

# political affairs

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*A Magazine Devoted to the Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism*

Editorial Board: V. J. JEROME, Editor, ABNER W. BERRY, ALEXANDER BITTELMAN,  
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## The Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers—A Step Forward

by Joseph Starobin

THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS has just concluded its first meeting in 18 months amidst profound changes in the relationship of forces between the imperialist camp and the camp of Socialism, People's Democracy and peace.

The immediate and visible outcome of the Council's sessions has been limited. It will affect, on the surface, only a phase of the German problem, and the status of Austria. Yet, this meeting must be seen as an important advance in the struggle to maintain peace and curb imperialism—the central objectives of our time.

It will be remembered that the foreign ministers of the three major capitalist powers broke off the December 1947 meeting without even agreeing to the date for another one. This dramatically expressed the end of the war-time coalition and its

commitments to fulfill the program of postwar cooperation which had been laid down at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945.

It was the signal to accelerate the "cold war," to press forward with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, to split Germany and guarantee its revival as the fulcrum of a reactionary Europe. This entire policy was demagogically presented to our people as the only way forward from the breakdown of the coalition for which "Soviet expansionism" was allegedly responsible. But it led directly to the Atlantic Pact—the concrete expression of American imperialist expansionism, patently directed against the Socialist and democratic world, against the working-class and revolutionary movements of Europe and Asia.

Within this same time-span, the

bankruptcy of such a policy has exposed itself. Far from stabilizing the capitalist world, its inner weakness has been revealed. For it rests on what Mao Tse-tung once called the "single pillar" of Wall Street's system, now rapidly slumping toward a major economic crisis.

The Marshall Plan efforts to bolster the disorganized structure of Western European capitalism was supposedly justifying itself as a great success, and production levels equaling 1938 were hailed as proof of certain victory; but it is now clear that the American economy was itself, during that period of great ballyhoo, beginning to falter. The doctor, supposedly aiding the patient, was revealed as mortally diseased himself. And the fatal relapse of the convalescent was made certain.

It was in December, 1948 that the O.O.E.C.'s long-term planning report admitted that there was no prospect of achieving the Marshall Plan objectives by 1952, and the London *Economist* foresaw by then a "catastrophic decline" in living standards well below 1938 levels.

The illusion of a united Atlantic World, gratefully following the unselfish leadership of American capitalism, began to evaporate, as well. It was one thing to stage the ceremonial signing of the Atlantic Pact in April (signed and sealed before popular discussion or parliamentary approval). But it was another thing to conceal the growth of sharp rival-

ries among the imperialists themselves.

The fact is that Britain is vigorously battling American competition in the shrinking world market. In particular, Britain contests the Wall Street plan of "unifying" Western Europe economically so that it may be more systematically exploited and dominated under American hegemony. Within this rivalry, the conflict between Britain and western Germany, France and Germany, as well as Britain and France, are easily seen.

Under cover of "developing the backward areas" (an industrial backwardness which a hundred years of imperialist domination has intensified, despite the lying rationale of imperialism!) the United States plans a more determined forcing of the still-largely closed British, French, Dutch, and Belgian colonial holdings.

And today German imperialism, although forced to operate in a prostrate and truncated Reich, has cooperated skillfully toward effecting a hot-house "come-back" under Wall Street's direction. But already, German capital actively presses against British and French positions, while striving to exact the best possible bargain from its American mentor, in anticipation of freeing itself from the Occupation Statute and re-entering the imperialist arena, on its "own," as once before.

It is ironical that distinguished observers of the Anglo-Saxon world chose the second anniversary of the

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Marshall Plan—at the very moment when the foreign ministers were rejecting Vishinsky's proposals on the assumption that the imperialist position had been strengthened—to lament its real weakness.

It was on June 7 that Walter Lippmann wrote:

Our policies and political hopes are based upon, and depend upon, the premise that the western world, including western Germany, can count upon a rising standard of life amidst conditions of increasing confidence and stability.

A world-wide deflation, with contracting markets, reduced consumption, rising unemployment—especially if an American deflation aggravates it, instead of compensating for it—will soon change, and not for the better, the political and diplomatic climate in which Mr. Acheson administers his policies. (*New York Herald-Tribune*)

And in London one day before, former South African premier, Jan Smuts, bewailed "the sense of fear, of anxiety, of menace which did not exist after the First World War."

\* \* \*

But this is only one side of the picture. On the other side is the strengthening and advance of the Socialist world and the forces led by the working class and by Communism. Undaunted by the imperialist blockade and the clamor of political threats, the Soviet Union is rapidly fulfilling its Fourth Five-Year Plan for Postwar Rehabilitation and De-

velopment, and has already surpassed 1940 productive levels by 18 percent; the U.N.'s Economic Survey indicates that the Soviet Union and the major People's Democracies account for most of the general rise in production in 1948.

Despite the treacherous defection of Tito's Yugoslavia, the People's Democracies have made an all-round political and economic consolidation, laying the basis for the ambitious plans of a rapid transition to Socialism, which contrasts with what is happening in Western Europe.

Thirdly, this same period has witnessed the titanic advance of the Chinese Revolution, which liberates another fifth of the human race. The Chinese Revolution liquidates a dangerous area of imperialist-incited war, while encouraging all the national-revolutionary struggles that rage unchecked in Southeast Asia. It has stunned the imperialists and stripped their pretensions and miscalculations before their own peoples.

Finally, there has been the movement for peace, which was climaxed and gained fresh impetus at the great World Congress of the Partisans of Peace in Paris. This movement, enlisting the forces of 72 nations and peoples, has its center of gravity in the West, where, according to President Truman's boast,\* "Communism" has been checked. It is a movement, to recall Frederic Joliot-Curie's famous opening words, which was

\* Speech at Little Rock, Arkansas, June 12, 1949.

"not gathered here to beg peace of the partisans of war, but to impose it upon them." Following the warnings of the Communist parties of virtually all capitalist countries, expressing solidarity with the Soviet Union in case of the unleashing of imperialist aggression, this peace movement was the peoples' answer to the Atlantic Pact. It showed that the calculation of precipitating early war against the Soviet Union, with Western Europe as the base, must founder on the determined and active resistance of the peoples within the Marshall Plan sphere.

\* \* \*

What is the bearing of these facts on the Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting? They show the changing relationship of forces, which, on the one hand, confronts the imperialists with more desperate dilemmas than before, and, on the other, makes their plans and preparations more difficult of immediate or early realization.

It is at a crucial point of this contradiction, and anticipating that the war danger must heighten as the capitalist system flounders more deeply in its general crisis, that the Soviet Union has used its diplomatic weight to force the resumption of four-power discussions, in the direction of a settlement of the most important and dangerous problem of Europe—the German question.

The Soviet Union fulfills its leading role as the bulwark of peace by striving to abate the war danger, in

the form of even a limited settlement in Europe. The Soviet Union declines to let matters take their course. Instead it strives to commit the imperialists to an agreement; it strives to gain time for the world democratic front; it strives to give concrete form to the principle on which it has always stood—the possibility of the peaceful co-existence between the two world systems.

\* \* \*

The Paris Council meeting showed that the Anglo-French-American bloc insists upon maintaining the division of Germany, and refuses to consider its economic and political unification on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement, which was designed to create the conditions for the development of a German national economy both to meet the peaceful needs of the German people and to facilitate the fulfillment of their obligations to the victorious allies. The Potsdam Agreement—at which the Western Powers now balk—thus laid the basis for the establishment of an all-German democratic government. This objective was formally proposed in 1947 at the March and November sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers, only to be rejected by the Western Powers.

Above all, the American capitalist objective remains what it was from the beginning: to revive a reactionary Germany, in the grip of American monopoly capital, and to exploit such a Germany as the base of politi-

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cal, economic and military operations against the Soviet Union and its allies, against the working class of the West, and let us not forget, against the German working class as well.

The Ruhr Control Board, in which the key figures are Dr. Hermann Dinkelbach, the agent of the Stahlwerke, and Hermann Abs, of the Deutsche Bank, sitting alongside directors of the Inland Steel Corporation, is essentially a mechanism for reviving the Hitlerite steel and coal industry in the interests of American Big Capital. The Occupation Statute hatched in Washington is a scheme for the government of a colony. The Bonn "Constitution" formalizes the dismemberment of Germany and sets up a federation through which western Germany can be more easily manipulated and controlled; it was written by 65 hand-picked delegates that represented, except for the two Communists, the spectrum of German pro-imperialist parties. It was dictated by the Western military commanders and presented to the world as the German popular will on the eve of the conference.

De-nazification has become the process of re-nazification\*; land reform is reduced to a grim joke, as in Bavaria, where the A.M.G. is now appealing to the landowners volun-

tarily to distribute their properties; trade-union participation in control of industry, a key demand of the western trade unions, is bitterly resisted, while proposals for socialization, as in the proposed constitution for Hesse, are vetoed by the Occupation; and the highly-touted currency reform of last June has merely aggravated the factors of crisis within western Germany. Goods are more available for people who cannot buy since price controls were simultaneously lifted. And the semi-military formations of the former Nazi storm-troops and Wehrmacht detachments enter into this picture. They are already partly in existence, certainly already part of the carefully-laid plans.

It was such a Germany that the Western powers proposed to make dominant over the Soviet zone and such was the Germany which the Western powers held up as proof of how well they have discharged their obligations under the Potsdam Agreement!

As for a genuine fulfillment of Potsdam, this was clearly rejected in advance. In the *New York Herald-Tribune* of May 27, Russell Hill reports "reliable Western diplomatic quarters" as revealing that the Western foreign ministers had decided in advance to be "*in no hurry to reach an over-all settlement.*" Hill reports that one reason was the unwillingness of the imperialists to share the administration of the Ruhr with the U.S.S.R. "A final reason why the

\* "Denazification, which began with a bang, has since died with a whimper, . . . opening the way toward renewed control of German public, social, economic and cultural life by forces which only partially and temporarily had been deprived of the influence which they exerted under the Nazi regime." John H. Herz, *Political Science Quarterly*, December, 1948.

Western powers do not want a compromise agreement, leading to a peace treaty," says Hill, "is that this would bring up the question of the end of the military occupation"—in other words, it would foil the whole strategic basis of the Atlantic Pact. "It is felt that the time for that is not yet," says Hill. *Indeed, at the conference itself, Dean Acheson indicated that the time might not come for 50 years!*

As a necessary step leading to the fulfillment of the desire expressed in the Potsdam Agreement for the speedy conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and the ending of the Occupation, the Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Vishinsky, placed heavy emphasis on the need to establish an all-German economic commission based upon existing German economic agencies in both zones to administer Germany under the restored cooperation of the four powers. This proposal embodied two vital points. First, irrespective of the political gulf between them, a representative commission of Germans from the eastern and western zones could overcome the harmful effects of the economic split of the country in their mutual interests. Second, the principle of unanimity, of cooperation and search for agreement, should be restored between the Soviet Union and the West—this fundamental principle on which the whole postwar hopes were based and which underlies the United Nations.

It is another confirmation of what

the real imperialist policy is—both as regards Germany and cooperation with the Soviet Union—that this proposal looking toward the economic and political unification of Germany was contemptuously rejected as a "retreat to Potsdam." This single phrase—"retreat"—is the confession of those who actually violated the Potsdam Agreement, who no longer consider it valid, even though they had a part in fashioning it and have claimed to be acting in its name. It is the admission that cooperation with the Soviet Union on an equal is what the imperialists do not want and itself reveals their aspiration to dominate.

It is against this background that we can best see the significance of the June meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris.

The imperialist powers, with Wall Street setting the tone, seek to minimize the Conference and its achievements, or else see in it confirmation of their "get-tough" policy. Intent on continuing the "cold war" policy, American imperialism cannot swallow the fact that the Conference, itself reflecting on a world scale the changing relations of forces in favor of the camp of Socialism, People's Democracy and peace, was a break-through against the atomic diplomats. Despite President Truman's arrogant posturings that the results of the meeting "reveal the correctness of the policies which this government has been following in

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our foreign affairs," the outcome reveals the opposite.

In the first place, the conference has resulted in a distinct easing of tensions at Berlin and in the facilitation of inter-zonal trade to the mutual benefit of both zones. Alongside of this, was the decision to complete the long-drawn-out Austrian treaty negotiations, allowing the end of the military occupation, and the settling of the war damage account with the Soviet Union.

Further, as against the designs of the imperialists to by-pass the Foreign Ministers' Council and reduce it to a dead-letter, the Paris Conference registered notable progress toward reconstituting and regularizing the Council's meetings and activities. The fact that the four powers will confer in September to schedule the next meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers and that the Council will continue to act upon the task of bringing about the economic and political unity of Germany, represents a step which opens the possibility for solving the basic problems at issue in line with the Potsdam provisions.

\* \* \*

Of course, the basic question of Germany's future still remains to be settled. It must be settled in the interests of consolidating a peaceful democratic Germany and of promoting the cause of world peace.

The revival of inter-zonal trade is of mutual benefit to the peoples

of both Germans. It serves as a constant reminder of the national crime for which the splitters of Germany are responsible. The possibility of finding markets in eastern Germany provides a certain relief for the developing crisis in Bizonia, while the eastern zone, making steady progress on the basis of planning and socialization, gains access to raw materials as well as markets for certain finished goods.

Of course, such a prospect in no way contradicts the main line of development in eastern Germany, embodied in the Two-Year Plan: namely the strengthening of the role and position of the working-class and popular-democratic forces, the effecting of reconstruction, in the closest economic and political relations with the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia. The success of this policy was registered in the fact that no less than two-thirds of the eastern zone Germans voted for the program of the German People's Congress. The capitalist press attempted to belittle this vote and interpret it as a "rebuke" to the Soviet and the German working-class policies. But in the conditions obtaining, such a vote is a substantial proof of the progress that has been made in re-making Germany, even though it shows how much remains to be done.

East-West trade in Germany, however, has still larger implications. These were noted by Michael Hoffman, correspondent of the *New York Times* on May 3, who cited the opin-

ions of experts at the U.N.'s Economic Commission for Europe in Geneva, and at the trade conference at Annecy, France. "The prospective relaxation of the blockade between East and West Germany," Hoffman wrote, "has changed the entire prospect for East-West European trade."

Hoffman went on to point out that if German businessmen in the west were to trade with the eastern zone, they would inevitably also be trading with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union via the eastern zone; on the other hand, if the Germans of the west were permitted to do so, it would prove impossible to maintain the American "veto" over such trade that the Marshall Plan has imposed on British, French, Belgian and Dutch business. In other words, this aspect of the Marshall Plan would be broken down, and the revival of intra-European trade, which is urgently needed, especially in the West, would take place. Concretely, the economic "cold war" would begin to thaw out.

American capitalist journals have been quick to note this, and draw some conclusions which are worth study. *Barron's Weekly*, for May 23, 1949, says, "the outcome of the conference which starts this week between Russia and the Big Three of the West can alter the course of both business and political events for years to come," and then adds its own regret: "paradoxically the more immediately favorable the effects seem to

be, the more lasting harm they are likely to wreak."

What *Barron's* means is indicated in the next paragraph: "If, for instance, the conference ends with the announcement of an agreement for resumption of East-West trade without any improvement in the essential character of present political relationships, the end result can only be to strengthen the Soviets and weaken the West."

\* \* \*

Of course, it would be wrong to exaggerate the importance of revived trade as a factor in the developing economic crisis, in the sense of "solving" the crisis, or indefinitely staving it off. For the crisis arises out of the profound and inexorable contradictions of capitalism, against the background of its deepened general crisis. It would also be wrong to speculate that profound political changes will automatically result because such trade may develop, even if a "detente" or relaxation of political tension develops together with it. Nevertheless, it is clear that some larger questions of the future development of relations between the imperialist states, on the one hand, and the U.S.S.R. and the countries of the New Democracy, on the other, are involved in the changes that may flow from the limited results of the Council meeting.

For the American people, the perspective is clear. It is a perspective of

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struggle against the criminal war incendiaryism of the imperialist bipartisans with their ruinous Marshall Plan and Atlantic Pact—a fight which must be linked with the struggle for a progressive solution in Germany, for an American-Soviet Peace Pact, a settlement that reduces the war danger and enforces the peaceful co-existence of the two systems.

The reactionary, aggressive western Germany which has emerged and continues to be a menace and obstacle to a durable peace is above all the creation of the American imperialists and a danger to the American people. It is a betrayal of the war aims and the postwar hopes of the American people, the veterans of the war, their families.

The Council meeting was partly the product of the demand which has arisen from many sides in our country for American-Soviet negotiations, and the people's conviction that such negotiations can result in agreements has been confirmed. But

it cannot be said that the American peace movement focused its demand for such negotiations on the problem of Germany, and this remains one of its big obligations.

To fight against the war danger and the domestic drive to fascism, to impose the will of the peace-loving masses of Americans on the warmongers, whose plans have by no means been given up, requires the many-sided attention to the problem of Germany, as it does to all other problems thrown up by the imperialist policies of Wall Street and the Truman Administration.

The Council meeting was a phase of this struggle for peace in the diplomatic arena and flowed from the changing relationship of world forces. It remains our duty more than ever, in our own interests as in the interests of all humanity, to press forward with this struggle and change the relationship of forces still more decisively against imperialism and on the side of peace and democracy.

# The Bill of Rights and the Twelve

by Arnold Johnson

WHEN JUDGE HAROLD MEDINA jailed Comrade John Gates because he refused to become a stoolpigeon and jeopardize the livelihood, liberty, and possibly the very lives of his associates now employed in private industry then Judge Medina made a mockery of the Bill of Rights. When the judge jailed Comrades Henry Winston and Gus Hall for their vigorous protests in defense of the rights which John Gates was upholding, then the Court revealed the naked brutality of its justice. When, further, the judge jailed Comrade Gilbert Green for his voicing the right of the defense to present its case, the elementary democratic rights of the entire American people were assaulted by the judicial arm of the fast-developing police state. The statements of John Gates give a positive and democratic content to the provisions of the Bill of Rights. These are not abstract rights, but are related to specific situations. The Communist exercise of these rights is for the strengthening of democracy, for the improvement of the livelihood of the people, for the advancement of society. This was demonstrated in the courtroom on Friday, June 3, and again on June 20.

The fine courage of Gates in de-

fense of his class and the Bill of Rights stood in sharp contrast to the exposure of the debased character of the prosecution. Gates declared:

I would degrade me in the eyes of my associates and the labor movement, in the eyes of the public, and in the eyes of the jury to act as a common stoolpigeon to give you such other information as you desire. I don't want to have on my conscience the fact that any human being would lose his means of livelihood or even his life because of any such information . . . I wouldn't be able to raise my head in decent society if I become a stoolpigeon under the direction of the court or anyone else.

The prosecution and the Judge were fully aware of the meaning of this clear condemnation of the entire character of the trial where the Government of the United States had to fall back for its testimony on degenerates and stoolpigeons. That entire courtroom was aware of the fact that just ten days had passed since Calif Hill, Jr., a Negro father of three children, was lynched at Irwinton, Georgia. To make the point crystal clear, Henry Winston declared, "Lynchers go free while this court sends decent people to jail." Winston's remark had much more mean-

ing. It hit at the Government plot which could launch a wave of terror and lynchings. The brazen callousness of the court was condemned by Gus Hall as worse than a "kangaroo court" and a "mockery of justice." Gates, Winston, and Hall had served in the U.S. armed forces in the war against fascism. Their defense of the Bill of Rights in the court becomes a challenge to every defender of civil rights. This was made doubly clear by Eugene Dennis who declared to the court that the ruling violates "the First and the Fifth and the Tenth Amendments" and puts "in jeopardy the rights of freedom of assembly, the rights of our Party as an American working-class political party." Dennis exposed "the sinister objectives of the prosecution" of building up a list for criminal prosecution, and "to give any information would be not only to transgress the inalienable rights of the defendants, of the members of our Party, but would be to put anyone mentioned by Mr. Gates in a position where he would be subject to lynching in the South." The judge tried to stop Dennis, but he continued: "This would be a violation of the traditions embodied in our Bill of Rights. This would be acting in the traditions of J. Edgar Hoover and Herr Himmler, because such rulings could only be conceived and executed in the spirit of a police state inquisition." He concluded with the declaration that "no court and no legislative body can kill ideas, political doctrines, movements of the peo-

ple, such as the Communist movement. They can't do that by force, whatever the form of compulsion. And similarly no court by force or compulsion can compel any Communist or any reputable working person to bear false testimony and act as an informer against his associates."

That courtroom scene of all the Communist defendants on their feet to take a stand in defense of the Bill of Rights was a demonstration of a high quality and purposefulness which is in keeping with the best of American democratic traditions.

The consistent and vigorous defense of the Bill of Rights has been the role of the Communists. That fight affects the entire course of American history. All democratic forces in society are called upon to participate in that fight. Labor in particular cannot ignore its specific responsibility in the fight for basic democratic rights. The vanguard role of the Communists is manifested today in a situation in which the dominant labor officialdom evidences complete failure to make that fight. That role is so challenging and the forces of reaction and fascism in the American ruling class are so brazen and crude that ever broader and more democratic forces are taking up this fight. The mass of American people know that the Bill of Rights is not a mere piece of paper to be put in the archives or to be destroyed. It is a document which embodies the struggles of the mass of the people against the most reaction-

ary and Tory elements of the ruling class. The full meaning of the struggle of the people for the Bill of Rights today can best be understood by appreciating the historical struggles and battles which have become part of that document. Likewise, the crassness of the betrayal of democratic rights by Social-Democrats and labor lieutenants of American imperialism can best be understood in the light of that history.

#### A BACKGROUND OF STRUGGLE —NOT A DEBATE

The vigilance and consistent struggle of the people against reaction have always been necessary for the defense and advancement of civil rights. Whenever the mass of the people became lax in the struggle for those rights, or failed to exercise them, the forces of reaction in the ruling class would curb or destroy such rights. The Bill of Rights became a part of our Constitution on December 15, 1791, but only after many bitter struggles from the earliest days of the colonies.

The Bill of Rights has its origin in the struggles of the people against tyranny and oppression. Those struggles are symbolized by Roger Williams who came to New England in 1631 and soon raised the demand for freedom from English rule. He was denounced as a "dangerous agitator," fought for religious freedom, was banished from Massachusetts, fled to

what is now Rhode Island, where he established the most democratic of the colonies.

The Bill of Rights had its birth in the courage of Mistress Annie Hutchinson, who defied the rulers of Massachusetts colony by holding meetings of women at her house. The fighting determination of Deborah Gannett, Salem Poor and Crispus Attucks and many more Negroes in the Revolutionary War gave special meaning to the content of the Bill of Rights. The valiant deeds of the Sons of Liberty and the work of the Committees of Correspondence and Safety are part of the traditions which gave life to the first ten amendments.

Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia before the Revolution, and Shay's Rebellion in New Hampshire after the Revolutionary War, became part of the people's struggle for democratic rights.

The Negro slave revolts, which include possibly several hundred separate actions before and after the Revolution, are an important part of this entire tradition. The first such revolt occurred in 1526 in a Spanish settlement in what was later to become South Carolina almost a century before the landing of the colonists at Plymouth Rock. Many Negro leaders gave their lives in early organized efforts for freedom in English America as early in 1644 in Virginia. The entire history of the Negro people in America, filled with scores of events and numberless

heroic individuals, gives special significance to the traditions and meaning of the Bill of Rights.

Labor in Colonial America—in so far as it was organized in the earliest forms of trade unions, and more specifically in other organizations, such as the Sons of Liberty—fulfilled an important role in the development of the Revolution and in the struggle for the Bill of Rights in the period of the Constitutional Convention. One indication of the early organization of labor was that a grand jury indicted eight shoemakers in 1805 on the charge of forming “a combination and conspiracy to raise their wages.” Another indication of organized activity was the work of the Committee of Mechanics in New York in 1773 before the convening of the Continental Congress. There were also joint committees of mechanics, merchants and planters. In town meetings and conferences in every colony, the mechanic, craftsman and farmer took a prominent part in all matters of government. Alliances were made with the small farmers in the back country. These developments achieved certain advances in civil rights in some colonial constitutions and increased the demand for independence.

The Revolutionary War intensified the demand for civil rights most sharply. This was registered in the state constitutions that included Bills of Rights. This was so definitely in the current of the common people's struggle that the promise of the first

ten amendments became an essential factor in getting ratification of the Constitution. In this sense the Bill of Rights became a cornerstone of the new constitution.

These early struggles which gave birth to the Bill of Rights were not parliamentary debates between individuals. Comrade William Z. Foster, in his excellent and comprehensive statement, “In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders” (published in the *Daily Worker* of May 23, 1949), points out that the Revolution of 1776 represented young American capitalism's break-away from British domination “as well as eventually from various degrees of controls by France, Spain, Russia, Holland, Sweden, etc. This revolution, fought through with fire and sword by the young American people, required a seven year's war before it was brought to a successful conclusion.” This statement indicates the character of the struggle and the setting in which the Bill of Rights had its origin. In that early period of the development of American capitalism, the working class was, of course, in a rudimentary stage. Its role, however, in alliance with the small farmers of the back country, was that of pushing forward the struggle for independence and intensifying the struggle for democratic demands within the struggle for independence.

That struggle for independence had to be conducted, not only against

British rule, but also against the native Tory landlords and the moneyed interests, whose main concern was property rights and who feared the struggle of the masses for democratic rights. The Benedict Arnolds of the military period were followed by the Alexander Hamiltons of the period of the constitutional convention. Aristocratic John Adams, as second President, was a spokesman for property rights.

The fight for the Bill of Rights in that early period of American capitalism was conducted by the best representatives of the class which, in that historic setting, was leading in the social advance of the nation. Among the outstanding spokesmen and fighters for the inclusion of a Bill of Rights in the Constitution, in order to guarantee to the people certain fundamental democratic rights, were Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Thomas Paine. This progressive battle, coinciding with the aspirations and struggles of the masses of the people, was waged with great intensity even before the drafting and adoption of the Constitution. The reactionary Federalist Party led by Hamilton, still dreaming of the possibility of thwarting the democratic demands of the people by setting up a monarcho-aristocratic regime, was able to prevent the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution. As a result, an intense and bitter struggle by the popular masses was waged over a number of years to secure the

adoption of the Bill of Rights as amendments to the Constitution.

#### THE DEMOCRATIC CONTENT IS THE BACKBONE OF THE STRUGGLE

That struggle did not end with the adoption of the Bill of Rights in December of 1791. The most advanced and progressive forces of society in each generation have had to do battle for the Bill of Rights. Within seven years after the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the Federalist Party, which included the merchants and bankers under the leadership of the Tory, Alexander Hamilton, entrenched themselves with a majority of Congress. This reactionary camp conducted an intensive campaign against Thomas Jefferson, who was called "an atheist leveller from Virginia." The Federalists created a big war scare—of a possible war with France—and denounced the "alien and subversive influences." They demagogically accused the Jeffersonian Democrat Societies of being financed by "French gold" and organized by "bloody French Jacobins."

The Federalists then proceeded to legislate against the Jeffersonians. The Naturalization Act, passed in June 1798, was directed against the Irish peasant immigrants who were coming to this country in 1798 in large numbers as a consequence of British repression. They brought with them a spirit of rebellion against landlord tyranny and colonial domination. This act established the re-



quirement of 14 years' residence before naturalization. Secondly, the Alien Act, passed also in June 1798, gave dictatorial power to President Adams "to order all such aliens as he shall judge dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States or shall have reasonable grounds to suspect are concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations . . . to depart out of the territory of the United States. . . ." A third law was the Sedition Act which was passed in July 1798 to remain as law until March 3, 1801. This law made it a crime for a person to "write, print, utter or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, uttered or published, etc. . . . any false, scandalous and malicious writings against the government of the United States, or either House of Congress or the President . . . or to bring them into contempt or disrepute; or to excite against them . . . or to stir up sedition in the United States, or to excite any unlawful combination therein for opposing or resisting any law. . . ."

The laws were applied in a deliberate effort to outlaw the Jeffersonian party and the Bill of Rights. Wholesale arrests were made. Congressman Matthew Lyon of Massachusetts was among those arrested and was re-elected to Congress while behind prison bars. These bills are comparable to the Smith Law, and the wording of the indictment of the Twelve, such current legislation as the Hobbs Bill, the Mundt and Ferguson bills and others. There

was the widest denunciation of the bills. George Nicholas of Kentucky, in writing a letter in 1798 to a friend says:

At the time you are calling out Arm, arm, against the foreign foe who you say threatens the independence of our country, do not shut your eyes to domestic violations of our Constitution and our liberties. What will it avail us if we can preserve our independence as a nation, nay, if we even raise our country to the highest pitch of national glory, provided we at the same time lose our own liberties?

He proceeds with a denunciation of the three laws. He defends the rights of the foreign born in such a way that his letter of that time can well be used to expose the unconstitutional character of Tom Clark's deportation drive. Significantly, in the early days of our country, the right to a fair trial by the foreign born included certain privileges, such as, "that their jury should consist of half foreigners." These laws became a central factor in the election campaign of 1800 which brought Thomas Jefferson into office. Jefferson immediately wiped out all the prosecutions and sentences, and these laws were repealed. This was another victory in the struggle for the Bill of Rights.

From the earliest days of our country, those who fought for the Bill of Rights have never been bigots and narrow nationalists. Jefferson was a defender of the French Revolution. Thomas Paine participated

in the American and French Revolutions. Thus, the very time in which the colonies were in battle for independence was marked by the development of bonds of international solidarity. Internationalism became a test of one's patriotism. Historically, from those early days until today, those who fought for the democratic rights of the people always expressed themselves in solidarity with the progressive movements in other countries. The first expressions of solidarity with the French Revolution were followed by support for the struggles of the Irish for independence from Britain. Our country welcomed the revolutionists who were exiled from Germany in the late 'forties. The mass of the American people greeted the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. They support the struggles in colonial countries for independence.

On the other hand, those who have fought against the Bill of Rights have been those who pursue a narrow nationalist position and seek the domination of the United States over other lands. Thus, the forces that sought to advance chattel slavery also advanced the unjust war against Mexico in 1846-47. They were the forces which advocated the predatory war against Spain to gain colonies. They were the imperialists who drove America into the First World War for markets and profits. They are the forces who today seek United States imperialist domination over the world.

In the period of the Civil War,

the struggle for civil rights took on a fuller meaning. The fight against chattel slavery and for full rights of the Negro people became a matter of life and death for the entire country. The Bill of Rights was strengthened with the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments. The actual realization of the fundamental rights in these amendments is still on the agenda of the day. It took a civil war to reverse the vicious Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court, which had declared in 1857 that a Negro was to be regarded as property and as having no rights which the white man was bound to respect.

The roster of men and women, Negro and white, who gave leadership in this struggle for human freedom includes Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Lucretia Mott, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Elijah Lovejoy, William Lloyd Garrison. The writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had a prominent role. Such Communists as Joseph Weydemeyer, August Willich and Fritz Jacobi distinguished themselves in the Union Army in the Civil War. The direct role of Communists in that historical period highlights the role of Communists in every struggle for basic democratic rights.

It is for this that the twelve Communist leaders have been placed in the dock of bourgeois "justice" by the conspirators against peace and the Bill of Rights.

The struggle for the rights of the

Negro people has become the touchstone of sincerity on the issue of civil rights. When Southern Bourbons, with the aid of reactionaries from the North, were able to nullify the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, they destroyed the Bill of Rights for everybody. As the national character of the Negro people's struggle developed, the imperialist character of the oppression of the Negro people became more evident. Thus, the fight for the rights of the Negro people has a fullness in that it truly represents the combination of the fight for civil rights merged with the fight for national liberation.

It is, therefore, no accident that the Negro people are most alert as a people to the need of fighting for the rights of Communists and for strengthening the Bill of Rights. They see the meaning of this struggle in terms of bitter experiences of brutality and oppression. They see the common enemy. Ever greater numbers among them also see in the Communist Party the champion of their struggle. The Scottsboro case is part of that struggle. The case of the Trenton Six is part of that struggle. The Communists have always stood in the forefront of the fight against lynching, police brutality and violence, in North and South. The struggle against every form of white chauvinism is a necessary part of the fight for democratic rights. From their experiences, the Negro people understand why it is necessary

to outlaw the Ku Klux Klan and to defend the rights of the Communists.

Though not thoroughgoing, because of the failure to uproot the plantation system in the South and to give land to the toiling Negro masses, the abolition of chattel slavery was a great stimulus for the rapid extension of capitalist production throughout the country, including the West. With the victory of Northern capitalism, moreover, monopolies began to emerge and grow rapidly, and by the end of the century competitive, industrial capitalism had been transformed into imperialist capitalism. A small financial oligarchy tightened its grip on the whole country, dominating the economic, political, and social scene.

The pre-Civil War stirrings of the working class now became growing mass struggles against brutal exploitation of twelve and fourteen hours per day, against starvation wages, child labor, slum-ridden existence, company towns, "boss" political rule, etc. Working-class organizations—including political parties—began to play a more and more important role in the life of the nation.

The emergence of finance capitalism is characterized, in the words of Lenin, by "reaction all along the line." The Bill of Rights—of limited, bourgeois-democratic, *not* full, socialist democratic rights—always anathema to reactionaries, now became a major target of Big Business.

The industrial overlords sought to smash the growing struggles waged by the workers, the agrarian and city anti-monopoly masses, and the Negro people, for the defense and extension of their economic, political, and social interests.

Big Business began, systematically, to trample on the Bill of Rights, to expunge the first ten amendments—if not always in word, at least in deed—from the Constitution. The “frame-up,” engineered by police, prosecutor, governor and judge, working in cahoots with private strike-breaking and labor-spy systems, became a typical, unique weapon of the American bourgeoisie to destroy trade unions and other labor and people’s organizations. The U.S. Army and the National Guard were called out again and again by President and governor to drown in blood the struggles of the workers for a shorter work-week, higher wages, and better working and living conditions. Each wave of rising struggle by the workers and the people was met by a bloody counter-offensive of the bourgeoisie.

Thus it is that, from leader in the struggles of the emerging American nation for independence, for national sovereignty—at the time when the bourgeoisie was a young, rising, historically progressive class—the bourgeoisie, entering into its infamous alliance with the Southern Bourbons, became the class of national betrayal, of brutal opposition to, and outright sell-out of, the interests of the

American people. Signaling this decisive change, was the historic emergence of the role of the working class as leader of all the exploited and the oppressed, as the leading force in the nation.

From its very birth, and by its very world-historic nature and role as the grave-digger of capitalism, the working class has been the most consistent defender and champion of democracy against the reactionary forces. Nobly militant indeed are the traditions of struggle of the American working class—struggles in which many of its courageous fighters have been martyred by bourgeois “justice,” cast into prisons, and done to death by bullet, knout, and lynch-rope.

The names of the Haymarket martyrs are enshrined in the history of May Day engendered on America’s soil. Big Bill Haywood, Joe Hill, Nicola Sacco, Bartolomeo Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, Eugene V. Debs, John Reed, Charles E. Ruthenberg, and scores of others, selflessly devoted their lives to this fight. The Memorial Day Massacre of the ten steel workers in Chicago is part of the history.

With all their force and violence, all their frame-ups and stool-pigeon slanders, the ruling class only demonstrates its own depravity and desperation, and steels the working class for more decisive battles ahead.

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In the period following World

War I, the most reactionary and chauvinistic section of the capitalist class of Italy established its brutal, open dictatorship over the country, through Mussolini and his fascist brigands. A dozen years later, Hitler took power in Germany, and the capitalist class ruled through terror, thought control, concentration camps, racist chauvinism, fiendish brutality and war incendiaryism. Hitler and Mussolini, with the benevolent "non-intervention" of Social-Democratic and bourgeois-democratic statesmanship, helped establish fascist Franco in power in Spain. In this entire period the most reactionary sectors of finance capital in the United States, who financed and promoted Hitler and Mussolini, also nurtured and encouraged the development of home-grown fascist forces in this country. The struggle for the Bill of Rights necessarily took on an anti-fascist content, and Communists had a special responsibility in the broad mass movements which were developed in the fight against fascism and war.

These were years of mass struggles for the American working class. The heritage of the struggles of the past became a source of new strength in the big drives and strikes to organize the unorganized—Negro and white, to build the industrial unions in the basic industries, win social insurance, provide relief for the unemployed, etc. In these campaigns, the Communists proved themselves front-line fighters. The bonus

marches, the demonstrations and hunger marches of the unemployed, the militant struggles of the Southern sharecroppers, numbered Communists in the forefront.

In the great anti-Axis war, the Communists rose to the test of high patriotism, to true loyalty to the interests of the people and the nation, in their unexcelled devotion and indefatigable zeal on the home front and on the fields of battle to speed the victory over the fascist enemy. Can the American people fail to see the significance of the fact that Judge Medina dealt his blow against the American Bill of Rights on June 3, symbolically, by remanding to jail three Communist veterans? Can they fail to see the significance of the fact that arraigned in the dock by police-state "justice" is wartime Staff Sergeant Robert Thompson, recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross for valorous action above and beyond the call of duty?

The wave of Red-baiting and intimidation, of bridling of the trade-union movement, of lynch terror against the Negro people, and of repeatedly renewed efforts to outlaw the Communist Party undertaken by war-bridling Wall Street after World War II clearly shows the relationship between class politics and the attacks on the Bill of Rights. The capitalist barons of the United States are in mortal fear of the oncoming economic collapse of the capitalist world. They are thrown into despair by the growing might of

the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies, the Chinese people's revolutionary sweep, and the worldwide anti-imperialist movement. Feverishly searching for market outlets for their vast production potential, for sources of raw materials, etc., they are determined to bring the globe under their domination. Hence Wall Street's drive for a new world war, so rapidly on the heels of the smashing defeat delivered to the similar ambitions of the former "anti-Comintern Axis." Hence, too, the wave of domestic reaction and rising fascism.

As has been amply proved throughout our country's history, the drive to outlaw the Bill of Rights arises out of the basic weakness of the ruling class and a fear of the mass of the people. Today, the bipartisan monopoly camp fears that the mass of the people will reject the entire war program of Wall Street. The warmongers know that all opposition to that disastrous program must be stifled or they can't put it over. While the organized peace movement has not brought millions of people into demonstrative action, as has been the case in other lands, yet that movement is growing. Smaller organizations such as the Quakers, the National Council for American-Soviet Friendship, a group of CIO local union leaders, or the National Council of Arts, Sciences and Professions, have been able to do big jobs for peace, while big and powerful organizations such as the Catho-

lic hierarchy or the American Legion high command or the Murays and Greens in labor have not been able to mobilize the people for war. The Progressive Party conducts a successful series of peace meetings throughout the country, while the warmongers are unable to come out openly with their program. The American people have not been convinced to support the North Atlantic Pact or the re-arm Europe program and the huge military budget. The ruling class is using every device at its command to put over its program for world domination. That is why it seeks to outlaw the Bill of Rights.

These are days of decisive struggles. The course of American history is being decided. All that has gone into the history of the Bill of Rights and much more is involved. Those who seek to destroy the rights of Communists and imprison the twelve leaders of the Communist Party would also destroy the vitality of the entire labor movement and drive this nation rapidly toward fascism and imperialist war. The people's defense of the Twelve must be seen as precisely that link which is decisive in determining a whole series of successful outcomes in the fight against war and fascism.

Each day, specific democratic rights which are embodied in the Bill of Rights are being scrapped in the court room on Foley Square. That is why the defense of the Twelve is today's struggle for the defense

of the Bill of Rights. Every capitalist means of propaganda is being used to confuse the mass of the people. On the other hand, the Communists in the courtroom set a high example of leadership in bringing clarity to the people. Communists in unions and mass organizations have a major political and organizational responsibility to fulfill in building that powerful united front of the people which will smash the fascist plot against the democratic rights of the American people, which finds its most blatant expression in the Trial of the Twelve.

The front-line defense of the civil rights of all Americans is today the defense of the rights of Communists—and that means the defense of the

twelve Communist leaders. The broadest sections of the population must be brought into active participation. Large masses of people who see that all democratic rights hang in the balance and who may disagree with or oppose the Communists on points of program, will join in this fight for the defense of the Twelve.

Every American who believes in the Bill of Rights has the responsibility to speak out in defense of the Twelve. An aroused people, angered against Medina's vindictive jailings, must make it known: The indictments and the entire case must be thrown out of court! The Bill of Rights must be saved!

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“Under socialism a regime of science prevails to a degree quite unheard of under capitalism. There is no ruling class to distort the findings of science and to cultivate superstition in order to bolster its class rule. Those who believe in religion have the full right to practice it and others have an equal right to oppose religion. Science under socialism will increasingly flourish and pass on to achievements altogether beyond the scope of science under the yoke of capitalism. The right of the people to the fullest education is a necessary part of this regime of science and intellectual freedom. The central aim of socialist society, unlike under capitalism, is to extend the maximum possible degree of scientific education to the broadest masses of the people. Education becomes truly democratic only under socialism.”

William Z. Foster, *The Twilight of World Capitalism*, page 145.

# The Beginning of the Economic Crisis in the United States\*

by Alexander Bittelman

WHAT IS THE MEANING of the sharply declining trends in the American capitalist economy as they came to expression since November-December 1948: the drop in the wholesale price of commodities, especially agricultural; cutbacks in production; the sharp rise of unemployment; decreasing exports; decreasing retail trade; decreasing income of workers, toiling farmers and lower middle classes; decreasing rate of capital investments; etc., etc.?

Is it a temporary and transitory development which is to be followed either by a stabilization of the economy on a somewhat lower but still high level or, perhaps, even by a rapid pick-up and a resumption of an upward climb?

Is it an artificially created decline, created by the monopolies, to cheat labor of wage increases, to squeeze out weaker rivals, to squeeze the farmers, to defeat the demand for price reductions, and to compel mass support for the "cold war" (the Mar-

shall Plan, the North Atlantic Pact, rearmament, etc.) as a means of preventing a deep economic crash?

Or is it the beginning of the inevitable economic crisis?

The course of wholesale commodity prices in 1948 is described by the U.S. Department of Commerce as follows:

The interruption of the postwar advance in the general price index reflected a narrowing in the number of price areas which advanced during the year, as well as the appearance of declining price trends in a growing number of groups.\*

We must note the significance of the particular areas where prices declined, as contrasted with those where they did not or where they rose: "Although sharp in some instances, price advances were restricted to the metals and their products, building materials, house furnishings and the fuels."\*\*\*

Most of these products, especially metals, some basic building materials and the fuels, are products of mo-

\* This article is based on a series of reports and discussions at meetings of the National Committee of the Communist Party in February 1949 and at the National Committee Plenum held in April.

\* *Survey of Current Business*, February, 1949, p. 11

\*\* *Ibid.*



nopolized industries, maintaining monopoly prices, and these have sharply risen in 1948. *But farm prices, and those of non-monopoly industry, have suffered declines:*

... for the first time in the postwar period prices of farm and food products, and of most of the industrial non-durables were lower at the year end than they had been at the beginning of the year.\*

The index of the Department of Agriculture for farm prices shows a decline of 4 percent from January 1949, to February, and of 16 percent from January 1948.\*\* And the Midwest farmers themselves, as reported from Omaha by *The New York Times* (February 27), see the situation in a much worse light. They point to the fact that "the value of farm and ranch products has dropped roughly one-third during the last year—and is still falling."

This has already affected critically the economic position of the small and middle farmers. It is only the big farmer and farmer-capitalist who is able to maintain the old rate of income and even to increase it because of heavy marketing and large government loans.

Fundamental in this situation is the fact that American agriculture is moving once more to a condition of chronic crisis, the course of which had been deformed and modified

since 1939-40 by the outbreak of World War II. Since the end of the war, agricultural prices were maintained largely by government buying for export and by government guarantees and subsidies which benefitted mainly the rich and big capitalist-farmers.

Now big surpluses of wheat, corn, cotton and tobacco are being accumulated by the government and the big farmers. The home market is shrinking, due to the rapid decline in the income and purchasing power of the American working class. Foreign markets are shrinking, too, due, on the one hand, to the growing economic difficulties of the Western European countries resulting in part from the operations of the Marshall Plan, and, on the other hand, to the struggle of the masses in those lands for the economic independence and revival of their own agriculture.

This process of shrinkage of the home and foreign markets for the products of American agriculture is taking place in the face of a tremendous expansion of the productive capacities of the agricultural plant during the war years. This rapidly sharpening contradiction between the expanded agricultural productive capacity and the shrinking market is leading American agriculture back to the prewar chronic crisis and to a much more profound development of this crisis because of the great deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system.

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *The Wall Street Journal*, March 17, 1949.

The steadily declining purchasing power of the mass of small and middle farmers has already seriously affected the home market for many products of industry—a process greatly aggravated by the growing gap between declining farm prices and the rigid and rising monopoly industrial prices.

Equally if not more serious are the declining trends in working-class income and purchasing power. This is a permanent and long-range factor. But the declining trends became more pronounced since November of last year, due to the mass lay-offs and growth of unemployment, as well as to the reduced hours of work or the growth of partial employment. The latest figure, inexact but very significant, shows a decline in the rate of annual wage and salary payments from December 1948, to January 1949, of \$1,700,000,000.\*

But the most important expression of the declining trends in the economy is the sharp rise of total and partial unemployment since November. What is equally important is that the mass lay-offs and curtailment of production affected all industries, though unevenly, with the exception of steel and motor vehicles.

According to the Bureau of the Census, employment dropped 2,725,000 from November 1948, to February 1949. According to the same source, total unemployment in

February was 3,220,000. But the most objective estimates place the figure nearer to 5 million, because the Bureau of the Census fails to include in the labor force all those willing and able to work (many women, younger people, Negro people) while also excluding from the statistics of the unemployed large numbers of unemployed workers from the same categories. But even the official figure of 3,220,000 is the highest total since March 1942.

It has also been estimated that there were in January 1949, some 9.5 million partly unemployed, and the growth of part-time employment continues.

Indicative of the sharply declining trend in mass purchasing power since last November is the drop in retail sales in department stores and in groceries. The weekly index of the Federal Reserve Board (1935-39 equals 100) for comparable weeks of 1948 and 1949 presents the following picture of sales in department stores:

| 1948    |     | 1949    |     |
|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| Feb. 14 | 238 | Feb. 12 | 238 |
| Feb. 21 | 249 | Feb. 19 | 227 |
| Feb. 28 | 248 | Feb. 26 | 232 |
| Mar. 6  | 266 | Mar. 5  | 244 |
| Mar. 13 | 279 | Mar. 12 | 255 |

The picture is even worse in New York and Philadelphia. The Federal Reserve Board reports for the week ending March 12 a decline of 11 per cent in New York as compared with

\* *Survey of Current Business*, February 1949.

last year, and in Philadelphia, with six department stores reporting, a decline of 24 percent.\*

Highly significant for the sharp drop in mass purchasing power and for the rapidly worsening position of the masses is the decline in the sales of grocery stores. Here is an A.P. dispatch from Washington:

Sales of retail grocers in January totalled \$2,021,000,000, a decline of 12 percent from December and 3 percent from January last year. The Commerce Department, reporting this today, called it "the first time on record that estimated January total sales failed to show an increase over January of the previous year."\*\*

In the same dispatch, it is reported that sales of radios and house appliances in January were off 41 percent from December and 5 percent from January last year.

In this connection, mention must be made of the continuing decline in cotton consumption since last November. In February, the mills used 640,182 bales as compared to 785,677 of last year.\*\*\*

The Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial production naturally reflects the declining trends, but not as sharply. The December index (1935-39 equals 100) declined to 192 from 195 in November. The

January industrial output declined further to 191 from the 192 in December, 195 in November, and 193 in January of last year.

The main reason the index of industrial production does not yet reflect as sharply the general declining trend that is so unmistakable in the rise of unemployment and the drop of mass purchasing power is probably the following. Production schedules in December and January have not yet been "adjusted" to the projected cutbacks in production widely planned by most industries. Exploitation of labor, intensity and speed-up, have increased considerably since November, so that nearly the same volume is turned out with fewer workers.

Another consideration is the counterbalancing effect upon total production of the intensified armament program. But this we shall consider later.

Here note must be taken of another indicator of the continuing sharp decline in economic activity, namely, the weekly loadings of revenue freight. As reported by the Association of American Railroads, loadings of revenue freight for the week ending March 12 were 10.9 percent fewer than last year and 15.7 percent fewer than in 1947. In general, the declining trend continues since November of last year.

We should note further that manufacturers' sales dropped 6 percent from December to January and that

\* *The Wall Street Journal*, March 15, 1949.

\*\* *The New York Herald-Tribune*, March 19, 1949.

\*\*\* *The Wall Street Journal*, March 18, 1949.

sales of wholesale dry goods dropped 21 percent from January 1948 to January 1949.\*

Exports show the same declining trends, even more sharply, continuing the drop in exports which took place from 1947 to 1948. U.S. exports in 1948 declined to \$12,614,200,000 from \$15,340,200,000 in 1947. January 1949 exports continued the decline to \$1,085,000,000 as compared with \$1,092,000,000 in the month of January 1948.

Although exact figures are as yet unavailable, reports are persistent and widespread that Big Business is planning large cuts in capital expenditures for this year and that production schedules are being fitted to the new plans. Lewis H. Brown, chairman of the board of the Johns Manville Corporation, expects a decline of at least 5 billion in capital expenditures, hoping that the armament program will make it good.\*\*

In the discussions on the economic situation during January and February, most bourgeois economists and capitalist politicians were speculating on a substantial pick-up in production in the spring. It was assumed that if this took place, the declining trends would become reversed and we should be starting another upward climb or, at worst, we should have a "healthy" stabilization, although on a somewhat lower level.

\* *Ibid.*, March 2, 1949.

\*\* *The New York Times*, February 16, 1949.

Spring is here, and what is happening to the economic trends and to the expected pick-up?

Let me cite the latest report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics as reported in *The New York Times* of April 21:

Employment in non-agricultural establishments declined in March for the third successive month.

Normally, March should show an upturn, but the bureau suggested that a clear picture of 1949 trends would not be available until the April figures were in.

We shall see presently what is happening to the April figures. Meanwhile we continue with the bureau's report:

The decline of 150,000 during March contrasted with an increase of more than 300,000 in the same period last year.

All discussions of a spring pick-up revolved a good deal about the seasonal pick-up in construction. True, a certain pick-up is taking place; but it is insignificant. Says the bureau:

Building contractors failed to increase their employment in March, reflecting the slowness of the seasonal upswing in residential construction.

The approach of Easter was expected not only to produce a certain pick-up in retail trade but a reversal of trends. But here is what the bureau finds:

As a result of generally lower retail sales and the late Easter this year, employment in wholesale and retail trade showed the smallest March rise since 1938. Trade employment, which totalled 9,530,000 in mid-March, was about 70,000 below the same month last year.

And here is the Federal Reserve Board report on department-store sales in the week ending April 9, only two weeks before Easter. It says:

Adjusting for seasonal factors, sales were up actually about 1 percent over the like period last year, which was the second week after Easter.\*

In other words, even the approach of Easter produced little significant change in retail trade.

Summing up on the course of manufacturing employment and unemployment for the last six months, the Bureau of Labor Statistics states in effect:\*\*

The downward drift in manufacturing employment continued for the sixth consecutive month. The 150,000 decline in March brought employment down to 15,550,000, nearly 1,200,000 below the postwar peak of September, 1948.

The larger part of the decline took place in durable goods. . . . The iron and steel fabricating and machinery industries accounted for the bulk of this reduction.

The significance of the drop in the durable industries must not be overlooked in an estimate of the mean-

ing of the downward economic trends.

As to the non-durable industries, the bureau reports:

The textile industries reported the largest curtailment of employment. The sharpest cutback took place in woolen and worsted mills, but further declines were also indicated by cotton and rayon manufacturers.

We must also take note of a further rise during March in part-time employment. The bureau finds that "the average work-week in factories dropped a half-hour from 39.4 hours to 38.9—and gross weekly earnings of factory workers dropped about \$1 to \$53.37. This was about \$1.64 below last December." Here too the continuing downward trend is unmistakable.

Now about the trends for April. Here we have a certain significant indication in New York State. I quote from *The New York Times* of April 13:

State officials, who had been hopeful that the unemployment rolls would start turning downward with the arrival of April, reported yesterday that the number of workers seeking unemployment insurance and veterans' readjustment benefits had gone up 2,447 last week. The rise took place despite the fact that 4000 workers were dropped from the benefit lists during the week for having exhausted their right to further payments.

The conclusion is that thus far spring has produced no significant

\* *The Wall Street Journal*, April 19, 1949.

\*\* *The New York Times*, April 21, 1949.

pick-up in the economy and that the trend continues downward.

Mass purchasing power continues to decline, due to growing unemployment, part-time employment, wage cuts, and the continuing decline in the income of the working farmers.

Latest Department of Commerce reports show a further drop in farm income in February of \$1,700,000 from January. Wage and salary receipts dropped about a billion.\* And the value of farm lands is declining critically, dropping 20 percent in New England and 33 percent in California.

As to the course of, and outlook for, capital investments, even the most optimistic capitalist calculations foresee a drop of no less than 5 percent. But "businessmen sounded out by the Commerce Department and the S.E.C. indicate they'll build and install 14 percent less in the second half of 1949 than they did in the corresponding 1948 period. . . . Manufacturing installations are the leader, going down quarter by quarter this year. Outlays in mining and railroads are expected to drop off in the second half."\*\*

These are some of the more relevant facts showing the sharply declining trends in the capitalist economy of the United States most prominent since November 1948. We asked at the outset what was the meaning of these facts. Our answer

must be that these facts reflect the beginning of the economic crisis in the United States, the crisis which our Party's analyses since the end of the war have shown as maturing and likely to break out in 1948.

## II. RECENT TRENDS IN THE LIGHT OF POSTWAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

In order to arrive at a correct judgment about the meaning of the recent declining trends, whether they are temporary and transitory or whether they mark the beginning of the economic crisis, we must consider the main contradictions and characteristics of postwar economic developments in the United States in relation to the crisis condition of world capitalist economy, on the one hand, and the upsurge of economic development and growth of the Socialist and transition-to-Socialist economies of the Soviet Union and the New Democracies, on the other hand.

Here we must note first of all the central factors in postwar economic development in the United States. These are the tremendous gaps or contradictions between the expanded productive capacity and the actual volume of production. Using the Federal Reserve Board index of the physical volume of industrial production, *The New York Times* presents a chart (January 3, 1949) which

\* *The Journal of Commerce*, April 15, 1949.  
 \*\* *Barron's*, April 4, 1949.

shows that production of durable goods in the United States has dropped 36 percent between 1943 and 1948. The index stood at 360 in 1943 and 230 in 1948 (1935-39 equals 100).

The complete picture is even more significant. Production of durable goods dropped nearly one-half (48 percent) from 1943 to 1946 as the war and armament orders declined to a minimum. And from 1946 to 1948, the production of durable goods picked up an increase of only 12 percent, even though in 1947 and especially in 1948 rearmament and war preparations were proceeding at considerable speed.

Thus, the most characteristic feature of postwar economic developments in the United States has been this terrific gap and contradiction between productive capacity and volume of production, between productive capacity and the consumption abilities or purchasing power of the masses, between expanded productive capacity and failure of American capitalism to find profitable markets for the full utilization of these capacities. And this feature is nothing else but a feature of crisis, aggravated by the deepening general crisis of the world system of capitalism, and making certain that the present sharply declining economic trends are no transitory affair but expressions of the beginning of the economic crisis of overproduction.

We should observe in passing, leav-

ing more fundamental treatment of the matter to further discussion, that Comrade I. Kuzminov has made a valuable contribution to an understanding of postwar economic developments in the United States with his article in *The Bolshevik* of December 15, 1948.\*

... the transition of capitalist economy from war to peace is not simply "reconversion," it is not just a technical and organizational change-over of individual plants, but a complex and difficult process of the spontaneous, anarchic adaptation of capitalist production expanded by "wartime demand," to the new conditions of the market. By employing the term "reconversion," bourgeois economists try to cover up the crisis character of postwar economic development in the U.S.A.\*\*

As we shall see later, this is also what Browder has been doing as he continues to peddle the program of American imperialism—refined in the reformist style—for the conquest of the world's markets.

Another important emphasis of Kuzminov, in his polemic with Varga, is that also during the war the pre-conditions of a new economic crisis were maturing in the United States. He says, basing himself on Stalin's profound observation that war is for capitalism "Just as natural and valid a state of affairs as the ex-

\* "The Crisis Character of the Economic Development of the U.S. in the Post-war Period," reprinted in *Political Affairs*, May 1949—Editor.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 58.

ploitation of the working class," that while "temporarily mitigating the contradictions between production and consumption, war at the same time lays the basis for a new sharpening of these contradictions and a new explosion, for a new crisis." He concludes this point by saying that "the economic development of the U.S.A. during the war was laying the basis for the further sharpening of the contradiction between production and consumption, between the curtailed purchasing power of the masses and the productive capacities which have increased on the yeast of 'wartime demand.'"\*

Postwar economic developments fully confirm this contention. Between 1943 and 1946, total production dropped about one-third, while production of durable goods alone dropped nearly one-half. In the next two years, the following took place: in 1947, capitalist industry recovered only one-third of the 30 percent loss in production from 1943 to 1946, while in 1948 only about 3 percent was gained over 1947. All in all, only about 13 percent of the one-third loss from 1943 was made good, but as this gain was being registered, a new declining trend set in which bears all the signs of the beginning of the economic crisis.

In other words, the beginning of the present economic crisis was preceded and prepared by one of the

sharpest declines in industrial production in the United States, creating a crisis condition for subsequent economic development (a deep gap between industrial capacity and actual production) and conditioning the forms in which the cyclical crisis is now developing, including the feature that the decline from the top points of 1948 is not as yet as precipitous and sharp as is the case in the classical form of development of a cyclical crisis.

The special features of the economic developments in 1948 are especially important. A review of 1948 by the Department of Commerce\* notes the following points:

The advances made in 1948 in most sectors of the economy were smaller than in the prior years of reconversion and postwar adjustment. Much of the rise in the value of the national product again represented higher average prices. (p. 1.)

A significant development in the trend of consumers' expenditures in 1948 occurred in the final months of the year when expenditures on durable goods, which previously in the postwar period had increased at a faster rate than other expenditures, actually declined. This decline in the final quarter consisted of a sharp drop in major household appliances and a smaller decline in furniture. (p. 2.)

The marked falling off in the rate of formation of new firms that occurred in 1948 was accompanied by a decline

\* *Ibid.*, p. 60

\* *Survey of Current Business*, February 1949.



in investment outlays from this source. (p. 2.)

Very important are the observations of this survey on national income and consumer purchasing power in 1948:

Much of the increase in national income and product reflected a rise in prices rather than a larger volume of production. (p. 3.)

The Survey notes "a decrease in the share of national income going to consumers" (p. 4) and makes the following revealing comment:

*The share of consumption in total national product was smaller in 1948 than in any other year of peacetime prosperity except 1941.* (p. 4.)

This will be a revelation to those who have assumed that the standard of living of the masses has been rising instead of actually declining, as we have consistently maintained and demonstrated. We continue from the Survey:

In 1929, for instance, consumption was 76 percent of national product as compared with 70 percent in 1948. (p. 4.)

Lest someone assume that this was because people did not want to spend, the Survey says further:

The reduced share of consumption is not mainly attributable to a tendency of consumers to spend a lower proportion of their disposable income and to save the rest. *Rather, the primary explanation lies in the fact that consumers' dis-*

*posable income was low in relation to total production—75½ percent in 1948 as compared with 79½ percent in 1929.* (p. 4, my emphasis—A.B.)

Another feature is the rise of armament expenditures. The Survey reports:

... as expansion in private sectors of the economy was slowing down, an acceleration of government purchases of goods and services was taking place. (p. 2.)

Remembering the drop in exports during 1948, we must assume that many of these government purchases are part of the armament program.

Finally, on the course of capital investments and inventory accumulations in 1948, the Survey reports:

Expenditures for new plant and equipment were 16 percent higher than in 1947. . . . Most of the increase in private investment during 1948 reflected the rise in prices. (p. 20.)

Another important indicator is the fact that the increase in capital expenditures from 1946 to 1947 was nearly 34 percent, as compared with 16 percent from 1947 to 1948 (most of which represented a rise in prices). Thus, the Survey rather underestimates the meaning of this decrease when it says that "private investments (in 1948) showed signs of levelling off" (p. 20). A drop in *the rate of growth* of capital investments of more than one-half (53 percent), from 34 percent to 16 percent, is a

*precipitous fall* rather than "a leveling off." And this especially indicates that the present declining trends mark the *beginning* of the economic crisis.

Regarding inventories in 1948, the Survey finds:

During 1948, manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers continued to expand their investments in inventories. The increase in book value amounted to 6 billion dollars as compared with 8.1 billion in the previous year. (p. 21.)

All these facts and features pointed clearly in 1948 to the approach and

the close proximity of the economic crisis. When these facts are analyzed on the basis of the crisis character of postwar economic developments in the United States, greatly aggravated by the deepening general crisis of the capitalist system, plus the imminent return in sharper form of the chronic agrarian crisis, we are brought to the conclusion that we are now at the beginning of the economic crisis in the United States.

[*The second and concluding part of this article will appear in the August issue.*]

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"The interests of the Communists are identical with those of the masses, both in an immediate and a long-run sense. Marx laid down this fundamental principle one hundred years ago in *The Communist Manifesto*. There is a perfect harmony between the Communist Party's fight for the people's everyday demands and its fight for their ultimate goal of socialism. The two go hand-in-hand, mutually complementing each other. A successful movement for socialism can only develop out of a loyal and determined defense of the people's everyday interests, and only a leadership with a socialist perspective knows how to defend the workers' interests under capitalism."

William Z. Foster, *The Twilight of World Capitalism*, page 108.

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# The Dixiecrat Fascist Menace

by Nat Ross

MILLIONS of Americans are aware of the Dixiecrat menace. This awareness was brought about by the Nazi-like Presidential campaign of the Thurmond-Wright ticket and its incitation to mass lynch violence against the Negro people. It was made more real by the Dixiecrats' hatchet job in the filibuster against civil rights, and other obstructionist activities in the 81st Congress.

In this article we shall endeavor to show that there are no basic differences of principle between the Dixiecrats and the Truman Administration on such overriding and fundamental questions as the bipartisan imperialist war policy and the continued national oppression of the Negro people. We shall show that the existing conflicts and differences between the Dixiecrats and Truman are of a tactical nature. Both camps strive to realize the class program of monopoly capital. They differ in the areas and class composition of the social support they seek, and consequently in their use of demagoguery and political methods.

Furthermore, we shall show the *fascist character* of the Dixiecrat movement, *the first widespread mass fascist political movement in the United States*. We shall endeavor to

show that as an integral part of the bipartisan war plans and the drive to fascism in the U.S., *the primary aim of the Dixiecrats is to drown the rising Negro liberation movement in blood*, in order to "stabilize" the South—the Achilles' heel of American imperialism.

## THE FASCIST PROGRAM

Behind a thin disguise of "democratic" demagoguery, the real Dixiecrat program comes forth, especially in action. The core of this program is to unleash a Niagara of anti-Negro propaganda modeled on Hitler's race "supremacy" rubbish in order to translate lynch-language into lynch-action, to Nazify the minds of masses of white Southerners, and to prevent any developing unity of action between Negro and white toilers. The lineal class descendants of the chattel slave-owners, who forced their attentions on slave women and then disowned tens of thousands of their own flesh and blood, state in the Dixiecrat Handbook: "We must face the race question frankly and fairly as we have learned to face venereal disease in this country."\*

\* *States' Rights Information and Speakers Handbook*, published by National States' Rights Campaign Committee, Jackson, Mississippi, p. 50. (Hereafter referred to as the Dixiecrat Handbook.)

This vicious racist approach actually expressed the fear of the Dixiecrats, who, with the scent of bloodhounds, grasp the revolutionary implications of the struggles of the oppressed Negro people in the Black Belt for national liberation. With their eyes glued on the Black Belt, the Bourbons say:

Negro voting means negro\* rule in some of the finest sections of the South because the negroes out-number the whites in those sections some times as much as ten to one.

In many counties throughout the South a few thousand whites operate farms, business and industry and furnish employment to hundreds of thousands of negroes. If those negroes voted and elected their kind of officials, which would happen if they voted, there would not be a business or industry operating in the county twelve months after they took over—*unless violence was resorted to for the protection of business and industry and farming* [my emphasis—N.R.] against the improvident acts of incompetent and corrupt administration.\*\*

The above quotation expresses the Hitlerite racist poison of the terrorist Dixiecrat leaders, their determination to use violence to keep the Negro people in subjugation and to prevent any democratic advance for the

Negro and white workers of the South.

This quotation also serves to demonstrate the significance of the fight for the franchise in the deep South. It indicates the interrelation between the franchise and the struggle for jobs, equality and land reform, as seen in numerous mass movements in the past few years in such Black Belt cities as Winston-Salem, Macon, Memphis and Birmingham. Fear of the profound significance of the stirrings among the Negro people of the Black Belt and the deep South has led the Dixiecrats to unleash their terrorist attack on the Negro liberation movement.\*

Former Governor Thompson stated that over 300 Ku Klux Klan demonstrations to intimidate the voters were held on the eve of the 1948 gubernatorial race in Georgia in which he was beaten by Talmadge. The names of Nixon, Snipes, Hill, Mallard, the Ingrams, of the lynch victims of Monroe and Brunswick, Georgia, point up this Talmadge-Dixiecrat-K.K.K. mass murder, this genocidal terror designed to crush the Negro liberation movement in the Black Belt.

A major objective of the Hitlerite anti-Negro propaganda of the Dixiecrats is to win the support of the masses of white Southerners. But the fact is that side by side with the

\* Deliberate refusal to spell *Negro* with a capital "N" in this quotation is another example of the vicious hatred and white chauvinist contempt for the Negro people, as well as of the efforts to hide the national character of the Negro people's liberation struggles, on the part of the Southern Bourbons.

\*\* *Dixiecrat Handbook*, p. 52.

\* The Southern Regional Council has acknowledged 50 known cases of violence against Negroes in 1948, including lynchings—a figure that is a gross understatement.

Dixiecrat anti-Negro propaganda and actions, there is the most virulent and violent campaign against organized labor in the South. The reactionary columnist Ray Tucker has bluntly stated that one of the main reasons for the formation of the Dixiecrat movement was to maintain the Southern wage differential and oppose labor's organizing drive. Recently the Dixiecrats showed their hand in the Birmingham-Bessemer area where 5,000 Negro and white ore miners employed by the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company (U.S. Steel subsidiary) had been organized in the progressive Mine-Mill union for over a decade. Dixiecrat politicians joined in a common front with T.C.I., the K.K.K., the police and the Philip Murray forces in steel, to stage one of the most murderous attacks on the Mine-Mill leadership and membership seen in the violence-ridden South in many years.

David Clark, publisher of the *Textile Bulletin* in Charlotte, and one of the founders of the Dixiecrat movement in North Carolina, typifies the Dixiecrat employers in textile and other Southern industries. Mr. Clark, who wrote in 1938 that he preferred Hitler to Roosevelt, has a record of 40 years' vigorous opposition to unions and to anti-child labor laws. This Dixiecrat is a spokesman for the Southern textile barons who, according to the magazine, *U.S. News and World Report*, are preparing for an eventual cut in wages by one-

third. It should also be noted that the textile industry in the South is "lily-white" and employs about 700,000 white workers. *Thus we have a national conspiracy to exclude Negroes from production in an industry whose raw materials are produced mainly by the semi-slave labor of Negro sharecroppers and farm workers on the cotton plantations.* Thus we see the meaning of the Dixiecrat "white supremacy" propaganda and lynch violence against the Negroes. It is simultaneously a brutal weapon to destroy the organized labor movement in the South and drastically to depress the living conditions of the Southern workers.

Underlying all the Dixiecrat fascist propaganda and activities is their systematic and frantic Red-baiting, their anti-Soviet slanders, and their hysterical warmongering. This is aimed especially at quelling the militant peace sentiments of the Negro people and their sympathetic attitude toward the Soviet Union—a sentiment which was so eloquently voiced by Paul Robeson at the recently-held Paris Peace Conference. Dixiecrat speeches in the South and in Congress are full of sabre-rattling and "atom-bomb Moscow now" talk. During the Presidential race Thurmond criticized the bipartisan war policy because it wasn't tough enough! In Congress, the main Dixiecrat leaders have been among the most vociferous supporters of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan,

the North Atlantic Pact, and other major aspects of the bipartisan war policy.

#### WALL STREET AND THE DIXIECRATS

As has been reported in numerous periodicals, the real backers of the Dixiecrats are a group of powerful Wall Street corporations operating in the South, groups of Southern capitalists, and big landowners. The financial backers of the Dixiecrats include the Rockefeller, Morgan, Mellon, DuPont interests in the South, as well as the National Cotton Council (the N.A.M. of the plantation South). It is the policy of this evil combination that the Dixiecrats express, and it is in their profit interests that the Dixiecrats operate. The leading centers of the Dixiecrat movement are in Birmingham and Houston, as well as Jackson. *It is the Wall Street monopolists in oil, steel, chemicals—the war industries—who are the dominant forces behind the Dixiecrat movement.* This fascist movement demonstrates the closest fusion between the monopolists and the state and political parties under the domination of the monopolies. Thus, this so-called "Southern Party" has its real headquarters in Wall Street.

In Birmingham it is an open secret that the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company which is the single major force in Alabama politics, is also the

dominant behind-the-scenes backer of the Dixiecrat movement. Gessner McCorvey, one of a trio of leading Alabama Dixiecrats, which includes Frank Dixon and Horace Wilkinson, is an attorney for T.C.I., Standard Oil and Gulf Oil, Southern Railroad, and other powerful Wall Street corporations. Former Governor Frank Dixon who officially represents the N.A.M. in Alabama, is an attorney for the Associated Industries in Alabama, a spokesman for the DuPont interests, for the DeBardelaben coal and the Comer textile interests of Alabama. Horace Wilkinson, the notorious ideologist for Ku-Klux-Klanism, is also an attorney for some of the most powerful corporations in Alabama.

In Houston the main economic force behind the Dixiecrats are the oil corporations. In addition to their other objectives, the oil monopolies are using the Dixiecrats as a front in a struggle to get control, through the separate states, of the estimated four billion barrels of oil under the surface of the Gulf area. This struggle explains the real meaning of one aspect of the flood of Dixiecrat demagoguery about states' rights. The Humble Oil Company of Texas (Standard Oil), which netted \$186 million profits in 1948, is a prime mover in the Dixiecrat development through its chief counsel, E. E. Townes. Another Standard Oil attorney, Palmer Bradley, is a well-known Dixiecrat leader in Texas

and a member of the Dixiecrat national committee. The multi-millionaire Texas oil operator, Roy Cullen, financed the private plane and trains that brought Thurmond and Wright to Houston for their acceptance speeches last August. And the oil monopolies are powerful forces in the political machines of Governor Earl Long and Senator Russell Long, joint heirs of the fascist legacy of Huey Long.

Jackson, Mississippi, forms another major center of the Dixiecrat movement. Here we see the role of the Black Belt plantation owners and their servile alliance with the dominant Wall Street monopolists. Governor Fielding Wright, the Dixiecrat Vice-Presidential candidate, who precipitated the so-called Southern revolt in January 1948 and was one of the founders of the Dixiecrat movement, is himself a big Delta planter. Another vigorous supporter of the Dixiecrats is the *Staple Cotton Review*, organ of the Delta planters who are a bulwark of the economic and political backwardness of the South.

Thus, we see the combination of the fascist-minded Wall Street monopolists (many of whom have strong Republican Party ties), the most anti-union Southern capitalists and the Bourbon planters, as the real masters and backers of the Dixiecrats. Whatever differences and conflicts develop among the various groups in this combination, in which the Wall

Street forces are dominant, the combination is united on the main fascist program and purpose of the Dixiecrat conspiracy.

In addition to some of the attorneys and other representatives of the capitalists and landowners already mentioned, there is a whole host of "white supremacist" public officials who are either organizationally or ideologically tied up with the Dixiecrats. Some of the most notorious of these include Governors Tammadge, Thurmond, Wright and Long; Senators Byrd, George, Russell, Eastland, Connally, Ellender, McKellar; and Congressmen Rankin, Cox and Wood.

Along with these poll-tax politicians the *Ku Klux Klan in every Southern state is a major factor, and generally the most decisive force, in the Dixiecrat movement*. It is no exaggeration to state that every Klansman in the South is a political Dixiecrat. Other fascist groups which have joined the Dixiecrats include the forces of Gerald L. K. Smith, the Anti-Jewish Party of Chattanooga, the Columbians, and the National Patrick Henry Organization of Georgia. The hero of the Dixiecrats is the military leader of the slaveholders' counter-revolution, Robert E. Lee. The flag most prominently displayed at Dixiecrat gatherings is the flag of the Confederate secessionists.

In short, this Dixiecrat conspiracy is backed and financed by a Wall

Street-Bourbon combination, and led by Wall Street attorneys and "white supremacists." It uses the K.K.K. as its shock troops and hatchet men. It leans for support on the white urban and rural middle class and the backward sections of the workers. This fascist gang operates in the highest councils of government and is given every assistance through publicity, funds, important posts, etc., in carrying out its illegal and terrorist activities against American democracy. This is permitted and encouraged because the fascist Dixiecrats are an important part of the war machine of American imperialism and of the drive toward fascism.

#### THE DIXIECRATS AND THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

The poll-tax Democratic cliques and the Southern state political machines were transformed into the organized Dixiecrat conspiracy in the context of the postwar developments in the South and the drive of American imperialism for world domination. The poll-tax Bourbons found their theatre of operation somewhat cramped on the stage of the Roosevelt New Deal and the war against the fascist Axis. But on the stage of the postwar developments when American Big Business was driving to world domination, to war and fascism, the Bourbon politicians found the natural setting for the unfolding of the fascist Dixiecrat movement. In the South, the post-

war economic and political blitz especially against the Negro people was aimed at breaking the developing Negro-white unity and wiping out the popular gains made during the period of the New Deal and the anti-Axis war. The postwar resurgence of the Klan and of fascist leaders, like Eugene Talmadge, prepared the ground for the poll-tax politicians trying to give more substance to the poisonous century-old "white-supremacy" propaganda of the slaveholders.

At the same time, President Truman's report on civil rights served as a springboard for the Bourbon politicians. Truman was alarmed at the worldwide criticism of the lynch terror against the Negro people which was exposing the preachers of the "democratic American way of life." He was especially alarmed over the militant surging Negro liberation movement. In order to tone down and divert this movement from anti-imperialist struggles and to win the voting support of the Negro people, Truman felt it necessary to resort to his "civil rights" demagoguery. But the Bourbons were afraid that even demagogic talk about civil rights, even the slightest concession, might stir up the volcanic moods of the oppressed Negro people. While Truman's hypocrisy on civil rights served as the convenient pretext for the birth of the Dixiecrat movement, the real impetus was more basic and underlying. The Dixiecrats were

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fearful of certain trends toward Negro-white unity to which the twenty years' activity of the Communist Party in the South had been a contributing factor. They feared the entrance of the Progressive Party in the South which was able to collect 30,000 and 80,000 signatures in North Carolina and Georgia respectively, and to run sixty candidates for state and Federal office, of whom twenty-three were Negroes. The Dixiecrats were above all determined that the rising Negro liberation movement could be smashed by mass intimidation and widespread lynch terror; they were aided in this by the fact that despite certain important exceptions, the masses of Southern white workers lagged behind the advancing Negro liberation movement and refrained from joining with the Negro workers in the common struggle for their pressing needs and against the Jim-Crow system.

In this way, the so-called Southern revolt of the winter of 1948 was transformed into the organized Dixiecrat movement of the late summer of that year. The so-called States' Rights Democrats wound up with the Thurmond-Wright Presidential ticket. The Thurmond-Wright ticket appeared on the ballot as the official Democratic ticket in South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. In the other states the Dixiecrat ticket appeared in a column separate from the Democratic Presidential ticket. The Dixiecrat campaign which was

directed at Truman, while certain Dixiecrats more or less openly supported Dewey, was primarily aimed at strengthening the Dixiecrat position within the Democratic Party. The Dixiecrats succeeded in capturing control of the Democratic Party in South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana, and with the help of Herman Talmadge, they had ideological leadership of the Democratic Party machine in Georgia. As is known, the Dixiecrats suffered a serious setback in the November elections. They were repudiated by the Southern voters, including the overwhelming majority of white voters to whom they made their appeal as the "true Southern party." They were able to carry the four states in which they controlled the Democratic Party machinery. (Truman's name did not even appear on the Alabama ballot.) They received less than a million popular votes in the South, many of them undoubtedly from voters who were confused by their demagoguery about being the "true Southern party."

However, despite their electoral setback, the Dixiecrats prepared for renewed activity in the post-election period. Their main aim continued to be to operate within the Democratic Party, to capture positions of power and to influence policy in the Democratic Party in the states and nationally. This was given impetus by the Southwide meeting of the Dixiecrats in Jackson, Mississippi, on May 10,

where they made elaborate and menacing preparations for the 1950 elections. Under the guise of "states' rights," the Dixiecrats adopted a platform designed to strengthen their terrorist rule over the Negro people.

While continuing their terrorist activities in the South in the post-election period, it was in the 81st Congress that the Dixiecrats delivered some of their main blows. It should be clearly recalled that the Truman Administration, flush with its November victory, with a Democratic majority in both Houses and with a popular mandate, could have completely undermined the power and position of the Dixiecrats in Congress. The Truman Administration was in a position to refuse committee assignments to the Dixiecrats. It could have changed the archaic rules of Congress, and especially the filibuster rules, at the outset of Congress. It could have shorn the Dixiecrats of patronage and removed their agents from power in the Democratic Party in the South. But the Truman Administration which had complete control of the national Democratic Party machinery did not want to do this, because it is interested, not in a real fight to isolate the Dixiecrats, but only in a sham fight. Except for some feeble efforts in Mississippi and South Carolina, and some verbal wrist-slapping the Truman Administration has not lifted a finger against the Dixiecrats.

*In fact, the Dixiecrats are now more*

*firmly entrenched in the Democratic Party and are stronger in the 81st Congress than at any previous time.*

Nor is this accidental. Truman, Barkley, McGrath, Connally and Rayburn planned it that way! The bipartisan war policy of the Truman Administration and its civil rights demagoguery which precipitated the birth of the Dixiecrat conspiracy, was also to strengthen that political spawn at the opening of the 81st Congress, in spite of the people's mandate against the Dixiecrat gang.\* But the basic fact remains that Truman needs the Dixiecrats, the fascist wing of the Democratic Party and of the Administration—just as he needs the misleaders of labor. Both wings are necessary to put over the war-and-fascism program while the Truman Administration demagogically prates, but does absolutely nothing about, guaranteeing civil rights or taking action against known lynchers in the South.

In the past few months, Vice-President Barkley has been making speeches, trying to woo the Dixiecrats by telling them that Truman has been grossly misunderstood on civil

\* It is true that there have been certain differences and conflicts between Truman and the Dixiecrats in Congress on domestic legislation. These tactical differences arise from the fact that Truman finds it necessary to indulge in all sorts of liberal demagoguery and occasionally to make certain minor concessions to the people in order to corral the support of the Negro people and the working masses for the bipartisan war policy. Truman's liberal pretenses are also considered of cardinal importance for deceiving the peace-loving masses of other countries, and this, too, explains the tactical differences and conflicts that arise between Truman and the Dixiecrats.

rights and that the President doesn't really mean it. The press reports that Senator Connally made a deal with Southern Congressmen to knife the civil rights program in return for support to the Atlantic Pact. Truman's main Congressional lieutenants have been most active in sabotaging repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law. Actually, the agreement between Truman, the Dixiecrats, and the Republicans on the bipartisan war policy and the Red-baiting and anti-Soviet hysteria foredoomed any real effort in the 81st Congress by the Truman Administration to carry out its election promises on civil rights and the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law.

As is well known, Truman added insult to injury by vacationing in Florida while the Senate filibuster was successful and a cloture rule was adopted which was even worse than the previous one. The filibuster was successful, not only because of the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition, but because of Truman's sellout on his election promises and his surrender to the Dixiecrats. On numerous occasions Roosevelt, supported by labor and the people, was able to beat the Bourbon Democratic - Republican coalition. But Truman, in violation of his election promises, has strengthened the Dixiecrat gang. The root of this betrayal is the Truman-Dixiecrat-Republican agreement on the war program, the class program of monopoly capital. And no demagogy

or anti-Communist hysteria can for long cover up this fact. Responsibility for the double-cross of labor and the Negro people in the 81st Congress falls jointly on the Republicans, the Dixiecrats, and the Truman Administration, especially on the latter as the *national Administration*.

#### THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE DIXIECRATS IN THE SOUTH

At a time when the spread of white chauvinism in a thousand forms is manifest throughout the country, *and above all in the South*, as part of the imperialist war drive and the fascist offensive, the Communist Party must sharpen its struggle against white chauvinism, everywhere and also in its own ranks. *The uncompromising struggle against any and all white chauvinist tendencies in the ranks of the Party in every Southern district is an indispensable precondition for a successful struggle against the Dixiecrats and the Jim-Crow system. It is the acid test for the Party in the South where white chauvinism is the main weapon and system of rule of the Wall Street-Bourbon coalition.* Above all, this fight means an understanding of the great strength of the Negro liberation movement and confidence in the ability to win masses of Southern white workers in the course of their own experience, for the joint struggle for Negro rights. It means a recognition that the

fight for full and equal rights for the Negro people in the South and for the overcoming of the Dixiecrats' "white supremacy" poison in the minds of masses of white Southerners is *in the absolute and direct interests of the white workers, and is an indispensable prerequisite for any lasting success in the struggle in our country for peace, democracy and socialism.* The fight against white chauvinism, the concrete day-to-day struggle for Negro rights and for Negro-white unity becomes all the more urgent in this coming period, since the Dixiecrats are preparing the ground for using the growing mass unemployment as a means of inciting white workers against Negroes.

The Dixiecrats are on the march in the South because of the failure to develop the broadest united struggles of Negro and white workers. But the Dixiecrat movement is also an expression of the weakness and the elements of disintegration in the capitalist and semi-slave setup in the South. The beginnings of the economic crisis in the United States and its unfolding will have the sharpest manifestations in the cotton South.

There is no question that tremendous mass struggles are maturing in the industrial and plantation South. The steady rise of the Negro liberation movement is symptomatic of this perspective. The further development of the Negro liberation movement calls especially for strengthen-

ing the position and leadership of the class-conscious Negro worker who embodies the general interests of the working class and the special interests of the oppressed Negro nation.

The decisive importance of this lies in the fact that *the struggle for Negro liberation is the mainspring of social progress in the South.* The fact is that the Black Belt in particular and the South in general are torn by two basic contradictions, namely, that between the oppressed Negro nation and the Wall Street-Bourbon rulers, on the one hand, and that between the working class and the exploiters, on the other.

As the result of these two basic antagonisms, and with correct leadership, major struggles will undoubtedly unfold in the South in the next period as two phases of the common front against imperialism and as part of the general struggle in our country for peace, jobs, and progress. Our job is to give effective leadership in these developing struggles and to unite both phases of this common front of national and class struggles in the South in one liberation stream, *under the class leadership of the Negro workers in unity with the progressive white workers of the South.*

The Communist Party throughout the country and especially in the South must take the lead in the exposure of, and mass struggles against, the fascist Dixiecrats. The Communist call to struggle against the Dixie-

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crat menace is not to be conceived as limited to the advanced anti-fascists. On the contrary, it should serve as a clarion call to the broadest sections of labor and all honest democrats and anti-K.K.K. forces to join with the Negro people in a common front against the Dixiecrats — agents of Wall Street and enemies of the people of the South. This front can be developed in struggle for the most pressing needs of the white and Negro masses of the South. The program of struggle would include the fight against mass unemployment and the increasing attack on living standards; against speed-up and for wage increases; against the Southern differential in wages, relief, farm and social security, health, housing and schools. It would include the fight for progressive legislation, for Negro rights and against lynch terror, for peace and against the war drive.

To help prepare the ground for participation in these maturing struggles, the Party districts in the South have the immediate job of carrying out their practical plans of industrial concentration, of Party consolidation and Party building. Above all, it means the development of the united front of struggle on the economic and the other day-to-day needs of Negro and white workers and the oppressed Negro people, as given above. It means linking these movements with the struggle to free the Ingrams and the Martinsville Seven; with the struggle for the defense of the Com-

munist Party and its twelve national leaders.

The struggle against the Dixiecrats is an integral part of the struggle against the warmongers.

A crucial task that faces all peace-loving and anti-fascist forces in the struggle against the Dixiecrats is the building of the Progressive Party as a broad people's party in the South. In this connection, Left and progressive forces, while firmly maintaining the principle and practice of independent political action, will be faced with the necessity of utilizing the conflicts and contradictions within the state Democratic parties in the South, which are often expressed in the Democratic primaries. The Left and progressive forces will thus need to build the broadest united front on issues allying labor with the Negro people to defeat the Dixiecrat candidates and elect anti-Dixiecrats in the Democratic primaries. At the same time, the progressive forces, while centering their main fire against the Dixiecrats, will wage an effective struggle only if they also frankly expose and criticize the role of the pro-Truman candidates in the Democratic primaries. The situation demands, therefore, the preparation for winning the widest support for the Progressive Party in its day-to-day leadership of struggle and for its candidates in the general elections.

The Dixiecrat determination to drown the Negro liberation move-

ment in blood and to smash the labor movement in the South, directly menaces the labor and progressive movement of the whole country. *The lynch South is the pace-setter for advancing fascism in the United States.* There can be no successful struggle

for peace and democracy in our country unless there is an effective struggle *within the South and nationally* against the Jim-Crow system and the fascist Dixiecrat hatchet men of the Truman Administration and the bipartisan war crowd.

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“Fascism, the rule of the most reactionary, chauvinistic, terroristic sections of finance capital, is generated by the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. As the capitalist system sinks into greater and greater difficulties from the sharpening of all its inner conflicts, antagonisms, and contradictions, the ruling big bankers, industrialists, and landowners reach out for more violent means of struggle against the workers, against the colonial peoples, and against rival capitalist powers. Democracy is thrown overboard, the labor movement is suppressed, the bourgeoisie rules with open terrorism, and imperialist war is glorified into a holy national objective.”

William Z. Foster, *The Twilight of World Capitalism*, page 116.

# The I. L. W. U. Convention—A Victory For All Labor

by Roy Hudson

Since the Portland Convention of the C.I.O. the future of democracy in America and of peace in the world have been closely bound up with the following questions:

Would the reactionary bloc of Right-wing and Social-Democratic forces that dictated the pro-war program at the 1948 C.I.O. convention succeed in imposing their harmful policies on the rank and file of labor? Would the Left-progressive and Communist forces be able to unite their ranks, give effective leadership and rally support for the progressive program of the minority at the Convention—or, in the face of the all-out disruptive attack of the Murray-Reuther forces, would the Left-progressive forces split, capitulate, or lose the support of the rank and file?

The increased atmosphere of hysteria that has been promoted by Wall Street's intensified drive toward war and an American brand of fascism, as signalized by the conclusion of the North Atlantic Pact and the prosecution of the leadership of our Party, has emphasized the extent to which the fate of our country depends upon how these questions are answered.

In the light of this background, the recently-concluded Convention of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union is of decisive significance to the labor and progressive movement, not only on the West Coast, but throughout the land, because it answered these questions in a manner that helps strengthen the fight of labor and its allies against the imperialist offensive of Big Business.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF I.L.W.U. CONVENTION

The significance of this Convention and its lessons can be understood only in the light of the entire program adopted by it. But the overall program adopted and the struggle waged for it have a special and added significance because of the Convention action on the issue of autonomy. Every issue confronting the delegates also involved the threat and challenge to trade-union democracy and autonomy raised by the reactionary decisions of the Portland Convention of the C.I.O. Concretely, the question before the delegates was—would they reaffirm and exercise the right of the membership to de-

termine the policies of their union, or, would they surrender to the demand that the membership submit to policies dictated by the Right-wing, Social-Democratic bloc in the C.I.O. headed by Murray and Reuther? Unless rank and file membership controls the unions, there can be no guarantee that the unions will express the sentiments of the workers and effectively defend their interests. Therefore, the question of autonomy and trade-union democracy poses the fundamental issue of surrender to Wall Street and the class-collaboration program of the reactionary Social-Democrats or support for a militant program of struggle to defend the demands of the workers, the democratic interests of the American people, and the cause of world peace. Because this is so, and because the Convention squarely faced this issue, the central issue of struggle took place on the autonomy question and the Convention action on autonomy had a far-reaching effect on other issues.

Long before the Convention, the representatives of the dominant C.I.O. leadership and their supporters in the I.L.W.U. sought to establish a mass base to fight for their reactionary policies. At Portland, their attempt to secure the repudiation of the resolution of the International Executive Board of the I.L.W.U. on autonomy was overwhelmingly defeated. Maneuvers in San Pedro that were aimed at directly winning Local

13 to line up with the C.I.O. national leadership in regard to the autonomy of the Los Angeles C.I.O. Council were checked, but not entirely smashed. Finally, James Kearney, President of Local 10, the home local of Harry Bridges, International President of the I.L.W.U., succeeded in hoodwinking the membership into adopting a resolution that converted a simple vote of thanks for the cooperation of the C.I.O. in helping secure return of Army work, into a motion expressing 100% support for the entire program of the C.I.O. The majority of Local 10's delegation were supporters of the Kearney administration, and a number of them, including Kearney, are active members of the disruptive Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. Backed by this delegation and armed with a phoney mandate of support from this key local, Kearney and the representatives of Philip Murray hoped that they had a solid basis for splitting the Convention by appearing as the "loyal champions" of the C.I.O. program and defenders of the foreign policy of the Truman Administration and the C.I.O.

This strategy of Philip Murray and the Right-wing in the I.L.W.U. was met head-on by the progressive forces at the Convention. In his keynote speech, President Bridges placed the issue bluntly when he declared: "Don't associate the national leadership of this union with the Right wing. We are Left wing,



and we are 'proud of it." On the initiative of President Bridges and the other union officers, the Convention, in executive session, spent two full days discussing a resolution which declared: "The I.L.W.U. views the denial of autonomous rights, the arbitrary actions and undemocratic methods of National C.I.O., with considerable concern." The resolution also contained a 7-point program of action. In addition to reaffirming the autonomy of the I.L.W.U., this program registered support to the Farm Equipment Workers' Union, and asserted the right of delegates to C.I.O. councils and conventions to speak on any matter and to vote in accordance with the instructions of their membership. The resolution not only defended democratic rights, but also advanced a five-point program for democratizing the C.I.O. and called for regular financial reports, availability of the minutes of the C.I.O. Executive Board, and greater opportunity for the membership of affiliated unions to discuss issues before decisions are arrived at by the C.I.O.

In the two days of debate, the representatives of Philip Murray, headed by R. J. Thomas, and assisted by a handful of supporters led by Kearney, not only spoke at length, but used every possible trick to try to influence the convention. Notwithstanding the fact that the debate took place in executive session, extra-convention activities were resorted to, such as the release to the press of a

telegram from Murray before it was presented to the Convention. At the conclusion of the debate, the resolution was adopted by a roll-call vote of 632½ to 11½. Kearney was the *only* longshore delegate who voted against the resolution—meaning that the aim of the Right wing to split the longshore delegation had completely failed.

But this decisive action of the Convention was not the climax of the struggle on this issue. The showdown came the same evening at an overflow membership meeting of Local 10. While the Convention was in progress, Kearney had distributed a signed leaflet appealing to the rank and file to attend the meeting because there was a "Communist plot" to take over the meeting and repudiate the former action giving 100 percent support to the reactionary program of the C.I.O. national leaders. At this meeting, the membership heard a report of the Convention's action on autonomy, and was witness to the efforts of R. J. Thomas to "explain" the position of the C.I.O. leaders. They then adopted a motion, made by Bridges, rescinding the phoney motion previously adopted.

Thus, the position of Philip Murray, as expressed by himself and by R. J. Thomas, was decisively rejected, and their main spokesman, Kearney, was repudiated by the rest of his own delegation and by the membership of his local. In doing so, the Convention and the membership of Local

10 refused to be intimidated by the demand of R. J. Thomas that they "comply or get out of the C.I.O." and declared that they were determined to continue loyally to fight for the fundamental program on which the C.I.O. had been established.

#### CONVENTION ADOPTS PROGRESSIVE, FIGHTING PROGRAM

The Convention did not merely reject all and any attempts aimed at restricting the rights of the International and its membership. The delegates proceeded to exercise these rights by adopting policies on the key issues facing the labor movement.

The officers' report emphasized the increased profits of the employers, the meaning of the growth of unemployment, the disastrous effects of the Marshall Plan, and further, specifically analyzing various class-collaboration schemes sponsored by Reuther and other Social-Democratic agents of the bosses, the report called for the rejection of these schemes and for the union to continue to base itself on its organized strength and a policy of struggle as the only means of advancing the fight for higher wages, improved conditions, and the protection of the workers' interests. On the basis of this approach, the Convention adopted an economic program outlined in three main reso-

lutions, the central features of which are:

##### (a) Wage policy.

The position of the I.L.W.U. on wages is simple. We will fight for wage increases to the limit of our bargaining power. . . . The need for wage increases is greater now than ever. Profits have risen higher than ever in history, so high that corporations have devised all sorts of means of demonstrating that profits are not really so high after all. . . . It is the firm conviction of this Convention that we should drive ahead in all segments of our jurisdiction to secure the wage increases to which we are entitled; and

##### (b) Shorter work-week.

Growing unemployment must be met by a demand for a shorter work-week with no cut in earnings. . . . No one should misunderstand this demand. It is not a demand to share unemployment by spreading what work there is among more workers at the same old hourly wages. That is a position labor has been forced to take in times of depression when in an unorganized or weakened position. Our demand is for an increase in the hourly rate sufficient to maintain take-home pay. That's a tough demand. It costs the employers money. It can't be won without a struggle. But now is the time to push such a demand. Whatever the employers' propaganda, they are well "heeled." They have never been better off. They have had four war years of super-profits and three postwar years of super-super-profits. They have built new and more efficient plants; they have acquired the

latest in labor-saving equipment. And they are preparing to maintain prices and profits as output and employment go down.

(c) The ten planks in the resolution on unemployment contain the elements of a basic program aimed at establishing the responsibility of the Government and of industry for meeting the needs of the unemployed.

These decisions are of more than usual importance, because they outline a program of struggle for higher standards and new goals in a period of growing unemployment and because they contain the elements of a general program to meet the problems of the unemployed.

The determination of the Convention to rely upon the organized power of the workers to fight for such a program was emphasized in the action of the Convention on the Taft-Hartley Law. The Convention declared: "Every trick in the Taft-Hartley Book was played on the I.L.W.U. . . . But we won our major disputes. And we won because we refused to get entangled in the compliance and part-compliance of Taft-Hartley that some unions tried." The resolution pledges to continue these non-compliance policies and to strengthen further the fight to repeal the Taft-Hartley Law and to defeat the action of the N.L.R.B. aimed at outlawing the hiring-hall provision in the contract won in the 98-day maritime strike.

The Convention resolution on discrimination can provide the basis for a stronger fight by the union against discrimination on the job and in support of the general demands of the Negro people and other oppressed minority groups. Two of the resolves of this resolution are:

We declare that the betrayal of the Civil Rights program by the coalition of reactionary Democrats and Republicans in the Senate and the surrender of the Truman Administration to these forces by the filibuster deal, will not go unchallenged. Our union stands pledged to join with other defenders of democracy and with representatives of the Negro people and other minority groups in launching a renewed fight for the purpose of upholding the rights guaranteed the people by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States.

The fight against discrimination is first of all the fight to organize the unorganized and the struggle against discrimination in employment. With unemployment growing, we must see to it that the employers do not use this situation for the purpose of abolishing job opportunities for minority groups. If we are to protect the unity of our ranks and the strength of our organization, we must see to it that minority groups are not compelled to suffer more than their share of unemployment and, when unemployed, shall not be discriminated against in securing unemployment benefits and in seeking re-employment.

By unanimous vote, the Convention agreed to listen to Geraldine

Smith, one of the Communist leaders jailed for "contempt" in Los Angeles, and in its resolution on Civil Liberties, the union declared:

Today we face a new wave of hysteria, aimed at all those whom the reactionaries call "Communists." Their activities and even their thoughts are labeled "subversive" and every effort, legal and illegal, is used to deport them if they are aliens, to jail them if they cannot be deported, to drive them out of their jobs, and generally to harass them to such an extent that all their energy goes into self-protection. Such are the contempt cases brought by the Thomas-Nixon Committee and the Canwell Committee, such are the contempt charges in Denver and Los Angeles, and such is the prosecution in New York against the leaders of the Communist Party.

The I.L.W.U. has a stake in all these cases. It recognizes that they, like the earlier attacks on Civil liberties, are flank attacks against the labor movement. We must fight militantly to protect the civil liberties of the Communists because the destruction of the civil rights for any group threatens their destruction for all groups. In the same way, we fight and protest against lynchings and other attacks on the Negro people wherever they occur, because such attacks necessarily destroy the solidarity and sap the strength of our union which is based upon non-discrimination and the unity of all minorities.

This resolution was adopted unanimously. The fact that the extreme Right wing did not dare openly

to speak and vote against it is an indication of the extent to which the overwhelming majority of the workers feel that the attacks on the Communists are attacks on the fundamental rights of all Americans.

The decisions of the Convention on the above resolutions, as well as on a number of other important questions, were unanimous. In line with its general strategy, the Right wing sought to undermine the united action of the Convention on wages, civil rights, and discrimination, by concentrating on challenging the position of the union's leadership on peace, international labor unity, and political action. The Right wing was overwhelmingly defeated on these issues also, although the victory was not as decisive as on the question of autonomy.

#### THE W.F.T.U. ISSUE AND THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

The two-session debate on the action of the C.I.O. in withdrawing from the World Federation of Trade Unions was one of the high points of the Convention. By a roll-call vote of 564 $\frac{1}{2}$  to 59 $\frac{7}{8}$ , the Convention resolved:

(1) To notify the leadership of the national C.I.O. and the W.F.T.U. that no individual or organization is authorized to pull the I.L.W.U. out of the W.F.T.U.;

(2) To make the proposal to the national leadership of the C.I.O. that

the question of withdrawal from the W.F.T.U. be submitted to a referendum vote of all unions affiliated to the C.I.O. before any final action is taken on this matter, and if this is turned down, that the I.L.W.U. officers are authorized and instructed to conduct a referendum among the I.L.W.U. membership on the question; and

(3) To call upon the W.F.T.U. to establish as soon as possible an Inter-Marine Transport Department of the W.F.T.U. and to initiate a world conference of maritime unions as a part of the program of setting up such a department.

The discussion on the foreign policy resolution was extremely limited, and the openly pro-war speech of James Kearney was not replied to as effectively as were the speeches of the Right wing on the W.F.T.U. issue. Undoubtedly, this is one of the reasons why the Right wing succeeded in mobilizing a larger vote than they did on the issues of autonomy and W.F.T.U. membership. Notwithstanding this weakness, the Convention by a roll-call vote of 513 $\frac{1}{23}$  to 115 $\frac{2}{23}$ , overwhelmingly adopted a resolution, the heart of which is contained in the following:

Today the foreign policy of our Government and those with which it is allied in the Atlantic alliance is unified only on the basis of being against our former ally, the U.S.S.R. . . .

The I.L.W.U. therefore condemns any policy which imposes barriers between peoples and interferes with the peaceful settlement of disputes. We have learned from our own trade-union experience that differences have never been settled unless the parties sat down and negotiated. We fear that in the Atlantic Pact a departure from the United Nations has been made that can only make negotiations more difficult and practically impossible. . . .

We oppose a policy that maintains that peace can come only through armaments alliances and plans of war.

Our own delegation of four rank and filers that recently returned from an extended survey of Europe reported that the people they talked to everywhere wanted one thing above everything else—PEACE. We join this demand.

We urge that the State Department and the Congress immediately review our entire foreign policy for the purpose of making it once again the beacon to all peoples who, like the American people, are searching relentlessly to find the common grounds for peaceful discussions and negotiations.

On political action, the Convention refused to go along with the reactionary decisions of the Portland Convention of the C.I.O. abandoning the traditional policy of independent, non-partisan political action by the adoption of a resolution committing the C.I.O. to "support of the progressive forces in the two major parties" and rejecting "any and all proposals for a third party." Instead, the I.L.W.U. reaffirmed and pledged

to continue a policy of independent political action, defined as follows:

The I.L.W.U. is committed to no one political party, Democratic, Republican, Third, minority or Independent. It reserves the right to endorse or oppose in whole or in part the program and platforms of these parties, and to support or oppose candidates of all such parties. The I.L.W.U. is and will continue to be, in other words, strictly non-partisan.

The International Union shall only make recommendations to locals on political matters and candidates. All locals shall have full autonomy with respect to political issues and candidates.

We shall insist that those elected in the 1948 election campaign live up to their campaign pledges and promises.

After outlining the legislative program of the union, the resolution then declares that the union will join forces with all others who will help advance the fight and declares that "the International Union is to maintain its own legislative and political action apparatus."

Undoubtedly, this resolution provides a starting point enabling the members of the union effectively to defend their interests by joining with all other progressives in building a people's coalition to fight against Wall Street's imperialist program championed by the Republican and Democratic parties. However, the resolution is limited, as it does not hold Truman and the Democratic Party directly responsible for their

failure to honor the so-called Fair Deal program the people voted for in the election. The resolution is silent on the fact that the existence of the Progressive Party reinforces the fight of all independent forces to achieve a people's anti-fascist coalition because it smashes the monopoly of the two parties of Wall Street and consistently champions the progressive foreign and domestic policies of Roosevelt.

It would be a mistake to conclude from the serious limitations of this position that those forces which performed such an outstanding job of helping to further the Wallace campaign and to establish the Progressive Party have weakened in their support for a people's program and in their willingness to fight for such a program. However, these weaknesses do show that even at this late date many Communist and Left-progressive forces are still on the defensive because they do not fully understand the meaning of the 1948 election campaign and tend to overestimate greatly the illusions of the workers in Truman and his demagogic promises and because they fail to see the tremendous possibilities for the supporters of the Progressive Party and of independent political action to enter into an effective united front with the workers who voted for Truman for the purpose of winning the program millions voted for in the elections.

LESSONS OF THE  
I.L.W.U. CONVENTION

To what extent are the decisions and actions of this Convention to be considered representative of the sentiments and understanding of the workers? This question can be answered in the light of the fact that this was no cut-and-dried convention. Conclusions were arrived at only after lengthy and serious debate and struggle which often resulted in the modification of resolutions that had been submitted. Some of the most important delegations, especially from longshore, were under the influence of conservative trade unionists. Consequently, the will, sentiments, and understanding of the overwhelming majority of the delegates were fairly accurately reflected in the statements of policy adopted. All these decisions expressed a mood and will to struggle, and most of them reflected a relatively high degree of understanding, but this was not expressed uniformly on all issues. Certainly, the debate on foreign policy and peace shows that many important questions are still not fully clear in the minds of many honest workers and their representatives. And the decisions of the Convention on political action perhaps do not measure up to the political maturity of the rank and file. But above everything else, the actions of the delegates to the Convention undoubtedly express the fact that the mass of

workers are not moving to the Right. On the contrary, the Convention shows that where the leadership is effective and loyal to the interests of the workers, the workers will rally to reject the class-collaboration program of Murray and Reuther. And at this Convention, the leadership of the union again proved itself worthy of the membership, and the officers, headed by President Bridges, basing themselves on the rank and file, came forward with a fighting program that met with a magnificent response from the delegates.

These were important factors that made it possible to unite the overwhelming majority of delegates in support of progressive policies and decisively to defeat the Right-wing forces led by Kearney and directly assisted by the C.I.O. top leadership. It is significant to note, too, that the struggle on issues led to the exposure of the disruptive role of the A.C.T.U. This was expressed in the speeches of three delegates who spoke as Roman Catholics in denouncing the role of the A.C.T.U. as a reactionary outside force attempting to interfere in the affairs of the union and influence the course of the Convention.

But there are no grounds for minimizing the potential danger to the union and the whole labor movement arising from the disruptive activities of the Murray forces in the C.I.O. and their agents such as Kearney in the I.L.W.U. The Convention

showed that these forces were organized, knew what they wanted, had leadership, fought ruthlessly, and determinedly and consistently tried to exploit every weakness. They were decisively defeated, but not destroyed, and they can be relied upon to make an even greater effort after the Convention. And if the fight against these reactionary forces is further to be strengthened, then the progressive forces can well afford to ask: Why is it that after suffering complete isolation and defeat on the autonomy issue, the Kearney-Murray forces did not remain isolated but were unable to influence a limited number of delegates on other major questions? How are the vacillations of some conservatives, middle-of-the-roaders, and opportunists, which were exploited to some degree by Kearney, to be explained?

The answer is that the autonomy issue is much more clear to the average trade unionist. But the facts also show that not enough effort has been made to clarify those problems that everyone knows are not fully understood. This was expressed by the very few resolutions that came from the local unions on key questions, and was further expressed in the weaknesses revealed in the ideological and political struggle conducted by most Left-progressive forces in defense of the Convention resolutions on peace, political action, and even world trade-union unity. The fact that the rank and file has

not everywhere been fully won on such issues was expressed in the fact that some delegates, while generally supporting the progressive policies of the union's leadership, nevertheless wavered and vacillated on some issues. There can be no doubt that if these delegates felt the same unity among the rank and file as prevails on the autonomy issue, that the Kearney forces undoubtedly could not have won a divided vote on some issues. And the Convention shows that a struggle on these issues cannot be evaded, because the Right-wing forces will force a fight on these issues and will make headway if the rank and file are not won over by the progressives.

Thus, the generally correct program, as well as the splendid tactics pursued by the Left-progressive forces on most issues, made it impossible for the Kearney forces seriously or effectively to exploit shortcomings exhibited by some Left-progressives, who were especially weak in the longshore delegations. That danger was averted but not removed by the Convention. The victory can be inhibited by some Left-progressives, forces, learning from their weakness, intensify their work to unite the entire union, and especially the overwhelming majority of the longshoremen, solidly behind the main decisions of the Convention and to sustain those officers who stood solidly for these decisions at the Convention.



### EFFECT OF I.L.W.U. DECISIONS ON LABOR AND PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

How do the decisions of the Convention affect the labor and progressive movement as a whole?

The importance of the Convention lies in the fact that it helped to establish and clarify the fundamental issues before labor and the people and adopted a program on these issues that is of decisive significance. The militant program of struggle, as expressed in the stand of the Convention on wage policy, the shorter work-week with no reduction in pay, its unemployment program, the progressive positions adopted on autonomy and trade-union democracy, world trade-union unity, peace, and to a lesser degree on political action, all go a long way in arming, not only the membership of the I.L.W.U. but the entire labor movement, with a fighting program. Thus, the failure of the C.I.O. Convention to advance such a program can, to a great degree, be overcome by the actions of this Convention in developing a fighting trade-union program that has the backing of one of the most important unions in the C.I.O. This fact can mark a new stage in the fight to unite labor to resist Wall Street's imperialist program. Since the C.I.O. Portland Convention, the Left-progressive forces in a number of unions have been fairly effec-

tively defending their policies and positions in the face of the reactionary attacks of the Murray-Reuther forces. These reactionary forces have now been weakened and temporarily placed on the defense by the defeat they suffered at the I.L.W.U. Convention. To a certain degree, the initiative now lies in the hands of those forces fighting for a program of progressive unionism and militant struggle and they are now in a position to reach broader masses with this program and rally them to fight for it. If this initiative is effectively exercised, it can have a far-reaching effect throughout the ranks of labor.

For these reasons, consolidating and extending the victories of the longshore convention is a responsibility for everyone concerned with the fate of the labor movement in America and everything that depends on it. This requires first of all, of course, the rallying of the longshoremens and warehouse workers solidly to support the progressive decisions of their Convention and the officers that militantly and loyally championed these policies.

The questions of autonomy, of trade-union democracy, are questions of fundamental importance to the entire C.I.O. and the struggle for the program advanced by the Convention is a struggle to return the C.I.O. to its original policy, to restore its unity and fighting capacity. Therefore, every union has a responsibility to uphold these fundamental

trade-union principles. The action of the I.L.W.U. Convention on these issues gives a lead to all labor and makes it possible for every union to raise its voice on behalf of a united C.I.O. based upon respect for the democratic rights of its affiliated organizations and on rank-and-file control. A concerted action throughout the labor movement on these issues is now possible, and if developed, can bring about an upsurge in the ranks of labor even greater than that which emerged with the birth of the C.I.O.

#### ROLE OF THE COMMUNISTS

The victories scored by this Convention are victories for progressive unionism, for all those who stand for rank-and-file control, militant policies, and a united and progressive leadership responsible to the workers. The program adopted is not a Communist program, but a fighting program that can unite all workers regardless of their political affiliation. The Communists are proud of the fact that they did their share, along with other progressives, in helping develop the fight to unite the workers behind these policies. They will continue to join with all other progressives in supporting and further developing this fighting program.

To the extent that the Communist longshoremen and warehouse workers helped provide clarity, unity, and leadership, they were able to do so

because some headway was made in overcoming confusion and incorrect tendencies that have been expressed by some Communists on a number of issues. Collective discussion helped establish a better understanding of a correct approach to such issues as an overall program to combat unemployment, wage policy, etc.

The public discussion conducted by the Communists around these issues led to clarity and unity, and thereby rudely smashed the hopes of the enemies of labor and of progressive unionism that the Communists would be unable to be a source of unity and clarity to the mass of workers. However, these experiences also demonstrate and emphasize that the Communists can be a source of clarity and unity, and can continue to meet their responsibilities to the workers in the industry only to the degree that the Communist Party fulfills its role and that all Communists are armed with a better understanding of Marxism-Leninism and fight for a better understanding of the policies of the Party on all issues.

This requires that the entire Party, and not only top committees, be more fully involved in developing the Party's policies and in fighting for their application. These experiences emphasize the need, on all levels, firmly to guard against and vigorously fight to overcome the Right opportunist tendencies that have expressed themselves from time

to time in the carrying out of the Party program. Recent experiences also emphasize the need to guard against and overcome Left sectarianism, which hampers the struggle against Right opportunism and leads to isolation from the masses. The struggle on these two fronts requires concrete discussion and analysis at all times, and the rejection of any tendencies to solve specific problems on the basis of advancing unwarranted political characterizations and labels.

Inspired with a greater sense of responsibility to the workers and with an ever greater confidence in the rank and file and in our ability to meet our responsibilities, as a result of the outstanding contribution of the Communist longshoremen and warehousemen, the entire Party must undertake to improve and strengthen its work, and above all to strengthen the Party's base, especially in long-

shore, and bring about a drastic improvement in the work and leadership of the branches in every port. This requires the more effective carrying through of a concentration policy that makes this task a major task for the entire Party and its leadership in every State organization on the West Coast, without exception.

On this basis, but only on this basis, we can more effectively bring our socialist program to the masses in this industry, promote their class understanding, and guarantee that the Communists will do their share to help insure that the longshoremen and warehouse workers, on the basis of the progressive policies of their Convention, will advance the fight for maritime unity and stand in the forefront of the struggle of the American working class and its allies to defeat Wall Street's program of fascism and imperialist war.

# Cosmopolitanism and Internationalism\*

by A. Leontyev

THE EXPOSURE of bourgeois cosmopolitanism as a poisoned weapon of imperialist reaction evokes the fury of the American bidders for world supremacy. The vicious attacks of the Voice of America confirm that the blows at the pernicious contagion of cosmopolitanism are hitting the mark. But the directors of American propaganda are evidently beginning to realize that open defense of cosmopolitanism by its actual inspirers may only contribute to its further exposure, by showing whom it really serves. Reserves are therefore being brought into action in the shape of the notorious "third force"—the European Right-wing Socialists.

The bait was set rolling by the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung*. On March 24, this organ of the Austrian Socialist Party came out in defense of cosmopolitanism with an article which claims to give a theoretical (save the mark!) exposition of the question. The article is designed to arm the preachers of cosmopolitanism with a sort of ideological weapon. On examination, it proves to be a very feeble and rusty weapon; but nothing better is to be found in the arsenal of the

"third force" and its American patrons.

It is not for nothing that the role of advocate of cosmopolitanism has been assumed by the organ of the progeny of Austro-Marxism. Forty years ago the word "Austro-Marxism" had already become synonymous with subtle deceit of the working class. The proponents of this variety of opportunism, bred under the conditions of the Hapsburg monarchy, beat all records of hypocrisy in betraying the interests of the proletariat and cringing before the bourgeoisie, while at the same time swearing fidelity to Marxism and socialist ideals.

Today the top leaders of the Austrian Socialist Party—as was recently corroborated by Erwin Scharf, former member of the party executive, in his book, *I Cannot Remain Silent*—represent nothing but a handful of individuals who have sold themselves body and soul to British and American imperialism. The realities forced Scharf to the conclusion that "the line of the Right-wing leaders of the Austrian Socialist Party is worked out in the American State Department." These pseudo-socialist politicians earn their dollars and

\* Reprinted from *New Times*, Moscow, April 6, 1949 (No. 15), slightly abridged.

pounds sterling by retailing wretched and tedious untruths which are merely a translation from the American. Now and again the old kitchen of Austro-Marxism produces a spicy dish, of which the article in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in defense of cosmopolitanism may serve as an example.

"What is a cosmopolitan?" the paper asks, and gives the following answer:

Literally, he is a man who belongs to the universe, to the whole world, that is, a citizen of the world, whose thoughts and sentiments are directed to all the peoples of the earth; in other words, a man who aspires to internationalism.

Having given this definition of cosmopolitanism, the author of the article innocently rolls up his eyes and asks:

"Is this a crime? Is this a term of abuse?"

The swindle is obvious. The Vienna paper endeavors to pass off cosmopolitanism as internationalism, to place the sign of equality between the two. Actually, cosmopolitanism and internationalism, far from being one and the same thing, represent diametrically antithetical concepts.

Genuine internationalism is the ideology of the working class. There is no other internationalism, and never has been. Proletarian internationalism is irreconcilably hostile to bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism—to the ideology of national and racial inequality and oppression. At the same time, proletarian interna-

tionalism is indissoluble from profound love of one's country and selfless struggle for its liberty and against internal reactionary oppressors and foreign enslavers, from love for the progressive, democratic traditions of its history, culture and art.

The horny-handed sons of toil, the workers by hand and brain, the creators of all material and spiritual values, cannot but love their native land, their people and its culture. Even when they are crushed by the power of the parasitic exploiters, the inextinguishable consciousness lives within them that they are the real masters of life, that the future belongs to them. In our time, when the age of capitalism is coming to an end, this consciousness is awakening with new force in the hearts of the peoples.

In the Soviet Union, where the system of exploitation and oppression has been destroyed to its foundations, and the majestic edifice of a free socialist life has been erected, love of country has become a powerful driving force of social development, a source of the supreme victories of Socialism both in time of war and in time of peaceful constructive labor. Soviet patriotism engenders heroism on an unprecedented mass scale, inspiring Soviet people to feats of military and labor valor which arouse the admiration of all progressive men and women.

The strength of Soviet patriotism,

[said J. V. Stalin in his speech on the occasion of the 27th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution] lies in the fact that it is based, not on racial or nationalistic prejudices, but on the profound devotion and loyalty of the people to their Soviet Motherland, on the fraternal co-operation of the working people of all the nations inhabiting our country.

Soviet patriotism, as Comrade Stalin pointed out, harmoniously combines the national traditions of the peoples and the common vital interests of all the working people of our country. Soviet culture tenderly cherishes and multiplies the precious heritage of the progressive culture of the Russian people, as the leading nation of the Soviet Union. Far from dividing, Soviet patriotism unites all the peoples of our country into a single fraternal family, cemented by bonds of indestructible friendship. The noble sentiment of Soviet patriotism inspired the Soviet people to engage in a selfless struggle to put an end to the age-old economic backwardness of our country in the briefest historical period, and to safeguard the sovereignty and independence of our Motherland. This sentiment armed the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War against the German fascist invaders, when the Soviet Army not only upheld the liberty and independence of our country, but performed a great liberating mission, delivering the nations of Europe from fascist slavery and saving Euro-

pean civilization from the Nazi barbarians. Soviet patriotism, the sentiment of legitimate pride in the victories of Socialism in the political, economic and cultural spheres, is the great force which inspires Soviet folk to fresh feats in the present period, when our country is in process of building a fully Communist society.

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The triumph of Socialism in the Soviet Union, the decisive role played by our mighty Soviet State in the Second World War, and its enhanced weight in international affairs all cleared the way for the liberation of a number of nations of Central and Southeastern Europe from imperialist bondage, from the yoke of the venal landlord and capitalist cliques. With the disinterested support of the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies are laying the foundations of Socialism and consolidating their political and economic independence. In these countries, a new feeling is growing and maturing among the liberated peoples, the feeling that they are the responsible masters of their land; the struggle against the corrupting influences of bourgeois culture lends strength to the life-giving sentiment of patriotism in which love of country and of its liberty and independence is combined with deep gratitude to the Soviet Union—the bulwark of peace and international security, the leading force in the anti-imperialist

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camp that stands guardian over the national sovereignty of peoples.

The noble desire to defend their national independence and sovereignty from the filthy claws of the transatlantic claimants to world hegemony is also growing in the minds of the peoples of the Marshallized countries of Western Europe. The betrayal of the national interests by the cowardly and despicable bourgeoisie and its Right-wing Socialist lackeys is arousing growing protest and disgust in the hearts of the common people. In this protest, an understandable contempt for the bankrupt ruling classes is combined with the firm conviction that the morrow belongs to the working masses, that the time is not far off when the peoples will be able to rid themselves of the filthy parasitic exploiters and take their destinies into their own hands. Confidence in their strength, confidence in coming victory, inspires the progressive democrats of the West-European countries to fight against the cringing of the bourgeoisie before American imperialism, against the corrupting influence of the Americanized ideology of the ruling classes, of which cosmopolitanism—that treacherous artifice of the perishing classes—is an integral part.

Proletarian internationalism implies the international solidarity of the working people in their great emancipatory struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois rule, for Socialism. Today the world is divided into

two camps—the anti-democratic camp of imperialism, headed by the United States, and the anti-imperialist camp of Socialism and democracy, headed by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. The camp of imperialist reaction spells for the people oppression, economic and political enslavement, economic crises and mass unemployment and new annihilating wars. The camp of Socialism and democracy is conducting a consistent and resolute struggle for enduring peace and the security of all nations, big and small, for their liberty and independence, for the preservation and consolidation of their national sovereignty. This being so, proletarian internationalism is indissolubly bound up with support for the camp of Socialism and democracy, with the struggle against the camp of imperialism and reaction.

These simple truths, which are obvious to millions of people, the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* is trying by fraudulent means to distort and pervert.

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Opposed to proletarian internationalism stands bourgeois nationalism, the reverse side of which is cosmopolitanism, which in these days has assumed a particularly blatant form. V. I. Lenin wrote:

Bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism are two irreconcilably hostile slogans which correspond to the two great class camps of the entire capitalist world, and which reflect

two policies (more: two world outlooks). . . .

The world outlook and policy of the bourgeoisie are founded on nationalism and chauvinism, because the power of the bourgeoisie is inconceivable without social and national inequality, without social and national oppression. Nationalism and chauvinism serve, in fact, as the ideological substantiation and justification of inequality and oppression. Bourgeois nationalism implies denial of the legitimate rights of other nations, contempt for their culture, the cannibalistic philosophy of racism. It fosters dissension and strife among nations. Bourgeois nationalism has nothing in common with the real national interests of peoples; on the contrary, it represents a mortal danger to these interests. History knows plenty of instances when the aggressive chauvinism of the bourgeoisie brought nations to the brink of ruin, doomed them to disaster. The recent history of Hitler rule in Germany is the freshest example, but by no means the only one.

The Second World War and the postwar period have revealed that in every country it is only the toiling masses, headed by the working class, that are the true patriots. In the present era of monopoly capitalism the exploiting classes are going to ever greater lengths of betrayal of the national interests of their countries. They are governed in their anti-national policy by narrow egotistical

and mercenary class interests. V. I. Lenin wrote:

. . . higher than the interests of the fatherland, people and anything else, capital sets the protection of its alliance of the capitalists of all countries against the working people.

Such is the foundation of bourgeois cosmopolitanism. It and bourgeois nationalism are but the two persons of one and the same god. This god is the golden calf, the religion of which not only recognizes no national boundaries; it does not recognize national interests, either. This religion is connected with the corrupt robber morality embodied in the bourgeois maxims: money does not smell; my fatherland is wherever I am well off. Bourgeois cosmopolitanism is founded in the world ties of capital—an impersonal force which holds nations in slavery and oppression. Present-day cosmopolitanism reflects the tendency inherent in imperialism to strive for world hegemony, to seek the forcible establishment of the domination of a group of the strongest capitalist powers or of one power over the world. The carrier of this tendency today is Anglo-American imperialism. Hence present-day cosmopolitanism is the reverse side of the ideology of race superiority cultivated by the Anglo-Saxon imperialists.

The indissoluble connection between chauvinism and cosmopolitanism stands out very saliently in

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the activity of the Right-wing Socialists of various countries—the friends and fellow-thinkers of those who write for the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung*. The Right-wing pseudo-socialists fawn on American imperialism, and at the same time pursue and uphold a policy of the most savage oppression of other countries and peoples.

Bevin, for example, is lavish in his advice to the peoples of Western Europe to give up their national sovereignty in favor of aggressive bloc operating under the flag of "European unity." At the same time, Bevin is a most jealous guardian of British imperialism, in the interests of which he throttles the national-liberation movement in Malaya, Burma, India, the Middle East and the African colonies. Bevin, together with Churchill, organized the criminal intervention against the Greek people, who ever since have been shedding their blood in the struggle against the Anglo-American enslavers and their royalist-fascist placemen.

Leon Blum combines zealous propaganda of cosmopolitan betrayal of the national interests of France and slavish worship of Americanism in all its forms with defense of the colonial war of the French colonizers against the people of Viet-Nam. Exactly similar is the position of the Belgian Right-wing Socialist Spaak—one of the pillars of notorious "European unity," and at the same time an ardent defender of the ag-

gressive campaigns of the colonial powers in Indonesia, Indo-China and elsewhere. Kurt Schumacher, leader of the German Right-wing Socialists, crawls on his belly before Anglo-American imperialism, and at the same time fans revanchist passions, not yielding to Goebbels himself in rabid propaganda of racism and chauvinism.

At the second session of the U.N. General Assembly, A. Y. Vishinsky, head of the Soviet delegation, speaking in the Political Committee on October 6, 1947, fully exposed the treacherous preaching of renunciation of national sovereignty with which Spaak, McNeil and other representatives of the Anglo-American bloc came forward at the session. Noting that Spaak had referred to the "idea of state sovereignty" as a "political veil," an "obsolete idea," and an "old reactionary idea," A. Y. Vishinsky showed that Spaak was only reiterating the doctrines of the reactionary political theorists who at the time of the League of Nations had preached the doctrine of a "super-state." At the same time A. Y. Vishinsky disclosed the real motives which prompt this preaching:

The development of capitalism, and especially the entry of capitalism into its highest stage—the era of imperialism—brings with it an urge for domination and annexation. But this calls forth growing resistance among the peoples, whose national consciousness is awakening. This resistance can easily pass

into dangerous actions and other measures against foreign capital. . . .

. . . It is from this that the desire springs to put an end to the state sovereignty, the national independence of peoples. For the state sovereignty of other countries is an obstacle to the realization of expansionist plans.

State sovereignty [declared A. Y. Vishinsky] is the banner of independence and struggle of many, many countries against the voracious appetites of the capitalist monopolies.

It is the interests of these monopolies which inspire the cosmopolitan propaganda of Spaak, McNeil, Bevin, Attlee, Blum, Schumacher and the other Right-wing Socialists who call for the abandonment of "all attributes of national sovereignty."

The British and American imperialists make use of the traitorous cosmopolitan ideology, for it justifies any and every national betrayal, any and every act of espionage and sabotage, any and every anti-national activity. False chatter of a universal culture and science, of a "world government," of a United States of Europe and even of the whole world, serves in practice as a screen for the dissemination and propagation of slavish crawling before the venal science of the dollar and decaying bourgeois culture, belief in the charlatan myths about the vaunted "American way of life," receptivity to any black-

mail of piratical Wall Street diplomacy.

Cosmopolitan worship and adulation of things foreign is rooted in contempt for one's own people, disbelief in its strength, fear of its awakening—all those traits which are characteristic of the exploiting classes who, remote and alien to the people, and having outlived their day, are convulsively clinging to their power.

In the Marshallized countries of Western Europe, cosmopolitanism is a smoke screen, under cover of which the ruling cliques barter the remnants of national sovereignty wholesale and retail, place military bases at the disposal of the American aggressors and strangle domestic industry at their behest. In the People's Democracies, the forces of reaction, vanquished but still far from destroyed, resort to the catchwords of cosmopolitanism to justify their adoption of the methods of espionage and sabotage in their struggle against the rule of the people and their enlistment in the American and British secret services.

Bourgeois cosmopolitanism is today performing a very important function in behalf of international reaction. It serves as a means of glossing over the paramount fact of the present era—that there are two systems, two camps in the world: the camp of Socialism and democracy, and the camp of imperialist reaction. Cosmopolitanism is designed to conceal the social, class antagon-

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isms between these two camps, to undermine faith in the superiority of Socialism over capitalism, and thus to demoralize the least stable elements. It is precisely for this reason that the Soviet people resolutely expose and condemn the wretched handful of renegades, of kithless cosmopolitans, who are endeavoring to halt the mighty onmarch of Soviet culture. . . .

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Having undertaken the role of defender of cosmopolitanism, the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* declares:

Ever since mankind experienced the elemental urge to find the right path, that is, ever since times of hoary antiquity, there has always been a contest between two powerful forces: the interests of the individual, of the group, of the secluded tribe or nation, and the interests of the human community, which stands above individual, nation or state.

Such, if you please, is the philosophy of history of the menials of American reaction who pose under the guise of Socialists, and even—paper will stand anything!—of "Marxists." The crude forgery can easily be detected even with the naked eye: the class struggle, which is the motive force of history, is thrown overboard and is replaced by the charlatan and arch-reactionary idea of a struggle between the individual and the nation, on the one hand, and a certain mystic force

of a human community standing above the nation, on the other. . . .

Such is the utterly false scheme of world history presented to its readers by the Vienna paper. It cannot be said that working in the service of American imperialism has helped the intellectual development of the Austro-Marxists—the wretched successors of Hilferding and Bauer. The onetime subtlety of the Austro-Marxists in the art of deceit has given place to downright ignorance, no whit superior to that of the obscurantists of the inquisitorial Un-American Activities Committee. . . .

It is not difficult to see that from its crude sketch of world history the Vienna paper has obliterated every progressive movement: the struggle of the plebians and slaves in the antique world, the peasant wars of the Middle Ages, and, finally, the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries. Who does not know that the fighters of the French Revolution called themselves patriots? Who does not know that the Paris Commune arose on the ruins of the Second Empire, which, in the well-known phrase of Marx, "had been the jubilee of cosmopolitan blacklegism"? But the ignoramuses and falsifiers of history of the Vienna pseudo-socialist paper care nothing about these facts. In an organ which calls itself the "Workers' Newspaper" *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, they write:

We should cease to be Socialists if we were not cosmopolitans, if we did

not strive more for international co-operation, for international solidarity, for the fraternity of nations.

The same old despicable swindle! The same old attempt to combine the uncombinable, to equate diametrically antithetical political concepts. But, surely, it is the anti-imperialist camp of democracy and Socialism, headed by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, that consistently champions international cooperation, friendship and fraternity among nations, and enduring peace. The imperialist camp, on the other hand, whose poisoned weapon cos-

mopolitanism is, disrupts international cooperation at every step, undermines its very foundations, pursues a policy of oppressing, enthraling and enslaving nations, and is hatching a new war.

The pseudo-socialists of the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* conclude their article with a sort of vow of fidelity to American imperialism. They declare that they will "with greater pride than ever bear on their shield" the title of cosmopolitans.

A superfluous labor! The brand of Judas is seared as it is on the brows of those servitors of American imperialism, the Right-wing Socialists.

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# Some Aspects of the Family Life of Karl Marx\*

by Dr. Edgar Longuet\*\*

I WOULD HAVE DESIRED, in tracing this sketch of the family life of Karl Marx, to be able to enrich it with many personal memories.

Unfortunately, these personal memories are very much blurred by the retreat of the years, and especially so because the last time I saw my grandfather I was only three years old.

But it is curious that in the midst of so many unexpected events which happen in life, certain facts, we do not know why, remain engraved in the memory.

Anyway, I have kept in a very precise fashion the memory of my grandfather taking my brother Jean and myself for a walk in the woods of Champroux, which in that year 1882 still gave Argenteuil, with its fields of asparagus and its vineyards, the aspect of a faraway countryside. Marx was then making a visit to my parents in July 1882; for since the return from exile of my father, Charles Longuet, a former member of the Commune, at the end of 1880, my parents lived in this district.

\* Published in *Cahiers du Communisme*, Paris, March 1949, on the occasion of the anniversary of his death, March 14, 1883.

\*\* A member of the Communist Party of France, Doctor Edgar Longuet, grandson of Karl Marx (the son of Jenny Marx and of Charles Longuet), has generously written these notes for the readers of our review who will find here some unpublished information on certain aspects of the family life of the founder of scientific socialism. (Editor, *Cahiers du Communisme*.)

I have not kept any ill-feelings against my grandfather for the unpleasant reputation which he gave me in my very early years, a bad reputation which I fear was perfectly justified. When I was about eighteen months old, I was, it seems, quite a gourmand, and it is this sin which earned me the nickname "The Wolf" given me by my grandfather.

Marx had so named me because one day I was surprised while chewing to pieces a raw kidney which I had taken for chocolate, and which I continued to devour in spite of my mistake.

In a letter to my mother, he softened his judgment of me however:

"With my compliments to Jean, to Harry (my younger brother) and to the good wolf who is in reality an excellent child."

I shall come back later to Marx's relations with his grandchildren, and I now wish to depict rapidly the family life of Karl Marx, leaving aside his political life.

Briefly, I recall that Marx was born at Treves in 1818, a little while after France's annexation of this city.

His father, of Jewish origin, with a whole line of rabbis as ancestors,

was converted to Protestantism, which would, he thought, make it easier for him to exercise his profession of lawyer.

At the age of eighteen, Marx became engaged to Jenny von Westphalen, considered as "the most beautiful girl of Treves." She belonged to a family of Brunswick origin.

I am passing over the whole first phase of the life of my grandfather which, politically, is well known, and I recall simply that after arriving in Paris in 1843, he was expelled in January 1845 (it was during this stay that my mother was born; consequently, she was a Parisian by birth).

He next lived in Brussels, where he was again expelled, and returned to Paris on March 4, 1848, invited by Flocon in the name of the provisional government of February 24th.

After being convinced that the February Revolution, made by the proletariat, had been once more the occasion for the bourgeoisie to take power against the working class, he left Paris for Germany in April.

There he raised the banner of revolution and led a fierce struggle until the day when, reaction triumphing, he was again forced to take the road of exile.

Arriving in Paris in May 1849 he was there at the time of the meeting of the Legislative Assembly, composed of monarchists in the great majority.

After hardly a month, he received

a friendly invitation to leave the city in twenty-four hours. It was then that he went to England at the end of June 1849 and it was in this country, which *at that period* was the place of refuge of all the exiles of the world, that he lived until his death, that is for thirty-four years. And I must, at the outset, recall that if, in the midst of suffering due to continually shattered health (liver trouble, asthma, frequent and repeated boils), and in the midst of the material distress in which Marx struggled, he was able to bring the work which he had undertaken to a successful conclusion, he owed it to Frederick Engels.

The friendship of Engels and Marx deserves to remain in history like the old legend of Orestes and Pylades.

Engels, in effect, was compelled for the greatest part of his life to manage a branch of his father's business in Manchester, where it was established, and to engage in an occupation which was a heavy burden to him, only in order to come to Marx's aid and to permit him to realize his work. And there is little doubt that without Engels, Marx and his family would have died of starvation.

I also wish to say a few words about a second person who played an important role in the life of Marx's family. I wish to speak about the good Helene Demuth, familiarly called Lenchen.

Having come into my great-grandmother's house, the baroness of Wes-

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phalen, she followed my grandmother everywhere, from her marriage to her death, to Paris, to Brussels, and to London. She saw the little ones being born and dying; she went through the agonies of poverty, hunger, and grief in their company; she watched over the children, friends, and refugees without resources; she brought bread to their table when everything was in the pawnshop; and she passed the nights in sewing, washing, and sitting at the bedsides of the sick. I have the most moving memories of her.

This admirable woman well merits sharing the Highgate grave at London with Marx, his wife, and their grandson Harry.

#### POVERTY OF THE EXILES IN LONDON

And now I would like to describe rapidly what was the existence of an exile and his family, who arrived in London in the most complete destitution. For Marx and his family there began a life of poverty, suffering, and bereavement; and I do not know how to give a better idea of it than by quoting these few lines from a letter of Marx to Engels in which he wrote "that he could not bear the horrible nights which his wife bathed with tears."

This anguish cannot be better expressed than by these passages of a letter from my grandmother:\*

"My husband has almost succumbed to the meanest worries of life. He has run through thousands of marks to save the *New Rhenish Review*.\* He took all the expenses on himself. I went to Frankfort to sell our silverplate, the only thing which was left to us."

And in the same letter, my grandmother said that, in spite of her waning health, she had tried to nurse her fourth child, for the sake of economy.

This child slept neither night nor day. He was seized with violent convulsions, and often in his crises he injured his poor mother, and what he sucked was blood.

It was in this misery that his lodging-house keeper, to whom Marx had recently paid 250 thalers, shortly afterward broke the contract which she had accepted, and, arriving with two sheriff's officers, set herself to removing all the furniture; my poor grandmother, whose breasts so pained her, was left on the bare floor with her freezing children.

Further on, she writes:

"Do not imagine that these sufferings have shaken my will. I know only too well that we are not alone in struggling and that I am still among the chosen and happy ones, seeing that my dear husband, the prop of my life, is still beside me. What tears at my heart and makes it bleed is the thought that my husband

\* Written in 1850 to Joseph Weydemeyer, resident in the United States, friend and adherent of Karl Marx. (Editor, *Political Affairs*.)

\* Exactly: *Neue Rheinische Zeitung Review*, or "Review of the New Rhenish Gazette." (Author's note.)

must endure so many sordid worries, when it would have required so little to help him."

In June 1850 following this eviction, Marx and his family took refuge first in a furnished hotel in Leicester Square, then a little later in Dean Street, where the quarters were still very miserable: one room with a small dressing-room, so that one of the two rooms served at the same time as kitchen, study, and living-room.

And the ordeals continued:

In 1851, Marx wrote to Engels at the time of the birth of Francisca: "At the same time, my wife has been confined. The delivery itself was easy, but she is still confined to her bed, for domestic rather than physical reasons. And literally I haven't a red cent in the house, but there are, all the more, bills from shopkeepers, the butcher, the baker, and so on.

"You will agree that this is quite a pretty mess and that I am sunk into the poverty of the petty bourgeois. And, to cap it all, they reproach me with exploiting the workers and with seeking to establish a dictatorship! *Quelle horreur!*"

In 1852, this little girl died. And here is what Marx wrote:

"Our poor little Francisca came down with severe bronchitis at Easter. For three days the poor child fought against death. She succumbed. Her little body lay in the small back-room for three days. We retired into the other when night came: we slept on the floor. The

three other children were stretched out near us, and we wept over the little angel who lay close by, already quite cold, quite pale. The death of this dear child came at the time of our direst need.

"With my heart filled with anguish, I hastened to a French refugee. He immediately gave me two pounds sterling with the greatest kindness. This was the money which allowed us to pay for the coffin.

"She had no cradle when she came into the world, and her last shelter was very difficult to find."

And in a letter of September 1852:

"My wife is ill; little Jenny [my mother] is ill. Lenchen has a sort of nervous fever. And I cannot call the doctor because I have no money to pay for medicines.

"For about a week now I have fed my family bread and potatoes, and I doubt that I shall be able to get even that today."

In January 1855 a sixth child came into the world. They called her Tussy (this was later my aunt Eleanor Aveling). She was so puny that each day she was expected to die. And a few months afterward, Marx met with one of the greatest griefs of his life: his only son, Edgar, his Musch, "Colonel Musch," died in his arms. For many weeks the child fought against death, and Marx's letters expressed the changes in the state of the child for better or worse. But in a letter on May 30th, Marx wrote to Engels that "the illness has finally taken the character of tubercu-

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losis of the intestines, an hereditary illness in my family, and the doctors hold no more hope. My heart bleeds and my head burns, although, naturally, I have to maintain my composure. In the course of his illness, the child did not once lose his original character, so good, and at the same time such an egoist."

It was really a very intelligent child, and he resembled his father very much by his love of books.

And my poor grandfather wrote to Engels on April 2, 1855:

"The house is naturally quite empty and deserted since the death of the dear child who was its animating soul. I cannot attempt to describe how we miss the child wherever we turn. I have already had all sorts of troubles, but it is at this time that I know what a real misfortune is. I feel all broken up. As luck would have it, I have had such a headache since the burial that I no longer see.

"In the midst of the horrible suffering which I have undergone these days, what has always kept me going is the thought of you and your friendship, and the realization that the two of us still have to accomplish a worthwhile work on this earth."

Some weeks later, my grandfather, having lost his mother, inherited a few hundred thalers, and the family was at last able to move into a healthier apartment in Graf-ton Square. Marx had still another new child who died very young.

The circumstances which accompanied this death were excruciating and made so tragic an impression upon my grandfather "that he remained out of his senses for several days."

And life continued for long years, just as hard for Marx and his family, but with fewer bereavements.

For some years, his collaboration with the *New York Tribune* had helped his financial situation a little; then poverty reappeared to such a degree that Marx wrote to Engels that he intended to confide his children to friends, to send Helene Demuth away, to go to live in a furnished room with his wife, and to look for a job as a simple cashier.

The death of his mother brought him a small inheritance in 1863. And a little later, his old friend, Wilhelm Wolff, left him his little fortune at his death, which permitted him to get rid of all his debts, including the obligations which he had contracted for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, and, as much as his health permitted it, to give himself exclusively to his scientific work. But his state of health did not improve, and his sight was in danger several times.

From this time on, few years passed without Marx being afflicted with abscesses, and anthrax, to which were added disorders caused by liver trouble.

#### A PRODIGIOUS LIFE OF WORK AND STRUGGLES

It would have been interesting to

indicate how Marx, in the midst of his material and spiritual harassments, and of the difficulties with his health, was able to bring so gigantic a task to a successful conclusion.

Not wishing to prolong these notes too much, I shall content myself with first showing Marx spending entire days, from ten in the morning to seven at night, in the British Museum (analogous to our Bibliothèque Nationale), going through blue books, parliamentary documents, economic and social studies, etc., and spending entire nights working at home.

He made many attempts to try to live from his intellectual works, but it was generally impossible for him to find publishers, and, moreover, Engels, unable to watch Marx losing his time on second-rate work, urged him to use every available moment in exclusively devoting himself to preparatory work for his great economic study which he was planning; and for this purpose, he offered him permanent aid.

But even so, this aid was not sufficient.

The *New Rhenish Gazette* brought him only new debts.

And so it was that he agreed to become a collaborator for the *New York Tribune*, in 1851, which made it necessary for him to apply himself to many studies, which, however, came partly into the framework of his principal work of a scientific nature; it is certain that these articles were very important contributions to

the general and economic history of modern times.

Unfortunately from the financial point of view, only about one-third of his articles were paid for; the other two-thirds were eliminated by the publisher who did not consider it necessary to pay for them.

And it must be said that Marx accepted this thankless literary job, which did not permit him even to feed his family, with bitterness.

In 1852, the greatest part of his time was taken up by the business of the arrest and trial of the members of the Communist League in Cologne and elsewhere.

Marx worked without interruption, together with his London friends, to show that this trial was nothing but a police and government plot.

I could not better express the atmosphere of Marx's house at this time than by quoting these few extracts from a letter of my grandmother:

"It was necessary to recopy the three documents eight or ten times, for all the letters destined for Cologne were confiscated on the way.

"It is no more now than a duel between the police and my husband, on whose back everything is being put.

"We have a veritable office at our house: some write, others carry messages, and others are engaged in scraping together all the pennies they can to assure bread for those who write."

Let us recall in one word that at

this time, when Marx was in danger of succumbing to the weight of these ordeals, he wrote the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, so analytical, so profound, so clear-sighted a work.

And during this period, Marx could not leave his house because his clothes were in the pawnshop.

The years went by, still just as hard with the incessant material difficulties, the long days of sickness, and the periods of frantic work; and in spite of all, the great work was being accomplished, the work of a fighter, a thinker, a creator; for, far from confining himself to working in his study, Marx carried on his prodigious theoretical work side by side with his tireless action as a leader of the International Workingmen's Association.

And in spite of all, his house, especially the one in Maitland Park, which Hitler's bombs did not spare, was the refuge for all the exiles, for all the militant workers, English or foreign.

In my childhood, I regained the memory of the atmosphere which reigned in this home where Marx lived with his family: his wife, who, notwithstanding her grief and her poverty, always welcomed guests, for the most part refugees, with a nice smile; and his three daughters, Jenny, Laura (later the wife of Paul Lafargue), and Eleanor, three women remarkable for their intelligence and their culture, each of whom would merit a personal biography.

Marx, whom his daughters wor-

shipped, adored the children, and we may imagine how terrible for him were the bereavements he suffered. Yes, Marx loved children and he was very tender and gay with them.

This violent fighter had a treasure of delicacy, kindness, and tender devotion in the depths of his heart.

He played with the children, as if he were one of them, without worrying about compromising his prestige.

In the streets of his neighborhood, he was called "Daddy Marx," a man who always had sugar in his pockets with which to treat the youngsters.

This affection he later brought to his grandchildren. "Many kisses for you," he wrote to my mother, "and for your little men."

In each letter he spoke of them:

"And now give me a long description of the doings and exploits of Jean and company."

In a letter written in 1881, he related to my mother:

"Tussy, with Engels' aid, just transported the box of Christmas gifts for our little ones to the Parcel Company in a cab. Helene asks that I tell you especially that it is she who is sending a dress for Harry [who died shortly after Marx did], one for Eddy [myself], and a little woolen beret for Pa [my brother Marcel]. Laura is sending a little blue garment to the same Pa. From me, there is a sailor suit for my dear Jean. Mama still laughed so gayly in the last years of her life in telling Laura how you and I, accompanied by Jean, went to Paris to get him a suit which gave

him the air of a 'Bourgeois gentil-homme.'"

Jean was the one of us whom Marx saw the most, since he was the eldest.

"Tell Jean," he said in another letter to my mother, "that yesterday, during my walk in Maitland Park, that important personage, the keeper of the park, came up to me to ask me for news of Johnny."

He often used phrases to speak about his grandchildren which were as original as they were charming.

"And now embrace Jean, Harry and the noble wolf very much for me, very, very much. As for him who is the 'great unknown,' I cannot permit myself to take this liberty with him." (This referred to my brother, Marcel, born in April 1881, whom he had not yet seen.)

I could not better show his affection for his grandchildren than by quoting the last sentence of a letter written to his daughter shortly after the death of my grandmother:

"I really hope to spend many fine days at your side and worthily fulfill my functions as grandpapa."

Alas! Karl Marx could not realize his desires.

Exhausted by successive illnesses, already very much affected by the death of his wife, he had the overwhelming grief, thirteen months later, of seeing his eldest daughter, my mother Jenny Longuet, die in January 1883. This last blow, added to long years of suffering and poverty, on March 14, 1883, brought about the death of the man of genius who devoted his life to preparing for the liberation of the proletariat and who fought to his last breath for the happiness of men.

As Frederick Engels said, speaking at his grave:

*"His name will endure through the age., and so also will his work!"*

*Translated by  
Norman Plotkin.*

# The Plight and Struggles of the Mexican-Americans

[With the following section we conclude publication of the article begun in the May issue. This study was compiled from material prepared by the Mexican-American Commission of the Communist Party in Los Angeles County, and by Comrades Arthur Bary and Pat Bell of Colorado.—Ed.]

NO SUMMARY of the problems of the Mexican people is complete without a consideration of their contributions to the nation and to the struggles of the working class. Immigrants from the East in the early days were often surprised to find a European-type culture already old and long-established when they first unhitched their horses to settle down in the Southwest. The cultivation of wheat, grapes, olives, and oranges was begun by the Hispanic colonists, who brought with them seeds, cattle, and the technique of Mexico and Spain, founding the industries that have remained leading ones ever since.

The Spanish language exerted a strong influence over the newcomers and both the cowboy's technique of riding the range and his vocabulary and traditional guitar are part of his inheritance from the Mexican *vagabundo*. Early Yankee settlers learned Spanish, and for more than a generation after the conquest, until 1872,

the city and county records of Los Angeles were kept in that language. Place-names throughout the Southwest have retained their Spanish flavor. The fiestas begun at that time are still the traditional fiestas of today, though in modified form; for example, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, the Los Angeles and Santa Barbara and San Gabriel fiestas, rodeos, etc.

Architecture throughout the Southwest has retained a strong Hispanic influence that dates from the early missions. California pottery, long known for its distinctiveness, owes its glaze to the Chinese and its color and spirit to the Mexicans. Mexican and Spanish music has always had a large Anglo-American audience in the region, while the dancing has always been considered an indispensable part of every historic pageant and fiesta.

In the economic field, it was Mexican labor that built and maintained

most of the railroads and highways, that turned the desert lands of Arizona and Texas and California into rich gardens that now provide much of the East with its winter food supply. Mexican workers built great factories and have worked in them in increasing numbers, creating great wealth in return for a mere pittance.

#### A TRADITION OF STRUGGLE

But as the people built and contributed, so have they struggled to secure a fairer share in what they produced and to be able to contribute still more. For the spirit of the Mexican worker is predominantly a revolutionary one. Each period has produced its own type of struggles. The Indians fought repeatedly for freedom in California, and once in New Mexico succeeded in repelling the invaders and re-establishing Indian sovereignty for thirteen years (1680-1693). Although the people of California did not participate actively in the struggle for Independence from Spain they showed their resentment toward Spain's mercantilistic policies by constant smuggling. There were numerous local rebellions, reflecting the fight between liberals and conservatives in Mexico proper.

Bourgeois historians have gone to great lengths to "prove" that the Southwest was a happy land, where no class struggle or poverty existed. Nothing could be further from the truth. An early strike occurred dur-

ing the building of the Plaza Church in 1814, when the Indian workers refused to continue work for the few cents a day they were paid, and demanded the unheard-of wage of 60 cents a day, several times what they had been getting. The friars in charge resorted to strike-breaking, using the workers of San Gabriel and San Fernando to make the bricks and tiles; the first "hot cargo" was brought by ox-cart. Although the strike lasted for two years, it was finally broken. Workers were paid from \$1 a week to \$5 a month. Indians found intoxicated were jailed and forced to work out their fines on a landowner's estate. They were paid half their wages in liquor, so that they would again become drunk and be re-arrested, only to repeat the cycle.

This continued for years after the American conquest. The labor-recruiting lots seen in depression days descend from the days when workers were sold for limited periods of service on a block in the plaza of Los Angeles.

When, after the immigration of the early 1900's, the Mexican workers found the doors of the AF of L closed to all minorities, they rallied in great numbers to the militant appeals of the anarchists and the International Workers of the World, then the most advanced sections of the people in their fight against peonage wages and imperialism. The Mexican anarchist Flores Magon, who inspired the great peasant lead-

er Zapata, came to California, set up headquarters in Los Angeles, and issued a newspaper, *Regeneracion*, which reflected the intense suffering of the Mexican people and their militant fight for better conditions. This paper sympathized with the Mexican Revolution and defended it against the imperialist attacks and maneuverings of the United States government. Likewise, the I.W.W. found enthusiastic support from the Mexican people, particularly in the mining camps of Arizona, where company terrorism, outright peonage, and horrible living conditions prevailed. A wave of bitterly-fought strikes swept the mines, the people being forced to boil leather machine-belts for soup to avert starvation. Yet they were so well organized that a bugle call was sufficient to rally the entire camp for a strike meeting.

Even as late as 1932, agricultural wages in the vicinity of El Monte, California, were fifteen and even nine cents an hour. The workers lived in thin-boarded shacks, several families sharing the same outdoor privy, and in the summer months obliged to bring water from half a mile or more away when the water supply failed. Unable to stand their intolerable conditions any longer, the workers went on strike. Immediately, police terrorism was launched against the movement. A steel fence was put up around two sides of the Mexican community of Hicks Camp—a river and a railroad border it

on the other two sides—and people were stopped by police from entering or leaving. Food supplies were cut off; fat-bellied cops swaggered down the dirt streets; stool pigeons were employed; workers were jailed and beaten without cause.

In Imperial Valley, the people lived in shack Hoovervilles and even in primitive bamboo huts, working under the broiling desert sun for starvation wages. Half the population suffered from disease, yet had little or no medical attention. Owned by Harry Chandler, labor-hating editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, and by a few other large landholders, Imperial Valley recognized no democratic rights "guaranteed" by the state or national constitution. The only law was that of the grower-controlled sheriffs.

At this time, there was as yet no CIO, and the AF of L was uninterested in the organization of agricultural workers. The initiation fees and dues were so high that the Mexican workers could not belong to the AF of L, although attempts were made by the local Mexican unions to organize them. Consequently, it remained for the labor movement of Mexico, elements from the conservative CROM, to assist in organization from across the border. The El Monte and Imperial Valley struggles were a prelude to the unionization drive that was to come later.

By 1934, the prevailing wages of 22 cents an hour in the Los Angeles area led to an outbreak of

strike activity which grew rapidly until it engulfed most of Los Angeles County and all of Orange County. Despite the disruptive role of the Trotskyites in some localities and the wholesale sellout engineered by the Mexican Consul, Gil, the Communist Party, though still small and weak, was able to raise the workers' understanding of fundamental issues, by direct participation in the strike committee which arose in the absence of a well-organized union. The International Labor Defense also played an important role by holding mass meetings, organizing the defense of hundreds of victims of mass arrests and American Legion-led vigilante activity and raising food for the starving communities cut off from relief and isolated by police patrols. Working in an underground fashion and enduring every sort of privation, including hunger, the Mexican workers reached a highpoint of militancy and solidarity. Those who had food shared it with the hungry wives and children of the jailed strikers. As if their terrorism against a defenseless people was not sufficient, Los Angeles County and state police—at least 700 of them—were imported into the Orange belt of Orange County, and a special radio station was set up to broadcast to a fleet of radio patrol cars imported for the strike. Meetings were broken up and the people beaten up by local vigilantes. Relief was denied the people, although whole families in-

cluding babies went without food or milk for as long as three consecutive days. Some of the leaders of these early struggles entered the Communist Party.

During the economic crisis, thousands of Mexicans from Texas to California were unemployed and received no relief. As the first unemployed councils were formed, the Mexican workers became active in what was, for most of them, the first working-class organization they had ever known. Party-led demonstrations, which always had a large and militant Mexican participation, resulted in the creation of Federal and State work-relief agencies. Fights were conducted against evictions and the shutting-off of gas, water, and electricity of the unemployed who could not pay the bills; also against discriminatory budgets of relief agencies, which gave Negroes and Mexicans less money and food than other groups.

During the Workers Alliance days, the Mexican people, led mainly by Mexican-American Communists, participated on a mass scale in the fight for relief and jobs, and won substantial victories. In Los Angeles, Mexican women staged a sit-down strike in the relief offices and held their ground, although light and heat were shut off in the building and although police denied them access to food and toilet facilities. Some women were jailed and insulted by the police, but their spirit did not weaken. They maintained



themselves firm and won their demands.

With the deepening of the crisis and the increased militancy of the people, a reactionary-inspired deportation campaign was carried out, sometimes on a "voluntary" basis, but more usually by direct intimidation, economic pressure, or outright deportation. At this time, Mexican families were "repatriated" or cut off relief. Hundred of families were separated or broken up. A consistent fight was waged against deportations. Many protests were organized which resulted in the immigration or relief authorities dropping a case which otherwise would have meant forcible deportation.

In New Mexico, where a large number of small farmers constitute a great percentage of the inhabitants, the Liga Obrera, or Workers' League, was organized to help defend the people against expropriation by banks and the big interests that previously considered the land too poor to be worth bothering with. Locals of the League ranged up and down the length of the Upper Rio Grande River, but failed to develop sufficient leadership to permit the organization to survive. Here, too, the Workers Alliance played an important role in fighting for relief, particularly in centers like Albuquerque.

In San Antonio, where little industry existed, the pecan-shelling and packing industry employed Mexican workers exclusively — but

at the starvation wage of ten cents an hour. The organization of the UCAPAWA (United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing & Allied Workers of America), with progressive Mexican leadership, brought a ray of hope to the hundreds of thousands of field workers throughout the Southwest. In San Antonio, a thorough organizational campaign was launched, resulting in a militant and monumental strike unprecedented in the history of the city, and in the establishment of a twenty-five-cent hourly minimum. The UCAPAWA conducted important drives among the beet workers of Colorado, among the lettuce and cotton workers of Arizona and Imperial Valley, and in many regions of California where the AF of L had denounced the spontaneous lettuce and cotton strikes in the Great Valley a few years before. (At that time, the criminal syndicalism laws had been invoked to jail strike leaders, who were forced to serve years in prison.)

In 1933, the miners of Gallup, New Mexico, conducted a strike and a defense against frameup by the Southwest Coal Company and local police, a struggle that has become classic in the traditions of the Southwest. Living in dismal huts on treeless, unpaved streets, the workers supported enthusiastically both the union drive and the defense of the frame-up victims conducted by the I.L.D.

With the active support of the

Party, a Spanish-Speaking Congress of a broad nature was formed, Texas issuing the original call and California holding its first Convention or Congress in December 1938. A national organization was founded the following May. The Congress was the largest and most progressive organization ever to exist among the Mexican people; its work in raising the political level of the people, in obtaining concessions from the government, and in bringing about a closer understanding between Anglo-American progressives and the Hispanic-Americans, was incalculable. Over a period of time, many victories were won, many grievances solved, and many Congress demands made realities.

For example, a special seminar was called to prepare teachers for work among their Mexican pupils, and for three days Congress officials lectured to the teachers on the problems of the youth. Spanish was introduced into the elementary-school curriculum of Los Angeles. Trade unions began to give more consideration to the problems of their Mexican members and accepted the services of Congress speakers in their organizing campaigns. Organizations in many communities began to meet together to discuss and act on local problems. The Mexican people had a voice in the Congress, a voice which was highly respected.

It is important at this time to point out that the organization of the Spanish-Speaking Congress was pos-

sible in 1938 because of the consistent struggles which had been carried on in the preceding years.

#### THE MEXICAN PEOPLE AND THE WAR

Despite all the obstacles and discrimination, Mexicans have continued to contribute to the nation's progress and made an outstanding contribution to the war effort. In 1942, the Office of War Information, Bureau of Intelligence, Special Services Division, prepared a report called "Spanish Americans in the Southwest and the War Effort." In 1940, the labor force of Mexicans was 1,500,000. This labor force was mainly engaged in agricultural jobs or in unskilled labor in heavy industry. For 18 months after Pearl Harbor, Mexican-Americans found little employment in war industries. Their utilization was confined to common labor, mainly in construction work.

This was true throughout the Southwest. On the West Coast, the main aircraft plants issued directives that Mexicans were to be employed only if they were American-born and of light complexion.

In consequence of a campaign conducted by the Party, by mass organizations, and by the trade unions, and by virtue of President Roosevelt's Executive Order to fight unfair practices in employment which was hurting production so vital to winning the war, Mexicans as well as Negroes and other minor-

ities were employed in defense industry.

After the FEPC was set up, it was found that Mexicans were almost totally unaware of its existence and therefore did not utilize its offices in fighting for the right to work.

During 1942, in Southern California, 10,000 Mexicans were employed in shipyards, 40 per cent of them in semi-skilled and some in skilled jobs. In aircraft, 96,000 were employed in detailed assembly, general assembly and riveting, and a few in supervisory and inspection jobs.

In the mines, mills, and smelters of Arizona and New Mexico, 14,000 were employed in 1943, 60 per cent as common labor, 35 per cent in semi-skilled jobs, and 5 per cent as skilled craftsmen. In Texas and Oklahoma, oil industry employment was 6 per cent to 8 per cent Mexican-American, for the most part restricted to common labor, yardmen and custodians. In 1945, there were some improvements in Houston, due largely to the efforts of the FEPC. There were also some gains in the shipyards and in aviation plants in Dallas. Still, out of the one million Mexican-Americans in Texas, fewer than 5 per cent were employed in war industries according to the FEPC files. Similarly, of the railroad workers in the Southwest who were Mexicans, very few were skilled workers.

Mexican youth contributed mightily to the war effort. Thousands of

them served in the armed forces and fought valiantly in every branch of the service. Many gave their lives and many more have been awarded medals and citations for extraordinary bravery and heroism. In Los Angeles, our own *Smiley Rincon*, an active Communist, gave his life on the battle front in Leyte.

Special mention should be made at this point of the contribution of women to the war, especially on the West Coast, where thousands of Mexican women and girls went into the factories for the first time. Their employment in such large numbers, not only days, but also on swing and graveyards shifts, forced the recognition that women were no longer just "amas de casa" (housewives) who must be at home all the time. Before the war, if they worked at all, Mexican women generally entered laundries, canneries, restaurants, or the fields. Building an airplane was a fantastic departure from former ways, which kept a woman closely guarded by the family during her teens, to become a housewife with no independent economic, organizational, recreational, or political life.

The war forced a change of thought by both men and women, old and young, in this regard. Young women whose husbands were in the armed forces had to make decisions for themselves which formerly had been made entirely by the male. She decided where she would work, and

often where she would live; she paid bills, bought insurance and furniture, worked out budgets, used nursery schools for the children while at work, and joined her union. She became an integral part of the war effort and even began to exercise her long-neglected right to vote. Her ballot in the Roosevelt-Dewey elections was overwhelmingly a liberal one. Some went even further and entered the armed services—a completely unprecedented action, often opposed greatly by the older people.

#### THE TASKS BEFORE THE TRADE UNIONS

Thousands of Mexicans have joined the trade unions in the last decade. There is no question about the unions having benefited the Mexican people in securing better wages and conditions for the workers; nor is there any question about the Mexican members' loyalty to the unions. In Los Angeles today, the Mexican membership in the CIO is 20 per cent of the total membership, yet this ratio is not reflected in the leadership, delegates to the Council, business agents, etc., and the Minorities Committee is very weak and ineffectual. In the AF of L, where there are locals that are predominantly of Mexican membership, this shortcoming is likewise to be noted.

This means that the trade unions and their educational programs are not reaching the Mexican members because the unions are not taking

up specific issues or activities in which the Mexican members are interested and are not making a special approach to the Spanish-speaking membership. There have been some attempts at translation of proceedings in meetings of such unions as FTA and ILWU. But there has seldom been a serious approach by union leadership, a serious consideration of Mexican workers in the shop, as to what abilities Mexican workers might have for service as shop steward or executive officer.

We have already seen, in the foregoing, some of the manifestations of the national chauvinism and fascist-like terror directed against the Mexican people in the Southwest. This terror has been directed with particular severity against the youth.

#### FASCIST-LIKE TERROR AGAINST THE YOUTH

During the "zoot suit" riots in Los Angeles, caused by police and press magnification of unimportant local incidents involving servicemen, there occurred riots which were of international consequences, involving formal diplomatic action on the part of the Mexican government and highly-colored broadcasts from Berlin and Tokio. *Time* magazine had this to say: "The police practice was to accompany the caravans of sailors and soldiers in police cars, watch the beatings and then jail the victims."

Old-style lynchings are no longer necessary to the ruling powers, for

the state apparatus is well established and thoroughly corrupt. The police are now the chief weapon of reaction to "keep the Mexican in his place." In the war period, the disunity created by the fascistic Sinarquistas did not cause one-tenth of the antagonism caused by the attitude of the police. Their influence was weaker still, compared to that of the powerful press, which, in Los Angeles, for example, invented the non-existent juvenile "crime wave" culminating in the riots of June 5 to 8, 1942, during an alert threatening enemy action on the coast. The wound, cut deep into the heart of the Mexican-American youth, has by no means healed; violent hatred of the police is an outstanding phenomenon of the teen-agers today.

From time to time, the Mexican Government has had to complain of the injustices and discrimination suffered by the Mexican people in the United States. That these conditions compel attention is attested by the column of Sumner Welles (February 14, 1944), in the New York *Herald Tribune*: "Discrimination of this character inevitably cuts deep. They create lasting resentments, which no eloquent speeches by government officials nor government policies, however wise, can even hope to remove . . . but so long as they continue anywhere in the United States they are bound to undermine the foundation which the two governments have laid for those cooperative ties which are so greatly to the

interest of both countries, and they will in the wider sense impair that inter-American relationship which is today more necessary than ever before."

#### THE MEXICAN-AMERICANS IN THE 1948 ELECTIONS

In the November 1948 election campaign the Mexican people reached the highest stage of political development and activity since the unemployed struggles of the 30's. An unprecedented number of Mexican candidates ran on the Progressive Party ticket: in Arizona, Tomas Ybarra of UMMSW received 9 per cent of the vote; Jose Ramon Chavez ran ahead of the ticket in the election to the State Legislature in Los Angeles; Jose Chavez, president of the Steelworkers local in El Paso; Brigidio Provencio of UMMSW in New Mexico; Joe Gurule of UMW in Colorado; Alfonso Sena of Denver. Many Mexican people assumed state or national leadership of the Progressive Party: Isabel Gonzales, national president of Amigos de Wallace; Alfredo Montoya, vice-president of the New Party of New Mexico; Alfredo Zalazar and Bernard Zarmeno in California, and Ralph Cuaron of Los Angeles (his speech on the problems of Mexican youth being one of the highlights of the Young Progressives Convention in Philadelphia).

It is significant to note that those electoral districts having the largest Mexican population generally gave

the highest proportion of Wallace votes. For instance, Mora County, an isolated community in New Mexico with the highest percentage of Mexican population (95.2 per cent), where there was no Progressive Party organization, turned out the highest proportion of Wallace votes in the state. Prospero Jaramillo, the only Mexican presidential elector on the Wallace ticket in New Mexico, got the highest vote.

Actions were conducted around the payment of the poll tax in El Paso; around the expulsion of Robles from the State Legislature in Arizona (Robles, with the active support of the Progressive Party, was re-elected by a tremendous majority); on FEPC in Colorado, and on many other community issues.

The Progressive Party held mass meetings of the Mexican people in most of the important centers of the Southwest, Wallace speaking in Spanish in Albuquerque, Denver, El Paso, and to 10,000 Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles.

In the course of this election campaign, the progressive movement came in contact with, and brought

forward, new anti-fascist forces in almost every Mexican community in the Southwest. The sharpening of Wall Street's offensive against Latin America is part of the world-wide expansionist and pro-war drive of U.S. imperialism, with the accompanying fascist offensive against, and increased exploitation of, the American working class as a whole.

It is thus possible and necessary to build a mass national progressive organization which will unite the various Mexican communities around the needs and struggles of the Mexican people. Such an organization would enable the progressive forces to unite and continue their struggle on a higher level, thereby overcoming the moods of pessimism and defeatism which result when struggles are confined to a local scale.

The Communist Party, which has been in the forefront during the past struggles of the Mexican-American people, has today the task of participating, with vanguard initiative and leadership, in the mass movement which is currently developing.

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# A Momentous Youth Gathering

## A STATEMENT BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE\*

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE Communist Party hails the Memorial Day meeting held in Chicago by a group of young Americans who enthusiastically set in motion a plan of action bright with promise for the future of American youth and of our country.

This meeting was especially timely because of the grave problems that face our young people today. The dangers that threaten our country and the world menace above all the young generation. It is the young who die in war. It is the youth whom fascism seeks to corrupt and enslave. The blight of economic crisis is most bitter for the youth.

The young men and women who gathered in Chicago are awake to danger, for they have already been schooled in struggle. They are working-class youth who know speed-up and lay-offs. They are Negro youth who have suffered discrimination and lynch terror. They are students, leaders in the fight for academic freedom. Many are World War II veterans with distinguished service records, and have seen war and fascism in all their horror.

The Conference declared that there is need for a new youth organization which can help youth find fundamental answers to its questions about the present and the future. After full and free discussion, it took steps toward the formation of an organization for young Americans who want to engage in active struggle for the needs of youth, claim the right to take sides with the working class, and want to learn about Marxism, the working-class science of socialism.

\* \* \*

We applaud the decision to launch an immediate organizing drive for the establishment of the projected new organization, and greet the formation of the National Organizing Conference for a Labor Youth League. We are confident that this new organization will itself carry on effective struggle for the needs of youth, and will also help strengthen every progressive youth movement by advancing youth's education in the principles of Negro and white unity, international labor solidarity, and devotion to the working class and its historic goal of socialism.

\* *The Worker*, June 12, 1949.

We greet the decision to found a new organization which will welcome to its ranks young people whose political beliefs are not fully crystallized, whose ideas vary, but who nevertheless share the desire to work together in the interests of the youth and the working class, and to learn about socialism.

We hail the clear vision of these young people, whose patriotism and devotion to our country's best traditions inspire them with determination to help assure that the youth of America shall not go the way of the Hitler youth.

We deeply appreciate the desire of these young workers to learn from the Communist Party and to study Marxist principles. We will welcome the building of warm fraternal relations with their new organization, along the lines indicated in Chicago.

\* \* \*

The Conference made it clear that the new youth organization is not to be a political party, but a non-party organization of youth. It is to be independent, adopting policies and carrying out a program worked out by young people to meet the needs and desires of the youth. The Communist Party will foster and respect this independence, while at the same time giving full support both to the building of the new organization and to its work.

These young people set as their central task, now and in the future,

the strengthening of all youth movements which chart a progressive course. They resolved to strengthen the unity of the Negro and white youth, and to promote united youth actions in the shops, the communities, and the campuses. They determined to join with all progressive forces in rallying youth to strengthen the trade unions, develop boldly every organized expression of the Negro liberation movement among the youth, and support the Young Progressives of America, which reflects and promotes anti-fascist unity among broad sections of the American youth.

We greet the Conference decision that all united actions—whether on peace, economic questions, or in defense of the Bill of Rights—should be directed toward promoting the struggle against the main danger of fascism and a third world war, and toward winning the minds of the youth for peace, equality, social progress and socialism.

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The Communist Party calls on all Party organizations, leaders and members, on all progressive trade unions and other people's organizations, to give these young people full support in realizing the goals set in Chicago.

Every District of our Party should especially help the youth guarantee that the organizing drive for a Labor Youth League begins at once, and

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takes the form of intensified mass activity among the youth, with special concern for the needs of the working-class youth and the Negro youth. The goal of a hundred Charter Clubs, to be formed by July 4, should serve as a stimulus to increased activity around the most burning issues facing the youth.

Many of the National Committee members now on trial for teaching the world-liberating principles of Marxism-Leninism were educated in the spirit of socialism by the Young Communist League. It is clear that the projected new youth organization does not aim to become a duplicate of the former Y.C.L. But we anticipate that it will take inspiration from the great contributions which the Y.C.L. made to the labor

and progressive movements of the early '30's.

This decision to advance the education of American youth in the spirit of socialism is itself a challenge to fascist reaction, whose political heresy frame-up is an attempt to outlaw all democratic thought. Working-class principles and the Marxist social science of mankind's liberation will live and flower in this young generation of Americans, who educate themselves for the future, confident that the future will be theirs.

National Committee,  
Communist Party  
William Z. Foster,  
Chairman  
Eugene Dennis,  
General Secretary

## A DRAFT OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE NEW YOUTH ORGANIZATION\*

"(THE LABOR YOUTH LEAGUE) works for a peaceful, secure, and happy life for every young American—worker, student, veteran, farmer.

"It educates youth in a spirit of

\* Adopted at the National Conference of youth leaders held in Chicago, May 28-29, 1949, this draft of Principles is subject to further amendment on the basis of the proposals submitted at that Conference. The Chicago gathering designated the organizing movement which it launched, and which is now under way, as the National Organizing Conference for a Labor Youth League. Final consideration and adoption of Principles, By-laws, and the official name of the new organization, is due to take place at the new youth organization's first convention.

devotion to the working people. It bases its program on the proposition that the needs and desires of the youth are bound up inseparably with the immediate and fundamental interests of the working class. It recognizes the working class as the source of progress in the modern world, as the defender of the democratic traditions of our country, as the force capable of assuring lasting peace. Therefore, it stimulates interest in, and study of, Marxism, and educates

youth in the principles of scientific socialism—the beacon-light and historic goal of the working class.

“(The Labor Youth League) at all times promotes the cooperation and unity of American youth, Negro and white, to improve their daily lives and advance their democratic aspirations. It organizes young people irrespective of sex, color, national origin, or religious belief. It strives to enrich their lives, build their characters, train them for leadership—promoting both study and action, providing cultural, social, and sport activities.

“(The Labor Youth League) stands against the big business tycoons whose system exists by war and human misery. It opposes Wall Street’s preparations for a third world war. It opposes reaction’s drive to fascism. It opposes all efforts to militarize America’s young people and to poison their minds. It combats every form of chauvinism, warmongering, white supremacy, religious bigotry, anti-Semitism, labor-baiting, and anti-communism.

“(The Labor Youth League) strives for friendship between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. as the cornerstone of lasting peace. It also builds fellowship and solidarity with the democratic youth of all nations, united in their determination for peace, and in their hatred for imperialism and colonial oppression.

“(The Labor Youth League) calls on youth to defend, support, and

build the trade unions. It call for a vigorous defense of the economic rights and interests of working youth, threatened by mounting unemployment and developing economic crisis. It opposes every kind of special exploitation of young workers, whether through wage discrimination, speed-up, or child labor.

“(The Labor Youth League) works for the forging of unbreakable solidarity between Negro and white youth, in the conviction that this unity is indispensable to the fight for peace and to every struggle and advance of America’s working people. It combats every aspect of the national oppression of the Negro people, and fights for the full equality of Negro youth in every phase of American life.

“(The Labor Youth League) strives for the democratization and expansion of education, opposing the concerted efforts of reaction further to limit educational opportunity and corrupt its content. It works for the health and recreation needs of young Americans.

“(The Labor Youth League) defends the Constitution and Bill of Rights against every enemy of democracy. It rallies young people to defend and extend the democratic gains achieved in the rich history of our country, through the glorious struggles of America’s common people. It inspires youth to love our country. (The Labor Youth League) instills young people with faith in

the America which can and will become a land of free and equal people, a land of socialism. It creates confidence in a future free of man's exploitation of man—a future without wars, without want, without racial and national oppression. (The Labor Youth League) believes that through the conviction and unity of the overwhelming majority of the workers and common people, America will become a country which offers its youth limitless opportunity for creative work, education, and happiness.

"In all of its endeavors (the Labor Youth League) holds high the tradition of young Americans of past generations who were never found wanting in time of crisis. It honors the heroes and heroines who are the symbols of youth's service to the

cause of progress and to the people: Nathan Hale and Crispus Attucks of the War of Independence; the young rebel slave Gabriel and the sons of John Brown; Harry Simms, Joe York, James Ashford, and Dave Doran, Young Communists who gave their lives organizing young workers and fighting fascism in the forefront of the great democratic youth movement of the '30's; Dorie Miller, Colin Kelly, Meyer Levin, Herman Boettcher and every young American whose blood was joined with that of the young heroes of other nations in the anti-Axis war.

"This, our heritage, is our inspiration. (The Labor Youth League) proclaims its confidence that young Americans of today will not be found wanting in humanity's cause of peace and freedom."

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"The first great source of strength of the Communist parties in all countries, is their scientific Marxist-Leninist theory. This is their brain stuff, their nerve system, their life blood. Communist theory is all-comprehensive, dealing with practically every phase of human society—economic, political, military, literary, artistic, scientific, philosophical. Marxism-Leninism gives Communists a strong, dynamic, materialistic conception of life, creating for them an endless perspective of the development of freedom, prosperity, and the progress of man. It produces a rational, powerful, well-balanced optimism and a fighting spirit for socialism."

William Z. Foster, *The Twilight of World Capitalism*, page 101.

## THE LAND WHERE PEOPLE COME FIRST

by Joseph North

PEOPLE COME FIRST, by Jessica Smith, International Publishers, New York, 1948, 254 pages, \$2.00.

The Soviet man is the hero of Jessica Smith's inspiring book, *People Come First*. The idea embodied in the title is anathema to a press whose political morality is bounded by the four corners of a dollar bill. Hence, one has yet to see a review of this invaluable work in the pages of *The New York Times*, which flaunts the motto: "All the News That's Fit To Print."

*People Come First* is the eyewitness account of one who has had the good fortune to travel widely through the Soviet Union, not once, but four times. The traveler was able to assess the post-war Soviet scene in the light of the invaluable experience of her previous journeys to the Socialist country, where she had lived for a number of years in the 'twenties.

She could thus measure the immense achievements of the land, and though she came, this fourth time, when the war was "still very close in those autumn and early winter days of 1945," what she saw and wrote has remarkable pertinence today. The author saw the nation's grievous war-wounds and, simultaneously, "the indomitable spirit of the people." She was witness "to their determination to rebuild and cre-

ate a life even better than before and their determination not to have another

Hers was a remarkably rich journey: she takes the reader from the central offices, factories, theaters, schools, and homes of Moscow to similar vantage points in Leningrad, Gorky, Stalingrad, Baku, Rostov. She talked with the housewife and the school-child, the worker and the farmer, the teacher, the artist, the men and women of various liberated nationalities; she interviewed veterans, women leaders, judges, mayors, trade-unionists. And the total is a vivid panorama of Soviet life. war."

\* \* \*

Miss Smith's book is a description, in human terms, of Article Three of the Soviet Constitution:

"All power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies."

American workingmen will be especially rewarded by her account of the Soviet trade unions, and many will learn, doubtless for the first time, that "most of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet are trade-union members." The chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, "a position often described as President of the U.S.S.R.," is Nikolai Shvernik, former head of the All-Union Central Council of Trade

Unions—while Vassili Kuznetsov, present head of the Soviet unions, is Chairman of the Council of Nationalities. It would be as though the President of the United States were a trade union leader—and in the genuine sense—and most members of the Senate and House were militant members of the organized labor movement!

No book has yet appeared in America that caught—as this one has—the enthusiastic reconstruction of the wrecked cities, and one is infinitely moved—as Miss Smith was—to hear the women singing as they rebuilt their homes and factories in Stalingrad. So it was wherever she went.

*People Come First*, in every interview reported by the author, in her vivid description of the daily life of the people, in the over-all picture of the various institutions and organizations, gives graphic testimony to the truly democratic nature of the Soviet Union. We see here the truth of Lenin's profound remark that "Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy."\*

You travel with the author amid a peace-minded people inspiringly altering their great factories to peace production, and she guides you through airplane plants that have changed to wardrobe factories, gun plants to those manufacturing garden tools.

On the Iskra Collective Farm, the collective farmers graphically described to her the hard, creative work that brought the farm's income from 340,000 rubles in 1940 to 1,340,000 in the first ten months of 1945. And this after severe losses in manpower during the war! Two women, in this collective of

ninety-seven families, were Soviet deputies. "Our Galina Maiora is a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R.," one volunteered proudly, "and she has the Order of Lenin. We want to elect her again this year. And our Shubina, who died, was the best milkmaid in the whole country. She was a member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and used to go to Moscow" (p. 88).

\* \* \*

Yes, these pages catch the glow and spirit which already has wrought miracles in reconstruction that rival, nay surpass, those of wartime. When Miss Smith arrived, the roar of cannon had scarcely died down; the graves of seven million at the fronts were still fresh when the Socialist society decided upon the Fourth Five-Year Plan for Postwar Rehabilitation and Development. The goal was to exceed prewar production by fifty percent by 1950. And indeed, industrial output had phenomenally reached the prewar level by the close of 1947. By that time, the nation had already enjoyed a general reduction in prices; the cost of living has been further reduced several times since.

Consider, too, that these achievements were won by a people who had, as the book describes, seen their homeland devastated; only half a dozen years ago, at the height of the Nazi invasion, enemy armies had ravaged 600,000 square miles of their territory.

Some 88,000,000 men, women, and children lived in that area. And the world must never forget, Miss Smith emphasizes, that the enemy demolished and burned, completely or partially:

1,700 towns; 70,000 villages; 98,000 collective farms; 6,000,000 buildings;

\*V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, p. 135.

3,589 industrial enterprises; 40,000 hospitals and medical institutions; 84,000 schools; 48,000 public libraries; etc.

Twenty-five million persons were deprived of their homes. The devastated area, including some of the richest and most highly developed industrial sections of the country, accounted for about one-third of the prewar industrial output. Yet, despite these losses—unparalleled in modern times, probably in all time—the miracle of reconstruction continues, expands, and infinitely inspires all progressive mankind.

Inquiring Americans should investigate these achievements, ascertain their source. What gigantic qualities enabled a people to recoup so rapidly, heal their national wounds sustained in the greatest war of all time, and to emerge the unquestioned world power that the Soviet Union is today?

The people who move through this book supply the answer. What they said, and what they did, utterly demolish the nightmarish caricatures painted by the Koestler-Eastman school of charlatans.

Just one of many instances: it is currently the vogue in the war-mad press to claim that anti-Semitism has emerged in the Soviet Union. Such inspired tales had already gained circulation in 1945 and Miss Smith described them to Solomon Mikhoels, the great Soviet Jewish actor, who died recently. His reply is classic: "There is and can be no *problem* of anti-Semitism in our country." He told her he had traveled throughout the country but "never felt a trace of anti-Semitism. What we Jews feel above all is the immense concern our country and our people have for us." He asked how Jews can ever forget

that "at the most difficult moment for our country's existence, when every railroad car was needed to carry troops to the front and factories and workers to the rear, the Soviet government still found it possible to provide transports to evacuate hundreds of thousands of Jews from threatened areas, knowing they would suffer most at the hands of the enemy" (p. 26).

Similarly, the Soviet average citizens whom Miss Smith interviewed demolished the entire chain-belt of lies—the "prison camp," the "police state," the "enslaved trade-unions," the "cowed citizenry," the "degraded women," the "broken family" and all the rest of the fabrications that Goebbels roared through the microphone, and which have been plagiarized wholesale by his contemporary counterparts in the United States today.

All such imperialist- and fascist-inspired lies are refuted by the living people presented in this book, who are a cross-section of the entire Soviet population.

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The truth, as it emerges from the account in this book, is rooted in the science of Marxism-Leninism. It is to be traced to that turning-point of mankind's history when Lenin declared from the dais of the Smolny Institute in Petrograd a brief thirty-one years ago: "We shall now proceed to build the socialist order."

Colossal obstacles intervened in carrying through the program of Lenin, Stalin, and other co-workers. If the revolution was not as smooth as the Nevsky Prospekt, Socialist construction encountered veritable Alps. There was the war of imperialist intervention against the young Soviet Republic, in

which seventeen foreign armies and civil war took *twenty-five million* Soviet lives. Blockades, "cordons sanitaires," sabotage, espionage, and outright wrecking activities on the part of the imperialist powers preceded Hitler's barbaric invasion, which robbed the Soviet people of another *seven million* lives in military action alone. Yet, in these three brief decades, the Socialist Soviet Union achieved such gigantic successes that today it stands as a world power of the very first magnitude.

For, a new man has come into being: the Soviet man. With a daring unmatched in all history, he marches ahead, confident in the future. Lenin regarded no rampart unattainable by the Bolshevik; and the Soviet people, with the Party of Lenin, the Communist Party, in the van, have fulfilled his prophecy: Nature is being tamed; the very climate is being altered. The goal is not merely to make two blades grow where one grew before, but a dozen, a score, a hundred.

In that land, where happiness is planned, man has achieved the science and social system to bridle nature and is well on the road to create miracles no seer ever envisioned.

And in changing his world, in mastering nature, man changes his own nature, attaining a stature never reached in all pre-history, as Marx called all history before the advent of socialism. The cook has become a judge, as Lenin dreamed; as Miss Smith records, the milkmaid of the Iskra Collective, Marie Volkova, sits in the Soviet at Gorky. The milkmaid simply, yet unforgettably, described her duties as deputy, which involve coping with such problems as organizing better sowing and harvesting campaigns, getting more

consumers' goods to the country districts, and so on.

As the author shows, every personal advance is socially significant: each man's deed adds to the nation's stature.

Overwhelmingly, this has become clear: Socialism is providing the conditions that enable man to pursue the possibilities of his enormous potential. Locked in him, as in the atom, are staggering powers of development. The moral and political unity of the Soviet people is the basis for the majestic unfolding of these potentialities.

That recognition, that spirit, born of the freedom afforded by the Socialist organization of society, is successfully, heroically, mastering the enormous problems of reconstruction. The Five-Year Plan, which envisions an industrial output 50 percent greater than the prewar level by 1950, will lead on to heights inconceivable today.

And the multiplied labor force of the Soviet Union—set free by the great October Socialist Revolution—is daily enhanced. As Miss Smith noted, in 1945, the job sought the man. The returning veteran was guaranteed, not only by decree, but in practice, clothing, money, housing. He also got a job, a choice of jobs, as Daniel Pocheltsov, from the Third Byelo-Russian Front, typically revealed. "His wages before the war had been 1,200 rubles a month; the jobs now offered would bring 1,500 or more" (p. 32). That was in 1945. Real wages have increased steadily since then.

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The remarkable advances of Soviet womankind is the theme of another important chapter in the book. "In tsarist Russia," we read, "out of 2,300,000 working women, 1,300,000 had

been domestic servants in cities, 750,000 hired laborers in the villages." Few women served in the professions and almost none in science. Since 1918, millions have gone into industry, including the most highly-skilled jobs. By 1941, there were 170,000 women engineers (by 1946, there were 250,000); 650,000 women teachers (750,000 in 1946); 73,000 women doctors (100,000 in 1946); more than 33,000 women scientific workers; more than 9,000 women agronomists. Today, 25,000 women hold scientific titles and 199 have won Stalin prizes. Fifteen thousand women are chairmen of collective farms, and a quarter-million head tractor brigades. Half a million women are members of local Soviets, while deputies to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous Republics number 1,700 of whom 277, about 24 percent, are deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (p. 160).

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The author's itinerary was focused primarily on visiting key sections of that vast Western part of the U.S.S.R. which had been invaded and ravished by the German hordes. Nonetheless, she made it a special point to undertake a flying visit to Baku, capital of Transcaucasian Soviet Republic of Azerbaïdzhan. Through her description of the flourishing economic, political, and cultural life in Azerbaïdzhan, the reader gets a fascinating glimpse into one of Socialism's greatest achievements: the transformation of Czarist-imprisoned nations into the great co-fraternity of free and equal Socialist Republics.

When Miss Smith asked Dr. Mir-Assadulla Mir-Kassimov, the country's foremost surgeon, what he considered

the most striking change that had come about in Azerbaïdzhan since the Revolution, he replied simply that a people almost totally illiterate a quarter of a century ago had now established their own Academy of Sciences. "Before 1920," he continued, "only three percent of all our people could read and write. Soon our entire population—excepting only the very old—will be literate."

So it was everywhere Miss Smith went. Education, culture, had marched forward with seven-league boots. "The general growth of Soviet education" she writes, "may be gauged by the fact that the number of children in Soviet schools (elementary and secondary) rose from 7,900,000 in 1914-15 to 33,200,000 in 1948.

All this reflected itself in the enormously rich cultural life that greeted the author—the scientific endeavors, the books, the concerts, the plays, the ballet, the movies, and so on. Creativity reigned everywhere; and everywhere the people reveled in it. Since every work was for all, all felt free to express themselves. And they did express themselves. They spoke out, they wrote, by the thousands and tens of thousands, their reactions, their criticisms, favorable and unfavorable, to this symphony, that play, this novel, that movie. *People Come First* enables one more readily to understand the profound creative impulse that lies at the root of the current great ideological campaigns to inspire all cultural, scientific, and philosophic creation to ever-higher levels, in consonance with the needs of that society which is consciously advancing to Communism. Guided by their Communist Party and their government, the people are determined to eliminate every out-



worn vestige of the past, to dispel all reactionary pressure and influences of imperialist "Western" culture.

For they know well that imperialism, led by the billionaires of Wall Street, dreams the old dreams anew: to conquer the world, to shackle it for dividends. The danger of World War III is dreadfully real. The Soviet man, as Miss Smith abundantly proves, aspires to peace, and works tirelessly for it. Unhampered by capitalist production relations, he recognizes that peace is imperative for his nation to march as quickly as possible to the highest form of society—Communism. No compulsions for markets, for dividends, for wars, operate in his society.

Hence, the author concludes, "the will to peace I saw everywhere among the Soviet people remains and can only

be broken by an aggressive war directed against the Soviet Union." Her chapters reiterate—from the lips of farmer, worker, official—that "the will for peace of the Soviet people grows out of the very basis of Soviet society. Not in the soil of chaos and war can socialism thrive."

The goal of Communism requires the boundless concentration on peaceful labor to persuade the good earth to yield ever more of its riches and to produce enough goods to satisfy the needs of everyone. "This they can do only in a world of stability and peace, not of upheaval and atomic war."

Eloquently, vividly, *People Come First* reveals the unalterable will of the Soviet people for a stable world at peace. It is a weapon of keen edge against war.

## Books and Pamphlets Received

*The Twilight of World Capitalism.* William Z. Foster (International Publishers). New York, 1949. 168 pp., 35 cents.

*In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders.* William Z. Foster (New Century Publishers). New York, 1949. 96 pp., 15 cents.

*Labor Fact Book* 9. Prepared by Labor Research Association (International Publishers). New York, 1949. 191 pp., \$2.00.

*Must We Perish?* Herschel D. Meyer (New Century Publishers). New York, 1949. 176 pp., \$1.00.

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