

THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE NEXT TASKS

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

PART I

I.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I—Hasten the defeat of fascist-militarist Japan!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grant immediate national independence to Puerto Rico.

Break diplomatic relations with Franco Spain and fascist Argentina.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Establish the principle of the guaranteed annual wage.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pass the Wagner-Murray-Dingell social security bill.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

V. Safeguard and extend democracy!

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

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

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

Outlaw and prohibit all fascist organizations and activities.

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

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

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

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

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

PART II

5.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.

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

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

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

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