

Political Affairs

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THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE NEXT TASKS

AMENDED DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE PLENARY MEETING
OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE, C.P.A., JUNE 18-20, 1945

Discussion Speeches by

GILBERT GREEN • MORRIS CHILDS • ROY HUDSON
ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN • DOXEY A. WILKERSON
SAMUEL DONCHIN • CARL WINTER • V. J. JEROME

LETTER TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE, C.P.U.S.A.
WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Just Published!

THE TREATMENT OF DEFEATED GERMANY

By V. J. JEROME

We have won the military victory in Europe. Now we must win the peace. The great Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition wrung unconditional surrender from the defeated enemy. Will it maintain its strength and unity to solve, also, the problems of the peace? How can the roots of German fascism be destroyed? What about the punishment of the German war criminals? What of the responsibility of the German people? What kind of territorial revision and reparations must be exacted to strengthen peace? Are military disarmament and economic control imperative for world security? Is there hope for the democratic reorientation of the German people?

These questions, which have been placed on the agenda of history by the victory of the United Nations, are incisively answered by V. J. Jerome, an editor of "Political Affairs" and a noted Marxist scholar, in his new book, "The Treatment of Defeated Germany."

The role of the Prussian Junkers, in league with the rapacious German monopolists, and their utilization of Nazism to advance their designs of world domination; the aims of the German High Command, which is even now—after defeat—preparing the ground for World War III; the role of German Social-Democratism in aiding Hitler to power; the war guilt of the German nation; the character of the terms which must be imposed in order to safeguard world security, are cogently treated from the point of view of Marxist science.

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devoted to the advancement of democratic thought and action

EARL BROWDER, *Editor*; EUGENE DENNIS, *Associate Editor*; V. J. JEROME, *Managing Editor*

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THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE NEXT TASKS

(Draft Resolution of the National Board, C.P.A., as amended and approved by the National Committee on June 20. This draft is now submitted for the further consideration of the membership and for final action by the emergency National Convention of the C.P.A. on July 26-28.)

PART I

I.

The military defeat of Nazi Germany is a great historic victory for world democracy, for all mankind. This epochal triumph was brought about by the concerted action of the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition—by the decisive blows of the Red Army, by the American-British offensives, and by the heroic struggle of the resistance movements. This victory opens the way for the complete destruction of fascism in Europe and weakens the forces of reaction and fascism everywhere. It has already brought forth a new anti-fascist unity of the peoples in Europe marked by the formation in a number of countries of democratic governments representative of the will of the people. It has also created the prerequisites for speeding the defeat of Japanese imperialism. Thus great possibilities have been opened up for the peoples to realize a long-term peace, to make new democratic advances and social progress.

2.

However, a sharp and sustained struggle must still be conducted to secure the complete destruction of fascism throughout the world and to guarantee that the possibilities which now exist for creating a durable peace shall be realized. This is so because the economic and social roots of fascism in Europe have not yet been fully destroyed. This is so because the extremely powerful reactionary forces in the United States and England, which are centered in the trusts and cartels, are striving to reconstruct liberated Europe on a reactionary basis. Moreover, this is so because the most aggressive circles of American imperialism are endeavoring to secure for themselves political and economic domination in the world.

American capital supported the war against Nazi Germany, not because of hatred of fascism or a desire to liberate suffering Europe from the heel of Nazi despotism, but because it recognized in Hitler Germany

a dangerous imperialist rival determined to rule the world. From the very inception of the struggle against fascism, American finance capital feared the democratic consequences of defeating Hitler Germany.

This explains why the monopolists opposed the concept of collective security in the days when the war still could have been prevented and instead chose the Munich policy which inevitably led to war. Later, even after the anti-Hitler coalition was forged, the forces of big capital who supported the war continued to hesitate and procrastinate, to make vital concessions to the worst enemies of American and world democracy—to the sworn foes of the Soviet Union and to the bosom pals of Hitlerism. That is why American capitalism gave aid to Franco Spain; why it preferred to support the Petains and Darlans and the reactionary governments-in-exile as against the heroic resistance movements of the people. And that is also why it hoped that the Soviet Union would be bled white on the battlefields of Eastern Europe and why it tried to hold off the opening of the Second Front until the last possible moment.

Only when these policies proved to be bankrupt, meeting growing opposition from the ranks of the people; only when American capital realized that the Soviet Union was emerging from the war stronger and more influential than ever precisely because of its valiant and triumphant all-out war against Nazism, did it reluctantly and belatedly move toward the establishment of a concerted military strategy and closer unity among the Big Three.

Now that the war against Hitler Germany has been won, the American economic royalists, like their British Tory counterparts, are alarmed at the strengthened positions of world labor, at the democratic advances in Europe and at the upsurge of the national liberation movements in the colonial and dependent countries. Therefore they seek to halt the march of democracy, to curb the strength of labor and the people. They want to save the remnants of fascism in Germany and the rest of Europe. They are trying to organize a new *cordon sanitaire* against the Soviet Union, which bore the main brunt of the war against the Nazis and which is the staunchest champion of national freedom, democracy and world peace.

This growing reactionary opposition to a truly democratic and anti-fascist Europe in which the people will have the right to freely choose their own forms of government and social system, has been reflected in many of the recent actions of the State Department. This explains why at San Francisco, Stettinius and Connally joined hands with Vandenberg—the spokesman for Hoover and the most predatory sections of American finance capital. This explains the seating of fascist Argentina; the British-American reluctance to live up to the Yalta Accord on Poland

and the American delegation's refusal to join with the Soviet Union in pledging the right of national independence for mandated territories and colonies as well as to give official recognition to the representatives of the World Labor Congress.

It is this reactionary position of American big business which explains why Washington, along with London, are pursuing the dangerous policy of preventing a strong, united and democratic China; why they bolster up the reactionary, incompetent Chiang Kai-shek regime and why they harbor the idea of coming to terms with the Mikado in the hope of maintaining Japan as a reactionary bulwark in the Far East. It accounts, too, for the renewed campaign of anti-Soviet slander and incitement calculated to undermine American-Soviet friendship and cooperation.

On the home front the big trusts and monopolies are blocking the development of a satisfactory program to meet the human needs of reconversion with its accompanying economic dislocations and severe unemployment. Reactionary forces—especially the N.A.M. and their representatives in Congress—are planning a new open-shop drive to weaken or smash the trade unions, and to undermine the democratic wartime gains of the Negro people. They are trying to prevent the adoption of governmental measures which must be enacted at once if our country is to avoid the most acute consequences of the trying reconversion period and the cyclical economic crisis which will follow on the heels of the short-lived postwar economic "boom." Likewise, they are vigorously preparing to win the crucial 1946 elections.

Already the reactionaries are trying to use the increased cutbacks in war industry to lower wages and living standards. They are obstructing the enactment of necessary emergency federal and state unemployment insurance. They are sponsoring vicious anti-labor legislation, such as the new Ball-Burton-Hatch labor relations bill, and are blocking the passage of the FEPC and anti-Poll Tax bills. They are trying to scuttle effective price and rent control and to exempt the wealthy and the big corporations from essential tax legislation. They are endeavoring to place the entire cost of the war and the difficulties of reconversion upon the shoulders of the working people.

If the reactionary policies and forces of monopoly capital are not checked and defeated, America and the world will be confronted with new aggressions and wars and the growth of reaction and fascism in the United States.

3.

However, the conditions and forces exist to defeat this reactionary threat, and to enable our country to play a more progressive role in

world affairs in accord with the true national interests of the American people. For one thing, the military defeat of Nazi Germany has changed the relationship of world forces in favor of democracy. It has enhanced the role and influence of the Land of Socialism. It has strengthened those forces in our country and elsewhere which seek to maintain and consolidate the friendship and cooperation of the United States and the Soviet Union—a unity which must now be extended and reinforced.

This is evidenced by the fact that the overwhelming majority of the American people, and in the first place labor, are opposed to reaction and fascism, support the foreign and domestic policies of President Roosevelt as embodied in the decisions of Crimea, and in the Second Bill of Rights.

This is demonstrated by the great mass support for the San Francisco Charter and the determination of the American people to guarantee that the United Nations security organization shall fulfill its historic objectives—that the amity and unity of action of the Big Three shall be strengthened in the postwar period and made more solid and effective, in order to prevent or check the recurrence of new aggressions and wars.

This majority of the American people must now speak out and assert its collective strength and will. The united power of labor and of all democratic forces must express itself in a decisive fashion so as to influence the course of the nation in a progressive direction.

It is imperative that the American people resolutely support every effort of the Truman Administration to carry forward the policies of the Roosevelt-labor-democratic coalition for American-Soviet friendship, for the economic bill of rights, for civil liberties, for collective bargaining and for the rights of the Negro people. It is equally necessary that the people sharply criticize all hesitations to apply these policies, and vigorously oppose any concessions to the reactionaries. The camp of reaction must not be appeased—it must be isolated and routed.

Toward this end it is necessary, as never before, to decisively strengthen the democratic unity of the nation, to create that kind of unity for the postwar period which will be able to facilitate the destruction of fascism abroad and to prevent fascism from coming to power in the United States. Therefore, it is essential to weld together and consolidate the *broadest national coalition of all anti-fascist and democratic forces*, including all supporters of Roosevelt's anti-Axis policies.

To forge this democratic coalition most effectively and to enable it to exercise decisive influence upon the affairs of the nation, it is essential that the working class—especially the progressive labor movement and the Communists—strengthen its independent role and activities and display far greater political and organizing initiative. It is imperative to

develop the maximum unity of action between the C.I.O., the A. F. of L. and the Railroad Brotherhoods and to achieve their full participation in the new World Federation of Trade Unions. It is necessary to rally and imbue the membership and lower officials of the A. F. of L. with self-confidence, a progressive orientation, and a consciousness of their great responsibilities to labor and the nation.

While cooperating with the patriotic and democratic forces from all walks of life, labor must, in the first place, strengthen its ties with the veterans, the toiling farmers, the Negro people, the youth, the women, professionals and small business men, and with their democratic organizations. At the same time, while forging the progressive unity of the nation, labor should cooperate with those capitalist groupings and elements who, for one or another reason, desire or endeavor to promote democratic objectives. But in so doing, labor must depend first of all on its own strength and unity, and on its alliance with the true democratic and anti-fascist forces of the nation.

In the vital struggle to crush feudal-fascist-militarist Japan it is necessary that American labor collaborate in the prosecution of the anti-Japanese war with all democratic forces who favor and support victory over Japanese imperialism.

However, labor and the other anti-fascists must take cognizance of the fact that amongst those big business circles who desire military victory over Japan, there are influential forces, including some in the State Department, who are seeking a compromise peace which will preserve the power of the Mikado after the war, at the expense of China and the other Far Eastern peoples, and directed against the Soviet Union. Similarly, there are powerful capitalist groupings, including many in Administration circles, who plan to use the coming defeat of Japan for imperialist aims, for maintaining a reactionary puppet Kuomintang regime in China, for obtaining American imperialist domination in the Far East.

Labor and the people should and will continue to do all in their power to hasten complete victory over Japanese militarism and fascism. And to do this, labor and the popular forces must follow a consistent anti-fascist policy and must rely, first of all, on the people and their democratic organizations and aspirations.

4.

To achieve the widest democratic coalition and the most effective anti-fascist unity of the nation, it is vital that labor vigorously champion a program of action that will promote the complete destruction of fascism, speed victory over Japanese imperialism, curb the powers of the

trusts and monopolies, and thereby advance the economic welfare of the people and protect and extend American democracy.

In the opinion of the Communist Political Association, such a program should be based on the following slogans of action:

I—Hasten the defeat of fascist-militarist Japan!

Rout and defeat the advocates of a compromise peace with the Japanese imperialists and war lords.

Guarantee a free democratic Asia with the right of national independence for all colonial and dependent peoples. Curb those who seek American imperialist control in the Far East.

Press for a united and free China based upon the unity of the Communists and all other democratic and anti-Japanese forces so as to speed victory. Full military aid to the Chinese guerrillas led by the heroic Eighth and Fourth Armies.

Continue uninterrupted war production and uphold labor's no-strike pledge for the duration. Stop employer provocations.

II—Complete the destruction of fascism and build a durable peace!

Cement American-Soviet friendship and unity to promote an enduring peace and a world free of fascism.

Carry out in full the decisions made by the Big Three at Crimea.

Punish the war guilty without further delay. Death to all fascist war criminals. Make Germany pay full reparations in labor and in kind for the reconstruction of Europe.

Strengthen the World Labor Congress as the backbone of the unity of the peoples and the free nations.

Support the San Francisco Charter for an effective international security organization, based upon the unity of the Big Three.

Guarantee to all peoples the right to determine freely their own destiny and to establish their own democratic form of government. Put an end to Anglo-American intervention against the peoples, such as in Greece, Belgium and Italy.

Grant immediate national independence to Puerto Rico.

Break diplomatic relations with Franco Spain and fascist Argentina.

Remove from the State Department all pro-fascist and reactionary officials.

Help feed and reconstruct starving and war-torn Europe. Reject the Hoover program based on reactionary financial mortgages and political interference.

Use the Bretton Woods Agreement in the interests of the United Nations—promote international economic cooperation and expanding

world trade. Grant extensive long term loans and credits, at low interest rates, for the purpose of reconstruction and industrialization, without reactionary interference in the internal affairs of the nations.

III. Meet the human needs of reconversion—Push the fight for 60 million jobs!

Make the right to work and the Roosevelt Second Bill of Rights the law of the land.

Increase purchasing power to promote maximum employment. No reduction in weekly take-home pay when overtime is eliminated.

Revise the Little Steel Formula to increase wages so as to meet the rise in the cost of living. Establish an adequate minimum hourly wage on a national scale.

Establish the principle of the guaranteed annual wage.

For a shorter work week except where this would hamper war production.

Support Truman's proposals for emergency federal legislation to extend and supplement present unemployment insurance benefits as a necessary first step to cope with the current large-scale cut-backs and lay-offs. Start unemployment insurance payments promptly upon loss of job and continue until new employment is found. Provide adequate severance pay for laid-off workers. Insure the retraining, education and re-employment of young workers.

Prevent growing unemployment during the reconversion and post-war period by starting large-scale federal, state and municipal public works programs—slum clearance, low rental housing developments, rural electrification, the building of new schools, hospitals, roads, etc.

No scrapping of government-owned industrial plants. Guarantee the operation of these plants at full capacity for peacetime purposes.

Maintain and rigidly enforce rent and price control and rationing. Strengthen the law enforcement powers of the OPA. Smash the black market.

Prosecute the war profiteers. No reduction or refunds in corporate, excess profit and income taxes for the millionaires and big corporations. Lower taxes for those least able to pay.

Pass the Wagner-Murray-Dingell social security bill.

Maintain equitable farm prices and assure adequate federal and state aid to all needy farmers.

IV. Repay our debt to the men who fight for victory!

Raise substantially dependency allotments to families and relatives of men in the Armed Forces.

Extend and improve the system of democratic orientation and discussion in the Armed Forces. Draw more personnel from labor's ranks into orientation work. Eliminate all anti-labor and anti-democratic material and teachings from the educational services provided by the War Department.

Guarantee jobs, opportunity and security for all returning veterans and war workers, regardless of race, creed or color.

Extend the scope and benefits of the GI Bill of Rights and eliminate all red tape from the Veterans' Administration. Guarantee adequate medical care to every veteran.

Press for the speedy enactment of legislation providing for substantial demobilization pay, based on length and character of service, and financed by taxes on higher personal and corporate incomes.

Insure full benefits of all veterans' legislation to Negro veterans.

V. Safeguard and extend democracy!

Enforce equal rights for every American citizen regardless of race, color, creed, political affiliation or national origin.

End Jim Crow. Outlaw anti-Semitism. Eliminate all anti-Communist legislation. Pass a national FEPC. Abolish the poll-tax and the white primary. End every form of discrimination in the armed forces.

Protect labor's rights, especially the right to organize, strike and bargain collectively.

Outlaw and prohibit all fascist organizations and activities.

Curb the powers and policies of the monopolies and trusts which jeopardize the national welfare and world peace. Prosecute all violations of the anti-trust laws, and all moves and acts to restore or continue the Anglo-German-American cartel system and practices. Protect and extend federal aid to small business.

* * *

This program meets the most urgent immediate interests of the American people and nation. It is a program of action around which all progressive Americans can unite today. It is a program of action which will advance the struggle for the moral and political defeat of fascism, leading to its final destruction and eradication. It will help create the conditions and guarantees for a stable peace, and for a larger measure of economic security and democratic liberties for the masses of the people. The anti-fascist and democratic forces of our nation can become strong enough, being the overwhelming majority of our people, to check and defeat imperialist reaction and to realize the great objectives of this program of action.

As class-conscious American workers, as Marxists, we Communists support this program. However, we believe that Socialism alone can finally abolish the social evils of capitalist society, including economic insecurity and the danger of fascism and war. But we Communists realize that the majority of the American people do not yet understand that the eventual establishment of Socialism in the U.S.A. will usher in a new and higher form of democracy and social progress.

But the majority of the American working people do agree that fascism must be destroyed, wherever it exists or wherever it raises its head. The American people are ready to protect and extend the Bill of Rights and all democratic liberties. They are desirous and willing to fight for greater job and social security and to make President Roosevelt's Second Bill of Rights the law of the land.

Therefore, Communists and non-Communists, all progressives and anti-fascists can be rallied in support of the above program of immediate action. For this is a program that can unite the majority of the people today to prevent the rise of fascism and to assure victory in the 1945 municipal elections and in the fateful 1946 Congressional elections which must be organized and prepared for now. This is a program which must be championed in every factory and industry, in every community and state, through the medium of labor's political action; through labor's joint and parallel action locally and through broad shop steward conferences and united community movements, as well as through other broad united people's and democratic front activities.

PART II

5.

The foregoing program will not be easy to win. The reactionaries will seek desperately to divide the ranks of the people, to pit one group against the other—veterans and farmers against labor, Gentile against Jew, white against Negro, Protestant against Catholic, A. F. of L. against C.I.O. They will strive to break the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition and foment bitter class, racial, partisan and sectional strife. For these purposes they will use Hitler's secret weapon of "white supremacy" and anti-Communism, and make maximum use of the David Dubinsky and Norman Thomas Social-Democrats, the Trotskyites, as well as the John L. Lewises and Matthew Wolls.

To meet this situation the people need a great strengthening of every one of their progressive organizations and particularly the organizations of labor—the trade unions. They need loyal, courageous and honest leadership; men and women who combine clarity of vision with the qualities of firmness in principle and flexibility in tactics. Above all, they

require a larger, stronger, more influential and more effective mass organization of Communists.

The Communists have a greater responsibility to labor and the nation than at any other time in their history. And these greater responsibilities can be fulfilled by us with honor because of our long record of devotion and service to the cause of the working class and the people, and because of our adherence to the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The American Communist movement confidently faces the future. We are proud of our consistent and heroic struggle against reaction and fascism over the years. We draw strength from, and are particularly proud of, our efforts to promote victory over Nazi barbarism and Japanese imperialism.

On the field of battle and on the home front, we Communists have been in the forefront of the fight to defend our country and our people. In the struggle for the establishment of the anti-Hitlerite coalition, for the opening of the Second Front, for national unity, for the re-election of Roosevelt, for the rights of the Negro people, for building a strong and progressive labor movement, for uninterrupted war production and for the attainment of international trade union unity—the contributions of the Communists have been second to none.

6.

We recognize that the future of the labor and progressive movements, and therefore the role of the United States in world affairs, will depend to no small extent upon the correctness of our Communist policy, our independent role and influence, our mass activities and organized strength.

That is why today we Communists must not only learn from our achievements in the struggle against fascism, but also from our weaknesses and errors. In the recent period, especially since January, 1944, these mistakes consisted in drawing a number of erroneous conclusions from the historic significance of the Teheran accord. Among these false conclusions was the concept that after the military defeat of Germany, the decisive sections of big capital would participate in the struggle to complete the destruction of fascism and would cooperate with the working people in the maintenance of postwar national unity. This illusion had no foundation in life, either in the class nature of finance capital, or in the postwar aims of the trusts and cartels, which seek imperialist aggrandizement and huge profits at the expense of the people. This has been amply demonstrated by recent events.

This revision of Marxist-Leninist theory regarding the role of monopoly capital, especially after military victory, led to other erroneous conclusions, such as to utopian economic perspectives and the possibility

of achieving the national liberation of the colonial and dependent countries through arrangements between the great powers. It also led to tendencies to obscure the class nature of bourgeois democracy, to false concepts of social evolution and to minimizing the independent and leading role of the working class.

Furthermore, the changes we made in our form of Communist organization, coming when they did and coupled with the above revisionist errors, could not but lead toward liquidating the independent and vanguard role of the Communist movement. Nor was the act of dissolution of the Party required to carry out our correct election policy of support for President Roosevelt.

While the change from C.P. to C.P.A. did not result in a decline in membership (the 1945 membership enrollment of the C.P.A. showed a more than 25 per cent increase as compared with the 1944 enrollment figures of the C.P.), it is nonetheless true that the growth of the Communist movement among industrial workers was undoubtedly retarded.

While a change in form or name of our Marxist organization is not in itself a question of principle, it is a matter of principle, however, that the character of our Communist organization, whatever its electoral status, must be that of the independent, Marxist party of the working class. And this we must now fully guarantee in the program, policies and activities of the Communist Political Association, pending whatever changes we shall make in the form and name of our Communist organization and movement.

While correctly concentrating on our main wartime objective: namely, that of subordinating everything to win the war, to smash Nazi Germany and militarist Japan, our opportunist mistakes were abetted by an over-simplified and one-sided approach to our wartime tasks. These errors were also facilitated by non-labor, bourgeois influences which unconsciously affected some of our policies as we participated and functioned ever more actively in the broad camp of national unity. And these opportunist deviations were accentuated by our reluctance to constantly analyze and re-examine our policies and mass work in the spirit of Marxist self-criticism, especially the failure to draw our full membership into the discussion and determination of basic policy.

The opportunist errors which we were committing adversely influenced our work during the war, limited the effectiveness of our anti-fascist activities, and were tending to confuse and mislead the Communist and the progressive labor movement for the postwar period.

While we Communists were beginning to re-examine our postwar perspectives and to correctly react to some of the recent international developments, we were, however, readjusting ourselves too slowly to the

new world developments, because we failed to understand the basic opportunist errors that had crept into our policies.

In this connection, therefore, we must recognize the important contributions which Comrade Foster made in the struggle against opportunism. Likewise, we can appreciate the basic correctness of the sound, fraternal, Marxist opinions expressed in the recent article of Jacques Duclos, one of the foremost leaders of the Communist Party of France.

In ascertaining the grave responsibility for the opportunist errors and mistakes committed in the recent period, it is necessary to state that while Comrade Browder, who was the foremost leader of the C.P.A., bears a proportionately greater share of responsibility than any other individual leader or member, the entire national leadership and in the first place, the National Board, must and does assume heavy responsibility for these errors.

7.

Clearly, the single, most essential pre-condition to enable us to effectively perform our Communist duties in the postwar period as the most far-sighted and able defender of the interests of the working class and the nation, is to quickly and decisively overcome our errors and mistakes, especially to eradicate all vestiges of opportunism in our policies and mass work.

Toward this end all members and organizations of the Communist Political Association must immediately make a thorough and self-critical examination of our policies and leadership. We must establish genuine inner democracy and self-criticism throughout our organization. We must refresh and strengthen the personnel of all responsible leading committees in the Association. In doing this we must combat all tendencies toward factionalism, toward distortions and toward weakening the basic unity of our Communist organization.

At the same time, we Communists must avoid all sectarian tendencies and boldly and energetically expand our own anti-fascist mass activities and our most active participation in the broad labor and democratic movements. We must resolutely strengthen our independent Communist role and mass activities. We must build our Communist Association, especially amongst the industrial workers. We must wage a resolute ideological struggle on the theoretical front, enhancing the Marxist understanding of our entire organization and leadership.

We Communists renew our pledge to do everything to destroy fascism and reaction, to advance the cause of American and world democracy, the cause of national freedom and social progress. We are determined to cooperate with all anti-fascists and all democratic forces to achieve these great objectives.

Speeches in Discussion On the Draft Resolution of the National Board at the Plenary Meeting of the National Committee, C.P.A., June 18-20, 1945

SPEECH BY GILBERT GREEN

THE FACT that the National Board has separated itself from the false position occupied by Comrade Browder, in no way relieves it of responsibility for the grave errors committed. Not only Comrade Browder, but every member of the Board, with the exception of Comrade Foster, must bear a share of the responsibility, although not all of equal magnitude. My own share of responsibility I consider particularly great. I did not follow blindly—I was firmly convinced that the main line was correct. Whatever differences I had were on secondary and subordinate questions. In fact, in seeking theoretical justification for our policies, I was one of those who contributed to the further revision of our basic body of Marxist-Leninist principles. Unable to make the line fit the theory, I began to reshape the theory to fit the line. Such

errors cannot be considered as small ones; they could have led to the most dangerous consequences, and our organization has the duty of drawing the fullest political and organizational conclusions from them.

I agree with those who say that our organization would have come around to a fundamental correction of its policies even without the withering lash of Comrade Duclos' criticism. But I disagree with those who believe that we were on the verge of such a basic re-examination of our position when the Duclos article arrived. That is not true. It is true that for some weeks prior to the arrival of the article we had sharpened up our criticism; that we were deeply disturbed at the increasing signs of tension in the ranks of the coalition; and that we did recognize that a certain shift in class forces was taking place with

the achievement of victory in Europe. But I am convinced that at the first indication that either a patching up or a partial solution of differences was taking place, we would have once again been lulled into a false sense of security—in fact, would have taken such developments as a further verification of the correctness of our general line.

That is why we owe a real debt of gratitude to Comrade Duclos. And today, even though we know that the San Francisco conference is establishing the framework of a world security organization, that a solution of the Polish controversy may be close at hand, and that another meeting of the Big Three is about to take place, we no longer feel complacent, for we have divested ourselves of the dangerous illusions of yesterday.

Comrade Browder has declared that he can never agree that the Teheran Accord was a "mere diplomatic incident." But the words "mere" and "incident" are his own, certainly not those of Duclos. The fact that Teheran was a diplomatic accord does not make it unimportant; all it means is that this was an agreement entered into by governments and not a platform for postwar class peace in the United States.

Our organization has many times stated that the words of the Teheran declaration mean what they say and say what they mean. But what we forgot is that, while

Stalin as the representative of the workers' and peasants' state meant what he said at Teheran and could guarantee that the policy of his government and his class would correspond to his pledge, the same could not be said for Roosevelt and Churchill, who, even if they meant what they said at Teheran, could not guarantee that their governments or ruling classes would or could keep this pledge.

Let us but recall the Franco-Soviet Pact of 1935. The French Communists certainly considered this pact of tremendous importance in the fight to stop Hitler aggression and the drift toward war. But they did not take the signature of their ruling class at its face value and did not draw the conclusion that this called for class peace in France. They never relaxed their vigilance and never gave up their struggle against France's 200 Families, knowing full well that while the Soviet Union would live up to the Franco-Soviet Pact, the French bourgeoisie would not, unless confronted with so powerful a movement of the people as would make no other course possible. And history showed that despite this correct policy and the existence in France of a much stronger popular movement than that in this country, the French bourgeoisie did betray its written pledge—and the very man who signed the Franco-Soviet Pact, Pierre Laval, became later the arch-traitor of France.

In Comrade Browder's remarks rejecting the resolution of the National Board, he makes much of the point that there is a "coincidence of interests" between capitalist America and the Soviet Union. This is undeniably true. But apparently what Comrade Browder does not also see, is that side by side with this coincidence of interest there also exists a basic antagonism. Both of these—the coincidence of interest and the antagonism—have been and continue to be reflected in the foreign policy of our government, and which is uppermost at any given moment is determined, not alone by the class interests of the bourgeoisie, but by the class struggle—by the struggle of the overwhelming majority of the American people against the most reactionary, predatory and chauvinist elements of finance capital.

Comrade Browder in his June 2 statement says that the only alternatives that the American bourgeoisie has to collaboration with the Soviet Union is either that of immediate war, or that of a period of armed peace including features of diplomatic and economic warfare. These alternatives Comrade Browder characterizes as suicidal for the bourgeoisie, thereby leaving the course of collaboration as the only tenable one open for it.

I'm afraid the actual picture is far more complicated than this. The fact remains that the foreign policy of London and Washington has not been and is not today a pure policy

that can fit into one or the other of Comrade Browder's neatly constructed compartments. This policy reflects both the coincidence of interests as well as antagonism, which means it includes both the elements of collaboration as well as those of the carrot and club policy. The fact that Comrade Browder, and we with him, failed to see this two-sided character of British and American policy explains the many gyrations in our own estimates—one week, Vandenberg had taken over the American delegation at San Francisco; the next week, Hull had it back under control again; the third week things generally were going to the devil, and the fourth, everything was well again.

Had we seen the two-fold character of American foreign policy, even under Roosevelt, it would have helped us to fight more consistently against vacillations, hesitations and even double-bookkeeping. The two-fold character of our foreign policy is best illustrated in the personage and actions of Stettinius, who flew directly from Yalta to Mexico City and there organized the conspiracy to undermine the Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta agreements on the world security organization as well as to seat fascist Argentina. Certainly there was no shift of class forces that took place during the flight from Yalta to Chapultepec; it was only the same actor playing his double role—and, remember, with the agreement and

under the leadership of Roosevelt. Of course, while military victory in Europe was still in question, the carrot and club aspect of American policy was not so evident as now when German imperialism has been defeated and a new fear—the fear of a truly anti-fascist and democratic Europe, of a stronger labor movement at home, and of a more powerful and influential Soviet Union—dominates the mind of the bourgeoisie.

There will be more meetings of the Big Three and more agreements and settlements through compromise, but once and for all we must discard the strange concept that compromise represents the opposite of struggle, instead of being a product and a form of the struggle, and likewise must we stop the petty-bourgeois practice of worshipping at the shrine of compromise. In many compromises that take place, we are in the people's corner, fighting with them to wring the most concessions possible from imperialism. Certainly, the Greek armed conflict was brought to a halt through compromise, but can we forget for a single moment that this "compromise" was forced on the people of Greece by British bayonets?—or that the Yugoslav troops were forced to withdraw from Trieste instead of those of Britain and America?

If we constantly see the two-fold character of American policy, we will never again repeat the error of giving a blank check to the foreign

policy of even a Roosevelt, for even the Roosevelt policy was far from being the clear-cut anti-fascist policy that must be ours. This will also keep us from veering from one extreme to another in our estimates, and if things do not go so well we shall not draw the conclusion that a new war is already here, or when things are going relatively well that a new millenium has arrived. Above all, it will help us maintain our vigilance at sharp edge; for with the European war over, the tendency is toward a general sharpening of all contradictions, the next point I want to speak about.

* * *

For the sake of argument let us assume that Comrade Browder is correct and that the foreign policy of our bourgeoisie will be motivated solely by the "coincidence of interests" and that we are going to witness very close U.S.-U.S.S.R. collaboration without even a trace of the carrot and club policy. Would such collaboration make possible a solution of the economic problems of American capitalism for a long period of time ahead? It would not, even though the Soviet Union can become a large market for American goods. And I say that it would not, with full cognizance of my own special responsibility in writing articles that tended to lead people to opposite conclusions.

In my articles on postwar eco-

conomic perspectives I showed that postwar production levels must be higher than prewar ones if catastrophe is to be avoided. I pointed to the possibility of achieving such higher levels for the years immediately following the reconversion period, as well as for a considerable period after, through an expansion of foreign trade and through the struggle to raise living standards in the United States. But there is one cold, stark fact that I evaded in all my writings and that cannot be dodged, for it is the nub of the whole question—namely, that even if postwar production were to remain at wartime peak (something highly improbable), even if there were to be the wildest expansion of foreign trade, another cyclical economic crisis is inevitable. In fact, the tremendous expansion of productive plant in the country during the war and the creation of a number of new industries, only intensifies the problem of finding postwar markets large enough to keep our industries operating at anything like maximum capacity. Aggravating the problem even further is the fact that during the war there has taken place a tremendous increase in labor productivity which has brought about a marked increase in the rate of exploitation. Also, even if the country were to achieve foreign markets on a scale unheard of before, this could not eliminate crisis; it could only postpone the ultimate day of reckoning, guar-

anteeing that when it finally came the crash would shake the entire capitalist world and American society to its very depth.

As long as we have capitalism we shall have cyclical economic crises. This was even true of American capitalism in the nineteenth century when it was young and virile and still had a whole continent to develop. It certainly is even more true of capitalism today in the period of its general crisis. In fact, under conditions of this general crisis, there is bound to be considerable chronic unemployment even in the years of relative prosperity. This does not of course mean that the fight for full employment is a utopian one. This fight, the fight for the right to work, is going to be one of the most bitterly fought battles in American history. The bourgeoisie is going to fight with every weapon at its command to keep this right from being written into the laws of the land and realized.

If American capitalism is going to face a sharpening of the contradiction between its increased productive powers and its diminishing market possibilities, then it is quite obvious that over the years, especially after the first postwar years, we are going to witness a sharpening of all the inner and outer contradictions of American capitalism: an intensification of the class conflict at home; a growing scramble between Britain and the U.S.A. for each other's markets and sources of

raw materials; a sharper struggle between the colonial peoples and the imperialist powers and an intensification of the contradictions between the two world systems.

All of these contradictions will reach their most acute forms when this country approaches its first post-war economic crisis, although even before then, more and more circles of finance capital will seek a solution to their problems by trying to crush the popular and democratic movement at home and by moving in the direction of aggression and conquest abroad.

The masses must be prepared for such a sharpening of the struggle. This does not mean that we shall not have a period of postwar boom, but it does mean that we shall shortly witness the first offensives and onslaughts on the living standards and rights of labor and that we do not have too much time to prepare to meet these attacks.

If this is the perspective ahead, we can all the more appreciate the danger confronting our country if labor and the Communists are nothing more than the tail-end to the kite of the liberal bourgeoisie. Even when we support certain reform measures advanced or supported by liberal-bourgeois forces, we are duty-bound to make perfectly clear to the workers and the people that these measures are inadequate, that they cannot fully meet the problems, and we must point to a program aimed at drastically curbing the

powers and reducing the profits of the trusts while propagating socialism as the ultimate answer to the threat of exploitation, insecurity and war.

Any policy of trailing after the liberal bourgeoisie, of failing to bring forward an independent policy and program, can very well create the objective conditions in which demagogic fascist leaders can create a mass base for themselves, not only from the discontented middle classes, but also from the ranks of the returning veterans, from the ranks of the Negro people, the youth and even from sections of backward workers. Only if the masses see clearly a different alternative; only if the Marxists and left forces generally work in such a way so that they merit the due credit for the positive gains won, but do not lay themselves open to implications of responsibility for the shortcomings and failures of the government and the liberal bourgeoisie, can fascist demagogy be defeated, the ranks of the working class and progressive masses united and the path to fascism and war blocked.

Let us recall that even at the height of New Deal reform, Roosevelt could not prevent a new economic crisis from breaking forth in 1938, and that this new crisis reflected itself in a swing away from Roosevelt in the November, 1938, elections. Thomas Dewey, reactionary demagogue that he is, yet had a kernel of truth when he charged

last November that Roosevelt had failed to solve the problems of unemployment and that only the war had solved this for him.

The next years ahead will be decisive for the whole future of our country and the world. If the masses are not organized and united around a militant program in defense of their interests, then there is a grave danger that this country may take the path toward fascism and war, replacing Nazi Germany as the threat to the peace and freedom of the world. That is what must be avoided at all costs. This cannot be achieved by a narrow sectarian policy, but only by the

broadest mass policy. This does not mean that we should refuse to work together with liberal bourgeois forces. It only means that we must constantly remember that the program of even the liberal bourgeoisie cannot offer the way out, that the bourgeoisie cannot be relied upon, that the working class must learn to think as a class, must depend in the first place upon its own strength and upon its unity with its natural allies, and that above all, that there must be a Communist vanguard which firmly, without vacillation and without illusions, points the way to victory over reaction and fascism.

SPEECH BY MORRIS CHILDS

IN HIS "Left-Wing" Communism, Lenin wrote:

The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfills its obligations toward its *class* and the toiling masses. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party: that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class* and then the masses.

It is in this spirit of self-criticism that we American Communists must proceed to find the roots of our erroneous policy and the means of correction. This self-criticism applies to leading committees and to individual comrades.

Our self-criticism must not be perfunctory—it must be deep and concrete. It must not be a temporary self-chastisement that soon wears off and is forgotten—it must be practiced constantly.

I think that all the complaints of the comrades, even the so-called "gripes," must be given the most serious consideration. We must ask ourselves nationally and on a district scale if our methods of work did not take on bureaucratic forms which even resulted in a bad relationship

between the leading comrades themselves and with the membership. There is need for a thorough *scrapping* off of the bureaucratic crust. Collective leadership and connection with the membership will go a long way toward correcting this evil. Together with serious political discussion and work, this correction is bound to effect a real change *in our practice*, in the formulation and execution of our policy. As a result of these discussions there are many errors which I for one will have to discuss and correct much more concretely—particularly in our district. No one else can assume responsibility for these mistakes. We must begin with ourselves.

We have vital ties with the people and their organizations in this country. Therefore our discussion of policy cannot be considered an inner organization matter only. The non-Communist workers are also vitally concerned with our policy and are certainly affected by it. Since our discussion is not a secret, the enemy will undoubtedly try to take advantage of our differences and even exaggerate the differences in our ranks. In fact, the bourgeoisie through its many spokesmen is already seeking to exploit our weaknesses and use them for its own ends. The columnists and editorial writers of the bourgeois press are not "neutral"; on the contrary, like Mrs. Roosevelt

they slander us and would, if they could, like to prevent us from developing a Marxian policy.

We have no need to be embarrassed by criticism or over-sensitive to it. Let us disregard the needling by our enemies and search out our own weaknesses, and admit them frankly and openly.

* * *

Some comrades — hard-working and loyal comrades—wonder if the terms “revisionist” and “opportunist” employed in Comrade Duclos’ criticism of our line are not too harsh. They argue that since they worked to organize the masses and had only the best intentions, how could they be classified as revisionists, especially since they believed in Marxism. I think that in self-criticism it is necessary to place such comrades in a category different from that of our leadership, which must accept *full responsibility*. Yet this question must still be answered.

First, let us dispose of the matter of “intentions.” The old saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions applies also to our case. In attacking opportunist currents in the Socialist movement of his day, Karl Marx, writing to Sorge in 1877, answered those who tried to find mitigating circumstances for an opportunist, one Dr. Höchberg, who had the “noblest” of intentions, with the castigating exclamation, “I do not give a damn for ‘intentions.’”

On the question of Marxism and opportunism—we must say that not

all revisionism openly denies Marxism. On the contrary, some outstanding opportunists and revisionists claimed to be “orthodox” Marxists: Karl Kautsky and Morris Hilquit are notable examples. Yet these Social-Democrats were able, by using Marxism as a cover, to distort it, to take the content out of it and thus mislead the working class. Our most dangerous opportunistic mistakes were peddled by us as the “latest” in Marxism. Lenin and the Bolsheviks used to carry on an uncompromising struggle against the “renovators” of Marxism—against those who doctored it just a little, touched it up a bit here and there, and in doing so covered up or weakened a basic proposition of Marxism.

We, by accepting Comrade Browder’s theories, went far beyond the “renovators.” We agreed that there is little in the “old books” to base ourselves upon, so we decided that the road we are traveling is a “new one,” a road yet “uncharted.” Comrade Browder and we who supported him found justification in the pretentious conception that we are “adding” something “new” to Marxism. We took Engels’ correct statement that “Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action” and vulgarized it in the most opportunistic fashion. Instead of strengthening the ties between our theory and practice, we departed from our basic theory and loosened the strands that knit our ideology into one whole.

Let me be concrete. Taking Tehe-

ran as a departure, we *completely revised* Marxism-Leninism. I underline *completely* because we departed from every basic tenet of Marxism. How?

In his book *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, Comrade Browder said:

Teheran represents a firm and growing *common interest* between the leaders who gathered there, their *governments*, the *ruling classes* they represent, and the *peoples of the world*. (The words "common interest" were italicized in the original; other italics mine—M.C.)

This is a departure from the materialist, objective analysis of the relationship of all classes in our society. Teheran was an expression of a historical progressive aim agreed to by the coalition under the given circumstances; yet it did not erase class relationship on a worldwide scale (the coalition is made up of governments representing two different social systems—capitalist and Socialist), nor was the declaration of Teheran the incarnation of the identity of interests of rulers and peoples. We know now as a result of experience that the class aims of the signers of Teheran were not identical.

Naturally this erroneous assumption led us further away from Marxism-Leninism. Thus we developed the idea that the anti-German imperialist bourgeoisie has given up Munichism, *i.e.*, the destruction of the U.S.S.R.—forever. And we told

the workers to drop their guard — that the bourgeoisie has nothing but good intentions toward the Soviet Union.

Lenin predicted the establishment of a "kind of collaboration" between the Socialist world and the capitalist world. Stalin knew long ago of the *possibilities and limits* of what he called the peaceful "cohabitation" of the Soviet state with the capitalist states. Knowing the limits of the relationship, he characterized it as a "provisional equilibrium." He, like Lenin, took into full consideration the antagonisms in the capitalist world—the internal and external antagonisms and the fact that the imperialists base their relations with the Soviet Union upon the needs and position of their class and not on good will or justice.

The world relation of forces has undergone a considerable change as a result of this war and the defeat of German fascism. The changed relation of forces does provide the possibility of a long term of "peaceful cohabitation" and peace "if not forever, for many generations." This is not the issue among us. The issue is how the struggle shall be waged for the fulfillment of Teheran. The issue is to realize who the enemy of the Teheran objectives is and how to fight the enemy. The issue is to realize that these basic facts and the changed relationship of forces have not abolished the class relations and their motivations.

Our Party, by accepting and prac-

ting. Comrade Browder's policy, substituted the Marxian-Leninist theory with a bourgeois-liberal one. We denied the class antagonisms and preached class peace. We carried this "peaceful" relation of classes into the postwar period. To make it plausible, we violated every material economic concept of Marxism and even worked out an economic program for the bourgeoisie. Instead of basing our policy upon the existence of exploiter and exploited, we envisaged and urged class cooperation. The capitalists were turned into big-hearted philanthropists who, while allowed a profit (we were not going to disturb their monopolist profits), would nevertheless use their profits for "the good of humanity" at home and abroad. Everything was "planned." If our common sense and Marxian ABC says that this planning is impossible under capitalism—particularly under imperialism, decaying capitalism, "capitalism on its deathbed"—we regenerated capitalism to order by replacing the Leninist theory of imperialism with that of Kautsky. Yes, that is what we did when we proved that imperialism is "capable" of all the things we suggested. We did not even behave like a bourgeois opposition; we accepted responsibility for the acts of the bourgeoisie and its state, and urged "compliance"; and we were not, for all of that, even invited into the "government," but kicked around.

Comrades, I insist that I am not oversimplifying. On the contrary, we

got into this blind alley of putrid idealism and bourgeois liberalism precisely because in the past we were too content not to draw every possible conclusion from a Marxian point of view. We were impatient—impatient with ourselves and with the working class. Lenin used to urge repetition of basic Marxian propositions: this we have failed to do.

On June 12, a week ago, the reactionary *Chicago Tribune* published an editorial about our present discussion, entitled "Communism Is a Science." The object of this editorial was to refute Marxism. The *Tribune* asked: "How could a man chosen for his position of leadership because of his knowledge of Communist dialectics and his skill in expounding and applying them have been led into such gross error?"

The *Tribune* is aware of the error charged to Browder, as the editorial put it, "in thinking that the class struggle could be abandoned and a *modus vivendi* established between the revolutionary movement and bourgeois capitalism?"

The *Tribune* says further: "If Communism were in truth a scientific system, Browder could not possibly find himself at issue with Duclos, Stalin or his fellow revolutionists in America. There would be only one choice of action for all. But the quarrel does exist, and the fact of its existence can only lead to the conclusion that the conception of Communism as a science is false." The *Tribune* insists that, "Far from

betraying Marxism Browder has been betrayed by it."

The *Tribune* is resorting to the hoary deception that has always been used by the bourgeoisie. If that editorial succeeds in fooling some people, it is because our toleration of a distorted Marxism lends some credence to the *Tribune's* claim. Every time revisionism is passed off as Marxism, it discredits the scientific validity of real Marxism.

In a most important article entitled "Marxism and Revisionism," written in April, 1908, Lenin analyzes and refutes revisionism as a system of "well-known liberal bourgeois views." Lenin deals there with every argument brought forward by Eduard Bernstein, who became the symbol for this current. Lenin refutes Bernstein in the domain of philosophy, of political economy, and of the class struggle and the final aim of the socialist movement.

"The inevitability of revisionism," Lenin states, "is conditioned by its class roots in modern society. Revisionism is an international phenomenon."

Lenin shows that revisionism is substantially the same everywhere, "notwithstanding the gigantic variety in the national conditions and historical moments of all these countries in their present state." Revisionism denied the sharpening class struggle and the final aim of the socialist movement with the catch phrase, "The final aim is nothing, the movement is everything."

The struggle against Social-Democracy and opportunism by the Bolsheviks, current for all these many years, was around this slogan.

According to Lenin, this slogan expressed the substance of revisionism better than many a long argument: "To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the windings of political trivialities, to forget the basic interests of the proletariat and the main features of the entire capitalist system as well as the whole capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these basic interests for the sake of real or would-be advantages of the moment—such is the policy of revisionism. And it obviously follows from the very essence of such a policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms and will give rise to one or other variety of revisionism, each time when there is some 'new' question, or when there is a more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though this turn changed the basic line of development to but an insignificant degree and for but the shortest period of time."

We lived and worked under extraordinary conditions during the last few years. That is true. But nothing in the international and national relations, even while accepting the slogan of national unity as very valid in the war against reaction and fascism, can excuse our departure from the Marxian aims of the working class.

Did we not during the last few years accept in essence the slogan of revisionism? Did not Comrade Browder offer to subordinate even our ideology in the interests of unity? Socialism is not the issue of the day, and it was correct, as Comrade Foster also said, that we would not raise this slogan. But why did we have to give up the education of the workers for raising the level of their class consciousness which leads to the understanding of Socialism? The bourgeoisie did not for one moment give up its ideology. When Communists cease to impart their ideology to the working class, they lose that which makes them *distinct* from all other workers. That is why it became virtually impossible for us to explain to the average worker the difference between our organization and any other militant workers' organization. We tried to bring new workers into our ranks, but their instinct told them we were not meeting their needs, even if we worked harder and more consistently than others.

All the organizational and mechanical efforts to change this situation did not result in much gain for our Association. Whether we are conscious of it or not, our dissolution of the Communist Party was a logical step following from the entire policy.

A Communist Party must be a vanguard party; it can be that only if it accepts Marxism-Leninism in its entirety. It is impossible to separate and discard any component part of Marxism at will and still claim Bol-

shevik inheritance and leadership.

I think that those of us who accepted this step without realizing the full implications deserve to be criticized more severely than up to now: we discarded the Marxist-Leninist conception of the role of the Party. This demobilization of the workers logically flowed from our other political errors and will have to be corrected.

* * *

How did it happen that all the leadership, with one vocal exception, which is also on record, Wm. Z. Foster, accepted and endorsed a policy we now recognize as harmful?

It is my opinion that all of us were influenced by our capitalist environment and ideology, that we did not develop our general and tactical policy on the basis of our general theory, but rather developed it empirically.

I believe, also, that the strength of American imperialism had something to do with our thinking. This can take place whether we are conscious of it or not. When we argued against Jay Lovestone, who was expelled from our ranks years ago, we pointed out that Lovestone was reflecting the view of the bourgeoisie and that he put forth his theories of exceptionalism because he was influenced by the exaggerated strength of American imperialism. These ideas of the bourgeoisie, since we do not live in a vacuum, permeate even the ranks of the Communist organization. We are not immune because our ideology is different from that of the bourgeoisie.

In the Soviet Union there is a different class relationship than in our own country. The bourgeoisie has been abolished. There exist only two friendly classes. The foundations of Socialism have been laid. It is reflected in the new Constitution. Yet capitalist ideology found its reflection in the minds of the people in the Soviet Union, including members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. What was the meaning of the trials against the Trotskyite and Bukharin followers? They reflected the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Where did they acquire this ideology? It came from the remnants, even if they were small, of capitalism or enemy class remnants that still remained in the Soviet Union and from the outside. This is how the C.P.S.U. explained the alien ideology. And even now, at this moment, the C.P.S.U. is carrying on an ideological struggle within its own ranks, constantly cleansing out alien elements and warning those of its members now in other capitalist countries against the danger of bourgeois ideology. Now, many of these things we acquired almost unconsciously, but we are reflecting our surroundings. This is the way this ideology has seeped into our ranks. Our leadership, as I said before, fell victim almost without exception. Imperialism still operates in corrupting even sections of the working class—the labor aristocracy—throws them a few extra crumbs out of their super-profits and dulls their class consciousness. This influence, too, seeps

into our ranks. A previous speaker has concretized this point and explained the influence of the Roosevelt era and the illusions it created.

There is another factor which deserves our consideration as responsible for this state of affairs, and that is that we did not sufficiently utilize the weapons of self-criticism, that there was not sufficient discussion on basic problems, on theory and on the Party.

At the time of our differences between Foster and Browder, this discussion was limited to the top committee and was not brought down to the membership, so that the membership might participate in it. I believe that these two circumstances were largely responsible for the ideas held until recently by the main body of our leadership.

A Communist Party leadership must be united. Yet we are paying for our so-called unanimity. Why? Because unity must be based on fundamentals and should be arrived at after thorough discussion.

We must admit that the expression of an opinion, even on a minor matter, was very often frowned upon. Yet we went along tolerating this attitude. I believe the history of our Party also has something to do with this. I think we feared factionalism so much that we suspected every difference of opinion as a danger to our unity. This was wrong. The failure to air and discuss policy can create a basis for factionalism. Open debate and discussion can really unite us.

SPEECH BY ROY HUDSON

I THINK I am one of many who have read and re-read our basic documents, as well as Browder's writings since the Duclos article. And I am also one of those whose first reaction to a re-reading of these documents was that our policy did not contend that there were no longer any contradictions between imperialist powers, between capitalism and socialism, between the bosses and workers—we never said that the perspective of Teheran would come automatically, that raising wage levels and settling differences with the bosses in the postwar period would be handed to the workers on a silver platter. We did not say that the no-strike pledge should be continued into the postwar period. Moreover, we constantly stressed the importance of the defense of the economic interests of the workers as being essential for the maintenance of national unity and the prosecution of the war. While this is true, the main thing, of course, is that the wrong conclusions we drew from Teheran created many illusions and much confusion regarding the continuation of the no-strike pledge into the postwar period.

But a re-reading of these documents, in the light of events and the Duclos article, forces one to face a fundamental fact—that we did not, in life, help the workers and the people generally to understand that

the anti-Hitler bourgeoisie were partners only to a certain degree: that because of their class nature and imperialist *aims*, collaboration with them was possible only on a limited basis. We did not educate and organize the workers and the people generally to insure that these imperialist forces would not, either as a result of lack of initiative and vigilance on the part of the people, or by joining hands with the pro-fascist sections of monopoly capital, impose their reactionary policies on the Government.

If one argues that this is what we intended to do but did not say so, then the answer is, in my opinion, that we failed to do it, and this failure was inevitable because of our basic mistake.

As to whether we consciously rejected basic principles of Marxism and as to whether we were motivated by a desire to revise and repudiate Marxism, it seems to me the point here is not necessarily what we intended to do, but what we did. Lenin, in defining the policy of revisionism, which Dennis referred to, says amongst others things "... it consists in *forgetting* the basic interests of the proletariat, the main features of the capitalist system as a whole and capitalist evolution as a whole..." I do not think Lenin's use of the word "forgetting" instead of rejecting was an oversight. It seems to

me that the least we can say is that we "forgot" to keep in mind the main features of the capitalist system as a whole and as a result were embarking upon a policy of revisionism.

However, I do not think that we can let the matter drop there, in view of such statements as Browder's in the June issue of *Political Affairs*:

The alignment apparently taking place of Britain and America against the Soviet Union expresses a *conflict of mood and opinion but not a conflict of interest*.

I think the explanation is to be found, not in moods or opinions, but in the nature of monopoly capital, in the efforts of Big Business to realize their interests as imperialists which are in conflict with the interests of labor, the people and the independence of nations.

Did Comrade Browder just recently come to these views or have they existed all the time and were they the basis for our wrong estimate of Teheran and the conclusions we drew? In the light of developments it would seem to me that these are views which Browder held all the time, and we swallowed them hook, line and sinker until we began to do some serious thinking as a result of Comrade Duclos' article.

Developments since V-E Day, and especially those at the San Francisco Conference, certainly show that the

participation of the bourgeois governments of America and Britain in concluding the agreements of Teheran and Crimea did not mean that the character of monopoly capital had changed, and that the imperialist powers were embarking on a fundamentally new policy. The nature and aims of imperialism remain. What is new is that one of the partners in the coalition—the Soviet Union—as a gigantic, military and political force having influence in world affairs, entered into the agreement for non-imperialist reasons. What is new is that the power of monopoly capital and of the trusts no longer exists intact in Europe, and that new and higher forms of democracy are emerging in which labor plays a decisive, leading role. What is new is that the struggles of national independence are challenging the rule of imperialism in the colonial countries. What is new is the gains made in establishing international labor unity. Another new fact is the greater organizational strength of the American labor movement, the fact that the decisive section of organized labor has emerged as a powerful political force in America.

These facts do fundamentally affect the ability of the forces of imperialism and reaction to realize their imperialist aims. We support and fight for the decisions and perspectives of Teheran and Crimea, not because we have blind faith that the bourgeois governments will honor

them, but because they are supported by the world working class, the Soviet Union and all other forces of democracy and freedom; because these forces, if united, are strong enough to win the fight and complete the defeat of the forces of world fascism. We support those decisions because they are in the interests of our nation and the world, were upheld by the people in the national elections, and can today unite the consistent anti-fascist forces in our country—in the first place, the American working class.

* * *

Labor's political role in the 1944 elections was of historic significance, even though labor emerged as an independent force, not in opposition to the bourgeoisie as a whole, but in collaboration with the anti-Hitler section of the employers. Furthermore, when the C.I.O. unites with the rest of the world trade union movement in joining hands with the organized workers of the Soviet Union, then something fundamentally new has emerged that is bound to have a profound effect on the course of history, even though the reactionary policies of the A. F. of L. Executive Council must still be defeated for the split in the ranks of world labor to be completely healed.

We have, of course, stressed the importance of these events, generally, and in relationship to the immediate key problems but in my opinion we have not sufficiently em-

phasized and studied the fundamental significance of these changes in the American labor movement. These events are important, not because labor is the backbone of the nation's unity in a *supporting* sense, but in a *leading* sense; not because the pro-Roosevelt or anti-Hitler bourgeoisie will guarantee the realization of the Crimea decisions and Roosevelt's program if they have the united support of labor, but because labor is the main social force that will consistently defend democracy and the true interests of the nation, the force capable of rallying and uniting all democratic and anti-fascist sections of our population to destroy the political and economic basis of fascism.

Have we devoted one-tenth of the necessary time to studying, explaining, and winning support for the significance of the world labor unity developments? Has the full significance of labor's new role in the political field been adequately studied and grasped, and do we fully understand the weaknesses that are bound to exist, especially as a result of the concrete form in which labor has emerged as a political force? Can we be satisfied that the limitations of labor's political role are being grappled with in a manner that will insure the independent strength of labor against dispersal by the bourgeoisie and against Social-Democratic influences, so that it will achieve greater maturity and greater strength, so that labor will

increase its influence over the democratic and anti-fascist camp as a leading force?

An answer as to why such questions have not been examined more fundamentally is to be found in re-reading the book *Teheran* and nearly every important speech, resolution and article. Whom did we seek to convince, to whom were our arguments addressed? Every section of the population and especially the win-the-war bourgeoisie and the Administration, but not particularly the labor movement. Of course, we must have a program for the nation, we must speak to all democratic forces and seek to convince them. But our prime concern, as a Marxist organization, must be to arm the working class with the necessary understanding, and develop its initiative and leading role as the most essential prerequisite for convincing other forces with whom we and labor are seeking to collaborate.

As a result of our fundamental mistakes, we gave inadequate attention to these basic changes and put insufficient stress on what was new and maturing. We did not do everything necessary and possible to consolidate and extend the gains of labor, deepen its understanding and enable it more rapidly to become the leading force in welding the democratic unity of the nation. As a result of a wrong estimate of Teheran we stressed the "progressive" position of sections of monopoly capital as new and decisive, thus giving rise

to illusions that the remaining conflict of interests was only secondary.

As a consequence, our policy had the effect of strengthening labor as a supporting force but not sufficiently developing its leading role. The manner in which we conducted our fight for labor to be accepted as a full partner in the camp of national unity had the effect of promoting illusions that the anti-Hitler bourgeoisie fully supported anti-fascist policies and would play an equal role with labor in consistently fighting for these policies. We did not sufficiently arm labor with a full understanding of its role in combating the imperialist aims of the anti-Hitler sections of big business, and consequently it was not fully prepared to react to the serious developments that have taken place since V-E Day. Another practical consequence is that we have not tackled, even yet, the problem of winning the A. F. of L. for international unity as a major political question.

I have given considerable attention to the changes that have taken place in the ranks of the working class as expressed on the political field and in relation to world labor unity, because I consider our weakness in this general question one of the most serious consequences that flowed from our basic error in estimating Teheran. While this examination shows weaknesses it also emphasizes the tremendous forces, especially in the ranks of the working class, that can be drawn into action for the Res-

olution's Program of Action—forces that we have been insufficiently influencing because of the weaknesses we are now correcting. I have not attempted the concrete examination of the specific weaknesses of our work in the unions, which must be undertaken, because I believe that to a certain degree many of these weaknesses had their roots in the question I have tried to deal with. In examining our work I think we must guard against over-correction, as Comrade Foster has warned.

Our policy and the forms of struggle we have advocated undoubtedly have enabled the organized labor movement to make considerable achievements in defending the economic interests of the workers and in building the unions. But there can be no doubt that our basic weaknesses limited the effectiveness of our efforts, and in the recent period were beginning to demobilize the fight. The defense of the economic interests of the workers against the present onslaught demands the development of militant forms of struggle. This must not, however, weaken in any manner the firm support for the no-strike pledge to insure the speedy defeat of Japanese imperialism.

We have played a decisive role in maintaining the unity of the basic win-the-war forces in the labor movement; but an examination will also lead us to conclude that our revisionist errors hindered the consolidation and strengthening of this

unity, the deepening of the understanding of the masses and key forces, the exposing and defeating of Lewis, Hutcheson, Dubinsky, and Reuther, and the strengthening, to the full of our relations with the basic sections of the working class.

We correctly stressed the important role of key individuals in the labor movement, but over a considerable period of time we have, in some cases, over-emphasized this, with the result that our policy was becoming one-sided. Thus, support for responsible leadership tended to become a substitute for the fight for program, the further development of trade-union democracy and the education of the workers. To the degree that this is true, the correction of course, is not the other extreme, where we ignore the key role of individuals and fail to see the decisive importance of supporting and strengthening their leadership and our collaboration with them.

In the recent period we had begun to feel the cumulative effects of these and other weaknesses—in terms of lagging behind, in the existence of illusions and confusions, and in serious set-backs in several decisive places. These are danger signals that, unless the turn called for in our Resolution is quickly achieved, a major crisis in the labor movement and the nation can develop.

I support the line of the Resolution without qualifications, and this goes as well for the reports made by Foster and Dennis. Foster was

far too lenient in his criticism of the rest of the National Board members and especially of myself. I feel very deeply the responsibility that I share with the other Board members for the mistakes made. My work in applying our general policy did not have an indirect effect upon the labor movement, but a direct effect—perhaps more so than that of many other comrades. I recognize that this fact must be taken into account in judging my own responsibility as a Board member in the critical examination of every leader which our membership is determined to undertake in order to decide what steps must be taken to strengthen the leadership and secure full guarantees that our organization will make its maximum contribution.

Not all of us quickly understood the full meaning of the Duclos article. That we had made mistakes was quickly clear; but an understanding of the fundamental nature of these mistakes did not come so easily for me. I trust that this experience will deepen my own understanding and enable me to grasp more quickly fundamental questions. However, when I raise serious questions and they are ignored, or when there is no effort or when there is an inadequate effort to explain and convince, or when my motives are challenged—then I will continue to protest, although perhaps, in the future, I will find a better way of doing it

than abstaining from voting.

I for one do not plead that I had serious doubts about the policy we are now correcting but went along with it out of respect for the judgment of Browder and others: I went along because my inadequate grasp of Marxism prevented me from understanding that something was fundamentally wrong. I do not think the same thing is true in regard to the question of the type of collective and individual methods of leadership that has dominated our work for years and the manner in which we practiced democracy. For years every instinct in me rebelled at certain methods of leadership. It seemed to me that in effect "collective" work boiled down to everyone expressing what he had to say and then Browder's word would be final. After he had taken a position everyone seemed to be reluctant to press a point, either out of fear that maybe this would result in encouraging what was considered Foster's narrow line, or else be interpreted as challenging Browder's leadership. Collective leadership and responsibility became replaced by personal leadership and responsibility. This was not just confined to Board meetings but led to a situation where some questions that should have come before the Board were disposed of without even bothering to bring them to the Board. I would like to add, however, that these methods were not confined to Browder alone by any means, but

undoubtedly were expressed in the work of many of us.

Why did I, and perhaps others, submit to such methods, even though it went against our grain? One of the reasons perhaps is that we figured Browder's greater ability, superior experience and mastery of Marxism offset these other things; that we were making major headway in many directions and that the question of methods of leadership was secondary. The result has been that the greater the progress we seemed to make and the more confident we became that we were on a correct path, the worse the situation

became. All this meant that we were adjusting ourselves to non-Bolshevik conceptions of leadership, and in the long run, instead of establishing the authority and prestige of the leadership, we were approaching a situation where it would be undermined, if not completely destroyed. I do not know whether we could have prevented, or more quickly overcome the mistakes we have made, if this situation had not prevailed. I do know that we can never fully correct our mistakes and become the organization that we must be unless all such methods of leadership are ended once and for all.

SPEECH BY ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

COMRADES OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE:

It seems to me that every member of our National Board is called upon to make a searching statement as to his position on the Resolution before us, and on the mental processes that led up to the acceptance of the Resolution.

I don't think that any of us are now hoping to convince Comrade Browder, although I say quite frankly that I was one of those who started, after reading the Duclos article, with the hope that this could be accomplished. And if I have come under any "influence" in my thinking during the period I have been a member of the Communist organization, it is the influence of Comrade Browder. It has not been easy, in fact it has been a very painful and difficult experience to face this and eliminate it from my thinking. And so I make my remarks rather personal and that cannot be avoided.

I don't think we can answer this question by thumping our breasts and saying "mea culpa, mea culpa" over and over again. It's like the Irishman who after whacking his breast exceptionally hard groaned aloud, "Glory be to God—there goes me pipe!"

I think a lot of pipes will go with this kind of breast-thumping unless

we follow it with something more substantial than words.

I felt admiration for Comrades Green and Minor because they at least had undertaken to do what I knew myself to be incapable of doing. I don't have sufficient confidence in myself as a theoretician, I thought that they in all earnestness and sincerity couldn't just accept and brush aside the contradictions that seemed apparent, but that they had made a very earnest and serious attempt to reconcile our practical position with the theory of our movement. I believe Comrade Green did try to do so. I want to say now that I withdraw that estimation of Comrade Minor. I am sorry. I had a great affection for Bob over a period of years, but I was never aware of an intense and continued struggle between Comrades Minor and Browder. Maybe I am naive, but it appeared to me every time I heard Comrade Minor speak in the Board that Comrade Minor was out-Browdering Browder, and that he was fastened to Comrade Browder's mental apron strings, even to the extent of making Browder uncomfortable at times. I was happy at our Board meeting, which was one of the unhappiest meetings, to have the impression of seeing Comrade Minor cut those strings and honestly change his opinions. But apparently that is not correct. I don't think

Comrade Minor can convince me or anyone that he waged a continual struggle with Comrade Browder. In fact I felt, and I am going to speak frankly, that he used "Comrade Browder's approval" as a constant bludgeon against the rest of us in every difference of opinion, not only in the early phase of the discussion when he resisted the criticism of Comrade Duclos and the Resolution of the Board, but at all times. In the experiences I had during my secretaryship of the Committee in Defense of Comrade Browder, this was true. Up to Christmas time we were hamstrung and prevented from carrying on a mass campaign (and Comrade Foster will remember that I sent for him about this when I was sick and just out of the hospital). Comrade Minor always spoke in the most official and authoritative and final manner as to what Comrade Browder wanted in relation to the situation and against mass activity or publicity. I have to say this because I have to evaluate my fellow members of the Board as well as myself.

I can say quite frankly that I had a sort of inferiority complex toward these comrades. I haven't got it any more. In admitting I was wrong, I realize that they too were wrong. I suppose this inferiority feeling was partly due to the fact that I came into the Communist movement late in life and late in my labor experience. All my background in the U.W.W. was different from the approach to work and the concepts of

leadership in the Communist movement. I tried very hard to learn how to work as a Communist and how to work under this conception of leadership. I can tell you frankly it wasn't easy, because I went to Plenums where I was revolted by the repetition of acquiescence with everything Comrade Browder had said, in speeches prepared before he had made his speech, and I said to myself, "Elizabeth, there is just something wrong with you. After all, these comrades are all experienced, they have long years in the Communist movement, you were always engaged in struggles of a mass character as an agitator, and you are just not on the beam. You will have to learn to work this way. This is the proper attitude toward leadership."

And so, I thought, you have got to shed your leftist deviation, sister, you have to learn to work as a Communist. And this gave me an inferiority complex which I now see I had. I feel a lot better since I got rid of it. There were so many times I didn't speak at Plenums because I felt I didn't have anything to say and yet I had a lot to say. I would go out among the miners and would know what their problems are and what the miners were thinking, but on my return nobody would ask me whether I had any opinions on this subject. I thought, "Well, they know it already. There's nothing I can tell them they don't know, so what's the use?" I was absolutely wrong not

to speak out.

This has been a difficult period in my life and it has been a relief to get away from official meetings and get out into the districts. That's probably why I fought to get out of New York and into the other districts. There I felt more of an equal, more at home. And I am not reflecting on any attitude of comrades here toward me. It was of my own making; I see now that it grew out of my too ready outward acceptance of everything Comrade Browder said. And to what I didn't accept I assumed a sort of evasive method. I can see now that I read out of *Teheran* and *Victory and After* that which I understood and believed in and I presented this in my speeches and forgot about the rest of it. I interpreted *Teheran* especially as a book of struggle. This was entirely wrong. There is that element in the book; but essentially I put into Comrade Browder's book things which weren't there and now Browder has taken out a great deal that was in there, as I interpreted it.

I feel that I have applied this fear of being "leftist" and being a "Wobbly" to my estimation of Comrade Foster's position. I said, "Well, Bill's an old Wobbly too and he has the same kind of deviations I could easily have." This was unjust to Comrade Foster. Somehow I never talked it over with him because I was afraid he was, going to convince me and that if I was convinced I would be out of step with

the organization as a whole. I wanted unity and was willing to conform to achieve it. This is a frank discussion on my part, but I think it's good for the soul to say some of the things that have been on our minds for such a long time and were responsible for our many weaknesses and that we say these things in a personal as well as in a political sense. It is easy enough to take "collective responsibility" and make a reservation that the other guy was always wrong but that I always had the right things back in my mind. That's not good. It is not a good way to face the future.

* * *

I came back to New York City from a trip to discuss the Duclos article. The comrades should have sent for us—both Comrade Hudson and myself. I don't think it was exactly fair that there would be discussions carried on over a period of time on the floor in which absent members were not able to participate. The other comrades were three or four steps ahead of us and slightly patronizing toward us when we returned. They acted as if we were awfully slow to catch up. They already had the benefit of a thorough discussion. But I didn't and I came up fighting, with the feeling that we should defend our line and defend the leadership of Comrade Browder, and I was very much surprised that the other comrades didn't react in the same way. Even Comrade Browder in his foreword was

apparently yielding to the Duclos criticism at that point. Gil Green passed me a note to the effect that "we all felt like you do, at first"—very subjective, very angry, excited. They said Bob Minor had been flaying around in all directions; and it would have been bad for Duclos if he were in the vicinity. Well, I felt better. I will catch up somehow, I thought.

I can say quite frankly that I didn't really begin to see the light until some members began to discuss it with me in detail. And it is my fault as much as the others. This was the first time that I had a long discussion with some of the leading comrades, the first time I have had a thorough discussion with at least two members of the National Board. I felt I was sort of a visiting member—sort of a pitcher full of information when I went out into the field. The only trouble with that was I didn't have all the answers. I had the pitcher full all right, but after the pitcher was empty I didn't have the answers to the questions and I found myself even getting angry with people who were asking questions. And then I thought there's something wrong with you, Elizabeth, when you get impatient when workers ask you questions. And this was the mood I came back in.

I had a long talk with Comrade Williamson, and I deeply appreciated it because he gave me a review of the thinking of the other

members of the Board and he began to straighten out my remaining kinks. But I was not entirely convinced until I heard Comrade Browder make his remarks at the final meeting of our Board, and a very painful experience it was. I saw that this is not the direction that I can go along, and not the direction that I can explain, to lead other people. After all I may not have the clearest conception of Marxism, but as I learned it from experience in movements of the masses—in the I.W.W., it was based on the class struggle, on the conception of organizing the workers, as the basic power in the progressive movement, based on the necessity for struggle. It certainly was not based on any confidence in the employing class, in the capitalists or imperialists. I had felt that maybe this was the right policy for the war period, but somehow or other it didn't fit as a long-term perspective. If Comrade Browder had earlier made it clear how far his thinking went and that this was *such* a long-term perspective, I don't think anyone of us could have accepted it. We are a Party based fundamentally on the working class and its struggles. The hardest thing I did and the one I can least forgive myself for was to stop talking about Socialism entirely. It was a violation of almost forty years of my basic purpose in the working class movement of this country. I am sure my father turned over in his grave, although I know

he had already turned over when I defended Winston Churchill, but he turned over again in this period. I think we have to face all these things honestly. We substituted our immediate program for the ultimate goal. For a long time I didn't see these things clearly and all of a sudden I feel I came out of the fog, thanks to Comrade Duclos holding a mirror up to us and forcing us to examine ourselves.

* * *

But I have one thing to be happy for, I am glad I didn't write a book. I wondered why I didn't, and made excuses to myself. Five years ago, at a National Convention I got an assignment to write a book. But first I have my ancestors. They were Irish and militant fighters against England for 750 years. I could not dispose of my ancestors or suddenly make them collaborators. So I thought, well, they're out, for this period at least. And then my own background. At the age of 16 I entered into a period of twenty years of the most intense and violent strike struggles which this country has seen. And I thought, well, if I am going to tell them as they really were—these tremendous struggles of the people for their basic rights, it's likely to agitate and inspire people to go out on strike or have the perspective of strikes in the postwar period. So that goes out. And then there's the question of labor defense. Years of bitter struggle for the rights

of the working class against frame-ups, Moyer-Haywood, Joe Hill, Mooney and Billings, Sacco-Vanzetti, and countless others. How could I picture capitalists as I have known them as brothers under the skin or the lamb and the lion lying together for an indefinite period of class collaboration? I saw my book was out, because it did not fit our line. I cannot make my book in that kind of a presentation. It was impossible. Now I feel kind of pepped up. I can keep my ancestors, the great strikes and labor defense, and everything of the heroic struggles of the American working class and the American people for their basic rights for the past four decades, of which the struggle against fascism is a logical part.

In the postwar future we may need the inspiration of our traditions and struggles in the past. You cannot tell the miners that they can work with the operators in postwar planning. I have tried it and it can't be done. As far as the miners are concerned, they hate the operators and they hate John L. Lewis, and they are waiting for us to present a constructive program that they can carry on into the postwar period.

Well, this speech is partly biographical, partly confessional, and partly an evaluation of our weaknesses. I cannot understand why I am never afraid to go out and talk to a group of miners or steel workers or workers anywhere in the country, and why I was afraid of our

own National Board and the National Committee. There's some kind of atmosphere we created. It is bad and let's get rid of it and let's say the sky is the limit to speak our minds when we hear an honest question or difference of opinion. I promise you, if I am one of the lucky ones (and I would not be surprised if I am not on the new National Committee because I have been equally guilty with all others), I promise you that there will never be another meeting of the National Committee that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn doesn't speak her mind on any subject either because she has differences or can make a contribution.

* * *

As Board members we must all speak frankly now of our reservations, self-enforced silences, or too ready unthinking acceptances. We must explain the difficult ordeal we have all gone through in facing the errors we have made and also the prolonged struggle we have had in trying to convince Earl Browder. Our change of position was not a sudden overnight business, nor was it superficial, as it may seem to some observers. Comrade Earl Browder has apparently locked his mind against either our persuasion or the logic of events. We have tried to find the key but to no avail. The Duclos article first, and the prompt agreement of our membership even before the publication of the Board

resolution, plus the effect it had on our Board and on the other members of the National Committee—surely all this should be the key to unlock the mind of Earl Browder as a Communist.

It is a sad state of mental isolation and arrogance, even if unconscious, which persists in a refusal to do anything more than to re-affirm one's original position and substantiate it with self-quotations. We have all contributed to making Earl Browder believe himself infallible. Let us never abandon collective leadership in the future, in this manner. I personally feel profoundly sorry for what has happened to Earl Browder. I hope the withdrawal of some of the causative factors may effect a cure. If so, he could do far better work in the future than in the past. If not, no one, no matter how good, is irreplaceable. My advice to Comrade Browder, unsolicited and unwelcome though it may be, is to break down your reserves, which have been a barrier between you and your fellow-workers and find your answers among people, not in research and study alone. You are a hard man to talk to, nobody feels he really knows you, nobody feels free to approach you. Is it shyness and modesty, as we believed? Now, frankly, your attitude causes doubt. If you had mixed with the people, gone into their homes, checked your thoughts with them, as Lenin did—you would not be so isolated today. If you had even mixed with

your own comrades—you could have understood them better. Take a trip around the country, alone, unknown, unhonored, and unsung, but *meet the people*, Earl, and learn to be one of them once again. It is not we but you who have come under “alien influences,” I fear, which placed you apart and above, aloof and unresponsive to the workers; which made you move less and less

among them; which made you magnify the importance of contacting influential persons rather than masses; which separated you from the instincts and heart beats of the people. It may be a long and hard road back, but this is the only one I see for you. Then maybe you can find the key to unlock the closed mind and once again “free Earl Browder.”

SPEECH BY DOXEY A. WILKERSON

THE VALIDITY of the C.P.A. National Board Draft Resolution, which analyzes the basic errors of American Communist policy since January, 1944, is fully confirmed by the wave of reaction which has burst forth on both the foreign and domestic fronts since V-E Day.

None can fail to see that many of our former win-the-war allies among the big bourgeoisie simply are not behaving as our "Teheran" analysis predicted that they would:

1. Instead of fostering Anglo-Soviet-American friendship "in their own interests," they have given American foreign policy a dangerous push along the anti-Soviet policy of imperialism and war.

2. Instead of promoting the speedy defeat of Japan, the liberation of colonial peoples, and the democratic reconstruction of Europe, they are toying with the idea of a negotiated peace with Hitler's Far Eastern ally, holding tightly to their colonial possessions, and fighting to suppress the upsurge of democratic currents in liberated Europe.

3. Instead of working to consolidate democratic national unity as our "intelligent" appraisal of the alternatives before them would demand, they are ganging up with old-line reactionaries to destroy the wartime gains of the Negro people, shackle and weaken organized labor, and press down the living standards of the people. Even the fervent ap-

peals of President Truman do not suffice to halt the aggressive role with which they seek to turn back the progressive trend which this people's war has brought well along toward maturity.

From these facts of current history Communists must infer either (1) that our Marxism is not a science, capable of accurate historical prediction, and thus competent to guide our vanguard role of the working class; or (2) that our Pre-Duclos analyses and over-all policy represented a disastrously illusory distortion of Marxism.

It is not difficult to choose between these two propositions. Although the recent political behavior of "decisive sections" of the big bourgeoisie does not conform to our predictions, it does conform precisely to what our "old books" of unrevised Marxism would lead one to expect of monopoly capital in its imperialist stage of development.

We have, indeed, been led into a major Right deviationist error by our illusion that national unity born of urgent war necessity was an abiding historical phenomenon, that never again would monopoly capital revert to its traditional predatory role, and, therefore, that vigorous struggle of the working class *against* monopoly capital—as orthodox Marxists always knew was essential for abiding social progress—need no longer be a guiding premise in work-

ing-class strategy and tactics.

As a result, we have helped disarm the working class and the Negro people, rather than help prepare them for the hard struggles which life now thrusts to the forefront. We have alienated ourselves from large sections of the people who refused to accept our Pollyanna line. We have undermined the basic Marxist character of our Communist organization. We have made ourselves and the nation vulnerable to resurgent reactionary onslaughts which only a united and fighting coalition of all progressive forces, based upon an alert and powerful labor movement, can readily withstand.

REVISIONISM ON THE NEGRO QUESTION

If Earl Browder bears major responsibility for this near disastrous error, all members of our National Board share fully because of their suppression of the Foster letter of warning while this revisionist policy was being debated. Moreover, the entire National Committee, Communist cadres throughout the country, and practically the entire membership are seriously guilty; for our Marxist understanding plus courageous and genuinely democratic discussion should have prevented us from "unanimously" accepting and believing in so gross a distortion of our basic theory. I, personally, assume a very large share of the guilt which rank opportunism alone can fully explain.

It was inevitable that our over-all

revisionist policy should weaken all specialized aspects of Communist work—and this has unquestionably been true of our recent strategy and tactics on the Negro question.

Marxists - Leninists have long established that the Negro people constitute an oppressed nation. Communists have correctly held that this oppression of the Negro people operates seriously to divide the working class, and thus to weaken both white and Negro workers in their struggles for democratic liberties and for security. They have taught that there can be no substantial and lasting progress for the masses of people generally except through blasting the Jim Crow shackles which hold back the Negro people. And from this basic premise, Communists have historically been in the very forefront of the fight for Negro rights, refusing ever to compromise on this issue, and seeking always to rally the white and Negro people for united and vigorous struggle against the common oppressors of both.

Except for one brief period of ideological confusion immediately following Pearl Harbor, the Communists have maintained strict verbal adherence to the no-compromise-on-the-Negro-question line. The temporary period of unclarity was forcefully brought to an end by Earl Browder's speech at Madison Square Garden in July 1942, when he sharply criticized the tendency of many Communists to soft-pedal the fight for Negro rights lest such strug-

gles disrupt win-the-war national unity. Then, and later in *Victory—And After*, and still later in *Teheran—Our Path in War and Peace*, Browder repeatedly declared that the Negro question, above all others, permits of no compromise, that we must struggle with all our might to uproot the whole system of Jim-Crowism—as a necessary measure to consolidate national unity and hasten victory in the anti-Axis war.

But a critical examination of Communist practice during the recent period can but reveal a striking gap between ideological profession and actual performance.

1. We Communists did fight hard for the right of Negroes to work in war industries, but we failed signally to push the struggle to protect Negroes' wartime gains during the period of reconversion cutbacks now upon us.

2. We never did throw our full power into the fight against the Red Cross Jim Crow blood bank; and we tended to discourage, or certainly failed to promote, the strong movement of a few years ago to amass hundreds of thousands of petitions demanding mixed Negro-white fighting units in the Army—a policy which eventually was initiated on the Western Front without our aid.

We criticized, but seldom led, vigorous struggles against racial discrimination in the armed forces; indeed, we characterized as unduly

"nationalist" certain Negro organizations that demanded immediate and substantial correction by the Roosevelt Administration.

4. We liquidated the Communist organization entirely in the South, and preached an (uneasy) reliance upon the Southern bourgeoisie, "in their own interests," to industrialize that semi-feudal land and establish democracy as a "necessary" step in the process.

5. We met and indulged in sharp self-criticism for failure to develop and bring forward a strong corps of Negro Communist cadres in the great industrial centers of America, but we never gave practical organizational expression to the correct conclusions then drawn.

This catalogue could be continued at length, but this should suffice to explain why it was possible for certain (largely anti-Communist) elements to stage a public debate not long ago on the question: Have the Communists Quit Fighting for Negro Rights? None could have raised that question during the 1920's or early 1930's when the outstanding and perhaps most widely-recognized fact about the Communists was their militant and uncompromising struggles for the democratic rights of the Negro people.

This slowing-up on struggles for Negro rights has not resulted from a deliberate policy to do so. Rather, it has resulted primarily from our over-all illusory policy of reliance

upon "decisive sections" of the big bourgeoisie to act in accord with the spirit of Teheran. If, "in their own interests," they were going to turn the scales in favor of enduring peace, expanding prosperity, stronger national unity and deepening democracy—as we have been eager to believe; indeed, to "prove" from occasional progressive wartime steps they have supported or tolerated—then there was little need for sharp struggle on the Negro question or any other. It was not difficult for us to accept Earl Browder's easy sophism that the Negro people have "exercised their right of self-determination" and have "chosen" the path of integration—which "Teheran" is certain to carry forward to full development.

The practical effects of this opportunist policy on the Negro question are now all too apparent. Tens of thousands of Negroes who instinctively rejected our illusions remained entirely without our influence. Many thousands of those who entered our ranks failed to find the answers they sought, and thereupon produced the "fluctuating Negro membership" problem which practically all districts report. That Negro's greatest ally, the labor movement, is strikingly unprepared, not only for the general struggles which this period thrusts upon it, but especially for the fight against disruptionist racial antagonisms which our government's failure to tackle the hu-

man aspects of reconversion will certainly provoke.

Despite the obvious errors here recounted, the Communists have helped greatly to push forward the boundaries of Negro freedom during the period just past, and they have made tremendous gains in Negro membership and in influence among the Negro people. But these achievements are minor, indeed, when measured by what could have been achieved by a correct policy. Moreover, they represent highly inadequate preparation for the struggles which lie ahead.

THE MAIN TASKS AHEAD

With reference to Communist policy regarding the Negro question, as with all other aspects of our work, the primary task we now face is to rid our minds of the stultifying bourgeois illusions under the influence of which we have been operating in the past. We must come quickly to realize that, despite notable wartime gains, the Negro people are still an oppressed nation, living in a society in which Jim-crowism is still the dominant pattern. We must draw the proper conclusions from the current aggressive efforts of Southern planter interests and Northern monopoly capitalist interests to destroy FEPC, defeat poll-tax repeal, and "put the Negro back in his place." We must recognize the peril which mounting anti-Negro attacks present to or-

ganized labor and the progressive pro-Teheran forces of our nation generally. And we must do everything in our power to rally the Negro people, in unity among themselves and with their labor and progressive allies, to launch a broad, militant counter-attack against reaction all up and down the Negro freedom front.

As a necessary basis for success in such efforts, it is of the utmost urgency that we move quickly to develop hundreds of Marxist-trained cadres among the Negro proletariat in the great industrial centers of our nation, and to guide them in rallying the masses of Negro workers in effective struggle alongside the organized white workers in defense of the national interests of us all. By the same token, we must step up our education of white Communists, especially those in the labor movement, on the urgent necessity for militant struggles for Negro democratic rights. These are among the major historic tasks which now con-

front the American Communist movement.

We enter this mixed period of continuing war and beginning re-conversion with the forces of progress in our nation far more mature and powerful than ever before. The perspectives of Teheran and Yalta, which we have cherished during the recent past, still represent the goals toward which we and all freedom-loving mankind will continue to move. Moreover, these goals are entirely attainable. But as is now fully apparent to us all, we can win that enduring peace, freedom and security for which *we* have fought this war only through unrelenting and militant struggle against those reactionary forces of monopoly capital which now seek to turn the tide of history backward. And it is important for us ever to realize that what we Communists do, or fail to do, in the struggle for Negro democratic rights will have a truly decisive influence upon the course of our nation during the years ahead.

SPEECH BY SAMUEL DONCHIN

THE TEST OF AGREEMENT with the program of action of the Draft Resolution is a full comprehension of the theoretical source of Comrade Browder's revisionist line.

But merely to deal with Browder's opportunism as it affected our post-war estimate and tasks is not sufficient. We must also show concretely how it distorted our correct line during the German phase of the war.

To cite three basic facts:

(a) In a number of cases we have objectively contributed to the growth of Trotskyism and Social-Democratism in the ranks of the organized labor movement. This was caused by not taking up more energetically the economic struggles of the workers against the trusts within the limits of our no-strike pledge; by quelling the justified fears of the workers regarding the postwar economic tension and difficulties. Because of that we have not sufficiently prepared ourselves for the human aspects of reconversion. Thus, it became more difficult for us to rally the workers for a more resolute struggle against the open appeasement sections of American monopoly capitalism and their Trotskyite, Social-Democratic allies.

In many cases we handed over the initiative in the fight against the monopolies to the petty-bourgeois radicals. Thus we have strengthened

political petty-bourgeois influences in the ranks of labor and made it more difficult to carry through our general education of Marxism and the ideas of Socialism.

(b) In an article in *The Communist* on the Negro question, Comrade Browder correctly stressed the need of struggling for Negro rights on the basis of equality. However, he made an error which has had the effect of weakening our struggle for Negro rights during the people's war. He has eliminated the national aspect of the Negro question. (Here it was not a question of raising the slogan of self-determination.) The Negro people in the U. S. feel a strong kinship with the colonial peoples. And it is in this spirit that they so joyously greeted Molotov's amendment to the San Francisco Trusteeship Charter for full independence and the right to self-determination.

We must say that by our underestimation of the national aspect of the Negro question and by our theoretical revisionism on the colonial question and the right of self-determination, we have objectively contributed to the growth of petty-bourgeois national reformism in the ranks of the Negro people.

The fact that the two main camps which constitute the basis of the Communist movement in the United States, labor and the Negro people,

experienced tension in their relationship with us, should have been a danger signal to us.

I suggest that the Draft Resolution deal more specifically and directly with the distortions of our correct line with reference to labor and the Negro people as caused by our post-war opportunist line.

(c) Another ill effect of Browder's opportunist line during our war activities were the reports and discussions on municipal elections at our last National Committee meeting. Public utilities and real estate interests, as a rule, shape the taxation policies for the municipalities. We do not accept an attitude of indifference to municipal finances. But in my judgment the taxation program presented at our last National Committee meeting showed the impact of reconciliation with the tax program of the public utilities tied up with monopoly finance capital.

What is the source of Comrade Browder's revisionism? It is his revisionism of the Marxist-Leninist laws pertaining to the character of American monopoly capitalism as a *class* and that of American imperialism. To emphasize a few of the theoretical mistakes which led to revisionism:

It is correct to reject counter-revolutionary Trotskyite ideas of the impossibility of the peaceful co-existence of Socialist and Capitalist states. But Stalin more than once warned against its over-simplifica-

tion. Stalin took more than one comrade to task for forgetting the capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union. He warned against those who would interpret the irrevocable victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union as removing the danger of war caused by capitalist encirclement. I think this is one of the main reasons why we were caught off guard with respect to the San Francisco conference.

* * *

A second basic error was the separation of the pressure of the contradictions of American monopoly capitalism upon the whole system of capitalist world economy. As we know, the world economic crisis of 1929 was ushered in by our own economic crisis of that year.

American monopoly capitalism presents in an accentuated form all the inherent contradictions of capitalist monopolist economy. Not as Trotsky preached, that America would put the whole world on the ration system, but America, by virtue of monopoly capitalist contradictions and inherent imperialist aggressiveness, *adds* to the *instability* of world capitalism.

Monopoly capitalism dominates the American scene. The workers instinctively feel it, and to use an old expression, so do all other toiling sections of the population, including the middle class. Though we may enjoy a higher standard of living, the sense of insecurity, the

fear of losing a job in the United States is at times even greater than in any other capitalist country. This comes from the fact that the inherent contradictions of capitalist economy are most accentuated in this most developed monopoly capitalist country of the world. This contradiction is dramatically expressed in the spectre of mass unemployment.

Does this mean that we should overlook the specific features of the historically favorable development of American capitalism? Not at all. But these specific features are subordinate to the main features and as time goes on, the effect of the specific features on class relationships becomes less and less.

It is with pain and anguish that the membership in the present discussion asks itself—how could it happen? I would say that the critical mood of our membership should be welcomed. If our membership was numbed, then there would be very little hope for self-criticism and true theoretical discussions leading to self-correction. Of course there is a danger that defeatist moods may develop. That is why it is so essential to discuss the source of our errors.

* * *

In addition to what has already been said on the source of our errors, let me emphasize a few points: Our mistake did not consist in not utilizing the contradictions and conflicts in the capitalist class itself. We

failed to utilize them, however, in a Marxian way—that is, to be on guard against the whole monopoly capitalist class, and through our strategy to weaken the position of the bourgeoisie. Browder's theories, however, his idolization of Roosevelt, tended to have the opposite effect.

The resolution correctly calls attention to our obscuring of the class character of bourgeois democracy. The source of our idolization of Roosevelt must be traced to our opportunistic interpretation of the class character of bourgeois democracy as we correctly fought to defend it from the attacks of fascism and reaction. But I would like to call attention to another source which is responsible for the idolization of Roosevelt, and that is our overlooking the danger of bourgeois nationalism.

We correctly took the cue from George Dimitrov in fighting national nihilism. We were guilty of national nihilism, and there is still room to fight it. However, we have also been warned against bourgeois nationalism. This we completely overlooked.

Comrade Browder, a long time ago, raised the slogan of "Communism is 20th Century Americanism." That slogan is the source of many of our mistakes with regard to bourgeois nationalism. It was a slogan which tore Americanism out of its 20th Century context, which is also American imperialism, American monopoly capitalism.

We correctly paid attention to re-discovering our democratic revolutionary traditions. But we completely overlooked the traditions and the study of the history of the American labor movement. This is not accidental. It is related to our underestimation of the independent role of the American working class.

As we speak of the pressure of bourgeois influences upon our movement, as the source of our revisionist line, we must also add its expression in the form of *American chauvinism*. I would, therefore, suggest as a concrete amendment, that the Draft Resolution should refer to *American chauvinism* and its pressure upon our movement as a source for minimizing the aggressive role of American imperialism and its ideological pressure upon our organization. This would also help us to correct our obscuring of the class character of bourgeois democracy.

We could contribute so much to the victory in the war because in the main, an opportunist line did not dominate our activities. We could shape correct policy because we did look for allies in the fight against fascism; because we did not hold all imperialist powers equally responsible for the war. However, we made a fatal error. We forgot Lenin's admonition: "*From this logically follows the provisional character of our tactics to 'strike together' with the bourgeoisie and the duty to carefully watch our ally, as if he were an enemy.*" Yes, we

forgot to watch our bourgeois ally as if he were an enemy.

No one denies the historic significance of Teheran. However, we tore Teheran out of the historic context of the imperialist epoch and shamelessly tortured Leninist teaching of imperialism to suit our revisionist line.

Our revisionist interpretation of Teheran has weakened us in utilizing the Teheran agreement in the fight for *jobs and peace*.

Another source of our errors is the fact that we completely forgot the struggle on two fronts: against leftist sectarianism and right opportunism. We should remember that as a principal reason for our mistakes in the past, as well as a warning now not to over-correct ourselves. In fact, we should be on guard against a happy release of all old sectarian frustrations and inhibitions. We must be on guard against "revolutionary" phrase-mongering, and as our Resolution warns, against a relapse into the tactic of "class against class."

* * *

The pre-Duclos line of the National Board and that of individual members cannot be separated from Browder's revisionist line. Browder's line was the line of the National Board, with the single militant exception of Comrade Foster. (And Comrade Foster does not expect us to agree with every proposal he made in the past.)

What is true of the National Board

is also true of the National Committee. I do not in my own conscience absolve myself from individual responsibility for the revisionist line. When I look back on individual issues that I may have fought on, such as the liquidatory tendencies, the self-abnegation of labor and the Communist organization in our vital and necessary practical relationships with progressive groupings, the over-emphasis of centralism at the expense of inner Party democracy, however, I have at no time traced them to a wrong revisionist line.

Can we in all honesty say that any member of the Board (with the exception of Foster) at any time tried to check Browder's revisionist line? Unfortunately the answer is that this was not the case.

The sources of our errors are not only of an objective nature but also of a *subjective* character. Among the basic subjective errors one must enumerate: (a) lack of collective thinking; (b) bureaucratic practices. Just as on the theoretical source of our errors so on the subjective source of errors we must in the first place hold Browder responsible. But here again, on the subjective side of the errors, we cannot just confine bureaucratic practices to Browder alone. *The individual members of the National Board and the individual members of the National*

Committee have also been guilty of contributing to a stifling atmosphere and to bureaucratic practices.

I would therefore also suggest that we strengthen the self-critical part of the Resolution, extending more to the entire Board and the National Committee. *This would strengthen the guarantee of self-criticism leading to self-correction.* It would also aid in overcoming anti-leadership tendencies as an evil punishment for the lack of leadership self-criticism.

We must be on guard against factionalism and intrigue. We must not be guilty of the indecencies of self-righteousness and breast beating. The membership will resent it and reject it as lacking in genuine self-criticism.

As I see it: Why is it that the National Board could so readily accept the Duclos article? Some of the reasons are:

(a) Life has challenged Browder's revisionist line; (b) the richly accumulated Marxist fund, the history of the struggles in our own movement on the character of American imperialism; (c) the mass experiences for the past period have made our organization uneasy and now it became obvious many things did not click because of our revisionism; (d) last, but not least, the role, I would say the principal role, of Comrade Foster.

SPEECH BY CARL WINTER

I HAVE NOT prepared a manuscript, nor have I a long list of quotations to "prove" my understanding of the present situation and tasks. I did read many books and cite many quotations during the three years that I worked in the California district in an effort to convince the comrades there of the correctness of our policies and in an effort to interpret, as I understood it, the line of Comrade Browder's books which were the basis of our Party's policy. The question now is not how well we can echo the line which we are together hammering out; the main problem is how we got there, how we got to our present correct policy which we are formulating, and how we got off into the swamp of opportunism before.

The answer to the bad phrase which became popular before, that "it is not in the books," is not simply to say now that "it is all in the books and you only have to read them." What we will find in the books are the conclusions from past experience which give us general laws of social development, invaluable as a guide to future action, without relieving us of the necessity to learn from our own practice how to apply these laws concretely. I am trying to think this question through seriously in a responsible way, as I think we all are trying to do, to discover how we could have misread these books and how we could have forgotten all we

learned before and so contributed to the misleading of our Party and our followers.

Yesterday Browder cited a long list of quotations from his writings and speeches in "refutation" of the charge of revisionism. With many of these selected quotations we can still agree. In fact, without some of them—at the time they were written—it would have been impossible, in my opinion, to carry the Party and our supporters so readily along the wrong path which we followed. It is necessary to remember also—and it will help us locate the source of our errors—that wrong conclusions often contain a fragment of truth and are frequently a result of a one-sided over-development of that single fragmentary aspect of the whole truth.

In his speech Comrade Browder referred approvingly to his writings about the hub of world relations being located in American-Soviet relations and in the Teheran and Cri-meian accords. He referred to the liberation character of the war and the consequent democratic advances to be expected from victory. He referred to the need to strengthen national unity and to work for the election of Roosevelt in 1944. Yes, he even referred to the importance of building an independent Marxist organization in the United States. It is true that these references and ap-

peals were all present in his statements of our policy during the period under discussion. But they served, it seems to me, as a sort of covered bridge by which we moved and mistakenly led our followers over to a wrong and harmful opportunist position without seeing where we were headed.

I support the Draft Resolution of our National Board. I agree with its characterization of our errors and its general conclusions. I should like, however, to see it further developed to include a more rounded out analysis of international and class relations as well as to trace the root sources of our opportunist and revisionist mistakes. Even after we have done that, we shall still face the reasonable and important question: how did our whole leadership (except Comrade Foster) and our whole organization make these errors unanimously?

I submit that if Browder had presented us with his speech of June 2 of this year in January, 1944, his whole position would have been rejected outright. Yesterday Browder said that he offers this speech for the record as his reply to Comrade Duclos' criticism. He said that it gives his "basic view of the relation of forces in the world which must serve as the starting point of any discussion of the charge of revisionism."

That invitation is very easily accepted. Browder's speech of June 2, which appeared in the June 10 issue of *The Worker*, is itself the most

fully developed example of revisionism. It openly reduces the role of the working class to one of trailing behind the bourgeoisie. The role of driving force for social progress is assigned to the very class whose social and economic position gave rise to, and continues to be the very source of, fascism. That is the meaning of the appeals to the "intelligence" of the bourgeoisie to save itself from its folly so that all the rest of us may be saved thereby.

From this idealization of the role of the bourgeoisie there follows inevitably the practical liquidation of any independent vanguard party of the working class. It is now clear to me that the seeds of this speech of Browder's were present in his original position at the time of the January, 1944, Plenum. But the seeds were not recognized by many of us until they bore fruit. However, the responsibility of leadership entails ability to identify before others can the inherent errors, to recognize the seeds before the fruit is ripe, and to warn and lead others away from these consequences.

I feel deeply my responsibility as a National Committee member and as a delegate from California to the National Convention which dissolved the Party and formed the C.P.A. for my part in the course we adopted there. I feel responsible to the members who elected me as a delegate to the Convention. I want therefore to help trace back and understand how we made these

mistakes, to correct them and guard against any repetition or any distortions in the future.

* * *

First, I feel that there was a lack of real opportunity to share adequately in the thinking of our National Committee, a lack of opportunity which limited the understanding and ability of many comrades to recognize the seeds of revisionism. The lack of information on the part of members of the National Committee, of whom I am one, as to the contents of the Foster letter and (as we learn today) of other sharp differences in the National Board, retarded our understanding. And so too, in the districts, we in turn observed—in essence—only the barest forms of democracy in the discussions we held with our members. This led to other similar practices. Thus, we refused to heed the rank-and-file criticism which came from members in the trade unions and other fields where they encountered difficulty in attempting to put our policy into practice.

It has already been pointed out in this discussion that we should pay attention to the history of bourgeois influences contributing to the distortion of our line—for example, the years of labor's experience with Roosevelt's bourgeois-democratic reforms. I see where that has contributed to pushing us in the opportunist direction in which we were going.

In addition, similar contributing

factors were the exceptional profits derived by American imperialism in the course of this war under conditions in which our nation was spared the horrors and costs of direct involvement as a battleground. We participated in this war under conditions of full employment, rising wages, comparative safety from the battlefields. Therefore all kinds of illusions were fostered among the people and among ourselves as well. These illusions readily gave rise to the desire to continue this lush sort of thing indefinitely.

As a consequence, it seems to me we contributed to the idealization of the very strength of American imperialism—which was the specific form of American "exceptionalism" in this period. We failed to struggle against the ideological and material corruption exerted upon sections of the working class by American imperialism. Thus, we fell under its ever-active influence.

The basic question, it seems to me, that was distorted and led to revisionism in Comrade Browder's position is *the question of who must lead whom*. The working class has the historic task of completing the "unfinished business" of developing the democracy left uncompleted by the bourgeoisie. Instead of emphasizing that, Browder leaves leadership in this job to the bourgeoisie itself.

* * *

When I first read Duclos' article, although I shortly afterward recog-

nized the criticism as fully merited, I was greatly disturbed by the unprecedented sharpness of tone. Yet, it seems to me, we fully deserved that kind of sharpness. We not only were guilty of disorienting the workers of our own country, but we presumed to dictate from this safe vantage point to the liberation movements of Europe—in the midst of their bitter struggle—that the form of their social system must in the future be capitalist. Linked with this, we forgot our international responsibility, leaving the liberation movements of Asia and Europe to cope alone with the threat of U. S. imperialism without the support of struggle by the American working class against reactionary imperialist aims on the part of our own bourgeoisie.

I agree with Comrade Foster's warning about the need to guard against over-correction in trying to achieve a correct line. We must be very careful about not swinging over to sectarianism. I would like in this connection to make an observation about what may appear to be only a small detail. That is, about the question of style in our work.

I had the feeling on reading the National Board Resolution that in making a correct breakaway from a wrong line, it unnecessarily scrapped many of the things our movement learned in the past few years about popular forms of expression, avoidance of cliches and little-understood terminology, speak-

ing the language of the people, and so on. Part of our present new and correct line must be the further improvement of style in presenting our position to the masses. The practical program of work in the draft resolution is our guide for the period ahead. The correction of our past theoretical errors puts this program of action on its feet at last.

A word about one question raised in the discussion, that of liquidationism. This is a matter of political content and not of technical forms. The change of form and name from C.P. to C.P.A., *in the concrete situation of prevailing revisionist premises*, is now revealed to have been wrong and harmful. But now no magic organizational formula such as mere change of name and reorganization of clubs will change the situation. What will be decisive is clarification of the leading role of the working class and the leading independent role of the Marxist political organization, and demonstrating this in practical struggle, even if for a time we retain the name and many forms of organization we now have.

On the basis of the resolution before us and the discussion we are having, I am confident we will have nearly unanimous conviction and agreement. Aided by our present position, our organization will surely grow and, making the necessary organizational adjustments on the basis of a correct political line, will contribute more effective leadership to the American working class.

SPEECH BY V. J. JEROME*

HOW DID WE COME to derail our train from the tracks of Marxism-Leninism? This is the question to which our membership and our followers demand an answer.

One factor in particular has stood out in the general range of the discussion of the National Committee meeting, namely, the lack of a really collective leadership in our Party. Because of this, for a number of years our leadership assumed a crassly bureaucratic character, one of whose features was the virtual deification of Earl Browder—by the leadership as well as by the membership—so that often new policies were presented as the outcome of the analysis of an individual, without adequate participation of the collective leadership in forming these policies and with little or no democratic discussion on the part of the members.

Thus, it was possible, by fiat, in the form of a lecture at the Workers School, to present to the membership—and, as is now revealed, also to the leadership, including the Negro leading comrades—a revised theory of the status of the Negro people, which overnight, unprecedented by any collective discussion, negated our Party's Leninist concept of the fundamentally national character of the Negro people's struggle. Thus, too, it was possible for the decision to

dissolve the Communist Party to be railroaded over the membership, which was accorded the privilege of offering proposals for the name of the successor organization in regard to the creation of which it had not been consulted.

This dictatorial centralism is a crime against Bolshevism which cannot be laid at the door solely of one man. To do so would mean to shunt the responsibility from the National Committee and the National Board, and to the degree that it belongs there, from the membership, to an individual whose one-man leadership was in the final analysis the creature of the collective leadership. Self-criticism cannot be reduced to "self-criticizing" Browder.

I agree with the emphasis placed in the Report of Comrade Foster on Comrade Browder's major responsibility for the un-Marxian line we have followed, though I must take exception to his excessive apportioning of Browder's responsibility. Adherence to Marxism in Party policy is always basically a responsibility which every member and leader must assume, even though the degree of responsibility may vary in accordance with the entrusted task and position. Because our membership was deprived of the Party-democratic basis for exercising its responsibility, the responsibility in this situation falls all the more heavily on the

* Contributed toward the discussion of the National Committee, C.P.A.

leadership.

The collective leadership entrusted by the membership with formulating policies and leading in their execution is answerable in the first place for guiding the work of the Party by Marxist-Leninist theory, whether or not the leadership has succeeded in being collective. Only because of the default of the collective leadership did one-man leadership come to be a fact in our Party.

But how did this default come about in the case of tried and seasoned leading comrades? To answer simply that they were prisoners of an undemocratic leadership arrangement is to beg the question.

It would be a vulgarization of the truth to assume that the leaders and members of our Party subjected themselves to the role of "yes men" or that they were mesmerized into accepting the line by Browder's talents of leadership. No! The answer is not to be found in such subjective evaluations; the answer is profoundly political.

We must search for it primarily in the objective conditions obtaining in the United States during the Roosevelt decade, in which the situation that was so favorable for building the democratic coalition also brought with it dangerous currents of bourgeois influences against which we did not guard ourselves.

We must also search for the answer in the traditions and the political level of the American working class—the subjective factor—even though

in recent years our labor movement has made great strides forward along the road of organization and independent political action. These objective and subjective factors demand a searching analysis on our part. In my remarks, however, I wish to limit myself to the factor of Browder's leadership.

* * *

One thing stands out. We were impressed by the definite contributions which Comrade Browder has made to our Party.

These contributions, I submit, had within them very early the seeds of opportunism and revisionism. But in our readiness to welcome the positive aspects of those contributions we allowed ourselves to be uncritical of their negative aspects.

What were these contributions? It was first of all the fact that, coming into leadership following the expulsion of the Lovestoneites, when the conditions had been created for Party unity, Comrade Browder helped to unify our organization. Our Party was transformed from a house of discord, from a factional house divided against itself, into a consolidated Party. We were avid for unity, we wanted to forget the nightmare of factionalism.

In our great eagerness for unity, however, we permitted a very real and actual disunity to grow up under the cover of unity. For, in the symbol of our unification, Earl Browder, we tended to pool, not only our confidence, but increasingly also our in-

dependence of judgment and evaluation, our basic democratic duties and rights as Communists to test and re-test, collectively and each for himself, the policies and decisions we disciplined ourselves to carry through. We forgot that unity is real when it is based on a thorough and democratically arrived at agreement on principle. Our unity became a unity on the surface based on avoidance of discussion.

Secondly, Browder's teachings on the American revolutionary and democratic traditions are undoubtedly a very important contribution which obviously did much to enhance Comrade Browder's prestige in the eyes of our membership and leadership.

The fascist distortion of national traditions for racist and chauvinist ends impelled Dimitrov to remind the working class that it was the inheritor of the valuable traditions of national struggle for freedom, that in the present stage of history the working class must come forward as the savior of the nation. Dimitrov proclaimed in 1935 that national nihilism is opposed to Marxism. It was in this setting that Comrade Browder brought to our attention the need for a study of American history.

But had we examined this contribution as Marxists, we would have found a definite one-sidedness in Browder's approach to the democratic heritage in the nation's past. The proletarian element in the American tradition which Comrade

Browder asked us to take over was virtually absent. I think that we should go further and say that the democratic tradition of our nation's revolutionary beginnings which Comrade Browder stressed were submitted to us, not through Marxian critical evaluation of the past, but by and large as a bourgeois-democratic heritage to be taken over on a bourgeois-democratic level.

But our inheritance of bourgeois-democratic traditions has to pass through the crucible of Socialist consciousness; it has to reject as well as accept; it has to add our own to that which it inherits from others; otherwise we shall be doing nothing more than renovate capitalism, even though it may be the best in capitalism. How flagrantly we failed to do this was reflected in our now abandoned slogan, "Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism." It is shown in the position of primacy which the Constitution of the Communist Political Association accords the traditions of Washington, Jefferson, Paine, etc.

* * *

A further factor making for the enhancement of Comrade Browder's prestige was his contribution toward leading our Party in carrying out the counsel of the *Open Letter* of 1933 to put an end to our Party's sectarianism and to broaden out our Party's connections with the working masses. We saw only the positive aspect of the contribution; what we did not see was the creeping oppor-

tunism which, because unchecked, eventually bogged us down into revisionism.

The advice of the *Open Letter* was not only to root ourselves in the working class, among the basic industrial workers, but to do so in order to be an effective vanguard of the working class, both in its direct economic struggles and in whatever alliances it was destined to enter.

Comrade Browder, proceeding from his idealized conception of the progressive bourgeoisie, did not guide the Party to lead the working class toward the full performance of its role in the alliances which it had to enter in order to build the democratic coalition against fascism.

Missing was the Leninist art and science of alliances and compromises. The contingent and transient bourgeois ally in the war against the Axis was presented in the pattern of natural and lasting ally. The alliance was conceived undialectically, as a unity of opposites without the conflict of opposites. The compromise entailed in this alliance was presented as a harmonious blending of the interests of the two basic contending classes in our country.

No one can belittle Comrade Browder's contributions toward promoting American-Soviet friendship; yet as we look back, we find that this one war which combined the Socialist and capitalist states against Hitler combined these states in Comrade Browder's eyes into a one world in which the struggle of the two worlds

was obliterated—Willkie's "One World"!

What was true in foreign political relations had its counterpart in the nation—a conception of national unity in which the class struggle, instead of being seen as transferred into the framework of national unity, came to be regarded as something disruptive of national unity. The workers were discouraged from struggle against the war profiteers and trusts with the slogan that "Equality of sacrifice" was Lassalleian. Instead of the backbone of national unity in the war, the working class was seen as the back to carry the burden of the war.

There is no cause for complacency in the fact that we have struggled against sectarianism. Marxism bids us beware against two main danger-paths that lead to sectarianism—not only adolescent "Leftism," but Right opportunism. The former, which proceeds from fear of "contamination" by the masses, leads to sterility and decrepitude. An American example of this concealment of the "vanguard" light under a bushel is the political fossil known as the Socialist Labor Party. But this divorce from the working class can also come about through Right opportunist policies of "broadening out." Failure of a Communist Party to connect itself as effective political leader of the working masses together with whom the broadening out must proceed; failure to be truly alert to their day-to-day needs, to promote their or-

ganized strength and advance their class position in every situation and with every policy, means essentially a weakening of the vanguard role and must lead inevitably to a weakening of the vanguard's ties with the working class, to an isolation of the vanguard—to sectarianism.

* * *

What do Comrade Browder's contributions have in common? An underestimation of the role of the working class in our nation permeates each of them. Whenever such an underestimation occurs, the role of the bourgeoisie is correspondingly enhanced in one form or another. When these ideas are introduced into the Party organism, a fundamental disturbance must be the consequence after a time. Bureaucracy feeds on it, inner democracy is enfeebled, and the Party, while nominally remaining in existence, fails its role and liquidates its true being. The opportunism which we are now fighting imperceptibly diluted our Marxist-Leninist understanding.

With such ideas current our Party could not develop as political leader of the working class.

Formally our Party was consolidated, but the latent and finally expressed opportunism prevented it from becoming a monolithic Marxist-Leninist vanguard. Such a vanguard Party requires a basic, unswerving confidence in the working class as the leading force for progress in the nation. Coupled with this confidence must be the willingness

to learn from, as well as to teach the working class. Such a vanguard Party must, through the championship of the day-to-day needs of the working class, hold before it the light of Socialism.

Had these requisites been fulfilled, we would not have had to deceive ourselves as to our role in the nation. We were irked by a persistent and warning question: Why, in this super-industrialized country, are we such a negligible force? We consoled ourselves with exaggerations of our *influence* as against our organized strength. Unconsciously we tried to compensate for our obvious deficiencies with such exaggerations. We began to look upon Comrade Browder as "speaker to the nation." More and more Browder became the statesman, the advisor to all classes. And more and more we gloried in our tribune to the nation. We tended to forget our own inefficiency as Marxists when Browder set himself up as the efficiency expert for the nation, and particularly its "enlightened" bourgeoisie. By no means does this criticism imply that Communists should not address themselves to the nation. Communists would fail the democratic coalition of the nation in which they participate unless they sought out every possible avenue to address themselves to all the democratic forces that can be rallied to struggle in a common front against the main reactionary enemy. What should never be forgotten, however, is that no Marxian can speak to the

nation except as champion and organizer of the working class. When this is forgotten, the nature of the vanguard is distorted, the inner life of the Party languishes, bureaucracy is the natural outgrowth, and collective leadership degenerates into one-man leadership.

The question naturally arises: Why did I accept and fight for this opportunist, revisionist line?

In evaluating my work in the course of recent years I come to the conclusion that I failed to exercise sufficient vigilance and to do my share in struggling against the permeation of bourgeois ideology into the ranks of the working class and its vanguard. Especially in the United States, where the strongest imperialist-capitalist class uses the most powerful propaganda agencies and media, open and subtle, a Marxist should have been conscious of the danger of this permeation. The advent of the New Deal Administration marked the fact that American capitalism could no longer depend on the specific American Social-Democracy, or A.F. of L. leadership, as it did in World War I, for holding the working class in check. The monster unemployment demonstrations led by the small Communist Party in 1930 and the ensuing great wave of strikes brought the ruling class of this country to the choice: either the policy of Hoover repression and playing with fire, or the adoption of a "New Deal." This New Deal meant a direct approach

of the American bourgeois administration to the working class; it meant concessions to the working class in the form of legislative provisions for collective bargaining and social insurance. At the same time, it meant a policy of investment for securing the goodwill of the working class. In that situation, despite the growth and strengthening of the labor movement, the permeation of bourgeois ideology into labor's ranks proceeded rapidly. While continuing and even intensifying its ideological pressures upon the working class through petty bourgeois, reformist carriers of its theories, the bourgeoisie now operated through direct transmission. We did not grasp the full import of the danger of direct imperialist-bourgeois influences upon the working class and its vanguard. We were not sensitive, specifically, to the danger constantly present in the encirclement of the irrational ideas of pragmatism—the court philosophy of American imperialism—whose effects could all too often have been noted in our recent forecasts and tactics, which were marked by anything but the cogency of Marxian scientific prediction. In view of all this, I must assume my share of responsibility in not sensing that alertness to the danger of bourgeois influences was all the more necessary because of the favorable political factors brought about by the Roosevelt Administration.

True, like others among us, I often

had misgivings; occasions arose when I chafed under flagrant departures from Marxism-Leninism, which I told myself were "vulgarizations of our line." I failed, however, to draw the full conclusions from such dissatisfactions and to realize that the line was the matrix of those vulgarizations.

Let me take an example from my own work. At the time of the dissolution of the Communist Party, I wrote two articles for *The Communist* on the role of the Communist vanguard. That writing was motivated by the need to offset liquidatory tendencies and moods which had manifested themselves in our ranks. The thesis was that the vanguard is constant, even though its form may change under changing historic conditions. To this end I drew upon examples from the world history of the vanguard, as far back as the Communist League of 1847.

Subsequently, I set about preparing these articles for publication in pamphlet form. However, in examining the development of the analysis I found that I could not proceed; for somehow I could not fit the theory and the historical lessons of the Marxian vanguard to the situation of our dissolution. Accordingly, I gave up the project. I failed, however, to draw the full conclusions from the difficulty I encountered and to probe deeper into the main ideological source of the disharmony between our practice and our theory with respect to the dissolution of

our Party.

With no desire to lessen my self-criticism, I believe it will be helpful to a fuller understanding of the factors that contributed to my errors if I state that the undemocratic atmosphere which pervaded our entire organization, from the branches to the highest committees, conduced to holding back and even repressing individual initiative in thought and action. In yielding to this atmosphere, I mistakenly felt that I was exercising the political virtues of loyalty, discipline, and maintenance of Party unity. Actually, I was abandoning the elementary duty of every Communist constantly to evaluate his work and himself in the light of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Yet, to rest upon these explanations would mean in reality but to explain away that which needs to be explained. As a Marxian propagandist and an editor of the theoretical organ of our Party, recognizing the special gravity of my errors, I can come to but one conclusion: My acceptance and my participation in promoting a policy that was in essence revisionist proceeded from my need to achieve full mastery of Marxism-Leninism, to strengthen myself in Bolshevik vigilance.

Yes, comrades, we need loyalty, we need discipline and unity, we need to reaffirm these qualities with manifold intensity; but primarily and at all times we need to affirm our loyalty to the working-class cause, to the science of Marxism.

FOSTER'S LETTER TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED JANUARY 20, 1944

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL
COMMITTEE, C.P.U.S.A.,

Dear Comrades:

In Comrade Browder's report to the recent meeting of the National Committee, which was adopted as our Party's policy, there are, in my opinion, a number of serious errors which must be corrected. After listening to Comrade Browder's report, of which I had previously seen only some parts, I placed my name on the speakers' list to reply to the proposals that he had made. However, several Polburo members urged that I should not make the speech, arguing that it would cause confusion in the Party and that further Polburo discussions would clarify the situation. So I refrained from voicing my objections at the time, proposing instead to take them up in the Polburo. As I consider Comrade Browder's errors to be of an important nature, I feel myself duty bound to express my opinions to the National Committee.

In his report Comrade Browder, in attempting to apply the Teheran decisions to the United States, drew a perspective of a smoothly working national unity, including the deci-

sive sections of American finance capital, not only during the war but also in the postwar; a unity which (with him quoting approvingly from *Victory—And After*), would lead to "a rapid healing of the terrible wounds of the war" and would extend on indefinitely, in an all-class peaceful collaboration, for a "long term of years." In this picture, American imperialism virtually disappears, there remains hardly a trace of the class struggle, and Socialism plays practically no role whatever.

In his Bridgeport speech, Comrade Browder said that "Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in the new world." But this must not cause us to lose sight of some of the most basic principles of Marxism-Leninism.

It seems to me that Comrade Browder's rather rosy outlook for capitalism is based upon two errors. The first of these is an underestimation of the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war. When questioned directly in Polburo discussion, Comrade Browder agreed that capitalism has been seriously weakened by the war, but his report would tend to give the op-

posite implication. The impression is left that capitalism has somehow been rejuvenated and is now entering into a new period of expansion and growth. Characteristically, he says that there is general agreement that there is "no valid reason why the same (American—W.Z.F.) economy, including agriculture, should not produce at approximately the same level (as during the war—W.Z.F.), and that no plan is worth considering that proceeds from any other basis." Contrary to this picture of a flourishing, easily recovering capitalism, I would say, the reality is a badly weakened world capitalist system, whose weakness will also be felt in postwar United States. The problems of reconstruction, in this country and especially in devastated Europe, will be gigantic and, in the long run, insoluble under capitalism. This is not to say, however, that there may not be a temporary postwar economic boom in some countries and possibly also an increase in the productive forces. It does assert, however, that the gravity of the postwar reconstruction will not admit of any such easy solution as Comrade Browder seems to imply.

The second basic error in Comrade Browder's report is the idea that the main body of American finance capital is now or can be incorporated into the national unity necessary to carry out the decisions of the Teheran Conference in a democratic and progressive spirit. It is true that

Comrade Browder sometimes makes modest estimates of the extent of the sections of monopoly capital that he hopes will go along in the democratic camp in fulfilling the decisions of Teheran in their international and national implications. He says, for example, that "Such an approach is correct even if it should turn out that we find no allies there." But obviously he is making policy calling for new relations between two whole classes, the working class and the capitalist class. That he is calculating upon the bulk of finance capital being won for the proposals he outlined is clear from many indications, including the great stress he lays upon the symbol of Browder shaking hands with Morgan and by the fact that he foresees no serious opposition by big capital in "the long term of years" of peaceful collaboration which he sees ahead.

This great optimism as to the progressive stand of big business in backing the war and in working out the reconstruction problems is quite unfounded. The enforcement of the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international aspects, demands the broadest possible national unity, and in this national unity there must be workers, farmers, professionals, small businessmen and all of the capitalist elements who will loyally support the program. But to assume that such capitalists, even if we should include the Willkie supporters, constitute the decisive sec-

tions of finance capital, or can be extended to include them, is to harbor a dangerous illusion. The fact is, as I shall develop at length later, the great body of American finance capital is following a line contrary to a democratic and progressive interpretation of Teheran, and in all probability will continue to do so.

The only way a national unity could be made with the main forces of American finance capital, and this is most emphatically true of the postwar period, would be upon a basis incompatible with a democratic realization of Teheran. Such a national unity would be necessarily one under the hegemony of big capital, and in the long run it would fail in realizing the line laid down at the Teheran Conference. The plain fact, and we must never lose sight of it, is that American big capital cannot be depended upon to cooperate with the workers and other classes in carrying out the decisions of Teheran, much less lead the nation in doing so.

The error of Comrade Browder is precisely the false assumption that they can be so depended upon. He thinks (Bridgeport speech) that the big capitalists fall within the scope of "the intelligent people of the world, the united moral forces of Britain, America and the Soviet Union," who are fighting for a new and better world. Contradicting his own correct statement in his report that the working people are the main

base of the Teheran supporters, he makes various proposals that appear to go in the direction of expecting a progressive lead from the monopolists. This is indicated, for example, by his praise of the postwar program of the National Association of Manufacturers, and by his looking hopefully to the big capitalists to bring forward plans for doubling the workers' wages in the postwar period. It is also shown by his agreement with the N.A.M. that in the question of foreign trade "the government should go no further in this direction than the export-capitalists themselves demand," which would put the monopolists in full control of this vital matter. He says further that he would put no more curbs on the monopolists than they themselves see the need for, which would indeed be an ideal situation for the monopolists.

Comrade Browder's misconception as to the progressive role of monopoly capital in the postwar period is further indicated by his playing down the initiative of the workers in formulating proposed governmental economic policies and his looking for programs rather to the big employers, "who must find the solution in order to keep their plants in operation." There are also his flat acceptance of the two-party system, his indefiniteness as to what forces constitute reaction in the United States, his understress on the national election struggle, and his curt

dismissal of the whole question of Socialism. Characteristic of Comrade Browder's new conception of the progressive character, if not the actual leading role of monopoly capital, is the way he states the method of arriving at a national economic program, putting the capitalists first and the workers second. He says such a program must "rouse a minimum of opposition, from at least the two most decisive groups: first, the business men, industrial and finance capitalists and their managers, who have effective direction of the nation's economy; and second, the working classes, organized labor and the farmers." This is putting the cart before the horse.

The danger in this whole point of view is that, in our eagerness to secure support for Teheran, we may walk into the trap of trying to cooperate with the enemies of Teheran, or even of falling under their influence. Trailing after the big bourgeoisie is the historic error of Social-Democracy, and we must be vigilantly on guard against it. Our task, instead of pursuing illusory plans of creating a national unity to include the body of monopoly capital, is, therefore, to understand that in order to realize the plans and hopes of Teheran, we have to rally the great popular masses of the peoples and to resist the forces of big capital now, during the war, and that, also, we will have to curb their power drastically in the postwar period. This

policy is a fundamental condition for success of Teheran and all it means to the world. When Roosevelt and Wallace single out the monopolists for attack, as they often do, they are sounding not only a popular, but also a correct note.

AMERICAN MONOPOLY CAPITAL AND THE TEHERAN DECISIONS

Among the major objectives established by the Teheran decisions are (a) the development of all-out coalition warfare for complete victory over the enemy; (b) an orientation toward an eventual democratic world organization of peoples to maintain international peace and order; (c) an implied unfoldment of an elementary economic program with which to meet the terrific problems of postwar reconstruction. In carrying out these objectives, ample experience and plain realism teach us that American finance capital is a very reluctant cooperator, indeed, with the bulk of the American people, not to speak of its being their progressive leader.

Take first the matter of an all-out military policy. In this respect American monopoly capital has indeed given anything but a patriotic lead thus far or a convincing promise for the future. The patriotic lead, on the contrary, has come, and will continue to come from the national unity elements grouped mainly around the Roosevelt forces. So far as the bulk of finance capital is con-

cerned, starting out with a pre-war record of appeasement, it has, all through the war, followed a course of rank profiteering and often outright sabotage of both the domestic and foreign phases of the nation's war program, especially the former. While these elements obviously do not want the United States to lose the war, they are certainly very poor defenders of the policy of unconditional surrender. In the main, their idea of a satisfactory outcome of the war would be some sort of a negotiated peace with German reactionary forces, and generally to achieve a situation that would put a wet blanket on all democratic developments in Europe. All this still remains a serious obstacle to full victory. A real victory policy, as laid down at Teheran, can be achieved only in opposition to these elements, certainly not in easy collaboration with them, and above all, not under their leadership.

As to the creation of a world organization to maintain the postwar peace, as outlined at the Moscow and Teheran meetings, American finance capitalists, in the main, are equally unreliable. All through the war they have been saturated with anti-British and anti-Soviet tendencies. They were literally shoved into their dubious endorsement of Teheran by heavy mass pressure. They probably would accept some sort of an after-war world organization to maintain peace, but certainly not one

as contemplated by the signers of the Teheran and Moscow pacts. At best it would be a kind of a touch-and-go proposition calculated not to interfere with the active imperialist maneuverings they have in mind. So far, the real pressure and leadership in the United States for a democratic world organization of states has come, not from the main forces of finance capital, but from the broad masses of the people, and there is no reason to suppose that this situation will alter in the foreseeable future.

Regarding the development of a cooperative world economic program of reconstruction after the war, as Teheran obviously foresees, American finance capital again would indeed be a shaky reed to lean upon. While the great capitalists of this country would probably accept some elementary program to encourage world trade and also would provide a niggardly program of emergency relief, their guiding principle would be to grab off whatever they could of the world market. That is about all the significance they would attach to epoch-making Teheran. It is idle to think that they would come forward with a broad economic plan based upon the true interest of our nation and the world. The United States is not Czechoslovakia or Greece. It is not even Great Britain. Despite its war injuries, which are much more serious than appears at first glance, it will nevertheless emerge from this war by far the

most powerful capitalist nation in the world. And its great industrial rulers will not be inclined to make such concessions to the peoples' interests as is now being done by the capitalists of some occupied countries, who are even accepting Communists in the Cabinets. American finance capital has not been seriously chastened by the war. It does not consider this war as a world defeat for monopoly capital (which it doubtless is) after which its job will be to assume a responsible attitude toward the world capitalist system and to work out a progressive domestic program with democratic forces. It is strong, greedy and aggressive.

When American capitalism looks out upon the postwar world it will see mostly that its great capitalist rivals have been badly disabled by the war, and its imperialistic appetite will be whetted. Germany, Japan, Italy, France and many other capitalist countries will be prostrate by the war's end, and Great Britain also will be much weakened. While American big capitalism acutely fears Socialism, it nevertheless considers that the U.S.S.R., facing a gigantic problem of internal reconstruction, will not be an insuperable obstacle to its plans of imperialistic expansion. Altogether, it seems principally an alluring opportunity to conquer markets and strategic positions, and we may trust the Wall Street moguls not to overlook this

chance. The Teheran Conference by no means liquidated American imperialism. A postwar Roosevelt Administration would continue to be, as it is now, an imperialist government, but one with a certain amount of liberal checks upon it. An election victory of the Republican Party, the chosen party of monopoly capital, would mean, however, imperialism of a far more aggressive type. Comrade Browder goes too far when he says that world capitalism and world Socialism have learned to live peacefully together and (in his Bridgeport speech) that "Britain and the United States have closed the books finally and forever upon their old expectation that the Soviet Union as a Socialist country is going to disappear some day." The fruition of such an attitude on the part of these capitalist countries is dependent upon the extent to which democratic support is built up for Teheran and its perspective.

In my article in the *New Masses*, December 14, 1943, I gave a brief summary picture of about what we could expect from American finance capital in the postwar period, given the strong control that a Republican victory would bring it. It would endanger the whole setup and program of Teheran:

A Republican Administration would encourage reaction all over the world. Rampant American imperialism again in the saddle would weaken the foun-

dations of the United Nations and sow seeds for a World War III. Such an Administration would not insist upon unconditional surrender, it would not extinguish fascism in Europe or establish democracy; it would not collaborate loyally with the USSR or Great Britain; it would degenerate our Good Neighbor policy in Latin America. . . . Nor could Willkie as President, even if he wanted to, substantially alter this basically reactionary course of the Republican Party.

The important sections of the capitalists who support Wendell Willkie incline somewhat more to a liberal application internationally of the Teheran policies, although Willkie's stand on Poland was not very promising. Their basic kinship with the bulk of finance capital and their willingness to follow its main international and domestic policies, however, are indicated by their common, all-out hatred of Roosevelt and by the practical certainty that they will, in the event that Willkie does not get the Republican nomination, support any other Republican candidate, unless possibly it should be some outright fascist or isolationist, such as Colonel McCormick. The weakness in our own attitude toward the Willkie forces has been to stress too much their more superficial liberal tendencies and not enough the more basic fact that they are part of the camp of reaction and that they constantly tend to lure the workers away from the Roosevelt progressive line into the trap of the

Republican Party. The Willkieites will accept the reactionary line of the Hoovers, Tafts and Deweys, rather than join with the masses of the people to fight these reactionaries.

All of which means that the bulk of monopoly capital cannot be relied upon either to cooperate loyally, or to lead in a progressive application of the Teheran decisions. It will yield in this direction only under democratic mass pressure. Instead, our reliance must be upon the great democratic people, the real backbone of national unity, now organized in the main in and around the Roosevelt camp. The basic flaw in Comrade Browder's report was that he failed to make clear this elementary situation, but instead tended to create illusions to the effect that these antagonistic forces, the bulk of big capital and the democratic sections of the nation, now locked together in one of the sharpest class battles in American history, can and should work harmoniously together both now and during the postwar period.

NATIONAL UNITY IN THE ELECTIONS

Following logically his argumentation to the effect that the decisive sections of monopoly capital are, or can be drawn, not only in "the democratic-progressive camp" for the realization of the Teheran decisions, but may also be the leaders of that camp, Comrade Browder gave little emphasis indeed to the bitter Presidential election struggle now devel-

oping. For, certainly, if the decisive sections of American monopoly capital are behind the Teheran decisions loyally, and indeed may lead the national unity, there would be little to worry about regarding the outcome of the elections. It would make little difference which side won. Comrade Browder did not sound any note of alarm about the elections. He did not warn the American people militantly of the grave danger that would be involved in a Republican victory. Instead, in his National Committee report, he handled the two major parties almost in a tweedle-dee, tweedle-dum manner, and in his Madison Square Garden speech, where he presented the Party line to the public, he devoted only twelve lines to the vital subject of the elections. Logically following out his general position, he seemed rather to be more interested in bridging the gap between the two warring parties in the name of an all-inclusive national unity, than in stirring into victory action the great democratic forces of the country, the only ones who can be relied upon to make the hope of Teheran real.

Let us consider the elections a little more in detail. Briefly, the situation is this: during the eleven years of the Roosevelt Administration, monopoly capital has, of course, remained dominant; its profits have gone right on, and it has also very greatly increased its concentration and strength, particularly during the

war period. Nevertheless, monopoly capital has found an obstacle in the Roosevelt Administration. This Administration is, in fact, if not formally, a coalition among the workers, middle class elements, and the more liberal sections of the bourgeoisie (with the special situation in the Democratic South). The big monopolists, after the first few emergency months of 1933, have in overwhelming majority come to hate the Roosevelt Administration bitterly. They especially attack the domestic angles of his policies. What backing Roosevelt had from finance capital at the start has mostly leaked away from him. This is because of certain restrictions his Administration has placed upon big capital's drive for unlimited power. The monopolists hate the Roosevelt Government because it is not an instrument that will do their bidding fully and immediately; they hate it because of the social legislation it has written on the books and also for what it threatens to adopt during a fourth term; they hate it because it has facilitated the organization of ten million workers into trade unions, which weakened their great open shop fortress in the basic industries; they hate it because they think there is altogether too great a democratic content in its war and foreign policies.

The substance of the present election struggle, therefore, is an attempt of monopoly capital to break up the

Roosevelt liberal-labor combination. It is an effort of the big financial tycoons to get rid of the governmental and trade union hindrances that have irked them so much under the New Deal, so they can branch out into the active imperialistic regime they have in mind. They are fighting Roosevelt viciously, trying to defeat him in his own party with their Farleys and Southern poll-taxers, and, if they fail in this, to beat him with a Republican candidate if he is nominated for a fourth term. The big capitalists are fighting Roosevelt with striking unity. Even though they are having trouble to decide upon a candidate of their own, they are nevertheless united in opposing Roosevelt. The fact that 90 per cent of the daily press and all the leading employers' associations and conservative farmers' organizations are definitely opposed to Roosevelt, tells graphically where finance capital is standing in this crucial election struggle. Its victory would be understood all over the world as a victory for reaction. The fascists and every other enemy of Teheran in the United States and abroad would hail it as their triumph.

In this most crucial election since 1864 our duty as a Communist Party is plain. We must go all-out for a continuation of the Roosevelt policies, as the only way to support effectively the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international implications. We must tell the people precisely who the enemy is that

they are fighting—organized big capital—and mobilize our every resource to help make their fight succeed. We must awaken them to the grave danger of a reactionary victory, pointing out the heavy mobilization of the capitalist elements, the systematic propaganda-poisoning of the armed forces against labor, and the serious inroads that have been made into Roosevelt's labor and working farmer support.

The mobilization of labor's forces politically and combining them with all other democratic, win-the-war forces supporting Teheran for an election victory over reaction, whose main fort is the Republican Party, should have been the all-pervading business of our National Committee. But it most emphatically was not. Instead, with Comrade Browder's new conceptions of national unity, there was a tendency for us to bridge the gap in the elections. This would, indeed, be a serious mistake for us to make, to try to convince the American people in the heat of this great and significant struggle, that there is a possibility for progressive unity with the very forces that they are fighting against and must defeat in this election, the monopolists.

Let us not make the serious error of slipping in between these fighting forces in the name of an all-inclusive but illusory national unity with big capital. We must understand clearly and definitely that the basic forces of a progressive national unity are those grouped, in the main, around

Roosevelt's banners and we must fight to help them extend and solidify their ranks. Perhaps we can learn a lesson from the recent hotly-contested elections for the Auto Workers' conventions when we, in the name of trade union unity, took a neutral position and the dangerous Social-Democrat, Walter Reuther, almost won control of the convention out of the hands of the win-the-war forces. The influence of our Party in the national elections can be very great, especially in solidifying the, at present, confused ranks of labor, and it must not be frittered away in any middle, half-middle, or above-the-battle position.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL UNITY IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

What kind of a postwar perspective may we look forward to in this country? In my judgment, it will be quite different from the long period of peaceful class collaboration and social advance, in which the monopolists are progressively collaborating, that Comrade Browder seems to envisage. The gravity of the world's postwar construction problems, which our country also will feel, and the sharp contradictions in class interests involved, will not permit such a harmonious progress.

It is true that at the present time many big capitalist leaders and organizations are talking glibly in generalizations about the fine economic conditions they will create after the

war. But bearing in mind the glowing promises, all unfulfilled, that were made toward the conclusion of World War I, we can safely discount much of their rosy prophecies and look sharply at their real policies. After all, these men of big promises have a great prize at stake, the full control of the United States Government, and if they can fool the people with tricky demagoguery it will be a well-paying investment.

Actually, the great capitalists in this country are orientating in the main upon a long-time postwar industrial boom, based upon reconstruction work and the spontaneous development of new industries, as well as the capture of new international markets. Although in case of a crisis these elements would be quick to appeal to the state for aid, they are quite generally pooh-poohing and opposing any attempts to prepare in advance a Federal Governmental program to keep the industries operating and the masses employed. To them this is still all pretty much "boondoggling" and interference with the mystical operation of "free enterprise." That their true perspective is almost complete reliance upon privately owned industry along the accustomed paths of the past, is evidenced by the fact that they have not introduced a single postwar economic measure into Congress or popularized it before the country. Every progressive proposal made so far, from the general slogan of the Four Freedoms, to the

economic reconstruction program of the National Resources Planning Board, the Wagner-Murray social insurance bill, and the legislation to rehabilitate members of the armed forces, and now the President's recently announced 34,000 mile highway plan and his new Bill of Rights, have all originated in the camp of the Administration forces and are opposed by the main forces of monopoly capital.

And so it will continue to be. In the domestic, as in the international sphere, the progressive lead will not come from monopoly capital. The far-reaching economic programs, involving government intervention in industry on an unprecedented scale that will be necessary to guard our country from an economic collapse worse than that of 1929, will originate in a truly progressive camp, consisting of the masses of workers, farmers, middle classes and liberal sections of capitalists. And they will be brought to realization, not in easy agreement with the monopolists, as Comrade Browder would appear to believe, but in active pressure against them.

Let us consider, therefore, what is likely to confront us as a result of the elections? First, if President Roosevelt should be elected again and should try vigorously to put into effect a progressive program, including the international decisions of Teheran and the economic and political aims he enunciated in his recent "Report to the Nation," con-

cretely, his new Bill of Rights, then he will certainly collide heavily with the powerful forces of the bulk of American finance capital. Their present bitter opposition to all such measures would not suddenly melt away in sweetness and collaboration. Inasmuch as we now fall far short of national unity even under the severe pressure of war, may we expect more unity when this unifying pressure is released? The American big bourgeoisie show no signs of interpreting the Teheran Agreement in the sense that henceforth they must voluntarily adopt progressive programs in the United States. They still respond only to pressure of one kind or another, exerted nationally or internationally. The progressive democratic forces of national unity under a postwar Roosevelt Administration should, and no doubt would, seek to widen as far as possible the area of agreement around their necessary economic programs and also generally to work on an orderly development of our national progress, but this desire will not save them from coming into serious collisions with the forces of finance capital.

On the other hand, should a Dewey, Taft or Bricker, or even the liberal-speaking Mr. Willkie be elected, then we could expect definite attempts of the new Administration to give monopoly capital a much freer hand at the expense of the people. If successful, this could only result in strengthening reaction and imperilling our economic future. At

best, the domestic economic program of such an Administration would be one based on boom expectation and upon extending government aid to the workers only in the most niggardly measure and under heavy pressure. American finance capital would soon demonstrate that it had learned very little of a progressive economic nature through the war and the period of the New Deal. The big capitalists, if they did not make an open attack upon the unions, would probably try to paralyze organized labor by ensnaring it into a program of intensified class collaboration, designed in their own interests and not in those of labor and the nation. The capitalists have not forgotten the way they did this so disastrously to the labor movement and the people after World War I. With the added consideration that big business today, bitterly remembering the liberal-labor coalition that has backed the government for the past dozen years, would adopt any means to prevent a repetition of this hated experience. It could therefore be expected, what with the growing fascist spirit in its ranks and the tricks it has learned from Hitler, that the monopolists would adopt, if necessary, the most drastic means to clip the strength of labor and to prevent the return to power of any popular, progressive government.

At our National Committee meeting there were delegates who interpreted Comrade Browder's report,

not illogically, as implying a no-strike policy for the trade unions in the postwar period. One, who went uncorrected, said: "We have the perspective of continued cooperation, a no-strike policy and no class clashes for a long time after the war." This is nonsense, of course. It would disarm the trade unions in the face of their enemies. The Teheran Conference did not abolish the class struggle in the United States. The workers would indeed be foolish if they were to orientate upon any such illusory perspective. The cue to the trade unions, in facing the postwar period, is to unify their ranks, nationally and internationally, to organize the millions of still unorganized workers, to develop their united political action movement so that they may be a real force in the democratic coalition, to establish the broadest possible alliance with all other democratic groups and classes, to defeat reaction in the coming national elections, to prepare constructive economic proposals for the postwar period and work diligently for them, and generally to strengthen their ranks and be in readiness to defend their organizations and their living standards from any and all attacks by their powerful and inveterate enemy, monopoly capital. It would be disastrous if our Party were in any way to weaken labor's alertness to these necessities.

THE SLOGAN OF
"FREE ENTERPRISE"

Comrade Browder was correct in

saying that we should not take issue with the reactionaries' slogan of "free enterprise" in the sense that in the Presidential election the issue is for privately-owned industry or against it. But he is incorrect when he says, "The issue of 'free enterprise' is thus not in any way, shape or form the issue of the coming struggle for control of United States policy in the Congressional and Presidential elections." On the contrary, "free enterprise" is the main slogan of the monopolists and behind it stands the whole conception of their program. It cannot be dismissed by saying that "If anyone wishes to describe the existing system of capitalism in the United States as 'free enterprise,' that's all right with us."

In stressing their main slogan of "free enterprise" the monopolists are of course trying to make plausible their unfounded allegation of Socialism against the Roosevelt Administration. But they are also seeking to do much more than this. Within the purview of this slogan is comprised their whole determination to regain unrestricted control of the government, to weaken the power of organized labor, and generally to free the hands of monopoly.

The economic essence of this slogan is a main dependence upon a long-term industrial boom to solve our national economic problems, with improvised government work programs and aid for the workers and farmers considered merely as

emergency programs. Thus, Senator Taft says in the *Saturday Evening Post*, December 11: "Substantially full employment must be restored and maintained through free enterprise, with only such assistance from government as is proved to be absolutely necessary." That is to say, only after the economic crisis bursts upon us we may look for fragmentary, skinflint programs of government work and relief. The "free enterprise" slogan represents a concrete program just as definitely as did that of the "New Deal." Hence, to accept or ignore this slogan means to imply, in the popular mind, to accept or ignore the program behind it.

It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot simply brush aside big business' main slogan of "free enterprise" as being merely demagogic and let it go at that. On the contrary, while thoroughly exposing the demagoguery of the slogan, we must also expose its reactionary economic and political content. This can only be done on the basis of bringing forward the program of the progressive forces. In doing this, the question of social insurance and government stimulation of industry can not be put forth merely as emergency stop-gap measures to apply in times of crises. They must be presented as essential steps if we are to cushion ourselves against plunging headlong into overwhelming economic crises; if we are to make even an approach to the full production and jobs for

all that everybody is now talking about so glibly. The counter-program of the progressive, win-the-war, win-the-peace forces to the reactionary "free enterprise," or unrestrained monopoly program of the reactionaries, does not now contain demands for the nationalization of banks, railroads, or other industries, and it will not in the immediate postwar situation. But the grave difficulties that will confront capitalism all over the world after this war, not excluding American capitalism, will surely eventually raise the need and popularity of such demands.

* * *

On the question of the two-party system, it is my opinion that Comrade Browder also dismisses that matter too easily, by speaking of "the stone wall of the two-party system." He subscribes to "the general national opinion that this 'two-party system' provides adequate channels for the basic preservation of democratic rights," and thus leaves the impression that the Communists no longer look beyond the present two-party line-up, even in the most eventual sense.

In such a presentation, it seems to me, there is contained an underestimation of the political initiative of the democratic masses of the people and an overestimation of their acceptance of the bourgeois leadership of the two main parties. While the situation is very much not ripe for a new political party line-up in the

United States, nevertheless this can by no means be excluded permanently. I prefer, instead, the formulation of Philip Murray in the current issue of the *American Magazine*, where he states that the political situation at this time in the United States does not justify the formation of a third party.

THE QUESTION OF SOCIALISM

In presenting such a basic change in line to our Party as he did, it seems to me that Comrade Browder should have made a more complete statement regarding our Party attitude to the question of Socialism. While it is correct to say, as Comrade Browder does, that Socialism is not the issue in the war, nor will it be the issue in the immediate postwar period in the United States, and that, therefore, to raise the issue now could only result in narrowing down the national unity necessary to win the war and to carry out generally the decisions of Teheran, nevertheless, merely to take this negative attitude toward Socialism is not enough. We must also develop our positive position.

We have to bear in mind that although Socialism will not be the political issue in the United States in the early postwar period, it will nevertheless be a question of great and growing mass interest and influence. This is true for a couple of major reasons, aside from the possibility that some countries of Europe

may adopt Socialism at the close of the war: first, the Soviet Union in this war has given a world-shaking demonstration of the power and success of Socialism. The democratic peoples of the world, who have been saved by the Red Army from Hitler tyranny, are looking upon this great demonstration with amazement, gratitude and a lively curiosity. For the first time they are beginning to see through the wall of prejudice that was so carefully built up against the U.S.S.R. over so many years. They are extremely interested, and in a more and more objective sense, to learn further about the great, new, socialist world power. The present new crop of books friendly to the U.S.S.R. is an early sign of the new mass interest in the Soviet Union and its Socialism. With the development of the postwar reconstruction period, in which we can expect the U.S.S.R. to perform as great "miracles" as it is now doing in a military way, hence this mass interest is bound to increase. The second basic reason for a great postwar mass interest in Socialism is that with the world capitalist system badly injured, there will be definite tendencies for the peoples in all countries to learn from the Soviet regime and to adapt to their own problems such features as they can from the obviously successful and flourishing Socialist Soviet Union. The whole question of the advance to Socialism will be in for a fresh discussion in the new world conditions.

In view of all this, obviously the Communist Party, as the party of Socialism, cannot take merely a negative attitude toward Socialism. We must teach the workers the significance of the socialist developments of our time and their relation to the United States. While we point out that Socialism is not now the issue in our country, we must also show that it is nevertheless the only final solution for our nation's troubles. If we do not do this, then the Social-Democrats will be left a free hand to pose as the party of Socialism, with consequent detriment to our Party and to the whole struggle of the win-the-war, win-the-peace forces.

* * *

Obviously, the questions raised by Comrade Browder in his report are of far-reaching significance and represent a radical departure from our past conceptions of national unity. They deserve the most profound consideration in the pre-convention discussion that is now beginning. In these days of world-shaking war and with postwar problems of enormous size and complexity looming before us, our Party must be doubly careful in the development of its political line. I for one am convinced that if we give this close attention to Comrade Browder's report, adopted by the National Committee, we will find it necessary to alter it in the general sense of the several points raised in this letter.

Comradely yours,
WM. Z. FOSTER.

NOTE BY WM. Z. FOSTER

The above letter to the National Committee was rejected at an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau, held on February 8, 1944, with about 40 leading Party members in attendance and voting. Comrade Browder put as the main issue of the meeting, not a re-survey of the political policies, in the light of my letter, but the preservation of the unity of the Party. After a day's discussion, all present voted against my letter, except Darcy and myself.

As a result of this serious rebuff and in view of Comrade Browder's expressed determination to stamp out all open opposition, an attitude on his part which was strengthened by the heavy vote of the enlarged Political Bureau against my letter, I concluded that it would be folly for me to try to take the question to the Party membership at that time. For to do so would have weakened our general work in support of the war; ruined our current big recruiting drive, interfered seriously with the development of our vital national election campaign, and perhaps resulted in splitting our Party.

So I decided to confine my opposition to the ranks of the National Committee, a course which I followed during the next year and a half by means of innumerable criticisms, policy proposals, articles, etc., all going in the direction of eliminating Comrade Browder's opportunistic errors. I was convinced that

the course of political events and the Communist training of our leadership would eventually cause our Party to return to a sound line of policy.

It will be noted that my letter to the National Committee does not discuss the matter of the dissolution, or reorganization, of the Communist Party into the Communist Political Association. When Comrade Browder proposed this liquidatory step several members of the National Board raised objections to it, and, of course, I opposed and voted against it. Nevertheless Comrade Browder was able to push it through in spite of this opposition. At the time of my sending the letter to the National Committee, things had proceeded so far that I considered the reorganization of the Party into the C.P.A. as virtually an accomplished fact. It had already been publicly announced and endorsed at the January meeting of the National Committee, and, in fact, the Party was already in the preliminary stages of reorganization. Consequently, I felt that further agitation of the matter was hopeless for the time being and could only cause useless strife and confusion in our ranks. So I left the whole question out of my letter to the National Committee. The immediate task, as I saw it, was for me to help to keep the C.P.A., in fact, if not in name, the Communist Party.

ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

BY JACQUES DUCLOS

Reprinted from the April issue of CAHIERS DU COMMUNISME, theoretical organ of the Communist Party of France.

Many readers of *Cahiers du Communisme* have asked us for clarification on the dissolution of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. and the creation of the Communist Political Association.

We have received some information on this very important political event, and thus we can in full freedom give our opinion on the political considerations which were advanced to justify the dissolution of the Communist Party.

The reasons for dissolution of the Communist Party in the U.S.A. and for the "new course" in the activity of American Communists are set forth in official documents of the Party and in a certain number of speeches of its former secretary, Earl Browder.

In his speech devoted to the results of the Teheran Conference and the political situation in the United States, delivered December 12, 1943, in Bridgeport and published in the Communist magazine in January, 1944, Earl Browder for the first time

discussed the necessity of changing the course of the C.P.U.S.A.

The Teheran Conference served as Browder's point of departure from which to develop his conceptions favorable to a change of course of the American C.P. However, while justly stressing the importance of the Teheran Conference for victory in the war against fascist Germany, Earl Browder drew from the Conference decisions erroneous conclusions in no wise flowing from a Marxist analysis of the situation. Earl Browder made himself the protagonist of a false concept of the ways of social evolution in general, and in the first place, the social evolution of the United States.

Earl Browder declared, in effect, that at Teheran capitalism and socialism had begun to find the means of peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the framework of one and the same world; he added that the Teheran accords regarding common policy similarly presupposed common efforts with a view to reducing

to a minimum or completely suppressing methods of struggle and opposition of force to force in the solution of internal problems of each country.

That (the Teheran Declaration) is the only hope of a continuance of civilization in our time. That is why I can accept and support and believe in the Declaration at Teheran and make it the starting point for all my thinking about the problems of our country and the world. (Address at Bridgeport, Conn., December 12, 1943.)

Starting from the decisions of the Teheran Conference, Earl Browder drew political conclusions regarding the problems of the world, and above all the internal situation in the United States. Some of these conclusions claim that the principal problems of internal political problems of the United States must in the future be solved exclusively by means of reforms for the "expectation of unlimited inner conflict threatens also the perspective of international unity held forth at Teheran." (*Teheran and America*, pp. 16-17.)

The Teheran agreements mean to Earl Browder that the greatest part of Europe, west of the Soviet Union, will probably be reconstituted on a bourgeois-democratic basis and not on a fascist-capitalist or Soviet basis.

But it will be a capitalist basis which is conditioned by the principle of complete democratic self-determination for each nation, allowing full expression within each nation of all progressive

and constructive forces and setting up no obstacles to the development of democracy and social progress in accordance with the varying desires of the peoples. It means a perspective for Europe minimizing, and to a great extent eliminating altogether, the threat of civil war after the international war. (Bridgeport speech, *The Communist*, January, 1944, p. 7.)

And Earl Browder adds:

Whatever may be the situation in other lands, in the United States this means a perspective in the immediate postwar period of expanded production and employment and the strengthening of democracy within the framework of the present system—and not a perspective of the transition to socialism.

We can set our goal as the realization of the Teheran policy, or we can set ourselves the task of pushing the United States immediately into socialism. Clearly, however, we cannot choose both.

The first policy, with all its difficulties, is definitely within the realm of possible achievement. The second would be dubious, indeed, especially when we remember that even the most progressive section of the labor movement is committed to capitalism, is not even as vaguely socialistic as the British Labor Party.

Therefore, the policy for Marxists in the United States is to face with all its consequences the perspective of a capitalist postwar reconstruction in the United States, to evaluate all plans on that basis, and to collaborate actively with the most democratic and progressive majority in the country, in a national unity sufficiently broad and effective.

tive to realize the policies of Teheran. (*Teheran and America*, p. 20.)

To put the Teheran policy into practice, Earl Browder considers that it is necessary to reconstruct the entire political and social life of the United States.

Every class, every group, every individual, every political party in America will have to readjust itself to this great issue embodied in the policy given to us by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill. The country is only beginning to face it so far. Everyone must begin to draw the conclusion from it and adjust himself to the new world that is created by it. Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in this new world. We are going to have to draw together all men and all groups with the intelligence enough to see the overwhelming importance of this issue, to understand that upon its correct solution depends the fate of our country and the fate of civilization throughout the world.

We shall have to be prepared to break with anyone that refuses to support and fight for the realization of the Teheran Agreement and the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition. We must be prepared to give the hand of cooperation and fellowship to everyone who fights for the realization of this coalition. If J. P. Morgan supports this coalition and goes down the line for it, I as a Communist am prepared to clasp his hand on that and join with him to realize it. Class divisions or political groupings have no significance now except as they reflect one side or the

other of this issue. (Bridgeport speech, January, 1944, *The Communist*, p. 8.)

Browder's remark regarding Morgan provoked quite violent objections from members of the American C. P. Explaining this idea to the plenary session of the central committee, Browder said that:

. . . I was not making a verbal abolition of class differences, but that I was rejecting the political slogan of "class against class" as our guide to political alignments in the next period. I spoke of Mr. Morgan symbolically as the representative of a class, and not as an individual—in which capacity I know him not at all. (*Teheran and America*, p. 24.)

As Browder indicates, creation of a vast national unity in the U. S. presupposes that the Communists would be a part of this. Thus, the Communist organization must conclude a long-term alliance with far more important forces. From these considerations, Browder drew the conclusion that the Communist organization in the U. S. should change its name, reject the word "party" and take another name more exactly reflecting its role, a name more in conformity, according to him, with the political traditions of America.

Earl Browder proposed to name the new organization "Communist Political Association," which, in the traditional American two-party system, will not intervene as a "party," that is, it will not propose candidates

in the elections, will neither enter the Democratic or Republican Party, but will work to assemble a broad progressive and democratic movement within all parties.

In his report to the plenary session of the central committee of the C.P.U.S.A., Browder spoke in detail of the economic problems of U. S. postwar national economy, and their solution on the basis of collaboration and unity of different classes. Browder indicated that American business men, industrialists, financiers and even reactionary organizations do not admit the possibility of a new economic crisis in the U. S. after the war. On the contrary, all think that U. S. national economy after the war can preserve and maintain the same level of production as during the war.

However, the problem is in the difficulties of transition from wartime economic activity to peacetime production, and in the absorption by home and foreign markets of \$90 billions in supplementary merchandise which the American government is now buying for war needs. In this regard, Earl Browder claims that the Teheran Conference decisions make possible the overcoming of Anglo-American rivalry in the struggle for foreign outlets, and that the government of the United States, in agreement with its great Allies, and with the participation of governments of interested states, can create a series of giant economic associations for development of backward regions and war-devastated regions

in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

As to extension of the home market, to permit absorption of a part of the \$90,000,000,000 worth of merchandise, Browder suggests doubling the purchasing power of the average consumer, notably by wage increases.

Marxists will not help the reactionaries, by opposing the slogan of "Free Enterprise" with any form of counter-slogan. If anyone wishes to describe the existing system of capitalism in the United States as "free enterprise," that is all right with us, and we frankly declare that we are ready to cooperate in making this capitalism work effectively in the postwar period with the least possible burdens upon the people. (*Teheran and America*, p. 21.)

Further, Browder claims that national unity could no more be obtained by following a policy based on slogans aimed at the monopolies and big capital.

Today, to speak seriously of drastic curbs on monopoly capital, leading toward the breaking of its power, and imposed upon monopoly capital against its will, is merely another form of proposing the immediate transition to socialism. . . . (*Teheran and America*, p. 23.)

In his closing speech to the plenary session of the C. P. Central Committee in January, 1944, Browder tried to base himself on "theoretical" arguments to justify the change of course of the American C. P. Also

he expressed his concept of Marxism and its application under present conditions.

Browder thinks that by pronouncing the dissolution of the C. P. and creating the C.P.A., the American Communists are following a correct path, resolving problems which have no parallel in history and demonstrating how Marxist theory should be applied in practice.

Marxism never was a series of dogmas and formulas; it never was a catalogue of prohibitions listing the things we must not do irrespective of new developments and new situations; it does not tell us that things cannot be done; it tells us how *to do* the things that have to be done, the things that history has posed as necessary and indispensable tasks. Marxism is a theory of deeds, not of don'ts. Marxism is therefore a positive, dynamic, creative force, and it is such a great social power precisely because, as a scientific outlook and method, it takes living realities as its starting point. It has always regarded the scientific knowledge of the past as a basis for meeting the new and unprecedented problems of the present and the future. And the largest problems today are new in a very basic sense.

We have more than ever the task to refresh ourselves in the great tradition of Marxism, completely freeing ourselves from the last remnants of the dogmatic and schematic approach. . . .

True, according to all of the textbooks of the past, we are departing from orthodoxy, because none of our textbooks foresaw or predicted a long period of peaceful relations in the world before the general advent of so-

cialism. (*Teheran and America*, pp. 43-45.)

The new political course outlined by Browder found but few adversaries among the leading militants of the C.P.U.S.A. At the enlarged session of the political bureau of the Party, those who spoke up violently against Browder were William Foster, president of the C.P.U.S.A., and Darcy, member of the central committee and secretary of the Eastern Pennsylvania district.

Foster expounded his differences with Browder in two documents—in a letter to the national committee of the C.P.U.S.A. and in his introductory speech to the extraordinary session of the national committee on Feb. 8, 1944.

In these two documents, Foster criticizes Browder's theoretical theses regarding the change in the character of monopoly capital in the U.S.A., the perspectives of postwar economic development as well as Browder's position on the question of the Presidential elections. -

In his Feb. 8 speech Foster also attacks those who, on the basis of Browder's theses, suggested that strikes be renounced in the postwar period.

But in neither one of these documents did Foster openly take a stand against the dissolution of the Communist Party.

In his report Comrade Browder, in attempting to apply the Teheran decisions to the United States, drew a perspective of a smoothly working na-

tional unity, including the decisive sections of American finance capital, not only during the war but also in the postwar; a unity which (with him quoting approvingly from Victory and After), would lead to "a rapid healing of the terrible wounds of the war" and would extend on indefinitely, in an all-class peaceful collaboration, for a "long term of years." In this picture, American imperialism virtually disappears, there remains hardly a trace of the class struggle, and Socialism plays practically no role whatever. (*Foster Letter to Members of N. C.*)

Foster violently criticized Browder because the latter while outlining a new course in the activity of the American C.P., had lost sight of several of the most fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism.

It seems to me that Comrade Browder's rather rosy outlook for capitalism is based upon two errors. The first of these is an underestimation of the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war. When questioned directly in Political Bureau discussion, Comrade Browder agreed that capitalism has been seriously weakened by the war, but his report would tend to give the opposite implication. The impression is left that capitalism has somehow been rejuvenated and is now entering into a new period of expansion and growth." (*Ibid.*)

According to Foster, world capitalism can surely count on a certain postwar boom, but it would be wrong to think that capitalism, even American capitalism, could maintain itself at the production level

attained in wartime, and resolve, in a measure more or less satisfactory to the working class, the complex problems which will arise after the war.

Without diminishing the importance of the Teheran conference, Foster considered, nevertheless, that it would be an extremely dangerous illusion to think that Teheran had in any way changed the class nature of capitalism, that the Teheran conference had liquidated the class struggle, as it appears from Browder's speech. The fact that capitalism has learned to live in peace and in alliance with socialism is far from meaning that American monopoly capitalism has become progressive and that it can henceforth be unreservedly included in national unity in the struggle for the realization of the Teheran conference decisions.

The class nature of imperialistic capitalism, Foster asserted, is reactionary. That is why national unity with it is impossible. The furious attack of these circles against the democratic Roosevelt government—does this not supply a convincing proof? Can one doubt, after that, that the monopolist sections in the U. S. are enemies and not friends of the Teheran decisions as Earl Browder thinks?

The danger in this whole point of view is that, in our eagerness to secure support for Teheran, we may walk into the trap of trying to cooperate with the enemies of Teheran, or even of falling under their influence. Trailing after the big bourgeoisie is the his-

toric error of social-democracy, and we must be vigilantly on guard against it. (*Foster Letter to Members of N. C.*)

Foster also criticized Browder for his attitude toward the National Association of Manufacturers, which is, in his opinion, one of the most reactionary organizations of monopoly capital in the U. S. However, Browder thought he had to approve a certain number of the economic measures of this association. He accepts its central slogan, that of "free private enterprise," which is in reality basically reactionary and contrary to the Roosevelt policy. What is more, Browder, counting on seeing workers' wages increased 100 per cent after the war, invites U. S. monopolists to share his good intentions and says to them: "[You] must find the solution in order to keep their plants in operation."

Citing these words of Browder's Foster declared:

In my opinion, it would be a catastrophe for the labor movement if it accepted such a plan or such an idea, even if only provisionally. Starting from a notoriously erroneous conception, that U. S. monopoly capitalism can play a progressive role Comrade Browder looks askance at all suggestions tending to subdue the monopolies, whereas the C.P. can accept only one policy, that of tending to master these big capitalists now and after the war. In calling for the collaboration of classes, Browder sows wrong illusions of tailism in the minds of trade union members. Whereas the job of

the trade unions is to elaborate their policy and dictate it to the big employers.

As to the problems of postwar organization, Foster repudiated all illusions regarding the self-styled progressive role of monopoly capital. America, Foster declared, will emerge from the war as a powerful state in the world, the industrial magnates will be rather inclined to dictatorial acts than to compromises, and it is hardly likely, he added, that we can expect a progressive program from them.

So far as the bulk of finance capital is concerned, starting out with a pre-war record of appeasement, it has, all through the war, followed a course of rank profiteering and often outright sabotage of both the domestic and foreign phases of the nation's war program, especially the former. While these elements obviously do not want the United States to lose the war, they are certainly very poor defenders of the policy of unconditional surrender. In the main, their idea of a satisfactory outcome of the war would be some sort of a negotiated peace with German reactionary forces, and generally to achieve a situation that would put a wet blanket on all democratic governments in Europe. (*Foster Letter to Members of N. C.*)

Foster thinks that Browder is right when he says that the question of socialism is not the issue of the present war and that to pose this question would only result in restricting the framework of national unity. But

considering the fact that the successes of the U.S.S.R., will increase the interest of the masses in socialism, the Communists must explain to the workers the importance of the socialist development of our epoch and the way in which it concerns the U. S., for otherwise the Social Democrats could represent themselves as a part of socialism.

The enforcement of the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international aspects, demands the broadest possible national unity, and in this national unity there must be workers, farmers, professionals, small businessmen and all of the capitalist elements who will loyally support the program. (*Foster Letter to Members of N. C.*)

Foster's letter to the National Committee and his speech at the extraordinary session of the National Committee on Feb. 8, 1944, against Browder's line, provoked violent criticism from those in attendance. Most speakers rejected Foster's arguments and supported the "new course" of the C.P.U.S.A. outlined by Browder.

Speaking during the meeting against Browder, Darcy said that in his opinion Foster's speech was not aimed at diminishing Browder's authority. Like Foster, Darcy violently criticized the interpretation given by Browder of the Teheran decisions and asserted that the political agreement of the big three powers who constitute the Teheran conference should not be considered

as an agreement on the principal postwar economic problems.

Afterwards Darcy was expelled from the Party by the Congress on the proposal of a commission named by the Central Committee and headed by Foster, because, as the decision says, by sending to Party members a letter containing slanderous declarations on Party leaders, he attempted to create a fraction within the Party, and because he submitted the letter in question to the bourgeois press.

After the extraordinary session of the National Committee, a discussion on Browder's report to the plenary assembly of the Central Committee was opened in the basic organizations of the Party, in regional congresses and the Party press.

According to information published in the *Daily Worker*, after the discussion the organizations and regional congresses of the Party unanimously accepted Browder's proposals. As to Foster, he declared at the extraordinary session of the National Committee that he did not intend to make known his differences with Browder outside the Party Central Committee.

The Congress of the C.P.U.S.A. (held May 20, 1944) heard Browder's report in which he expressed his opinions regarding the political situation in the U. S. and he proposed adoption of a new course in the policy of Communists of the U. S.

Proposing a resolution on the dissolution of the C.P.U.S.A., Browder declared:

On Jan. 11 the National Committee of the Communist Party in the interest of national unity and to enable the Communists to function most effectively in the changed political conditions and to make still greater contributions toward winning the war and securing a durable peace, recommended that the American Communists should renounce the aim of partisan advantage and the party form of organization. . . .

With that purpose, I propose in the name of the National Committee and in consultation with the most important delegations in this Convention, the adoption of the following motion:

I hereby move that the Communist Party of America be and hereby is dissolved. . . . (*Proceedings*, p. 11.)

After having accepted the resolution on dissolution of the C.P., the Congress of the C.P.U.S.A. proclaimed itself the Constituent Congress of the Communist Political Association of the United States and adopted a programmatic introduction to the Association's statutes. In this introduction it is said:

The Communist Political Association is a non-party organization of Americans which, basing itself upon the working class, carries forward the traditions of Washington, Jefferson, Paine, Jackson and Lincoln, under the changed conditions of modern industrial society.

It seeks effective application of democratic principles to the solution of the

problems of today, as an advanced sector of the democratic majority of the American people.

It upholds the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its Bill of Rights, and the achievements of American democracy against all the enemies of popular liberties.

It is shaped by the needs of the nation at war, being formed in the midst of the greatest struggle of all history; it recognizes that victory for the free peoples over fascism will open up new and more favorable conditions for progress; it looks to the family of free nations, led by the great coalition of democratic capitalist and socialist states, to inaugurate an era of world peace, expanding production and economic well-being, and the liberation and equality of all peoples regardless of race, creed or color.

It adheres to the principles of scientific socialism, Marxism, the heritage of the best thought of humanity and of a hundred years' experience of the labor movement, principles which have proved to be indispensable to the national existence and independence of every nation: it looks forward to a future in which, by democratic choice of the American people, our own country will solve the problems arising out of the contradiction between the social character of production and its private ownership, incorporating the lessons of the most fruitful achievements of all mankind in a form and manner consistent with American traditions and character. . . .

(Preamble, *Proceedings*, pp. 47-48.)

The Constituent Congress of the C.P.A. adopted a main political

resolution, "National Unity for Victory, Security and a Durable Peace."

The resolution points out the exceptional importance of the Teheran conference decisions for victory over the aggressor and establishment of a lasting peace. It calls for reinforcement of national unity as the necessary conditions for the application of those historic decisions.

By national unity is meant union of all patriotic forces from Communists, Laborites to adherents of the Democratic and Republican parties. All ideological, religious and political differences must be subordinated to this unity. The resolution stresses the exceptional importance of the 1944 elections on whose results depend the country's unity and destiny. It recognizes the increasingly important role of the working class in national unity, its growing activity and its political influence.

The resolution flays the reactionary policy of groups led by Du Pont, Hearst, McCormick, characterizing this policy as pro-fascist and treason, and calling on the American people to struggle against these groups.

The resolution then says that the majority of the American people is not yet convinced of the need for a more radical solution to social and economic problems with the aid of nationalization of big industry or by means of establishing socialism.

That is why, the immediate task consists in obtaining a higher level of production in the framework of the existing capitalist regime. With

this, private employers must receive all possibilities to solve the problem of production and employment of labor. Solution of these problems is likewise, in the first place, linked to the maximum increase in the American people's purchasing power and extension of foreign commerce. If private industry cannot solve these tasks, the government must assume responsibility for their realization.

The resolution expresses itself against anti-Semitism, anti-Negro discrimination, calls for the outlawing of the "fifth column" and for the banning of calls by the latter for a negotiated peace with the aggressor.

The resolution concludes in these terms:

For the camp of national unity, which is composed of the patriotic forces of all classes, from the working people to the capitalists, rests and depends upon the working class, the backbone and driving force of the nation and its win-the-war coalition. . . . It requires the extension of labor's united action of the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods. It requires the most resolute development of labor's political initiative and influence, with labor's full and adequate participation in the government. . . .

. . . we Communists, as patriotic Americans, renew our sacred pledge to the nation to subordinate everything to win the war and to destroy fascism. . . . (*Resolutions*, p. 7.)

In addition to the resolution on

"National Unity," the C.P.A. Congress passed a series of other decisions: on transition from war to peacetime production; on international trade union unity; on the C.P.A.'s wage policy; on political life as it regards demobilized veterans; on war among women; on farmers; on the situation in the southern states; on suppressing the poll tax; on the fight against anti-Semitism; on unity among countries of the western hemisphere and on the 25th anniversary of the Communist movement in the U. S.

The congress unanimously elected Browder president of the C.P.A.

The C.P.A. Congress addressed a message to Comrade Stalin and the Red Army saying especially:

In every American city and village, every factory and farm of our great land, men and women and children of all classes speak with wonder and deep gratitude of the heroic achievements of the Soviet Union and its valiant Red Army. Every day since the brutal and treacherous common Fascist enemy violated your borders on June 22, 1941, more of the American people have come to know and love your leaders and your people.

The political and military leadership of the U.S.S.R. and its mighty Red Army is applauded not only by our great political and military leaders, but by our workers, farmers, businessmen, professional people, artists, scientists and youth. The appeasers of the Hitlerites and the enemies of our common victory, who have been trying to frighten us with Hitler's "Soviet bo-

gey," have not succeeded in blinding our people to the realities. Your deeds daily speak with an authority that drowns their poisonous words.

As the relentless offensives of your mighty forces drive the Nazis from your soil, bringing nearer the day of your common and final victory over the Fascist enemy, we grow ever more conscious of our enormous debt to you, the leaders and fighters and peoples of the great Soviet land. The names of your liberated towns and villages are daily on our lips, the name of Stalin and the names of your countless heroes enshrined in our hearts.

Daily more and more of our people understand why it is that yours, the world's first Socialist state, has given the world such an unparalleled example of unity, heroism, individual initiative and a new discipline in the art and science of warfare.

All patriotic Americans are determined to strengthen still further the concerted action of the United Nations, and its leading coalition of our country, the Soviet Union and England on which our assurance of victory rests. They are determined to continue and deepen this coalition in the peace to come and to extend the friendship among our peoples which will cement the alliance of our two powerful nations as the mainstay of victory, national freedom and an enduring peace." (Message to Stalin, *Proceedings*, pp. 13-14.)

After the Constituent Congress, the leadership of the C.P.A. waged a campaign of explanation on the aims and tasks of the Association.

In one of his speeches Browder said:

... That is why we dissolved the Communist Party, renounced all aims of partisan advancement, and regrouped ourselves into the non-partisan Communist Political Association. That is why we are ready and willing to work with any and all Americans who place victory in the war as the first law, and who move toward such a minimum program as we have outlined for the solution of our postwar problems. This is why we do not associate ourselves with any other political party, but rather with the most forward-looking men in all parties. ("The War and the Elections," *Daily Worker*, June 18, 1944.)

Explaining the functions of the C.P.A., its organizational secretary, Williamson, declared:

As regards the functioning of the Association, we emphasize that this means manifold increase and improvement in every aspect of political-educational activity, on a national, state and local club basis. We must become known as an organization whose grasp of Marxism provides us with correct answers to the complex political problems confronting the people. While the members belong to, and are active in, every type of mass organization—political, economic, cultural, fraternal, etc.—the Association in its own name will speak out boldly and with initiative on all issues and policies." (Williamson, *Proceedings*, pp. 55-56.)

The practical activity of the C.P.A. since the Congress was subordinated to the principal task of the hour: active participation of the

C.P.A. in the 1944 election campaign.

The national C.P.A. Congress unanimously backed Mr. Roosevelt's Presidential candidacy. In their speeches, Browder and the other leaders of the C.P.A. in the name of the C.P.A. supported Mr. Roosevelt's election to a fourth term. The regional-state organizations of the C.P.A. and local clubs carried on an active propaganda campaign in favor of Mr. Roosevelt and congressional candidates favorable to Mr. Roosevelt.

On Sept. 25, 1944, during a meeting called by the New York C.P.A. on the 25th anniversary of the Communist movement in the U. S., Browder gave a speech in which he declared:

... every group, however small, just as every individual has the same supreme duty to make its complete and unconditional contribution to victory. We must give not only our lives, but we must be ready also to sacrifice our prejudices, our ideologies, and our special interests. We American Communists have applied this rule first of all to ourselves.

We know that Hitler and the Mikado calculated to split the United Nations on the issue of Communism and anti-Communism; we know that the enemy calculated to split America on this issue in the current elections, and thus prepare our country for withdrawal from the war and a compromise peace. We therefore set ourselves, as our special supreme task, to remove the Communists and Commu-

nism from this election campaign as in any way an issue, directly or indirectly.

To this end we unhesitatingly sacrificed our electoral rights in this campaign, by refraining from putting forward our own candidates; we went to the length of dissolving the Communist Party itself for an indefinite period in the future; we declared our readiness to loyally support the existing system of private enterprise which is accepted by the overwhelming majority of Americans, and to raise no proposals for any fundamental changes which could in any way endanger the national unity; we went out into the trade unions and the masses of the people, straightforwardly and frankly using all our influence to firmly establish this policy of national unity; we helped with all our strength to restrain all impulses toward strike movements among the workers, and to prepare the workers for a continuation of national unity after the war. . . .

As spokesman for American Communists I can say for our small group that we completely identify ourselves with our nation, its interests and the majority of its people, in this support for Roosevelt and Truman for President and Vice-President.

We know quite well that the America that Roosevelt leads is a capitalist America, and that it is the mission of Roosevelt, among other things, to keep it so. We know that only great disasters for our country could change this perspective of our country from that of capitalism to that of socialism, in the foreseeable future. Only failure to carry through the war to victory, or a botching of the peace and failure to organize it, or the plunging of our

country into another economic catastrophe like that of the Hoover era, could turn the American people to socialism.

We do not want disaster for America, even though it results in socialism. If we did, we would support Dewey and Hoover and Bricker and their company. We want victory in the war, with the Axis powers and all their friends eliminated from the world. We want a world organized for generations of peace.

We want our country's economy fully at work, supplying a greatly multiplied world market to heal the wounds of the world, a greatly expanded home market reflecting rising standards of living here, and an orderly, cooperative and democratic working out of our domestic and class relationships, within a continuing national unity that will reduce and eventually eliminate large domestic struggles. . . .

That is why American Communists, even as our great Communist forebears in 1860 and 1864 supported Abraham Lincoln, will in 1944 support Franklin Delano Roosevelt for President of the United States. . . .

As to Browder's attitude toward the Soviet Union, he highly appreciates the U.S.S.R.'s role in the United Nations system and in the work of finally crushing Hitlerite Germany and establishing a lasting peace after the war. Browder stressed more than once that the Soviet state built by Lenin and Stalin constitutes the irreplaceable force which saved the world from fascist slavery and he called for it to be

made known to all Americans all the wisdom of Leninist-Stalinist theory that made the Soviet Union great and powerful.

From an organizational point of view, the C.P.A. structure is as follows: the basic organizational cell is the territorial club whose general meeting is called once a month. Between general membership meetings all the work planned by the club is carried out by its committee, made up of the most active members. The clubs are subordinated to regional C.P.A. councils. The leading organization of the C.P.A. is the National Committee elected for two years at the Association Congress. The Association's president and 11 vice-presidents elected by the Congress comprise the permanent leading organization of the Association.

The C.P.A. Congress set forth maintenance of the principle of democratic centralism as the structural basis of the Association. Williamson, C.P.A. organizational secretary, explained to the Congress in these terms the application of the democratic centralism principle of the C.P.A.:

... While maintaining a structure and minimum organizational requirements compatible with the character of a Marxist political educational association, we must grant greater autonomy to the lower organizations, emphasize that democracy is a two-way street from top to bottom and bottom to top, and eliminate all rigidity of organization. (Williamson, *Proceedings*, p. 58.)

The national Congress of the Political Association adopted the C.P.A. constitution in which it said that everyone who wishes to belong to the C.P.A. accepts its program and its line.

Explaining who can belong to the Association, the *Daily Worker* wrote:

We can ask of new applicants to membership in the Party only loyalty to the principles that are already comprehensive to all workers, devotion to the most basic duties of action today; plus a willingness and eagerness to study the program and history and the theory which will make them thorough Communists. And above all a willingness to fight, to sacrifice in the war of mankind against Nazi enslavement is the first requirement for entering the Communist Party. (Minor, *Daily Worker*, February, 1944.)

At the time of its dissolution the Communist Party of the United States, according to Browder's declaration, had 80,000 members without counting the 10,000 Party members in the army. According to the Congress decisions all members of the C.P.U.S.A. are members of the C.P.A. and must register before July 4, 1944. As the *Daily Worker* announced up to July 16, 1944, hardly 45,000 persons had gotten themselves registered.

Without analyzing in detail Browder's full position on the dissolution of the C.P.U.S.A. and creation of the Communist Political Association, and without making a devel-

oped critique of this position, one can nevertheless deduce from it the following conclusions.

1. The course applied under Browder's leadership ended in practice in liquidation of the independent political party of the working class in the U. S.

2. Despite declarations regarding recognition of the principles of Marxism, one is witnessing a notorious revision of Marxism on the part of Browder and his supporters, a revision which is expressed in the concept of a long-term class peace in the United States, of the possibility of the suppression of the class struggle in the postwar period and of establishment of harmony between labor and capital.

3. By transforming the Teheran declaration of the Allied governments, which is a document of a diplomatic character, into a political platform of class peace in the United States in the postwar period, the American Communists are deforming in a radical way the meaning of the Teheran declaration and are sowing dangerous opportunist illusions which will exercise a negative influence on the American labor movement if they are not met with the necessary reply.

4. According to what is known up to now, the Communist Parties of most countries have not approved Browder's position and several Communist Parties (for example that of the Union of South Africa and that of Australia) have come out openly

against this position, while the Communist Parties of several South American countries (Cuba, Colombia) regarded the position of the American Communists as correct and in general followed the same path.

Such are the facts. Such are the elements of understanding which permit passing judgment on the dissolution of the American Communist Party. French Communists will not fail to examine in the light of Marxist-Leninist critique the arguments developed to justify the dissolution of the American Communist Party. One can be sure that, like the Communists of the Union of South Africa and of Australia, the French Communists will not approve the policy followed by Browder for it has swerved dangerously from the victorious Marxist-Leninist doctrine whose rigorously scientific application could lead to but one conclusion, not to dissolve the American Communist Party but to work to strengthen it under the banner of stubborn struggle to defeat Hitler Germany and destroy everywhere the extensions of fascism.

The fact that all the members of the Communist Party of the United States did not sign up automatically in the Communist Political Association shows that the dissolution of the Party provoked anxieties, perfectly legitimate besides.

In the United States the omnipotent trusts have been the object of violent criticism. It is known,

for instance, that the former Vice-President of the United States, Henry Wallace, has denounced their evil doings and their anti-national policy.

We too, in France, are resolute partisans of national unity, and we show that in our daily activity, but our anxiety for unity does not make us lose sight for a single moment of the necessity of arraying ourselves against the men of the trusts.

Furthermore one can observe a certain confusion in Browder's declarations regarding the problem of nationalization of monopolies and what he calls the transition from capitalism to socialism.

Nationalization of monopolies actually in no sense constitutes a socialist achievement, contrary to what certain people would be inclined to believe. No, in nationalization it is simply a matter of reforms of a democratic character, achievement of socialism being impossible to imagine without preliminary conquest of power.

Everyone understands that the Communists of the United States want to work to achieve unity in their country. But it is less understandable that they envisage the solution of the problem of national unity with the good will of the men of the trusts, and under quasi-idyllic conditions, as if the capitalist regime had been able to change its nature by some unknown miracle.

In truth, nothing justifies the dis-

solution of the American Communist Party, in our opinion. Browder's analysis of capitalism in the United States is not distinguished by a judicious application of Marxism-Leninism. The predictions regarding a sort of disappearance of class contradictions in the United States correspond in no wise to a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the situation.

As to the argument consisting of a justification of the Party's dissolution by the necessity of not taking direct part in the presidential elections, this does not withstand a serious examination. Nothing prevents a Communist Party from adapting its electoral tactics to the requirements of a given political situation. It is clear that American Communists were right in supporting the candidacy of President Roosevelt in the last elections, but it was not at all necessary for this to dissolve the Communist Party.

It is beyond doubt that if, instead of dissolving the Communist Party of the United States all had been done to intensify its activity in the sense of developing an ardent national and anti-fascist policy, it could very greatly have consolidated its position and considerably extended its political influence. On the contrary, formation of the Communist Political Association could not but trouble the minds and obscure the perspectives in the eyes of the working masses.

In France, under cover of Resist-

ance unity, certain suggestions for the liquidation of the parties have been circulated, with more or less discretion, during the last months, but none among us has ever thought of taking such suggestions seriously. It is not by liquidating the Party that we would have served national unity. On the contrary we are serving it by strengthening our Party. And as far as the American Communists are concerned, it is clear that their desire to serve the unity of their country and the cause of human progress places before them tasks which pre-suppose the existence of a powerful Communist Party.

After the Teheran decisions came the Yalta decisions which expressed the will of the Big Three to liquidate fascism in Germany and to help the liberated peoples to liquidate the remnants of fascism in the different countries.

It is scarcely necessary to recall that the material bases for fascism reside in the trusts, and the great objective of this war, the annihilation of fascism, can only be obtained to the extent in which the forces of democracy and progress do not shut their eyes to the economic and political circumstances which engendered fascism.

The American Communists have an especially important role to play, in the struggle taking place between the progressive forces of the earth and fascist barbarism.

Without any doubt they would have been in a better position to play this role in the interests of their country and human progress if, instead of proceeding to dissolve their Party, they had done everything to strengthen it and make of it one of the elements of the assembling of the broad democratic masses of the United States for the final crushing of fascism, that shame of the 20th Century. It would be useless to hide the fact that fascism has more or less concealed sympathizers in the United States, as it has in France and other countries.

The former Vice-President of the U. S., Henry Wallace, present Secretary of Commerce, said rightly that one cannot fight fascism abroad and tolerate at home the activity of powerful groups which intend to make peace "with a simple breathing spell between the death of an old tyranny and the birth of a new."

The Yalta decisions thwart these plans, but the enemies of liberty will not disarm of their free will. They will only retreat before the acting coalition of all the forces of democracy and progress.

And it is clear that if Comrade Earl Browder had seen, as a Marxist-Leninist, this important aspect of the problems facing liberty-loving peoples in this moment in their history, he would have arrived at a conclusion quite other than the dissolution of the Communist Party of the United States.

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