

political affairs

FEBRUARY 1955 • 25 CENTS

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New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3

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

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: V. J. Jerome

The New Jailings of Communist Leaders

By National Committee, CPUSA

On January 10, 1955 the United States Government, acting even before the Supreme Court formally rejected appeals for a re-hearing, imprisoned twelve leading and beloved comrades: Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Pettis Perry, Claudia Jones, Alexander Trachtenberg, Alexander Bittelman, V. J. Jerome, Albert F. Lannon, Arnold Johnson, Betty Gannett, Jacob Mindel, William Weinstone and George Blake Charney. Upon that new act of savage persecution, the National Committee of the Communist Party issued the following statement:

IN JANUARY, TWELVE of the best sons and daughters of the American working class were "distributed" to various Federal prisons throughout the nation.* Among these was Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, 64-year-old veteran of numerous struggles of labor for a decent standard of living and for maintaining the Bill of Rights.

They were jailed by an Administration hell-bent on creating new war tensions on the China coast and re-arming the Nazis in Europe. They were jailed by a Wall-Street Administration which fears mounting dissent against its plans for aggressive action abroad and universal military training at home.

The Administration and some of its Democratic bi-partisan supporters

want to crush all resistance to its pro-war and anti-labor plans in labor and liberal circles. That is why it has jailed Elizabeth Flynn, Pettis Perry and their co-workers under the notorious Smith (Thought-control) Act. They were jailed, it must be emphasized, *not* for any acts but solely for their teachings.

In the face of considerable evidence of jury rigging and perjured testimony by paid informers, the Supreme Court shamefully refused to review the case—despite its clear promise in the Dennis case to "re-view convictions with the scrupulous care demanded by the Constitution."

The jailing of Elizabeth Flynn and her co-workers coincides with the conviction under the so-called membership clause of the Smith Act of Claude Lightfoot, Negro leader and chairman of the Illinois Communist

* The imprisonment of Louis Weinstock was held up, as he is now being tried on additional trumped-up charges in Washington.

Party. It was also timed with the imminent release of Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party, and other members of the National Committee, who now, having served their terms, are to be placed in unconstitutional double jeopardy under individual membership indictments.

The Supreme Court's callous action, the jailing of the Flynn defendants and the conviction of Claude Lightfoot are not blows at the Communists alone. They are in fact directed against the entire labor and liberal movement, against all those who dissent from Wall Street's "inevitable war" policies. They are directed against those who seek co-existence rather than atomic devastation; the Bill of Rights rather than McCarthyism; free trade unionism rather than industrial slavery.

Americans of all political views—and in the first place trade unionists—should unite in the fight to free Elizabeth Flynn, Pettis Perry and their co-workers; to keep Eugene Dennis, Ben Davis and their colleagues free; to end all Smith Act arrests and prosecutions.

The liberal journalist, I. F. Stone, with whom we disagree frequently, was clearly correct when he recently wrote (*I. F. Stone's Weekly*, Jan. 17, 1955):

The liberals who look the other way rather than risk defending the rights of the Communists will have a bitter awakening, like that which they experienced under the loyalty and security procedures. For the day is com-

ing when non-Communists, too, can and will be prosecuted under the Smith Act. Future Ladejinskys will go to jail.

The prosecution of men for their opinion alone—whether disguised as "conspiracy to advocate" or facilitated by group convictions under the "membership" clause—is a cancer which must be excised or it will destroy the living tissue of a free society.

The country has demonstrated repeatedly that it rejects McCarthyism. Brazen McCarthyites were soundly defeated in last Fall's election. Loyalty and security procedures and the vile government informer system are under sharp attack. The last C.I.O. convention demanded "that all federal legislation limiting what people can think and say be removed from the statute books."

This mounting resistance movement must speak out against the brutal jailing of Elizabeth Flynn and her colleagues. Regardless of deep past or present differences, all supporters of the Bill of Rights should unite, in joint, parallel or individual action to demand a Supreme Court review of the Flynn case, executive amnesty to free all Smith Act prisoners and an end to all prosecutions under the Smith Act.

Let all labor, all progressives, all democratic-minded citizens speak up! Let America learn from the tragic example of Nazi Germany! Let us unite now, irrespective of all other differences, in the common fight to defend the Bill of Rights for all. Only that way lies peace and progress for our nation.

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The Perspectives for a Labor-Farmer Party in the U. S.

By William Z. Foster

In the December 1954 and January 1955 numbers of Political Affairs, Albert E. Blumberg has presented an exhaustive analysis of the 1954 national elections, together with a rounded-out statement of political tasks leading up to the presidential elections of 1956, on the basis of the Program of the Communist Party. The present article deals with but one aspect of the Party program, namely the perspective of an eventual labor-farmer party and the relationship that this bears to the present-day main political task of educating, organizing and activizing the masses of workers now following the lead of the bourgeois political organizations, especially the Democratic Party.

THE UNITED STATES is the only major industrial country in the world where the working class does not possess its own broad mass political party—Labor, Socialist, or Communist. American history is, of course, replete with efforts by the workers and their farmer political allies to build such a party, but up to this time success has not been achieved. The present Progressive Party plays only a very limited role, the Socialist Party hardly exists at all, and the Communist Party is still small. The vast body of toiling masses remain under the political sway of the capitalist class, supporting in the main the Democratic Party.

An old-time Gompers argument against forming a labor party was that the organized labor movement was much too weak numerically to

support such a party successfully; but this nonsense has long since become clearly obsolete. The trade unions of today, with their 16 million members, are obviously potentially strong enough to serve as the basis of a powerful party of labor and its political friends. This strength would be greatly augmented if the present negotiations between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. should result in actual labor unity. Organized labor, plus the Negro people, the working farmers, and the various other democratic strata that can be counted upon as the natural supporters of a broad labor-farmer party, constitute an overwhelming majority of the American people, and, if united and properly led, they would be a decisive political force.

Numerous reasons combine to ex-

plain the basic fact that the working class of this country has not yet embarked upon the road of independent political action. These reasons include the cunningly disruptive policies of the demagogic bourgeois politicians, the powerful anti-labor party pressures of the reactionary trade-union bureaucracy, the demoralizing effects of current Keynesian (Rooseveltian) illusions of progressive capitalism, and the failure over the decades, first of the Socialist Party, to carry on an educational campaign, in season and out, for the formation of a broad labor party. Nor did the Communist Party campaign steadily for the slogan. But the basic reason why there is no mass labor party in the United States is economic—the fact that the working masses in this country do not, as yet, feel such powerful economic pressures of low wages, unemployment, etc., as to impel them to break through every obstacle and to launch a great party of their own.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, specifically in the far-reaching Granger, Greenback, and Populist movements, the workers and farmers, under the heavy economic stress of the times, made repeated and persistent, if nevertheless unsuccessful, efforts to establish a broad independent political movement. Also, amid the economic and political hardships during and following World War I, these joint forces made a big farmer-labor party effort, culminating in the Presidential candidacy of Robert M. La Fol-

lette in 1924. And as a result of the great economic crisis of 1929-33 and the growing danger of fascism and war, the working class developed much political activity, but this did not reach the stage of launching a separate political party, save in New York and a few other states.

During and since World War II the workers have displayed little independent political action, and the same is largely true of their usual political allies. Wartime and post-war "prosperity," with steady jobs for the workers and comparatively good prices for the farmers' products, explain basically the relative mass political backwardness. That there has not been a powerful labor-farmer independent political movement in this country following World War II, is a reflection of the relatively strong position of American imperialism during this period.

During the past generation the trade unions, departing gradually from the rigid apoliticalism of the old Gompers regime, have engaged increasingly in political action. But this has remained within the framework of bourgeois political thinking and bourgeois organizational controls. One of the most decisive steps in breaking this bourgeois tutelage of the workers and in the latter's beginning to develop a genuinely proletarian political program and organization will be precisely the eventual formation of the mass labor-farmer party.

It would be stupid, of course, to suppose that the present two-party

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political situation can long endure—with the gigantic American working class, although powerfully organized in trade unions, continuing to trail along after the Democratic Party, with the general result that the workers remain practically unrepresented in the national, state, and local legislative bodies of the nation. For example, among 333 of the contestants for seats in the House in last November's elections, according to the *N. Y. Times* (November 1), only six were workers—trade-union leaders—and but sixteen were dirt farmers. The only ones who can believe that such a political absurdity will be permanent are the "American exceptionalists" of various stripes, based on their silly notions that the United States economic system is not actually capitalism at all and that in this country we have no real capitalist and working classes.

Obviously, tied in as they have been for generations, with the bourgeois parties (chiefly the Democratic Party), a big shock will be needed to shift the workers from their present political moorings, and to launch them upon a course of independent political action. And such a shock is certainly in the making. The basic reality of the American situation is that this country is now heading towards economic and political crises which ultimately will make irresistible the need for independent worker political action expressed through a broad political party of the working class and its political allies.

CRISIS FACTORS IN THE UNITED STATES

Capitalism in the United States, as an organic part of the world capitalist system, is involved in the developing breakdown of that system. The world capitalist system is thoroughly sick and constantly getting sicker. During the last 37 years world capitalism has not only lost over one-third of the world's population to the camp of Socialism, and the markets that go with them, but in so doing, it has also lost many of its richest fields for reaping imperialist super-profits—Russia, China, Poland, Bulgaria, Indo-China, North Korea, etc., once having been very favored preserves in this respect for imperialist exploiters. Besides, in the colonies and semi-colonies that are left to it, monopoly capital also is finding it more and more difficult to extract super-profits—what with the rising spirit of nationalism in all these countries, the high price of maintaining big armies there, the costly subsidizing of puppet governments, etc. This is a disastrous situation for the imperialist powers, which are more and more being compelled, in their drive for maximum profits, to extra-exploit their own peoples under the present feverish armament production.

Following World War II, the capitalist countries of the West, it is true, have been "enjoying" a considerable economic boom; industrial production has gone up in Western Europe since the immediate pre-war

years, and in the United States the national output had doubled during the same period. But this is an unhealthy growth, based principally upon the reparation of the immense natural damages and commodity shortages caused by the war, and upon huge preparations for another world war. In Western Germany, France, Italy, Japan, and many other capitalist countries, the real wages of the workers are still below what they were before the war. Thus, not only has mass purchasing power in general relatively declined, but capitalism has also lost its former market controls over many countries that have since taken the road to Socialism. All this feeds the general capitalist crisis.

The general crisis of capitalism, in accord with the law of the uneven development of capitalism, does not grow at an even pace in all countries and at all times. Its tempo varies, and thus it hits some countries more devastatingly than others. So far the United States has escaped lightly many of the ravages of the general crisis of the world capitalist system. But this is only a temporary and illusory phenomenon. As in other capitalist countries, elementary contradictions and antagonisms are at work that must eventually culminate in serious economic and political crises, and, therefore, in a deep-going radicalization of the working class and of other democratic strata. It is, consequently, in this general setting that the perspective for a labor-farmer party in the United

States must be considered.

The drive for world conquest and war, so aggressively pushed by Wall Street and its obedient Truman and Eisenhower governments since the end of World War II, which is fundamentally a product of the deepening general crisis of capitalism, is a program which cannot possibly free it from the strangling coils of that crisis. Should the Washington atomaniacs succeed in launching the world war that they want so badly, this could only result in a major holocaust for world humanity and in a final catastrophe for the international capitalist system. If, however, unable to precipitate their planned-for war (as seems more and more to be the case in the face of growing world peace pressure), Wall Street continues on with its synthetic cold war, involving gigantic armaments expenditures, this would also turn out to be a road to crisis through the growing exhaustion of the peoples of the capitalist world, including this country. And even if the capitalist United States, led by a reactionary government, should find itself forced by economic necessity to reduce heavily its arms expenditures (without adopting a progressive economic program to alleviate it), this, too, would help to precipitate and deepen the economic crisis.

The capitalist world is now heading toward a severe economic crisis. Unemployment is beginning to reappear upon a mass scale in various capitalist countries—West Germany,

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Japan, Italy, Austria, France, Great Britain, etc. The United States, the stronghold of world capitalism, is also displaying serious signs of developing economic crisis. Industrial production here from mid-1953 to mid-1954 fell by an average of about ten percent, with steel, mining, textiles, automobiles, etc., off from fifteen to thirty percent. Some five million workers are wholly or partially unemployed, and stockpiles of commodities are growing. Agriculture is also down, and it is flying distress signals. Meanwhile, capitalist profits in the United States have soared from \$6½ billion in 1939 to \$45 billion in 1953. The meaning of all these facts is that this, like other capitalist countries, is facing an economic crisis. Nor can the projected re-arming of West Germany and Japan or the Keynesian pump-priming policies of the Government do more than to delay temporarily the onset of this economic breakdown.

Another manifestation of the increasing general sickness of world capitalism is the present threatening growth of fascism in a number of countries. Fascism, as the Communists long ago made clear, is not a sign of strength but of weakness in the capitalist regime developing it. It is a manifestation of the fact that the ruling class, finding it increasingly difficult to rule by customary bourgeois-democratic methods has to resort to fascist means of demagoguery and violence. A definite re-growth of fascist trends, usually under American cultivation, is to be

found in West Germany, Japan, Italy, various Latin-American countries, etc. Especially the United States itself is manifesting a sharp development of fascist *tendencies*. McCarthyism and other breeds of fascist ideology have already reached the stage where they have become a national danger, and they have potential recruits in the Dixiecrat Jim Crowes. The expansion of fascist methods in this country is a sure sign that all is not well with Wall Street—its war program in particular, and its economic system in general. The rising fascist danger, involving as it does growing attacks upon the organizations and freedoms of the working class, the Negro people, and other democratic strata, is a potent breeder of political crisis and intensified class struggle.

POLITICAL STIRRINGS OF THE WORKING CLASS

The continuance of the war danger, the worsening of the economic situation, and the rise of the menace of fascism, which fundamentally are expressions in the United States of the deepening general crisis of world capitalism, will inevitably produce a growing radicalization of the working class, which will offer most favorable conditions for the formation of a broad labor-farmer party. Evidences of this increased militancy of the workers and of their political allies in this country are to be found upon all sides. As the Communist Party *Program* states:

There are signs of a new awakening

in our land. Larger sections of the workers and of the people generally are beginning to speak up for peace and for a program of peace-time jobs. A powerful anti-McCarthy grass-roots movement is developing. The opposition to the Eisenhower Administration is growing. . . . The collision between the people and the foreign and domestic policies of McCarthyism must grow in volume and intensity.

In the fight for world peace a grave handicap for the workers is that their top labor leaders, the Meanys, Reuthers, *et al.*, are tied up in a united front with monopoly capitalism in support of the latter's program of imperialist expansion and war. Often they are more belligerent in their anti-Soviet hatred than even the capitalists themselves. This class collaboration opens a source of filthy imperialist poison into the ranks of organized labor. Nevertheless, there is a profound pro-peace sentiment throughout the mass of the workers. Despite their being more or less contaminated by anti-Soviet propaganda, they decidedly do not want war. Consequently, they have been active participants in the many movements in the United States that have helped block the plans of the American warmongers to continue and spread the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars, to carry the war into People's China, to militarize the American people, and the like.

Throughout the world there is now a very powerful and constantly rising mass peace sentiment, against

the capitalist warmongers and for policies of peaceful co-existence between the capitalist and socialist countries. The American working class and other democratic strata, notwithstanding many confusions and betrayals by their leaders, are essentially sympathetic with this developing world peace movement. This means basically that in the oncoming period the question of the fight for real peace policies will become increasingly a mass political issue in the United States.

In the fight against the developing economic crisis the rising militancy of the workers and their political allies is more pronounced. The *Program* of the Communist Party correctly states that "the American people are no longer going to accept hard times as just hard 'luck' or as the process by which individuals are made more rugged under capitalism. They refuse to blame themselves or fate for mass unemployment. They expect the economic system and the government to guarantee them jobs at a living wage as workers, and a living income as farmers." In this spirit both the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. have adopted anti-depression programs and, along with the working farmers, they made the economic question a decisive issue in the election campaign. The higher militancy of the workers is exhibited also in their willingness to strike for substantial wage increases, even in the face of heavy unemployment and slack industry.

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In the fight against McCarthyism, the most open and virulent form of American fascism, the militancy of the workers is also definitely upon a rising scale. Nearly all the labor and progressive organizations in the country have taken a constructive stand on this general question, and they are making an increasing opposition to the various anti-labor bills that are being pushed by organized reaction. Fascism in the United States is a malignant and growing danger, and the labor movement, despite its corrupt and conservative top leadership, will find itself constrained to fight against it with more and more clarity and resolution.

The rising militancy of the workers and their allies was to be seen clearly in the November 1954 elections. They evidently wanted to deal a heavy blow against the Eisenhower regime and political reaction. But they achieved this in only a limited and distorted form, because the leaders of the Democratic Party, the organization in which the working masses placed their main reliance, refused to fight vigorously for the basic issues raised by the people. That is, the Democratic leaders, including the top labor-union bureaucrats, refused to attack outright Eisenhower and his policies. They did not raise the question of peace but let the Republicans demagogically pose as the party of peace, they abandoned the issues of McCarthyism and Negro rights altogether, and they made but a weak fight upon questions of unemployment and the

plight of the farmers—the central issues in the campaign. This flagrant sabotage of the people's interests took place because the Democratic leaders do not differ basically on policy from the Republicans. The general result was to rescue the Eisenhower forces from a major defeat.

THE INFLUENCE OF RISING SOCIALIST PRESTIGE

Basic factors in radicalizing the workers and in moving them towards independent political action and eventually toward a labor-farmer party, are the continuing war danger, the worsening economic situation, and the rising fascist threat. But there is still another powerful factor, of ever-increasing importance, which must be taken into account. This is the rapidly soaring prestige of the Soviet Union, People's China, and the People's Democracies of Europe and Asia, which are exerting an ever-greater influence upon the workers and other democratic forces in the world. To distort and destroy this socialist prestige has always been a basic aim of predatory imperialism.

When the Russian Socialist Revolution took place in November 1917 this had a tremendously inspiring effect upon the workers of the world. It was an elementary factor in the ensuing revolutions in Middle Europe, which swept away the autocratic monarchies of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey, and it

produced reverberations throughout the whole Asian and Latin-American colonial and semi-colonial worlds. During the next years, the Soviet Union was immersed in the overwhelming tasks of building its industries from the ground up, and revolutionizing agriculture, tasks which inevitably required endless work and severe hardships upon the part of the working masses. The capitalists, with the help of the Social Democrats, by carrying on an endless, lying campaign of red-baiting, were obviously able largely to misrepresent and slander what was going on in the U.S.S.R. and thus to diminish the prestige of Socialism among large sections of the world's workers.

The U.S.S.R., however, went into another period of tremendously expanded political prestige among the world's exploited masses as a result of its decisive struggle against world fascism, especially from the early 1930's and all through World War II. This enhanced Soviet prestige made an untenable situation for the capitalists. During the cold war years, again with the eager assistance of Social Democracy, they therefore launched an unprecedented campaign of red-baiting and Soviet-baiting, as a basic part of their drive for world conquest through another great war. With this campaign of ideological poison and terrorism, they undoubtedly were able to make it appear to vast numbers of workers in the capitalist countries, above all in the United States, that the

Soviet Union was an imperialist menace to the peace of the world. The tremendous Chinese Revolution, as well as those in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Indo-China, and Northern Korea, were condemned as simply the results of Soviet aggression and as a threat to world democracy. All this tended again to diminish the constructive influence of the Socialist countries upon the labor movement of the world.

But the Soviet Union, People's China, and the People's Democracies generally, are at present going into a fresh period of immense political prestige among the toilers of the world. This is because they have blunted the war drive of the imperialists, and they are now in a period when their high culture, democratic life, and increasing mass well-being are becoming so strikingly obvious that all the world must recognize them. Nothing the capitalists can do will be able to keep the Socialist sun henceforth from shining clearer and brighter over the face of the earth or to prevent the workers from experiencing its warming glow.

The current great leap forward of the U.S.S.R. and People's China is already having pronouncedly constructive effects upon the workers and other democratic strata throughout the capitalist world. This is evidenced, among other facts, by the ever-larger number of delegations—labor, cultural, and political, that are now being exchanged between the

two greatest countries of Socialism and many capitalist lands. The general result of all this is a stimulating effect upon the labor movement of the world, inspiring its fighting spirit and giving it clearer direction and aims. Despite everything that Wall Street and its labor-leader lackeys may do against it, this rising socialist world influence will penetrate and dissolve the present thick fog of slanderous red-baiting and it will exert a powerfully constructive effect also upon the American labor movement. Therefore, in estimating the factors making for independent political action, this basic one must be counted in.

TOWARD THE LABOR-FARMER PARTY

The above-described forces, growing out of the war danger, the economic crisis, and the menace of fascism, plus the effects of the swiftly rising prestige of world Socialism, are tending inevitably to produce a labor-farmer party in the United States. The job of this article is not to speculate as to just when such a party may actually come into existence as a major political factor, but to point out the basic trends towards it and to emphasize some of the elementary tasks we confront in this general connection.

It is obvious, however, that the situation in the United States at present is not yet ripe for the immediate launching of a broad labor-farmer party. Consequently, our

task in this respect contains a large element of agitation and propaganda. The workers and their allies must be taught the imperative need for independent political action, which finally means a labor-farmer party. They must be made to understand that the logical goal of their present political strivings and of their present urgent political needs is precisely the formation, in due time, of a great party of the working masses and their political friends. It was an historic mistake of our Party not to have persisted, year in and year out, to agitate for a labor-farmer party.

The labor-farmer party, of course, cannot be built simply by propaganda, however essential this may be. It can develop only out of the broad struggles of the masses, led by the working class. Nor can these movements be merely election campaigns and parliamentary activities. The labor-farmer party must grow out of the whole complex of struggles, economic and political, of the working class, the Negro people, the working farmers, and other democratic strata of the people. The fight for the labor-farmer party, by the same token, must, in turn, serve to strengthen all the phases of the mass struggle, to politicalize them, and to make them more conscious of the labor-farmer goal to which they are tending.

In the cultivation of independent political action by the working class and its allies, the main present task is to educate, organize, and activate

the masses now affiliated politically to the Democratic Party, and in a lesser degree, to the Republican Party. It is of tremendous importance that the Communist Party *Program* clearly points out this present stage of the fight for independent political action by the working class. As our Party *Program* states:

The two-party system is still the form through which the overwhelming majority of the American people now express themselves on politics. Except in special local and state situations, there is no immediate prospect that decisively large masses will break away from the existing two-party structure. Under these circumstances the decisive sections of organized labor, without which a mass third party is impossible, are first attempting to fight out the issues within the ranks of the Democratic Party.

This means that the Communist Party must turn its attention decisively to the masses now following bourgeois political leadership. As our *Program* states, we must support and stimulate such organizations as the Labor League for Political Education (A. F. of L.) and the Political Action Committee (C.I.O.), as well as the whole body of the trade unions, N.A.A.C.P., farmers' organizations, youth movements, etc. Our agitation must saturate the masses with a spirit for independent political action. It must stimulate all the democratic strata to develop a political coalition movement, to build their own election machinery, and, as our *Program* puts it, "to come

forward as a distinct political force even within the framework of the present two-party system." We must also begin sharply to pay more attention to the farmers. Many persons may be surprised to learn that a generation ago the Communist Party exerted a powerful influence among mid-west working farmers.

To create this strong working coalition organization and movement of the workers and their allies within the Democratic (and Republican) Party is the first organizational stage in the development of independent political action. It is the stage we are now in and it demands our major attention. It is the line along which our Party is now beginning its campaign to defeat the reactionaries in 1956. The ultimate stage will be the launching when the situation has eventually ripened, of a broad labor-farmer party. As we have seen above, basic forces are at work that are tending to place the formation of such a party upon the political agenda in the United States.

The general and specific demands for the independent political action movement, particularly in its present preliminary phase, are fully stated in the *Program* of the Communist Party, entitled, *The American Way to Jobs, Peace, Equal Rights and Democracy*. It is, therefore, unnecessary here to reiterate in detail these demands, corresponding to the most urgent daily needs of the workers, the Negro people, the working farmers, and other democratic strata in this country. An all-out fight for

the Party's Program is fundamental not only for the coalition in the old parties but also in the general struggle for an eventual labor-farmer party.

SOME DANGERS TO AVOID

In carrying out this general political line we must be alert to avoid serious dangers of both a "Left"-sectarian and a Right-opportunist character. The "Left" mistakes would lead us into premature organizational steps in founding the labor-farmer party and thus isolate us from the masses in the trade unions and in the old parties. The Right mistakes would tend to make us lose ourselves in the masses, to tail after them, and to depend upon mass spontaneity. Both types of errors will flourish in our political work from now on and we must make a two-front fight against them.

One of the worst "Leftist" errors that we could fall into would be to try to precipitate the formation of the labor-farmer party without there first being a sufficient mass base for it, especially among the trade unions. At the moment, this danger may not be a very active one, but it has played a highly injurious role in past years. It was a basic error which we repeated several times in the big farmer-labor party La Follette movement of 1919-1924, and it was also a factor in the Wallace-Progressive Party campaign of 1948, and of various other movements in our Party's history. We may be sure, too, once the labor-farmer movement begins

to get under way in a mass sense, that we will again have to face this dangerous "Leftist" tendency to go off half-cocked regarding the actual founding of the new party. There can be no serious labor-farmer party without decisive trade-union support.

To guard against such errors, we must, from the outset, realize clearly that it is of the specific nature of the movement for working class independent political action in this country at this time that, throughout its various phases of development, even in the beginning, organizational steps for the labor-farmer party must be taken only on the basis of a broad mass trade-union following. This means also, especially when the movement puts up independent election candidates, that generally these must have a practical chance of winning, or at least of making a good showing at the polls. The brick-by-brick method that we use primarily in the building of the Communist Party will not suffice to build the labor-farmer party—here we must work upon the basis of a mass-party strategy and tactics at all stages of the party's development.

This implies that we have to be resolutely opposed to all premature splits and wishful-thinking policies of building the labor-farmer party from the ground up, without regard to the developing political movements of the workers, especially the organized workers, in the mass following of the bourgeois parties. This is not to ignore the presumption that, in the course of the work, undoubt-

edly there will develop many instances when, confronted by a choice between reactionary candidates, the workers and their allies will find it necessary to advance independent election tickets. In such cases, candidates must be boldly put forth—we must not support reactionaries because they are endorsed by the trade-union leadership. Organizations like the American Labor Party and the Progressive Party, can play a vital role in placing necessary independent candidates. On this basis such parties should be built and their campaigns supported.

Independent parties should abandon the traditional sectarian practice of Left parties of functioning simply as propaganda and protest movements, by putting up full-scale city, state, and national election tickets as a routine agitational matter, and of gathering votes indiscriminately without a tactical political plan. This type of unorganized political activity is confusing and disruptive to the work inside of the Democratic and Republican parties, and it could also lead to serious negative political consequences. Under the American election system of counting each state's electoral votes en bloc, even a few thousand misplaced votes, conceivably could hand an important state's electoral vote, and, therefore, possibly even a national political victory, to the reactionary forces. This would defeat the workers' whole purpose. The independent labor parties or tickets, therefore, and there will undoubtedly be many of these as the

movement for independent political activities matures, should give up all idea of an indiscriminate search for votes and begin to concentrate their slates only in specific districts where the movement assumes a mass character. They should coordinate all such independent political activities strictly in accordance with the work being carried on within the bourgeois parties by organized labor and its allies. Independent general election tickets, whether local, state, or national, at this stage at least, should be put up only under special circumstances; that is, only where they are tactically necessary, and only after serious consideration of the probable results of such slates.

Under the general head of when to split or not to split from the old parties, special attention must be paid to the experiences of the American Labor Party in New York State, especially in its early years. For a considerable period this organization, with a huge mass following, functioned as a political party, without actually breaking contact with the progressive forces within the Democratic Party. The Commonwealth Federation in Washington state, of the same period, was virtually a party within the Democratic Party. A generation ago the Non-Partisan League also had a similar, and even more effective experience, with regard to the Republican Party among the farmers of the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Montana. The tactical significance of such experiences indicates that a split with either the

Democratic or Republican party is not always immediately practical. Labor's political experience also teaches that independent political action, with the placing of independent candidates, may occur not only under the specific form of political parties, but also of committees, blocs, labor tickets and other types of organization. And when local or state labor parties are formed, it by no means follows that these must everywhere and always put up complete slates of candidates. The New York and Northwest experiences (not to mention California and elsewhere) must be carefully evaluated in working out the general tactical line in conducting the fight inside the bourgeois parties and also in the eventual building of the labor-farmer party.

The Right-opportunist mistake that we must especially avoid, and it is one that we have to be conscious of at the present time, would be for the workers' political movement to become the tail to the Democratic Party. This would make it a prey to disastrous "lesser-evil" policies, and it would from the outset sentence it to futility and ultimate demoralization and defeat. To avert this danger we must bear clearly in mind the following major propositions:

a) That the Democratic Party is a party of monopoly capital and is dedicated to carrying out the main Wall Street policies of maximum profits, imperialist expansion, ultra-reaction, and war. Never did monopoly capital prosper more in both

its domestic and foreign policies than during the recent twenty years of Democratic rule. Traditionally, the Republican Party has been the favored party of big capital, but ample recent experience demonstrates that when, due to the Republican Party discrediting itself by ultra-reactionary policies, the masses elected the Democratic Party to power, the monopolists have made full and effective use of it—not only in the Dixiecrat South, but also in the North and West.

b) That it is impossible for the workers and their allies to capture the Democratic Party and to reorganize it into a progressive organization—a labor-farmer party in the service of the common people. To think otherwise would be a political absurdity. As the class struggle intensifies and the working masses raise sharply more and more elementary working-class demands, the Democratic Party, run by capitalist reactionaries, will become less and less able to contain these rebellious masses. This perspective is in line with class struggle experience throughout the world, of the working class advances towards independent political action. The Communist Party *Program* is altogether correct in stating that "Labor will find that the many important battles it must wage within the Democratic Party, decisive though they may be in checking the immediate danger of McCarthyism, will not transform that party into a labor-farmer party."

c) That from the beginning the working class and its allies must inevitably orient towards eventually creating a broad independent party. As our Party's *Program* puts it: "Labor must set its sights in the direction of a great party of its own, a party without Wall Street financiers, corrupt underworld racketeers, or Southern Dixiecrats—in short a true united front party of labor and the common man."

During the period of the Roosevelt New Deal the workers won many economic and political reforms, while generally operating politically within the framework of the Democratic Party. These gains were due primarily to the high militancy of the workers, Negro people, and poor farmers during these years. However, history will hardly repeat itself in this general respect. That is, in view of the worsening position of American capitalism, both at home and abroad, the Democratic Party will never be able to retain within its ranks and control the rebellious masses, once they again go on the march—that is, if the Left and progressive forces are alert to their tasks. The builders of the eventual labor-farmer party should, therefore, concern themselves with the Democratic and Republican parties, not in the illusion that these parties can be rebuilt into progressive political organizations capable of serving the needs of the working class, but because in their general following are large masses of workers who must needs be organized in their

present organizational affiliations to block the plans of the warmongers and fascists, and as the first stage of the labor-farmer party movement. The danger of the "lesser evil" theory must be constantly guarded against.

THE LEADING ROLE OF THE WORKING CLASS

The most tragic fact of present-day American political life is that the working class, by and large, is still tied politically to the leading strings of the major capitalist parties, principally the Democratic Party. The very heart of the movement for independent working class political action is precisely to break this bourgeois tutelage and to develop an independent political program and eventually a party for labor and its allies. The workers must be taught the fact that they are potentially the real leaders of the nation and cannot possibly drag along after their worst enemy—Big Business.

In carrying out this historic political task, obviously, at this period, the masses cannot be directly led by the Communist Party; nevertheless, a key role can and must be played by our Party. We must be on guard, especially in this period of sharp government persecution of our Party and of the whole Left, of tendencies to rely merely upon the spontaneity of the masses. Spontaneity is a decisive factor and little can be done without it, but left to itself it is altogether insufficient to carry the workers to real victories. Marxist-

Leninist leadership is indispensable, and realizing this, we must combat every effort of the red-baiters and warmongers to destroy our Party. We must fight to keep our leaders from going to prison and to free those who are already in jail, and we must exert every effort to have our Party display the utmost political activity and to strengthen its contacts with the masses.

The battle to break the bourgeois political leadership of the workers is not something that must wait until the situation has ripened to the point when a labor-farmer party can actually be launched on a mass scale. On the contrary, this fight must be waged militantly even now, in this preliminary stage of the work. Thus, for example, the movement for independent political action must break sharply with the old Gompers political formula of "Reward your friends and punish your enemies," which still remains essentially the policy of the top leadership of both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. This policy, which expresses itself in the support of all sorts of bourgeois fakery and demagogues, has resulted in American labor, as we have already remarked, being left practically without any solid representation in the legislative bodies of this country. Contrary to the Gompersite political bankruptcy, the labor-farmer party movement, also in its preliminary stages within the two capitalist parties, must fight for, as its election candidates, genuine representatives of the working class, the Negro

people, the working farmers, etc. By the same token, the movement must fight to raise political issues that are of real importance to the toiling masses of this country, as expressed by the Party's program for Jobs, Peace, Equal Rights and Democracy. This general line must be followed until the working class and its allies have smashed the bourgeois political fetters that now shackle them and have achieved an independent political program and organization.

The greatest political weakness of the workers and their allies during the Roosevelt regime was not to have then laid the basis for a broad labor-farmer party. That the masses would have supported such a movement was demonstrated by the important successes won during these years by the American Labor Party in New York and by the Progressive Party in California and elsewhere. Considerable political activity was manifested at that time by the workers through P.A.C. and similar bodies in the A. F. of L., but the bourgeois and labor politicians of the Democratic Party were on the alert and defeated all real tendencies towards mass independent working-class political action.

Especially during the war, organized labor was in a strong position to have begun to develop working-class initiative and leadership politically. In addition to other elementary steps, the very least that should have been done, therefore, was to demand that Roosevelt deal with the labor movement upon a coalition

basis. But all this was anathema to the Greens and Murrays and their likes. They had no political conception other than to tail along after the bourgeoisie, greedily devouring such political crumbs as the bosses saw fit to throw to the workers. Earl Browder, with his absurd illusions about the "progressive" character of American monopoly capitalism, shared fully in the Green-Murray opportunism and infected our Party with it. He even outdid such reactionaries in actively opposing every proposal to bring forward the workers as an independent political force during the war.

At the present time but a small section of the trade-union movement stands committed to the formation of a labor-farmer party—only the U.A.W.-C.I.O., the progressive independent unions, and a few others—hardly as many as 2,000,000 organized workers of a total of 16,000,000, have in any way recently endorsed it. But under sharp economic and political pressure (and with good work by the advocates of the labor-farmer party) the number of the supporters of working-class political action can swiftly mushroom, as has been seen upon several occasions during the past 60 years. Our Party must be fully aware of the political potentialities of the situation.

TOWARD THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The elections of 1956 obviously will be highly important. Already

the two major parties are preparing for them. The Right-wing Republicans, the pro-fascist McCarthyites, are striving to capture the Republican Party or to split it; while Eisenhower, with his intense peace demagoguery, is clearly aiming at the Republican nomination and a second term. The Democrats, flushed by their November victory and confident of winning a bigger one in 1956, are counting themselves as "halfway back to the White House." The Communist Party also will, from now on, pay basic attention to this developing struggle.

The Program of our Party remains valid for the coming Presidential elections. It gives a clear line on the specific demands of the workers, the Negro people, the working farmers, and of other democratic strata, and its central slogan for Jobs, Peace, Equal Rights and Democracy clearly meets the elementary needs of the people. The general tactical line of the Party is also correct for the coming campaign; that is, to mobilize the masses politically within the framework of the two major political parties, chiefly in the Democratic Party, where they are now affiliated.

As the national Presidential struggle unfolds, we must clearly realize that, tactically speaking, there are two phases to our political work—that within the bourgeois parties, and that in the shape of independent candidacies. These two phases, of course, cannot be equated in importance with each other; the work within the bourgeois parties is vastly

more important than that of supporting independent candidates. At this stage it constitutes our basic tactical line. Nevertheless, we must also pay close attention to the lesser question of independent candidates. Far better than in 1954, our work both within and without the bourgeois parties must be fully coordinated. It would be folly to call upon the workers to defeat the Republican (and also Democratic) reactionaries, and then to follow a contradictory policy outside of putting up independent candidates indiscriminately, a policy which, as pointed out above, could lead to serious working-class defeats and the negation of our work within the bourgeois parties.

As our Party *Program* indicates, there are no signs of a mass political orientation of the workers in the di-

rection of a labor-farmer party during the 1956 election campaign. Nevertheless, we must always be conscious that we are living in a period of rapidly mounting class tensions and of possible swift political realignments. This is indicated by such developments as the sharp crystallization of the Right wing in the Democratic Party, the collision between the Eisenhower and McCarthy forces, and the coming together of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. In any event, while carrying on our work for independent political action by the workers within the bourgeois parties, we must always be conscious that we are eventually heading towards the creation of a broad independent political organization, a labor-farmer party, and we must teach the masses this elementary fact.

The March issue of Political Affairs will contain a Resolution of the National Committee of the Communist Party, analyzing the 1954 elections and offering perspectives for the immediate future—ed.

The Farm Situation in the U. S.

By Pettis Perry*

THERE ARE FOUR BASIC questions relating to the developing agrarian crisis in our country.

First, the present agrarian crisis is developing within the chronic crisis in agriculture which has existed for several decades in the United States, with only a slight interruption during the end of the Second World War and in the immediate post-war period.

This whole general question and its relationship to industrial crisis, cannot be dealt with at any great length in this article. The essence of the matter, however, is summarized in Hyman Lumer's recent work, *War Economy and Crisis*, in these terms:

The farm crisis was an important contributing factor in the 1929 crash, by which in turn it was itself deepened. In this country, the depression of the thirties hit the small farmer with special severity. In 1932, farm income was only 5.8% of total national income, and in 1940 it was still less than 10%. The parity ratio fell to 55 in 1932, and by 1940 had climbed back only to a level of 80. The agricultural crisis persisted until well after Pearl Harbor, before

* This article was completed by its author a few days prior to his being jailed on a Smith Act frame-up conviction.—Ed.

the specter of overproduction was again temporarily exorcised by the exigencies of all-out war. (International Publishers, N. Y., 1954, p. 95)

Second, the agrarian economy in the United States is an increasingly monopolistic one. There has been an enormous growth in the factory-in-the-field type of farming coupled with a tremendous increase in mechanization, carrying with it a heavy need for constant capital outlay. A result has been that big farms have been growing bigger while the small and middle farmers have been and are being squeezed to the wall. Thus, in the decade 1940-50 over 700,000 small farmers were driven from the land. *Facts for Farmers*, in a recent issue, basing itself on the 1950 census, presented the following picture:

Farms of 1,000 acres and more have more than doubled their land holdings since 1920. By 1950 their total acreage had increased to 494,500,556, comprising 43% of all farm land in the U.S.

Although a million farms have disappeared in the period since 1920, the number of farms having 1,000 acres or more has nearly doubled, numbering 121,362 in 1950.

While these farms of 1,000 acres and more constitute only 2.3% of all

farms, they account for 30% of all wheat threshed, 26% of all vegetables, 14% of all cotton, and 25% of all cattle and calves sold alive.

Third, the U.S. agrarian economy, in the midst of and part of a monopoly capitalist system, is faced with great "overproduction." This crisis of overproduction grows increasingly acute with an ever-shrinking home market due, on the one hand, to the constant rise in the cost of living, and, on the other hand, to the expanding gap between what the farmer receives for his products and the outlay the farmer makes for the things he must buy. The shrinking home market is further aggravated by the shrinking world market as the big bourgeoisie, both rural and urban, persists in its refusal to engage in large scale East-West trade.

Fourth, and this we can barely mention in this place, the developing agrarian crisis takes place in the midst of the ever-deepening general crisis of world capitalism.

* * *

With this by way of necessary background, I turn now to a more specific analysis of the present agrarian situation and the tasks confronting us. Ten states in particular were studied for this purpose. Among these were four states representing heavy concentration of industry: Ohio with about 200,000 farms, Illinois with 195,000, Michigan 155,000, and Pennsylvania, 147,000. These were included in order to help emphasize the fact that the farm

question must no longer be considered as something confined to the so-called "agrarian" states of the mid-west or far-west or south.

The remaining six states were: two eastern—New York with 125,000 farms and New Jersey with 25,000; one western—California, with 137,000 farms; two southern—Texas, with 331,000 farms and Alabama with 211,000; and one mid-western agrarian state—Iowa, with 203,000 farms.

In studying this question it is necessary that we focus our attention on that which is of fundamental concern for us, namely, the status and condition of the poor and the middle farmers. A key set of figures in comprehending this is that which details the percentage of farmers who are in fact part-time farmers, i.e., working more than 100 days off the farm, and the percentage who realize from the sale of their farm produce less than \$250 a year. Here is a table presenting these figures for several states:

State	% working off farm 100 days or more	% earning \$250 or less from farm sales
Pa.	37.1	24.2
N. Y.	39.4	16.9
N. J.	26.3	14.8
Iowa	9.3	3.8
Texas	28.4	19.5
Ala.	23.3	27.9

The hiring of labor on farms is another good index as to the economic status of the farm operator. As of 1950 there were 5,379,250 farms in the United States. Of this total,

only 186,207 expended as much as \$2,500 a year on hired labor, while there were 2,700,000 farms which had no labor expenditure at all. Generally, the average income of the farm family, in terms of the 1937 dollar, amounted in 1954 to less than \$700, an hourly wage rate of some 17c.

In connection with this whole question of farmers' income it is necessary to bear in mind that this year a large number of farmers will be denied price support—that is, they are provided with 75% price support because they are not designated by law as producers of basic crops. It is only cotton, wheat, rice, corn, peanuts and tobacco that are labelled "basic" and stabilized at 90% of parity as of now. Notice that neither meat nor milk nor vegetables are called "basic." This is an indication of the kind of situation which the so-called "flexible parity" policy has created for millions of rural folk.

* * *

Of special concern in any consideration of the American farming masses was the catastrophe that hit major agricultural regions last year in the form of drought—a catastrophe, let it be said self-critically, that aroused very little attention, from the Left.

To give some idea of the proportions of this catastrophe, let it be noted that large proportions of entire states were called disaster areas by the Federal government, though actual assistance from the Eisenhower Administration was notable

by its absence. In Alabama, 56 out of 67 counties were drought-stricken; in Georgia, 154 out of 159; Kansas, 41 out of 105; Louisiana, 28 out of 64; Missouri, 81 out of 114; Minnesota, 48 out of 82; etc. In the southwest, let it be added, 16 million acres of farm land were ruined by dust storms and an additional 30 millions were severely damaged.

Now, the large grower, equipped with considerable capital, can afford to and does insure his crop to its full value, and often to more than its full value. But in the case of the small farmers—of hundreds of thousands of them—their insurance if they have any at all, generally comes to about one-tenth or even less of the actual value of the crop. With them, as is immediately apparent, a flood or drought disaster is truly disastrous.

There is no disaster insurance by the Federal government to guarantee payment to the farmers and there is no low-cost crop insurance available. And the losses from disaster pile up in addition to the ever expanding "scissor"—the gap between what the farmer realizes from his crop and what he spends to buy the things he must have. And remember that large farming areas in this country have faced flood and drought disaster five times during the past five years, meaning losses amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, and all this with no assistance from the Federal government.

It is clear, then, that an approach to a farm program must demand

not only 100% parity which will be of some help in narrowing the "scissors," but must also raise in the most serious terms the demand for effective disaster protection—protection against drought, flood, premature cold, insects, etc. And along with this goes the demand not only for protection, but also for prevention, and this encompasses such items as large-scale dam construction, and other public works in rural regions, which, in turn, would have the additional advantage of supplying work for the mounting unemployed.

Of central concern, too, for the American farming masses is the question of credit. The fact is that, today, to conduct any kind of a commercial farming operation—that is, to be in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year category of the farming population—one requires about 200% more capital than he did back in 1920. This makes the question of credit terms, of the forbidding of foreclosures for non-payment of debts, and the whole question of farmers' indebtedness of transcendent importance.

The struggle for peace is, of course, basic to the interests of the farming masses as to all humanity. But there are certain special considerations here that manifest themselves in the fact, for example, that practically every farm organization in the country has taken a decisive stand against U.M.T., and the National Grange at its last convention not only re-affirmed its opposition to U.M.T., but also demanded a gen-

eral reduction in armaments. Bear in mind that when the draft takes a son in the city, the father-worker loses a son; but when this happens on the farm, the father-farmer loses a son and a key helper in the farm work. (Often the farmer loses a daughter, too, for as the sons leave the farming areas, the daughters move to the cities, where opportunities for marriage and for a family are greater.) When it is known that the average age of the mid-west, full-owner farmer is 53 years, then the full impact of the loss of the son-worker becomes clearer. The whole question of the peace effort and especially opposition to the draft is of special consequence, then, to the farming masses.

Working farmers are very much aggravated, too, over the question of government favoritism to the rich farmers and over the question of plain graft and corruption resulting in enormously profitable handouts. An example of this was the fairly recent grain scandal involving millions upon millions of dollars, which finally came to court, resulting in a fine and a suspended sentence. Here some five million bushels of wheat, admittedly not fit for human consumption, were brought into the country, mixed with good grain and sold on the market as first-rate stock. Involved in this scandal were some of the biggest grain corporations in the country, and the whole scandal outraged the mass of the farming population.

Contrast this with the manner in

which the Federal government handled the recent case involving Negro strawberry-growers in Louisiana, a case which itself throws much light on aspects of the agrarian question in our country.

Here was a case where a group of Negro strawberry-growers, on a plot of land amounting to but three acres, decided to form a cooperative in an effort to force the big chain stores to give them about \$400 a year for their crop. The Federal government, through its Department of Justice, instituted an anti-trust [!] suit against this group of farmers, and got a conviction. The men were sentenced to heavy fines and to prison terms ranging from six to nine months. This happened while the same so-called Department of Justice, under Brownell, was dropping anti-trust suits against oil and aluminum monopolies.

In this case, the government itself had to admit that the Negro farmers "received a lower average price per crate" of strawberries than did white, more prosperous farmers, and that they had to pay interest on loans which was twice that charged those richer farmers.

Again, most self-critically, it must be stated that the Left was not present in this whole struggle, and that it was the Social-Democratic National Agricultural Workers Union that was involved.

Undoubtedly, the Federal government rushed into this case, at the behest of the rich, in order to block efforts at organization on the part

of poor farmers. Additionally, of course, was the fact that here were Negro farmers in the South organizing, and, evidence shows, actually attracting certain sections of poor white strawberry farmers at the time suit was instituted. Involved, then, was the whole question of Negro-white unity, Negro-labor unity, as well as that of the poor rural masses.

* * *

Notable during the past year has been a developing concern with the farm question on the part of the organized labor movement. Some Internationals stand out in this respect, especially the United Packinghouse Workers and the United Electrical Workers. The latter's pamphlet, *Farmer-Labor Team Work*, distributed in 150,000 copies, was itself of great significance. On a more limited scale, approaches toward farmer labor unity were made by the United Auto Workers, the Mine-Mill, and the Miners. One of the issues raised by these workers' organizations that has great possibilities for united action was that of demanding that the Federal government make available to the unemployed food from its warehouses full of agricultural commodities.

Moreover, in the past year, the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. have officially come out in favor of the farmers' demands for high-price support.

Such developments call for the fullest participation and, where possible, leadership from Left forces who appreciate the central import-

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ance of real labor-farmer unity, not least to further the perspectives for advanced political activity in 1956. Such a perspective requires, if it is to be realized, a basic turn to the rural population, especially to the small towns of this country.

Similarly, there can be no effective approach in our Party on the question of industrial concentration which does not take into account the question of the countryside, with its small industrial towns. Again, there arises the whole question of four million unorganized agricultural workers in our country, plus the fact that 40% of all the farmers are in fact part-time farmers only.

* * *

I would like to discuss briefly certain ideological problems and differences that have arisen. These arise, fundamentally, from a "Left" sectarianism. Thus, one hears that support of 100% parity is wrong because it results in financial benefits for the rich farmers, National Dairy or Borden's. But that is incidental to our main emphasis, which is to raise the living standard of the poor, and if, in the course of this the big bourgeoisie—controlling the state apparatus—reaps certain benefits, we must face the fact that the monopoly bourgeoisie does indeed control the government. But we do fight for the immediate and the real interests of the masses, including the farming masses, and 100% parity will benefit them.

Similarly, others argue that in the name of "the interest of the working

class" we must not fight for high-price support, for in closing the "scissors" one hurts the workers. This is wrong, for the fight must be conducted in terms of battling for increases for the masses both on the farm and in the cities, in terms of prices realized for crops and in terms of wages. Moreover, the struggle to close the gap between what farmers receive and what they pay is at the same time a struggle against the high prices charged by the monopolists who control the manufacture and marketing of finished products.

"Left" arguments, too, are used to justify opposition to work within the Farmers' Union and the Granges, where, as it happens, there are 500,000 and 800,000 farm families respectively. This is justified on the grounds, for example, that the National Farmers' Union leadership, supporting the Korean war, is "reactionary," or that among the Grange leadership are bankers, or that the Grange is "only" a social organization.

The fact is that hundreds of thousands of the members are not bankers, but working farmers, and the fact is that even in an organization which is "only" social, real problems arise and real alliances can be formed on important issues. The fact is that the farming masses are in these organizations and if we mean to learn what they want and how they think and what they need and if we want to be effective among the farming masses we must be where they are.

Others argue, more generally, that

the farmers are petty-bourgeois and therefore anti-working class. But, of course, this whole question was a root of the Menshevik-Bolshevik quarrel fifty years ago, and comrades will recall that Lenin held that while all sorts of petty-bourgeois illusions and limitations would be present among the farming masses and that the decisive leadership had to come from the working class, that it was also true that progress required working class alliance with the farming masses. This was possible and natural because those farming masses were, in fact, oppressed and exploited by the monopolists; they collided with the big banks and insurance companies and other giant financial concentrations. The rural poor must be won over by the working class. The Communist Party must fight for their immediate interests—as their long-term interests—as part of the whole effort to defeat reaction, stem the drive towards war and to build mass independent political action.

We must take up issues which are burning questions with the farming masses right now and here and not become bogged down and swamped in the morass of Leftism, which frequently masks Right-opportunist action of the crassest kind.

* * *

I want to close by reiterating and summarizing certain basic tasks and issues that confront us as concerns the farming question.

First, there is the struggle for 100% parity for all crops, involving the poor and middle farmer.

There is pressing need for a vast program designed to eliminate disasters which especially hit the poor and middle farmer, and to provide full disaster insurance for those farmers.

A major fight should be developed in terms of getting the Government to use its vast surplus foods to eliminate the actual suffering of the unemployed and other poverty-stricken masses in this country. This will help in terms of building farmer-labor unity.

The question of East-West trade is of vital concern to the farming masses, and is central to the whole effort to secure peaceful co-existence between the capitalist and the Socialist worlds.

The question of UMT and vast armament programs is of special concern to the farming masses and we should bring forward our opposition to these war-provoking actions.

There is need within the Party itself for much more extensive and systematic concern with the whole farm question, and there should be educational work directed at advancing the theoretical and specific grasp of the question among the members.

We need a general national perspective on the whole agrarian situation that must be supplemented with a concrete state approach because conditions vary from state to state.

Abolish Jim-Crow Prisons!

By Benjamin J. Davis

In December, 1954, Comrade Benjamin J. Davis, a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party—and confined, under the Smith Act, since 1951—issued a ringing challenge to the Jim Crow practices of the Federal government in its prisons.

It is characteristic of our Comrade Davis that, though in prison, he continues to deal strong blows against the abomination of Jim Crow. Comrade Davis, as a member of the New York City Council, was a leader in the fight to end discrimination in every phase of metropolitan life, from housing and jobs to police brutality and baseball.

The full text of Comrade Davis' historic Petition is printed below:

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, JR.,

Petitioner,

v.

HERBERT BROWNELL, JR.,
Attorney General of the United
States, and JAMES V. BENNETT,
Director of the Bureau of
Prisons of the Department of
Justice of the United States,

Respondents.

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGES OF THE UNITED STATES
DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

The petitioner, Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., for himself and for all other Negro inmates similarly situated in prisons and penitentiaries under the jurisdiction of the United States, by Ralph E. Powe, his attorney duly

authorized to bring this proceeding, on information and belief respectfully alleges as follows:

1. This is an application for a writ of mandamus to direct the Attorney General of the United States and the United States Director of Prisons to discontinue the unlawful and unconstitutional practice of segregating the petitioner and other Negro inmates of prisons and penitentiaries under the jurisdiction of the United States from other inmates thereof and otherwise discriminating against the petitioner and other Negro inmates of such institutions.

2. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under the Fifth and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States; Sections 4001 through 4081 inclusive of Title 18 of the United States Code and statutes related thereto; and the federal civil rights statutes.

3. Petitioner is a Negro confined in the United State Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana. The said penitentiary is under the direction of the respondent, James V. Bennett, Director of the United States Bureau of Prisons. The Bureau of Prisons is governed by rules promulgated by the respondent, Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General of the United States. The respondent Brownell is also charged by law with the duty of classifying the inmates of United States prisons, making provision for their proper government, and directing the manner in which they shall be quartered and furnished with subsistence.

4. Petitioner was convicted in 1949 of violation of the Smith Act and was sentenced to a term of five years imprisonment. The judgment of conviction was affirmed by the United States Supreme Court, two justices dissenting, on June 4, 1951. On July 2, 1951, pursuant to order of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, petitioner surrendered and commenced the service of his sentence. On or about July 6, 1951, he was transferred to Terre Haute Penitentiary.

5. The Terre Haute Penitentiary is one of six institutions of its class operated by the Bureau of Prisons of the Department of Justice. It contains approximately 1,200 prisoners, of whom about 250 are Negroes. The Negro prisoners, as a group, are segregated from other prisoners in the dormitories, in the mess hall and at entertainment. Petitioner is a part of the Negro group.

6. All Negro prisoners, including the petitioner, are confined to cells or dormitories which are located in a section of the penitentiary reserved only for Negroes. All other prisoners occupy cells or dormitories in a section of the penitentiary reserved only for non-Negro prisoners.

7. The procedure upon entering the mess hall or the entertainment hall is for Negro prisoners to enter as a group separately from other prisoners

and to occupy separate tables in such halls, and petitioner has been classified and segregated with the other Negroes in the group.

8. In the auditorium, gymnasium and in other places set aside for entertainment, all Negroes are seated in one section while whites are seated in another section of said auditorium, gymnasium and other places set aside for entertainment.

9. Substantially similar practices obtain as specifically alleged in Paragraphs 7 and 8 herein in all other prisons and penitentiaries under the jurisdiction of the United States.

10. The aforesaid segregation of petitioner and other Negro inmates and the discrimination against petitioner and other Negro inmates is a violation of the rights of the petitioner guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution; and a violation of his right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment as guaranteed by the Eighth Amendment. Such segregation and discrimination also violates the laws and statutes appertaining to the Government of United States prisons. Such laws do not authorize the segregation of prisoners according to race, color or creed and do not authorize discrimination against prisoners on the basis of race, color or creed. Section 4001 of Title 18 of the United States Code provides that the Attorney General may "classify the inmates" of United States prisons; but Section 4081 of the same title provides for the standards to be observed in the classification of prisoners and makes no reference to race or color.

11. Petitioner is able and willing to comply, and has heretofore complied, with such standards of meritorious conduct and exemplary work as may be required of white and Negro prisoners and he is entitled to enjoy without discrimination all of the privileges and benefits accorded to white prisoners. The segregation of petitioner and other Negro prisoners from white prisoners as aforesaid is personally offensive to the petitioner and other prisoners involved, and it tends to foster and encourage racial prejudice, contrary to the announced policy of the United States.

12. It is the duty of the respondents in obedience to the mandate of the statutes aforesaid and the Constitution of the United States to abolish the aforesaid practice of segregation and discrimination against Negro prisoners in federal penitentiaries. More particularly, under Section 4001 of Title 18 the Attorney General should be required to "promulgate rules" for the government of the penitentiary which shall comply with the said laws and with the Constitution; he should be required as directed by the said section to "classify the inmates; and provide for their proper government***"; he should be required, as provided by Section 4042 of Title 18, to "provide suitable quarters" which should be free of unlawful segregation and discrimination; he should be directed to classify and segregate prisoners in

the penitentiary as directed by Section 4081 of Title 18 in accordance with the criteria therein set forth and without reference to race or color.

13. The petitioner has no other adequate remedy for enforcing the respondents' compliance with their duties as aforesaid than an application for a writ of mandamus. Petitioner does not seek to review or control or in any way interfere with the exercise by the respondents of any discretion reposed in them by law. Mandamus is a proper remedy, and the only remedy, whereby the relief sought herein may be afforded.

WHEREFORE, petitioner prays that a writ of mandamus be issued out of this Court directing and commanding Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General of the United States, and James V. Bennett, Director of the Bureau of Prisons of the Department of Justice of the United States,

(a) To terminate and abolish the practice of segregating and classifying petitioner and other prisoners in federal penitentiaries for any purpose whatsoever in accordance with race or color;

(b) To terminate and abolish the practice of segregating petitioner and other Negroes in mess halls and entertainment halls in federal penitentiaries;

(c) To terminate and abolish the practice of providing segregated sleeping quarters for petitioner and other Negroes in federal penitentiaries;

(d) To make available to petitioner and other Negroes without discrimination all benefits and privileges which are or may be extended to white prisoners for meritorious conduct and exemplary work or otherwise in federal prisons;

and

for such other and further relief as may be just.

BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, JR.,
Petitioner

By RALPH E. POWE, Attorney

On the Fight Against White Chauvinism

By Walter Williams

IN RECENT MONTHS, especially since the historic decision of the Supreme Court on May 17, 1954, outlawing segregated schools, much concern has been expressed over the relationship of our Party to the current struggles for Negro rights and to the activities and developments in the Negro people's movement.

Similarly, there has been much concern over the question of how matters stand with our Party at this time on the struggle against white chauvinism.

Both of these concerns are fully justified. The realization of the 1956 coalition objectives depends in no small measure upon the extent to which the demands and activities of the Negro people's movement are fully integrated and incorporated into the broad popular movement of the whole democratic peace-loving people in our country. The vitality of the Negro people's struggles for full democratic rights is one the most decisive agents for spurring the coalition to new and higher levels of activity, consciousness and unity.

Additionally, the objectives of the Negro people's movement itself, popularly phrased in the slogan "Free by '63," require serious and

devoted attention for their realization.

Thus, it is highly desirable and timely that there should be much discussion and concern in the ranks of our Party and in the progressive movement generally on this question. To achieve the immediate goals of the people's coalition and the Negro people's movement, in concert, requires a far more energetic and creative devotion to the tasks in this field than is presently the case. In this connection, this article chooses to focus upon the question of the struggle against white chauvinism which, in the view of the writer, is of very great importance in advancing our work toward the ends indicated above.

* * *

The present-day needs of struggle against white chauvinism are as urgent as ever—nay, they are even more so. The decision of the Supreme Court outlawing public school segregation has presented a major challenge to the democratic forces: to secure the full implementation of that victory in the next immediate period.

One of the first attempts at apply-

ing the new ruling took place in Delaware. The conscience of the world was shocked by the arrogant, Nazi-like defiance and violence which greeted the initiative of the small town of Milford. Integration of Negro and white students was proceeding peacefully—not without some rumblings but with no major incidents—until the appearance on the scene of one Bryant Bowles, a rabid white supremacist. This bigoted racist intruded himself into the affairs of the citizens of Milford and set into motion a series of events which was to shock the conscience of every decent American. Bowles drew his weapons from the ruling-class arsenal of white chauvinism. He played upon the backwardness and fears of certain sections of Milford's white population, reviving every filthy canard and vile slander against the Negro people that has been fabricated over the past 300 years. From the fulmination of this KKK agitator, latent forces of chauvinism were stimulated and aroused into noisy demonstrations. The movement, initiated by Bowles in the name of the so-called "National Association for the Advancement of White People" (NAAWP), was not only criminal and shocking. More than that, it demonstrated the overwhelming importance of the question of white chauvinism, its bomb-like force in torpedoing the advances on the front of struggle for Negro rights and American democracy.

Standing on a platform of white

supremacy and Dixiecrat reaction, Bowles was able to attract several crowds ranging in size from 2,000 to 3,000 persons. From these audiences he raised large sums of money to finance his program. He was able to move students and parents alike to riot, and violent disorder. Through his movement, he was able to disrupt the whole school system of Delaware and sent some vigorous vibrations into the neighboring regions of Baltimore and Washington. As matters now stand, the schools of Milford are still segregated, thanks to the intervention and organizing "genius" of Bryant Bowles, Florida-born white supremacist.

But the chauvinist-inspired demonstrations in Milford were but a dry run for desperate counter-struggles which lie ahead. Bowles is not simply a pathological element from the lunatic fringe. Behind him stand powerful forces who have vested interests in Negro oppression. The emergence of the White Citizens' Councils throughout the South, operating alongside the NAAWP, is an indication of the forces at work to defeat desegregation. These Councils are composed of Southern bankers and substantial business forces in a position to squeeze economically Negroes and their white associates who are joined with them in the school fight. Moreover, Bowles has been "sprung," at least for the moment, from the court action against him growing out of his conduct in the Milford situation.

As the year 1955 unfolds, the larger

part of the job of realizing the victory contained in the Supreme Court decision will undoubtedly be undertaken by the Negro people, North and South. And while they engage the enemy on this front, they will call upon their allies and reserves to join them for a decisive thrust.

Anticipating this, the Bourbons of the South are resorting to every fraud and maneuver within their capabilities to thwart and defeat the forward surge of the Negro people. While Negro students have so far been admitted to formerly lily-white schools in more than two-score localities under the new ruling, the Black Belt states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina have passed enabling legislation to liquidate their public school systems, toward the objective of making them private to circumvent the Supreme Court order.

Naturally the ideological justification for all of this is the doctrine of white supremacy. Thus, the mass character of the struggle against white chauvinism is emphasized. As the struggle to implement the school victory sharpens, the opposing forces will reach ever more deeply into the cesspool of anti-Negro prejudice to separate the Negro people from their allies, to isolate them and turn them back from the threshold of victory. All of this calls for a new level of struggle against white chauvinism, a level which meets the challenge of the present-day struggle for the democratic demands of the Negro people.

The initiative for this new propulsion of white chauvinism into the arena of struggle is not confined to the die-hard Bourbons of the South. White chauvinism is the ideology of the ruling class. It is "above all," as Comrade Foster says, "the weapon of fascists." In the present-day political life of our country, McCarthyism is the face of fascism. As McCarthyism jockeys for position, regroups to overcome defeats, or moves to forward positions in American political life, it draws upon such ideological weapons as white-chauvinism and anti-Semitism in order to build a base for itself among the prejudices and backwardness of such sections of the population as may subscribe to either, or both, of these fascist doctrines.

Alongside the menace of fascism, the country is also faced with the danger of war. Currently, the ruling circles of the nation are frantically pushing the rearmament of Western Germany. Their purpose in doing this is to increase the tensions in the international situation with the hope that out of this will come the opportunity for realizing their primary objective: an all-out war against the Soviet Union. The plans for the rearming of Germany include, necessarily, the renazification of this strategic land. And this, in turn, entails the stimulation of Nazi ideology, which when spilled over into the special conditions of American life means, in addition to intensified anti-Semitism, intensified white chauvinism.

Therefore, both dangers — the danger of war and the danger of fascism—are of reactionary origin and spawn a reactionary offensive of white chauvinist assaults upon the Negro people.

In this connection, one can recall that the echoes of the cannon-fire of World War II had not yet died away when the Truman Administration embarked on the path of world domination for United States capital. Above the din of those echoes there arose the all-too-familiar sound of rifle-shot, pistol-shot, and the sharp crack of the whip directed against the advancing Negro people. The anti-fascist war was not even finally concluded when the Ferguson brothers were shot down in uniform in cold blood by a civilian policeman in Freeport, L. I. And then there followed the shooting of Negro veteran Maceo Snipes, the eye-gouging of Negro veteran Isaac Woodard, and countless other crimes spawned out of the "cold-war" counteroffensive against the bonds and alliances developed during the anti-fascist struggle.

Against the Negro people a cruel vengeance was directed. An unprecedented wave of police brutality followed through the post-war years. Bombings of homes, KKK lynch terror and intensified economic suppression were all brought to bear upon the Negroes. Negro leaders and Negro organizations were attacked and victimized. Job gains of Negro workers were systematically and efficiently wiped out. Ghetto housing

for Negro residents was intensified and efforts to break out were met with violent resistance. Thus, the reactionary course of the "cold war" (with its fearsome moments of nearly becoming the "hot war" desired by the imperialists) has produced a bloody and shameful trail of attacks upon the Negro people.

It is clear, therefore, that the American people, who are today faced continually with the dangers of war and fascism, must necessarily be bombarded with the ideological weapons of the ruling class in order to browbeat and stupefy them into an acceptance of its reactionary program. Herein lies a main source of the new propulsion of white chauvinism into the arena of struggle.

There is another principal—if not decisive—source, and that is one which flows from the current economic situation in our land. The Negro people are undeniably bearing a vastly disproportionate share of unemployment and other consequences accruing from the depressed state of the nation's economy. Layoffs and part-time employment are the fate of many thousands of Negro workers today. High prices, excessive rents, and poor housing all exact a heavy toll from a people already economically overburdened. From this state of affairs the big monopolies and corporations reap enormous profits.

There is little risk of error in the calculation that big business will seek to further widen the gap between Negro and white unemployed as it introduces greater speed-up, automa-

tion and technological advances in its drive to extract maximum profits from the entire laboring population. To accomplish this greater exploitation, the ideology of white chauvinism is heavily relied upon.

The drive against the Negro workers is also important to the bourgeoisie for weakening the trade unions and rendering them less effective on the economic and political fronts. In 1938, there were about 700,000 Negro workers in the trade unions. Today the figure stands at close to 2½ million. At least one tactical objective of the bourgeoisie is clear: to split off this force in order to weaken the whole.

Particularly under these conditions, the labor movement has a decisive responsibility in the fight against white chauvinism—a responsibility which must be lived up to in its own self-interest. The record of the A.F.L. is, however, far from impressive on this score. To the contrary, as Comrade Foster writes, it “has cultivated this political menace,” holding stubbornly to anti-Negro restrictions on membership and job opportunities in countless of its narrow craft jurisdictions. While the C.I.O. has reflected a more progressive influence, it too must face up to new responsibilities for heightened struggle.

In 1947, for example, the C.I.O. launched its Southern organizing campaign, “Operation Dixie.” Large sums of money were spent and dozens of union organizers were sent into the South. But the C.I.O.

chauvinistically rejected the leading role of the Negro workers in the South and embraced the ideology of the Southern white bosses. Thus, Operation Dixie ran aground on the craggy shoals of white chauvinism. This was not only damaging to the Negro workers, but to the white workers as well.

* * *

From all this, the conclusion can and must be drawn that the present-day needs for struggle against white chauvinism are most urgent. As Comrade Bob Thompson put it:

Without an alliance, without the forging of a common front of struggle, between the American working class and the Negro people, *there can be no successful struggle against fascism in the U.S. . . .*

The working class cannot build such an alliance if its attitude and approach continue to be warped by the capitalist ideology of white supremacy.

How, then, do matters stand concerning the Party's relationship to the urgent present-day needs of struggle against white chauvinism?

From its earliest years, the Communist Party has always recognized the special character of the Negro question in our land. In the 1920's, the Party fought, wrote Comrade Foster, “with characteristic energy, devotion, and incisiveness” for the right of Negroes to work in industry and belong to unions; against lynching; against white chauvinism; for the full social equality of the Negro

people. As Comrade Foster records that early period:*

Wherever the Negroes were attacked and oppressed, there, in the measure of their limited numbers and resources, were to be found the Communists. . . . Because of these activities, enemies of the Party characterized it as a Negro Party, a title which the Communists proudly accepted. The election platform of 1928 said, "The Communist Party is the Party of the liberation of the Negro race from all oppression."

This zealous devotion to the Negro people's struggles continued throughout the 20's and 30's, resulting in an overwhelmingly impressive record of achievement in the fight for Negro rights. It was the intrusion of the notorious theories of revisionism during the period of World War II by the liquidationist Browder which disoriented the Party from its correct path of struggle on the Negro question. Pointing to the beginnings of the industrialization of the South as a consequence of the war boom, Browder held that the Negro question was solving itself and that the Negro question as a special question would no longer exist in our country. From this position, he proceeded to liquidate the Party in the South and diverted the Party's efforts away from the Negroes' struggles of that time.

Thus, a most significant point in the Party's struggle for Negro rights (and against white chauvinism) was the rejection of Browder's

opportunist revisionist line on this question and his expulsion from the Communist Party in July, 1945. For it was here that the Party returned to the correct Marxist-Leninist principles of a vanguard party and re-established its basic position on the Negro question in America.

At a special plenum of the Party in December, 1946, which was called to consider the Negro question, the Party's scientific position was more clearly and definitively elaborated, to include a program for basic land reform in the South; the right of Negroes to vote and hold office; for the "full economic, social and political equality for the Negro people"; for attaining representative government in the South; for the right to self-determination for the developing Negro nation, and other demands.

On the question of white chauvinism, the newly reconstituted Party declared:

A firm alliance of labor and the progressive forces generally with the Negro people is required by the present struggle against reaction. This alliance demands, in the first place, a constant fight to eradicate the doctrines and practices of white chauvinism in all their forms, among all sections of the population, and especially whenever they manifest themselves in the labor and progressive movement. . . .

By its own actions, the Communist Party must set an example before the whole labor movement. . . .

Towards this end, the Communist Party . . . as part of its constant fight for Negro rights, will strive to uproot false theories and ban race prejudice

* Wm. Z. Foster, *The Negro People in American History* (International, 1954) pp. 455-56.

from the labor and progressive movement. This is imperative for welding firmly the alliance of the labor and progressive movement with the Negro people in the common struggle against reaction and the threat of fascism.

Another high-point in the struggle against white chauvinism and the fight for Negro rights was the important campaign launched in mid-year of 1949. The great significance of that campaign was the heightened theoretical and ideological consciousness of the Negro question which resulted from it in the ranks of the Party. Numerous specific struggles were initiated in that period, combining the Party's practical work in this field with its regenerated and sharpened theoretical understanding.

There were, of course, other important high-points. Party conventions, district and national, special articles and practical struggles all combined to provide the Party with a continuously enriched treasury of knowledge and experience on this dynamic, important question.

* * *

Such then, briefly sketched, is the history of the Party's struggle against white chauvinism over the past decade. The achievements of our Party are all the more impressive when one considers the corresponding events instituted by Big Business reaction.

During this same decade, we witnessed the rapid deterioration of the anti-fascist alliance and its replacement with the U.S. bi-partisan "cold

war" program. It was the period which saw the ruthless bid for world domination by U.S. imperialism; the creation and rise of McCarthy and McCarthyism; U.S. intervention in Korea and the resultant 3-year long Korean war; the return of the Republican Party to national leadership. It was this period which also saw the most intense attacks upon the Communist Party, the imprisonment of its leaders, and the victimization of hundreds of liberals and progressives in the labor movement, people's organizations, and in the government itself.

In the face of these assaults, our Party was able to be of some assistance in gaining important victories on the Negro rights front of struggle. To recall only a few will serve to prove the point.

Who can forget the monumental struggle to break down the lily-white housing policy in Stuyvesant Town, initiated by our Party, led by Comrade Benjamin J. Davis, and participated in by a broad section of the population, Negro and white?

Nor should we forget the great struggles initiated by our Party during this period on the questions of police brutality and lynch terror. It was our Party which initiated the movements in defense of such Negro victims as the Martinsville Seven, the Trenton Six, Rosalie Ingram, Willie McGee, and others. These movements reached considerable mass proportions, reverberating all around the world.

It was also during this period that

the fight for Negro representation received new emphasis. From the election of Adam C. Powell to Congress and Ben Davis to the New York City Council, to the more recent elections of dozens of Negroes to public office, South as well as North, including some "firsts" since the 1890's, the achievements on this question have made an indelible democratic imprint upon the history of our times.

On the issue of jobs for Negro workers, even though the offensive of the bourgeoisie has considerably outdistanced the defensive efforts of the democratic forces, it would be wrong to slough off the activity around jobs and job discrimination which unfolded in the period under discussion. In a number of Negro communities across the country, broad unity efforts were launched to win jobs for Negro men and women. Retail chain stores, grocery chains, trustified industries such as beer, television and radio, airlines and railroad, were exposed and joined in battle.

Since 1945, twelve states have adopted FEPC laws, and thirty-one cities now have local ordinances prohibiting job discrimination. Even the Cadillac-crowd stopping over at the White House was forced to recognize the movement on this question, issuing its anemic Compliance with Government Contracts order.

Can any honest person deny that our Party organized and participated in some of the most important initial thrusts on this front?

Presently in our ranks, there is the tendency to take a dim view of the Party's fight for Negro rights. This tendency undoubtedly arises out of an anxious and sincere concern over the present state of things wherein there is a serious ebb in Party initiative on the fight for Negro rights. But one gets lost in the forest because he has forgotten the path over which he has journeyed. The tendency to deprecate the Party's efforts in the historically recent past in the struggle for Negro rights and against white chauvinism is of no service to finding a solution for the problems of the moment. Indeed, such deprecation is quite harmful.

For example, some comrades, focusing exclusively on the weaknesses of the Party's 1949 campaign against white chauvinism, today vehemently characterize the line of that campaign as "Left-sectarian." True, there were plenty of instances of Leftist-sectarian errors and distortions in the conduct of the campaign. But the political line was—and remains—valid. As we have tried to indicate above, the 1949 campaign was one of several significant high-points in the implementation and extension of a basic line flowing from the rejection of Browder's revisionism which sought to liquidate the struggle for Negro rights and which undermined the Party's vigilance in the fight against white chauvinism.

Further, we have heard some comrades tremblingly express the hope that, in its efforts to overcome the existing lag in its work in the present-

day struggles for Negro rights, the Party will "not return to the period of '49." But to overcome the lag, it is precisely to such a period that our Party must return. Admittedly, we can and must avoid the errors, weaknesses, distortions and excesses which pushed their way into the 1949 campaign. Nonetheless, we need to return to a period of intensive ideological and theoretical struggle within the Party on this question. We need to return to a period of practical work which energetically employs our theory and ideology to the production of concrete, tangible struggles. And all of this must be done under the new political and tactical considerations of the present line of battle.

Those who tremble, ostensibly over the past weaknesses, are in reality trembling over the clearly urgent necessity for coming to grips with at least two of the major inter-related problems facing our Party at this moment: (a) how to close immediately the gap between the present high level of activity in the Negro people's movement and the contradictory low level of Party initiative in the struggle for Negro rights; and (b) how to mount the struggle against white chauvinism, broadly and specifically, to overcome the new propulsion of this ruling class poison.

Can the first problem be solved abstracted from the second? No—and neither can the second be solved abstracted from the first. The tremblers would like to conduct the fight for Negro rights without renewing

our initiative in the struggle against white chauvinism. This is impossible. White chauvinism is the main danger to the struggle for Negro rights. The two contend against each other, and cannot be separated in practice anymore than they can in theory. But let us leave the tremblers to their gloomy fears. May the "ebb" comfort them.

Some of our forces tend to consider that the fight against white chauvinism has, insofar as our own ranks are concerned, been substantially won. From this estimate, they proceed to a position of philosophical acceptance of "not-too-serious" and subtle manifestations of white chauvinism. Such a position of course, leads to abandonment of the struggle. Rationalization cannot be substituted for comradesly criticism and friendly education.

Then, there is the view that goes something like this: Our tactical approach to the over-all problems of the day requires our activity in the mainstream of the organized life of the people. In this broad stream, the masses have their prejudices, big or small, which cannot be combatted by progressives without the risk of being "exposed" and/or becoming isolated from these organizations.

This is a Rightist position of accommodation. It inevitably leads to a sponge-like relationship to the mass movement. The sponge absorbs everything—filth, waste, water, substance, etc. To be a sponge is one thing. To be a Communist is quite another thing. Communists must

understand that the fight for Negro rights is neither "leftist" nor divisive in the people's movement. The "Left" has had—and will continue to have—an important initiative on this question, but it does not have either hegemony or monopoly of the struggle for the bourgeois-democratic rights of the Negro people. Moreover, wrong tactics will invariably lead to division, isolation, etc. But the issue itself is a principled issue which, when combined with correct tactics, is most unifying. It is the absence of the injection of the Negro rights fight into the popular movement which is divisive, not the other way around.

How we conduct the struggle against white chauvinism is of very great importance. Comrade Foster has rendered an invaluable service to our Party in defining the Right and "Left" deviations in the fight for Negro rights and against white chauvinism.

In the struggle for Negro rights, (writes Comrade Foster) there is always to be combatted the main danger of white chauvinism, which is a Right danger, and a high barrier in the fight for Negro rights. We must also fight the lesser Right danger of Negro bourgeois nationalism. White chauvinism, as it manifests itself among the masses of the working class and in the ranks of the Party, is a reflection of white bourgeois nationalist ideology and it is Right-opportunism of the worst character. Right-opportunism underestimates the significance of white chauvinism, both without and within the Party, treats it as a minor evil, and

makes little or no fight against it; it is, in short, essentially a surrender to the white chauvinists. . . .

The Party cannot fight either the main danger of white chauvinism or the lesser danger of Negro nationalism with policies . . . heavily handicapped by Leftist sectarianism. Leftism always cultivates, not weakens Right dangers.

Here is a basic conception, indispensable to mastering the struggle on two fronts: against the main danger, white chauvinism, and against the lesser dangers, Left-sectarianism and Negro nationalism. The past weaknesses in our work, ably defined and discussed by Comrade Foster, must not be ignored. Neither must they be exaggerated to nullify the positive. Our mistakes and errors must be faced up to self-critically. This is necessary in terms of directing our main attention to the masses in the major labor and people's organizations—organizations which today are substantially under the leadership of reformists, Social-Democrats and Right-wing forces.

Our Party has put forward a full and realistic program of struggle for Negro rights. This is contained in the Party's general program for fighting against the menace of fascism and the threatening danger of world war, for peace, democracy and economic well-being. Our program is in complete harmony with the interests and aspirations of the Negro people and their democratic allies, their demands and their willingness to conduct the struggle. Our vanguard task is to unite programma-

tically all the elements who are committed to the struggle, to win ever more new commitments, and to forge strong and lasting bonds of solidarity between the Negro people's movement and the broad popular movement of the nation's democratic rank and file population.

Note should be taken here of the more or less recent outcroppings of Negro bourgeois nationalism in the Party's ranks, which are manifested in a somewhat paradoxical intertwining of this Right deviation with a resistance to correcting longstanding Left-sectarian weaknesses and isolation. Although this nationalism cannot be equated with white chauvinism as a danger to the struggle for Negro rights as a whole, it can become a principal divisive force in particular relationships or struggles. It is a serious Right deviation which has, in spite of its close alliance with Left-sectarianism and the nourishment it draws from white chauvinism, an independent existence of its own flowing from the impulses of the Negro bourgeoisie which narrowly exploits the racial and national

consciousness of the whole Negro people in its struggle against the dominant white bourgeoisie. All manifestations of Negro nationalism in the ranks of the labor-progressive movement must be combatted as dangers to the essential Negro-white unity without which advances on this front cannot be won or substantially maintained.

Our Party has a proud tradition and a rich treasury of experiences in the struggle for Negro rights and against white chauvinism. If we are to improve our work today in this field, if we are to recapture an initiative which has been temporarily lost, we must build upon the positive essence of our experiences, expunge the weaknesses and defeat the distortions; and then, drawing inspiration from the great traditions of our Party, move into the battle wherever it is joined.

As we move to face the challenge of the great tasks outlined in the Program of our Party, there is every reason to have confidence in our capacity to win new and decisive victories on this front.

Mount the Counter-Offensive Against McCarthyism

By Mark Logan

IN RECENT MONTHS opinions have been expressed in certain circles that McCarthyism is a thing of the past, and that in so far as the erosion and suppression of democratic liberties are concerned—the worst is over. Wide currency has been given to the catch phrase coined by some complacent wag that “McCarthyism has become a wasm.” If true, this development would signalize something very important indeed and therefore this point of view and supporting evidence deserves serious examination.

The fact is that the year 1954 witnessed some strong blows struck against McCarthyism. It was a year in which the mood of resistance mounted perceptibly and in which the forces of democracy laid the basis for further advances. There are many signs that the “ice age of fear” is melting, that courage is becoming infectious, and that the resistance to repression is spreading.

The first fruits of the growing will to fight back were the partial victories scored in the Congressional elections of last year in which some of the more notorious and virulent McCarthyites were defeated, and the

censure action taken by the U.S. Senate against Joe McCarthy.

This is the fact that emerges from the struggles of 1954 that is new, and of cardinal importance.

However, this is not the entire picture. Nor is it time for Senator Wayne Morse, or anybody else, to utter a sigh of relief and to contend that all is well.

Together with the rising tide of opposition to McCarthyism there has simultaneously been a steady intensification of repression, and all three branches of the federal government continue in their efforts to lay waste to the Bill of Rights. An appraisal of the events of 1954 shows that the attacks on democratic freedom continue without abatement, mainly on the initiative of the Eisenhower Administration but aided and abetted by a large group of Democratic Party officeholders.

The *New York Post* (Dec. 17) in a welcome burst of editorial wisdom, put it very well when it wrote:

Sen. Morse (Ind. Ore.) jauntily declared yesterday that the censure vote on Joe McCarthy has finished McCarthyism. Morse is in a strategic position to prove his point—by announcing

that he will move for repeal of the monstrous and oppressive "anti-subversive" bill he helped to create, during the midsummer madness of 1954.

Morse's colleague, Senator Herbert H. Lehman, showed a better grasp of the real situation:

The Senate voted against the man. We have yet to confront the "ism" . . . The vote of December 2 was clear condemnation of Sen. McCarthy . . . but it was by no means a clear repudiation of McCarthyism.

The past year was characterized by a two-sided development: an upsurge in the resistance to McCarthyism of great meaning and promise for turning the tide; and at the same time a sustained and systematic dismantling of the Bill of Rights by Congress, the Department of Justice and the courts. Both these features must be understood if greater victories are to be scored in the immediate period, and if the powerful currents of resistance are to merge and sweep on to important triumphs.

The time has arrived for the broad democratic forces that oppose McCarthyism to mount a great counter-offensive. This is widely sensed. Most notably, the C.I.O. at its recent convention, indicated a growing conviction that 1955 and 1956 can be the years in which McCarthyite reaction is checked and repression curbed. It declared in resolution: "*Now is the time for a counter-attack on the civil liberties front.*"

Success in the counter-attack demands, however, far greater clarity on several crucial questions, as well as an ever-expanding unity on the part of all democratic forces, and in the first place on the part of organized labor. It is with this objective in mind that we undertake to examine more specifically the events of the past year and some of the views held by several outstanding spokesmen in the field of civil liberties.

That large sections of our people have decided to stop retreating in the face of repressive attacks, and have begun to fight back is verified by a review of the quickened activities of the past year. This is true not only among organizations of academic people and scientists, where the inroads of McCarthyite terror are perhaps most notorious, and where there has been a noticeable stiffening of some backbones—even as the targets of reaction become more numerous and as the roster of victims continued to invade the most sacred precincts (Oppenheimer, Condon, etc.).

Today, to give one example, the shock troop struggles of the heroic New York Teachers Union (independent), waged almost single-handed for several years, find new reserves of support moving into action. Many influential voices have joined to condemn the nefarious practice of forcing school teachers to be informers. Thus, while the sights of the embattled are aimed at very limited objectives as yet, it is undeniably true that academic people

are at least beginning to shoot back from their foxholes.

The same is true in most areas of American life. What had been for many a silent or discreet opposition to McCarthyism has begun in the past year to find organized expression, much of it of a grass roots character, often flaring up spontaneously and then fading out for lack of direction, support and leadership from the more powerful organizations of the people.

Parallel to these more spontaneous developments, many of the powerful organizations of long standing also began to show signs of breaking with the timidity and misguided "prudence" they practiced so long. The paralyzing effects of the big lie for years succeeded in dividing many of these organizations and diverted them into internal witch-hunts of their own, making their resistance to McCarthyism formal and feeble. While these influences are still tragically at work, they are not quite as disabling. The pressures of intimidation and conformity are being shaken loose and many organizations are becoming more outspoken in their condemnation of the witch-hunt, but their resolutions need still to be matched with bolder actions.

A review of the statements adopted by many conventions in the past year shows a decided trend toward a more vigorous opposition to McCarthyism. This was true with respect to many federations of Protestant churches and of synagogues, women's organizations, and out-

standingly the N.A.A.C.P., the I.B. P.O.E.W. (Negro Elks), the American Jewish Congress, the Farmers Union, etc.

Most noteworthy was the action of many trade unions and central labor bodies. These included: the action of the C.I.O. Council of New York City which called on labor to take the *lead* in the fight against McCarthyism; the action of the central bodies of labor in Massachusetts, representing thousands of Catholic workers, who condemned McCarthy and his works; the resolution adopted recently by the Minneapolis central labor body—following the Senate censure action—calling for a movement "to retire McCarthy to private life" (in contrast to the failure of labor to support the "Joe-Must-Go" action of last year); the sharp criticism of some union journals and labor spokesmen of the shameful and cynical action of the Humphrey-type Democrats last summer in passing the Communist Control Act.

The C.I.O. International United Electrical Workers and other C.I.O. unions have begun to show some resistance to the corporation policy of firing workers who avail themselves of the Fifth Amendment. The General Executive Board of the U.A.W. has in the past year altered its former attitude of cooperation with the Un-American Committee. A strong movement is developing among all sectors of the trade-union movement against the scab-herding, open shop "right-to-work" laws

which, encouraged by the Taft-Hartley law, are on the law books in 17 states. One of the most impressive examples of resistance was the high degree of labor unity and militancy shown in the Square D strike in Detroit in face of the sharpest McCarthyite attacks.

Finally, the action of the national CIO convention in December calling for counter attack on the civil liberties front signalizes this new trend.

Of course, the picture has been far from an even or consistent one. And what is worse, there have been flagrant lapses into inexplicable silences and total inactivity, frequently when the McCarthyite challenge was the most ominous. Nevertheless, the fact remains that new winds are blowing, and that the past year witnessed the beginning of a turn in the tide of struggle.

HAS "McCARTHYISM BECOME A WASM"?

Does this mean, however, that there has already been an abatement of repression, that the assaults on constitutional liberties have slackened? Can we look serenely and passively towards a year in which our few remaining hard-won democratic freedoms will be free from further attack, and in which "modern progressivism" will reign in the field of civil liberties? Not if the past year—and especially the last months of the past year—is any indication of what we can expect.

It is certainly true that with the

rising tide of resistance moving over to the counter offensive, there is every guarantee that the encroachments on democratic freedoms *can* be stopped and the direction reversed, but for the time being the pattern of repression and the jeopardy to our most elementary rights continues to unfold.

Let us see what has been happening *since* the turn into 1954. For one thing, the 83rd Congress was in session through most of the summer and added considerably to the peril. The American Civil Liberties Union looking at the record declared that "the body made deep inroads into civil liberties." It made this estimate with particular reference to the so-called anti-Communist legislation.

It was in the autumn of 1954 that the Attorney General's office came before the Supreme Court and proposed that the Court's decision to desegregate the schools be vitiated by referring it to the "regional courts."

It is not our desire to itemize here in all its voluminous detail the full catalogue of terrorist acts and persecutions which have marked the year 1954 with its long succession of deportations, denaturalization hearings, arrests in the middle of the night, instances of prohibitive bail, job dismissals and economic sanctions, and other violations of the Bill of Rights. But it would serve some purpose just to take for swift review the month of December.

As the year was drawing to a close, and hard on the heels of the

Senate censure action, the McCarthy Committee demonstrated that Congressional vigilantism was far from through. It immediately went back into action and renewed its witch-burning activities, this time in conspiracy with the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Once again militant workers were fired from their jobs and put on blacklists leaving families without paychecks or prospects of another job.

One can get a fair idea of what a militant factory worker or some school teacher is subjected to by these congressional inquisitionists when one ponders the grotesque attack by the Reece Congressional Committee on the powerful foundations. Representatives Hays and Pfost, speaking of the committee's majority report, declared, "The foundations have been indicted and convicted under procedures that can only be characterized as barbaric."

This can hardly be called an accidental stray shot that came after an Armistice. On the contrary, it shows that when a murderous barrage is laid down against the Communists it must of necessity saturate the landscape, threatening anything that moves, including a Robert Hutchins or anyone else who might have displayed on occasion some concern for civil liberties.

All through December, instead of a slackening in the assault, each week brought new aggressions against basic freedoms. The wind was being sown ostensibly against the Communists, but to the extent

the hoax succeeded, labor and the people as a whole will be reaping the whirlwind.

One of the more vicious and alarming episodes was the re-arrest of Irving Potash, even before he left the prison gates of Leavenworth where he completed a 5-year term under the unconstitutional Smith Act. This time he was jailed under the so-called membership clause of the same infamous law. Potash, and the other leaders of the Communist Party still serving prison terms under the "conspiracy" clause of the Smith Act are, thus, being subjected to special persecution through "double jeopardy" in another violation of the 5th amendment. Together with Claude Lightfoot, Martha Stone, Albert E. Blumberg and Junius Scales, they have been earmarked as the first victims of a new and dangerous attack on the most elementary constitutional rights as defined by the First and Fifth Amendments.

During the last week of December the Administration and its courts delivered itself of a veritable fusillade. If the year of 1954 came in a roaring beast of reaction it didn't go out as a freedom-loving lamb. On the eve of Christmas, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld by a 2 to 1 vote the tyrannical McCarran Law which requires the registration of the officers and membership of all "Communist-action" organizations. The Appellate Court acted in the spirit of a police state, considering that such registration

amounts to an admission of "criminal" guilt, particularly now with the passage of the so-called Communist Control Act of 1954 (the Humphrey-Butler Bill).

The McCarran Law is the same devil's grab-bag that gives the Department of Justice absolute power over the freedom and activities of all foreign born and which provides for concentration camps for so-called future emergencies.

Should the Supreme Court sustain the lower courts, the combination of the McCarran registration law and the Communist Control Act will make a mockery of democratic processes, and not only for Communists. Recent experiences should have made it clear to all that the consequences of these draconic measures will not be limited in their use exclusively to members of the Communist Party.

The misnomer of the Communist Control Act may tend to make some overlook that it calls for government licensing of American trade unions for the first time in our history.

In the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, when, ironically enough, talk of "good will to all men" was at its annual peak, that kind shepherd of justice, Attorney General Brownell, added 27 groups to his list of "subversive" organizations bringing the total up to 282. He also asked the Subversive Activities Control Board to order the Washington Pension Union to register as a communist-action organization. Thus, first it was the Commu-

nist Party, then, a fraternal order based on sick and death benefits, then civil liberties groupings, then a school—the Jefferson School—and now, an organization to protect the economic rights of the aged.

And to ring out the old year, a federal judge gave the court's stamp of approval to the McCarthyite purge and blacklist of militant workers in factories. This action found the court in cynical conspiracy with union-busting monopolies (General Electric, Bethlehem Steel, etc.) and Joe McCarthy himself, in condemning hundreds and perhaps thousands of workers' families to starvation, economic capital punishment plain and simple, because workers avail themselves of the Fifth Amendment. Small wonder that McCarthy, far from seeing his role at an end, announced a 16-hour marathon witch-burning as his last act as Committee chairman, and simultaneously launched a new campaign of war incitement against China, and those who would deal with China.

The year came to a close with a pledge by the Department of Justice that they would "carry on this program at an accelerated pace" in 1955.

This brief summary of the last months of 1954 proves how little real abatement there has been in the reactionary drive against civil liberties by the Big-Business government in Washington.

What is one to conclude from the two-sided developments outlined here? Has the new legislation, the

recent actions of the various federal courts, and the ruthless campaigns of the Department of Justice brought our people to their knees and established a fascist regime? There *have* been those, even some among the ranks of the more advanced progressives, who came to such erroneous and defeatist conclusions, especially after some particularly hard blow was suffered, for example, passage of the Humphrey-Butler Act.

The answer was given most clearly in an article in *Political Affairs* of November 1954, by William Z. Foster. He wrote:

Undoubtedly the reactionaries and the MORE CONSCIOUS fascists have been able to undermine seriously popular democratic liberties in this country, . . . and they have also weakened the general position of the labor movement. But this attack has not reached the stage of actual fascism, early phases or otherwise. Bourgeois democracy has been badly damaged, but not basically abolished. The workers and other democratic strata still possess the elementary rights to organize, to strike, to vote, and to discuss the various issues confronting the country . . . That there is a grave and rising danger of fascism in the United States is clear; but this by no means signifies that fascism is inevitable in this country.

There has been striking confirmation in the past year of the confident thesis that underlies the Communist Party Program adopted last summer:

There are signs of a new awakening in our land . . . A powerful anti-

McCarthy grass roots movement is developing . . . The collision between the people and the foreign and domestic policies of McCarthyism must grow in volume and intensity.

Several other questions come to the fore as the New Year unfolds. Once the record establishes that there has been no abatement of repressive measures and that, in fact, deeper inroads have been made against basic democratic freedoms, what accounts for the rising tide of resistance and what is the perspective immediately ahead? Will there not be greater intimidation and also accomodation?

There were many factors at work in recent months arousing and inducing new forces to enter the struggle against McCarthyism. We wish to single out three developments that are penetrating into the consciousness of millions, and that are operating to dissolve fear and overcome passivity.

1. It is becoming impossible to ignore the hard fact that the Communists are not the sole target of the reactionary drive and that Marxist theories are not the only ideas which are being subjected to thought control. It is becoming obvious that democratic freedom must be indivisible in the U.S.A. if it is to exist at all. The spreading pattern of victimization and police-state procedures are proving to many for the first time that McCarthyite repression cannot be localized or confined. It must be rooted out.

For example: It becomes inevitable that the C.I.O., which in recent years

has expelled whole unions and helped black-list individual workers in witch-hunts conducted by C.I.O. top officials, has begun to sense the sinister meaning of the legislation coming out of Washington. The resolution on civil liberties adopted at their convention last December condemns the Communist Control Act (the Humphrey-Butler bill) for "the branding and busting of 'Communist-infiltrated' unions [which] constitutes a dangerous first step toward state control of all trade unions."

Or another example: Walter Reuther, in his annual report to the convention, felt it necessary to reveal that the Defense Department had proposed "to require every defense worker with access to any classified information to fill out a questionnaire naming under penalties of perjury every person he has ever associated with, *no matter how many years back*, who, at any time in his entire life, had ever belonged to any of the 240 or more organizations on the Attorney General's list," with severe criminal penalties for those filling out questionnaires inaccurately or with "wilful" omissions.

Thus, there is more at work than simple traditional regard and abstract attachment to democratic liberties and academic concern for the principle involved—not a negligible factor in itself. Today, it is the personal freedom of millions that is directly implicated, and each has a stake in the fight-back.

2. With this, there is an intrinsic

corollary: a growing realization that exposing and isolating Joe McCarthy and his avowed supporters (a job which is far from finished) is only coping with part of the threat. McCarthy's brow-beating vigilanteism and fascist sorties against the Bill of Rights have become a widely recognized menace, as was registered in the elections last November. The bolder and more determined struggles against Joe McCarthy also forced through the Senate censure action last December. But what is equally significant, if not more so, is that many have come to realize that the expanding pattern of repression cannot be ascribed alone to McCarthy and his unabashed and publicly acknowledged co-workers. In recent months, new millions have begun to see in the overall policies pursued by the Eisenhower Administration many overtones of McCarthyism. There is a growing suspicion that the differences with Joe McCarthy in the millionaire cabinet are superficial and purely tactical and that behind Eisenhower's celebrated grin and amiable talk of "moderate progressivism" the Nixons, Wilsons and Brownells are ceaselessly at work dismantling the basic fabric of our constitutional freedoms.

However, the process of fully awakening to the sinister designs and devious tactics of this Administration is being hamstrung by the maneuvers of the high command of the Democratic Party. Its policy of honied words for the President and cynical competition with the G.O.P.

in extending the witch-hunt, will require the greatest measure of independent action and leadership by organized labor and its allies if confusion and demoralization is not to confound the progress made in the '54 elections and in the past year.

There are indications that the magnitude of the job ahead is understood far beyond the Left. Even among some of those who have prematurely concluded that things have eased with regard to civil liberties, there are not too many illusions.

3. Finally, but very important: as international tensions eased somewhat last year—mainly as a consequence of the stubborn peace policy of the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China—it became a bit more difficult to foist the Big Lie of the Communist menace on the American people. The phony myth of an external and internal Communist menace has been the stock-in-trade of McCarthyism for years. And to the extent that the Truman Administration peddled this myth it opened the flood gates to McCarthyism and laid the basis for the Eisenhower victory. However, it becomes evermore difficult for the present Administration to sustain the lie that this country is threatened. It has done all in its power to falsify the facts and fabricate an enemy. It has done all it can to keep tension high. Only thus can it hope to press the armaments race, to blunt the opposition of the American people to war, to keep pushing its program for world domi-

nation by American monopoly interests, and to frustrate all efforts at peaceful coexistence. And it follows that it is also difficult to justify the aggressions at home against basic freedoms by government and big employers unless the Big Lie is kept alive as a bugaboo.

Thus, every blow that was struck for peace last year became a blow struck for democratic rights. To the degree that international tensions relaxed, prospects for checking reaction improved. As the struggle for peaceful coexistence gains, the struggle to restore the Bill of Rights is reinforced.

However, the desperate measures taken by the State Department to re-arm West Germany, forcing through the close and unpopular vote in the French Assembly last December, is once again aggravating the war danger and heightening international tensions, and in turn further endangering civil rights.

There are many other factors at work kindling the resistance and laying the basis for a strong counter offensive which space won't permit us to explore at this point: growing unemployment and the fear of reactionary Big-Business policies leading to a devastating economic crisis; the public spotlight during the Censure debate finding the Knowland "war-now" gang in conspicuous public embrace with the McCarthy police state vigilantes, etc.

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The time has come to strike more effective blows for democratic rights,

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to launch a counter-attack that can in truth turn the tide. The relation of forces in our country, the growing mood of resistance on the part of most Americans, the gradual awakening of important sections of the labor movement to the real peril, and the short time before the crucial elections of 1956 make this both possible and imperative.

The situation demands that certain obstacles that hinder counter-attack be cleared away. There has to be some plain talk among those who oppose McCarthyism.

There are still some, who, with a sigh of relief, call attention to what they describe as a subsiding of the hysteria and then turn to other matters. They view this hysteria as if it was an epidemic of some kind—caused perhaps by some mysterious virus, not yet definitely determined, but analogous to the influenza virus, that must be expected after wars.

There are others who "fool'd with hope . . . favor the deceit" and prattle that all is well. They acclaim every engagement won as if the war is over.

These ostrich-like attitudes can only paralyze resistance and facilitate new advances by McCarthyism. Objectively, their role is no different than those others, already mentioned earlier, who overwhelmed with the scope of the pro-fascist attack, fail to see the new winds blowing, and who continue to cower in their storm cellars spinning fatalistic theories that disarm the forces massing for counter-attack.

But we wish to address ourselves to those who, agreeing that important advances have been made in the anti-McCarthy battle, and seeing the still very much present need for mounting struggle to really win, nevertheless believe that victory can be achieved even though the Big Lie of McCarthyism is accepted.

In the N. Y. *Times* (November 14, 1954) Paul Hoffman warned that: ". . . the basic elements that produced the hysteria are still present and we cannot let down our guard."

It is at this point that we reach the crux of the problem in mapping the next advances for the forces opposed to McCarthyism. Mr. Hoffman is right, of course, when he says the "basic elements" that produced the hysteria are still present. The question is, just what are the "basic elements"? A correct answer to this crucial question, when arrived at, first and foremost, by the millions of trade unionists, will guarantee the successful outcome of the next phase of struggle against McCarthyism.

Mr. Hoffman's view of what constitute the "basic elements" is the familiar and seedy one that the rise of McCarthyism is a consequence of the Communist threat. It is a tragic fact, even now, that the surrender to this theory based on a myth explains much of the irresolution and division among the anti-McCarthyite forces. He argues:

My point is that these happenings [the witch hunts] are somber symbols

of this complex fear. At the source of this fear was, of course, the vicious threat of Communism to our security—not so much the external threat, because Americans have never feared a military enemy, but more the internal conspiracy and in particular our methods of combatting it.

Several paragraphs later, Mr. Hoffman apparently realizes that this alleged "internal threat" isn't really very convincing. Many sober-minded citizens have begun to suspect for some time this is a McCarthyite hoax. He now turns to the other tired and threadbare fable—"the external Communist threat"—which he has just finished denying as being very menacing. He writes:

. . . The signatures hardly had been penned on the papers at Tokyo Bay before the unmistakable foreboding came. The men of the Kremlin were determined to push the Communist conspiracy for world conquest in deadly earnest . . . Our fright came when the revelation burst upon us that the Russians had stolen our atomic secrets . . . despite all our precautions and barbed wires, the Russians were able to get our secrets.

Thus, he finds himself, for all his eloquent concern over the state of our constitutional liberties, a miscast soloist for the McCarthyite chorus as he chants mournfully both stanzas of the Big Lie . . . the same Big Lie on which has been based the total cold-war hysteria and on which McCarthyism thrives. The C.I.O. United Auto Workers, who invite this same Mr. Hoffman to their edu-

cational conference, cannot accept this line of reasoning and hope at the same time to effectively implement the call to counter attack issued by the convention of their parent organization.

It's time to catch up with the truth. The only confessed spy in U.S.A. in the past 10 years was working for the government of the Netherlands. The Rosenbergs were framed and lynched.

Those who would fight all the manifestations of McCarthyism, who would check and defeat the witch-hunt, who would restore the Bill of Rights cannot accept the basic premise of McCarthyism. There are heartening indications that many are sick and tired of the stale fictions and counterfeit theories about Communist espionage and sabotage.

Professor Joel H. Hildebrand, president-elect of the American Chemical Society, is representative of the growing temper. Speaking last December to a symposium of science writers he declared (as if in reply to the Hoffmans):

Some persons think that the only way for a Russian to learn a secret is to steal it from us. That is a dangerous delusion. Nature can reply to questions asked in Russian just as easily as those asked in English . . . There never was such a thing as 'the secret' of the hydrogen bomb (*N. Y. Times*, Dec. 29, 1954).

There are basic reasons for the present state of our democratic liberties, and for the "complex of fear." But they have nothing in common

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with the reasons advanced by Paul Hoffman.

The reasons will be found in the unpopular, burdensome, and risky adventures that characterize U.S. foreign policy, which must have artificially incited hysteria and governmental thought-control at home. You can't ask a people to chance atomic destruction for dollar diplomacy and world empire, and yet dare to permit dissenters and peace advocates to speak their mind. The drop in production in 1953 and most of 1954, the 5 million unemployed and part-time workers, and the threat of a disastrous depression leave the monopoly interests uneasy lest there be too many popular liberties. Big Business interests that are for forcing the burdens of economic busts on the backs of the people, are unlikely to want the people to have enough freedom to voice their demands and enforce their will.

Herein lie the "basic reasons" why the millionaire cabinet, the monopoly agents in Congress and the robed corporation lawyers on the court benches have been at work dismantling the Constitutional freedoms of the American people and stoking the fires of hysteria and tensions. Herein lies the main reason for the special drive against Communists, foremost fighters in defense of civil rights, of peace, and of the living standards of the masses.

The year 1954 saw the controlling interests in our economic and political life and all three branches of government relentlessly engaged in

chipping away at the most fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. Hardly a clause in the Bill of Rights or in the 14th Amendment escaped attack. The main transgressions came not from wild mobs caught up in some mystical hysteria, but emanated from the men of the trusts and the cold-blooded policies they pursued in the highest councils of government. The great majority of Americans never sought or sanctioned these invasions against our most basic and sacred rights; on the contrary, they gave unmistakable signs of ending their retreat and struck some hard blows for democratic freedom.

The year 1955 opened with every indication that forces are massing for the counter-attack. The main formations are centering their fire in defense of the First, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments. These represent the bedrock of traditional democratic freedoms in our country and are the ones that suffered the greatest damage from the government demolition crews.

For the counter-attack to score essential victories, battles will have to be waged against *specific* and *particular* invasions of the rights guaranteed under them. And the fire should be concentrated. The time has also come for all concerned to realize that the front line of counter-attack must be the defense of the rights of Communists under these amendments. These rights cannot exist for some and not for others. The cancerous nature of McCarthy-

ism is proving this for those who have been reluctant to draw this conclusion previously.

The incident of a leading metropolitan daily newspaper, the *Chicago Daily News*, recently accepting a half-page advertisement from the Lightfoot Defense Committee (giving the facts of his indictment under the membership clause of the Smith Act) is a harbinger of the changing climate for struggle in defense of the First Amendment. The fact that the newspaper felt compelled to justify its action by editorial is an indication of how far gone are the most elementary freedoms.

The *Daily News*, which does not favor jailing people solely for their ideas, however perverted, reasoned that the case involved a fundamental issue of civil liberties, and that the Lightfoot committee was entitled to appeal for the public support.

We have come to a stage in the struggle against McCarthyism where for a trade-unionist or liberal to remain silent while the Bill of Rights is declared null and void for Communists makes one perform an accessory to the fact, as well as a probable victim of the next round of attacks.

The recent C.I.O. convention moved in the right direction in its resolution on civil liberties, when it demanded that "all federal legislation limiting what people can think and say be removed from the statute books." The C.I.O. could perform a monumental service to the cause of democracy and act in its own best

self-interest if it would undertake to translate this resolution into an aggressive program of action and give leadership in this struggle. The C.I.O. could by its example move many of the other powerful labor and popular organizations. It is no exaggeration to say that in large measure the rights of labor and the future of the trade-union movement depend on this initiative.

Also, very much at stake in this struggle is the fateful question of whether our people will live out their lives in peace or be plunged into an atomic holocaust.

No less an authority than J. Edgar Hoover made this quite clear in a report issued on the occasion of the new year. In a statement which makes no bones about what really concerns the High Commissioner of thought-control he declared:

The need for eternal vigilance against subversion by followers of the Communist Party becomes more necessary with the world-wide rise of "neutrality" and the intensified Soviet propaganda program of "peaceful co-existence".

Can anything spell out more clearly the intimate connection between defense of the civil liberties of Communists and defense of the cause of world peace, and the fact that advocacy of peace is considered synonymous with subversion by the Department of Justice?

The trade-union movement has a special stake in this fight, and special responsibilities. The Bill of Rights

has little meaning for wage workers as long as government and corporations have the right to screen, fire and blacklist anyone whose opinions on foreign policy and political associations are objectionable, or who won't turn informer.

Not only political rights but elementary economic security demands defense of the rights of all workers under the First, Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments without any modifications. The right to organize and strike, grounded on the First Amendment, cannot be protected without a struggle to nullify and repeal the Humphrey-Butler law which gives the government power of life and death over trade unions for the first time.

No movement for civil liberties in 1955 can hope to make a serious dent without centering attention on three specific laws that are poisoning the free air. The most notorious of these is the Smith Act. The Smith Act has become the cornerstone of the whole framework of the current assaults on democratic rights and is the preferred instrument of the government agencies leading the attack. They are counting on the action of the courts in the past months as having imbedded the Smith Act into the basic fabric of government policy. The new rash of indictments based on the simple act of membership in the Communist Party violate in the crudest way possible the right to pro-

tection against "double jeopardy" under the 5th amendment, and the right to assembly and free speech under the 1st. A struggle to nullify and repeal the Smith Act and to free its victims strikes at the very core of the witch-hunt and will help topple the whole loathesome system of loyalty oaths, inquisitions, and thought control.

The McCarran Registration law and its board of inquisition (SACB) also operate in direct contravention of the Bill of Rights. And together with the new so-called Communist Control Act (Humphrey-Butler Law) threaten to obliterate the most elementary political rights for any non-conformist.

A specific struggle for the nullification and repeal of these two laws is demanded from all who agree with Supreme Court Justice Douglas, that:

The Fifth Amendment is an old friend, and a good friend. It is one of the great landmarks in man's struggle to be free of tyranny, to be decent and civilized. It is our way of escape from the use of torture. It protects man against any form of the Inquisition.

As new strata move into position for struggle in defense of the Bill of Rights, as the counter-attack begins to unfold, the Communists will not be found wanting. In the months ahead as in the years past they will be found among the shocktroops of the democratic forces.

The Emancipation Proclamation

By Herbert Aptheker

CONTEMPORARIES differed most sharply in their reactions to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, issued in preliminary form on September 22, 1862, and in final form on January 1, 1863. The differences reflected the class divisions in the United States and demonstrated the truth that ideas basically derive from the groundwork of these divisions.

Much of the Northern press, especially that controlled by merchants with close ties to slaveowners, as the *New York Journal of Commerce*, and the *Herald*, denounced the Proclamation. Many of the reactions were so vehement that the President, reading, as he said, "a batch of editorials," was moved to ask himself: "Abraham Lincoln, are you a man or a dog?"

The Confederate press, as one would expect, spewed vitriol rather than ink, the *Richmond Enquirer* asking with reference to the President and his Proclamation: "What shall we call him? Coward, assassin, savage, murderer of women and babies? Or shall we consider them all as embodied in the world fiend, and call him Lincoln, the Fiend?"

Copperheadism in the North matched the elevating language of

its Southern ideological brethren, so that, for example, the Democratic-dominated legislature of Lincoln's home state formally resolved that his Proclamation was "a gigantic usurpation . . . a total subversion of the Federal Union . . . an uneffaceable disgrace to the American people."

The rich in England, sympathetic to the reactionary outlook of the Confederacy, economically tied to the planters, and jealous of the industrial and commercial competition that the United States already offered and fearful of what she would offer—if still united—in the future, greeted the announcement of emancipation in similar terms.

But among the workers of England—though now especially suffering because of the Union cotton blockade—the Proclamation was greeted, as Henry Adams, son of the American Ambassador, testified, by "a great popular movement." Meetings attended by thousands from mine and mill hailed Lincoln and simultaneously denounced their own Tory government and the bosses who dominated it.

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white workers and farming masses, though infected by racism, generally hailed the Proclamation as a blow for human freedom and a means towards hastening peace. In the border state of Maryland, the *Cambridge Intelligencer*, speaking for non-slaveholders, rejoiced in the Proclamation for it showed the war to be one for freedom. It went on:

There is another sense in which this is a war of freedom. There are other men in the South to be freed as well as black men . . . The social system of the South has never been anything short of despotism—a tyranny equal to any of the age. The mind has forever been bound here. Freedom of opinion has never been tolerated below Mason and Dixon's Line . . . Let the mind be free! . . . There can be neither prosperity nor happiness where these are enslaved.

Similarly, a New York City workmen's paper, *The Iron Platform*, in welcoming Lincoln's Proclamation, pointed out:

There is one truth which should be clearly understood by every workman in the Union. *The slavery of the black man leads to the slavery of the white man.* . . . If the doctrine of treason is true, that 'Capital should own Labor,' then their logical conclusion is correct, and all laborers, white or black, are and ought to be slaves [italics in original].

Of course the Left—the Abolitionists (including the Marxists)—were pleased with the Proclamation, declaring it to be a document guaranteeing immortality to the man who had issued it.

And the Negro people as a whole greeted it, in the words of Frederick Douglass penned at the time, as "an anthem of the redeemed," "the dawn of a new day," "the answer to the agonizing prayer of centuries."

Dominant American history writing today, product and bulwark that it is, of imperialism, tends, in substance, to agree with the estimates offered by contemporaries hostile to the Proclamation. Naturally, the adverse opinions are expressed without vituperation, but the general verdict conveys the impression that the Proclamation was more sham than reality; that its significance is minor, its issuance demagogic; that its impact, at least at home, was nil, or, if anything, adverse to the Union.

The reader or student is told that the Proclamation freed no one, that it was "only" a military act, that its actual purpose was simply propagandistic. To this is added the insistence, so general in today's academic circles, that the war itself was needless, that its outbreak reflected sheer stupidity, that its cause is unknowable, that slavery was benign and truly irrelevant to the war's origin, and that the war's consequences were regrettable. At the same time, the point is conveyed, either by indirection or explicitly, that, in any case, of course, the so-called slaves were Negroes and "everyone" knows what that meant and means in terms of inferiority, docility, and the manifest impossibility of real liberation since subordination to the superior white rep-

resented and represents acceptance of a natural and immutable condition.

A more sentimental version of basically the same chauvinist clap-trap—aimed especially at the quite young—is to treat the Proclamation in terms of a gift from on high to the Little Brown Brother through the beneficence of the Great White Father who rather absent-mindedly and in the midst of more significant labors deigned to loosen the chains.

Actually, the Emancipation Proclamation is one of the most momentous documents in American history and in the history of the Negro people. As the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, this document, too, symbolizes and embodies a decisive turning point in our history. It is, indeed, of great consequence in the whole magnificent record of humanity's unceasing effort to throw off oppression and stand forth truly free.

The Civil War begins with the aggression of the slaveowners. It begins as an attempted counter-revolutionary *coup* by a desperate slaveholding class. This class, consisting of about 250,000 men out of a total population in the South of some twelve million (almost four million slaves), was made desperate by four central social developments of the preceding generation.

1) As James Russell Lowell wrote: "Secession has come not because of the election of Lincoln, but because of the Census of 1860." Lowell was referring to the colossal development

of a free-farming West (the Central States of today), the leap forward of industrial capitalism (so that, for the first time in American history, in 1850-60, the value of the products of the factory exceeded the value of the products of the soil) the development of a robust, though yet very young working class, and the split off of a segment of the growing merchant bourgeoisie from economic tie-in and consequent political alliance with the planters. The interests of these classes were sufficiently complementary then, in important particulars, so that they could and did unite politically—under the hegemony of the industrial bourgeoisie—in the face of their common enemy, the slaveowners, and through the instrumentality of their new political coalition, the Republican Party, challenge the Bourbons' preferred party, the Democratic, for supremacy of the national government. This came to a head, of course, with the victory of Lincoln in 1860, a victory made possible by a three-way split among the opponents of the new party.

2) Another key development was the intensification of the threat to Bourbon domination at home, *in the South*, at the same time that the threat mounted against their domination of the Federal government. This arose from a very widespread unrest among the slaves (with significant signs of Negro-white unity) and from serious economic and political challenges to slavocratic dominance from the non-slaveholding

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whites, both rural and urban. So serious was this threat, that Bourbon spokesmen privately warned each other of the possibility of revolutionary war at home, before they could launch counter-revolutionary civil war against Washington.

3) Further, there were the economic contradictions of the slavocratic system which made it a particularly expansionistic one. The expansionism derived from the single-crop, plantation economy, the lack of fluid capital which curtailed employment of scientific improvements and of machinery, and the deliberate effort of the slave workers to produce as little as possible. This expansionistic urge—which unsatisfied would mean the suffocation of the system—was intensified by the mounting pressures of a growing slave population. This forced the slave system into active and continual collision with the developing non-slave system, and served to keep the basic question itself in the political limelight.

4) The quantitative and qualitative growth of the Abolitionist movement helped drive the slaveowners berserk. Here, they knew, was an uncompromising revolutionary movement—one attacking the power of the slaveowners at its roots, that is, at its basic property relationships. And this movement had grown from a handful in 1830 to hundreds of thousands—to a decisive balance of power—in 1860. Moreover, with its growth and helping to explain its growth, the movement

had pretty much rid itself of sectarianism.

Each of these developments, alone, would have been enough to disturb seriously the slaveowners. But they were not separate; they were interpenetrating and developing. Their crystallization and culmination in the 1860 defeat of the slavocracy and the victory of the party representing the new forces, convinced the leaders of that oligarchy that they had everything to gain and nothing to lose by a resort to counter-revolutionary force and violence. It is in response to this original force and violence on the part of the reactionaries that the nation takes up arms to defend itself and it is in the course of offering resistance to a counter-revolutionary effort that a revolutionary outcome develops and becomes necessary.

The slavocracy saw two alternatives: a) to accede to the democratic verdict and give up power; b) to defy the verdict and attempt to undo it by violence. It chose the second alternative—not an unusual choice—because if the second were unsuccessful it would then be where it would have been had it chosen the first. Nothing was to be lost, except human lives, but what are human lives to oppressors and enslavers whose very existence depends upon contempt for humanity?

* * *

In all this the centrality of the enslavement of the Negro people is

to be observed. Slavery is the fundamental question of pre-Civil War history; it is this fact which made the policy towards slavery of basic consequence during the War itself. This is fundamental to a comprehension of the origin and significance of the Emancipation Proclamation. The historic forces, which have been briefly summarized above, were controlling and fundamental but they were operative only through and by human activity and this required will and therefore organization. The widespread *recognition* of the existent fact that the slave question was at the root of the matter required agitation and guidance and struggle; to get the necessary action to accompany the recognition, to make real the recognition, likewise required constant agitation, alertness, guiding activity, and fearless struggle.

The task was complicated by the very great power of the slavocracy in its homeland and in the North where a thousand economic, political, family, and ideological ties gave it great influence. The task was complicated by the very desperation and fierceness of the slaveholders, attributes characteristic of exploiting classes fighting for their lives. The task was complicated, too, by the neat balance of forces which precariously held the border slave areas—Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, much of Tennessee and Virginia (to become West Virginia)—on the side of the Union—areas with great manpower, enorm-

ous resources and with the only military approaches into the Confederacy.

Complicating, too, was the slavocracy's insistence that at stake in an assault upon slavery was the whole concept of the sanctity of contract and the sacredness of private property—"civilization itself", as the phrase goes. Hence its insistence that Abolitionism was not only Black Republicanism, but also Red Republicanism, Socialism, agrarianism, levellism, and other epithet-slogans of the moment. Hence its warnings to the well-to-do of the North that if property in slavery goes on Sunday, then property in land will go on Monday, and property in factories on Tuesday. If one can be abolished on moral grounds, on the grounds of the welfare of the majority or the improvement of the social order, why not the others on the same grounds, changing only "slave" to "toiling farmer" and to "wage-worker"?

Historically, the reply of the other property owners was: Power is perilous, of course, but it is also delightful. Now you slaveholders hold power and that fact impedes and frustrates our fullest development and keeps *us* out of power. So, we are opposed to your continued domination, a domination based upon the ownership of a type of property extinct among us. Yes, the precedent of attacking property—of any kind, even such as we do not own—is distressing, and we would prefer a gradual dissolution of such

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property ownership, with generous compensation. But, in any case, power involves risk. You slave-owners have held power and now face its loss; we capitalists will have power—with its risks, no doubt—but we will have it and you will make way for us. We do not mean to destroy you, but we do mean to supersede you. We mean to rule this nation, all of it, with every ounce of its resources, with the entire range of its market, from tip to tip. We will not surrender the Union. We need it all and we will have it all and none will stunt our growth. We want it all for what it offers now, and magnificent as this is, for the infinite possibilities it will offer in the immediate future.

So, says the Republican Party, we will not touch slavery where it is. Indeed, we will guarantee its perpetuity, and repeal the Personal Liberty Laws in the North and in other ways see to it that the Fugitive Slave Law is rigidly enforced,* but, we will not allow the further territorial expansion of slavery by one inch.

The slavocracy will not accept this, as later it will not acquiesce in compensated gradual emancipation. The now obsolete ruling class will not peacefully and willingly give up its domination. It will not abide by its own code of laws, and it finds the democratic implementation of those laws to be stifling.

Moreover, it knows that no further expansion means not only loss of domination; it means more or less

rapid suffocation—it means, in fact, extermination. And the slavocracy is keenly aware of how shaky is its power at home; how detested it is by four million rumbling slaves, and how despised by seven million stirring non-slaveholding whites. Should it retreat nationally, show weakness, give up domination of the Federal apparatus, could it then hold its own at home—in Alabama, in Georgia? Even to pose the question was insufferable. No; it would not simply accept defeat; it would not step down. It would fight for “independence”, that is, the perpetuity of a freely-expanding slave system, the building of a mighty slave-based empire, the splitting, if not the complete destruction, of the Republic. It would turn to force and violence, to counter-revolution, to real treason.

Finally, it had two more trump cards. One was the great dependence of Europe, especially of England, upon its crops, above all, cotton, and the enormous investments and lucrative connections held by wealthy Englishmen in the South. The other was the slavocratic ideology, especially white supremacy, that had pervaded the American atmosphere and permeated so many of the brains of American white people for two centuries. This, played upon by the very real allies

* On Feb. 27, 1861 the House of Representatives passed a Resolution, 137-53, calling for the repeal of the Personal Liberty Laws and strict enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. On Feb. 28, 1861, the House, by 133-65, and the Senate on March 2, 1861, by 24-12, approved a projected XIII Amendment to the Constitution (the so-called Corwin Amendment) making slavery perpetual *where it was*.

of the Confederacy in the North, might so immobilize and weaken Union resistance as to assure the Republic's death.

* * *

The new Republican Party was a bourgeois-democratic one and represented a coalition of the industrial bourgeoisie who exercised hegemony, some merchants, the free farming population, much of the urban petty-bourgeoisie, most of the budding working class, the Negro people (there were, in 1860, about 250,000 in the North), almost all of the Abolitionists (among whom were the Marxists*)—with these components freely critical of official Party policies and statements. Its policy, reflective of its composition and the dominant elements of that composition, was extremely vacillating. Its problems were, of course, exceedingly complex and its difficulties very serious and these together account for much of the hesitancy. Yet, fundamentally, that hesitancy, epitomized in the excruciatingly slow movements of Lincoln, reflected bourgeois concern—even in this progressive phase—(compounded by white supremacy) over revolutionary activity. Lincoln, in his First Annual Message to Congress, December 3,

* It is worth noting that sectarianism and Leftism infected the Abolitionists and some associated with the early Communist clubs. These allowed their dissatisfaction with the Lincoln Administration to express itself in complete opposition and so, in effect in practical alliance with the Copperheads. The Leftists denounced the war in terms of a plague-on-both-your-houses, that is, slaveholders and capitalists. They could not, then, claim to be Marxists, since Marx actively and effectively supported the Union cause from the beginning, and excoriated these Leftists as being in fact allies of the Confederacy.

1861, put the matter quite explicitly:

In considering the policy to be adopted for suppressing the insurrection, I have been anxious and careful that the inevitable conflict for this purpose should not degenerate into a violent and remorseless revolutionary struggle. I have, therefore, in every case, thought it proper to keep the integrity of the Union prominent as the primary object of the contest on our part . . .

Tactically, too, a demand limited to the defense of the Union seemed wisest, for it appeared broadest. No matter how one felt about slavery, no matter how pathological one's hatred for Negroes—the flag was fired upon, the integrity of the Republic was being tested, the destruction of the country was sought. Rise to defend the flag in a just cause, to preserve the Union, to safeguard your assaulted country. What could be broader than that?

It was the task of the Abolitionists to demonstrate that their program was not narrowing; they had to show that it was not a question of their having a special interest to which they were unreasonably attached regardless of all other considerations. It was the task of the Abolitionists to show that they were at least as patriotic as the next man (for a generation, of course, they had been denounced as seditionists, probably in the pay of Great Britain). They had to show that their insistence upon emancipation arose out of that patriotism as well as out of humanism and devotion to democratic principles and a proper con-

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cern with rescuing from slavery millions of men, women and children. The Abolitionists had to show that their special devotion to freedom made them more perceptive than others of the general needs of the Republic and made them particularly effective patriots.

Only a revolutionary policy could defeat the counter-revolutionaries; only a policy directed towards uprooting the key source of the slave-owners' power — slavery — could destroy that power. Why?

1) Because such a policy put an end to the very real danger of active intervention on the side of the Confederacy by Spain, France and England, since the masses in those countries simply would not tolerate or participate in a pro-slavery war.

2) Because such a policy invigorated Northern arms, and where it led to disaffection among officers and men, cleansed the Army by exposing Copperheads.

3) Because such a policy secured the active participation of Negro masses in the struggle—and before the War ended 230,000 Negro men fought in Lincoln's Army and Navy and about the same number of men and women labored for those services as cooks, scouts, pilots, waggoners, nurses, etc. Without these thousands of Negro fighters and workers the Union would not have been preserved and slavery would not have been abolished.

4) Because such a policy helped stimulate resistance to slavery and flight from slavery among the plan-

tation masses. Their conspiracies and uprisings, potential and real, tied up thousands of guards and soldiers; their flight reached the stage—as Dr. Du Bois has pointed out—of a mobile general strike, with something like 500,000 succeeding in getting away.

5) Because such a policy deepened disaffection among the non-slaveholding whites in the South. It made increasingly untenable the Bourbons' demagoguery about fighting for independence and increasingly clear the fact that the Bourbons were fighting to keep their property and their power—a power oppressive to most Southern whites. The majority of Southern whites opposed secession; their opposition to the Confederacy grew as the war progressed. The policy of emancipation enhanced that opposition, despite the smokescreen of racism, because it helped expose the real purpose of the Confederate ruling class.

It is all this that the Emancipation Proclamation means—its meaning is not to be found in its dry listing of counties and parishes and states exempted from its provisions. All that we have indicated is contained within the context of that Proclamation and was actually achieved by struggle in the field and it was maintained and pushed to reality, after the Proclamation, by intensified struggle.

Decisive in this contest, internationally, were Marx and Engels, and the First International under their leadership. The record of their work has been detailed several times and is

fairly well known, especially to readers of *Political Affairs*, so that it need not be spelled out here. Sufficient to say that it consisted of vital organizational and ideological pioneering, the substance of which may be found in their volume, *The Civil War in the United States* (International Publishers).

The Abolitionist movement, and the Negro people as a whole, played an indispensable role in transforming the character of the war. From the beginning people like Douglass, J. Sella Martin, William Wells Brown, Harriet Tubman, Lucretia Mott, Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips saw the need of the hour and labored together—men and women, Negro and white—for the liberation of the slaves and the salvation of the Republic. In addition, the grass-roots agitation of the Negro masses to be allowed to get into the fight against the slaveholders was very telling, especially as Union casualties mounted.

Step by step, very slowly, objective necessity—perceived, interpreted, and brought into living reality by courageous battlers—led Lincoln to pursue a course of emancipation. *"It must be done. I am driven to it,"* Lincoln wrote to a Pennsylvania Congressman, and he italicized the words. Again he said to a Kentucky friend: "I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter."

This in no way, of course, withdraws a tittle of the credit due Lincoln. Naturally, the ending of chattel slavery was not the result of one man's will or act, but rather of a whole historic revolutionary process. Yet its final human instrumentality was Abraham Lincoln, that Lincoln who, with all his doubts and his more than touch of racism and all his responsibilities, with all his hesitations and all his terribly difficult problems, did affirm: "I am naturally antislavery. If slavery is not wrong, then nothing is wrong."

It is to be added that though Henry Raymond of the *New York Times*, on learning to his displeasure that Lincoln intended to announce emancipation, urged him to do it in the form of a military order, Lincoln did not do so. While his Proclamation twice cited military necessity—an overwhelming reason, surely, in time of war!—it was not cast in the form of an Order, and it concluded by calling the Proclamation "an act of justice" and invoking upon it "the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of almighty God"—hardly appropriate for a "mere" military measure.

Lincoln knew the contest he led was for the preservation of popular sovereignty, of elementary democratic rights, of that government then more highly responsive to public will than any other in the world, of the principles of the Declaration of Independence. This contest he led successfully, not stopping at the revolutionary confiscation of three bil-

million dollars worth of private property. Of Lincoln, Marx wrote, with his typical sagacity, in March, 1862:

[He] never ventures a step forward before the tide of circumstances and the call of general public opinion forbids further delay. But once "Old Abe" has convinced himself that such a turning point has been reached, he then surprises friend and foe alike by a sudden operation executed as noiselessly as possible.

* * *

In conclusion: the Emancipation Proclamation heralded the change of Union strategy from one of futile legalistic defense of the Republic to one of aggressive re-establishment of the integrity of the country by transforming the economy of the enemy and so assuring his complete military defeat. The Emancipation Proclamation vindicated the policy and program of the Left. It demonstrated, once again, the centrality of the Negro question in all American history. It showed the interdependence of the needs of the Negro people with the needs of general democratic advance. It demonstrated in origin and implementation, the universality of progressive struggle. International proletarian solidarity, personally consolidated by Marx, was shown to be vital to our own national interest.

The Emancipation Proclamation symbolizes the essence of what Lenin referred to as the "world-historic progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War."

Would that, with the XIII Amendment, the full promise, implicit in the Proclamation, had really come to pass. Would that the advice offered by the General Council of the First International in an Address to the People of the United States, drafted by Karl Marx, in September, 1865, had been followed:

Injustice against a fraction of your people having been followed by such dire consequences, put an end to it. . . .

The eyes of Europe and the whole world are on your attempts at reconstruction and foes are ever ready to sound the death-knell of republican institutions as soon as they see their opportunity.

We therefore admonish you, as brothers in a common cause, to sunder all the chains of freedom, and your victory will be complete.

It remains for our generation "to sunder all the chains of freedom." It is our generation, and the American working class, the Negro people, the farming masses, and all democratic-minded people, who will bring to fruition, in the full meaning of our own day, the Emancipation Proclamation. Our Party has been in the past, is now, and will continue to be in the future, despite all persecution and slander, in the forefront of this struggle. In this way we shall be continuing and carrying forward into our own day the patriotic efforts of those who, ninety years ago, abolished chattel slavery and preserved our country.

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