently these people have not learned much from history.

The old coalition that gave FDR great victories rested on the base of an alliance of popular masses together with the reactionaries of the South. But in the post-war world this situation has changed. Today an alliance based on this diversity of interest is neither feasible nor possible.

This is the lesson which was forced upon President Truman in 1948 when he won without the support of the Dixiecrats. It is a lesson that was forgotten by Adlai Stevenson in 1952, when he lost with the support of the Dixiecrats. And now in 1956, Mr. Stevenson and his aides are offering a repeat performance.

There are some who ponder over this confusing picture and conclude

that nothing can be won because, they hold, an Eisenhower victory is in the bag. Even though the hour is getting late, the possibility still exists to transform the present situation into its opposite. The key to effecting this change is a change in outlook in the labor movement. Labor, in collaboration with its allies, the farmers and the Negro people, must overcome moods of defeatism and passivity. It must enter into the political arena with the outlook of bringing about a change in the relationship of forces within the Democratic party—thus providing the Democratic masses with some effective alternative to a GOP-Dixiecrat alliance. There are precedents which show that this can be done. The result of the 1948 elections is a case in point.

And today there is a greater force than the 1948 Progressive Party that can bring pressure to bear on the Democratic Party. An organized labor movement of 16 million members, the high level of development in the Negro people's movement—which in a large number of northern states constitutes the balance of power—is sufficiently strong to change the course of developments inside the Democratic Party. But these forces must be prepared to make it clear to the Democratic Party that if it fails to meet their demands in terms of program and candidates they will immediately, following the 1956 elections, take steps to form a new People's Party. The pressures that were exerted in

1948 compelled the adoption of a forthright civil rights platform and forced the Dixiecrats to walk out of the convention. From that point on the Democratic Party's campaign was taken from an all-time low and proceeded on to victory. But the road to victory was also charted by a forthright stand on many burning economic problems confronting the workers and farmers. And of no small importance was Truman's pledge to send Vinson on a mission to Moscow in the interest of world peace. We see therefore that it was a combination of issues that brought about the change.

Today no less is required. The Cadillac cabinet can hardly be defeated unless the Democratic Party convention adopts a positive peace program. The fact is inescapable that labor and the people's movement must force the Democratic Party to come out on a genuine peace program if the Tycoons of Big Business are to be ousted from government.

The chief slogans of the Republicans for 1956 are peace and prosperity. The campaign will be conducted amid relative prosperity. Yet every worker feels insecure. It is common knowledge that the economy rests on a powder keg. No one knows what day the bottom will drop out of things. It is, therefore, necessary for labor to take the lead in formulating a comprehensive, long-range program to protect the workers against the possibility of a crisis in the next few years. Labor in the

latter part of 1954 took the lead in formulating an anti-depression program. Such a program is needed now.

Labor and the Negro people's movement are rejecting the counsel of moderation in regards to desegregation in the South. But these forces must press even more energetically upon northern liberals and Democrats the necessity for action in the present Democratic-controlled Congress to enact some of the legislative matters before it, such as the Celler Bill. The people's coalition, with labor in the lead, must work to see that no compromise is made with the Dixiecrats at the Democratic National Convention. That convention must be compelled to enact a strong civil rights program, even if the southern diehards take a powder as they did in 1948. In fact, if the Dixiecrats do walk out, a new situation will exist in the party. It will have an energizing effect on all Democratic forces. It will enable Labor and the Negro people's movement to throw themselves whole-heartedly into the struggle to defeat the Eisenhower Cadillac cabinet. Given an approach along these lines it is still possible to advance substantially the cause of the people in the 1956 elections.

Comrade Dennis' *Letters From Prison*, dealing with the problems of 1951-1955, illuminates the path people's forces must travel today. In this sense the book has its greatest meaning.

The Question of Academic Freedom

By Herbert Aptheker

IN 1948 THE University of Washington in Seattle, fired two of its faculty members, Joseph Butterworth, a member of the English Department, and Herbert Phillips of the Philosophy Department. Both men had been on the faculty for many years and both declared themselves to be members of the Communist Party. On the grounds of that membership they were dismissed by the Board of Regents, at the recommendation of President Raymond Allen. This action was taken despite the fact that a majority of the University's Faculty Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom had found that Professors Butterworth and Phillips were fully competent and had not mis-used their positions for purposes of indoctrinating and propagandizing and had therefore recommended that the men not be fired.

The standing committee on academic freedom of the American Association of University Professors (with about 40,000 members) was instructed at once to examine the situation and make a report. The years passed, the political firing of teachers multiplied throughout the country, the study presumably continued

—but there was no report.

Changes, however, accompanied the passage of time, and in the fall of 1955, the AAUP appointed a special committee of eight, headed by Bentley Glass, professor of biology at Johns Hopkins University, to inquire whether college teachers had been unjustly discharged from their posts. On March 21, 1956, this committee filed a 58-page report; I think it is safe to call this report an historic document.

THE GLASS REPORT

First, this unanimous report found that there did exist in our country a widespread and most serious attack upon academic freedom and that this had had terribly harmful effects upon students, prospective teachers, professors and the nature of our entire educational system. This finding was a clear repudiation of the line insisted upon by Sidney Hook, Max Eastman and William F. Buckley, Jr., that the whole idea of a systematic attack upon freedom of thought and expression and, especially, upon academic freedom, was the concoction of "Communist con-

spirators" and their dupes—notably Professor Robert M. Maclver of Columbia University.

Second, the report condemned the entire concept and paraphernalia of security-inquiries and loyalty hunts conducted by extra-academic bodies of any kind—"patriotic," "alumni-business," "state-legislative or Congressional." In words reminiscent of former Secretary of State Acheson's recently expressed regret at the instituting of the witch-hunt by the Truman Administration, the Glass report held that universities should have resisted such activities from the beginning for:

It clearly would have been better for the health of higher education in this country if academic institutions had refused to be stampeded, and had insisted that competence and satisfactory performance in teaching or research, and good character in relation to these functions, are the matters to be judged when academic tenure is at stake.

Third, the report unequivocally rejected any racial or philosophical or political criteria for academic employment. When a teacher is challenged, only one thing is germane: "His professional fitness to continue in his position, considered in the light of other relevant factors, is the only question that should be considered." And considered by whom? Well, if the sole matter of consequence is professional fitness then manifestly the decision can only be made and should only be made by

his peers—*i.e.*, by his fellow scholars, and this is precisely what the report demands.

Fourth, the Report condemns the firing of teachers who are "uncooperative or unfriendly" witnesses before witch-hunting committees and declares that "invocation of the Fifth Amendment by a faculty member cannot be in itself a sufficient reason for removing him." Further, it condemns "loyalty oath" requirements and recommends that institutions should not dismiss faculty members who refuse to take such oaths. Moreover, it urges the repeal of all legislation—such as the New York Feinberg Law—which provides for the dismissal of teachers who belong to organizations declared by the Attorney General to be "subversive." And of such laws' requirement that administrators regularly certify to the political purity—that is, conformity—of their faculties, the report says:

The continuous scrutiny of faculty members' activities, associations and thoughts, which that requirement entails, should be as repugnant to the [administrative] board as it is to the academic community in general.

Finally, though the report avows its anti-Communism and even warns against the alleged "Communist strategy of infiltration," it nevertheless expresses itself as opposed to the firing of Communists as Communists. Specifically, it censures the previous administration of the University of Washington for having so

acted in the cases of Professors Butterworth and Phillips, and of that action declares:

The competence of the faculty members as teachers was assumed throughout, and there was no evidence that they had abused their positions in any way. The action of the administration deprived these faculty members of the right to be judged by their qualities as teachers, and took no account of much evidence as to fitness which came before the faculty committee.

AAUP CONVENTION

The forty-second annual convention of the AAUP met in St. Louis, April 6-7. Present were four hundred faculty members of about 150 colleges and universities throughout the country. The main business before this Convention was the question of academic freedom.

The governing body of the Association recommended to the Convention that it adopt the report of the special Committee on academic freedom whose contents we have summarized above. There followed two days of intense debate, at the conclusion of which the report was adopted by an overwhelming majority and eight major institutions of higher learning were censured by either unanimous or nearly unanimous votes.

Specifically, the full convention voted that:

1) A teacher should not be fired for pleading the Fifth Amendment or otherwise refusing to answer

questions from a Congressional Committee which in any way inquires into the views or philosophy or politics of the teacher.

2) A teacher should not be fired for refusing to take a loyalty oath.

3) Accused teachers should be tried only by their peers—other faculty members—and inquiry must be confined to teaching competence.

4) Teachers might be dismissed *only* on the following grounds:

Unfitness to teach because of incompetence; lack of scholarly objectivity or integrity; serious misuse of the classroom or of academic prestige; gross personal misconduct or conscious participation in conspiracy against the Government.

5) Certain actions of the New York Board of Higher Education were condemned: "its special investigating unit's and its special counsel's alleged pressure upon faculty witnesses to inform against others and the asserted practice of requiring accused faculty members to overcome . . . allegations based on secret information of undisclosed origin." The Board's practice of suspending accused teachers without pay was attacked and the repeal of the Feinberg Law was urged.

6) All efforts or proposals to censor text-books were condemned.

7) The United States Government was urged to grant passports freely to scholars and scientists and to remove all barriers facing foreign scholars seeking entry here.

8) Colleges were asked to seek out for employment teachers who, in recent years, had been dismissed "without demonstrated cause or in violation of academic process."

9) Teachers must not be fired because they were or are members of the Communist Party; rather such teachers, as all others of all and any political or philosophical persuasion or adherence, were to be subject to the same tests and the same standards, *as individuals*, to which all other teachers were subject.

10) For violation of one or more of the above standards, eight universities were censured,* the largest number at any one time in the history of the association: St. Louis University, North Dakota Agricultural College, the University of California, Ohio State University, Temple University, Jefferson Memorial College, Rutgers University, and the University of Oklahoma. In addition, the Association authorized an investigation of five other institutions to see whether they, too, should be censured: Reed College, New York University, and the Universities of Kansas City, Vermont and Michigan.

For standing firm in the face of witch-hunting pressures, six institutions were commended: Harvard (despite McCarthy's personal assaults); Massachusetts Institute of Technology (which, though forced

to suspend Prof. Dirk J. Struik after his indictment for "sedition," placed him on full pay); Sarah Lawrence College (whose President Harold Taylor stood firm against great American Legion and Big-Business attacks); Johns Hopkins (which tended to support Prof. Owen Latimore throughout his "ordeal by slander"); and Cornell and the University of Chicago.

THE ACADEMIC FREEDOM PROJECT

The appointment of the Bentley Glass committee late in 1955, its report in March, 1956, and the actions of the 42nd Convention of the A.A.U.P. this past April were culminations in the mounting discontent in intellectual and academic circles with the whole stultifying effect of ten years of Cold War and the "New Conservatism." One major sign of the changing atmosphere was the creation of the American Academic Freedom Project, coincident with Columbia University's celebration of its bicentennial, under the theme: "Man's right to knowledge and the free use thereof." Just about when the A.A.U.P. had appointed its special Glass committee, this Academic Freedom project issued two outstanding volumes: *The Development of Academic Freedom in the U.S.* by Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, and *Academic Freedom in Our*

* The practical impact of such censure is that it represents a recommendation by the Association to its members not to join the faculty of the tainted institution.

Time by Robert M. MacIver.*

The publication of these volumes was greeted by a concerted campaign to destroy their impact—especially that of Prof. MacIver, dealing with the present scene—to which the *New York Times* and the *New Leader* particularly donated their columns. It was waged by Prof. Sidney Hook, President Harry D. Gideonse of Brooklyn College, Max Eastman and William F. Buckley, Jr. But the books, manifestly the results of years of intensive study and from the pens of mature scholars (Mr. MacIver, in particular, is a Professor Emeritus) have withstood all such jibes and have made a profound impression throughout the American academic world.

The tone and effort of these volumes may be indicated by quoting briefly from their introductory remarks. Messrs. Hofstadter and Metzger open their pioneering historical work with the words: "Academic freedom has become one of the central issues of our time." They refer to their own "commitment to freedom" in favor of which they confess to "an ineluctable prejudice" and add that they "hope and expect that this inquiry will be a history, not an autopsy."

Similarly, Mr. MacIver begins with a forthright presentation of his enlightened viewpoint:

The aggravated assaults on academic freedom and the general disesteem of intellectual enterprise characteristic of our country at this time furnish the occasion for this work. It will serve its purpose so far as it helps to show the need for a stouter defense and the yet greater need for a wider understanding of the intrinsic values of higher education.

These books, and especially Mr. MacIver's, were altogether justified in raising the alarm about the terrible inroads made upon academic freedom here and in insisting upon the need for a complete overhauling, if not total discarding, of the "loyalty-security" structure, including its application to Communists—the two points most offensive to the Hook-Gideonse-Eastman group. The vindication of MacIver and the repudiation of Hook came in the A.A.U.P. convention, where an even more completely unequivocal stand in favor of academic freedom—especially so far as Communists were concerned—was taken than MacIver himself had felt prepared to take.

REVIVED STUDENT ACTIVITY

The changed atmosphere has also reflected itself, as it has in part derived from, quickening intellectual activity among the students.* There was a rather brief period, some six

* See, on this: Julian Lowitt, "Youth and the Struggle for Peace and Democracy," in *Political Affairs*, August, 1955; and Alita Letwin, "New Stirrings on the Campus," in *Political Affairs*, October, 1955. For an earlier period, see Samuel Sillen, *Cold War on the Campus* (pamphlet, New York, 1950).

* Both volumes are published by Columbia University Press.

or seven years ago, when the normal questioning and challenging of college youth had all but disappeared so far as articulate expression was concerned. But for the past few years this icy terror has been receding and today it is a fact that the stirrings on the campus are greater than at any time in some fifteen years.

The discussion of academic freedom tends to be confined to the question of faculty-hiring and tenure while the at least equally significant question of the freedom of students as students is relegated to a brief reference or is totally omitted. This failing marks the books by MacIver and by Hofstadter and Metzger. Yet there is one paragraph commenting on an aspect of this subject, in MacIver's work, which is outstanding:

The evidence suggests that a strong majority of students are on the side of intellectual liberty. Sometimes they feel there is little they can do about it, that their occasional demonstrations carry little weight. This is not the case. Since the ground advanced for the silencing of nonconformist teachers is the protection of the students against dangerous or subversive influences, the rejection of this intrusive paternalism by the students themselves is salutary. Moreover, when they stand by a teacher—or a whole institution—subjected to attack, their attitude strengthens the morale of the teacher and the institution. They are at the same time defending their own liberty.

The strong and growing stand of

American college students in defense of academic freedom, for the teachers and for themselves, is one of the central phenomena of our time and basic to an understanding of why books like the two issued by the Academic Freedom Project are published, and why conventions like the recent one of the A.A.U.P. are held. For four years now the National Student Association has been officially designating an Academic Freedom Week and notably in 1955 and most exceptionally during April, 1956, this Week has seen the fullest, deepest and broadest discussion of the need for intellectual freedom and to end once and for all the witch-hunt. On scores of campuses thousands of students and faculty members have rededicated themselves to the defense of the Bill of Rights and have gone out of their way to make clear that Communists, too, have the same freedoms as have all other Americans and that they mean to preserve and develop their own right to hear all points of view as expressed by their adherents, including Marxism as expressed by avowed Marxists.

Special bulletins, newspaper supplements, mimeographed and printed publications, Academic Freedom Committees, innumerable editorials, scores of "letters to the editors," and dozens of meetings attended by tens of thousands—all expressing profound dedication to intellectual freedom—have made American campuses, once again, places of stimula-

ation and excitement and inspiration. The change in the past five years is breath-taking.

Here is one specific example of this momentous development. More and more in the past few years college administrations have required all student organizations wishing recognition to submit a complete membership list to the college authorities. In the City College of New York such a requirement was announced late in 1954. For eighteen months many of the student organizations resisted this and sought through negotiations to get the ruling rescinded. Finally, in February, 1956, five of the six student political clubs at City College voted to leave the campus rather than submit the lists. The clubs so acting were: the Young Democrats, Young Liberals, Students for Democratic Action, Young Progressives, and the Marxist Discussion Club. Upon taking this decision a *jointly signed* statement was issued declaring that to submit names "would be a compromise of principle." And the action was taken with *unanimous* support in each club, except one negative vote in the Young Liberals. A week later the Folk and Square Dance Club also left the campus rather than submit names—the *Observation Post*, a student newspaper, hailed the club's decision to "sashay off the campus" and said flatly: "Most of us are against forced investigation of students' activities."

THE SLOCHOWER DECISION

All the developments which we have mentioned—and many not mentioned of a national and international character—were of decisive consequence in helping bring about the Supreme Court's decision in the Slochower case. That 6 to 3 decision was handed down by the Court on April 9, 1956, and it was written—further hallmark of the changing times—by Justice Tom C. Clark.

In this case the Supreme Court acted, in several respects, in accordance with the resolutions adopted the previous week by the A.A.U.P. convention. It pointedly rebuked the New York Board of Higher Education for its firing of Professor Slochower—for a generation on the faculty of Brooklyn College—because he had chosen to plead the Fifth Amendment when questioned about his political affiliations by a Senate Investigating Committee. In doing this the Court found unconstitutional Section 903 of the New York City Charter, which requires dismissal of a teacher asserting the privilege of that amendment, under which scores of men and women were previously victimized.

The Court noted with some astonishment that at no time were "Professor Slochower's qualifications for his position attacked in any manner." Of more importance the Court re-affirmed the decisive significance in the American struggle for liberty,

of an accused person's right to refuse to testify, and reminded everyone that because of this "our forefathers . . . raised it to the dignity of a constitutional enactment." Then, in a body blow against the whole "Fifth - Amendment Communist" cabal, the Court denounced "the assumption that those who claim this privilege are either criminals or perjurers." It added that "the questions which Professor Slochower refused to answer were admittedly asked for a purpose wholly unrelated to his college functions" and stated that this, too, caused it to reverse the lower finding and to order Professor Slochower reinstated to his position.

* * *

There are many aspects of academic freedom which, while of great importance, are rarely raised. Though we have and shall hereafter in this article concentrate on the one feature of the question which the country generally has been mainly concerned with—the threat to teachers' tenure arising from political views, and especially Communist views—it is necessary to at least allude to other phases of the matter.

We have briefly touched on the problem of the college student's freedom. Again we want to emphasize that his right to think and question and study and speak, to doubt and seek, to write and probe—his right to the fullest possible intellectual freedom—is sacred, if anything is sacred, and is of the essence of being

a student. The teacher's task is to suggest, to explain, to guide, help, inspire; to develop in the student a thirst for knowledge, a desire for human enlightenment and ennoblement. In all this, any fear or inhibition felt by the student is a crime against learning and destroys academic freedom at its fountain-head.

Further, it is notorious that in our country academic freedom is vitiated to a considerable degree by many kinds of religious, racial and national prejudices. Of these, among the more damaging is anti-Semitism which acts to limit severely the number of Jews permitted in certain areas of study and specialization and which even more severely limits the number of Jews hired as teachers.

The most devastating single prejudice within this category, however, is of course that directed against the Negro people.* Here the facts are a world-wide scandal—from students facing lynching for daring to seek advanced education, to legalizing third-rate educational facilities for Negroes, to several states now banning by law any teaching that questions the supremacy of white people and to other states prohibiting members of the N.A.A.C.P. from being employed as teachers.

Further, there are certain social and economic facts which are so much a part of our "way of life" that they are rarely considered to im-

* The 1955 AAUP convention called for the elimination of segregation in all institutions of higher learning, public and private.

pinge on the question of academic freedom, yet they do and to a decisive degree. There are, for example, severe social pressures directed against female advancement in the areas of advanced scientific study and research and this reacts very adversely against the real academic freedom of women, as students and as teachers.

Again, economic pressures place the masses at a distinct disadvantage and the rich at a great advantage in terms of scholastic pursuits. Clearly the entire middle and upper class nature of our higher-educational system, from its students, instructors, administrators, trustees, curriculum and subject matter constitutes an overwhelming limitation on full academic freedom. One may simply point out that very, very few people who are domestic workers or coal miners or sharecroppers or longshoremen when they are 18, are going to be college teachers when they are 30.

In all of these denials of true academic freedom something has been done (one need but think of labor's leadership in bringing about public education in the first place, or the recent great breakthroughs against segregated schools) and much still can be done even within the framework of a capitalist society and before the qualitative leap forward that Socialism will make possible in education, as in all spheres of life.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND COMMUNISTS

But we wish to confine ourselves to the question of the disqualification of teachers on political grounds, and especially on the ground of being Communists. We think that all regulations having this as their purpose clearly violate elementary tenets of the Bill of Rights and of academic freedom. Here, in a rather summary fashion, are our main objections to such a policy:

1) A denial of the privilege of teaching to anyone because of his political and philosophical views or affiliations, including Communists, is an unfair and arbitrary abridgment of the freedoms of the people directly involved.

2) Such a denial deprives others of the opportunity of hearing the points of view of those barred and of seeing whether those viewpoints offer illumination to or give useful suggestions for the resolving of scientific or scholarly problems.

3) Such a denial cannot be made and maintained without the coming into being of an apparatus of thought-control which, all the experience of our own country demonstrates, tends constantly to erode ever-increasing areas of freedom of thought and to widen the zones of *verboden* views or subjects.

4) Such a denial cannot be maintained without the students' knowledge. It tends, therefore, to diminish the students' respect for their own

(approved) teachers and, with some, to encourage spying, informing and black-mailing.

5) Such a denial must inhibit the students' own thinking and conduct and all the evidence in our country proves that it does have this effect. It puts a premium on political and intellectual passivity or conformity. It tends, too, to promote hypocrisy and/or cynicism amongst students who know that certain things are not said in class or written on examinations not because they may not be true, but because they are not politic—they are not "smart."

6) Such a denial is embarrassing to and is resented by many teachers who may feel that the banned ideas are false. Such teachers, and they are numerous, want a fair field against their intellectual opponents and resent the reflection upon their integrity and scholarship that invariably clings to an educational system that bars certain ideas.

7) Such a denial is really ineffectual anyway and will not achieve its stated aim—the exorcism of Marxism. This is demonstrated by the history of the world for the past century. To extirpate Marxism was the life-work of Thiers, Bismarck, Mussolini and Tojo, but Marxism has survived them all and in their own countries; it is the life-work of Chiang Kai-shek, Franco and J. Edgar Hoover, but it is certain that Marxism will survive all of them, too.

8) Such a denial is imbecilic for

it is aimed at a world outlook which now has more adherents than any other single outlook. Efforts to ban this outlook can only hurt (and have already hurt) the capacity of the American academic community to comprehend whole areas of international culture, literature, art, science, human development. It is ostrich-like and damaging not only to our schools but to all our citizens and to our country.

9) Such a denial runs counter to the advice and the estimates of the greatest academic minds produced by our own country. People like Charles A. Beard, Thorstein Veblen, Albion W. Small, E. R. A. Seligman, James Harvey Robinson, and John R. Commons themselves studied Marxism, urged their students to examine it and referred to its creator as a figure of transcendent genius and seminal consequence for world thought.* More recently, Professor John Herman Randall of Columbia University in his *The Making of the Modern Mind* (1926) writes: "Marx's materialistic interpretation of history spread to many historians, and seems at the present day to be at the foundation of most historical investigation"—and yet adherents of this interpretation are to be barred from teaching history!

10) Such a denial runs counter to the practices of most of the major universities of Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, and Japan

* For relevant quotations from these men see my *History and Reality* (New York, 1955), pp. 213-16.

—not to speak of socialist countries—in which a policy of banning avowed Marxists and Communists from teaching positions is generally viewed as a barbarous practice worthy of fascist or colonially-enslaved lands.

11) Such a denial postulates that Karl Marx would not make a worthy addition to the social science faculty of an American university. It insists that Theodore Dreiser and Lincoln Steffens and Martin Anderson Nexo and Irene Joliot-Curie would not have been fit and stimulating members of any American institution of higher learning!

12) To show the viciousness and the absurdity of such denial, one need not go only to the honored dead. Let us conjure up an imaginary university of our own, made up only of living Communists—all non-Americans, for obvious reasons, and all from non-socialist countries. In such a university one could have Sean O'Casey, Louis Aragon, Pablo Neruda, Nicolas Guillen, Nazim Hikmet, Haldor Laxness, Jorge Amado, Arnold Kettle, George Thomson, R. Palme Dutt, Christopher Hill, Picasso, Guttuso, Rivera, Siqueiros, J. D. Bernal, Marcel Prenant, F. Joliot Curie—there are nineteen to start off the faculty. Would this be an interesting, challenging, stimulating university?

* * *

Yet the fact is that many American academicians insist—even Professor MacIver is perilously close to

this position—that all must be allowed to teach except members of the Communist Party. Leaving aside all the arguments already mustered showing, I think, how damaging such a policy is and how, in actual practice, it has always served as a smoke-screen obscuring the much broader attack upon civil liberties and academic freedom, let us turn directly to the argument itself.

The argument derives from a misapprehension of the nature of Marxism-Leninism and the nature of the Communist Party. This is not the place to go into this matter and the literature on it is, of course, enormous. Here I want only to say—as has been said a million times and each time truly—that equating Marxism-Leninism with forcible overthrow of government is absolutely false, and equating the Communist Party with a conspiracy seeking to bring this about compounds the falsity.

Moreover, when it is argued that a Party member is the prisoner of a dogma and hence enchained in a closed and darkened cell without the possibility of appreciating or exercising scholarship, one again has profound error. The error is manifest from the dead and living savants who have been or are Communists and who at the same time are universally acknowledged to have been or to be scholars and creators with few peers.

The error is further manifest in the fact that, of the hundreds of

American teachers fired as Communists or as suspected Communists, almost never was their own scholarship or their professional competence even questioned. On the contrary, in most cases—as in those of Professors Phillips and Butterworth—the superior scholarship and teaching record of these teachers were explicitly recognized.

The error is further manifest in the fact that Marxism-Leninism emphasizes its scientific nature—*i.e.*, its anti-dogmatic character. Therefore, its literature is filled with warnings against dogmatism and examples of change and growth in its own system. It is, in fact, this aspect of Marxism that especially attracted a leading Socialist of our time—the Prime Minister of India. Nehru wrote, in his autobiography, published in 1941 that:

The theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many a dark corner of my mind. History came to have a new meaning for me. The Marxist interpretation threw a flood of light upon it. It was the essential freedom from dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism that appealed to me.

Some declare that a Communist Party member takes his "truth" ready-made and must believe what he is told or what the Party holds in every particular. The holding to a "line" has applicability in a general sense to political questions, as befits a political party, and even in this regard it is nowhere as rigid

as critics like Sidney Hook make it appear. Moreover, of course, this line is hammered out through discussion, is subjected continually to re-examination and, when considered necessary by changing events or erroneous estimation, it is itself altered. Further, even in these cases, the agreement, arrived at through debate and discussion, is persisted in voluntarily and may be freely terminated with resignation—if the difference is momentous—so that adherence shows nothing other than intellectual conviction.

But in general areas of scholarly pursuit, and most particularly in the areas of the individual's own specialization—whether American history or English literature or physics or medieval philosophy—no Communist worth his salt will be told by anyone what he is to believe or what he is to teach. Anyone yielding to such pressures violates the principles of the philosophy to which he adheres and would be considered as failing in his duty to make his full contribution to social and intellectual advance by his own pursuit of knowledge, by his own research and analysis and weighing of the evidence.

Let the scholarly works of Communists and let their teaching be subjected to the same tests as all others—the ordeal by experts, the testing by peers. Where this has been done in the past such research and such teaching have not been found wanting; should they be found want-

ing *in those terms* then of course the teacher or scholar, whether Communist or Republican, should be severed from his post.

It is further declared that Communists cherish academic freedom only for themselves and would destroy it if they had the power to do so. We Communists deny this and insist that we seek the fullest flowering of all human freedoms, and not least academic freedom.

But we add that those who argue that the Communist must have no freedom because he challenges freedom are *now* doing what they charge the Communist *would do* in the future. Surely, denying academic freedom now in order to prevent its conjectured denial in the future is a sorry defense of a fearful practice!

The whole argument for denying Communists as Communists the right to teach amounts to guilt by association and constitutes a bill of attainder. It is false *a priori* arguing as to what must be, given asserted conditions, and then insisting that that is the way things are because that is the way they *must be*. This is held to even when, as in this case, universally admitted *facts* show that what "must follow" does not follow, because, of course, what is postulated is itself false.

This in no way differs from the argument against the Jeffersonians of old Timothy Dwight, once Presi-

dent of Yale. Writing in 1798 on "the present crisis," represented by the rise of Jeffersonianism, Mr. Dwight resolved the debate by insisting that all Jeffersonians were infidels. He then added: "To say a man is an infidel is understood of course as a declaration that he is plainly an immoral man." No wonder this Mr. Dwight could toast Jefferson's election to the Presidency in 1800 with the wish that the gallows would yet claim him!

* * *

It was Walt Whitman who defined himself: "I am the sworn poet of every dauntless rebel." It was Emerson who taught: "Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist."

Hofstadter and Metzger, in their survey of the history of academic freedom, generalize that, "Mediocrity might be docile, but high aspiration pressed nervously at the outer bounds of the received doctrines."

To press against those bounds, to be the non-conformist is to be the trail-blazer. This right is at the heart of our country; that is why our Poet defined himself as the rebels' laureate. Anything that inhibits the fullest and most complete academic freedom here is a disservice to the education of our youth, an obstacle to the advance of science and beauty and justice; and is unworthy of our country.

The Process of Political Realignment*

By Gil Green

I have been trying to read the papers and see just what it is in this election that one Party wants that the other one don't. To save my soul I can't find a difference. The only thing that I can see where they differ is that the Democrats want the Republicans to get out and let them in, and the Republicans don't want to get out.

—Will Rogers, 1924

POLITICS, IT HAS BEEN SAID, is the art of the possible. And the possible in politics is the art of coalition. As Sidney Hillman once put it, "Politics is the science of how who gets what, when and why." And "who gets what, when and why" is greatly determined by who has influence and control over government. Toward this end political parties are formed and political alliances constructed.

This is true of American politics; it is true of all politics, even if the nature and form of coalition differ vastly. The dominant economic class—in the United States today, the monopolists—erects those political forms and alliances through which it best can perpetuate this dominance. The economic classes occupying an inferior status—which in the United States today include the workers, small farmers, and urban middle classes—seek to erect those political forms and alliances through which they best can protect their class interests. Whether this has as its goal the winning of minor concessions,

the imposition of major curbs, or a complete showdown with the ruling oligarchy, depends on many factors. It depends on the intensity of the class struggle at the given time, on the past experience accumulated by the masses, on the character of their leadership and on the degree of political consciousness arising from these.

In the American two-party system as it has developed over the years, each party contains a network of built-in alliances. Each party is in essence a huge vote-getting machine which combines, for the purpose of election, diverse and conflicting economic and social groups. Professor V. O. Key, Jr., in his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, observes: "The party machine has an interest of its own to advance but it gains power only to the extent that it can organize in its support sectors of society with objectives quite independent of those of the political machine."

He also points out that, "instead

* This article is part of a chapter from the book, *The Enemy Forgotten*, completed by Comrade Green shortly before he went to prison as still another victim of the Smith Act. The book will be issued very soon by International Publishers—Ed.

of dividing society vertically into parties of farmers, laborers and businessmen, the party system has been so constructed that each party contains farmers, laborers, and businessmen." It is this which gives the two-party system its great elasticity. As Key indicates, "the necessity for gaining support among a variety of classes also gives the party a degree of independence from the demands of the extremist groups." In other words, by balancing the demands of one group against another within each party, this guarantees that both of them can be kept from upsetting the applecart of monopoly rule.

The popular mass base of each party is not identical, of course, and has undergone considerable change in recent years. This difference in composition does compel certain differences in program and in party response to various issues. But these differences, while not unimportant, as we shall have occasion to discuss later, must be seen within the framework of the similarities between both parties. It is this framework which sets certain limits on the area and scope of conflict between the parties and, therefore, also sets certain limitations on how far afield each may stray. The differences between the two parties also play another role. They lend credence to the claim that each party is different and that the people have a real choice in selecting one as against another.

This political set-up has great

advantages for the ruling class. Neither party has a clearly defined set of principles, except to defend the economic system as it is. Party platform means nothing and party discipline is impossible in a potpourri of conflicting interests, in which corruption and irresponsibility are rife. In this way it is easy for monopoly to control each party, not merely programmatically, but by what Professor Charles E. Merriam called "the alliance of the 'Underworld' and the 'Upperworld'." The division of the spoils is relatively simple: the machine gets the patronage, the monopolists the power. . . .

The American electoral system has been no minor obstacle on the path of political realignment. And the course of this steeplechase has been strewn with more than this one thorny hedge. Other hurdles have been even higher and more difficult to leap.

SECTIONAL AND CLASS OBSTACLES

A second major obstacle to realignment has been the influence of sectional interests on American politics. While these have included class interests, they have also tended to cut across these and to blur them.

The vastness of the country, the unevenness of its economic development, the differences of climate, geography, natural resources, and population have frequently made the

bond of region appear stronger than the bond of economic class interest. The white workers of the South, for example, frequently were made to feel a stronger kinship with the white supremacist rulers than with their Southern Negro brothers, or with the workers of the rest of the nation. The dirt farmers of the corn and wheat belt, for example, have frequently felt a closer tie with the big capitalist farmers of their own particular region or crop than with the small poultry, produce, tobacco or cotton farmers, whether tenant, sharecropper or owner.

Thus, although sectional interests have contributed to the anti-monopoly movements, as we have shown in the previous chapter, they have also contributed their share to the maintenance of the two-party system as one of regional alliances.

An even greater obstacle has been the fact that the wage earners, the largest class in American life constituting more than half of the people, were nearly completely unorganized until the 1930's. They were sharply divided between skilled and unskilled, Negro and white, and native born and foreign-born. Only in the 'thirties did the labor movement begin to become a majority movement of the industrial workers. It also first began to organize its own independent and permanent political machinery.

Up to that time the city political machines, corrupt and rotten as they were and still are, held a virtual

monopoly of political influence in working class communities. This was especially true among the lowest paid workers—the European immigrants and later the Negro migrants from the South. To these the city political machines appealed as “friends.” They did small favors for the poor in exchange for the promise of support. They gave the immigrant and Negro workers a feeling that in a strange and hostile world they could at least go to their precinct captain for some small favor, especially when in “trouble” with the omnipotent power of “the Law.” And while much of this has changed since the growth of trade unions, it would be a mistake to overlook the influence of the machine to this very day.

Middle class reformers generally have not understood this. With their moralizing, their tendency to talk down to the workers or over their heads, and their utter indifference to the real problems that the poor and downtrodden face, the city reform movements generally failed to attract any considerable working class support. The workers supported such movements only when these were associated with concrete objectives that had something to do with improving their own lot. They would not and could not become aroused over the issue of corruption in city government, when all about them they witnessed Big Business robbery and corruption being cynically passed off as examples of “free

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enterprise" and the "American way." . . .

If the big party machines had considerable influence over the workers' votes, it was because the workers as workers had not yet found their way forward toward class understanding and solidarity. They were not yet awake to the great potential power which was theirs—but theirs on only one condition, that they act together, in unison. Without an increasing workers' unity and political awareness, it was impossible to move seriously toward a basic and lasting political realignment.

The popular anti-monopoly movements of the past were largely agrarian in origin and middle class in leadership. But different from the early period of the Republic, the dirt farmers no longer could provide the stable mass base needed for successful struggle against the plutocracy. The farmers no longer constituted the majority of the population. The majority class had become the class of wage-earners. Under the impact of rapid industrialization the agricultural share of national production had dwindled. Mechanization in farming had accelerated further the tendency toward a declining farm population.

Furthermore, while the farm and city middle class groups had interests inimical to those of Big Business, the workers' interests alone were diametrically opposed to those of big capital. For the source of capitalist profit was, and is, the sweat and toil

of labor. And the nature of this toil is not individualistic as is that of the small farmer. It is highly cooperative, bringing together thousands and tens of thousands of workers into single enterprises. In time, these workers inevitably learn to recognize their common interests and band together to defend them.

Such are the reasons, under conditions of modern industrial capitalism, why it was no longer possible for the agrarian masses to play the same role they had when the country was still primarily agricultural. The working class and its labor movement was the only force which could provide the new hub for the wheel of a popular coalition. The fact that organized labor has not yet understood or fulfilled this responsibility has proved to be a major obstacle toward political realignment.

The most formidable of all roadblocks in this direction, however, the decisive factor which determined the slow and zig-zag course of the struggle for an anti-monopoly realignment, has to do with objective conditions. This is not in contradiction to the stress placed in the previous chapter on the fact that objective conditions have been and continue to be at the bottom of anti-monopoly movements. Just as the interaction between the gravitational pulls of the earth, the moon and the sun is the cause for both the flow and the ebb of ocean tides, so are objective conditions, particularly

economic trends, the cause for the rise and fall of anti-monopoly tidal waves.

Up to now, periods of deep economic crisis were followed by what appeared to be periods of even greater prosperity. Thus the monopolists were able to break up the massed opposition to them before this jelled into permanent political form. Even the tailspin of the 1930's, the longest and most terrifying in American history, was brought to an end with the outbreak of the war. The great mass movement of that period, which was just on the eve of a more basic regrouping of class and political forces, was aborted. The break-up of the monopoly dominated two-party system did not take place. . . .

THE NEW IN THE OLD

There already exist the rudimentary outlines of a loose, amorphous alliance between the labor movement, the Negro people, a section of the farming population, and liberal circles of the small business and professional middle class. This is to be seen in the relationship between important organizations of the labor movement and the ADA, the NAACP, and the Farmers' Union. What could be termed a form of "inter-locking directorate" exists between these organizations. Labor, Negro, and farm opinion is represented within the ADA leadership. Labor, middle class, and farm groups

are represented in the leadership of the NAACP. And many of these leaders have helped form what has become known as the Committee for An Effective Congress.

This alliance-in-the-rough manifests itself in a similarity of position on many questions and in multiplying examples of mutual assistance. It has not yet taken distinct organizational form. It does not speak with one powerful voice on crucial questions. It is confused and divided on issues of foreign policy, which, as we have shown, leads to vicious contradictions and to paralysis on many decisive questions. But in this as yet roughly hewn form it does exist. It is a fact.

One of the peculiarities of this development is that it is taking place within the framework of the two-party system. More specifically, the gathering alliance, while politically "independent," operates largely through the medium of one of these parties—the Democratic Party. And the key forces of this nebulous coalition have one other thing in common: most of them share the illusion that the Democratic Party represents something basically different from the Republican Party and can be transformed into a truly peoples' party.

These forces reject the idea of a third party, not in principle, but as impractical. In effect, they still agree with the position enunciated by Samuel Gompers in 1906. He said then that the formation of a new party

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would require waiting until it is strong enough to elect "a majority of the legislature and then a governor and then a President of the United States," and that this means waiting a long time. "Trade unionists," he concluded, "don't propose to wait so long to secure material improvement in their conditions." But while Gompers tended to oppose all labor political action, that is not the position of present-day labor leaders.

Even George Meany, the most reactionary of the present-day labor leadership, does not close the door to a labor-led party should that become necessary. Writing in the November, 1955, issue of *Fortune* about labor and the future, Meany asserts that labor will remain in politics:

The fact that we do so does not mean that the A. F. of L. will be tied to any political party. Nor does it close off any particular road in politics. I do not think the membership of the A. F. of L. is thinking now in terms of a national political party sponsored by labor. Yet if the action of the two major parties leaves us no alternative in our efforts to safeguard and raise the living standards of the workers, labor will go as far as it must down that political road.

Thus the question comes down to this: Can labor "safeguard and raise the living standards of the workers" through the medium of the present two-party system? Few, if any in the ranks of labor would venture to claim that this could be

attained through the means of the Republican Party. It is generally recognized by the workers that the Republican Party is the preferred party of Big Business. But what about the Democratic Party? Here, labor has considerable influence. In some highly industrial localities it even shares control of the Democratic political organization. The influence that labor exerts within this party can be seen by the action of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, which in its 1955 convention took a forthright stand in support of the bitter, long drawn-out strike of the Kohler workers. When a Democratic state organization will take a stand of this kind, how can anyone declare that there is no difference between the two major parties? Certainly for the embattled Kohler workers of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, there is a difference. And for many others as well.

It is necessary, however, to bear in mind the character of the two-party system, that each party contains conflicting class forces which tend to negate each other's influence to the advantage of the ruling powers. Having given the example of Wisconsin and the Kohler strikers, let us now turn to some others.

It is a well recognized fact that the big problem that has confronted the labor movement in the postwar period has been how to complete the organization of the unorganized. Without accomplishing this task it was impossible to raise wage and

living standards substantially. But the main barrier to this was labor's failure to break through the South. In penetrating the South the labor movement confronts a number of grave difficulties. In the first place, the corporations are determined to prevent this last citadel of anti-unionism from crumbling. Secondly, in this determination the industrialists have the full cooperation of most of the Southern states. In many of these states "right to work" laws, which are really barbaric anti-labor laws, are on the statute books. The governments of these states, for a number of years now, have been wooing Northern capital to come South, offering it such inducements as taxfree properties and cheap labor. These state and local governments are Democratic. So are the Southern Congressmen who, by virtue of the seniority system, occupy the leading Congressional committee posts, and influence Democratic policies in the Senate and the House far beyond their numerical or electoral significance.

Or let us touch on the question of Negro rights. The brutal murder of the 14-year-old boy, Emmett Till in Mississippi shocked and aroused national and world opinion. When this was followed by the cynical freeing of the murderers, the depraved character of Mississippi and Southern white supremacist justice was exposed once again in all its ugly nakedness. Congressman Charles Diggs of Michigan declared his intention

to fight to unseat the Mississippi delegation in the House as long as the Negro people of that state are denied their constitutional rights. Congressman Diggs is a Democrat. So are those whom he would bar. How long, therefore, is it possible for Diggs and Eastland to operate through the same party? Only so long as those who believe in Negro equality continue to give way to the Eastlands in the interests of so-called "party unity." And this is not alone the problem of Congressman Diggs. It is the problem of all who oppose Dixiecratism, whether Negro or white.

The Dixiecrats are not the sole obstacles to the transformation of the Democratic Party. In the big city political machines we find the unholy alliance of Big Money and Big Politics. Selling political plums has itself become a big business. Each of the major parties has become a huge multi-million dollar syndicate. With the federal government spending over seventy billions of dollars a year, and the state and city governments many billions more, political power has become a much coveted and lush prize. To have an "in" with Washington is the surest and easiest way to become a new millionaire overnight. We are not referring to "sordid graft," which comes from an alliance of the underworld and the upperworld. We refer to what is cynically designated as "honest graft," that is, the ability of government officials "in the know"

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to make small fortunes for themselves or to help men with big fortunes to make still bigger ones. . . .

Thus the election business has become a big business in the literal sense of that term. To think that labor and its allies can cleanse the two-party Augean stables is to underestimate the strength of the golden chain which binds the political machines to the powers that be. Nor can labor be indifferent to the big business corruption of politics. For often the very men elected to office by labor votes are secretly beholden to the big corporations for huge financial contributions. Senator Wayne Morse has expressed the opinion that the main reason the U.S. Senate votes "wrong" so frequently is not that the individual Senators do not know better but because they are not free to vote otherwise.

"What keeps them from being free?" he was asked. Morse replied: "Because too often they are committed. . . . The party bosses dictate to them. I'll tell you the thing that controls them more than anything else, and when you get to the bottom of it you'll get to the bottom of the major cause of corruption in American politics—campaign contributions."

The labor movement cannot remain indifferent to the big business corruption of politics without being sucked into this cesspool itself. He who lives in a sewer must absorb some of the stench. And in those communities where labor leaders en-

tered into too close a tie-up with the political machine, the machine has altered them more than they the machine.

We are by no means advocating political abstention. We merely point out that the labor movement cannot close its eyes to political corruption and must combat it vigorously. Only then will this struggle have a chance of success, for it will point to the class roots of corruption and tie in with all the other basic needs of the people.

The sum total of all the above presents a rather anomalous situation. On the one hand, the class and social forces capable of bringing about a basic political regrouping are growing in numbers and unity. What they lack in depth, as compared with past movements, they make up in greater breadth. And the intensity will come as the struggle sharpens. Different also from the past is the fact that the labor movement now occupies the pivot position in this line-up. On the other hand, these forces are still the captives of the monopoly dominated two-party system. The new is still imprisoned in the shell of the old.

INNER-PARTY STRIFE AND ITS LOGICAL OUTCOME

How long can this state of affairs continue? How long can the labor movement, for example, put aside the decision to enter the battle for the South, without weakening its

position nationally? And when that struggle finally shapes up it will prove to be a battle royal with no holds barred, for the stakes will be great on both sides. Or the Negro people? Can they, will they, settle for anything less than what is rightfully theirs, in the South no less than in the North? This issue is already joined and the Southern white-supremacists are resorting to the most bestial forms of violence, including lynchings, to maintain their rule. And what do these things mean for the struggle within the Democratic Party?

In the past, the conflicting interests in the Democratic Party were kept together with the glue of conciliation, compromise and concession. This is still the objective of the Democratic leadership. This is its plan for the 1956 elections. But the more the basic issues are evaded, the less chance does the Democratic Party have of maintaining its alliance with those independent forces that came its way in the past two decades. This is its quandary.

If it fails to give recognition to the growing popular forces and to the demands of the people, it cannot win, even should the leaders of the trade unions, the ADA, and the others, continue to support them. This was shown in 1952, when the disgust with Truman's policies and with the war in Korea shifted enough independent voters to give Eisenhower and the Republicans a majority. Thus, while these voters

tend to follow the lead of their mass organization leaders, they by no means do so blindly. Many of them exercise independent judgment.

If, however, the Democratic Party does give the popular forces more recognition, and does heed the pressure of the people for more progressive policies, it runs into collision with the Southern reactionaries and with those Northern political bosses who are indebted to and controlled by Big Business. One aspect of this was seen in 1948. In order to offset the popularity of the Henry Wallace candidacy, Harry Truman went out of his way to demagogically promise the labor movement, the Negro people and the poor farmers his full support for their demands. The result was a political upset, the election of Truman, even though the Dixiecrats did not support the Democratic national ticket that year.

There is an important lesson in this. Contrary to popular opinion the Southern electoral votes are not decisive in a Presidential election. Only four times since 1880 have these votes been large enough to affect the outcome. . . . They were not needed for the four-time election of Roosevelt, and Eisenhower would have won in 1952 even had all the southern votes gone to Stevenson. Thus, the fear that a break with the Dixiecrats leads to political defeat is entirely erroneous.

In 1952, despite all the efforts of the Stevenson forces to pacify the Southern reactionaries, the Shivers-

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Byrnes gang supported Eisenhower. And this year, 1956, the Dixiecrats are trying to win concessions for themselves within the Democratic Party with the promise not to bolt. They are not, however, interested in a Democratic Presidential victory. What they would like to see is a Republican Presidential and a Democratic Congressional victory. This would guarantee that the White House was in hands "safe" from labor and popular pressure and that all key Congress posts remained in their hands.

Thus the cleavage inside the Democratic Party is basic and cannot be patched up indefinitely. At a certain point its components must fly apart under the centrifugal forces of accelerated class tensions.

Two factors will hasten this development and make it inevitable. First, the struggle against monopoly is bound to become intensified in the period ahead. Everything points in that direction—the present farm crisis, the record-breaking immensity of big corporation profits, the approaching economic crisis. Even the dominance over capitalist world markets which Wall Street won as a result of World War II is now being challenged more and more by other capitalist powers. . . .

If the first factor that will hasten a basic realignment has to do with objective conditions, with whether it will be possible in the period ahead for the ruling class to conciliate differences to the same degree

as in the past, the second has to do with the level of understanding reached by the popular forces making up the coalition. Before these masses will be prepared to move "on their own" so to speak, they must become convinced of two things. First, that they have nothing to lose by so doing, that whatever concessions still are to be squeezed out of the old alignment can no longer meet their needs, in fact, that the longer they hold off from bringing the issues to climax the more they will be endangering the gains of yesterday. Secondly, that they do not have to fear political isolation, that they have the potential strength to make their own bid for political power with a good chance of success.

Not until these two conditions are met will the mass break occur. And it will be a break in both major parties. For in the Republican Party, too, a struggle is taking place and is bound to become sharper. While the ultra-reactionary wing has temporarily been subdued, McCarthyism is by no means dead. It must be remembered that Hitler made his first bid in 1923-24. He failed in this attempt, even landed in jail. But in 1930, when the economic crisis broke, the most powerful German industrial magnates shifted their support to him and his Nazi hordes. Within three years Hitler held state power.

It would be a mistake mechanically to compare the United States with prewar Germany. But one comparison can be made. Given a mighty

rise of the popular forces, the most reactionary groupings of monopoly will seek to impose a form of McCarthyism upon the country. In this way they will hope to suppress the mass movement and to propel the nation into military adventures and a new world war.

It would also be wrong to think that all the popular forces are concentrated in the Democratic Party. Millions of farmers, small business people, professionals, white collar workers, and even industrial workers, still support the Republican Party. The coming regrouping, therefore, will also shake up the Republican Party.

What exact course the political realignment will take depends on many as yet unknown factors. Cortez Ewing, in his book *Congressional Elections—1896-1944*, a study of sectional influences on American politics, concludes with the following summation:

At present there are strong evidences that the Democratic liberal party may not be long able to maintain its official integrity in the face of the decided contradictions which exist within its fold. If the conservative Southern Democratic congressmen continue to battle against policies which are "musts" with liberal Democratic leaders from the other sections, the Roosevelt party may well disintegrate. Therefore, we would find ourselves with three strong parties, each of which would be sectional in its strength. Under such circum-

stances, our national administration would inevitably become a coalition of at least two parties.

Thus Cortez Ewing foresees a possible breakup of the two-party system and its replacement with a three-party system in which no single party could muster a majority of electoral college votes and federal power is decided, therefore, by a coalition of two parties.

Such a development is by no means out of the question. The logic of events could lead to a number of parties, in which the main form of coalition occurred after an election. It could lead also to another two-party arrangement in which one party was composed of anti-monopoly forces and the other remained monopoly dominated. We would, however, question Ewing's stress on the sectional character of the breakup. It seems to us that the line of development is toward a greater stratification of the country along vertical class lines as against horizontal sectional lines. Not that sectionalism and its influences would play no part, but these would be subordinate to the main class influences.

Whatever exact path the regrouping takes, one thing is quite certain: the present monopoly dominated two-party system must give way, in time, to a more meaningful division, and one of the parties will be labor-led.

THE 1956 ELECTIONS

Although a break-up of the present two-party arrangement is inevitable, it will not take place overnight or immediately. The objective conditions are not yet fully ripe for this. As Engels accurately foresaw back in the 1890's, the task of toppling the American two-party system would not be easy. It would require "unusually powerful incentives." These are in the making—they are not yet here.

Bearing this in mind, the progressive approach to the 1956 elections should aim to find the best ways, under the difficult circumstances of a monopoly dominated two-party system, to strengthen the forces of the people and to prevent the victory of the most extreme reactionary forces, those whose orientation is toward war abroad and in an anti-labor, pro-fascist direction at home. A number of things can be done toward this end. First, it is important to defeat the most reactionary candidates of both major parties and to elect as large a number of candidates as possible who favor an end to the cold war and the arms race, and who are pledged to uphold civil liberties, civil rights, and progressive social legislation. This would strengthen the voice of the people and be understood as a popular mandate for more liberal and progressive policies. Second, it is important to oust the Republican Big Business Administration and to remove Con-

gress from the paralyzing grip of the GOP-Dixiecrat alliance. This could bring into being an administration and Congress more amenable to mass pressure. This is the policy of the Communist Party, which in the words of Eugene Dennis, calls for the organization of a mass movement, "powerful enough to elect an Administration and a Congress in '56... more responsive to the will and needs of the people than were their immediate predecessors."

Such an outcome of the election could be brought about only by greater political independence, unity, and initiative on the part of labor and its allies. In turn, it would increase their political weight and give them greater confidence in their own strength. It would therefore operate as a factor encouraging a further development of independent political action after the election.

An election victory, if followed up with determined united action in behalf of the people's needs, could compel many concessions from a new administration and Congress. With the danger of an economic crisis growing ever more acute, an administration more amenable to mass pressure would also be less likely to orient in a fascist and war direction. Given a great mass upsurge, it could be pressed forward as was the Roosevelt New Deal. Whether it were or not, under conditions of crisis, the contradictions within the Democratic Party and in the two-

party system as such would greatly intensify. If the administration moved in a popular direction it would be under fire from the reactionaries. If it gave way to these, it would run into collision with its own mass base. If it attempted to straddle the issues, as is most likely the case, it would find that neither wing of the party could take this for long. Thus the process of political realignment would become greatly accelerated.

We do not say that this is the only path toward political regrouping. We believe it is the best path, for it sets as its aim the winning for the people as much as can be done at each stage of the struggle, while blocking the path to extreme reaction and war. Whether this is the path forward depends upon many factors. In the first place it depends on the outcome of the 1956 elections. As this is being written, there is no guarantee that the 1956 elections will bring about such a strengthening of the labor-liberal forces and a weakening of the most reactionary monopoly groupings. On the contrary, there is a grave danger that this may not happen. In the first place, the top Democratic leaders are operating on the assumption that the labor, Negro, and liberal votes are "in the bag," and that their efforts must now go in the direction of placating the Dixiecrats and in putting a conservative foot forward nationally in order to win the so-called "moderate" vote. As part of this ten-

dency, the main Democratic spokesmen have not taken the lead in the fight for peace and for a relaxation of world tensions. Some of them are still beating the "cold war" tom-toms. They are repeating, therefore, the same errors as in 1952.

It must be plain that the mere election of a Democratic candidate over that of a Republican, in and by itself, does not lead to a strengthening of the labor and liberal forces. It depends on what that candidate stands for; what he is committed to; what class forces he speaks for. To support all Democratic candidates irrespective of where they stand on issues is not to strengthen, but to weaken, the influence of labor and its allies. In the first place, it leads to a demoralization of many voters. These stay away from the polls in droves because they see no difference between one set of candidates and another. In the second place, even should a victory be won by such candidates, nothing is gained thereby; in fact, those who gave them a blank check, who did nothing to seek better candidates in advance of the election, are themselves greatly compromised. Instead of increased confidence in their own strength and increased conviction as to the need for greater independent political action, such practices only sow disillusionment and cynicism toward all political activity in the ranks of the labor and liberal forces.

The main reason for this state of affairs is that the leadership of the

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labor movement despite its assertions to the contrary, has given in effect a blank check to the Democratic Party. It has not taken the next logical step forward in independent political action, the convening of a national gathering of all independent political groups to establish a common program and approach to the 1956 elections. It is not speaking in a firm progressive voice on questions of policy, and many of its spokesmen, such as Meany, speak on foreign policy questions in a voice not far different from that of a McCarthy or a Knowland. The labor leadership is not making clear its refusal to go along with hand-picked boss-

controlled nominees and its determination to contest these in the primaries, or if necessary, with independent candidates in the final elections. It is not demanding greater representation for labor and the Negro people in the halls of Congress and in all branches of government. Thus, by tailing after the Democratic politicians the labor leadership is endangering the possibilities of an election victory in 1956. If the labor movement is to change this situation it must begin to train its sights on the real enemy, Big Business, and its representatives and policies in both major parties.

Milwaukee Defeats Eastlandism

By Alan Shaw

ON APRIL 3rd, Milwaukee voters went to the polls and re-elected their Mayor, the socialist Frank P. Zeidler, to a third term. Thus ended three months of the bitterest and dirtiest anti-Negro, socialist-baiting election battle, with a close victory for Milwaukee's industrial workers, Negro people and small business—a victory for decent democratic city government. It was a victory that also resulted in more representative city government with the election of Mrs. Vel Phillips, the first Negro as well as the first woman to be elected to the Common Council.

The Milwaukee story deserves and needs to be told to the entire country. The attempt to use Eastlandism—McCarthyism plus racism—in a northern industrial city, and the experiences of labor and the Negro people in defeating it—contain important lessons for democracy in our whole country.

WHAT WAS THE ELECTION ABOUT?

Milwaukee mayoralty and council elections are non-partisan, at least in the technical sense that candidates

do not run on party tickets. But the alignments were crystal clear. On the one side, behind Zeidler, was the united support of all sections of labor, of the Negro people, of liberal middle-class and professional people and of socialist-minded people, of whom there are many in Milwaukee. On the other side, behind the candidacy of former Common Council President Milton McGuire, were the main industrialists of Milwaukee, the county leaders of the Republican Party, a newly organized "For America" group, and the Hearst-owned *Milwaukee Sentinel*.

Why were the line-ups so clear and sharp? Why was the attack on Zeidler so vicious—using the two main weapons of "know-nothing" politics, 1956 version: racism and red-baiting? Were the big industrialists of Milwaukee really fearful that the re-election of Milwaukee's Socialist mayor would mean Socialism on April 4th, and that the farm equipment, auto and electrical factories would be turned over to the people?

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he says, but a "Social Democrat"), did not run on a program of Socialism. He ran on his record of two terms of decent city government, of protecting Milwaukee working people from the utilities, of defense of democratic rights and civil rights, of standing for organized labor and the underprivileged. Valid criticism has been made that Zeidler could have been firmer in his support of the Kohler strikers in the clay boat unloading incident*; that his position on the rights of Milwaukee's Negro population could be stronger and less apologetic and be reflected more in the policy of the Police Department; and that his seeming obsession at times with civil defense has added to the tensions of war when the relaxation of these tensions was both necessary and possible.

Despite these and other valid criticisms, the two terms of Mayor Zeidler's administration were marked mainly by vigorous fighting for the people's interests, particularly against the big real estate interests and utility monopolies. Zeidler's battle for slum clearance and for public housing won him the enmity of the real estate sharks. His opposition to the constant demands for increases from the telephone and bus companies, and his organizing of opposition to the natural-gas bill steal, set the utilities against his administration. At the last session of the State Legisla-

ture when J. Friedrich, General-Secretary of the Milwaukee AFL, testified against the "anti-red" Prange Bill (similar to the Broyles Bills in Illinois) he read a letter from Mayor Zeidler sharply criticizing the bill. This also helps to explain the violence of the opposition to Zeidler from the McCarthyite forces, "For America" and the *Sentinel*.

The major industrialists in Milwaukee did not fear that the factories would begin to produce for use instead of for profit on the morning of April 4th, if Zeidler were re-elected. But they did fear the influence of organized labor in the city government, they opposed the public housing, relief and consumer protection policies of the mayor. They decided that it was time for Big Business to take over the City Hall so that they could continue and increase the robbery of the people with the cooperation and help of the city government. Of course they were not going to put it that bluntly and therefore from the sewer of American politics they dragged out the methods of McCarthy and Eastland and built up a tremendous attack based on anti-Negro racism and on socialist-baiting and red-baiting. The anti-Negro racist attack took a covert form—a whispering campaign. The red-baiting was the open feature. But the two went hand in hand.

THE ANTI-NEGRO WHISPERING CAMPAIGN

In the months before the election

* At one stage in the very prolonged strike, after pickets had prevented the unloading of clay from the Kohler plant, the company tried to bring in a shipload through the port of Milwaukee.—Ed.

campaign, rumors and whispers began to spread in Milwaukee. They went like this: that Zeidler had plastered the South with billboards inviting Negroes to come to Milwaukee, promising good jobs and housing; that this was bringing real estate values down, causing a crime wave, and so on. This began to spread to a point where Miles McMillan, a Madison newspaperman, commented that you could not be in a public place in Milwaukee for fifteen minutes without hearing that Zeidler "wants to turn Milwaukee over to the Negroes." The big industrialists of Milwaukee hoped to ride into City Hall by appealing to backward sentiments, by splitting the Negro and white workers. As McMillan put it: "Jim Eastland would be proud of that campaign."

But this took place at a time when the whole country has been aroused by the murdering racism of the Dixiecrats, when the labor movement is beginning to see its own interest in the fight for civil liberties, and when liberal and religious leaders are feeling impelled to speak out.

It was organized labor in Milwaukee that first launched the attack on the whispering campaign, brought it out into the open and exposed it. Labor's Political League (the united political action body of AFL, CIO and independent unions) jumped the gun on its endorsement schedule because of the hate campaign, and without waiting for committee action, unanimously

endorsed Zeidler. From the very first, the discussions in LPL labelled the anti-Negro attack as anti-labor. While some tended to take an apologetic approach: "It's the industrialists and not Zeidler who bring the Negro people here"—the quick action of labor was marked from the outset by a new understanding.

Labor made the re-election of Zeidler its main goal, and later in endorsing candidates for the Common Council made its support for each candidate dependent on his support for Zeidler. A further step forward was the endorsement by LPL of Mrs. Vel Phillips and Isaac Coggs, both Negro candidates for the Common Council and the County Board. The two trade-union newspapers, the *CIO News* and the *AFL Labor Press*, continually hit away at "the spread of filthy group hate as a stepping stone to office," at the use of "race prejudice," at "shabby bigots," and at the *Sentinel's* playing up the race issue throughout the campaign. There was a growing recognition that McGuire, the same candidate whose supporters were spreading the anti-Negro hate campaign, was also the one who talked of "labor goons" and who said he "would have ordered the clay boats unloaded." The *CIO News* demanded that the *Milwaukee Journal* and *Sentinel* speak out and "help put an end to this ugliness."

The Milwaukee Federated Trades Council helped to nail the lie by

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writing to ten AFL councils throughout the South and asking if such billboards exist and proving the hate-mongers to be liars as well. Speaking of migration of Negroes from the South, the AFL Milwaukee *Labor Press* stated: "Fair minded people cannot criticize this migration. The Negro is entitled to a decent economic status as much as any other person." A prominent part of an AFL educational institute was devoted to attacking the whispering campaign. The Wisconsin State CIO in an *Actiongram* sent to all locals and officials denounced it as an "immoral campaign" and "guttersnipe politics," and said in part:

We cannot remain silent . . . help us put an end to these foul tactics that can mean death of democratic government in our community. . . . Long ago we in the labor movement understood that every man has a right to a home, to a job, to send his children to school. When any selfish group tries to deny these rights to the members of any group, they strike a blow at the security and well-being of all groups. . . . We rightly condemn the mistreatment of Negroes in the South. Let no one condone the mistreatment of Negroes in the North. . . . We believe this immoral campaign has reached a point where it must be repudiated completely and without reservation. We appeal to all fraternal and civic groups, all religions, all races and colors, and all parties, to denounce these poison spreaders in Milwaukee.

The day after the CIO *Action-*

gram, the Milwaukee NAACP, at a forum to hear the mayoralty candidates, put McGuire on the spot on this question and passed a strong resolution also calling on the people to repudiate the anti-Negro slanders. Shortly after the calls from labor and the NAACP, leaders of the Episcopal Church, in a statement headed by Bishop Hallock, said: "In our opinion, there is no place for any racial issues in this campaign." Rev. Roholt, a Lutheran pastor, called the slanders "bearing false witness." Democratic party ward units, which endorsed Zeidler, criticized the anti-Negro whispering campaign. The 5th Ward Republican Club stated: "We abhor the undemocratic and un-American attitudes which are being introduced in this mayoralty campaign." The Communist Party of Milwaukee had given wide neighborhood and shop distribution to a leaflet, "Whispers That Kill," and in its election program dealt sharply with this racism.

McGuire was forced to repudiate the anti-Negro slanders. At the NAACP forum the sentiment was so strong, that according to the *Milwaukee Journal*: "The question period found Zeidler and McGuire agreeing to ask the people of Milwaukee to observe an hour of prayer March 28th to support the Negro boycott against segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama." McGuire repudiated the whisperers—but even *Time* magazine indicated that his supporters continued to spread them.

Zeidler himself, particularly in the early part of the campaign, was not as strong in the attack on the anti-Negro whispers (even though he and his family came under personal attack) as were his labor and Negro supporters. However, when people began to speak out, Zeidler's position became stronger. (His record in office on this includes creation of a human rights commission, plugging for public housing in Negro neighborhoods and establishing a study on economic and social problems of the Negro people in Milwaukee). Before the election Zeidler stated: "If my opponent leaves any heritage to Milwaukee, whether he wins or not, it will be racial tensions where none existed before."

The anti-Negro whispering campaign against Zeidler did have some effect. It was seen, for instance, in the 2nd Ward, where a racist-inspired write-in campaign was conducted against the two Negro candidates on the ballot, and where the anti-Zeidler vote paralleled the sizeable write-in vote. But it did not succeed. The defeat of the anti-Negro campaign in Milwaukee was a victory in the civil rights battle taking place in our entire country today. It was a victory due mainly to the intervention and vigor of labor and the Negro people.

When the people started speaking up, the reactionary Big Business forces started to backtrack on the anti-Negro campaign. While it did not stop, they began to push to the

forefront an open attack on Zeidler, in the form of socialist-baiting and red-baiting.

THE SOCIALIST-BAITING AND RED-BAITING ATTACK

Milwaukee has had a strong socialist tradition and especially from the long administration of Daniel W. Hoan (1916-1940), the tradition of a socialist as Mayor. This sprang partly from the socialist thought of the early German settlers in Wisconsin, partly from the socialist consciousness developed from the work of the Socialist Party in the period before World War I. In 1912, the first Socialist Mayor, Emil Seidel, was elected. (Carl Sandburg, then a reporter on the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, was appointed Seidel's private secretary.) In 1910, Victor Berger was elected from Milwaukee as the nation's first Socialist Congressman.

So the issue of "socialists in city government" is not a new or a strange one to the people of Milwaukee. But Milwaukee Big Business, hoping to get control of City Hall and hoping at the same time to revive the hysteria and red-baiting of their "favorite son," McCarthy, decided to go all out. They started slowly, with McGuire saying that having a Socialist mayor gave Milwaukee a bad name, kept state and national legislators from giving Milwaukee an even break, and pointing out such "important" facts as that there are more radio and TV sets

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in the city of Milwaukee than "in any of those socialist countries like Norway." But he was not long in warming up and charging Zeidler with making "un-American utterances" and "trying to sell us a foreign ideology."

The major socialist-baiting and red-baiting attack was taken up by the Hearst *Sentinel*. For weeks before the election, day after day, the *Sentinel* ran a front page editorial series, an editorial page series, and a front page second section series attacking Zeidler. Day after day, it hit at Zeidler as a "long time dedicated, doctrinaire, Marxist socialist," opposed to Americanism. Daily the front page articles would quote from the platform of the Milwaukee Socialist Party (of which Zeidler was the Chairman) put a word in bold type, then given a quotation from Marx, Lenin, Stalin or Khrushchev which has the same word in it, put it in bold type also—trying to show that their outlook is one and the same. To give an example: On March 24 the following:

"Only by *Democratic Socialism* can there be security and freedom."

Wisconsin Socialist Party Platform, 1950

Frank P. Zeidler, Milwaukee, Chairman, State Committee

"We sincerely greet these *Social Democrats* and are willing to do everything necessary to unite our efforts. . . . The socialist camp is invincible!"

Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary, Communist Party

USSR (Russia, Feb. 14, 1956)

Feature articles on the editorial page would be headed: "Socialists, Reds Aim To Destroy Capitalism," "Socialist Platform Follows Marx." The important thing here is not the similarities that there might be, nor the differences that there are between Zeidler and Marx, Lenin, Stalin or Khrushchev. The important thing is the use of this fraudulent approach, and the method of campaigning—not on the issues but attempting to revive a red herring to get away from the real issues, attempting to label any ideas connected with Socialism as "un-American."

Had this type of attack taken place a few years ago, when the haze of McCarthyism hung heavy, distorting the vision of many, it might have succeeded. But the people of Wisconsin have had to think deeply about Senator McCarthy and his methods, and they began to give the answer in the "Citizens versus McCarthy" movement, in the "Joe Must Go" movement, and then in 1954 with the defeat of McCarthy's right-hand man, former Congressman Kersten. Just as the anti-Negro whispering campaign would have made Eastland proud, the red-baiting campaign would have made McCarthy proud.

But this was today, and the red-baiting, although it had some effect, did not take hold enough to defeat Zeidler. Bishop Hallock and the

Episcopal ministers said: "Nor is there a place for attacks on the patriotism of either of the nominees by implying that one is 'for America' and one is not." The "red" charge did not keep some Democratic Party ward units from endorsing Zeidler, perhaps because the Democratic Party has been similarly charged both nationally and in Wisconsin where Republican leader and open-shopper Grede (of Grede foundries) recently launched an attack on the Democrats. Even the *Milwaukee Journal*, itself having come under a sharp McCarthy attack in past years as the "Milwaukee Daily Worker," rejected the "false fears of socialism" and mildly supported the re-election of Zeidler.

The labor leadership, while it did not deal with the issue of red-baiting as vigorously as it should, did not fall for this red-baiting and played some role in exposing it. The *CIO News* stated: "Nobody in Milwaukee stays up nights worrying about Socialists." The attack of "For America" on Zeidler led the *CIO News* to comment that conservative people, who disagree with Zeidler's "opinions about democratic socialism, even though their ideas about the ultimate objectives of government may differ" are "so incensed by this sort of unfair attack they intend to vote for Zeidler." The *AFL Labor Press* in an editorial entitled "The Socialist 'Menace'" uncovered the false issue, showed what the real

issues were, and asked, regarding having Socialist mayors, "Is that bad?" The *Labor Press* directed a sharp attack on the *Sentinel* for going to the extreme of hinting on Easter Sunday that under Zeidler we could not worship as we pleased.

How did Zeidler deal with this charge? In the first part of the campaign he mainly ignored it. But as the attack grew in intensity he began to state the nature of his socialist beliefs. He described himself as not a "Marxist socialist," but a "Social Democrat" which he defined as one "cooperating in the spirit of brotherhood to produce progress in life." While presenting his ideas about Socialism, he also stated that the charges are a "smokescreen used on me in every election."

His campaign committee had newspaper ads dealing with the charge which said, "The communistic smear is not new in political campaigns," and "Who is un-American, one may ask, the mayor who serves with benefit and honor to his city and country, or the shameless few who would destroy his good name for political power in violation of all the American principles of fair play?"

Finally Zeidler wrote a public letter to the *Sentinel* demanding retractions of its red-baiting. In it he pointed out, among other things, that there are many different kinds of Socialists and that the *Communist Manifesto* is not a "bible for all socialists . . . since Socialists regard

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the *Communist Manifesto* as an interesting document only.*

In 1956, in the largest city in the state which McCarthy misrepresents in the U.S. Senate, the people did not fall for this king-size red scare. The Communist Party of Wisconsin, in one of its election leaflets, pointed out that Big Business was "trying to throw dust in the eyes of the people." The Communists pointed out that the things that the industrialists were attacking were not Socialism, which was not an issue in this campaign. The Communists further declared:

Anyway, since when is it a crime to believe in Socialism in Milwaukee? There have been thousands of believers in Socialism in Milwaukee for over 100 years, and Socialist mayors have been in office most of the time since 1912. When the majority of the American people are convinced they need a socialist system instead of capitalism, as they will some day, then they will have it, and they will be entitled to have that choice when they want it. But that is not the issue now. We are confident the people of Milwaukee will choose the path of progress and refuse to turn Milwaukee's City Hall clock back to the period that would suit McCarthy and his kind.

Racism and red-baiting were not the only examples of the anti-human

approach of the industrialists and their candidate. Not satisfied with poisoning the atmosphere with racial and political intolerance, with attacking labor, public housing, "easy" relief requirements—they also launched a vicious attack on the youth of Milwaukee. In a large newspaper ad for McGuire, the youth were referred to as "wolf packs," "emotionally warped," "moral termites gnawing away at decent respectable values" and "hoodlum mobs." The resentment to the "wolf pack" ad was so sharp (even from the Police Chief) that McGuire was forced to repudiate this also.

CONCLUSIONS

The election battle was close. In the primaries only 10,000 votes separated Zeidler and McGuire. In the final election Zeidler's margin was 23,000—a safe margin, but not the overwhelming repudiation of Eastlandism and McCarthyism that there could have and should have been. Labor is examining why it was so, as well as why some of the main labor-backed candidates were not elected. Among the main reasons discussed are:

1. While labor did have allies, it still followed too much of a "go-it-alone" policy;
2. Labor's campaign was still too much "on top"—with the need for local, ward and precinct organization very great; and
3. There is still much to be done

* That Socialism was by no means the issue in the campaign was further attested by an article in the *Christian Science Monitor*, which opened: "A British Laborite visited Milwaukee not so long ago and, naturally enough, put in a special request to see the city's socialist Mayor, Frank Zeidler. After an interview of two hours, the MP emerged, expressing bewilderment: 'How can that man call himself a socialist? He hasn't had a new socialist idea since 1848.'"

in combatting the effects of Eastlandism and McCarthyism.

But in the main, the anti-Negro and red-baiting of the industrialists failed and Milwaukee City Hall clock was not turned back to the McCarthy hours of darkness. They defeated the anti-labor, anti-Negro, red-baiting campaign; they elected a Negro woman to the Common Council; they elected most of the candidates endorsed by labor.

William Evjue, the crusading liberal editor of the *Capitol Times* (Madison) stated:

The results in Milwaukee show how completely the cult of McCarthyism is declining here in Wisconsin. No longer is it possible for a hack politician to ride into political office by placing the brand of socialism or communism on his opponent. . . . The people of Milwaukee also repudiated the political candidates who were the stooges of big business and who also used racial prejudice along with the fear of communism to win the election. . . . And so there are signs that the American voter is again returning to common sense after falling for the fear and hysteria that were used in the 1952 campaign. . . .

By Jo

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The British C. P. Congress

A Letter from London

By John Williamson

MEETING IN THE MIDST of tremendous new developments in the world, and when "the Tory Government, in the service of the big monopolies, has launched against the working class the heaviest offensive since the "Hungry Thirties," the 24th Congress of the British Communist Party was held for four days over Easter in the Battersea Town Hall in London. It was opened by the veteran working-class fighter and Party chairman, William Gallacher.

Following on the heels of the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the subsequent discussions of the role of Stalin during the past twenty years in furthering the harmful "cult of the individual," the capitalist press lavishly predicted splits and ousting of Party leaders.

For the first two days the delegates riveted their attention on the report of Harry Pollitt and the draft resolution before them. The keynote of the Congress was expressed in its opening sentence:

The supreme aim of this Congress is to rally the British working people to defeat the capitalist attacks on their conditions, preserve peace, and bring down the Tory Government.

Only on the third day was an executive session held where, in addition to electing the incoming Executive Committee of 42 members, a separate report was given on the 20th Congress of the

CPSU and the Yugoslav situation. At its conclusion a statement was released reporting that it "received the report and expressed full confidence in the Soviet Union, its people, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

While the Congress discussion was critical and hard hitting, most of it was on a responsible level. While there were sharp discussions and divided opinions on several specific questions, the Congress demonstrated—to the bafflement of the capitalist press—its unity by unanimously approving the report of Harry Pollitt and the political resolution.

The British Congress met in the new world conditions known to all readers of *Political Affairs*—the existence of a huge zone of peace representing the majority of the population of the world, the emergence of Socialism into a world system, and the disintegration of the colonial system, with its complete abolition on the order of the day.

As a result of the Tory Government's subservience to U.S. imperialism, with its NATO, SEATO, Baghdad Pact and other reactionary alliances—all in the hope of British imperialism holding on, by force if necessary, to its remaining colonies, holding on to its markets, and unleashing new attacks on the people at home to realize this—Pollitt emphasized in his report that:

The consequences of the Tory Government's policy for the British people are

only too clear. The huge burden of militarism and armaments continues, it cripples social development, distorts the national economy, aggravates the balance of payments crisis, disrupts family life with the two-year call-up, and strengthens every reactionary influence in British political life.

The threat of nuclear war menaces Britain more than any other country in the world, making agreement on outlawing such weapons more urgent for us than for anyone else. But the Tory Government refuses even to agree to abolish tests of such weapons. . . .

The American occupation of British aerodromes and bases continues; American bans on East-West trade hinder Britain's economy; and British political and military policy is dominated by the needs of the United States. . . .

This whole policy of colonial repression and slaughter shames Britain before the world, increasingly isolates her, and makes every problem facing Britain more difficult to solve.

It was in that setting that the Standing Orders Committee of the Congress recommended a separate discussion on the controversial issue of what attitude the Party should maintain towards conscription.

Everyone was unanimous in opposing the 'dirty' wars in Cyprus, Kenya, and Malaya; in emphasizing opposition to the use of the armed forces for colonial wars and defense of the Government's cold war policy; in demanding drastic cuts in military appropriations.

The Executive Committee's present policy was expressed in an amendment that concluded by saying:

Congress welcomes the growing support and activity for a reduction in the period of compulsory military service and urges the intensification of every effort to achieve success in this endeavor. We demand that the call-up should be reduced to twelve months and that the entire period should be served in Britain.

In arguing for the position of the Executive, emphasis was given to the tactical advantage of the broadest unity on the demand to reduce the term, as well as the more fundamental argument that some of the Tories were willing to abolish conscription in favor of a professional, volunteer army that they could rely on both at home and abroad.

Other delegates fought vigorously for a resolution that called on Congress "to express its opposition to the principle of conscription to the British imperialist forces."

Their main argument was that the Party was compromising itself, since the armed forces were being used as "an instrument of murder, plunder, and oppression in the colonies," and further, that in the growing movement for abolition of conscription, Communists "were forced to violate their conscience" by merely supporting reduction.

After a heated debate, the Executive position got 294 votes to 105, with several abstentions.

Congress examined the economic situation in Britain and concluded that the special conditions arising from the destruction caused by World War Two and the temporary exclusion of Western Germany and Japan from the world markets were both ended:

Thus the special conditions which made possible a long period of full employment in Britain are coming to an end, as the sudden crisis in the motor, cycle and radio industries and furniture shows. The Tory promise of a doubled standard of living in twenty-five years contrasts with the actual forcing down of the standard of living in 1956. The expanding production, relative technological progress and increased intensity of labor in Britain, coupled with a home market in which the consuming power of the working people is being re-

duced by the Tories and employers—these are the familiar factors making the crisis.

It is true that Britain's gold and dollar reserves are being reduced and that there is an adverse balance of trade. But this is not due to wages, or a low rate of industrial productivity, as the Tories claim. The principal causes are political: the heavy imports of material for the arms program; the cost of the colonial wars and maintenance of British armed forces abroad; the armaments productions program which cuts production of goods for export; and the political restrictions by the U.S. on trade with China and other Socialist countries.

The Tories are today waging a terrific offensive against the workers and the people generally. Prices, rents, fares and taxes are soaring. Schools and hospitals are a disgrace and the housing shortage is aggravated. A wage freeze is being attempted. Speed-up is demanded in the factories. Unemployment is being deliberately created and credit is restricted. The Tory Government threatens to worsen the situation with its new budget.

The organized workers and tenants have displayed a fine fight-back spirit. The magnificent solidarity in the Rolls-Royce and Hawker strikes; the victorious struggles of the railwaymen, engineers, Yorkshire miners, dockers, newspapermen, electrical workers; the fight against the short week; the developing activity among school teachers, bank clerks and other salaried workers; the rents struggle and that of the pensioners; and the numerous Parliamentary lobbies by trade unions, Co-op Guildswomen, and the Peace Movement all demonstrate the fighting spirit of the British workers. In the midst of all these, Communists will be found

amongst the most active.

Comrade Pollitt emphasized in his report:

It must be said, however, that the movement is not yet big enough or united enough to defeat the Tory offensive. It is clear that what the Tories really fear is the mass movement. They know that resolute united mass action could defeat their attacks. This explains why they have only gone over to the attack stage by stage and have granted concessions to head off the movement.

From the beginning to the end, the Congress deliberations emphasized the need of fighting to bring down the Tory Government now, without waiting five years.

The prerequisites exist because the Tory Government has already exposed the hollowness of its election slogan of "Make Britain a Property Owning Democracy." They have attacked not only the workers, but small business people, professionals and farmers. The new feature in the situation is that masses of people who normally vote Tory can and are being drawn into the struggle against the Government.

What was needed included:

The Labor Party leadership taking a decisive stand against every aspect of Tory policy.

The calling of an emergency national conference of the Labor Party, trade unions and Co-op movements to hammer out a counter-program to the Tories.

A united opposition to the Tory Government, embracing Labor-Communist, Trade Union and Co-op movements with other progressive-minded people.

Agreement on a minimum program for this united opposition to force the Tory Government to resign now based on the following broad lines:

1. An independent British foreign policy that ends subservience to the U.S.A., compels withdrawal of American troops, ends the colonial wars, and cuts the call-up, reduces huge armaments expenditures and reaches international agreement to reduce armaments and end the menace of nuclear weapons, full development of East-West trade.
2. End the Purchase Tax, cut taxes and increase wages, restore the social services and increase pensions to the aged, adequate appropriations for education and extending the school-leaving age.
3. Break the grip of the monopolists by real nationalization of such key industries as steel, engineering, electrical, chemical and building—accompanied by modernization with adequate safeguards to the workers and training of scientists and technicians vital for Britain's future.

The single most significant development in the policies adopted by the Congress was the stress in reports and resolutions on the urgent need for the Communist and Labor Parties to reach an understanding. The political resolution declared that "The Communist Party solemnly pledges to do everything in its power to assist in reaching a new political undertaking with the Labor Party in the light of the new situation at home and abroad that faces us all."

But this did not mean that the Congress tried to cover up differences. In a responsible manner, Pollitt's report asked: "Why is it that after six years of **Labor Government** . . . labor supporters did not develop more enthusiasm, and new sections of the people were not won for the Labor movement and Socialism? We believe that the explanation lies in the policy carried out . . . during those years."

In a hard-hitting, but fraternal manner, Pollitt then declared "There can

be no lasting advance unless the issue of unity in action between the Labor and Communist Parties is squarely faced, and bans and proscriptions against members of the Labor and Communist Parties working together are ended." Later he declared "The removal of these bans, restoring the historic unity of the movements as envisaged by its founders, would be the greatest single step to overcome the crisis in the Labor Party."

In the discussion, Vice-Chairman, R. Palme Dutt, made a direct, simple appeal "to friends in the Labor Party and trade-union movement." He asked, amid cheers, "If it is a good thing to end the cold war in international relations, is it not a good thing to end the cold war in the British Labor movement?"

Dutt then went on to examine and answer typical arguments against Labor-Communist cooperation, and outlined the steps each needed to take. Dutt added that Communists needed to do much to correct their own faults, in order to facilitate such cooperation, including the overcoming of old habits.

Amidst laughter and applause he concluded:

Indeed, we need to recognize that concentration on individual Right Wing leaders can be a kind of reverse cult of the individual.

In his summation of the general discussion, National Organizer Johnny Gollan dealt at length with the viewpoint of some delegates who thought there was a contradiction between the urgent policy of building unity and strengthening the Communist Party itself. Discussing it in general and on the basis of specific examples, Gollan showed how these two tasks went hand in hand.

He took an experience in a small town where a disgusted member of the Labor Party had argued with him that in that small town, where no Communist Party existed, it would be useless for him to join the Communist Party. He would only "isolate himself." Comradely discussion convinced him to join the Communist Party and today—a year later—there is a Communist Party branch of seven and the previously sick Labor Party branch has been won for united front struggle with the Communist Party and the trade unions on a program of immediate issues facing the town. The result is that the entire movement has benefited.

The other question that assumed key importance at this Congress was the need to increase the membership and improve the quality of the political activity of the Communist Party itself.

Pollitt undertook to rally the Party for a decisive change when he declared:

Everything depends on the strength and drive of our organization, above all in the factories. Communist ideas are powerful. It is organization that makes them all-powerful.

Pointing out that the Tories have no fear of Parliamentary opposition alone, he stressed their fear of the mass movement of the workers. It is in the factories that the daily clash of ideas takes place and where in the midst of organizing struggles the Communist Party must build its greatest strength.

Examining the work of the Party members and branches, Pollitt pointed out that the Party had increased its membership to 33,959 members. At the same time, no comparable change had been made in the *Daily Worker* circulation which hovered around 80,000 daily and over 100,000 on week-ends. Outlining how to bring about a change,

the Congress endorsed "the aim of 50,000 members as the next step in our development."

Pollitt explained the harmfulness of the "ginger group" concept and methods of work of the Party, as follows:

What is the essence of "ginger-group" conception? It is that we confine our work to that of influencing the decisions or policy of this or that trade-union branch, shop stewards committee, district committee or conference, etc. This is valuable work and can carry the movement forward a certain stage. By its very nature it can be done by comparatively few comrades with mass influence, by a small party of cadres. . . .

But the Communist Party is the highest form of working class organization. Its job is not only to influence other working-class organizations, to bring them into action, but to appeal to and influence the mass of the workers, to place the full program on any issue before them, to unite the varied activities into a general political movement against the Tories and the capitalist system, etc. This cannot be done without public work and political organization among the mass of the workers.

Answering the slander that the Communists are interested in destroying the Labor Party, the resolution declares boldly:

Far from destroying the ranks of the working class or seeking to destroy the Labor Party, we work with the aim of achieving one united working class party in Britain, based on the principles of Marxism. But we know that it is only on the basis of strengthening the Communist Party now that this aim can be achieved and Socialism established in Britain.

An inspiring report on the Communist Party and Young People was given by the Assistant Secretary, George Matthews. He described in eloquent terms the future that could free young people in Britain, declaring:

This is the age of atomic energy and of automation. It will soon be the age of space travel. . . . What a world this is for young people to live in. Wordsworth wrote:

*"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven."*

He was writing of the French Revolution. But what he said is even more true of the revolutionary epoch we live in today.

He then outlined a policy for young people that demanded an end to the militarization of the youth, better wages and working conditions, drastic improvement in education and raising of the school-leaving age to 16 years, adequate sports and leisure facilities, and the right to vote at 18 years. Amidst applause he declared:

If we are told that the money for all this cannot be found, we ask: Is it better to spend £1,000 on sending a lad to Cyprus or Malaya, or on getting a first class education? Is it better to spend hundreds of millions on the H-bomb, or hundreds of thousands on playing-fields and youth clubs?

After examining the attitude of the trade unions and Labor Party towards the young people, he self-critically turned to the work of the Communist Party.

Matthews then outlined a detailed program for changing the situation by the Party on all levels, aiming at doubling the Y.C.L. membership. He concluded by asking if the fact that the Party and Y.C.L. are political organizations means the work must be dull, uninspiring, and unadventurous? Answering the question, he declared:

We appeal to young people to take part in the most exciting, the most inspiring, the most adventurous deeds which are possible today—deeds aimed at creating a so-

ciety in which the marvels of atomic energy and automation will be used to build a new world of peace and plenty.

In his report, Harry Pollitt commented on the Party's program, "The British Road to Socialism," adopted in April 1952. Therein was charted how Britain will reach Socialism by her own road: how the people of Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real People's Democracy by transforming Parliament into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of the people.

Pollitt reminded the Congress this was adopted four years before the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. dealt with the same subject, throwing back the attacks upon both the Communists of Britain and the Soviet Union.

He elaborated on how such a People's Government would have to be backed by the mass struggle of the people. With such backing it could break the political and economic power of the monopoly capitalists and bring about the democratic transformation of the Civil Service, Foreign Office, armed forces and police, law courts and administration of justice.

Answering the hoary slander of civil war, he declared:

This is a question for the ruling class, not us. If they accept the democratic decisions of the People's Government then this issue will not arise. If they choose otherwise, then it is they who will be defying the democratic verdict of the nation.

But whatever the way to Socialism, Pollitt declared: "The decisive factor for the advance to Socialism anywhere is the political leadership of the working class headed by its vanguard, the Communist Party. Without that there can be no Socialism."

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