

# Political Affairs

25¢

MARCH

1948

## SPECIAL PLENUM ISSUE

Meeting of National Committee, C.P.U.S.A.  
February 3-5, 1948

Reports by

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

EUGENE DENNIS

JOHN WILLIAMSON

HENRY WINSTON

THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT

JOSEPH ROLAND

# ILLUSION AND REALITY

By CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL

- a "study in the sources of poetry" with a philosophy of art in terms of both the individual and society.
  - begins with a study of the origins of art in tribal life; discusses the development of English poetry from Shakespeare to modern times; examines the language of poetry, the differences between art and science.
- Price: \$3.75

---

# AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISM

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

- selected writings by a veteran Communist Party and labor leader on the past 35 years of trade union activity.
- selections include: the Great Steel Strike; Trade Union Educational League; the Question of the Unorganized; Trade Union Unity League; Organization of Negro Workers; Industrial Unionism; Communists and the Trade Unions; New World Federation of Labor; the Trade Unions and Socialism.

Price: \$2.85

---

# HISTORY of the LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

By PHILIP S. FONER

- a detailed study of the struggles of the working class to win an improved status in American society.
  - a history of the rise of trade unions and their influence on the development of American capitalism.
  - an authoritative work based on new and previously unpublished material.
- Price: \$3.75

NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS  
832 Broadway • New York 3, N. Y.

# POLITICAL AFFAIRS

*A magazine devoted*

*to the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism*

EDITORIAL BOARD

V. J. JEROME, *Editor*

ABNER W. BERRY, ALEXANDER BITTELMAN, JACK STACHEL, MAX WEISS

VOLUME XXVII, NO. 3

## *Contents*

MARCH, 1948

### THE FEBRUARY PLENARY MEETING NATIONAL COMMITTEE, C.P.U.S.A.

- World Democracy's Struggle Against American  
Imperialism *William Z. Foster* 195
- The Role of the Communist Party in the Present  
Situation *Eugene Dennis* 207
- Trade Union Problems and the Third-Party  
Movement *John Williamson* 224
- Some Aspects of Party Work *Henry Winston* 238
- The United Working-Class Front—Basis of the Polish  
People's Democracy *I. Olkowicz* 251
- 1948—A Year of Inspiring Anniversaries  
for Women *Elizabeth Gurley Flynn* 259
- The Question of the National Debt *Joseph Roland* 266
- FROM THE TREASURY OF MARXISM:  
On the Death of Karl Marx *Frederick Engels* 279
- BOOK REVIEW:  
A Guide for Understanding and for Struggle on the  
Cultural Front *Samuel Sillen* 283

---

*Re-entered as second class matter January 4, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. POLITICAL AFFAIRS is published monthly by New Century Publishers, Inc., at 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., to whom subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be sent. Subscription rate: \$2.50 a year; \$1.25 for six months; foreign and Canada, \$3.00 a year. Single copies 25 cents.*

## RECENT PAMPHLETS

♦ ♦ ♦

- THE THIRD PARTY AND THE 1948 ELECTIONS      \$.15  
*by Eugene Dennis*
- N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE'S 23 QUESTIONS ABOUT  
THE COMMUNIST PARTY ANSWERED      .10  
*By William Z. Foster*
- JEWISH CULTURE IN AMERICA, WEAPON FOR  
JEWISH SURVIVAL AND PROGRESS      .15  
*by Nathan Ausubel*
- QUARANTINE THE WARMONGERS      .03  
*by William Z. Foster*
- WHY I AM A COMMUNIST      .05  
*by Benjamin J. Davis*
- THE RED-BAITING RACKET AND HOW IT WORKS      .10  
*By George Morris*
- WALL STREET ON THE WARPATH      .05  
*by Peter V. Cacchione*
- THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE COMMUNIST  
PARTY (Marxist Study Course No. 1)      .15
- THE THUNDER OF THE GRASS      .50  
*by Aaron Kramer*
- ON THE THEORY OF MARXISM, Little Lenin Library  
Vol. 31, *by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin*      .15

# WORLD DEMOCRACY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST AMERICAN IMPERIALISM\*

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, especially since the break-up of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in mid-December, has become one of greatly increased war danger. The world has become definitely divided into two hostile camps: that of democracy and peace, and that of imperialism, fascism, and war; the first with the U.S.S.R. at its head and the second led by the United States. At this time the United States, in its ruthless determination to rule the world, is waging a so-called "cold war" against the U.S.S.R. in the fields of diplomacy, economics, politics, and military preparations. In this expansionist drive, however, the United States is meeting with ever stronger resistance from the world democratic forces. Consequently, the international situation is very tense, and this tension is steadily increasing.

What has caused this greatly sharpened world situation? To help us find the answer, let us review the analysis made by our June, 1947, National Committee meeting. At that time, in my report on the international situation, I pointed out that

\* A report on the international situation delivered at the meeting of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A., held February 3-5, 1948.

regarding the question of war imminency the American bourgeoisie might roughly be divided into three sections. First, there was a strong group of atom-bomb fanatics who would be glad to provoke an immediate war against the U.S.S.R. Secondly, there was a larger, the decisive, section of the capitalist class which, while accepting war as inevitable and supporting all war steps of the Truman Administration, nevertheless tended to hesitate before actually plunging into the so-called preventive war. Thirdly, there was a splinter section of smaller capitalists who supported the Roosevelt-Wallace peace policies. In that report I pointed out that any one of three factors could strengthen the war party; namely, a failure of American foreign policy, a victory of reaction in the national elections, and the fear, or the actual existence, of an economic crisis in the United States. Essentially, this analysis was correct at the time it was made.

Since that National Committee meeting, as we can plainly observe, the war party in the United States has become greatly strengthened—in numbers, in unity, and in militancy. The three factors of change that I



indicated in June have basically operated to intensify this war trend among the bourgeoisie and its hirelings and dupes. First, American foreign policy has suffered serious checks and defeats in the recent past (as I shall indicate later on). Secondly, the reactionaries feel that they have the national election, so to speak, in the bag, as far as the Presidency is concerned, all the leading candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties being imperialists and warmongers. The possibilities of an anti-war Congress, too, in their consideration, are quite remote at this time. Third, the fear of a coming economic crisis in the United States has become an obsession in capitalist circles (many authorities are prophesying its outbreak in about six months). Under the pressure of these three factors, and in the face of the growing democratic opposition both here and abroad, the American bourgeoisie is becoming infused with a spirit of desperation for war. There are still some divisions in capitalist ranks regarding war, as can be seen by their intense election struggle and by their sharp differences over the Marshall Plan; but the strong and growing tendency of the capitalist class toward war is unmistakable.

#### AMERICAN IMPERIALISM ON THE RAMPAGE

In order to understand this movement and the relation of the two

great camps of contending forces in the present world situation, it will also be well to analyze briefly the general course of the world struggle since the end of the war. Here I shall not attempt to review all major world developments during this period. I shall merely try to outline the general strategy of both sides, and to indicate the direction of this vast and vital world struggle.

Already, while World War II was still on, American and British imperialists were actively preparing for their present postwar drive to dominate the world. This was the significance of their delay in opening the Second Front, of their substitute offensive through Italy, and of their strong tendencies to concentrate their war effort against Japan instead of Germany. They wanted the U.S.S.R. to be bled white by Germany so that it might be the more easily defeated in the postwar world struggles they had in mind.

Accordingly, as soon as the war ended, American imperialism, with Great Britain as its junior partner, launched into its long-contemplated drive for world supremacy. This drive mainly took the form of a vigorous diplomatic blitzkrieg directed against the U.S.S.R. and backed by a widespread political use of goods, money, and especially the atom-bomb threat. Some of the major objectives of this offensive were to establish decisive American control over the United Nations, to intimidate politically the U.S.S.R., to

smother the developing liberation struggles in the colonial countries, to halt the spread of Socialism in Europe, to break down the new democratic coalition governments in Central and Eastern Europe, and to lay the basis for American trade supremacy in Europe and the world. This ruthless policy of American imperialist expansion throughout the world was supplemented by a domestic program of general political reaction, wild profiteering, and war-mongering in the United States. Imperialist expansion abroad and aggressive reaction at home were already then the co-ordinated policy of Wall Street.

The atom bomb played a very big role in the development of this offensive of American imperialism. The bomb did not provide its actual basis, but it intensified it. The offensive would have taken place in any case, even had the bomb never been invented. As early as June, 1945, in an article published in the *Communist* entitled "The Danger of American Imperialism in the Postwar Period," which was written three or four months before the first atom bomb was dropped, I pointed out that a postwar imperialist drive for world control would be made by the United States. The atom bomb greatly accelerated the tempo of this inevitable offensive and lent it its element of extreme danger. Without the atom bomb, the drive of American imperialism would

have been far less vicious and much less menacing to world peace.

In the main, the democratic peoples of the world firmly met the big postwar offensive of Anglo-American imperialism. The U.S.S.R. particularly, although terribly wounded by the war, resolutely refused to be intimidated. It vigorously combated every attempt of Wall Street to use the United Nations to advance its imperialist ambitions. The liberation movements in Asia, too, despite American opposition, grew and flourished. In China, notwithstanding American direct armed intervention on behalf of Chiang Kai-shek, the people's struggle broadened and prospered. In Europe the Communist parties rapidly expanded in numbers and influence, European trade union unity was largely achieved, the World Federation of Trade Unions was organized, and the new coalition democracies gradually consolidated themselves in Central and Eastern Europe. The U.S.S.R., with enormously increased prestige, stood out ever more clearly as the world champion of peace and democracy.

#### THE RENEWED WALL STREET OFFENSIVE

The first phase of the postwar drive of American imperialism lasted till the early months of 1947. By that time, however, the diplomatic blitzkrieg, with its various weapons of money, food, and military threats, and with all its fascist, Vatican and

Right-wing Social-Democratic allies throughout the world, was not succeeding. Despite Wall Street's assault, the world forces of democracy and Socialism were steadily advancing and realizing the democratic, anti-fascist goals for which the great war had been fought. Manifestly, something had to be done by the reactionaries to change the situation into one more favorable for American imperialism. However, to achieve this purpose the military jingoes apparently did not dare to use their all-prized weapon of the atom bomb, although they threatened freely to employ it in the so-called preventive war against the U.S.S.R. that they were publicly plotting. Perhaps, unwillingly, the American imperialists agreed with Stalin that the atom bomb was not a decisive weapon, and they feared to stake everything upon it.

About the beginning of 1947 American imperialism greatly stepped up its offensive. The first dramatic example of Wall Street's intensified effort to overcome its unfavorable world position was the announcement of the Truman Doctrine by the President in April. This amounted to armed intervention in Greece, allegedly to stop Communism. Along with his invasion of Greece, Truman also let it be known that the U.S. was prepared to provoke civil war elsewhere in Europe wherever it was thought necessary in order to advance Wall Street's interests and to carry on the anti-

Communist crusade. The Truman Doctrine met widespread mass opposition, both in Europe and the United States. Its raw bluster exposed it as too obviously a war drive. This did not fit in with the pretense that the United States was simply on the defensive and was struggling for peace. Consequently the United States was compelled to restate its policy. Thus the Marshall Plan was born. Announced by Secretary Marshall in June, it is now known as the European Recovery Program. This plan is simply the Truman Doctrine implemented with vaster funds and softer words. Those liberals and labor leaders who are trying to prove that the Marshall Plan is opposed to the Truman Doctrine are proving themselves ridiculous. Until now the Marshall Plan has been limited to Europe; but obviously the aim is to extend it to other countries, especially in the hope of halting the victorious advance of the armies of liberated, Democratic China.

The Marshall Plan is a war plan. It cannot and does not aim at the economic rehabilitation of Europe. For real recovery Western Europe would have to adopt the progressive economic and political measures now being so successfully applied by the new democracies in Eastern and Central Europe, to all of which American imperialism, with its Marshall Plan, is violently opposed. The Plan's real aims are to bolster monopoly capitalism by guaranteeing



the dividends and protecting the wealth of the owners of the great industries of Western Europe against the financial demands that would otherwise be made against them by their peoples; to give American capitalism a strong economic grip everywhere in Europe; to build Germany into a puppet, fascist state directed against the U.S.S.R.; to re-arm the reactionary governments of Western Europe; to reduce the national independence of European countries; and, finally, to mobilize a Western European bloc of satellite countries as military allies against the U.S.S.R.

The Marshall Plan cannot succeed in putting Europe on its feet economically. The 15 billion dollars allocated by the United States for Europe since the end of the war have simply been poured down the drain. The four billions that Chiang Kai-shek got were also squandered. And Truman's proposed 17 billion dollars will go the same way. Wall Street, with all its billions and bayonets, cannot revive moribund Europe. The American exceptionals who believe that war-fattened American capitalism, by blood transfusions, can cure the dying world capitalist system, are living in a world of dreams and wishful thinking.

Not only is the Marshall Plan ruinous for Europe, it also has disastrous effects upon the United States. Its criminal waste of American resources in Europe for war purposes adds fuel to the fires of infla-

tion now burning so high in this country. Its imperialist purposes are stimulating every reactionary and fascist trend in the United States. Its war-like objectives are leading to the militarization of this country. And it threatens to throw the United States into a devastating and fatal war.

Together with the announcement of the Marshall Plan, American imperialism has been, all through 1947, increasing the volume and tempo of its offensive. Using the acute dollar shortage as a whip, it is ruthlessly forcing various European capitalist countries to submit to its dictation. It is pushing its atom-bomb diplomacy more recklessly than ever. It is callously ignoring the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, and it deliberately broke up the London Conference of Foreign Ministers over the issues of Germany and Austria. It is shamelessly cultivating Franco and various other European fascists. It is by-passing the United Nations on many questions, acting unilaterally on such vital matters as its armed intervention in Greece, in Indonesia and in China, on the whole question of postwar rehabilitation, on the establishment of military air bases in various parts of the world, on the virtual establishment of a war alliance with the Latin-American governments, on the proposal for a West European war bloc, etc., etc. This intensified atom-bomb diplomacy is being supplemented by a barrage of open war threats against the U.S.S.R.

on the part of such jingoistic Anglo-American political leaders as Baruch, Byrnes, Hoover, Marshall, Bevin, Attlee, Truman and many others. Actual naval maneuvers are being carried on in the Mediterranean in order to intimidate the Soviet Union.

### THE PERIL OF MILITARISM IN THIS COUNTRY

The intensified imperialist drive has been accompanied by a big increase in the militarization of the United States. The past year has seen the combination of all the armed forces under one Cabinet head, the fortification of war bases far and wide, including new ones in North Africa and Iran, the turning over of scores of vital government posts to generals and admirals, the assignment by President Truman of 21 billions for the armed forces in his proposed national 1948 budget (at a time when the U.S.S.R. has substantially reduced its military budget), the systematic war mobilization of American industry, the open, detailed war preparations against the Soviet Union, and the far-reaching war propaganda to prepare the American people ideologically for an unprovoked attack upon the U.S.S.R. All these militaristic developments tell their own story of direct preparations for war now being carried on by the agents of Wall Street within and without the Truman government. They also emphasize the growing danger of fascism in the United States.

A dangerous feature of American imperialism's preparations for war is the success Wall Street is having in the mobilization of the Social-Democratic and conservative trade union leaders in Europe and the United States. Recently, the State Department hailed the European Social-Democrats as capitalism's strongest allies. These misleaders of the people, ardent advocates of the Marshall Plan, have sunk to the lowest levels of strike-breaking and general labor betrayal in order to do the bidding of their imperialist masters. The so-called "third force" appearing in its domestic aspects as "middle-of-the-road" governments and in its international aspects as a Western European bloc, is championed by the Right Social-Democrats and reformist labor leaders; this "third force" is manifestly only a stalking horse for Anglo-American imperialism. Among the tasks set for these labor betrayers by warlike American imperialism is to smash trade union unity in Europe, to split the Latin-American Confederation of Labor, and to wreck the World Federation of Trade Unions. To all these anti-labor tasks various Marshall Plan labor leaders are now applying themselves, with the A. F. of L. taking the lead, and with the C.I.O. top leaders also disgracing themselves.

The democratic peoples everywhere are, however, solidly withstanding the greatly intensified offensive of American imperialism and its Socialist and labor stooges. They are,

moreover, distinctly stepping up their active fight to defend their economic welfare and national independence. There are many indications of this new and militant counter-offensive by the workers and other democratic forces. The U.S.S.R. has embarked upon a policy of ruthlessly exposing the Anglo-American warmongers, and it also refuses to be intimidated or by-passed in the United Nations. By refusing to recognize or co-operate with them, it has doomed to impotency the Wall Street created Balkan and Korean Commissions and the Little Assembly, which are attempts to override the U.S.S.R. in the United Nations. Foreign Minister Molotov also shocked the capitalist world by announcing that the atom bomb is no longer a secret. In China, the people's forces are achieving spectacular success against Chiang Kai-shek's rotten regime, and the Chinese Communists are anticipating an early and decisive victory. In various colonial and semi-colonial countries liberation struggles are unfolding. In Latin America too there is widespread anti-Yankee imperialist sentiment. Panama's dramatic refusal of military bases to the United States tells an eloquent story in this respect. Also, the A. F. of L. union wreckers were amazed to find anti-imperialist spirit to be very powerful even among the stooges they brought together at Lima to wreck the Latin-American Confederation of Labor.

The historic September conference

in Poland of the nine Communist Parties sounded the note of struggle against American imperialism. The big Communist Parties of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, France, Italy, and the Soviet Union came together, reviewed the general situation, formed an Information Bureau, and called upon the peoples of Europe to defend themselves against the encroachments of American imperialism. "A special task," said the Conference, "falls upon the Communist Parties. They must take into their hands the banner of defense of national independence and sovereignty of their countries."

This Information Bureau is a type of organization different from the dissolved Communist International and does not replace it. Although our Party, for reasons publicly stated by our National Board, does not deem it expedient at this time to affiliate with the Information Bureau, we are in accord with its objectives of peace, economic recovery, and national independence.

The significant nine-Party Communist conference was followed throughout Europe with an intensified struggle against American imperialists and warmongers. The new democracies of Eastern and Central Europe, together with the U.S.S.R., have rejected the Marshall Plan and are scoring great successes with their own programs of rehabilitation. The U.S.S.R. especially, despite its terrible war losses, is making a swift

recovery. Already it is able to make huge exports of goods to its neighbors. Great strikes and political movements have occurred in France and Italy against the evil effects of the offensive of American imperialism. In Germany, too, in the American and British zones, huge protest strikes of the workers are also taking place against their new Wall Street masters. All over Europe, the masses are awakening to the new danger to their national independence from American imperialism. Also in Canada the question of preserving their national independence against American domination has become a live issue.

#### CAPITALIST DESPERATION CREATES WAR DANGER

The masses in this country are also beginning to awaken to the grave dangers that threaten their economic well-being, democracy, and peace because of the world drive of American imperialism for power and control, which has its program in the Marshall Plan. The basic significance of the Wallace movement is that it forms part of the broad world resistance struggle of the democratic masses against the monopolists of Wall Street who, in their greed for world domination, would plunge the peoples, if they could, into a new plague of fascism and the frightful devastation of a third global war.

The sum and substance of all these developments of mass resistance is

that the United States is not succeeding in its drive for world domination. This is a fact of the most decisive significance for the peoples everywhere. Wall Street is finding the democratic opposition of the peoples too great and the disintegration of dying capitalism too relentless. True, the American imperialists have won some important victories. They have practically reduced the governments of Great Britain, France, and Italy to the role of puppets; they have consolidated their domination over Japan; they have enlisted as their allies Right-wing Social-Democrats, fascists and clerical reactionaries throughout Europe; they have secured in the United States the active support of the top leadership of the A. F. of L., C.I.O., and Railroad Brotherhoods; they have both the Republican and Democratic Parties in their pocket; and they have undoubtedly confused large masses of the American people with their nonsensical propaganda to the effect that this country is in danger of an attack from the U.S.S.R.

Nevertheless, the world situation is one that fills American capitalists with grave alarm and foreboding. They realize that they are not winning the battle against democracy and Socialism. Their Marshall Plan is failing and is already slipping into a quagmire of contradictions. European capitalism is sick unto death, and Wall Street cannot possibly cure it. More alarming yet to the capitalists is the shattering blow that has

been given to the foundations of world imperialism during the past two years by the great colonial and semi-colonial revolts in the Far East. And most important of all, there is burning ever brighter the Socialist sun of the U.S.S.R. in the East, which never fails to incense every capitalist heart. The capitalists dread, too, the disintegrating effects of the contradictions between the United States and Great Britain and other capitalist States. And to fill the cup of capitalist pessimism to overflowing, there is the ever-broadening fear among them of a great economic crisis in the United States. For this crisis would knock into a cocked hat all the imperialists' hopes to put the battered world capitalist system on its feet again. In short, the American imperialists face the deepening general crisis of the world capitalist system, the significance of which is daily being brought home to them with ever greater force by the course of world events.

The serious danger of war at the present time comes precisely from this profound pessimism of the Wall Street imperialists. They see that their foreign policies are failing; they are afraid the U.S.S.R. will get the atom bomb, if it has not already got it; they fear the outbreak of a great economic crisis in this country; they have an inferiority complex about the rising Socialist system in the U.S.S.R.; and they dread the awakening of the democratic masses here and abroad. Consequently, they tend

to generate the reckless idea that if they are to win with their imperialist program, they must strike now while they still have the power to do so. The American capitalist class is fear-crazed and power drunk. The war danger arises primarily from the possibility that these big capitalists, unable to accomplish their imperialistic aims by economic and political intimidation, will seek to solve their overwhelming problems by a desperate attempt at the military destruction of the forces of world democracy. The danger of war is the danger of a sudden so-called preventive war by the United States.

#### WAR IS NOT INEVITABLE

The present diplomatic relations between the United States and the U.S.S.R. are undoubtedly bad and they are growing worse. But it would be a grave error to conclude therefrom that war is inevitable; that, perforce, the world must go through another terrible blood bath, incomparably worse than anything it has ever known before. Contrary to this pessimistic outlook, war is not inevitable. The decision still rests with the peoples. The democratic masses of the world have the potential strength to bridle the would-be warmakers and to make it impossible for them to plunge the world into war. To eliminate the war danger there must be no reliance upon the so-called intelligence of the capitalists, or upon the fear of the monop-

lists that war would destroy the world capitalist system. The Anglo-American imperialists must be stopped cold by superior democratic mass pressure for peace. There is no other way.

The people of the United States bear a tremendous responsibility in halting the warmongers; for our country is the storm center of the war danger. The great American monopolists want war; but our people, like others all over the world, ardently desire peace. The masses can and must be organized into a vast and powerful struggle for peace. The present national election campaign offers a splendid opportunity for such a great peace movement. Our Party especially has great tasks in this fight. We must be alert and active to teach the masses that war is not inevitable and that the American and Soviet peoples can and must live together in peace and harmony. We must help liquidate the dangerous lie of the warmongers that the United States is being attacked by the Soviet Union, and we must ruthlessly expose Wall Street's aggressive imperialist expansionism. We must show the people that Wall Street's proposed war would be a reactionary war, directed against all the forces of democracy and Socialism throughout the world. We must make clear, too, that it would be a lost war, one that would ravage our country, wipe out tens of millions of our people, and plunge our country into defeat. We must unmask the Marshall Plan

as a war plan, and as cut from the same cloth as the Truman Doctrine. With the fight for peace as the center of the election struggle, we must show the workers and the people the direct connection between American imperialism abroad and Wall Street reaction here at home. We must know how to link up this exposure of imperialist warmongering with the daily struggles of the workers in defense of their living standards and civil liberties.

In the sphere of specific campaigns there are four that I particularly wish to emphasize. First, there is the heroic struggle of the Greek people against their domestic fascist oppressors and the Wall Street invaders. This epic fight cries out for more ardent support from democratic Americans. Secondly, there is the desperate struggle of the Jewish people to establish a homeland in Palestine. This is the cause of all freedom-loving people and we should support it with far greater energy than up to this time. Third, there is the determined fight of the Latin Americans against the effort of Wall Street to subjugate and enslave them. It is our duty to stand shoulder to shoulder with these people, especially the exploited Puerto Rican masses, against American imperialists. Fourthly, there is the tremendous struggle of the Chinese people against their domestic and foreign oppressors. The Chinese situation will become all the more urgent because the Wall Street imperialists are soon going to extend



the Marshall Plan to that country. We must counter this armed intervention of the Wall Street exploiters by intensifying our efforts to unite the American democratic forces to aid Democratic China. In the near future, in all probability, China will become a center of American imperialism's desperate attempt to establish its own dominant rule and to save the stricken world capitalist system. The significant January Conference in New York of many labor and other democratic organizations gives an inkling of the powerful potential mass support for Democratic China in this country.

Comrade Eugene Dennis will develop all these urgent tasks in his report. My task here is rather to indicate the general course of world events, to point out the line-up of forces, and to show which side is winning and why. But to this general analysis I wish to add a few words about the building of the Party, the need of which is emphasized by the sharpening political struggles throughout the capitalist world. The need for strengthening the Communist Party is one of the supreme lessons taught by the present world situation.

#### THE NEED FOR A STRONG COMMUNIST PARTY

I wish to stress in this respect the tremendous role and the responsibilities that Communist parties are now fulfilling as the real leaders of

their peoples in many parts of the world. To meet these tremendous tasks, the Communist parties everywhere are strengthening their ranks and fortifying themselves with Marxist-Leninist theory. Our Party, too, also faces many grave responsibilities, and urgently needs strengthening. We must get rid of all false theories and pessimistic attitudes which are preventing the more rapid growth of our Party. Such negative moods have cost our Party tens of thousands of fine workers who might have been recruited. It is true that reaction is making a very sharp attack against our Party, the most severe we have ever had to face; and it is also true that war propaganda and Red-baiting have made dangerous inroads into the ranks of the working class. But this very drive of reaction has also brought about a strong growth, polarization and activation of the peace-loving masses. This situation offers our Party a magnificent opportunity to grow in numbers and mass influence. We must cultivate a strong pride in our Party. We must make our members and sympathizers feel that it is an honor to be a Communist in these historic days of struggle in defense of the people's most elementary liberties, against dying capitalism, and for growing Socialism. We must raise the theoretical level of our Party. We must also improve the working and fighting spirit of the Party. One of the greatest injuries Browderism did to our Party was to

weaken its militancy. This weakness has still not been fully overcome. We must, in our support of the third party, develop a working and fighting spirit in the Communist Party such as it has never known before. While co-operating in the broad third-party mass movement, we must also know how to develop our Party's independent role ideologically and politically, and to broaden its ranks. In the intense election struggles ahead of us, we must never lose sight of the supreme necessity of building our Party. The need for a Communist Party is one of the fundamental lessons taught by the present stormy world situation.

Let me conclude my report by once again emphasizing the grave war tension now existing in the world and our heavy responsibilities in the fight for peace. The democratic forces of the world, of our own country, are strong enough to block and defeat the insolent Wall Street fascists and warmongers. Has not a strong mass opposition prevented up until now the adoption of the univer-

sal military training so ardently desired by American imperialists? And did not a powerful mass pressure compel the reluctant Truman government to join with the Soviet Union in the United Nations' motion for the partition of Palestine? Fully aroused and organized, our people can go much further than these partial successes; they can smash back the reactionary warmongers and defeat their war program altogether. As the statement of the Nine-Party Communist Conference in Poland declared: "It is necessary to remember that between the desire of the imperialists to develop a new war and the possibility of organizing such a war there is a great gap."

We must fight with confidence and stout hearts. Let us not be dismayed by the arrogant Red-baiters. Let us be guided by that further statement of the Nine-Party Conference: "The main danger to the working class at present consists in an underestimation of its forces and an overestimation of the forces of the imperialist camp."

IN THE APRIL ISSUE: The full text of the celebrated speech by A. Zhdanov in the discussion of G. F. Alexandrov's *History of Western European Philosophy*, at a conference of Soviet philosophers held in 1947.

# THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE PRESENT SITUATION\*

By EUGENE DENNIS

The tasks of our Party at this historical moment, as at all times, are determined by the interests of the American working class, and especially by the most urgent and vital needs of our people and country.

It is true, of course, that we Communists have some very special responsibilities as the vanguard of the American workers, including the heavy obligation to build our Party in 1948 into a more powerful political party of American Marxists—an undertaking which we cannot yet expect millions to share with us. It is true, too, that in the '48 elections our Party will run a number of Communist candidates for Congressional and local offices—candidates who will be supported by only part of the anti-monopoly coalition.

But our objectives in these crucial 1948 elections, and in the period ahead, are equally the objectives of the anti-imperialist labor-progressive camp. These objectives are: to check and defeat Wall Street's drive toward war and fascism; to organize the resistance of the working people to the postwar offensive of the warmongers and reactionaries; and to rally labor and the people for the

counter-attack and the counter-offensive.

This is why we Communists, together with other advanced workers and anti-fascists, will do everything we can to reinforce and extend the anti-war and democratic people's coalition in general, and to advance the third-party movement and ticket in particular.

At this point, it would be well to define more exactly our attitude toward the new progressive political alignment and coalition party now being crystallized.

## THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE THIRD-PARTY MOVEMENT

It is a matter of public record that ever since its formation our Party, in accord with the immediate and the fundamental interests of the American working class, has worked, with the exception of the period of Browder revisionism, to liberate the workers and their popular allies from the two-party system of monopoly capital. Therefore, over the years we have endeavored to promote labor's independent political action and the class consciousness of the working class.

We have always understood that the specific conditions existing in the

\* Concluding section of the report on the political situation in the U.S. and the tasks ahead, delivered at a meeting of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A., held February 3-5, 1948.

United States require not only a strong, vanguard party of the working class, the Communist Party. These conditions also require a much broader people's party, based on the trade unions and other mass organizations of the people. These conditions require a new type of broad people's party that can embrace millions of workers and progressives, Negro and white, of different faiths and social outlooks, who are bound by certain common interests and have common immediate anti-monopoly objectives.

At one time the perspective of bringing such a party into being was expressed by us Communists and other advanced workers in the idea and slogan of a Labor Party, and later in the concept and slogan of a Farmer-Labor Party.

Ever since the rise of fascism, we Communists, together with other anti-fascists, have especially stressed the need to build a new type of mass party, a united front people's party based on the labor movement, the working farmers, and the Negro people, and uniting *all* who struggle against fascism and for peace.

During the anti-Axis war years, during the period of the Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition, the organization of such a party was *not* on the order of the day. But *it was always very much in order* to agitate and conduct education for a new mass party of the people, and to keep alive the people's aspirations and efforts to create the conditions for establishing it.

In the postwar period, taking into account the offensive of imperialist reaction and the political regroupings in and outside the Democratic Party, we Communists resolutely pioneered and used our political influence to help promote a new progressive political alignment and to build a broad democratic, anti-monopoly coalition, led by labor.

In line with this, we have actively supported all anti-war and progressive movements, including the Wallace crusade for peace and the efforts of the Left wing in the labor movement and non-Communist progressives to organize the new third party.

The chief criticism that might justly be made of our work in this connection is that some Communist leaders and state organizations lagged behind events and were unpardonably slow in understanding the trend of events, that is, what was new in the situation, and what had to be done.

Of course, the Americans for Democratic Action, the Dubinskys and the Reuthers, and the Democratic chieftains, join the G.O.P. and the Hearst-McCormick press in shouting that the Wallace candidacy and third-party movement are the products of a "Red Plot" and a "Communist conspiracy."

But the fact is that *this movement*, like the democratic political alignments and new parties led by Jefferson and Lincoln in their times, arises at a crucial turning point in the political life of the country. It develops as a new political instrument to

champion the most urgent needs of the American people. It is born out of the experiences and struggles of wide masses to meet a new crisis—to grapple with the growing dangers of imperialist war and fascism, of the coming economic crisis, and to fight unitedly for peace and progress.

It is also a fact, as we have noted, that we Communists have our own Party, and *we are going to maintain, strengthen, and build it as a Marxist, a vanguard party.* At the same time, we, together with other progressives, support the third-party movement. We do this because we, on our part, are prepared to join hands with all workers and anti-imperialists who want to curb the monopolies and prevent the rise of fascism and the drive toward World War III.

Yet there is nothing strange or "conspiratorial" about this. Precisely because we are Communists we champion the immediate as well as the basic class interests, the ultimate Socialist aims, of the working class. Therefore today, as in the past and in the period ahead, we support *all* progressive movements and *all* genuine labor and people's organizations, including, of course, the new people's peace party.

It is equally a fact that this third-party movement *is neither Communist nor anti-Communist.* It is developing as a mass people's party, uniting diverse anti-war and anti-monopoly elements and groups around a progressive, though non-Socialist program. Naturally, the monopolists and their labor and Social-

Democratic agents insist that the new party is thus, *ipso facto*, a "Communist front" and is damned and doomed because it is not an anti-Communist movement.

Suffice it to say that these frenzied Red-baiting charges prove nothing except that this new people's coalition and third-party movement is a serious independent political force that must be reckoned with. This coalition already represents a formidable challenge to the warmongers, to the bankrupt "liberals" and social-reformist labor leaders who kneel and pray before the altar of the twin parties of Big Business.

And here it would not be amiss to emphasize that there have been many other mass movements and organizations in the United States which were falsely branded as "Communist inspired" and "Communist dominated"; yet these progressive movements lost nothing and gained much from Communist participation and support. Among these we may cite, and with some pride, the organization of the mass production workers and the formation of the C.I.O.; the establishment of the A.L.P. and of C.I.O.-P.A.C. under the leadership of Sidney Hillman; and the major role played by all these groups and forces in the Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition in 1944.

While we Communists energetically aided and supported these movements, we did not seek, nor could we have succeeded even if we had so desired, to dominate or capture them. Neither do we seek to-

day to capture or dominate the new independent, coalition party of the people.

But we Communists will not allow ourselves to be intimidated by reaction and stand aloof from this great historical movement. To the extent possible, and according to our understanding and ability, we shall endeavor to participate fully in helping promote the new political alignment. We shall contribute our maximum to building the new people's party, to furthering its anti-war and anti-monopoly program, and to the election of progressive candidates who fight for its program.

We hope that, in the course of common struggle against monopoly reaction and the warmongers, we will help realize the maximum unity of action between the Communists and millions of non-Communist progressives in and outside the third party. As uncompromising fighters for a united front program of struggle against imperialist reaction, we hope, and will strive, to be accepted on our merits as full partners in the democratic people's coalition and the new political alignment.

And in the coming period, if the third-party movement continues to develop along anti-imperialist lines, as it can and should, and if it crystallizes nationally as a united-front and federated political organization, we Communists will seek to affiliate with it.

But whether our relations are one of various degrees of united or cooperative action, or whether subse-

quently we may become an affiliate of the new coalition party if it decides to organize on a federated basis—combining individual membership with group affiliations—our Communist Party, under all circumstances, will retain and strengthen its independent political identity and organization, its vanguard activity and advocacy of Socialism.

In this connection, we can learn much from previous experiences. In our early days and in the recent past, we have many times demonstrated our ability to go it alone, and to go against the stream. In spite of more than a few sectarian mistakes, we have shown the ability to pioneer effectively among the masses and to set them in motion. We demonstrated this in the days of the unemployed struggles, of Scottsboro, and in arousing the people to the prewar dangers of war and fascism. We demonstrated it in the new postwar period, when we came forward alerting and mobilizing the people against the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan.

We have also learned, especially in the last ten years, to work as effective participants in the broadest mass movements, which embrace democratic forces far beyond our own—such as the Roosevelt-labor-progressive coalition.

During this period, however, a basic weakness has frequently revealed itself. While correctly participating in various people's movements and democratic coalitions, we have not always, in the past, retained our independent Communist posi-



tion, advancing our programmatic aims, or maintained a critical position regarding the vacillations and mistakes of our allies.

In the new situation of 1948, we Communists are determined at all costs to avoid both sectarian attitudes and any tendency to submerge ourselves in the broader mass movements, such as the third-party movement. Such tendencies are liquidationist in effect, if not in form. They would limit the vanguard role and activity of our Party, and hence circumscribe the contributions of our Party and the working class in the democratic coalition. In any case, they could, unless overcome, prevent us from making our maximum contribution and exerting to the full either our present or potential political influence in the gathering people's coalition and new political alignment.

#### THE COMMUNIST PARTY MUST ENHANCE ITS VANGUARD ROLE

In this year of great decision, all the manifold problems that confront the labor-progressive camp also confront our Party. To measure up to our responsibility, and to enable the working class to exercise a leading position and influence in the anti-imperialist camp, we Communists must greatly strengthen and enhance the vanguard role of our Party.

To this end, we must focus major attention on solving the following decisive questions if our Party is to perform its function as the vanguard

party of the American workers and people in the coming period:

1. For one thing, our Party must expand its political and organizing initiative on all fronts and at all levels. We must multiply our independent activities nationally and locally, and at the same time help set in motion broader sections of the people who are not yet prepared to struggle directly under the Party's leadership. We must help generate mass electoral activity as well as other forms of political, economic, and ideological mass action.

To exercise its vanguard role the Party must not only initiate independent struggles in its own name, under its own banner and slogans. We Communists must at the same time help influence the launching of broad, mass actions through the various mass organizations of the people, whether on the issues of rent control and housing, for wage increases and against speed-up, for Negro rights and against anti-Semitism, or for an anti-monopoly tax program.

In this connection, and most importantly, we must now help organize the widest support and nationwide demonstrative activity to lift the arms embargo on Palestine and to render the most complete political, moral, and economic aid to the people's democratic movement in China, Latin America, and Greece. And, in so far as Greece is concerned, we must do everything to help prevent that country from becoming a new Spain, a new *place d'armes* of

world reaction, of the Anglo-American imperialist powers.

In cultivating and helping organize the greatest initiative of the masses, we Communists must avoid reliance upon spontaneity. We should avoid all tendencies to tail after the masses, as well as all tendencies leading to self-isolation.

We must seek out and advance those partial slogans which will rouse masses of people and advance the people's struggle, e. g., the slogan of action for a capital levy on the monopolists and profiteers to reduce the national debt and to finance a people's housing, health, and social security program; for a 25 per cent wage increase in both private and government employment.

Likewise, we should seek out such slogans as will move forward millions of workers and other anti-fascists, slogans that will imbue the masses with self-confidence and a fighting perspective. In this connection, it is timely to raise the slogan: *For a people's government that will advance the cause of peace, security, and democracy! For an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly people's government!*

What is projected in this slogan, it should be made clear, is a political objective that reflects the united front program which is bringing into a broad coalition all the democratic and anti-imperialist forces, including the present third-party movement. Such a people's government as here projected, in terms of American realities today, as regards both the objective

factors and the forces comprising the people's coalition and third-party movement, would not be of the level of development of the new people's democracies in Europe. For, such a government on the American scene in the immediate period ahead would set itself as the main immediate task the drastic curbing of the monopolies, but its political level would not yet present it with the task of breaking the rule of the monopolies and thereby effecting the transition to Socialism.

2. In the second place, our Party will fulfill its vanguard role if it pursues a sound united front policy, if it applies the tactic of the united front systematically and flexibly.

At all times, and especially now when the reactionary Social-Democrats and most top trade union leaders are opposing the Wallace ticket and supporting Truman and the Marshall Plan, the united front tactic will be effective and will advance the welfare of the workers, if it is developed primarily as a *united front of struggle from below*.

As never before, the work of our Party in the communities, shops, and trade unions, must now be directed toward uniting in action the largest possible number of individuals, groups, and organizations. The personal contacts of individual comrades, and the contacts of the shop, industrial, and community clubs—*all* should be utilized to promote joint action at the grass-roots level.

While the most progressive and militant workers support and active-

ly promote the Wallace-for-President campaign and third-party movement, they must not make the sole test for united action the issue of support for Wallace and the third party. On the contrary, the acid test for common action is provided in each case by the issue—whether it is for wage increases, or against the Marshall Plan, etc.

As for us Communists, we shall seek to arrive at limited and temporary agreements with various leaders of mass organizations, and to promote common action of the rank and file on all concrete issues which will promote the interests of the people, including joint action with the trade unions and their officials who are now opposed or neutral to the new political alignment.

And while we will continue to combat and reject all efforts to deprive the members and affiliates of the C.I.O. or A. F. of L. of their autonomous rights and political liberties, we will likewise oppose any sectarian tendency to convert the political struggle within the trade unions in behalf of Wallace and the new people's party into a movement to split or withdraw from the established trade union centers.

In applying the tactic of the united front from below, we shall constantly bear in mind that this tactic is designed at all times to achieve the unity of action of broad masses against capitalism, imperialist reaction, and war.

At the same time, we shall not ignore the fact that the Wallace-for-

President movement embraces many progressive leaders, including Wallace himself, as well as others associated with P.C.A. and the National Committee for Wallace, and that other leaders of national importance will gravitate to it as it grows and demonstrates its effectiveness in struggle.

### A STRONG COMMUNIST PARTY AND PRESS WILL STRENGTHEN THE COALITION MOVEMENT

3. The next question I should like to touch upon, even if only briefly, is the basic problem of building our Party, the need of determinedly working at all times to expand and strengthen our Party organizations. For without this, without building a stronger Communist Party, we cannot effectively exercise our vanguard role, extend our political influence and united front relations—and without this, the labor and people's mass movement will suffer and become disoriented, and will limit itself to climbing hills instead of mountains.

I do not want to infringe on Comrade Winston's report. Hence, I shall refrain from dealing with the host of new problems and tasks which we now face, if we are to utilize the present opportunities to build and strengthen our Party even now when we are under severe attack.

However, I should like to comment briefly on certain concepts of Party building, as well as on some aspects of the vital problem of attaining a mass circulation of our press.

As we well know, we are working under conditions in which pro-fascist reaction intensifies its political, ideological, and physical attacks against our Party. (Obviously) this situation creates numerous difficulties which stand in the way of expanding the growth of the Party.

This reactionary offensive and anti-Communist atmosphere presents enough real obstacles to widening the organized base and influence of the Party without our having to invent additional "reasons" and "justifications" as to why it is difficult, or "impossible," to build our Party.

Apropos of this, I call upon the members of the National Committee decisively to reject those capitulatory concepts and "theories" which claim that under present conditions the Party cannot grow, that its organized base is doomed to decline, and that now a loss in membership is even "desirable" because today we need "quality and not quantity."

One of the best refutations of the specious assertion that the Party membership will inevitably diminish as the offensive of reaction mounts, is the fact that our Party, nationally, will register at least the same organizational status, if not a slightly increased membership, at the completion of the current Party registration. And in such districts as New York, California, New Jersey, and Connecticut, as well as in such concentration areas as Youngstown, Flint, Gary, and McKeesport, our Party enters the new year numerically and politically stronger than last year.

This is a decided achievement for our Party, forced as it is to work under conditions of sharp reaction. Obviously, wherever we work well, concretely applying the political line of the Party, adapting our methods of work in accordance with the sharpening struggle, and giving top priority to building the Party day in and day out, there we can forge ahead.

Now, a few words regarding the "theory" of "quality versus quantity" now being advanced in certain quarters. Whatever the intent, this "theory" would in effect circumscribe the vanguard role of the Party. It would psychologically condition the Party to retrogress organizationally and to abandon the struggle to build our Party under extremely difficult conditions.

Suffice it to say that the advocates of such viewpoints are tending to reconcile themselves to a position in which, if their opinion were to prevail, the qualitative strength and composition of the Party would radically deteriorate. For under the slogan of "quality versus quantity" the Party is being asked to accommodate itself to the unnecessary and grievous loss of thousands of industrial workers, especially in the Negro working-class communities and in such industries as packing and auto.

Yes, we do need drastically to improve the quality of our work, as well as the quality of the composition of our membership. But to do this, we will have to strive for quality *and* quantity. We will have to

fight doggedly to improve the standards of Communist work of *all* our cadres and members; we will have to raise the level of Communist consciousness, loyalty, and activity everywhere; we will have to fight to retain in our ranks every class-conscious worker and to recruit every working-class militant who wants to become a Communist; and in the course of the coming struggles and on the basis of educating and training our entire Party in the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, we will attain a higher quality of Party growth, ideology, unity, and performance.

\* \* \*

Now, a few remarks on the Party press, which is of decisive importance for Party building and effective mass work. At a time like this, when we need more than ever the best that the Party can provide as agitator, propagandist, and organizer, we must surely approach in an altogether *new way* the problem of building our Party press, and especially the *Daily Worker* and the *Sunday Worker*.

The *Worker* and the *Daily Worker* are, in the first place, the foremost instruments the Party has for interpreting events, for clarifying and elaborating the political line of the Party, and for mobilizing our membership and friends for action. They are the most reliable medium we have for communicating with each other, for exchanging experiences, and for checking up on our policies and performance.

But, in addition, ours now is the only national, daily English press consistently supporting the Wallace candidacy and the third-party movement. In this new situation the *Daily Worker* and the *Worker* become in a new sense indispensable to the Party, as well as an important clarifying and mobilizing voice at the service of the whole anti-imperialist coalition.

We know from experience that we are not going to build the circulation of our press simply by passing resolutions, placing this task as one of a dozen others of equal urgency. We shall develop the kind of press building campaign the times call for, only if the *whole Party* takes up this question as a *central task*, one which will get major attention from the Party leadership on every level.

There is one very simple answer to the question of how to increase the circulation of the *Worker* and *Daily Worker*—that is, *to organize and mobilize people, Party members, who, as a political job of top priority, will go out and sell, distribute, and utilize our press every single day.*

We are all aware that there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the *Worker* and *Daily Worker*. But none of us is satisfied, and we are determined to make much greater improvements in its political-ideological content and its fighting capacity.

But the biggest problem we are now confronted with, is *circulation*. And this is not a technical but a po-

litical problem. The Party *leadership* on every level, must, in a new way, help the clubs and members to build, circulate, and utilize our press.

In the coming period we can expect the sharpest twists and turns in events at home and abroad. All kinds of speedy and tactical adjustments will be required to meet the changing conditions. And the most reliable and prompt means that we have of taking counsel with each other and of alerting and guiding our Party is our press.

Obviously, we cannot turn editorials into inner Party directives. But the district, section, and club leadership can use editorials and important political articles as a basis for political discussion, showing our members in the shops and communities how to translate policy into practical action. Utilization of the press also means getting out leaflets based on its material or reprinting its editorials. It means getting the paper and its message on this or that concrete issue into the shops and communities, guaranteeing that its most important editorials, columns, and articles reach the active forces and cadres, not only in the Party, but in the mass organizations as well.

Through such utilization and circulation of our press, for which its editors and the National Board also share a heavy responsibility, our press will become as indispensable to broad sections of the people's coalition as to us. And when that has happened, the circulation problem

will be mastered, and, as a result, the Party will greatly extend its political influence and base.

#### CRITICISM AND SELF-CRITICISM

4. A few words about criticism and self-criticism. As Lenin taught us, no Party is worth its salt which hesitates to admit, learn from, and correct its mistakes.

We know that what we went through a couple of years ago was difficult but essential, and that it paid big political dividends. The struggle for Marxism and against Browderism brought a new maturity to our Party, and enabled us to strengthen our ranks and extend our influence in a particularly critical period of our country's life.

However, one of the big lessons we learned then is that the weapons of criticism and self-criticism must be kept sharp and used vigilantly and regularly. Therefore, on this occasion, it is appropriate to take note of some of our weaknesses and mistakes.

During the first two years of the postwar period, when we pursued—and correctly so—the tactic of the Left-Center coalition in the C.I.O., we did not maintain a sufficiently critical position toward our then allies; nor did we combine existing—though limited—united front relations with the top and district trade union officials, with an energetic organization of the united front of struggle in the shops, locals, and communities.



Moreover, we were slow in drawing all the necessary practical conclusions from our correct estimate of, and principled opposition to, the Marshall Plan. We were slow to recognize and speedily counteract the shift and realignment that took place in top C.I.O. circles in connection with the promulgation of the Marshall Plan.

Furthermore, while from the very beginning we mapped out a sound, fighting policy in respect to both the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, we were slow in rallying the Left-wing forces in the trade unions and mass organizations for this program. Nor, in this respect, did we move quickly and decisively enough to overcome the opportunist vacillations of certain Communist leaders in the trade unions and the people's movement.

In connection with the development of the Wallace peace campaign and the third-party movement, our generally correct political orientation and line was considerably weakened for a time by our failure to wage an adequate and sharp enough struggle against a host of sectarian and opportunist tendencies. We were much too slow in combating the erroneous views of certain Party leaders and District organizations, as well as many of our trade union cadres who up till the announcement of Wallace's candidacy expressed doubts as to the advisability of an independent presidential ticket, and confused the maneuverings and treacherous position of most of labor's top officialdom

with the position being taken by the rank and file.

Further, we cannot gloss over the belated and limited response of most of the Party, especially of the Communist trade unionists, to the recent events in France and Italy, in Greece, Palestine, China, and Latin America.

Nor can we be unmindful of the fact that even at this late date we still have to wage an ideological and political battle to build our Party and our press; to effect a much-needed improvement in our struggle for Negro rights and against white-chauvinism; and to begin to make a real turn in the Party's mass work among the youth, among the women, the workers affiliated to the A. F. of L., and the Jewish people.

The question naturally arises: Why these shortcomings and errors? Two main reasons stand out, in my opinion:

First, we committed these errors because at times we tended in practice seriously to underestimate the strength and potentialities of the anti-imperialist camp, the new anti-war spirit and fighting capacity of the working masses which was and is developing.

Secondly, over the past two years, we made these mistakes, and vacillated on a number of questions, because our Party did not always adequately carry forward the self-criticism and self-correction developed prior to and during our national emergency convention so as to examine and improve all phases of

our mass work, especially in developing an effective political struggle against opportunism which manifested itself in certain sectors of the people's mass movement. This became an impediment toward achieving healthy criticism, necessary changes in work, and a real Party ideology in the activity of many comrades engaged in the broad people's mass movement.

In critically evaluating our work and in correcting our mistakes and weaknesses—as we have been and are doing — no one can obscure the fact that the general political line of our Party has been and is correct; and that our many positive achievements have resulted solely because there is a correct Party line and because, generally speaking, there has been a correct application of the Party's line and tactics.

Despite our shortcomings it should not be forgotten that we American Communists did not underestimate the postwar offensive of U.S. imperialist reaction and the growing war danger. Our Party did not miss the meaning of the Truman Doctrine, and never, for a single instant, did we fall for the Marshall Plan.

While our efforts and day-to-day leadership have been inadequate on many fronts, the fact remains that in practically every struggle which has taken place for housing, rent, and price control, against speed-up, for Negro rights, civil liberties, and for peace—there, we Communists have

participated and have made a contribution.

The future may well reveal this recent period as one of historic moment for the American people, and future historians may take note of our pioneering and modest, though effective, contributions to big events—not least of all in helping promote the new progressive political alignment now being forged.

In addition, they may record how thus far we succeeded in thwarting the combined efforts of the House un-Americans and the economic royalists and their twin parties of war and fascism to outlaw our Party and drive it out of American political life in this period so crucial for the destiny of the working class and the nation.

Whether in the struggle against the Rankin or Mundt bills, against the Callahan Act in Michigan, or the Caldwell Committee in Washington, or in the struggle to seat Gerson as Peter V. Cacchione's successor in New York City, we fought well and effectively. *of the Labor Board*

The class enemy—monopoly capital—has by no means abandoned that hope. Even now new efforts are being made to outlaw our Party. But we have grown. We have consolidated our positions and our fighting capacity under fire. We will defend and strengthen our Party, and build it bigger and stronger in the stormy times ahead. And we will do this all the better to the extent that we extend and improve our practice of criticism and self-criticism.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR MARXIST-Leninist THEORY

5. In relation to our new responsibilities, it is clear that our Party can adequately perform its vanguard role only if it combines its active and leading participation in all economic and political mass struggles with a drastic improvement of its activity on the theoretical and ideological front.

This is particularly true today, when the proponents of an American Century, the initiators of the Anglo-American anti-Communist Axis, are stepping up their ideological offensive at home and abroad, in order to confuse and divide the anti-imperialist peoples and, especially, to indoctrinate the American people with hostility toward the Soviet Union and the new democracies of Eastern Europe; when rampant reaction is striving to imbue the American people with a fascist-like spirit of race hatred and national chauvinism. And, it must be admitted, this reactionary ideological offensive has made some headway, has succeeded in influencing not only certain labor leaders but also some sections of the working people.

In view of this, we are confronted with a major task—or, rather, two phases of the same task—in our ideological work: to expose and combat Wall Street imperialism on the ideological field, and to enrich and extend our theoretical and propaganda work among the Party membership

and the labor and progressive spheres in which we exert influence.

A few brief remarks on both aspects. In the present situation the fight against American imperialism on the ideological front necessarily includes a major struggle to unmask and combat the hypocritical claims, concepts, and theories that Wall Street's drive for world domination is motivated by "moral" considerations, by interests of "national security" and "world peace"; that the U.S.A. is intervening in Greece, Turkey, China, and elsewhere to defend "Christianity" and "Western civilization" from "Soviet imperialism," from "totalitarianism"; and that the United States, with its bypassing of the U.N., with its Marshall Plan, global military-naval bases, and stockpiling of atomic bombs, is merely expressing "a world leadership" which was assigned to us from on high because of America's "allegiance" to democracy and the Four Freedoms, and because of the "superiority" of "the American way of life," of "private enterprise."

Clearly, our Party and all other anti-fascists must initiate a great ideological counter-offensive against this warmongering and pro-fascist propaganda, ideas, and theories. We must expose this ideology of the un-American men of the trusts in a basic way, and demonstrate that it is an ideology borrowed from the Nazi-fascists by those who seek to follow in Hitler's footsteps.

We must place in the center of this ideological struggle the exposure

*wings slavery?*

of the whole system of national discrimination and oppression which prevails in the U.S.—the whole system of imperialist domination which enslaves the Negro people and places the foreign-born and national minority groups in the category of second-class citizens; the system which promotes its own “master race” theory, the ideology and practice of “white supremacy,” Jim-Crowism, and anti-Semitism.

Here, as in regard to other basic questions, we must contrast this state of affairs with the situation existing in the U.S.S.R. and the new peoples’ democracies, with their national-liberation role; we must demonstrate the superiority of the social system of the great Socialist democracy and the new peoples’ republics.

Finally, to mention but one more of a series of additional fundamental points, it is essential to make clear that it is not the monopolists but the people’s democratic and anti-imperialist camp, headed by the working class, which today genuinely champions democracy and progress.

Here we must show how the Wall Street monopolies have betrayed and are violating the national interests and the democratic traditions and heritage of the American people. We must again explain how the economic royalists opposed and fought every bourgeois-democratic reform and measure proposed by Roosevelt and the New Deal camp, and how they have scrapped the program for a durable postwar peace subscribed to by Roosevelt at Yalta.

Equally, we must point out that if the American people are to advance the progressive and revolutionary aims and traditions of our country, to march forward on the road to democratic progress and to attain a stable peace, it is necessary for the masses of the people to defend these ideals. It is necessary for the people to defend actively the progressive features of American democratic liberties, to combat the encroachments of monopoly reaction, to defend the Bill of Rights and the Constitution, and to extend democracy.

Further, the realization of these democratic traditions and aims at the present time requires, not only the most active defense of all democratic liberties and institutions against their reactionary and fascist enemies, but the further development and extension of American democracy. It requires a people’s struggle for a new type of democracy, for an anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist people’s democracy that will staunchly safeguard peace and liberty and open the way to new democratic advance and social progress.

Now, as to the second main aspect of our ideological tasks, the general fight for Marxist theory and principles. Here I would like to limit myself to references to three key questions:

1. We must work to bring about a new Marxist understanding of the role of our Party as the vanguard of the American working class. This is of decisive importance to build

and strengthen our Communist Party and thus to enable the working class to play the leading role in the people's fight against the monopolies, war, and fascism, and ultimately to realize its Socialist objective.

To this end, we must combat all tendencies to reduce the vanguard role of the Party exclusively to the development of independent activity organized by the Party, in its own name, separate and apart from all other labor and progressive groups. Equally, we must put an end to such dangerous liquidationist conceptions as that we American Marxists can play our vanguard role as a "small" party, simply as a select party of cadres occupying "strategic" posts in various mass organizations.

At this juncture, it is timely to recall the viewpoint expressed by Comrade Stalin some twenty-four years ago:

The Party must stand at the head of the working class; it must see farther than the working class; it must lead the proletariat, and not follow in the tail of the spontaneous movement. . . .

Only a party which takes the standpoint of the vanguard of the proletariat and is able to elevate the masses to the level of the class interests of the proletariat—only such a party can divert the working class from the path of trade unionism and convert it into an independent political force. . . .

But the Party cannot be only a *vanguard* detachment. It must at the same time be a detachment of the *class*, part of the class, bound up with it by all

the fibres of its being. . . . (*Foundations of Leninism*, pages 109, 110.)

2. Next, as we have already noted, to enable our Party to fulfill its many new obligations, we must intensify and extend the political-ideological struggle against the harmful policies of social-reformist labor leaders, the reactionary activities of the Social-Democrats, the A.C.T.U. leaders, as well as the Trotskyite provocateurs. We must mercilessly expose these servants of imperialism.

We must remind the workers of the treacherous role of Social-Democracy and the reactionary labor leaders in helping fascism come to power in the prewar period, as well as of their sinister role today as salesmen of the Marshall Plan and lackeys of the new Anglo-Saxon Axis. We must demonstrate how the Greens and Wolls, the Dubinskys and Reuthers—as well as the Murrays and Potofskys who help them—are bending heaven and earth to subordinate labor to monopoly's bipartisan war policy and party system.

In so doing, we must explain, theoretically and practically, the bourgeois-ideological roots of reformism and Social-Democratism. We must show how this ideology and these groupings seek to prevent labor from coming forward as an independent political force. Without a relentless struggle against social-imperialism and class collaboration, it will be impossible to raise the class consciousness of the working class and to en-

able labor to exercise its leading role in the democratic people's coalition, today and in the more decisive struggles to come.

3. A third basic Marxist principle which must now be fought for with renewed vigor and in a new way is the principle and practice of proletarian internationalism. Precisely as American imperialism fans the flames of anti-Communism, national chauvinism, and race hatred, as it tries to pit worker against worker, nation against nation, and stirs up ideological differences within the anti-imperialist camp, and as its labor lieutenants seek to wreck the World Federation of Trade Unions—precisely now we Communists must carry on the most effective ideological and political struggle to give new life and substance to the Marxist slogan of action: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

We must help the American workers and all anti-imperialists to develop a stronger feeling of proletarian solidarity, of international co-operation for peace. We must help them to express this feeling in action in support of the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the peoples of Greece and China, Puerto Rico, Latin America and the Philippines, Italy and France.

For the cultivation of solidarity and unity of action of the international working class and all peace-loving peoples, especially of American-Soviet friendship, is inseparable from the struggle against war, chauvinism, and fascism. It is of

cardinal importance to curb and defeat our own warmongers and economic royalists, and to advance the whole struggle for peace, progress, and security.

\* \* \*

To equip our Party leadership and membership to wage a successful struggle on the ideological front and to make our full contribution to the broad people's movement, we must enrich the Marxist understanding of our entire Party.

To this end, we must utilize the Centenary of the *Communist Manifesto* to stimulate all Communists and class-conscious workers to deepen their study and mastery of all that a century of Marxist theory and practice has to offer to our Party, our working class, our country, and our time.

We must effect a qualitative theoretical improvement of *Political Affairs*. We must give more attention to the basic training of our cadres and to the Marxist-Leninist education of our new and old members. We must develop further, in all fields, such projects as the significant analytical and creative theoretical work on Keynesism now being undertaken under the personal direction of Comrade Foster. And we must systematically promote the Socialist consciousness of wider sections of the American working class, and generally carry on the most extensive propaganda and mass educational activity in behalf of the fundamental class aims of the American work-



ers, *i.e.*, for the Socialist reorganization of society.

If, in this decisive year of 1948, we are to avoid vacillation, sectarianism, and opportunist mistakes, we—all of us—must live and breathe the science of Marxism. We must acquire a new and more profound grasp of the theory and lessons to be learned from such Marxist classics as the *Communist Manifesto*, Lenin's *Imperialism*, Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism*, Dimitrov's Report to the 7th World Congress, and the *History of the C.P.S.U.*, as well as from such authoritative Marxist political journals as the new publication of the Communist Information Bureau, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*.

\* \* \*

Comrades! The developing new political alignment, the gathering democratic people's coalition and the

third-party movement, signalize new and bigger struggles to curb monopoly reaction, safeguard world peace, and preserve and extend the people's democratic achievements. These struggles must be waged in Congress and out of it, in the election campaign and in the wage and strike movements, in the shops and trade unions and in the mass organizations and communities.

Until now, imperialist reaction has called the signals and carried the ball. Now the working people and their allies must seize the initiative, hold the line, and throw back the monopolists and all imperialist warmongers. 1948 must be made the year that decides for a better future, that lays the foundations for a new general political situation in the United States, that advances the struggle for a people's government which will promote peace, security, democracy, and social progress.

How???

---

### "THE MEMORY OF THE COMMUNE. . . ."

"The memory of the fighters of the Commune is not only honoured by the workers of France but by the proletariat of the whole world, for the Commune did not fight for any local or narrow national aim, but for the freedom of toiling humanity, of all the downtrodden and oppressed. . . ."

V. I. Lenin, *The Paris Commune*,  
International Publishers, p. 16.

# TRADE UNION PROBLEMS AND THE THIRD-PARTY MOVEMENT\*

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE CENTER of our thinking and action on all questions, as emphasized in the reports of Comrades Foster and Dennis, is how to further the development and activity of the Wallace-for-President and third-party movement, which is springing up from among the people as a result of their conditions and experiences.

This is particularly true as regards the trade unions, since it is decisive that the workers—and in the first place organized labor—be won to building the new third-party movement.

The issues that divide the anti-imperialist, democratic camp from the camp of imperialism and war, have been made clear in the main reports. And it is around these issues—peace, security, free trade unions, and democratic rights—that a great political realignment is taking place among all sections of the people, and especially among the workers.

Many union members and lower officials are honestly confused as to the real meaning of the Marshall Plan; nor do they understand that

the Wallace candidacy and developing third party represents their immediate interests in the 1948 elections. As for the majority of the International trade union officials, they are consciously fighting against labor's participation in building this new party. In regard to the Marshall Plan, while these officials are all united in singing its praises and in championing the policies of American imperialism, they form various groupings, which can be brought roughly under four headings.

## THE REACTIONARY FORCES IN THE TRADE UNIONS

First, there are the open labor lieutenants of Wall Street, the A. F. of L. Executive Council members and their counterparts in the C.I.O. Secondly, there are the Social-Democrats of the Dubinsky, Reuther, Rieve, Carey type; and, next, the former center forces in the C.I.O., like Murray, Van Bittner, and Potofsky. These two latter groupings are the ones which at present operate most powerfully to confuse and mislead the trade unionists. Finally, there is the reactionary Association of Catholic Trade Unionists.

There is no mass Social-Democratic

\* A report delivered at the meeting of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A., held February 3-5, 1948.

party in our country, but this does not lessen the danger of Social-Democratism, whose base is the trade union movement, and whose position has been strengthened by the victory of Reuther and Mazey in the United Automobile Workers. With the trade unions as a base, the reactionary Social-Democrats within the trade unions support and build the Rightist-liberal-labor Americans for Democratic Action, try to influence Negro trade unionists, work against the World Federation of Trade Unions, and launch new magazines and papers to spread their poison.

Following American imperialism's course as the leader of world reaction, these Social-Democrats strive to assert themselves as the leaders of world Social-Democracy. However, they complain that the bourgeoisie does not yet let them do so openly as part of the government apparatus.

These Social-Democrats are not naively confused people. They are the real watch-dogs and stool-pigeons of American imperialism, and their objective is to obstruct every developing progressive movement. We must learn how better to unmask them and win the workers away from them, because they are among the main spreaders of poison and confusion against Wallace and the third party. Above all, it is necessary to expose their injurious policies within the trade unions—their class-collaboration schemes, their increasing repression of inner-union democracy, and, as part of these policies, their Red-baiting.

No less dangerous is the developing role of the former Center forces in the C.I.O., who are becoming a main road-block in the path of the third-party movement. This is so because of the confusion they are able to create precisely among progressive trade unionists, because of the Left having been in coalition with them over a long period of years. The Murray forces try to do the same job as the Social-Democrats, but more skillfully. They claim to separate the Marshall Plan from the Truman Doctrine. They condemn Wallace and the third party, without as yet endorsing Truman, although, clearly, their eventual purpose is to support him.

However, whatever differences exist between the Murray and Social-Democratic groupings will have to be utilized to the fullest in the everyday work of the Left-Progressives. Similarly, the Left-Progressives cannot be indifferent to certain contradictions in the position of the Murray grouping, such as its opposition to Universal Military Training, which is an integral part of the Truman Doctrine.

As for the A.C.T.U., which is merged at many points with the Social-Democrats and the Murray forces, much more serious attention must be given to combating it. Its leaders operate mainly in the C.I.O. They represent the pressure of the Roman Catholic hierarchy; they fight all progressives under the cry of "Reds," and become the organizers of strong-arm terrorist activities

against the progressives and Communists in the trade unions.

### THE TRADE UNIONISTS AND THE THIRD-PARTY MOVEMENT

Because the A. F. of L. Executive Council and the majority of the C.I.O. Executive Board are tied to Truman and to the Republicans, it does not follow that they represent the thinking of their membership. On the contrary, millions of trade unionists in the C.I.O., the A. F. of L., and the Railroad Brotherhoods, as well as the miners, and machinists' unions, can be won to progressive political action in 1948. This is already evident in the pro-Wallace actions of certain trade unions, in the involvement of trade unions in the Illinois Progressive Party and in the collection of signatures in California, and especially in the response from workers in shops and factories to petitions and Wallace pledge cards.

The program projected by Wallace concerns the vital interests of every worker. The sharpened class relations and struggles in connection with a host of domestic issues, such as wages, prices, taxes, minority rights, curbing of inflation, and Universal Military Training, will clarify for the workers what is at stake and will make it possible to enlist them as the shock-troops of the third-party movement.

To achieve this, particular attention will have to be given to the

problems discussed in Comrade Dennis' report—particularly to the confusion centering around the "lesser evil" arguments.

In combating the Marshall Plan the fallacy of the arguments of Murray, Carey, etc., to the effect that it is something distinct from the Truman Doctrine, must be exposed. It is also necessary to point out to the workers the following:

1. The Big Business forces who favor anti-labor legislation, a weakened trade union movement, and lower wage and living standards, are the ones sponsoring and fighting for the Marshall Plan.

2. The Marshall Plan and the financing of its war schemes will cause still further inflation in this country, sustain the astronomical profits of Wall Street, and further lower the living standards of American workers.

3. The Marshall Plan is the culmination of the Truman Administration's betrayal of the Roosevelt policies for peace; it is the application abroad of the same reactionary domestic policies which American trade unionists are fighting at home.

Sitting in Greece as a part of the U.S. military aid mission is C.I.O. leader Clinton S. Golden, who is engaged in whitewashing the anti-labor laws adopted there, including the death penalty for strikers. If the Greek issue is used effectively to expose the Marshall Plan, many more local unions will follow the actions of those which have already adopted resolutions condemning the events

in Greece and demanding Golden's recall.

Side by side with support to the Wallace foreign aid program, international solidarity actions by American trade unionists are beginning to develop. How vitally necessary this is can be seen from the fact that when the French and Italian workers were on strike, there was an almost total absence of solidarity greetings or funds from the Left-Progressive trade unionists. The outstanding exceptions we know of were the action of the N.M.U. seamen in solidarity with the Marseilles strikers and the sending of money by the United Office and Professional Workers of America to the striking bank clerks of Italy. Now, certain trade unions, like the fur and leather workers in New York City, are raising funds for the European trade unionists to be administered by the unions there. Also, the California C.I.O. State Convention adopted the important proposal to initiate a Labor Friendship Train for European trade unionists, to be administered by the W.F.T.U.

The reactionary position of those trade union leaders who support the Marshall Plan and Truman will more and more be reflected in their daily actions. It is inevitable that such leaders will increasingly neglect the defense of their workers' demands; for they will be influenced in the direction of driving for increased production for the Marshall Plan. Thus, their policy will increas-

ingly be one of class-collaboration and of accommodation to the corrupt use of the term "national unity" in support of the Truman Doctrine.

Hence, the Left must exercise boldness and initiative with regard to the growing number of domestic issues, not failing at the same time to connect these with the questions of foreign policy and the 1948 elections.

### WAGES

As a result of inflationary price increases, real wages are falling lower and lower. Hence, the most immediate issue is that of wage increases, and the present preparations by many trade unions, especially those of the C.I.O., to enter the third round of wage struggles.

The C.I.O. leadership has already committed itself to a new round of wage demands; but the workers would be wrong to think that this in itself gives adequate guarantees. Many C.I.O. leaders like Reuther, did not originally favor a 1948 round of wage increases.

Labor's only guarantee of securing its wage demands lies in adequate preparation, accompanied by a determination to use its economic power, up to and including strike action. To the extent that the workers are thus mobilized, with the maximum unity of action, will it be possible for them to see the relationship between their wage struggles and the need for the Wallace candidacy and the third party.

The inter-relation of domestic and

foreign issues can be seen in the fact that the Marshall Plan will undoubtedly stiffen employer resistance to wage demands. Support of the Plan by top union leadership gives employers a political weapon which complements the direct threat of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Strikes for higher wages—especially in the coal, transport, steel, and food industries—will almost surely be denounced as threats to the Marshall Plan. One need only recall, in this connection, the hue and cry last year that the coal strike was “ruining” our foreign policy. Within the key industries, pro-Marshall Plan union leaders will be under pressure to head off or minimize rank-and-file wage demands, and, where this is impossible, to act as “patriotic” strikebreakers. Tactics similar to those used by the French government will be repeated here in an attempt to mobilize a segment of public support against the workers’ demands.

Hence, it is necessary:

a. To make clear the position both of the Republicans and the Democratic Administration in favoring a wage freeze, thus maintaining the present gap between wages and prices.

b. To show that, in contrast, Henry Wallace supports labor’s demand for wage increases and, specifically, has proposed that the minimum wage law be amended so as to raise the level to one dollar an hour.

## SPEEDUP

Another key issue today in basic industry is the increased speedup. Examples of this are:

1. *Electrical*—The employers admit an increase of 13½ per cent in productivity in the 18 months following January, 1946, and admit a further 9 per cent increase in productivity up to January, 1948.

2. *Coal Mining*—After the 1947 contract was signed, the work week was reduced from six to five days a week. Despite this, there has been no reduction in the production of coal per man.

3. *Steel*—There has been a 32 per cent increase in production per man hour since 1939, but all wage increases have neglected this factor.

The projected increase of speedup is being presented as a “national need” to facilitate exports under the Marshall Plan. And those labor leaders who endorse the Marshall Plan try to justify such a speedup. This hypocrisy must be exposed and the trade unions prepared to fight for increased wages and against speedup.

## THE TAFT-HARTLEY ACT

The struggle against the Taft-Hartley Act will surely be intensified during 1948, as this law is brought into full force against the unions in their wage and other struggles. Large sections of labor are already beginning to see the anti-union character of this Act. The fact that this takes

place coincidentally with the election campaign presents labor with an opportunity to raise to new levels the struggle against the Taft-Hartley Act, to render it inoperative and to force its repeal.

Trade union leaders who promote the bipartisan-supported Marshall Plan will have great difficulty in covering up the responsibility of both old parties for enacting the slave labor law. These same labor leaders, accommodating themselves to Truman, will soon begin to rationalize a practice of living with the Taft-Hartley Act because it is the "law."

The opportunity should be grasped to show that Wallace is the only Presidential candidate who has spoken out aggressively for the repeal of this vile piece of legislation.

Reaction, it is true, has been able momentarily to gain the upper hand by dividing the labor movement and misleading the majority of the workers. It has done this by first centering attention on the anti-Communist sections of the Act. Nevertheless, on the basis of months of accumulated experience and struggle, we are more than ever convinced that the following position, long ago advanced by us, is the one which can most rapidly lead labor to success in the struggle against the Taft-Hartley Act:

1. The trade unions should maintain to the maximum the non-compliance front. Despite the breaches made in it, this front consists of a powerful array of unions, including

the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, the United Steelworkers, the United Mine Workers, the International Typographical Union, the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen and fourteen other C.I.O. Internationals.

2. Where the majority of the leaders of a particular International go on record to comply with the Act, the fight is not necessarily ended. For if work is done to arouse and activate the rank and file on the basis of a full understanding of the issues involved, victories will be achieved, as in New Bedford. Where it is not, defeats will result, as in the Ford Motor Company.

The bulk of the unions have been operating under contracts signed before the Taft-Hartley Law was passed; but these will run out this year. When this happens, the unions will be confronted for the first time with many of the practical consequences of the Taft-Hartley Law. Then many workers will propose to reverse their previous decisions which favored compliance with the Act. As each new union election occurs, the issue of reversing such decisions will be an important part of the program of progressive candidates.

#### THE NEGRO WORKERS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

As a result of the policies adopted by the C.I.O. Executive Board majority—in effect an endorsement of Truman for re-election—the Negro trade unionists and the Negro peo-

ple who over the years developed such confidence in the C.I.O., may begin to question the wisdom of collaboration with the trade union movement. For the Negro people cannot easily be misled by any "lesser evil" talk when Truman's record on their needs and rights is so plain to see. Yet, while Wallace has considerable strength among the Negro workers, this endorsement of Truman by the Murrays, Reuthers, and Rieves could result—if not effectively exposed—in confusing the Negro voters and driving some of them back to the Republican Party. However, to the extent that the Left-Progressive forces influence the trade unions really to champion the demands of the Negro workers in industry—for example, equal rights in acquiring skill as well as equal pay, and the election of Negro trade unionists to operative leadership—the confidence of the Negro workers in the trade unions will not be shaken but strengthened, resulting in their strong support of the Wallace candidacy and the third-party movement.

### UNIONIZING ACTIVITIES

It is a public secret, despite efforts to deny it, that new organizing activities by the unions have come almost to a halt. True, greater difficulties exist today, and the work of organization has to be done, not only in opposition to the employers, but also in the face of the Administration's vigorous enforce-

ment of the Taft-Hartley Law. The U.E.R.M.W.A. nevertheless reported recently that some thirty new contracts had been successfully negotiated. This proves that, with confidence in the workers and a proper approach, new organization work can be done—and much remains to be done. While the South, the Great Lakes area, the white collar workers, and the agricultural industries are the main fields for organizing the unorganized, several million workers still remain unorganized in shops and industries already under the jurisdiction of existing large trade unions, such as the steel, auto, and electrical workers' unions.

Furthermore, the development of the third-party movement and its struggle on issues will also greatly help to move the workers into action again. This opens up the perspective, not of isolation for the Left-Progressive trade union forces, but of the opposite, the acquiring of new bonds with a many times greater mass of workers. These struggles can successfully create a broad trade union base for the fighting people's coalition in the 1948 elections.

### THE SITUATION IN EACH TRADE UNION CENTER TODAY

At the C.I.O. board meeting in January, representatives of 1½ million C.I.O. members identified themselves with a pro-peace, anti-Marshall Plan program and refused to be tied to Truman's candidacy. This devel-



opment is of great significance; it will register its effect not only in our own country but throughout the world. Recently, while the labor and democratic forces of the world were developing their counter-offensive against American imperialism, they listened in vain for a voice from the major labor federations, especially from the C.I.O., that would distinguish itself from the Truman Administration. Instead, they heard Philip Murray's voice beamed to Europe wholeheartedly endorsing the Marshall Plan and denying that it had originated in Wall Street. They saw James Carey aping the imperialist arrogance of Wall Street; they saw him help split the French C.G.T. in the same way that A. F. of L. agents are now splitting trade unions in Europe and Latin America.

The clear opposition to endorsement of the Marshall Plan and the fight by a substantial minority of the C.I.O. board members against rejection of the third party made clear to the American workers, as well as to millions of trade unionists throughout the world, that the position of Murray, Carey, Reuther, and Rieve does not represent the unanimous opinion of either the leadership or membership of the C.I.O.

The minority's bold and progressive action was accomplished without the feared split that many thought was inevitable if the Left-Progressives asserted their own independent position.

The action of the majority of the

Board demonstrated to the entire C.I.O. membership that the Left-Center coalition was no longer in existence. This was so, because the area of agreement—which was, in a word, the 'F.D.R. program—that brought that coalition into being no longer existed.

Because of what happened at the Board meeting, the C.I.O. members will face many new problems and tasks. These include the following:

1. The Left-Progressive unions will have to consolidate their influence and strength, and strongly repulse every attack; from within or without, against their unity or autonomy.

2. While, in the past, C.I.O.-P.A.C. played a progressive role, it is now being transformed into a C.I.O. campaign committee for the re-election of Truman and support of his policies. Hence, the pro-Wallace unions and union members will undoubtedly develop their own forms of activity in support of the third party and its program and candidates. Unity of action can then be realized between these different forces and trade union committees in support of various Congressional and other local candidates who are being supported irrespective of their position on the Presidential candidates.

3. Efforts will have to be made to maintain the C.I.O. Councils as united bodies, with the recognition, at the same time, that the autonomous and democratic rights of their affiliates demand vital consideration.

4. A fight will have to be waged

for continued C.I.O. participation in the W.F.T.U., despite various threats by the reactionary top leaders to wreck the Federation unless it accepts the Marshall Plan.

5. The breaking up of the Left-Center coalition does not eliminate the need and possibility of collaboration between the Left-Progressive unions and any or all other unions and their leaders. In fact, collaboration on specific issues—such as wage increases, the Taft-Hartley Act, Universal Military Training, and support of certain Congressional candidates—is imperative.

#### THE A. F. OF L.

The position of the A. F. of L. Executive Council was well established at the last convention of that trade union federation. Since then, as was to be expected, it has condemned Wallace and the third-party movement, and made clear its support of the Marshall Plan.

Hence, it is more vital than ever to remember what we have said many times, namely, that the A. F. of L. rank-and-file members are essentially the same as their brothers in the C.I.O., have the same basic needs, and can be won for a progressive program. True, there are problems and difficulties, but they can be overcome if leadership is given to the workers. This is seen in the beginnings made in involving A. F. of L. members and local unions in building the third

party in California and in the campaign of the third party in Chicago; in the headway that has been made among the International Typographical Union members; and, with dramatic emphasis, in the 10-to-1 victory scored by the Left-Progressive slate, against heavy enemy concentration, in Local 6 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union in New York.

In contrast to the situation in the C.I.O., there exist sharp divisions in the top A. F. of L. bureaucracy between Republicans and Truman supporters. This means that there will not be the same pressure and organized effort in the A. F. of L. to intimidate the rank and file into support of a particular candidate. Also, the A. F. of L. tradition of freedom of action in political campaigns opens the door to the formation of a broad network of trade union committees for Wallace, especially in local unions or plants.

A key issue that can activate large sections of the A. F. of L. members is that of wage increases. The A. F. of L. leadership has not given any lead for wage increases. Instead, William Green has brought forward the proposals of C. E. Wilson (of G.M.) for a 45-hour week, in place of the present 40-hour week, at a time when the fighting slogan should be the 35-hour week with a corresponding increase in pay.

As for the main independent unions—miners, railroad workers, and machinists—all of these, but par-

ticularly the first two, offer even greater opportunities for rallying support to independent political action and the third party. Whitney may make his peace with Truman, but the railroad workers do not so easily forget Truman's strike-breaking role. In many areas, particularly the rural ones, the railroad workers are already the spearhead of the third-party movement. The miners, too, remember both Truman and the Republicans for their strikebreaking, injunction-issuing attacks.

In general, as far as the A. F. of L. is concerned, we must recognize that failure to influence progressively its seven million members means, among other things, that the rank and file will be left at the mercy of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats. One of the results that must be faced from such a situation is that part of the membership may become disgusted with unionism generally.

It means, in effect, that we are immobilizing thousands of Party members who belong to the A. F. of L. and preventing them from exercising the maximum influence for progress and union welfare.

In short, we must state self-critically that, despite many resolutions and reports, the Party leadership has not yet really convinced or mobilized our entire Party to work among the rank and file of the A. F. of L. This National Committee meeting must strive to effect a real change, from words to deeds, on this question.

### LABOR UNITY AND THE FORMS OF TRADE UNION PARTICIPATION IN BUILDING THE THIRD PARTY

We Communists have always supported the idea of a united trade union movement because it is in the general interests of the workers. However, different conditions dictate different approaches by the workers to the realization of full unity of the trade unions.

It is impossible to think in terms of trade union unity on the basis of support of Wall Street's imperialist program and two-party system. Unity of the trade union movement can be advanced today on the basis of the Wallace candidacy and the third-party movement and the struggle against the Taft-Hartley Act. Thus, if the rank-and-file miners are able to exert influence on their leadership to enter into the developing people's coalition, it will be a significant development. However, while Lewis' break with the A. F. of L. Executive Council on the Taft-Hartley Act is important, there is nothing yet to indicate an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly position in relation to foreign policy or the 1948 elections on the part of the U.M.W.A. leaders. The present developments in the U.M.W.A. emphasize the need of greater attention to influencing the coal miners and winning them for the third-party movement and its program.

Unity of the trade union move-

ment can be best advanced by ever closer co-operation of the rank and file and the lower officialdom of Left-Progressive and Right-dominated unions of the C.I.O., in common action with the rank and file of the A. F. of L., coal miners, machinists, and R.R. workers unions. In this connection, it should be noted that throughout the country, in many smaller communities, local joint committees of A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions continue to function. Also, there was recently organized in Peoria a committee embracing C.I.O., A. F. of L., U.M.W.A., and I.A.M. locals. Their agreement included the fight against the Taft-Hartley Act, a pledge of no raiding, and support of a progressive local candidate.

While in each state the newly organized third parties are involving the trade unions through endorsements and the sending of delegates, the broader activity that seems to be gaining momentum is the organizing of a network of trade union committees for Wallace that will cover each industry as a whole, as well as local and big shops in each industry.

In one steel mill, for example, where 1000 signatures were collected urging Wallace to run, the signers are now being recanvassed, and are being urged to join a Wallace Committee in that mill. In other steel mills, Wallace Committees of 300 to 500 members are being organized. This is the approach that needs to be followed in shop after shop.

## OUR LABOR POLICY RE-EVALUATED

It is also necessary that we re-evaluate our labor policies frankly in the light of the tasks we face. It is clear that a different orientation and a new emphasis are needed today in trade union work. However, we must review certain weaknesses and mistakes of the Left trade union forces during the period of C.I.O. Left-Center coalition:

1) The Left too often accepted as its program the compromise positions hammered out in the C.I.O., while the Right used them to campaign for its original position. The Left made the compromise formulas its own, instead of using them as a means of struggle for its correct policy.

2) Throughout the years, at Conventions and Executive Board meetings, the Left failed to assert its own initiative and fight for its own position. There was always a fear—and wrongly so—that fighting for one's position, and registering it on major questions by vote, would break up the coalition.

3) Some Left forces practiced a self-isolation that prevented their full influence from being exerted upon their Center allies.

4) Too exclusive attention was paid to top level relations—with the Left sometimes becoming the prisoners of its allies. In the U.A.W., for example, the Left Wing became so enmeshed in the Addes-Thomas-

Leonard caucus—in its weaknesses, its isolation from the local unions, its job corruption, its factionalism, etc.—that the workers could not distinguish the one group from the other. Even where the Left differentiated itself in the U.A.W., as in its correct opposition to the factional degeneration—the white chauvinism and subtle Red-baiting—of the caucus mentioned, it limited its opposition to the specific local unions, instead of making it known to the U.A.W. members as a whole. Another example was the great hesitation of the Left-Progressives in challenging some of the worst reactionaries in the steel workers' union, on the ground that it would not be to Murray's liking, although this left a section of the steel workers at the mercy of reactionary Regional Directors. The lesson, clearly, is that the Left forces, when in top coalitions, should never forget that the strongest bond of the united front must be with the ranks below.

The reasons must also be made clear why the Left has suffered certain setbacks in the unions during the last period. The main reasons are to be found in certain objective factors, *i.e.*, the terrific impact of reaction's offensive, of the unparalleled Red-baiting drive.

But frankness dictates recognition by the Left-Progressive forces that in the last period they were sometimes too slow in recognizing the effects on the American labor movement of the new world situation and Ameri-

can imperialism's new role. In day-to-day work the thinking of the past weighed too heavily on the practices of the Left-Progressives, including the Communists. The fear of endangering relations with the Murray forces persisted too long in a period when the area of agreement was fast narrowing. The compromise resolutions continued in a period when a bold position should have been asserted. If we examine three C.I.O. conventions we see this all too painfully.

In the New York State C.I.O. Convention, the Left forces made a major mistake in agreeing to a resolution that called for modification of the veto principle in the U.N.

At the Boston National C.I.O. convention last fall, the Left still operated on the basis of the concept of an over-all agreement with Murray on a minimum general program, without coming to grips with the issues of Truman's candidacy or the Marshall Plan. Thus, the Left supported what appeared as a compromise resolution on aid to Europe, which did not formally mention the Marshall Plan. At this Convention, however, Murray, by inviting Marshall to speak, actually created the impression of endorsing the Marshall Plan.

In the California C.I.O. Convention, which took place a month after the national C.I.O. convention, when Murray's interpretation of the Boston resolution as an endorsement of the Marshall Plan was already

clear, the Left-Progressives did not assert a position on foreign policy different from that of the Boston Convention, nor did they assert their position in support of the California Independent Progressive Party.

It is clear that the roots of some of these weaknesses are a reflection of the fact that we did not searchingly enough dig out all expressions of Browderism in Party trade union work and in the thinking and practices of some of our trade union forces.

The idea was tolerated at the time of our July, 1945, Emergency Convention that the influence of Browderism was less potent in the trade union field because the trade unionists had greater difficulty in applying some of its practical conclusions. Actually, Browder revisionism left deep imprints in the thinking and practices of our trade union cadres. This expressed itself in the lack of a militant program and of aggressive struggle to realize it; in satisfaction with work on top, to the neglect of the rank and file; in a failure to estimate the class orientation of the top leaders of the trade union movement; and in a bureaucratization of some Communist trade union leaders.

Today the need of improving the Party's ideological work among our trade union cadres is clear. In their great majority these comrades are excellent and loyal people. But the tendencies toward softness, bureaucracy, isolation from the rank and

file, and separation from daily Party life, must be overcome rapidly.

## CONCLUSION

Before closing, I wish to touch upon certain specific aspects of the program necessary for the closer coordination of the work of Trade Union, Organization, and Educational Departments:

1) Party programs need to be written for the main industries and popularized among the workers.

2) Trade union work must be geared to the Party's concentration program, particularly to Party building in key industrial areas and the improvement of the composition of Party membership.

3) Political life must be infused into our shop and industrial branches.

4) The shop and community work of the Party must be co-ordinated, without, however, neglecting the constant improvement of the shop branches.

5) Planned work of all Party members in the unions must be developed to extend the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and to build the Party.

In turn, the Organization and Educational Departments must gear much of their work to the trade unionists in the Party. This is especially true as concerns selecting organizers to build the Party in key industrial areas. It is also true of the planning and direction of much of our agitation, classes, cadre training, speakers' tours, etc.

In conclusion, comrades, we have the opportunity to make a great step forward in our trade union work. The key to this is the connection of all struggles of the workers with the new historic development—the building of the third party. This, in turn, is facilitated by the fact that the Left-Progressives in the C.I.O. have ended the period of their dependence, first on Lewis and then on Murray, and are asserting their own program.

With a policy aimed at maintaining contact with the mass of the rank and file, and of realizing the maximum unity of the trade union movement, the Left-Progressive forces in all the trade unions today have new possibilities through the developing economic struggles and in conjunction with the Wallace-for-President movement, to strengthen their position as champions of the urgent needs of the working class today.

---

#### ON THE HISTORIC ROLE OF THE PROLETARIAT

“It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, conceives to be the goal for the moment—it is a question of *what it is* and what it will historically be driven to do in accordance with its being. Its goal and its historical action are tangibly and irrevocably marked out both by its own life situation and by the whole organisation of present-day bourgeois society.”

Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family*.

# SOME ASPECTS OF PARTY WORK\*

By HENRY WINSTON

The reports of Comrades Foster, Dennis, and Williamson not only posed the basic problems faced by the American people, but placed in correct focus the whole question of our Party, of its relationship to the developing mass movement, and specifically the third-party movement. I can therefore center my report on several concrete questions concerning the attack on our Party, the ideological struggle, the strengthening of our Party clubs, and concentration work.

## MONOPOLY'S ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN

The offensive launched in 1947 against the Communist Party by the tycoons of American monopoly was aimed primarily at the security, democratic rights, and peace of the American people. It was unfolded on every level, involving every arena of the class struggle, economic, political, and ideological.

Never before has our Party had to face so violent an attack. The

ruling circles of our country try to picture our Party as "subversive," as "un-American," as an "agent of a foreign power," and as "advocating the violent overthrow of the government." Their purpose in this is to discredit the role of our Party and its contribution to the struggles of the American workers and the people generally, and to create a war hysteria that will enable reaction more readily to step up preparations for World War III. Monopoly's "anti-Communist" campaign is designed to cloak the preparations for an anti-Soviet war, the rebuilding of Germany as a reactionary gendarme in Europe, and American imperialism's drive for world domination.

This ferocious insanity is promoted by the high commands of the Republican and Democratic parties, by reactionary Social-Democracy, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. bureaucrats.

The press, with a daily circulation of 51,000,000, pumps this "anti-Communism" poison into the American people through its columns, editorials, news stories, cartoons, and comics. The comic books, read by millions of American children, have been revamped and are now systematic purveyors of this Hitlerian ideology. Professional anti-Communist script writers, replacing progressives in Hollywood, are busily concocting fantasies with which to influence the 80,000,000-weekly movie

\* A report delivered at the meeting of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A., held February 3-5, 1948.



goers. The pulpit is being brought into line, with the Roman Catholic Church needing no urging but, on the contrary, leading the way. The radio is used for official pronouncement to supplement professional anti-Communist commentators. Every old avenue of propaganda is being used to influence the minds of the people, and new ones are being developed.

As an inevitable counterpart of this ideological campaign, practical steps are already being taken in many industries which question the right of Communists to work. "Loyalty pledges" are being circulated for the purpose of ferreting out, not only Communists, but any militant progressive in the ranks of labor. Aided by government intimidation, Big Business is striving to create a huge blacklist against militant workers.

The armed forces are being indoctrinated with this "anti-Communism," with the aim of preparing this arm of the State for use against striking workers at home, and for military adventures abroad.

The House Committee on Un-American Activities spearheaded this anti-Communist drive. Its "hearings" were a political farce and a travesty on democracy, resulting in the citation for contempt and threat of imprisonment of Eugene Dennis, the General Secretary of our Party, of Leon Josephson, of Gerhart Eisler, the German Communist, ten Hollywood writers and directors, and six-

teen leaders of the Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee. Since then, the F.B.I. and the U.S. Immigration authorities have arrested for deportation Claudia Jones and Alex Bittelman. Thus, three members of our National Committee have already become victims of this "anti-Communist crusade."\*

New hearings have been announced for February 5. These, it is indicated by Edward Nellor of the *New York Sun*, will be for the consideration of bills "to present legislation to Congress barring the Communist Party or forcing members of the organization to register as agents of a foreign power." Listed to testify before the Committee are: Tom Clark, Karl E. Mundt, Donald Richberg, A. A. Berle, Jr., Ferenc Nagy, the former Premier of Hungary, Louis Waldman, Admiral W. H. Standley, the former Ambassador to Russia, Morris Ernst, James Burnham, and Dorothy Thompson. Need anything be said about such a sordid collection of reactionaries, Social-Democrats, Trotskyites, and fascist elements?

This "anti-Communism" strikes at the most fundamental interests of the American people. If there is any doubt on this score, the action of the Attorney-General of Arkansas with regard to the Cole Bill can serve as an object lesson. For not only did he express support of this bill, but he

\* Since this report was delivered, John Williamson, labor secretary of the Communist Party, has also been made the victim of a deportation charge.—Ed.

ruled at the same time that the Wallace movement—a movement that grows out of the deepest needs of the people today—cannot get on the ballot in that state because it is “affiliated to the Communist Party and advocates force and violence.” Bills are also being introduced in a number of states to prevent the groups supporting Wallace from getting on the ballot.

We can be sure that these attacks against our Party, the labor movement, and the people as a whole, will not diminish, but increase in violence, as the election campaign develops. They reveal most clearly the growing fascist danger our country faces.

### CHALLENGING THE ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE

On the other hand there are honest voices speaking out for the millions, and they are beginning to challenge in a real way the enemies of peace, security, and democracy. Thus, Henry Wallace, speaking in Columbus, Ohio, on February 1, stated:

The most frequent charge made against the American Communists is that they advocate the violent overthrow of the government of the United States. I have not seen evidence to substantiate this charge, and I do find a Supreme Court decision that this conclusion is unwarranted.\*

Such then was the attack our Party faced during 1947, and we can be

\* The decision of the Supreme Court in the Schneiderman case.

proud that our Party stood firm and fought back. And if the objectives of the monopolies were not fully achieved, it is due in no small degree to the existence of our Party and to its role within the mass movement in helping develop the fighting initiative of labor and the people.

Pro-fascist reaction will step up its offensive in 1948, but the battle will not be one-sided. A new type of anti-war coalition is emerging, the new third party headed by Henry Wallace. New wage struggles are taking place in all the basic industries. Supported by the whole of organized labor, the fight for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law has entered a new stage and will become one of the biggest issues in the election campaign. The struggle for Negro rights, which enjoys wide support, is vigorously challenging the very basis of Jim-Crowism, segregation, and discrimination. The movement against inflation, high prices, and high rents continues to grow. New forces are entering the struggle for civil liberties.

Thus, instead of destroying the people's will to action, reaction's offensive is resulting in the very opposite. The people's struggles for their basic rights and needs continues to develop, and will embrace additional hundreds of thousands in the next period. The key to victory over the forces of reaction will be found only among these forces and movements. But victory will not come by itself; it has to be organized.

It is against this background that

our Party must view its tasks and responsibilities.

### AN IDEOLOGICAL COUNTER-OFFENSIVE NECESSARY

A prime responsibility for all Communists today, more than at any other time in the past, is to defend the principles of Communism, the scientific theory of the working class, against every manifestation of bourgeois ideology.

The fight for the rights of the Communists is thus indissolubly linked with the general fight for the people's liberties. But this clarity, unfortunately, does not yet pervade the consciousness of the broad masses. This is one of the main reasons why the creation of a lasting anti-fascist and anti-imperialist unity lags behind the needs of the hour. The influence of bourgeois ideology within the ranks of the labor movement and its leadership partially explains the slowness with which this unity assumes an organized form.

The necessary clarity can and will be brought to the masses only by a mass expansion of our Party's ideological work. Upon us falls the task of equipping our Party cadres and membership in such a way that an effective struggle can be waged.

In this connection, the most immediate task must be a ceaseless struggle against opportunism in all of its forms.

### THE "LESSER EVIL" THEORY

The bourgeois theory of the "lesser evil" must be especially singled

out for attack. This theory represents open ideological warfare against the developing third-party movement. It is designed not only to render ineffective the fight for the Wallace candidacy, not only to make more difficult the election of a progressive bloc of Congressmen, but also to win adherents for the Administration's imperialist program.

The outcome of the fight to smash this bourgeois theory will determine the very character of the labor movement as well as the third-party movement. This central fact is understood quite well by Green, Murray, Reuther, Dubinsky, Max Lerner, Adolph Berle, *et al.* That is why they have jumped on Truman's bandwagon, with their theme song of "the lesser evil."

We must boldly expose the reactionary character of the concept that Truman is a "lesser evil," by bringing to the people this "lesser evil's" real record on the breaking of the railroad workers' and miners' strikes, on the Taft-Hartley Law, high prices, inflation, "loyalty oaths," atom-bomb diplomacy, Palestine, the vast militarization programs now under way, etc. What telling blows can be struck, for example, against the idea of Truman as a "lesser evil" by making clear that he can, by executive order, establish F.E.P.C., abolish Jim-Crowism in the army, and force the Department of Justice to take effective action against lynching of Negroes—and yet does nothing of the kind!

The policies of Truman flow from the same source as those of the Republicans—from the big monopolists of the country. We must make clear to the millions that we are dealing with a government of two parties, both of which represent the evils of monopoly. The struggle to win and influence the masses should have as its aim to win labor and the people for the only real alternative today—support for a third-party movement, and the building of our Party as a means of strengthening the fighting capacity of the forces participating in that movement.

In short, we must demonstrate that the "lesser evil" theory is designed to:

1. Stifle the fighting initiative of the workers and divert them from militant struggle to secure their just wage demands.
2. Win support among the workers and people for the Marshall Plan by way of support for Truman, or, failing to win active support, to neutralize active opposition to the Plan.
3. Prevent the political unification of the workers and their allies in the third-party movement by bolstering support for the two-party system.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE OPPORTUNISM IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The fight against opportunism has to be carried on vigorously within the labor movement. In this respect our Party has to take up energetically

the fight against concepts that base the workers' fight for wage increases on whether higher profits can be secured for the employers. Our Party must energetically and aggressively take up the fight against Social-Democracy, and Reuther's policy in the auto workers union in particular. The fight to undermine the influence of Social-Democracy must be conducted around the concrete economic grievances of the workers, which also includes the fight for wage increases. For example, the auto workers demand a 25¢ hourly increase in wages. Reuther, whose opportunism is so clearly expressed in his labor-management co-operation plan, flouts the real needs of the workers and comes forward with a 15¢ hourly wage increase. Our Party must show the connection between Reuther's support of Truman and the Marshall Plan, his collaboration with the auto firms which have heavy European investments in auto plants and parts, and his failure to fight for the wage demands of the auto workers.

But the fight against opportunism also means a constant fight against the Party trailing behind reformist leaders. It means that the Party must fight for its independent position and assert its vanguard role. Only thus can our Party make its indispensable contribution to the developing wage struggles, to the developing Wallace movement. Because of this we must give top priority on all levels of leadership to the ques-

tion of equipping our Party ideologically so that it will be able effectively to influence the mass movement.

### THE FIGHT FOR THEORY

In posing this problem, we must self-critically examine some aspects of our work in relation to developing the ideological struggle. In 1947, the distribution of Party literature was better than in 1946. But already the year 1948 presents our Party with certain dangers. Literature distribution is taking a downward trend. This is true of mass popular literature answering the questions of the moment; it is especially true of the basic literature of our movement—the classics of Marxism-Leninism.

It is clear that precisely at this moment, rather than a decline in the circulation of such literature, the reverse should be the case. That is why this National Committee meeting must place before itself the task of approaching the whole question of our literature distribution in a new way.

The National Committee's attention must also be directed to the fact that circulation of the *Daily Worker* and the *Worker* remains stationary and that a large section of our membership does not read our press, even though substantial improvements have been made in its content. Our press is not used as a basis for training and educating our membership, nor is it used sufficiently in our

Party's mass work. Clearly, this must be changed.

Over the past years the organization of forums involving the masses of non-Party workers has been completely neglected, and this too, must be corrected.

We have made some notable advances in the organization of Party schools and we are now engaged in organizing classes designed to train some 5,000 leaders in basic Marxism. This type of training must become a permanent feature of Party work and must be extended in every possible way.

Why do we place this problem of the fight for theory before the National Committee? Because it is a fight to steel our Party, to prepare it for its proper role of leadership among the masses.

No one can advance convincing arguments to prove that there exists a contradiction between training and developing our Party members and the role of our Party in participating in, and helping to build, the broad mass movement. In fact, the training and development of Party cadres are indispensable for an effective struggle to increase manifoldly the scope of the mass movement, and in turn the building of the Party itself.

### PROBLEMS OF REGISTRATION

We are registering this year a slightly greater number of members than we did last year. Under present conditions of work, this must be regarded as an achievement. This does

not mean that we take an uncritical view of our work. On the contrary, given a higher quality of leadership, the advances we now record could be even greater.

Already a number of districts are stronger organizationally and politically. Among these districts are California, New Jersey, Ohio, Connecticut, Iowa, West Virginia, Florida, as well as a number of concentration areas. But in many districts we have not shown any progress.

The fight to complete registration must be carried on rapidly, so that the energies of all our members may be released for mass work.

We do not yet have a complete analysis of the registration, but several outstanding factors are already clear. The rate of growth which we witnessed in 1947 has been checked. The shop and industrial clubs are not growing and new ones are not being built. The working-class base of our Party remains stationary. Finally, while we will show an increase in the number of Negro comrades registered, one of the big problems remains that of reaching the large number still unregistered.

We would not be realists if we attempted to discount the effects on our Party's growth of the war drive, the Taft-Hartley Act, the distribution of "loyalty" pledges in industry, the role of the A.C.T.U. and Social-Democracy, etc. But we would make a very serious mistake if we attributed our difficulties to these facts

and did not see the subjective factor at work.

In this connection, the basic question today is how to orient the Party so that it becomes a force in developing the mass movement of struggle among the people; and how, at the same time, to build and strengthen our Party ideologically, politically, and organizationally. Failure to resolve this seeming contradiction, partially explains our failure to grow more rapidly.

#### AN ENLIGHTENING EXAMPLE

I should like to illustrate this problem by an example taken from our experience in a key industrial town.

The general offensive of reaction against our Party and against the labor movement did not by-pass this town. But there we witness, not a decline, but a 52% growth of our Party. How is this to be explained? It is explained by the fact that our Party members undertook to organize the fight to solve the grievances of the workers and led the fight for a steward system to handle their grievances. They were able, by taking the initiative, to forge the united front from below, making this concept a living reality in which Communists and non-Communists worked in unison and pushed the fight for the real needs of the workers.

Secondly, our Party members took the initiative among the workers and helped to develop united front discussions of their wage demands, from

which a rank-and-file wage struggle developed. This struggle developed in spite of an effort to prevent discussion among the workers within the union local and within the shops.

Thirdly, our Party members related the fight for the concrete needs of the workers to the general struggles of the people, and involved the rank and file and leaders of the union local in their fight around such concrete issues as anti-lynching legislation, inflation, and peace.

Fourthly, the Party members undertook the struggle to end discrimination against Negro workers and led the fight for the election of a Negro on the policy-making bodies of the union locals and within the International.

Fifthly, they systematically spread our Party literature, in the shop and at shop gates, and at the homes of workers.

Sixthly, 100 subscriptions to the *Daily Worker* volunteered by the Brooklyn Party organization were sent to workers in the shop, from whom many steady readers for the paper were secured and many recruits for the Party.

Finally, all of this was accompanied by detailed guidance to the clubs, which as a result are becoming policy-making bodies, and the quality of the individual work of Communists is being improved.

The Party in this center of basic industry performed its function as a vanguard. It developed the fight for the economic needs of the workers.

But it also developed the fight that involved the Party on the political and ideological front.

Thus, this example shows that, given a higher quality of leadership, our Party can be built. It shows that there is no real contradiction between building our Party and building the mass movement of the people.

But the story is different in a number of key areas. For example, in a key major plant in another industry our Party did not grow but, on the contrary, lost members. This is to be explained by a number of factors, enumerated in Comrade Williamson's report.

I single out this specific example because what is involved here is also the method of work of our National Organization Department, and not only that of the leadership in a specific district. During 1947, the Party club in this plant lost contact with all but a small number of its members. The majority never was integrated in the Party organization as such. Clearly, since this industry is a national concentration point, the National Organization Department has to bear heavy responsibility for a situation of this kind.

Furthermore, this plant's club was weak in terms of politicalizing its mass work, of raising the thinking and level of understanding of its membership. Questions of policy, of tactics, were never made the property of the club. In this club we also had the expression of two wrong tendencies—the substitution of the Party

for the mass movement, or the submerging of the identity of the Party itself within this mass movement. As a result, before long, many who considered themselves Communists did not have a clear conception of our Party's role and method of functioning. This is a general problem we have to face in a number of shop and industrial clubs.

The problems existing in these clubs in the industries I have dealt with are expressed in one form or another in all of our shop clubs. Thus, we are not dealing here with special and local problems but with general ones. If we discuss them from that viewpoint, we will, I hope proceed more effectively toward solving them.

#### REGISTRATION OF NEGRO COMRADES

However, perhaps one of our biggest problems was revealed in the lag in registration of our Negro members in both shop and community clubs. This problem exists uniformly throughout the country and it must be tackled as one of the basic problems of the Party at the present time. This is so because the problems that present themselves in the registration of our Negro membership are completely out of line with the movement, activities, and fighting readiness of the Negro people today.

It is my feeling that the root of this problem, and its solution, will be found in certain weaknesses in our

ranks, which we must eliminate with the greatest speed and thoroughness. For precisely because our Party is the best fighter for Negro rights, and is recognized as such by the Negro people, they expect the utmost from us in clarity of thought and self-sacrifice in action. These weaknesses in our ranks are the following: the existence of white-chauvinism, open and hidden, especially when it comes to a consistent fight around the concrete needs and interests of the Negro workers in the basic industries of our country; the reluctance to develop in a systematic way the fight to advance the Negro workers from unskilled to skilled positions during this postwar period, when the problems of the Negro workers have become more aggravated; the absence of a systematic fight against restrictive covenants and segregation in housing; and the restricted scope of the fight against Jim-Crowism, against police brutality.

It seems to me that this is the most immediate problem on which we must center our attention, so as to be able to develop a conscious, systematic fight, involving the whole Party and our cadres in the labor movement, for the further extension and strengthening of the alliance already achieved between Negro and white workers.

Secondly, I believe that the problem regarding the registration of Negro comrades stems from a certain petty-bourgeois contempt on the part of many cadres toward inarticu-



late Negro workers within the ranks of the Party organization.

Thirdly, it flows from the lack of a planned and systematic struggle to integrate our Negro membership in the educational and cultural life of the clubs and to involve them in the struggle for the general needs of the people and the special needs of the Negro people.

Fourthly, there exists, in practice, a blunting, a certain distortion, of the Party line. The correct concept of the fight for the rights of the Negro people is not seen as a means to develop a systematic struggle for the fundamental rights of the Negro workers as such, for the special rights and needs of the Negro middle class, and the uniting of the two in the fight for the Negro people as a people.

But I think, further, that the problem of registering the Negro comrades comes from a reluctance, a hesitancy, to begin to break the clubs down into smaller-sized clubs, on the theory that we must have large-size club organization within the Negro community in contrast to the smaller ones in other communities. This theory proceeds from the false notion that in Negro communities there are not sufficient cadres to give leadership to small-sized clubs. This also negates the conception that in the Negro communities as well, small-sized clubs are imperative to achieve the mobility of, and contact with, our membership. The result is that while we maintain these clubs, we only have a limited core of partici-

pants in the life of the club. The bulk of the membership we never see from one registration to the other. This question, I believe, must be tackled in a new way, and decisively.

#### A SPECIFIC CLUB ANALYZED

As a member of a commission, I had an opportunity to make a detailed study of some of our clubs in a Negro community, and I believe that merely to state one example would be sufficient to point up many of our problems in some areas throughout the country.

This club had a membership of 189 comrades. During the year 1946, the club registered 161; this year it will register an equal number. Nevertheless, the actual attendance at club meetings is indeed very small.

In this club there was a general analysis and discussion. But there was no discussion of concrete issues that vitally concern the Negro people—nothing on the Marshall Plan, U.M.T., inflation, etc., and, until three weeks ago, not even a discussion of the Wallace movement. How can we expect comrades to develop if the Party club contributes nothing to broadening and deepening their thinking?

Yet this club comes through on fund drives and various Party appeals. But the life-blood of our Party's work—its education—is missing. *Political Affairs* is distributed only spasmodically, and then only to a few members. The club takes 50 *Workers*, but only irregularly, and

they are not used as a basis for educating the membership. There is no effort to get the *Worker* into the hands of comrades who do not attend club meeting; and the 50 copies of the *Worker* go to different people each time.

Furthermore, this club has organized no study circles, and the literature distribution is poor.

With so little effort to educate the Party members themselves, the club naturally carries on no systematic education of the people around it. Meetings take up routine matters, without a planned agenda.

All this explains, of course, the poor attendance at club meetings of comrades who are leaders in mass movements.

One such comrade has organized 98 families, involving some 315 people. He enjoys the highest prestige among these people. This comrade prevented the landlord from putting across a 15% rent increase, and that is no small achievement. As a result of his good work, four more apartment houses in the block are organizing. But he has done all this as an individual, without any help or direction from the club.

Another comrade in this club is a member of an important organization, and still another is a leader in her church organization. We register these mass leaders from year to year. But we have no regular contact with them and they continue to function as mass leaders without effective Party contact. In some cases such leaders are unfortunately dropped,

because of the lack of regular contact and guidance.

It is clear we must fight to integrate these comrades into the life of the Party, even if that means adopting new methods and forms of organization which conflict with traditional thinking.

Finally, this club revealed the need for detailed guidance on the part of the Section leadership—the need for effecting a system of leadership based first of all on solving the problems of the club.

I wonder if the problems of this club are not common, in a greater or lesser degree, to those of many of our clubs in all parts of the country. All of them involve the basic question of improving the quality of our Party work at the club level.

#### CONCENTRATION

I now want to discuss another aspect of improving the quality of our work—the question of concentration.

The fight to make concentration a system of work is the starting point for the effective implementation of our Party's basic policies.

Our concentration policy should run like a red thread through all phases of Party work. We propose to re-establish the application of our concentration policy as a system of Party work.

We must say, self-critically, that there has been a lag in our concentration policy, both nationally and in the districts. Here, at this National Committee meeting, we have the task of taking up this question in a

new way. For the stationary position of our working-class membership already gives some danger signals. The whole question of concentration must be understood as part of the fight to shift the majority of our membership to a working-class base.

Our position in a number of basic industries has been weakened by our failure aggressively to pursue a concentration policy. I have in mind particularly the packing, auto, railroad, and maritime industries. Because our concentration policy was inadequately applied, it did not result in the over-all strengthening of our Party, politically and organizationally.

Therefore we must now work in a different way, in order to build our Party in key industries and key towns to establish centers of Party influence and strength.

I think our Party must define new concentration points in a number of important industries. Here, our aim should be to strengthen existing shop and industrial clubs, and to build new clubs.

Finally, on this point, we propose that the National Organization Department map out a national concentration policy, based on this discussion and following this meeting.

**BUILDING OUR PRESS**

And now a few words about the question of our press, which is not unrelated to the problems of concentration.

In a general way, we can say that the further growth of our Party de-

pends on the building of our press, of the circulation of the *Worker* and *Daily Worker*.

More than that, our success in expanding the circulation of our press will have an effect on the development of the anti-war, anti-monopoly mass movement, including the new third-party movement.

When we speak of building the circulation of our press, we mean increasing its influence as an organizer and propagandist. This is of special importance in the present period. For, ours is so far the only national daily English press that supports the Wallace ticket and actively campaigns for the third party.

We are preparing an Open Letter to our membership, because we recognize that the problem of the press must be approached in a new way if we are to advance, and not retard, the growth of the Party.

We have also set up a commission on the problem of our press; it will report to this body.

The logical starting point is a determined struggle to win our membership as readers of the press; for if all our members would read our press today, we would more than double its present circulation.

In addition, there are many leaders of the mass movement, trade unionists and political leaders, who are searching for answers to all the complex problems of the day. They are looking for information and guidance that they will find only in our press. Here are new readers waiting

for us. And if we do not reach them with our papers, the development of the mass movement, as well as the circulation of our press, will suffer.

In spite of these new opportunities, three tendencies have cropped up that doom any advance in press building unless this meeting helps to overcome them.

The first would let press building go by default, on the ground that our Party is too small and weak to conduct a really serious press building campaign.

The second is a tendency to drop the press building campaign at the very moment we are deeply involved in mass work. This latter is one of the worst expressions of liquidationism in the present period.

The third tendency, while proceeding from the conception that it is possible to build our press, would have our campaign for circulation conducted in a separate manner—divorced from the developing mass movement, and without enlarging the mass base of the Party itself.

I hope that all these questions will

be discussed here. I hope that you will decide to launch an energetic campaign to build our press in 1948.

#### HOW TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS

Comrades, many difficulties beset us. Our Party is faced with a host of problems. But these are problems that can be solved. They can be solved if we base ourselves on the growing mass movement, if we fight correctly among the masses now moving into a new political realignment, and if we maintain the political identity and build the membership of our own Communist Party.

A self-critical examination of all our work, and collective measures based on the policies outlined in the main reports at this National Committee meeting, are the key to effective Party work in the struggle against reaction.

We can defeat the mounting offensive launched against us by the pro-fascist reactionaries and the imperialist warmongers! We can build a stronger, bigger and more effective Communist Party in 1948!

# THE UNITED WORKING-CLASS FRONT-- BASIS OF THE POLISH PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

By I. OLKOWICZ

ONE OF THE most significant results of the Second World War is the rise of a number of states that represent a qualitatively new type of democracy—the *people's democracy*. Here we find an entirely new form of statehood in the history of mankind, and a specific transitional form toward Socialism. This "people's democracy" is not a dictatorship of the proletariat; nor is it the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, as are the "western democracies." Rather, the working class in these countries has achieved hegemony in the democratic and national-liberation movement. The great estates of the nobility have been liquidated; the economy is being transformed into a socialized economy on a planned basis, controlled through the state representing the working class and masses of people. All of this creates, through a consistent anti-capitalist policy, the possibility of a gradual transition to Socialism.

Among these new democracies, Poland occupies an especially important place, because of its geographic location as a bridge between the East and the West and because of its politico-economic role in Europe.

## THE WORKING CLASS AS LEADER OF THE NATION

July, 1947, marked the third year since Poland, as an independent state, began transforming its social relations in the spirit of democracy and preparing the base for Socialism. In this truly gigantic task, the working class has emerged as the leader of the nation. Bearing out Engels' comment that the working class cannot free itself from the rule of the exploiters without simultaneously freeing forever all of society, there arose in Poland a firm union of the working class and the peasantry under the leadership of the former. This union also embraces all other progressive and democratic forces which together form an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist people's front.

The Polish working class has assumed responsibility involving the future of the entire nation. It is striving to build upon the dreadful post-war ruins, a new Poland freed from the oppression of the nobility and capitalists, an independent and sovereign Poland, with a government "of the people, by the people, for the people." It is establishing a Poland

free from control by foreign monopoly capital, a Poland that is not a springboard for imperialist adventures against the Soviet Union, but a bulwark of peace. In assuming this responsibility, the Polish working class realized that its mission can be achieved only on two conditions: It must be united, and its ideological compass must be scientific Socialism, Marxism.

Lenin once said that the Russian proletariat had come to Marxism through suffering. It can be said with equal justification that the Polish working class has achieved through pain and blood the knowledge that unity on the basis of Marxism can bring liberty.

The Polish people experienced in the fires of war the results of the criminal and nationally treasonous policy of their previous feudal-capitalist rulers, a policy of Soviet-baiting, oriented toward the big imperialist powers, which led to the Polish-Hitlerite alliance as a "guarantee against Bolshevism." They recalled the fate of the first "people's government" of Lublin, in 1918, headed by the Socialist Morachewski, which voluntarily abdicated power to reaction "in fear of Bolshevism." They recalled Pilsudski's attack upon Kiev in 1920 in the interests of the Polish landowners. They recalled the uprising of the Cracow workers in 1923 which was crushed in blood. They remembered the repressive expeditions into the villages, the Brest-Litovsk fortress where the best Polish patriots were tortured, and the concentration camp in Kartuz Berezé.

Ever larger masses of Polish people realized how the feudal-capitalist ruling class and its press had lied about the Soviet State and its people. They saw the Soviet Union in its true aspect as a friend of Poland and a liberator of the Polish people, as the mighty and uncompromising enemy of fascism and imperialism. And they were determined that the new Poland must put an end to the rule of landowners and big capitalists, that Poland must free itself completely from the control of foreign monopoly capital, that its entire internal and external policy must be built on a new foundation. They saw that Poland must be built up within new state boundaries in the interests of the people and oriented toward friendship and co-operation with all democratic, anti-fascist, anti-imperialist countries and world forces, and particularly the Soviet Union.

#### UNITED WORKING-CLASS ACTION

All this led to the growth and solidification of the united working-class front which has become the main motive force for the economic and political advances of the Polish people's democracy. If it was possible to create a close-knit people's front in the form of the "bloc of democratic parties" which brilliantly defeated the forces of reaction in the elections, it was because of the united action of the working class standing at the head of the democratic bloc. If it was possible to disarm most of the reactionary-fascist underground and to smash the legal expression of

reaction — the "Peasant" party which, under Mikolajczyk's leadership, transformed itself into an agent of international, particularly Anglo-Saxon, reaction\* it was primarily because of the united working-class front and its policy of strengthening the unity of workers and peasants. If within two brief years it was possible to awaken in millions of people truly gigantic creative forces for economic reconstruction, it was because the working class closed its ranks in a united front. If democratic Poland is carrying through successfully the three-year economic plan and Polish coal is making a solid contribution to European rehabilitation, if cities and towns are rising once again from devastation, it is mainly the result of the slumbering mass energy which the united front has awakened. If Poland now stands firmly in the anti-imperialist camp which fights for peace against the monopoly capitalists who strive to start a Third World War, it is again the achievement of its united working class which is guarding the peace and the freedom of its people.

#### ORIGIN OF THE SPLIT IN THE POLISH LABOR MOVEMENT

In the course of its development, the united working-class front encountered a number of obstacles.

\* *The New York Times* of February 8, in a dispatch from Poland, reported that "the Polish Peasant Party has joined the Central Coordination Commission of the Democratic Parties. . . . This means that the former party of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk . . . has moved over into the Government coalition. . . . The coordination commission is a Parliamentary group supposed to unify the efforts of the various parties."—Ed.

Efforts at unity met, not only with the bitterest attacks from the class enemy, but also with resistance in the ranks of the working class itself. This resistance stemmed from various sources—from a backward clinging to shadows of the past, from a failure to grasp fully the meaning of the revolutionary changes taking place in Europe as a result of World War II, from narrow partisan pride and sectarianism, and from a state of general distrust as a result of the sixty-year split in the Polish labor movement.

The Polish labor movement is among the oldest in Eastern Europe. In the '80's of the last century there came into existence in greater Poland, then under Russian rule, the "Proletariat," an organization affiliated with the Russian "Narodnaya Volya." This was the first revolutionary labor organization in the Russian empire. The "Proletariat," with its idealistic and heroic leader, Ludwik Varinski, did not take a clear-cut Marxist position. But it did recognize that the working class was the most important driving force of the revolution and that the emancipation of the Polish working class could come only through general revolutionary struggle in common with the revolutionary forces of Russia.

Toward the end of the 'eighties, when czarist power had succeeded in smashing this pioneer of Socialism in Poland, the labor movement split into two main currents. On the one hand, there emerged the petty-bourgeois nationalist group which later developed into the P.P.S.—the Polish

Socialist Party. On the other hand there arose a revolutionary Marxist group from which developed the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania, with Rosa Luxemburg at its head.

The split in these two main directions runs like a red thread throughout the entire history of the Polish labor movement. Yet, despite the separation and the profound political differences on principle affecting the most important questions of revolution and working-class struggle, the two groups did, from time to time, take united action in strikes, in demonstrations, and on barricades.

#### THE P.P.S.

The P.P.S. underwent a number of splits, especially in periods of revolutionary upsurge, which reflected the pressure of the toiling masses for unity on the basis of Marxism. Obviously these processes, like all historic processes, developed along a zigzag course. Thus, in the Revolution of 1905, the so-called "Left" P.P.S. split away from the P.P.S. This group, while taking a Menshevik position in general, moved forward to unity with the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania to form one Communist Party after the October Revolution in Russia.

In the period of the First World War, the nationalist, opportunist Right-wing of the P.P.S. harnessed itself to the chariot of the future Polish dictator, Pilsudski. When an independent Polish state was set up, the P.P.S. tailed after Pilsudski, ad-

vocating an outspoken anti-Soviet foreign policy, in consistency with its rank opportunist policy on internal questions. The P.P.S. was thus a most loyal agent of the Polish bourgeoisie within the working class. From time to time, class-conscious groups opposing these policies split from the P.P.S. In 1926, the Pilsudski clique seized dictatorial power and moved to destroy every trace of democratic rights. It began to put even P.P.S. leaders into prisons and to treat them in murderous fashion. Only then did there begin to develop a tendency toward a united front with the Communists.

During the Second World War there took place in the P.P.S. a major, therapeutic split, more correctly put, a reorientation. The great majority of the P.P.S. formed a new party which they called R.P.P.S.—the Polish Socialist Labor Party. Together with the Communists, it formed a united fighting front, committing itself to an active struggle against the conqueror, and opposing the criminal policy of "standing at parade rest" and waiting for Britain and the United States to free Poland.

The P.P.S. carried out a basic revision of the old, harmful P.P.S. policies. It adopted an open and resolute pro-Soviet position, participated with the Communists in the formation of the "Federation of Polish Patriots" in the Soviet Union and in the organization and battles of the Polish Army, which was created in the Soviet Union, and it took an active part in freeing Poland and in building the Polish people's democ-



racy. This P.P.S. of the war days forms today the Polish Socialist Party.

The old reactionary leaders of the P.P.S. call themselves *Wolnosc*, *Rowhosc*, *Niepodleglosc* (Freedom Equality, Independence), and are commonly identified by the initials W.R.N. They have become semi-fascist agents of foreign capital, representing the former members of the defunct London government. They act in the interests of the smashed feudal nobility and capitalists, organize underground fascist bands, are involved in espionage, and specialize in slander campaigns against the Polish democracy. They stubbornly hang on to the name P.P.S., striving to convince the world that they are the true P.P.S. and that the 750,000-strong Polish Socialist Party in Poland is merely a "Communist agency."

#### THE MARXIST POLISH WORKERS PARTY

Such, in brief, is the evolution of the Social-opportunist, nationalist wing of the Polish labor movement. A very significant evolution also marked the course of the revolutionary-Marxist advance guard of the Polish working class. While struggling against the petty-bourgeois Socialism of the P.P.S. and organizing the Polish workers to meet their historical revolutionary tasks, while standing firmly on the basis of international Marxism, the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania was nevertheless heavily burdened with false Luxemburgian theories.

Lenin said of Rosa Luxemburg that "in spite of her mistakes she was and remains for us an eagle." However, he criticized her errors most sharply, especially her false theory of the "automatic collapse of capitalism," her national nihilism, her underestimation of the role of the peasantry, and her errors on organizational questions. These errors were a major obstacle in her struggle for the Polish revolution, and they were passed on to the Communist Party of Poland which arose in 1918.

Primarily because of this Luxemburgian heritage, because of the improper understanding of the significance of the unity of the working class and the peasantry, because of the unskillful utilization of nationalist feelings, because of deeply rooted sectarianism, the Communist Party of Poland was not able to become the leading party of the Polish working class. Only in the liberation struggle against the Hitlerite occupationists did the process of emancipation from the false Luxemburgian ideas and sectarianism come to an end and was there created the consistent Marxist Polish Workers Party (P.P.R.), which has become the organized advance guard of the Polish working class as well as of the Polish people as a whole.

Even the leaders of the P.P.S. (Cyrankiewicz, Szwalbe, and others) find it necessary to underscore the "great contribution of ideas, effort, and blood" which the P.P.R. has made to Poland's struggle for freedom. And, in fact, the P.P.R. was the first to mobilize the Polish peo-

ple to active struggle against the German invader. In the difficult years of occupation and destruction, the P.P.R. conducted the sharpest campaign against the dangerous "theory of two enemies," *i.e.*, that Poland apparently had an "enemy" also in the Soviet Union. The P.P.R. effectively demonstrated to the Polish people that the Soviet Union is a mighty, invincible friend, who would help bring freedom and security to Poland.

The P.P.R. also projected the idea of a nationally monolithic Poland without the Ukrainian and White Russian territories, whose overwhelming non-Polish majorities strove to unite with their national republics in the Soviet Union. It also came out for the restoration of Poland's economically and strategically important regions which had for centuries been subjected to German dominion. The P.P.R. initiated this idea and carried it out with the support of the Polish people (against the nobility, capitalists, and their "Socialist" lackeys of "London") and with the help of the Soviet Union.

To the P.P.R. belongs the initiative for—and in a very great measure the achievement of—the nationalization of big industry, the wide agrarian reform which put an end to feudal land-ownership, and the three-year economic plan which is successfully bringing abundance and well-being to Poland as well as laying the basis for a planned and gradual rebuilding of the economy as Socialist economy.

The P.P.R. itself carries the main burden of direct struggle against the

fascist underground and suffers the greatest losses in human life in the course of liquidating the reactionary-bandit nests. The P.P.R. is stubbornly and resolutely carrying out the political liquidation of the legal agency of reaction — Mikolajczyk's party—separating the peasant masses from their reactionary misleaders and destroying that party's hope of serving as the rallying point for international reaction against the people's democracy.

#### THE UNITED FRONT BETWEEN THE P.P.R. AND THE P.P.S.

November 28, 1947, marked a year since the united front was consolidated through a formal "agreement between the P.P.S. and the P.P.R. on the unity of deed and collaboration." The agreement binds both parties to strive for the removal of the obstacles to the united front, to conduct an uncompromising campaign against anti-Soviet influences and reactionary W.R.N. ideology, against sectarianism, against sabotage and the lack of understanding of the principles of the united front. Both parties are pledged to expel those elements who act to harm the united front or make co-operation between the parties more difficult. Both parties, as independent and equal political organizations, are pledged to respect their individual organizational structures, declaring, however, that "they strive through constantly closer collaboration and ideological agreement to achieve the fullest organic unity of the working-class parties."

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that everything is proceeding smoothly, without any friction or differences of opinion. The traditions and the shadows of the past are too strong; the force of habit is a powerful force. But the tasks that stand before Polish democracy compel both main groups of the Polish working class to seek that which unites and to remove that which divides.

Polish and foreign reaction cannot tolerate the united front. The reactionaries place their greatest hope in magnifying differences in the united working-class front. They calculate that if it is possible to split the united front, it will be easier to undermine the structure of the Polish people's democracy and to try again to transform Poland into a semi-feudal state and simultaneously into an instrument of foreign imperialism. Therefore, the main target for attack is the Marxist P.P.R., which is demagogically accused of attempting to establish a one-party system, a sort of "totalitarianism." These provocative attempts are, however, unsuccessful. On the contrary, after each such attempt the united front becomes stronger and more solid. Thus, when reaction tried to exploit the dispute between the P.P.S. and the P.P.R. on the question of economy measures in industrial enterprises, it failed in its attempt. Instead, there were created mediation commissions to settle all disputes amicably. Mutual trust in the united front was strengthened among the members of both parties. Thus, too,

when a difference of opinion arose between the P.P.S. and the P.P.R. over the methods of overcoming speculation and the high cost of living, and over the evaluation of the role of co-operatives in the economic system of the people's democracy, reaction failed in its attempt to exploit the situation. All legislative proposals on these vitally important questions brought into the Sejm through the P.P.R. were previously agreed upon by the P.P.S. and were adopted by the votes of the whole democratic bloc. As a result of the month-long discussion among the hundreds of thousands of workers in the P.P.R. and P.P.S. on how to fight speculation, the united front was strengthened.

Reaction also tried to split the united front by raising a tumult about the arrest of a number of former leaders of the prewar P.P.S. (the current W.R.N.), who were involved in organizing terrorist acts, sabotage, espionage, and other crimes against the republic. But in this, too, directly opposite results were achieved. The Central Committee of the P.P.S. adopted at its session on June 30, 1947, a resolution which called upon that party to conduct an "effective struggle against the ideological and organizational offensive of groups and centers that are being led directly or indirectly by W.R.N. renegades from Socialism" and to be on guard against all "who drape themselves, now with chauvinist pseudo-patriotism and now with hypocritical pseudo-Leftism." The resolution

stamps every "Socialist" who wishes to split the united front as a renegade and betrayer of Socialism. The same plenum of the Central Committee of the P.P.S. declared categorically that "regardless of this or that difficulty or difference in the relations between the P.P.S. and P.P.R., the united front of both parties cannot be considered as one of the possible political combinations in which the camp of the class enemies can play a partner's role. The path of the P.P.S. leads only to the Left. The enemy is only on the Right."

True, in the ranks of the P.P.S. there are still quite a number of W.R.N. followers, who seek in the government party a "legal base" for their criminally treasonous activity. True, the P.P.S. still draws to itself many past members of the disintegrating Mikolajczyk party, who now seek to win in the P.P.S. support for their orientation toward the "western democracies." True, among the leaders of P.P.S. there are still some who dream of playing the role of a Blum or a Ramadier in Poland. These people are still filled with ideas of creating a "third," "independent" force to maneuver between the "Left" and the opposition, to be the golden mean, the balance of power. But the consciousness of the vital need of unity is so deeply imbedded in the masses that these elements can no longer seriously hurt the united front. The P.P.S. has de-

cidied "to investigate its own ranks," "to cleanse itself of political obstructionists, careerists, and speculators, who succeeded in stealing into the party."

For Polish reaction, and its foreign protectors, this is a great disappointment. For the toiling masses of Poland, and all sincere friends of peace, democracy, and freedom outside Poland, this is a very happy phenomenon.

The meaning of the united front in Poland spreads far across the borders of Poland. The international labor movement has much to learn from the Polish example of how to realize labor unity, which in turn becomes the backbone of labor and peasant unity, and of anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, national unity.

If the Polish working class had to travel such a difficult and painful path in order to achieve the unity that guarantees democracy and opens the way for a Socialist tomorrow, it does not mean that the working class of other countries must pass through the same painful experience. The timely establishment of a united working-class front against reactionary monopoly capital, against the exploiters and imperialist warmongers, can help the working class of other countries avoid the sufferings experienced by Poland.

One thing must be remembered: unity of struggle demands first of all the struggle for unity.

# 1948—A YEAR OF INSPIRING ANNIVERSARIES FOR WOMEN

By ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

THIS YEAR, 1948, brings inspiring historic anniversaries for American women. It is the 100th anniversary of the first Women's Equal Rights Convention. It is the 40th anniversary of the first mass demonstration on the East Side of New York City on March 8, 1908, known as "Women's Day," which grew into International Women's Day, now celebrated the world over.

1948 is also the 100th anniversary of the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, by Marx and Engels, which sharply criticized the disruptive effect of capitalism upon the workers' family, and the ruthless exploitation of women in industry. The *Manifesto* also stated unequivocally that the age-old evil of prostitution, which capitalism profits by, would be abolished completely with the advent of Socialism. Ridiculed as impossible, this profound prophecy has been realized, for the first time in history, in the U.S.S.R., where the home is no longer at the mercy of the profit system, women

are free and equal, the family is respected, and prostitution has been eliminated. History has confirmed the words Karl Marx wrote in 1868: ". . . great social changes are impossible without the feminine ferment. Social progress can be measured exactly by the social position of the fair sex. . . ."

## EARLY STRUGGLES

It was with the first Women's Equal Rights Convention, held at Seneca Falls, New York, July 19-20, 1848, that the American Women's movement began. Amid abuse and ridicule, these pioneers issued a "Declaration of Sentiment," modeled on the Declaration of Independence, demanding equality.

Frederick Douglass, the great Negro leader, accepted Lucretia Mott's invitation to attend at Seneca Falls. Among the thirty-one men present he alone had the courage to second Elizabeth Cady Stanton's motion: "that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves the sacred right to the elective franchise." He commented in his paper, *The North Star*: "Our doctrine is that right is of no sex."

The entrance of large numbers of women into industry as wage workers, and the interest and activity of women in the abolitionist movement, made them increasingly aware of their own special grievances, and later, brought them into closer relations with the labor unions. Thus, in 1868, at the convention of the American Labor Union, William Sylv

fought successfully to seat Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Stanton as delegates, and Kate Mullaney was appointed as the first woman organizer.

The struggles of these early pioneers, added to the recognition by labor of such women as Susan B. Anthony, who was far in advance of the feminists, resulted in the formation of the Working Women's Association of America. Susan B. Anthony, its founder, realized, when approached by leaders of the American Labor Union, that in addition to struggling to win the ballot for women, in addition to giving them a voice in the government, it was necessary to organize them along economic lines on a program of equal pay for equal work.

The early struggles of the Negro people to be free, of women to achieve equality, and of labor to organize, forged strong ties of sympathy among these large and important sections of our population, which together made up the overwhelming majority. There is a compelling necessity for similar common ties and action in 1948 against the increasing fascist tendencies in our land, which strike hardest at the Negro people, labor, and women.

MARCH 8, 1908

The major result of the first hundred years of the American women's movement—"the first hundred years are the hardest"—was the passage of the 19th Amendment. While historically feminist in outlook, this movement won for American women

their main victory to date in their fight for equality—the right to vote.

Mrs. Abigail Adams, wife of the second President of the U.S.A. and mother of the sixth President, had foretold such a movement in writing to her husband before 1787 when the Constitution was being formulated: "If particular care and attention are not given to the ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound to obey any laws in which we have no voice or representation." But her reactionary husband paid no heed. Only male suffrage was referred to in our Constitution until 1920, when the 19th Amendment granted women's suffrage, 133 years after adoption of the Constitution.

It was not accidental, then, that suffrage was an issue among women at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the arguments generally advanced in the early 1900's for suffrage were based on abstract rights, property and inheritance rights, "taxation without representation," etc.

But on the East Side in 1908, militancy was in the air. The arguments of the women of that community were powerful. The shirtwaist and cloak makers, largely women, were beginning to organize unions. The working women wanted the vote to further the fight for better living and working conditions. Many of them were immigrants who could become citizens only when their husbands did, and then only the men could vote. They resented the in-

justice of the fact that the man at the next sewing machine could vote and they could not. They felt deeply the need for political expression—to abolish sweat shops and child labor, establish a minimum wage, etc. Out of annual conferences organized by Socialist women from 1904 on, came "Women's Day," March 8, 1908. On that memorable day the overworked needle trades women from the sweatshops, and the tired mothers from the nearby tenements, gathered in the squares of the East Side in New York to demand "Votes for Women."

The voices of the resolute East Side working women raised that spring day forty years ago resound down the years and throughout the world.

#### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ESTABLISHED

In 1910, at the International Socialist Congress, on motion of Clara Zetkin, the American "Women's Day" was adopted as an *International Women's Day* by unanimous consent. Among the delegates supporting the resolutions were Lenin, who led the Russian delegation, which included Alexandra Kollontai, later Soviet Ambassador to Mexico and Sweden; also Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht from Germany; and William (Big Bill) Haywood from the U.S.A.

In every country, International Women's Day became for women an appropriate occasion to demonstrate, not only for the right to vote, but

against all forms of oppression of women under capitalism and for their full equality in political, economic, professional, civic, cultural, and social life.

International Women's Day coincided in czarist Russia with the beginning of the 1917 revolution, when "The Petrograd workers supported the demonstrations of the working women by a city-wide strike movement." (*History of the C.P.S.U.*)

In Madrid, Dolores Ibarruri, "La Pasionaria" (then a Communist Deputy in the Spanish Republican government) led a demonstration of 80,000 women on March 8, 1936, in an anti-fascist demonstration for "progress and liberty."

Fannina Halle gives in her *Women in the Soviet Far East* a moving account of how in Uzbekistan, Samarkand, and Tashkent women tore the medieval veils from their faces and burned them before Lenin's statue on International Women's Day, 1927.

Agnes Smedley, in *Battle Hymn of China*, describes celebrations of International Women's Day in the Chinese Communist army hospital behind the Japanese lines.

During the war, March 8 was honored by international broadcasts exchanging greetings between American and Soviet women. A permanent committee was set up in Great Britain adequately to prepare celebrations. Last year this committee succeeded in arranging a visit of its

members to the Spanish women in prisons.

In the U.S. last year, joint gatherings of the Women's Committee of the Council for American-Soviet Friendship and the Congress of American Women were held in many cities. These will be repeated on a larger scale this year. The Congress of American Women is the American affiliate of the Women's International Democratic Federation, under whose auspices anti-fascist women will demonstrate this year in forty-one countries.

Since the war, large organizations of women, such as the Union of French Women, have come into existence in Italy, Hungary, Greece, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and other lands, to continue the struggle against fascism in all forms, and to build new lives for the children.

In Europe and Asia women are taking a much more active part in public affairs than ever before. Steeled in the wartime struggles to liberate their countries from fascist aggression and tyranny, European women are active in politics, helping to rebuild their countries and to rehabilitate their families. Under hard conditions, worsened by our country's refusal to give adequate aid on a non-discriminatory basis, the people, and especially the women and the youth, are performing herculean tasks.

The political and social progress made by women, especially in countries where they have had the vote

only since the war ended, puts us to shame in the U.S.A.

During the past year Mrs. Pandit Nehru, who has been her country's representative in the U.N., became India's ambassador to the Soviet Union. Anna Pauker, heroic Communist fighter, is now Romania's Foreign Minister, and Isola Dragoitcheva, Secretary of Bulgaria's Fatherland Front, has become a cabinet member, Minister of Posts. In Czechoslovakia, Anexka Hodinova has been Deputy Speaker of the Assembly since liberation. There are women members in every parliamentary body of all but fascist countries in Europe.

Is it any wonder that a visiting Czechoslovakian newspaperman said recently here: "We don't think of your hemisphere any more as the New World. We think of it as the Old World and ours as the new!"

#### THE ROLE OF AMERICAN WOMEN TODAY

Just before the Women's International Democratic Federation adjourned its first Congress in November, 1945, the 900 delegates present, from 41 countries, took a solemn oath together in all their languages.

The American women who were present were greatly moved and inspired by the fervor and devotion with which women who had been so lately in prisons and concentration camps, working at forced labor, and fighting in the partisan and guerrilla armies, women also from colon-



ial and fascist countries, rededicated themselves to the unfinished tasks.

There are innumerable American women who gladly subscribe to that vow's stirring words:

We solemnly pledge ourselves to fight relentlessly for the stamping out of fascism, in all its forms, and the establishment of true democracy throughout the world. We solemnly pledge to fight relentlessly for the establishment of a lasting peace, which is the paramount guarantee of the happiness of our children and our own.

1948 will be the year of counter-attack by the American people against the forces of reaction who are attempting to fasten fascism on our country and revive it elsewhere. In the Presidential and Congressional elections, women can play a decisive role of an independent and progressive character. Henry Wallace has wisely remarked on this point:\*

The women of the United States are learning that there has been serious mismanagement by both parties. The Democratic Administration relaxed controls too soon. The Republicans co-operated with the reactionary Democrats and killed the O.P.A. Together, the reactionary Democrats and Republicans have co-operated on a program of planning for war, a program that inevitably aggravates the current world-wide food scarcity. . . . I believe the Administration and the Congress are not yet fully aware of the growing revolt among women. . . . Women want to

aid suffering people wherever they may be. Women want peace. . . . The most significant meetings in 1948, in my opinion, will not be the national conventions but the meetings of various women's organizations. They will protest with increased vigor the impossible prices and the threat of suicidal war.

## ISSUES

There are many burning grievances and much anxiety about the state of the nation and the world among large groups of American women today. *Peace* is the worldwide keynote closest to the hearts and minds of young wives and the mothers of the G.I.'s. The millions who died in the war in Europe and Asia are not so soon forgotten. No right-thinking American woman wants another war.

The women's organizations enthusiastically endorsed the United Nations, hope to see it succeed, and are gravely concerned over the Anglo-American bypassing and weakening of the U.N. in cases like Greece. Many important mass organizations of women oppose Universal Military Training (as Arnold Johnson pointed out in his article in the January issue of *Political Affairs*). Some of the same organizations, however, endorsed the Marshall Plan because their members are conscientious women who falsely believe it means aid for suffering people, and who are not fully aware that it is a part of the war plans. Many others, however, are endorsing and contributing directly to the "International Chil-

\* *New Republic*, October 27, 1947.

dren's Emergency Fund of the United Nations," to guarantee aid to all hungry children and help to countries where need is greatest.

Millions of women who voted for Roosevelt can be enlisted for the third-party movement. A woman, Elinor Kahn, is the State Director of the Organizing Committee, Independent Progressive Party of California, and women are doing yeoman service in the petition campaign in that state. The Progressive Party of Chicago includes in its 1948 slate two women candidates for Congress and two women candidates for judge. There, too, as Gil Green pointed out in the December *Political Affairs*:

The performance of the women in this campaign [Cook County Judicial elections, 1947] leads this writer to conclude that the progressive movement generally underestimates the role of women, gives leading women too little recognition, and hence fails to tap this great reservoir for progress.

Let us not forget that there are over 37 million housewives in the United States. In mobilizing these masses of women the keynote, domestic issue about which they are constantly agitated is the mounting high cost of living, the need for rent control, for adequate low cost housing—in short, the struggle for an adequate standard of living. Also, mothers are greatly worried over the lack of proper educational facilities. Only 1.5 per cent of our national income is spent on public education. Great Britain spends twice as much and the Soviet

Union six times as much as the U.S.A. More schools, teachers, and equipment are desperately needed. The women in industry, who still number over 16 million, are affected by anti-labor legislation, by shifts from wartime skilled trades to lower-paid unskilled service and domestic work, and still are in large numbers not receiving equal pay for equal work. The right to work, to training, upgrading, and equal seniority; safeguards for health and safety; adequate child care facilities—these remain the urgent demands of organized working women, and are needed by all who toil, especially Negro women. The threat of an economic crisis, with war savings practically all spent, looms large to such women workers who know they are "last to be hired, first to be fired."

In addition to the general program for veterans, let us not forget that there are several hundred thousand women veterans who are denied equal priority in housing, unless the husband is a veteran; who are given only \$65 under the G.I. Bill's educational provisions, as compared to \$90 for married male veterans; and for whom facilities are at an absolute minimum, with no provisions for maternity care. All of these grievances are even more pronounced in the case of Negro women veterans. In fact, every inequality and disability inflicted on American white women is aggravated a thousand-fold among Negro women, who are triply exploited—as Negroes, as workers, and as women.

## RIGHTS OF NEGRO WOMEN

The splendid, uncompromising fight being made by Mrs. Ada Fisher for the right to admission into the University of Oklahoma, which rejected her as a Negro, has rallied the support of white as well as Negro students there, and democratic Americans generally. This outrageous Jim-Crow case is but an added case of the Negro hatred which was lately manifested in the execution of a helpless Negro G.I. in Oregon, denied proper legal defense, and in the arrest for deportation of Claudia Jones, member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, a young Negro woman, who came here as a child from Trinidad.

Such outrages tear the mask from the hypocritical election year promises made to the Negro people by Truman's Civil Rights Committee. Especially is this true when seen in the light of the attitude of the Americans on the Human Rights Sub-commission of the United Nations who opposed Soviet proposals to make discrimination or its advocacy a crime. Mrs. Roosevelt, a member of that commission, also disagreed with the proposal of the Soviet Union that "marriage and the family should be protected by the state and that persons should be free to marry regardless of race, religion, or origin," doubtlessly because thirty

states in the U.S.A. prohibit marriages between Negroes and whites.

Indignities and insults are inflicted daily upon millions of Negro Americans. The false and broken promises from Republicans and Democrats alike, are turning Negro women away from both parties, and they can be a source of tremendous support to the third-party movement.

## A YEAR OF DESTINY

This is a year of destiny. Political rights for the oppressed and exploited of our land must be extended more than ever before. We can build new landmarks in this year of historic anniversaries of great struggles of the people. We must be bold to reach the women—in shops and factories, on the farms, in the homes—to make them part of a people's movement for peace, for democracy, for security, here and the world over. There cannot be a successful third party unless it reaches and includes the masses of women. We Communists should remember the moving words of Lenin, in his interview with Clara Zetkin:

We are dealing with millions of women. . . . If they are not with us, the counter-revolution may succeed in leading them against us. We must always think of that—the women masses, we must get them, whatever the difficulties we may encounter in doing so.

# THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT

By JOSEPH ROLAND

THE ERA OF THE GENERAL CRISIS of capitalism, in which we live, is also the era of gigantic national debts. On April 1, 1947, the national debt of the United States amounted to 258 billions of dollars. The annual interest charge alone, currently averaging about 2 per cent, amounts to 5.3 billions of dollars. Even in relation to current national income, running at a rate close to 200 billions a year, this interest charge is a staggering burden upon the people. But in a depression year, if national income fell to, say, half the present level, the burden of the interest charges would be catastrophic to the national economy.

We Marxists need to achieve a clear understanding of the economic and political significance of the national debt as a developing process. We need to analyze the process of creation of the debt as well as the process of maintenance of the established debt. The present method of financing the national debt of the United States has become one of the major forms of exploitation of the

American people. However, it is a peculiar form of exploitation with many special characteristics and a very complex content. It has implications of the greatest importance for the progressive struggles of the years just ahead of us.

## CLASS EXPLOITATION AND THE NATIONAL DEBT

It would be well to begin our analysis with a broad description of the established national debt as a method or instrument of exploitation. However, one should not jump to the conclusion that because we use the term *exploitation* we are suggesting that we should always be opposed to increases in the national debt. In general, we are opposed to the national debt because it is a means of fleecing the people and enriching financial speculators. But that does not mean that we are not in favor of government financing of social security, health, housing, etc., even if this should cause an increase in the national debt. But spiraling the national debt is not the only way to finance measures in the interest of the people. We favor steep taxation of corporate profits and, in times of great social need, a capital levy. We strenuously oppose increasing the debt for the purpose of financing the Truman-Marshall plans of reactionary imperialism and war for world domination.

Many liberal and New Deal economists feel that it is wrong to speak

of the national debt as a burden. As they put the matter: "After all we owe it to ourselves." They hide the fact that "we" consists of the masses of the people and the few financial capitalists, and that the many owe and pay the national debt to the few. It is true that a national debt is not like a private debt that has to be repaid in a fixed, limited time. The only thing that has to be paid regularly on a national debt is the interest charge. Such interest payments are a transfer of income from tax-payers to the holders of government bonds. To the extent that the two groups are identical, the transfer of income is fictional. But to a great degree they are not identical. Our tax system is highly regressive. It lays the heaviest burdens on the lowest income earners. The ownership of government bonds, on the other hand, is highly concentrated among the wealthiest groups. Exact data on the degree of concentration are not available and the extent of concentration is in fact pretty much concealed by the forms of ownership. For example, government bonds owned by commercial banks really belong to the corporations and individuals who have deposits in the banks. The ownership of such deposits (checking accounts) is of course highly concentrated and centralized in the hands of the wealthy.

According to the Treasury Bulletin (June, 1947) the outstanding U. S. debt of \$258.3 billions (February, 1947) was distributed in the following ownership categories:

<i>Held by</i>	<i>Billions</i>
Commercial and Federal Reserve banks .....	\$95.9
Insurance companies and mutual savings banks.....	37.4
Individuals .....	64.6
Other corporations and associations .....	22.9
U.S. Government agencies' trust funds, and state and local government holdings .....	37.5
Total .....	\$258.3

Included in the total of \$64.6 billion of U. S. government bonds held by individuals are \$30.7 billion of Series E savings bonds. A moderate proportion of Series E bonds is held by wage-earners. However, the proportion has been declining since the end of the war. Some \$45.4 billion of Series E bonds were originally issued, of which about \$20 billion were in denominations of under \$100. A large share of such low denomination bonds were sold to wage-earners. However, more than \$15 billion of the original \$45 billion of Series E issues have already been cashed in. Almost all of these were in the lower denominations. It is therefore unlikely that working-class ownership of Series E bonds is much in excess of \$5 billion at the present time. There is perhaps another \$5 billion of wage-earner (and low-income salary-earner) ownership of government bonds through insurance companies, savings banks, unions, and benefit association funds. Of the \$220 billion of privately owned U.S. government bonds (excluding U.S. agency trust

funds, and local government holdings) perhaps as much as 5 per cent is owned directly or indirectly by wage-earners and low-bracket salary-earners. This proportion will probably be cut in half in the next few years as workers use up their wartime savings.

There are practically no reliable statistical data on the distribution of the burden of taxation by income class. It is therefore impossible accurately to measure the degree of exploitation that the payment of interest on the national debt involves. In 1946, a married worker, with two children, earning \$3,500, paid \$220 in Federal income tax. If he owned \$500 in Series E bonds and \$500 in insurance reserves and savings bank deposits, he was credited in a year with about \$25 in interest. He paid \$220 in taxes and got back \$25 in interest. Of course, the taxes were used for other purposes by the government besides payment of debt interest, so that the degree of exploitation of this typical worker cannot be measured by a comparison of the two figures cited. Furthermore, the vast majority do not own any bonds and receive no interest. The essential point is clear, however. The carrying charges on the national debt exact a heavy tribute from the working class and all low-income groups. This burden will increase as workers' wartime savings are used up and if further regressive changes in our tax system are put into effect.

Communists necessarily support all measures which reduce this ex-

ploitation. We should oppose all efforts aimed at increasing the interest rates on the national debt and demand further reductions. We should support all measures aimed at reducing the concentration of debt ownership. Above all, we should advocate most vigorously a complete reform of our regressive tax system and the establishment of the principle of capacity-to-pay. These measures would reduce the disparity between the distribution of government debt ownership and tax incidence by income class. In this way the exploitation of the people, which is inherent in the existing debt and tax systems, can be reduced.

The process of formation of the national debt—that is, the creation of new debt—contains a great many complex aspects. These may be grouped under three main propositions, each of which requires considerable development before its economic and political significance becomes clear. These propositions are the following:

1. The capacity of the government to increase its debt is simultaneously a capacity for large-scale economic intervention, intensifying the growth of state capitalism and the merger of the monopolies with the state.

2. The growth of the national debt is associated with the operation under monopoly conditions of the historical tendencies toward a falling rate of profit.

3. The growth of the national debt tends to create liquid or money cap-

ital at a much faster rate than the rate of growth of the domestic productive forces, thus increasing the instability of the economic system stimulating inflation and the urge toward external expansion.

#### THE NATIONAL DEBT AND GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC INTERVENTION

Superficially, creation of new debt appears to be nothing more than the result of a government's spending larger sums than the income it receives from taxes, customs, etc. Looking at the matter a little more closely, one sees that government borrowing may represent a transfer to the government of the purchasing power embodied in the current savings of individuals and in the idle capital of corporations. For the most part, what economists call current "savings" are the monetary expression of the portion of currently realized surplus value that is not consumed in living expenses and luxuries by the capitalist class. Such "savings," were they not borrowed and spent by the government, might otherwise be invested in the purchase of capital goods and hence in the expansion of industry. On the other hand, they might never be invested at all and, by being withdrawn from the stream of purchasing power, contribute to the outbreak of a crisis of overproduction.

The economic effects of government absorption and expenditure of current private "savings" are potentially very important. The expansion

of industry may be greatly affected; taken together with a number of other steps, a cyclical crisis may be temporarily postponed or its effects somewhat mitigated.

Turning to the concrete historical facts, however, we see that the creation of the national debt of the U. S. has involved a great deal more than simply the absorption of current "savings" of the capitalist class. Important as the economic effects of such absorption of savings are, the actual process of national debt creation has involved developments of much greater economic importance.

The facts are that since the turn of the century the national debt of the United States has been created in three tremendous spurts. Each of the three big increases in the national debt went far beyond absorption of current private savings. The first period of rapid increase was during World War I, when the debt climbed from practically nothing to \$25 billion. The second period of rapid increase was the crisis and depression of the 'thirties. In the period between 1932 and 1940 the Federal debt more than doubled, reaching \$48 billion by June 30, 1940. This increase matched the World War I increase. During the third period, World War II, the debt increased by 500 per cent to a top of \$280 billion.

Clearly, the creation of the national debt of the U. S. has been largely a crisis and war phenomenon. The periods when the contradictions of the capitalist system have erupted in

war or crisis have also been the periods of rapid debt increase. In this sense the present national debt of the U. S. is a product of the general crisis of capitalism.

The periods of rapid debt increase were all characterized by extensive economic intervention by the government, aimed at sharply increasing the level of production. During the two war periods the government objective was maximum mobilization of the nation's economic resources for war on terms which would prove satisfactorily profitable to the monopoly capitalists. During the great crisis and depression of the 'thirties, the government's object was to stimulate the economy to a point where the supposedly normal forces of business expansion would take hold and eliminate the need for further government intervention. This it did not succeed in doing, for by 1937 unemployment still amounted to 10 million and a new cyclical crisis was in full bloom.

In each of these periods of large-scale economic intervention, the creation of a new debt was far in excess of available current "savings." By means of such excess debt creation, vast new sums of purchasing power—vast new sums of money—were pumped into the economic system by government spending. This excess money was created by the simple device of handing over great batches of government bonds to the big banks, which obligingly credited the government checking accounts

for the amounts of the bonds they received. Instead of just printing greenbacks, the government found it more feasible to use the technical facilities of the banks for creating check or credit money. In large part excess debt created this way bears an inflationary character, for actual and potential currency far outstrips the value of commodities in circulation. It tightens the grip of *rentiers* (coupon-clippers) on the national economy and breeds speculation and swindling. Currently, the Wall Street gamblers are receiving about one and a half billions of dollars each year as interest payment on the bank-owned government bonds.

A fundamental requirement of the war economy was to make the newly created purchasing power effective and prevent it from being wasted in inflationary price increases. The government therefore had to employ other measures of economic intervention during both war periods. It had to control prices. It had to ration scarce commodities, including labor power. It had to limit, direct, and control private capital formation, but always in a manner advantageous to the most powerful monopolies. Now that these controls are lifted we are feeling the full inflationary effects of the debt. During the period of economic crisis and depression, too, the government employed extensive measures of economic intervention. Thus, the historical experience demonstrates that the debt-creating powers of the government are an



integral part of its developing powers of economic control and intervention.

We can now see more clearly just why the monopoly capitalists are so anxious to create a national debt phobia in the minds of the American people. The monopoly capitalists like very much to own government bonds and receive interest. The more they have and the higher the interest rate received, the better they like it. They also have no serious objections to increasing the national debt in order to pour out billions on atomic bombs and super-navies, and in hand-outs to reactionary and fascist governments.

What they fear is the coming to power of a government which, like Roosevelt's New Deal government, would use some fraction of its debt-creating and associated economic powers in the interests of the people—for social insurance, public works, health, education, and conservation of human and natural resources. They are terrified, too, by the actions of the new democratic governments of Europe, which are using their powers of debt creation as an aid in the nationalization of the big monopoly industries and banks. They fear that some day the American people will get the same idea. They are in mortal fear that a decline in the national income, unemployment and reduced taxing power, under conditions of depression or crisis, will necessitate high taxation of corporate profits to finance the national debt. They fear,

too, the pressure of a growing national debt toward uncontrolled and run-away inflation.

#### THE NATIONAL DEBT, THE FALLING RATE OF PROFIT, AND SURPLUS CAPITAL

In the third volume of *Capital* Marx analyzes the highly complex circumstances underlying the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. His analysis of this tendency is based on conditions of capitalist free competition, *i.e.*, conditions of the pre-monopoly period. His analysis shows that the key factor in the tendency to lower profit rates is the increase (characteristic of capitalist development) in the ratio of constant to variable capital. This expresses the increasing use of machinery as against living labor, the increase in expenditures for plant, equipment, and raw materials, as against wage payments.

One of the conditions of freely competitive capitalism is that no capitalist or group of capitalists in a given industry is strong enough to prevent expansion of investment and production in that industry—either among the existing firms in the industry or as a result of new firms entering the industry. By contrast, one of the essential features of monopoly is precisely the power to obstruct or slow down expansion of production and investment in a given industry. The monopoly devices for the extraction of super-profits act like a dam arresting the downward flow of waters. Eventually, however,

the waters reach the sea. The key to the changes in operation of the law under monopoly conditions is the phenomenon of surplus capital, which Lenin regarded as an important feature of the epoch of imperialism.

Surplus capital under monopoly conditions is not only the result of super-profits. If the super-profits could all be profitably invested in industrial expansion they could not be regarded as surplus capital. The surplus capital arises because of the additional barriers to expansion of productive industry under monopoly conditions. The profits that are created in the monopolized industries (profits that in the days of competitive capitalism would, in large part, have been ploughed back in the form of industrial expansion) now tend to accumulate to a much greater extent as surplus capital.

The circumstances surrounding the origin of surplus capital are by no means simple. We are dealing with a phenomenon that expresses itself in the sphere of circulation of capital—the sphere of realization of surplus value. Marx devoted a big volume of analysis and discussion, Volume II of *Capital*, to the problems in this sphere. It is easy to see that for any individual capitalist the profit or surplus value that is extracted in a particular cycle of production is realized in money. When the goods that have been produced are sold, the capitalist has his portion of surplus value in cash. It is not so easy to see that for the capitalist

system as a whole—in the absence of big injections of new money—the full realization of surplus value cannot take place unless the stock of productive capital is increasing, unless investments are being made in new plant and equipment. For the system as a whole, if the volume of new investments tends to fall behind the volume of emerging profits, the profits begin to decline and a crisis of overproduction is stimulated. It is this tendency that is the root of the phenomenon of surplus capital under monopoly conditions.

As we noted earlier, government deficit spending and debt creation, when taken together with a number of other measures, may be a big influence in somewhat retarding the outbreak or mitigating to some extent the effects of an economic crisis. This occurs when the government resuscitates dying surplus value by the injection of new money. For in one way or another, this expenditure provides markets for some small portion of otherwise unsaleable products of industry.

When capitalist profits have to be rescued by government debt creation, their economic role is transformed. Instead of being the means of expansion of productive capital, of plants and machinery and labor power, they accumulate as surplus liquid capital in the form of government bonds or bank deposits backed by government bonds. Such capital is unproductive, parasitic. Though it has made no contribution toward production of values, it nevertheless

demands its rate of profit, its share of the national pool of surplus value.

It is the chronic condition of emerging surplus capital that, in the monopoly era, makes it possible for the government to float new bond issues at ever lower interest rates. Apart from the possibility of lower rates, there is a necessity here too. In view of the parasitic and unproductive character of the national debt—in view of its almost cancerous growth in crisis periods—a falling rate of interest is the only way that the total of debt interest can be kept within bearable limits.

Thus while the tendency of the rate of profit to fall results in a declining tendency of the rate of interest on the national debt, fundamentally the anti-monopoly struggles of the people must be considered decisive in cutting to the minimum the interest tribute of parasitic finance capitalists.

#### THE NATIONAL DEBT AND LIQUID CAPITAL

In the United States, as in all capitalist countries, government bonds circulate virtually as cash. They are also the main security for bank deposits. Every period of rapid increase in national debt is also a period of rapid increase in the accumulation of liquid or money capital.

If we use as a rough measure of liquid capital accumulation the total of demand deposits in commercial banks plus U.S. government bonds owned by individuals and corporations (other than banks and insur-

ance companies), we find that the June, 1940, total was \$44.2 billion, while the July, 1946, total was \$167.8 billion. Thus, the war profits paid out by means of increased national debt have had the effect of virtually quadrupling the accumulated liquid capital of the monopolies and millionaires in the United States. This was a sharp intensification of the process of increasing the U.S. liquid capital accumulation that was set in motion during the recovery period 1933-1940—also as a result of increases in national debt and its inherent inflationary character. We must now inquire into the significance of these tremendous increases in liquid capital.

In Volume I of *Capital* (in the chapters on "Primitive Accumulation" and "Genesis of the Industrial Capitalist") Marx analyzes the role of the national debt, and the liquid capital which it breeds, as an essential stimulating factor in the expansion of capitalist accumulation. In the early period of capitalism it was fairly obvious that a necessary step in the extension of the capitalist mode of production into areas dominated by the older commodity system of production was the prior accumulation of a fund of liquid capital. It is well known, for example, that the assumption by the Federal Government in 1790 of the depreciated state war debt, under the plan worked out by Alexander Hamilton, resulted in the creation of a tremendous quantity (for those days) of liquid capital, which helped stimulate

a broad development of capitalist relations.

Not only in the early period of capitalist history, but during all phases of capitalist development, including the imperialist phase of penetration of finance capital into colonial countries, the extension into a new area of the capitalist mode of production involves the appearance on the periphery of the area of a fund of liquid capital. This process illustrates Marx's general formula for capital, the well known M-C-M (money or liquid capital — commodities — money).

It is fairly obvious that the monopoly capitalism of the U.S. cannot possibly use more than a fraction of its new liquid capital supply for further development in the sphere of the domestic economy. If all of the new liquid capital began to press into the economic system, unhampered by government controls, the result might well be violent inflation. Indeed, the inflationary rise in prices which followed the destruction of O.P.A. reflected the pressure of some of this new liquid capital. While the present inflationary wave is mainly the result of outright monopoly robbery, the existence of big liquid capital accumulations stimulated by the national debt did undoubtedly facilitate the monopolistic inflationary price gouging of the past two years.

The new wartime liquid capital accumulations of the monopolies and the millionaires, when added to the potential surplus capital emerging from current production, create pow-

erful new incentives for capital export. In addition, the very strong foreign exchange position of the American dollar makes it easy to transfer United States liquid capital abroad. Foreign loans and investments are the economic means of pressure to extend American monopoly control and ownership throughout the world.

Thus, it appears that one of the most important effects of the growth of the national debt is its role—through formulation of liquid capital—in stimulating the aggressive expansionist appetites of the American monopolies.

#### THE POSITION OF NEW DEAL ECONOMISTS ON THE NATIONAL DEBT

Under the banner of the economic theories of the late John Maynard Keynes, a school of thinking has developed among certain liberal and New Deal economists that regards the national debt as the savior of capitalism, as the magic solvent of all its contradictions.

According to these views, the capitalist economic crisis is brought about by a deficiency of purchasing power and lack of investment. This deficiency occurs because the big-income recipients, who do most of the saving of income, tend to invest less than they save. These individuals are said to have a high "liquidity preference"—that is, they like to hold cash or bank deposits and they must be tempted by very attractive prospective yields to get them to invest their

money. Due to what they call the "maturing" of the American capitalist system, investment opportunities with attractive yields no longer abound. Hence, according to the Keynesians, there is a chronic tendency on the part of the upper-income groups to over-save or under-invest. The result is that the total purchasing power available to take goods off the market (demand for consumer goods plus capital goods) tends to fall below the value of the total production coming into the market.

On the basis of this analysis, the Keynesians hold that it is a simple matter to compensate for the deficiency in demand, to equalize effective purchasing power with production, and to maintain full employment. It is equally simple, according to this view, when conditions of unemployment exist, to increase purchasing power above the levels of current production and to stimulate a revival of production. Any amount of new purchasing power can be created by means of government spending in excess of tax revenues, that is, by deficit spending, the equivalent continually increasing the national debt. Hence, by the mechanism of continually increasing the national debt it is possible to ensure full employment and maintain the capitalist system free of crisis forever!

On the question of the inflationary potentials created by large increases in the national debt and the consequent expansion of liquid capital in the form of currency and bank de-

posits, the Keynesian position is that this potential can be neutralized by proper measures of banking, monetary, and credit control. Although there is much variation of individual opinion on the question of price control among the Keynesians, they are disposed to favor increases in the price level from time to time so as to offset increases in wages, keep profit margins at "satisfactory" levels, and preserve a proper proportion between the national income and the amount of the national debt.

The problem of the snow-balling burden of the interest charges resulting from a rapidly growing national debt has few terrors for the Keynesians. As we noted earlier, some of them hold that the amount of the interest charges does not mean a thing because "we owe it to ourselves." They maintain that by arranging things so that the price and wage levels go up from time to time, the national income can be increased so as to keep pace with the growing volume of interest charges. Some Keynesians believe that a large share of government deficit spending should take the form of productive investments, such as river-valley developments, self-liquidating public works, soil conservation projects, roads, etc. This would strengthen the nation's productive forces and efficiency and lead in turn to an increasing national income that could more easily support the increasing interest charges. Finally, there is a school of thought among them that would eliminate interest charges altogether

by having the government obtain funds through selling non-interest-bearing securities to the Federal Reserve Banks.

Fundamentally, and quite naturally considering their class basis, the Keynesians seek an easy way out of the capitalist crisis with a minimum amount of disturbance of existing social relations. The easy way that they think they have discovered, is the method of debt and monetary management. Stripped of fancy verbiage, this method calls for keeping the capitalist system afloat by means of periodic monetary shots in the arm. The Keynesians, as a group, are not too fussy about how the debt-created new purchasing power is spent, so long as it takes production off the market. Some of them would fall right in line with any scheme of deficit spending that is agreeable to the monopoly masters of the country.

Basically, the Keynesian monetary panacea is as utopian in theory as it is futile in practice. It cannot eliminate cyclical crises. No amount of tinkering with the currency can eradicate the fundamental contradiction of capitalism. As is made abundantly clear by the Marxist-Leninist classics and confirmed by over a century of experience, the fundamental cause of the crisis is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private, capitalist character of appropriation. No amount of tinkering with the rate of interest or pump-priming can eliminate capitalist exploitation, the

final source of the simultaneous tendencies to the unconditional expansion of production and impoverishment of the masses.

In effect, all schools of Keynesian economics seek for schemes and panaceas to soften, if not solve, the insoluble contradictions of capitalism which only Socialism can finally and fully eliminate.

In addition to their monetary bias, the Keynesians, in common with other bourgeois thinkers, tend to see economic problems in terms of individual behavior rather than in terms of the material relations of production. Thus, it is the liquidity preference of the big-income recipients which is supposed to bring about over-saving and under-investment.

The unsoundness of this view is immediately evident if we consider that millionaires do not make a practice of stuffing unspent income into their mattresses. They deposit their otherwise uninvested capital in banks and insurance companies. These institutions are in the business of making investments, and experience has shown that there is no interest rate low enough to discourage them from carrying on that business. They have no liquidity preference; they seek investment for their funds with almost frantic intensity. The difficulty, as these institutions continually tell the world, is that there is not sufficient demand for capital from qualified borrowers, *i.e.*, borrowers who are fairly certain to make a substantial profit in their use of borrowed capital. This is just another way of say-

ing that the big capitalists in industry, trade, and agriculture are unable to bring about an expansion of the productive forces sufficient to maintain a rate of new investment which is equal to the rate of new capital supply. Thus, it is capitalism, especially in its monopoly stage, which creates barriers in the way of full utilization of the nation's economic resources, and not the liquidity preferences of individuals, which account for the phenomena of "over-saving" and "under-investment."

A fundamental criticism which can be made of the Keynesians is that they misinterpret the role of monopoly and its relation to the state power. They seem to think that the government can act as an independent economic force turning the money faucets on and off in accordance with economic equations. They cannot grasp the fact that the state in the epoch of monopoly is but the executive committee of the most powerful trusts, and monopoly capital, in a hundred different ways, controls and determines economic and political policy. They do not understand that government deficit spending can be effective only when it is accompanied by strong and sweeping measures to curb the powers of the monopolies, including especially measures to nationalize the key banks and trustified industries.

#### A MARXIST PROGRAM ON THE NATIONAL DEBT

On the basis of the foregoing

analysis, our Marxist program should embrace the following basic ideas:

1. Labor and the people should struggle to keep the national debt down to a minimum. Government expenditures for social security, which should be appreciably increased, should be financed by stepped-up taxation of the rich. Under no circumstances can the people tolerate an increased national debt for reactionary imperialist war purposes, for the swollen war budget and for militarization of the youth.

2. The fundamental cause of the present gigantic national debt is the general crisis of capitalism, an important feature of which is the choking off of the productive forces by monopoly capital. Alleviation of the problems brought about by the debt is connected with the alleviation of the general distress caused by monopoly conditions. This requires curbs upon monopoly and nationalization of the biggest industries and banks.

3. The view that debt management (increases and manipulation of the national debt) is a panacea for all the ills of monopoly capitalism should be sharply combated. The present national debt, because of its political character and the methods of taxation used to finance it, is a huge, parasitic burden on the backs of the American people. It represents for the most part a concentrated accumulation of profits amassed by monopoly capital especially during the two wars. It represents a monetization of

human suffering accumulating at compound interest. It has been a big factor in stimulating the inflation, speculation and monopolistic price gouging of the past few years.

4. Only a people's anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist government can be depended upon to employ its debt-creating powers, like all its powers, in the interests of the people. Only such a government can be entrusted with new broad powers of economic intervention. We must fight against entrusting new economic powers to governments like the Truman Administration, which are dominated by the monopolies and which carry out their policies of aggressive imperialist expansion, and which represent a developing trend of reactionary state capitalism, that in the epoch of imperialism finds its full expression in fascism.

5. A people's government would follow a policy of deficit spending, when necessary, that would take the form of public investments and expenditures for social welfare. These expenditures would help to expand the productive forces in industry and agriculture and conserve the labor

skills of workers and farmers. To such a government the people could entrust full powers of price, monetary, credit, and banking control, as well as foreign exchange and capital export control. A decisive condition for such a progressive people's policy is to break the power of monopoly.

6. In the struggle against the economic and financial policies of the Truman Administration, and of monopoly capital in general, the democratic and anti-imperialist forces should favor the immediate application by the government of the following lines of policy:

The weight of the parasitic burden of the existing national debt should be sharply reduced. An end should be made of the interest graft paid to the banks. Much of the existing debt should be replaced by interest-free securities, taxation of large incomes and a capital levy generally.

A progressive tax program should be adopted, not only to provide for a government welfare budget with a minimum of deficit spending, but also to reduce and distribute fairly the burden of carrying the existing national debt.



# FROM THE TREASURY OF MARXISM

## ON THE DEATH OF KARL MARX\*

By FREDERICK ENGELS

[This selection is published to commemorate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx on March 14, 1883. *Editor.*]

I have subsequently received several documents on the occasion of this tragic event, which show how widespread the bereavement was, and of which I must give an account.

On March 20th, Miss Eleanor Marx\*\* received the following telegram from the editorial office of the *Daily News*, sent in French:

*Moscow, March 18th, Editor, the Daily News, London. Please be good enough to transmit to Mr. Engels, author of The Working Classes in England and intimate friend of the late Karl Marx, our request that he place on the coffin of the never-to-be forgotten author of Capital a wreath with the following inscription:*

**"TO THE DEFENDER OF THE WORKERS' RIGHTS, IN THEORY AND THEIR REALIZATION IN**

\* Appeared in the Zurich *Sozialdemokrat*, No. 19, May 3, 1883. This translation for *Political Affairs* has been made from the volume *Karl Marx: A Collection of Reminiscences and Essays* (German), published by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow, 1934. All notes are of this edition. *Ed.*

\*\* Marx's youngest daughter.

PRACTICE, FROM THE STUDENTS OF THE PETROVSKY AGRICULTURAL ACADEMY IN MOSCOW"

Mr. Engels is requested to let us know his address and the price of the wreath; the amount will be forwarded to him at once.

Students of the Petrovsky Academy in Moscow.

As it turned out, the telegram arrived too late for the funeral, which took place on the 17th.

Moreover, on March 31st friend P. Lavrov\* sent me from Paris a money order for 124.50 francs, which amounts to £4. 18s. 9d., sent in by students of the Technological Institute in St. Petersburg and by Russian women students, likewise for a wreath for Karl Marx's grave.

Thirdly, the *Sozialdemokrat* announced last week that students of Odessa also wanted a wreath to be laid on Marx's grave in their name.

Since the money I received from St. Petersburg was more than enough for all three wreaths, I took the liberty of also defraying the costs of the Moscow and Odessa wreaths out of this sum. The preparation of the inscriptions—here a rather unusual thing—caused some delay; but the

\* Peter Lavrovitch Lavrov (1823-1900), Russian revolutionary, a Narodnik, member of the First International.

laying of the wreaths will take place at the beginning of next week, and I shall then be able to sent an accounting of the money received to the *Sozialdemokrat*.

We received from the local Communist Workers' Educational Society of *Solingen* a large and beautiful wreath "For the grave of Karl Marx from the workers in the scissors, knife, and sword industry of Solingen." As we were laying it, on March 24th, we found that the long ends of the red silk ribbons on the wreaths from the *Sozialdemokrat* and from the Communist Workers' Educational Society had been cut off and stolen by some desecrating hand. Complaints to the authorities did not avail, but may well gain protection for the future.

A Slavic society in Switzerland "hopes that as a special token of remembrance to Karl Marx an international fund will be established in his name, for the relief of the victims of the great struggle for emancipation, as well as for the furthering of this struggle itself"; and this society sends in an initial contribution, which I am holding for the time being. The fate of this proposal depends, of course, primarily on whether it receives any further support, and for that reason I am publishing it here.

In order to counteract the false rumors now current in the press with some actual facts, I offer the following brief details concerning the illness and death of our great theoretical leader.

Almost completely cured of an old liver-ailment by taking three courses of treatment at Karlsbad, Marx still suffered from chronic stomach-trouble and nervous exhaustion, which expressed itself in headaches, but especially in persistent insomnia. Both ailments would more or less disappear after a visit to the sea shore or to a health resort in the summer and reappeared only after the new year with distressing effect. Chronic throat-trouble and coughing, which likewise contributed to his insomnia, and chronic bronchitis were on the whole less disturbing. Yet just these were fated to bring about his end. Four or five weeks before the death of his wife, he suddenly suffered a severe attack of pleurisy, combined with bronchitis and incipient pneumonia. Things were very dangerous; but he recovered. He was then sent first to the Isle of Wight (beginning of 1882) and later to Algiers. The trip was a cold one, and he arrived in Algiers with a new attack of pleurisy. Under ordinary circumstances that would not have mattered so much. But that winter and spring in Algiers were cold and rainy as never before. In April, vain attempts were being made to heat the dining-room! And so the end result was that his condition became worse instead of better.

Sent from Algiers to Monte Carlo (Monaco), Marx, as the result of a cold and wet sea-crossing, arrived with a third, though milder, attack of pleurisy. At the same time, there

was continuous bad weather which he seemed to have specifically brought over with him from Africa. So here again he had to struggle against new sickness instead of recuperating. Toward the beginning of the summer, he went to stay with his daughter, Madame Longuet,\* in Argenteuil, and took the neighboring sulphur-baths at Enghien for his chronic bronchitis. In spite of the continuing wet summer, the cure succeeded, slowly it is true, but to the satisfaction of the doctors. They sent him now to Vevey on Lake Geneva, and there he convalesced so well that he was allowed to spend the winter, if not in London, at any rate on the south coast of England. Here he wanted finally to resume his work. When he came to London in September, he looked well and often climbed with me the Hampstead Hill (about 300 feet higher than his residence) without difficulty. When the November fogs threatened, he was sent to Ventnor on the southern tip of the Isle of Wight. Immediately again damp weather and fog; the inevitable result: another cold, coughing, *etc.*, in short, a debilitating confinement to his room instead of invigorating exercise in the fresh air. Then Madame Longuet died. The next day (January 12) Marx arrived in London, with a pronounced bronchitis. This was soon complicated by a laryngitis, which made it

almost impossible for him to swallow. He, who could endure the greatest pains with the most stoic equanimity, preferred to drink a litre of milk (which he loathed throughout his life), rather than consume the corresponding amount of solid foods. In February an abscess developed in his lungs. Drugs no longer had any effect on this body which had been saturated with medicines for fifteen months; what they induced was at most a weakening of his appetite and power of digestion. He grew visibly thinner, almost from day to day. Nevertheless, his illness as a whole took a relatively favorable course. The bronchitis was almost gone, swallowing became easier. The doctors had the highest hopes. Then one day—between two and three in the afternoon was the best time to see him—I suddenly find the house in tears: he was so weak, the end seemed near. And yet that very morning he had taken wine, milk and soup with an appetite. The faithful and old Lenchen Demuth, who had brought up all his children from the cradle and who had been with him for forty years, went upstairs to him and came right down: "Come up, he is half asleep." When we entered, he was fast asleep—but forever. One could not wish for a gentler death than Karl Marx found in his armchair.

And now, finally, some good news.

The manuscript of the second volume of *Capital* has been *completely preserved*. How far it can be

\* Jenny Marx (1844-1883)—Marx's oldest daughter; wife of the French Socialist, Charles Longuet.

published in its present form I cannot yet say—there are over 1,000 pages folio. But “The Process of Circulation of Capital,” and also “The Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole,” are in a draft that was written in the years 1867-70. There is the beginning of a later draft, as well as

a wealth of material in critical excerpts, especially on Russian landed-property relations, much of which can probably still be used.

By verbal instruction, he named his youngest daughter, Eleanor, and myself as his literary executors. London, April 28, 1883.

---

#### “MARX WAS A STERN TEACHER . . .”

“Marx was a stern teacher; he not only forced one to learn but he also convinced himself whether one had learned. . . .

“As a teacher, Marx had the rare quality of being stern without being discouraging.

“And Marx had still another excellent qualification as a teacher; he compelled us to exercise *self-criticism* and did not tolerate that one should rest satisfied with what had been achieved. With the whip of his mockery he cruelly lashed the easy-going flesh of speculativeness.”

Wilhelm Liebknecht, “From Reminiscences Of Marx”  
(Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 110).

## BOOK REVIEW

### A GUIDE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND FOR STRUGGLE ON THE CULTURAL FRONT

By SAMUEL SILLEN

**CULTURE IN A CHANGING WORLD: A MARXIST APPROACH**, by V. J. Jerome, New Century Publishers, New York, 35 cents; cloth, \$1.00.

The American ruling class has long encouraged the illusion that ideas exist in a realm apart from social relations. It has soulfully advertised the "freedom" of the press, the "sanctity" of the schools, the "sovereignty" of art—in short, the independence of intellectual life in this country. And the more crudely the monopolists assert their control over cultural expression, the more piously do they boast its autonomy.

Of all bourgeois hypocrisies, this is perhaps the shrewdest. It has helped veil the fact that the ruling ideas of our society are neither eternal nor peculiarly American, but capitalist ideas. It has infected intellectuals with the illusion that ideology and art can exist above the class struggle.

Yet the deception wears thin, and it is becoming more and more clear, as V. J. Jerome stresses in his *Culture in a Changing World*, that "The struggle for culture is a vital aspect of the class struggle." The events of the past

year have shown what the vaunted cultural freedoms amount to in a country where the financiers have a stranglehold not only over government, but over press, films, radio. The bipartisan reactionary offensive of Big Business has obviously not by-passed the artist, writer, educator, and scientist. On the contrary, the cultural front has become a primary front in the battle between the people's movement and the imperialist forces driving toward fascism and war. The clash between the Un-American Committee and the Hollywood progressives was only one highlight of a struggle that grows sharper every day and that is effecting basic realignments of idea and action in the cultural field.

For a clear understanding of the underlying issues in this fight, the true relationship of forces, and the road to a progressive victory, Jerome's book is tremendously valuable. It is based on the text of a report delivered by the author at a conference of Marxist cultural workers held last June under the sponsorship of the then separate magazines, *New Masses* and *Mainstream*. Events subsequent to the conference have not only confirmed the analysis presented at that time, but also strengthened the need for the program of action outlined.

The entire discussion assumes special interest in view of the intensive examination of cultural problems carried on during the past year by Marx-

ists in a number of countries, the Soviet Union and France particularly. *Culture in a Changing World* throws a good deal of light on the world-wide struggle of the Marxist-Leninist science of society against decadent bourgeois expressions in art and literature.

The specific contribution of Jerome's book is that it applies Marxist-Leninist theory to cultural developments in post-war America, so that we get the continuous testing and enrichment of general principles in terms of concrete cultural expressions. The discussion proceeds dialectically under four main interrelated headings: 1) Reactionary ideology in American culture today; 2) Direct political manifestations of this ideology; 3) Counter-forces of the people's movement expressed in democratic cultural works; 4) The role of Marxist cultural workers in relation to the working class and the people generally.

Under each of these headings Jerome has cited a wealth of examples and developed a number of basic ideas. No careful reader of the book will fail to appreciate the remarkable compactness with which a whole range of questions has been treated here. Before commenting on certain of these questions, I shall briefly summarize the material of each section.

#### 1. "IDEOLOGISTS FOR A DYING SYSTEM"

Under this heading Jerome examines the role of idealism as the root philosophy of bourgeois politics and culture. "This reactionary philosophy," he writes, "is expressed in the various subjectivist, intuitivist, mystical, and nihilistic cults, which have their source especially in the irrationalism of Henri

Bergson and Benedetto Croce." Jerome discusses the "barren activism" of John Dewey's instrumentalism and the "mystic hodge-podge" of Sartre's existentialism, the "faith-cult" of Maxwell Anderson and the "brute-cult" of Hollywood, the white chauvinist bias of historians like Avery Craven and the "Superman as Anglo-Saxon" image on various levels of American culture today.

Through such examples Jerome emphasizes the basic inter-relationship of apparently dissimilar expressions of capitalist culture in decay. He shows how despair and irrationality permeate not only the work of writers like Eugene O'Neill and John Steinbeck, but also, with necessary and important distinctions, the Grade B film and radio pot-boilers which set out to brutalize the people's sensibilities.

#### 2. "MASKS FOR IMPERIALISM"

The relationship of these reactionary tendencies of thought in literature and the arts to the direct political sphere is elaborated in this section. Here Jerome draws a devastating portrait of the ideology of the Truman Doctrine (which soon after the June cultural conference acquired a twin form in the Marshall Plan). The ideological tactics of the anti-labor, anti-Soviet program of reaction are described all the way from the reactionary "world government" idea to the "American World-Empire" dream of Henry Luce and James Burnham. Even in the "escapist" detective fiction of a Gerald Heard the psychology of the atom bomb predominates. Orwell and Frederick Woltman, Koestler, and Louis Budenz—this is the sublime achievement of the bourgeoisie's "independent" culture today. "In books

and magazines," observes Jerome, "you may write of the farthest fairyland, but to be assured of publication, you would do well to give your wicked fairy at least a Russian accent."

### 3. "TOWARD A PEOPLE'S CULTURE"

In this section Jerome traces the increasing resistance that the monopolists and their cultural valets are meeting.

Without attempting to overstate the progressive cultural achievements in the recent period, Jerome notes the gains that have been registered. These have been particularly significant in the struggle against racism, as witness outstanding works like Howard Fast's *Freedom Road*, Sinclair Lewis' *Kingsblood Royal*, Shirley Graham's *There Once Was a Slave*, Theodore Ward's *Our Lan'*, Barbara Giles's *The Gentle Bush*, as well as plays like *Deep Are the Roots* and *On Whitman Avenue* and films like *Crossfire* and *Gentleman's Agreement*.

Jerome also cites major political-cultural formations like the Art, Science, and Professions Council of the Progressive Citizens of America, the progressive and labor schools in a number of cities, and the growing movement for independent cultural expression typified by Stage for Action, People's Songs, and Contemporary Writers. Here Jerome dwells on the role that trade unions must begin to play in developing a people's cultural movement, a subject to which I shall return in a moment.

### 4. "THE MARXIST COMPONENT"

In this section and in the concluding chapter Jerome discusses the role of

the Marxist cultural worker. "Decisive in relation to all our tasks is mastery of Marxism-Leninism, which arms us to withstand this permeation of bourgeois ideologies into our own midst," he writes, stressing that Marxist cultural workers can help American labor overcome its lack of class consciousness.

Analyzing the debilitating effects of Browder-revisionism on the progressive cultural movement, Jerome reminds Communist writers and artists of their responsibility as a vanguard, recalls the crucial distinction between the bourgeoisie's pseudo-objectivity and Marxian partisanship, and underscores that:

"As Marxist writers and artists, who understand labor's role in the nation, we have the task to bring out the significance to the nation of labor's advances, and at the same time to inspire the working class to a greater consciousness of its position as the leading social force in the people's antifascist struggle, to the consciousness of its basic Socialist objective. We have the task to gather the masses of writers, artists, and scientists to the side of labor in common struggle; to win them to the understanding that on this firm alliance depend at once their interests and the very existence of a people's democratic culture. We have the task to help them draw the full conclusions from their struggle that the basic solution of their problems, their final emancipation from the oppression and debasement to which they are subjected, will be achieved only in a Socialist America."

This, in outline, is the scope of *Culture in a Changing World*. An outline, however, cannot do justice to the dialectical method of handling the

many questions touched on. I shall single out here only three of the several features of Jerome's approach which seem to me to reflect a new level of maturity in our orientation to problems of culture.

### A CORRECT APPROACH

1. One striking feature is the avoidance of an over-simplified approach to certain writers and artists who, to be understood correctly, must be analyzed in terms of their contradictions. For example, while noting the "dead-end futility" expressed in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*, Jerome points out the need to differentiate between this writer, the foremost American dramatist, and the general run of nihilistic authors. O'Neill, though a skeptic, has an intense sympathy for people; he is a major artist; and he tries to grapple seriously, even if blindly, with life.

This is true of a number of bourgeois artists, and we must distinguish between those who are deliberate enemies and those who are merely dupes of reaction. As Jerome puts it in a later section:

With the class enemy, Marxists put their differences in the foreground; with allies and potential allies they put their common aims in the foreground. Thus, we should be guilty of a most costly sectarian error if we adopted the attitude that all or even most of the writers, artists, scientists, and educators who give expression to reactionary ideas in any of the ideological trends we have here discussed are now and henceforth confirmed reactionaries.

Judgment of writers and artists is therefore no simple matter to be achieved by some blueprint. At the same time, as Jerome's hard-hitting analysis of enemy writers indicates, this must not be opportunistically distorted. Engels once satirized a critic who found "some good" in every writer:

There is *no one* who has not done some good; *no one* who does not represent something notable; *no one* who is not responsible for some progress in literature. This everlasting indulgence in compliments, this eagerness to act the mediator, this mania to play the literary match-maker and go-between, is intolerable.

What Marxist criticism calls for is more concrete analysis of specific writers in terms of their full direction and character. This is, of course, beyond the scope of Jerome's brief book, but he has indicated a fruitful and mature method of approach.

### REALITY IN ART

2. Another striking feature, also related to the avoidance of sectarian and opportunist distortions, is the statement of the Marxian approach to the representation of reality in art. This involves the question of partisanship. For some artists, realism means what Jerome calls a "dead objectivism, a beyond-class standpoint." For others it means "a pollyanna version of reality, or an attitude of concealing that which is true but unfavorable." The first attitude misses the dynamic movement of reality and therefore leads to a falsification of social life. The second atti-



## BOOK REVIEWS

tude tries to make reality conform to a preconceived image and produces falsehood from a different direction. The Marxist approach, as developed here by Jerome, provides a creative solution:

Shall imaginative writing rule out negative aspects, shortcomings, and even elements of degeneration in the life of workers? To say that it should is to distort both reality and art. But on reading depictions of such shortcomings, we have the right to ask: What is the nature of the author's thought behind the negative aspects he discloses? . . . Without being called upon to set forth the ultimate solution of every social problem he raises, he must be prepared to show wherein his picture differs in ideological implication from that of the reactionary writer whose portrayal of corruption in the single worker-family seeks to induce the notion of inherent corruption of the class. The differentiation will be manifest if he perceives and makes clear that the basic onus rests on the social cause—capitalism, and not on its class victims. He will be able to show the differentiation only, however, if the eye that viewed the life of the working-class family was the historical eye of the working class itself; if through him the working class critically, *with regenerative intent*, evaluated one of its family components.

Here is the key to a principled examination of writers like James T. Farrell and certain authors of the Richard Wright school. Such an approach avoids schematic dogmatism on the

one hand and a flabby eclecticism on the other. Here again the scope of the book does not permit detailed application of the principle, but the statement of the principle should spur critics to undertake the task.

### A CARDINAL NEED

3. Jerome's discussion performs another service in stressing the cardinal need for cultural production independent of the privately owned media, while calling on artists not to abandon the difficult struggle for progressive content in even the monopoly-controlled media. In this connection the book also corrects a tendency of many people to think that the problem of developing independent films, theater, book publishing, etc., is simply a problem of convincing intellectuals not to "sell out" for big money. The problem, as Jerome shows, is also one of convincing the labor movement and progressive mass organizations of the importance of stimulating and supporting cultural activity.

"There has not yet been established in our labor movement," writes Jerome, "a positive and constructive attitude toward the role of culture in the life, the struggles, and the aspirations of the workers. . . . It is easy enough to be scornful of those who commercialize their talents. But let us remember that the labor movement as yet offers, not only no economic alternative to creators of culture, but not even a welcoming attitude."

The basis for a real change is present today with the revitalization of the rank-and-file opposing social-reformist union leaders, and with the growing support of the third-party movement

by progressive unions. The Wallace-for-President movement implies a much firmer alliance between labor and the democratic intellectuals. The richer the political life of the labor movement, the more speedily will the role of culture as a weapon in behalf of the working class be recognized. For the trade unionist and cultural worker alike there is an important lesson in Jerome's treatment of this subject.

These are only a few of the stimulating ideas that may be singled out in a work that also includes a discussion of the dialectical relation between form

and content, the cultural heritage, art as a weapon, the cultural resources of Marxism, and other major areas of theory and practice.

Though all too brief a work, *Culture in a Changing World* is a serious contribution to Marxist thinking about cultural problems in the United States today. It is a guide for understanding and for struggle on the cultural front, a work of great interest and significance not only for the professional, but for everyone engaged in the fight for peace and freedom and human fulfillment in our country.

---

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

- The American Communications Conspiracy.* Eugene Konecky. (Peoples Radio Foundation) New York, 1948. 168 pp. \$1.00
- Keep Canada Independent.* Tim Buck. (Labor Progressive Party) Toronto, 20 pp, 10¢
- Dissent Becomes Disloyalty.* Abraham Pomerantz. (*The Protestant*) New York, 1948. 6 pp. 5¢
- India's Economic Crisis and Its Solution.* T. Ranadive. (People's Publishing House), Bombay, 1947. 44 pp. 8 annas.
- 50 Years of the Jewish Daily Forward.* (In Yiddish.) S. D. Levine. (*Morning Freiheit*) New York, 1948. 64 pp. 35¢
- Europe—Between War and Peace.* (In Yiddish.) Paul Novick. (Ykuf) New York, 1948. 416 pp.

# CULTURE IN A CHANGING WORLD— A MARXIST APPROACH

By V. J. JEROME

An incisive study of the ideological struggle in the cultural sphere, including a critical examination of reactionary ideas advanced by various exponents of bourgeois ideology, the people's counter-forces moving toward a democratic culture, and the special role of Marxist cultural workers.

Price: \$.35

---

# LITERATURE AND ART

By KARL MARX and FREDERICK ENGELS

The first collection in English of the writings of Marx and Engels on the foundations of a Marxist approach to art. Selections are included on such subjects as the origins and development of art, art in capitalist society, realism in art, and literary history.

Required reading for an understanding of Marxist esthetics.

Price: \$1.85

---

# ART AND SOCIETY

By SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

A new kind of book about literature, music, and painting, a vigorous and original study of the social roots of art, the germinating power of folk art, form and content, the artist and his audience, main currents in the history of art, and the struggle for a living culture.

Price: \$2.75

NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS  
832 Broadway • New York 3, N. Y.

## SCIENCE AND IDEALISM

By Maurice Cornforth

A clear, objective exposition of the views of philosophers from Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes, through British empiricism, to the schools of "modern logic" and the logical analysis of science" as represented by Bertrand Russell, Wiggstein, and the logical positivists.

PRICE \$2.50

## STUDIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM

By Maurice Dobb

An examination of the main factors which have determined economic development in modern capitalism: the decline of feudalism, the beginnings of the bourgeoisie, the rise of capital and investment, forms of capital accumulation and growth of monopoly, the formation of the proletariat, and the influence of the labor market on economic and political policies.

PRICE \$3.50

## NOTES FROM THE GALLOWS

By Julius Fuchik

The final testament of a Communist leader of the anti-Nazi underground movement in Czechoslovakia, describing his Golgotha, his mental and physical tortures until the last moments before his death on the gallows. It is permeated with the spirit of struggle and confidence in the ultimate triumph of the people over fascism.

PRICE \$.60

o

NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS

832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.