

16th NATIONAL CONVENTION Discussion Bulletin

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Draft Resolution Points Way Party Should Go

By DOXEY A. WILKERSON

WE have no fixed standard by which to appraise the draft resolution before us for discussion. On the one hand, the constantly developing theory of scientific socialism provides no Marxist Holy Writ with which to compare the text of this document. On the other hand, it would benefit us nothing to evaluate the resolu-



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tion on the basis of some ideal conception of what we should like to see as the nature and role of our party.

The best we can do is to use the general guides of our theory and the concrete facts of our existence in arriving at an estimate. To what extent does the draft resolution define valid and adequate next steps for the American Communist Party—at this stage of its development, and with its present relations to the labor and people's movement? Here is my over-all point of view.

I think it is illuminating to approach this resolution by comparing its outlook and policy proposals with the views and practices of the party we have been living with during the past generation.

We have long been a party

with pat answers to all questions. We talked as if all problems had been solved, at least theoretically, and we knew all the solutions—or could readily find them in the *History of the C.U.S.U.*, or *Foundations* or the proper volume of *Selected Works*. This, of course, is the essence of dogmatism.

Moreover, many of the answers we gave are demonstrably at odds with the realities of this period and alien to the American scene. Recall, for example, such widely-held beliefs as these: The Bolsheviks charted the universal path to socialism. Violent revolution is an indefeasible law in the epoch of imperialism. A one-party dictatorship of the proletariat, with curbs on the civil liberties of the class enemy, is the necessary state form for the transition to socialism.

Our strategic outlook embraces only the ultimate goal of socialism; all intermediate policies and programs are "tactical."

The "main blow" must be directed against the Social-Democratic misleaders of the working class and Negro people.

War is inevitable under imperialism.

The necessary solution of the Negro question lies in self-determination of the oppressed Negro nation in the Black Belt.

Political and ideological developments in the Soviet Union and the C.P.S.U. constitute a valid guide to policy for Marxist parties everywhere. Sharp criticisms of Soviet foreign or domestic policy are sheer slanders, or reflect inadequacies in one's understanding.

Lenin defined the organizational principles which must shape the Marxist "party of a new type" in all times and places.

Our party is the vanguard of the American workingclass, the sole organizing and guiding center of those masses which will one day bring socialism to our land.

Merely to restate such ideas now, when fresh ideological

Errors in Unions Due to Running Too Far Ahead

By ROSE WORTIS

NEW YORK.

BECAUSE of my forced inactivity in the movement during the past few years, I have hesitated to participate in the Party Discussion. However, like thousands of others, I followed it with great interest. I am particularly concerned with that part of the discussion which seeks to evaluate our work, particularly our trade union work.

I have little sympathy with those who speak of wasted years. Any honest, unprejudiced historian of the American labor movement for the past 35 years must acknowledge the positive contributions made by our Party to the advancement of the labor movement during different periods, even though many of the younger generation of organized workers, who enjoy the benefits of our pioneering work are not aware of the important role played by the Left Wing and the Communists to help bring them about.

To mention but a few: (1) The role of the Communists, especially William Z. Foster, in discarding the disastrous policy of dual unionism which helped to bring the progressive workers back into the mainstream of the labor movement; (2) The mass campaign for the amalgamation of the craft unions, a campaign which involved hundreds of thousands of workers; (3) The pioneering work in the movement to organize the unorganized in the mass production industries, which was later of enormous help in the creation of the CIO; (4) The struggle of the unemployed for unemployment insurance; for the soldiers' bonus and for the Youth Act, etc.; (5) The struggle for Negro rights dramatized by the Scottsboro and Herndon cases; (6) The fight against racketeering and for de-



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mocracy in the trade unions.

I shall never forget my experience at the founding convention of the CIO when I heard the program, which until then had been associated only with the Left Wing and Communists, being adopted as the official program of the newly organized labor movement. We can also take pride in the positive contribution we made to building anti-fascist unity before and during the second world war.

The most challenging question for me is how and why, in the face of these contributions during different periods since the birth of our Party, we made mistakes which led us in a leftist direction and destroyed the gains and the prestige we had won, leading us to isolation from the very movements we helped build and the people who worked closely with us.

It is in an effort to find an answer to these challenging questions that I am writing my piece. An examination of these problems out of my own experience leads me to believe that the main source of our Leftist mistakes—and I firmly believe they were Leftist—was and is an over-estimation of the radicalization of the workers, a tendency to run far ahead of the masses
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About This Bulletin

This bulletin will appear every two weeks until the national convention in February. We urge members of the Communist Party to write articles and letters giving their views in the Party discussion. It should be borne in mind that this phase of the pre-convention discussion is based on the draft resolution issued by the National Committee.

The deadline for articles for each issue is two weeks before publication date. If at all possible, manuscripts should be typed (double space). Maximum length for articles will be 2,500 words, though the shorter the better. Every effort will be made to have each issue present varying points of view, cover a variety of topics and represent different parts of the country.

Articles must receive some identification. They must be sent through district offices with an accompanying note from the district (or from the section in cases where the sections are far from the district headquarters).

Copies of resolutions adopted by clubs, sections, districts, etc. should be sent in the same way as articles. Many of these will be printed. Suggested amendments to the draft resolution should likewise be sent to the Discussion Committee. These too will be printed when of general interest.

Address all mail and material to Discussion Committee, 101 W. 16th St., New York 11, N.Y.

winds are blowing throughout the Marxist world, is to dramatize how mechanically we have tried to apply the principles of scientific socialism—without full consideration of varying time, place and circumstance. This is the essence of doctrinairism.

The fruits of these dogmatic and doctrinaire errors should by
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Change to Political Action Body Would Be Step Forward

By BERNARD BURTON

LOS ANGELES

THE DRAFT RESOLUTION, after rejecting proposals to liquidate the party so as to "clear the way" for a broader socialist organization, or to transform the Party into an educational association, has the following to say:

"The foregoing two proposals are liquidationist in character. However, others of an extremely different character have also been offered. One such proposal is that the Communist Party become a political action association. In the opinion of the National Committee, circumstances today do not justify such a change."

This brief two-sentence statement is the only reference in the draft resolution to the proposal for some sort of political action body. I wish the National Committee had stated what "circumstances" do not warrant this change, and why they do not.

My own thinking has been running along the lines of such a change for some time. I agree with the NC that this proposal

is not a liquidationist one. However, I also feel that the circumstances in which we operate and what I feel to be our principal tactical task—that of winning legitimacy as a natively rooted trend among American workers—make such a change logical and desirable.

My reasons are the following:

1. It is appropriate to the character, tradition and present level of development of the U.S. labor movement.

Contrary to European tradition, our labor movement has generally steered clear of and even rejected affiliation with any political party. It has also generally opposed granting any special position for any party within trade unions. This was true even back in the early days of the AFL when Marxists of that period were highly respected within the labor movement. One of the first breaks with Marxists in the AFL's formative period came when Daniel DeLeon insisted on a special status for the Socialist Labor Party within the New York Central Labor Council. Compers, who then considered himself something of a Marxist, opposed

this move and wrote to Engels asking him to state his views. Engels later indicated that he agreed with Compers (see Philip Foner's second volume on the *History of the Labor Movement in the U.S.*).

USED BY COMPERS

This fight over special status lingered for a long time and was used demagogically by Compers to counter any class political action, but the fact is he used it with effect among the workers. Contrariwise, the old Socialist Party, under Gene Debs, made its greatest strides in labor support when it adopted a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of trade unions, although

individual Socialists, who were trade unionists, became the bane of Compers' existence because they fought—as trade unionists—for class struggle policies. However, the SP finally degenerated also, for many reasons, including its control by class collaborationist forces.

I think it should be recalled that at the time when the SP flourished the working class was largely unorganized. The issue of leadership of the workers had not yet been resolved or formalized in any real way. In many ways, Debs had as much influence over the workers as Compers.

These conditions have not

ILLINOIS STATE BODY BACKS RESOLUTION

The Illinois State Committee welcomes the draft resolution as an important instrument for the next stage of the discussion, and particularly greets the stand of the National Committee in rejecting proposals to dissolve the Communist Party or alter its Marxist-Leninist essence. This does not imply acceptance of each and every proposition, con-

clusion or theme set forth in the draft resolution. On the contrary, the discussion, if properly organized, should produce concrete proposals for amendment and alteration (in written form) to be submitted for final adoption of the convention resolution.

(The above was adopted with several abstentions — no count was taken.)

been true for a long time. The workers are now largely organized and there are a formal set of leaders in the trade union movement. I say "formal" because the workers do not follow these officials on many issues. The reality, however is that these officials today wield the strongest influence on the workers and have done so for some time, and it is a reality with which we have to deal.

In more recent times, even left-wing forces have come to recognize the fact that the U.S. labor movement has been and continues to be opposed to granting special status to any political party within its ranks, even though support may be tendered certain parties or candidates in election periods. The Left recognized this fact when it voted for the CIO's "resent and reject" resolution in 1946.

In the meantime, a certain form of year-round political activity has won acceptance in labor's ranks. These are political action bodies. There are the official trade union bodies, such as the former CIO-PAC and the AFL's LLPE, now united in
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Morale Indispensable for Building Vanguard Party

By JAMES E. JACKSON, Jr.
NEW YORK.

FREEDOM, said Marx, "is the realization of necessity."

Necessity, said Engels, "is blind only in so far as it is not understood."

And Lenin showed the workers of the whole world how to fashion out of their own ranks a vanguard leadership party with infinite ties to the working class and its allies, which—upon the basis of a mastery of the Marxist science of society—



JAMES E. JACKSON, JR.

would be capable of introducing into the class the consciousness of that which is socially necessary to do in order to acquire for itself and the nation freedom and happiness.

A vanguard party of the working class is the indispensable instrument for introducing consciousness, for developing the understanding of freedom's requisites. It is necessary to give guidance to the mass forces responding, with ever greater awareness, to the compulsions of social need.

"Intelligent" (i.e., well led) social action of the masses based on a consciousness of that which is necessary, results in new measures of freedom. In such fashion might one represent the equation of social progress. What is not particularized, however, in this formula, is a subjective phe-

nomenon related to the factor of leadership and consciousness, namely "will," "spirit," "morale." In the affairs of man, without it, nothing can be accomplished.

In the necessarily critical discussion under way on the draft resolution it is my hope that participants will display a concern for further enhancing the morale and fighting spirit of our membership, and not derogate it, as was the manner of certain people during the pre-draft resolution period.

From his hospital bed a few days before he died, Comrade Alfred Wagenknecht penned a letter of objection to those who scoff at the Party in our history and who would foreclose a place for it in our future. He reaffirmed his faith in the unconquerable spirit of our Party.

Has there been a bleeding of the Party's "spirit and will" in the past several months? There has been. It has found its expression in such imprecations as, "I have wasted the best ten years of my life"; in the oft-repeated declamation of a prominent comrade to the effect that he is glad his father died before the details of the errors of Stalin's leadership were made known; in one writer's reference to the Party's history in the field of Negro affairs as a "debacle"; in assertions that there is no socialism in the Soviet Union; in another writer's despondent and depressing dirge to Fadeyev; in the new-found fashion among certain functionaries and their sophisticated hosts of competing in debunking and belittling "jokes" (sic!) at the expense of the Soviet people, their Party and their leaders.

HARMFUL POT-SHOTS

In my opinion such taking of pot-shots at the self-confidence, faith, spirit and will of the Party members contributes to an atmosphere of pessimism such as is indispensable for those few among us who want to totally obliterate our Party—to liquidate its organization and sever its theoretical tap-root from the social science of Marxist-Leninism.

Lenin was a hard critic who gave no quarter, who spared neither himself nor others when a serious question of principle was at stake. Yet nowhere (not a single example can be cited in

all of his works) did Lenin ever give vent to an emotional outburst, or present a "creative proposal" in such a fashion as would dampen the spirit of those on whose shoulders rested the task of making the required turn: On the contrary, Lenin penned his most severe indictments against those weary and befuddled leaders who conceitedly projected their mood of pessimism and loss of faith to their fellow-workers in the ranks of the Party. It would be well for some comrades to ponder the challenge that Lenin once put to the Russian Marxists during a past period of great trials experienced by their Party. I quote a passage from his Preface to the 'Letters to Kugelmann' by Karl Marx, p. 14:

"Here is a lesson that should be learned by the Russian intellectual Marxists, weakened by skepticism, sunk into a torpor of pedantry, inclined to make penitent speeches, rapidly tiring of revolution, longing as for a holiday for the funeral of the revolution and its replacement. . . . They ought to learn from the theoretician and leader of the proletarians to have faith in the revolution, to acquire ability in rousing the working class to uphold their immediate revolutionary aims to the last, to acquire firmness of spirit which admits of no faint-hearted whimpering because of temporary setbacks to the revolution."

Aside from all questions as to the lack of staunchness in the character of people who become befogged in a funk of pessimism and cynicism and seek outlets in panicky proposals to tear down the temple in the name of future reconstruction, there are at least two main sources of their current instability:

Firstly, they are symbols of and reflect our Party's theoretical immaturity, with its history of dogmatic application and one-sided development of Marxist-Leninist principles. They did not, nor did our Party keep clearly in view Lenin's teachings that Marxism as a live doctrine would itself reflect changes that would arise first in the conditions of social life, and not merely prophesy such changes. The scientific and flexible quality of Marxism as a non-dogmatic guide to action was expressed by Lenin in

the following passage taken from Vol. XX of his Collected Works (p. 85):

"Our teaching—said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical proposition emphasizes with a remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is continually left out of view. And in leaving it out of view, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, crippled and dead, we take from its living soul, we undermine its fundamental theoretical basis—dialectics, the teaching of historical development as being all-sided and full of contradictions; we cut its connection with the definite tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn in history."

"And in our time . . . very frequently people are to be met with, who leave out of view precisely this side of it."

Therefore, those who would dampen the confident spirit of those whose role in life is to firm the will and bring consciousness to the struggle of the working class and its allies, betray their basic ignorance of Marxism.

LOST MOORINGS

"Having applied Marxism in the formulation of their tasks in an extremely one-sided way and a mutilated form, having learned by heart a few 'slogans,' a few answers to tactical questions without understanding the Marxist criteria of these answers," now, "all at once faced with the most important problems (born of the altered world relationship of political, economic and social forces, and their reflection in our own country, and the rude awakening from the long sleep induced by the cult of the individual, by the superstitious worship of authority.—J.J.), some have lost their mooring." "The 'reevaluation of all values' in various spheres of social life led to 'revision' of the more abstract and general philosophic foundations of Marxism."

Of course, "It is impossible to brush aside the questions raised by this crisis which Marxism is undergoing, about its connection with the whole social-economic situation of the period in the midst of which we now

find ourselves. There is nothing more harmful and unprincipled than the attempts to get rid of them by means of a phrase [be that phrase 'Browderism' on the one side or 'creative Marxism' from the other direction.—J.J.] There is nothing more important than the mustering of all Marxists, who have recognized the depth of the crisis and the necessity of fighting it, for the defense of the theoretical foundations of Marxism and its basic positions which are being distorted from the most opposite sides. . . . (Marx, Engels, Marxism, by V. I. Lenin, p. 89.)

Second, they are bitter and disenchanted out of all rational proportion because of the revelation of a catalog of heretofore unacknowledged errors and tragic misdeeds that were committed in the course of the building of socialism, particularly during the latter years of Stalin's leadership of the state and party of the Soviet Union. Their conclusions from the errors revealed (and now being corrected and the safeguards instituted against their recurrence) being as un-Marxian as was the previous idealizing of the progress of socialist construction and party work in the Soviet Union was heretofore. Lenin foresaw the probability of not a few serious errors being committed before the age of world communism, by this or that socialist country, but this never led him to put in question the fundamentals of Marxist theory or dampen his ardent faith in the desirability and the inevitability of the working class in every country undertaking a victorious march toward socialism:

"The proletariat will not become holy and immune from error and weakness merely by virtue of the fact that it has carried out the social revolution," wrote Lenin, quoting Engels' Letter to Kautsky. But, he added, "If we desire to be faithful to socialism we must educate the masses in internationalism now. . . ."

There is nothing in all the revelations of Khrushchev that can justify the kind of defamatory remarks that are sometimes heard from the lips of some few Communists and associates; they

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In Correcting Errors Let's Not Swing to Extremes

By A. KRCHMAREK

OHIO

THE OPENING up of the floodgates of critical discussion in our Party is of great benefit to our movement. It is a necessary, even though somewhat painful process for the further advance of Marxism in the U.S.

The gushing wells of deep-going discussion and self-appraisal are helping to uncover our mistakes and miscalculations; to bring to light practices which have no room in our midst; to set aright our relationships with the mass movements. It is a cleansing process essential in bringing anew the glow of health and vitality to the working class movement in America.

One thing becomes more clear—while our Party has become more steered and experienced, it continues to show signs of political immaturity. Despite all pretensions to the contrary, the evidence shows that we are still far from being fully matured and seasoned ideologically even though some advances have been made. This is reflected in the continuing tendencies to swing to extremes even at times when corrections of mistakes are being undertaken.

Is it not political immaturity that our Party for so many years should have committed Left sectarian errors which served to

isolate us from the masses of the people? Or that we made faulty political estimates in overrating the power of reaction and understanding the strength of the democratic forces in America? Or that our relationships with the people's mass movements should worsen steadily at a time when these great mass movements are surging forward so dramatically? This does not indicate a full mastery of the principles of scientific socialism.

The current discussion is mercilessly exposing our weaknesses in this respect. But the matter does not end there by any means. The ghosts of our immaturity continue to haunt us even in the midst of the process of correction. Tendencies of the pendulum to swing to extremes continue and find even sharper expression. Currents ordinarily lying dormant surge to the surface now and become whirlpools of confusion. Thus:

Realization that the Party made a number of serious errors evokes proposals for the dissolution of the Party altogether.

Recognition that the Party made mistaken political estimates and judgments brings proposals to ditch the theories of Marxism-Leninism as no longer valid or applicable to the U. S. .

Violations of principles of socialist democracy in the Soviet Union evoke attitudes of cynicism and hostility (thus a mem-

ber asks for a year's leave of absence to make up her mind about the Party and the Soviet Union).

Violation of principles of democratic centralism brings proposals for the abandonment of democratic centralism altogether.

Security measures imposed as a result of severe persecution bring in their wake a demand for a Party completely "legal," as though all that was necessary was a mere pronouncement on our part.

Our theoretically correct perspective for a peaceful transition to socialism evokes some fantastic proposals based upon dazzling illusions with respect to bourgeois democracy.

Reopening of the Negro question for evaluation brings out the depth of penetration of white supremacist ideas even in our ranks.

Many of these ideas and proposals are based upon the abandonment of a Marxist concept of the social laws of development. They tend to ignore the nature of capitalist society in our country and its class structure. They tend to embrace the concept of the disappearance of the class struggle from bourgeois-democratic United States. But the fact is that today, more than ever, we need to study with a new understanding the principles of Marxism-Leninism in their specific application to the capitalist system

in the U. S.

Lenin's analysis of imperialism and the role of monopoly applies with full force to the U. S. Operating behind a facade of bourgeois democracy, there has developed in our country a ruling class commanding greater wealth and exercising greater power than any previous ruling class in history.

Within this class the decisive power is wielded by a tiny group of individuals composing not more than 10,000 persons, with the actual power resting in the hands of a few hundred top financial magnates. Their power and their decisions influence every phase of public life—social, political and economic.

Into the coffers of this oligarchy pours a staggering ocean of profits each year, produced by the most technologically advanced working class in the world. Fundamental to their power is their control of the means of production. This ownership is exercised not so much through individuals as by the instrumentality of the giant corporations—the modern monopolies which are decisive in the production system of the U. S.

Utilizing these giant corporations, the oligarchy asserts its will more or less openly, but decisively. They decide not only the personnel and the operation of the procedure process, but the personnel of the government,



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the judiciary, education, publicity media, etc.

To expect these rulers of America to hand over their positions of power and purpled ease voluntarily is unrealistic. Even Judge McNamee commented dryly in the course of the Ohio Smith Act trial, "Do these people (the Communists) think that the stockholders of U. S. Steel will give up their stocks without a fight?" A good question—will they, or will they not? What are

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PROPOSE COMMITTEE FOR TALKS WITH OTHER GROUPS

The following resolution was adopted by the Echo Park Section Board, 24th Congressional District of Los Angeles:

We propose that our Party at its coming national convention adopt a resolution expressing an "outstretched hand" policy of willingness to work with all socialist-minded forces in our country. We further propose that the national convention establish a special committee, elected by the convention, for the purpose of initiating discussions and negotiations with other groups for joint action around issues, electoral coalitions, and other forms of united front activity, and that the district, state and county conventions be urged to set up similar committees to operate on a local or regional basis.

Such activity which is essential today to lay the basis for a future mass socialist party in the U. S., requires a strong, well-functioning Communist Party. Our Party today is in a real crisis and we are strongly critical of the fact that the depth of this crisis has been concealed from the membership, and that our national, state and county leadership have not presented their positions to the membership for open discussion. Drastic and radical changes must be made quickly in our Party to make it more democratic, to make it possible for our individual members and clubs to function with greater initiative and freedom, and to bring our entire Party closer to the people.

In the course of this dual process, of seeking out and finding new ways of cooperation with other socialist-minded forces and remolding our own Party, we must work out much more clearly what kind of new mass party is needed to meet the needs of the situation in the U.S. This requires a specific re-examination of our basic Marxist theory in relation to the particular facts of life in the U. S. of today in order to clarify our thinking as to the program and form of such a mass party.

While at present the identifiable socialist groups in this country are small and do not themselves have any sizable mass following, the search for forms of cooperation and the dynamics of this cooperation will attract many other forces, at present unorganized, particularly in the trade union movement. Within the organized labor movement there remains a core of workers who were nourished on the native socialist traditions of our country's history and who have undoubtedly influenced some of the younger generation of workers. Among the farmers also there is a long history of anti-monopoly struggle which perhaps had its highest development in the days of Populism, and which in many areas, after the defeat of the Populist movement, carried over into support of the Socialist Party. This old native socialist tradition can and must become a part of the modern socialist movement.

It can also be expected that under the impact of the development of socialism on a world scale, as well as of developments in the U. S., new forces will be moving to socialism whom we cannot even imagine today. Our perspective of work now for cooperation among socialist-minded forces and our perspectives for a future mass socialist party must be flexible and dynamic enough to attract these new forces.

THEORY OF ORGANIZATION

With relation to our own Party today, we believe that it is necessary to reexamine our entire theory of Party organization. Without at this moment presenting any conclusions on

these theoretical points, we make the following recommendations for immediate action:

1. It should be clearly understood, if necessary provided for in the constitution, that each Party organization has full responsibility for its own area of work within the framework of general Party policy. There must be an end to the practice whereby higher bodies virtually exercise veto power over the lower bodies. Further, the clubs, first and foremost, and the sections should have the full right to decide for themselves what their activity should be and the right to reject proposals for activity from higher bodies which, in their judgment, are not suitable for their areas.

2. In general we agree with the principle of delegated bodies for section and county leadership. Many of the specific proposals made by the county Organizational Conference involve much too complicated a structure.

3. We propose that a separate apparatus, under the direction of the county, should be established for the standing organizational questions such as press, membership and dues, education and literature. At the present time a great deal of time of the section committees, which should be concentrating on mass work in the communities, is taken up with details of these organizational questions since the section committees are held politically responsible for all of them. The county forces in charge of particular departments have little or no direct contact with the clubs, and their role usually degenerates into that of agitating the section committees. The people in the clubs responsible for these departments are constantly being reduced to the status of technical workers since every time there is a fundamental political discussion or a serious problem to be solved, the matter becomes the property of the section committee and the club chairmen, rather than theirs.

We recommend that there be included in the constitution a brief statement of fundamentals which every one joining the Party accepts, such as the belief in socialism as the solution of the basic problems confronting the people of the U. S.; the obligation to struggle for full equality of the Negro people, the Mexican-American people, and all other minority peoples, etc. We feel that the right to dissent must be guaranteed, but we also feel strongly that there are certain basic questions on which there can be no dissent since if there is not agreement on these, the individual has no place in our Party or in a future mass socialist party.

5. We are keenly concerned with the problem of the industrial sections and clubs, and we feel that this question is a question for the entire Party. The community sections and clubs must participate fully in any discussion leading to a resolution of this question.

6. We agree strongly that there should be not more than one level of leadership between the county committees and the clubs.



Against Discarding Democratic Centralism and Vanguard Role

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

In submitting this article John Williamson writes: "Although I am not at present in the country I still consider myself of our Party and its leadership — in temporary political exile, but still functioning on its behalf. Furthermore, the period under discussion is not only close to me, but as one of the national secretaries I had a specific responsibility for the Party activities and estimates under discussion."—Discussion Committee.

DISTANCE and time — lag prevent me from seeing the draft resolution and the latest articles in the Daily Worker at this date of writing (Sept. 16).

It was understandable that the shock of the revelations of repressions and violations of socialist law and Party democracy in the Soviet Union should result in extended discussion. It seems to me the discussion in our Party of the 20th Congress of the CPSU was very one-sided. Little attention was given to the breath-taking strides recorded in the five-year plans on the economic, educational and cultural fields; and a selective attitude of "pick and choose" was adopted towards the new contributions to Marxist — Leninist theory outlined there.

Discussion of our Party policy and its relationship to the workers' movement was long overdue. The pro-fascist repressive measures against the Party, with its resulting semi-legality and imprisonment or separation of many leaders, denied the usual interflow of ideas and experiences between membership and leadership. This situation was accentuated during the years of 1951-54 by confusion in policy and organization, separation of leadership from membership, conflicting centers, a manifold increase in bureaucratic methods of leadership and neglect of the problems of the membership and branches.

This is not to say that there were no errors of policy or bureaucratic tendencies prior to 1951. However, in my opinion, the main direction of much of our analyses from 1945 to 1951 was correct. I refer specifically to the estimate of the aggressive post-war role of U.S. imperialism and the pro-fascist developments that accentuated the danger of fascism itself. To deny these is to blind oneself to objective facts. This is not con- of June 4, 1951 reveals that it traidictory to Comrade Dennis' statement that most of our tactical mistakes since 1945 "have been chiefly of a Left sectarian character."

In addition to common responsibility with the entire National Committee on such errors as wrong estimates of the economic situation and certain electoral tactics, I bear a specific responsibility for Left sectarian errors in trade union policy and for failure to fight energetically enough against such pressures within some districts or among some trade union comrades.

On the key question of pro-fascist development in the U.S. A. and the Vinson decision upholding the Smith Act convictions, a re-reading today of the National Committee statement stands up very well and was fundamentally sound. It is correct that we miscalculated the immediate tactics of the ruling class, and certain organizational measures were taken that were disorientating and therefore wrong. However, we did not miscalculate the main tactical line of the ruling class, with its pro-fascist legislation, arrests, witch-hunts and administrative acts of repression. I agree with Comrade Dennis when he states



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in his report that:

"The post-war process of militarization and of the 'creeping' fascization of the state apparatus has not yet been reversed, but at best, only partially checked or deterred."

Discussion in our Party is intended to strengthen its political role and leadership in the everyday workers' struggle and in the struggle for socialism. Is this happening today?

Some of the discussion does not lead in this direction. Rather some of the fundamentals of a Marxist party are being challenged, even though it be by comrades who are sincere in wanting to help the Party overcome its isolation.

In the course of the discussion there has been projected the need to re-examine the validity of democratic centralism, of the concept of monolithic party and of whether the Party should exercise its vanguard role—and if does, whether it has a monopoly in this respect.

RUSSO'S PROPOSAL

In blunt language, Comrade Mike Russo says what others have hinted at, when he projects his "indispensable" proposal, namely, that we publicly proclaim our "readiness to dissolve the CP." Side by side with such an announcement of contemplated suicide, Mike favors "the formation soon . . . of a non-party organization, political in character, whose chief purpose would be to advance the cause of socialism in the U.S."

And this came on the heels of assurances that "Browder revisionism is not an issue in the Party discussion" and Browderism is "as dead as a door nail."

Such ideas represent a policy of liquidation and strike at the concept of the Communist Party as the most politically conscious and best organized force of the workers. The CP fulfills its vanguard role by consistently representing the immediate and future interests of the workers and by helping to organize the most effective struggles of the workers to advance their interests. The degree of its success in this respect depends on a combination of factors — the ideological development of the Party based on Marxism-Leninism and a knowledge and grasp of the history and conditions of its own country; its strong roots amongst the decisive sections of the working class and its mass organizations; a leadership that has been elected by the membership on the basis of its proven ability to react adequately and on time with correct policies that advance the interests of the workers and make it possible for our Party to gain ever greater support from more workers and toilers.

It seems to me there is much distortion of Comrade Dennis' discussion of "the possibility of organizing in the U. S. a new and broader mass party of socialism." Who can disagree with such a great hope, and not pledge readiness to throw overboard sectarian or

subjective reactions that might be an obstacle? But Comrade Dennis also emphasized that "the task of organizing a broad, mass party of socialism, based in substance on genuine Marxist principles, cannot be easy or quick" and that "It will necessitate sharp political and ideological struggles" as well as a "strengthening of our CP politically, ideologically and organizationally—and above all, to extend its mass influence and united front relationships."

Under the abstract banner of unity of Socialist and Communist forces there is a line being projected by some comrades of dissolving the Communist Party. The idea of a new and broader party of socialism is to have a larger and more effective force propagating Marxist principles and leading the American workers in struggle for them. To such a unity our Party will contribute proportionately the greatest share. To advocate dissolution of our Party now is to weaken the struggles of the workers and to postpone still longer the desired unity of all socialist-minded workers into a Marxist party.

And this policy of liquidationism is theoretically justified because "our program, tactics, and organization in their entirety must be brought fully into accord with American requirements and with the central idea that socialism will be established in the U. S. by constitutional means."

Has not our Party a proud record of service in the struggles of the American workers? Has not our Party for many years declared its support of a peaceful transition to socialism? And has not our Party suffered the most severe blows of any working class force by a ruling class that has and is making a mockery of its own constitution and democratic traditions? This phrase about "constitutional means" is projected in such a way as to blind the workers to the fact that to successfully tread the peaceful path to socialism in the U.S.A. will necessitate many sharp bitter struggles against the ruling class on behalf of the majority will of the workers, Negro people and small farmers.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

To fulfill its role effectively, the world Communist movement, through decades of experience has evolved the organizational principles known as democratic centralism. There are those in the discussion who call for a discarding of democratic centralism, and some who even question the vanguard role of our Party. To do this means to change the Marxist character of our Party and return it to the ways of the old Socialist Party.

The essence of democratic centralism is that the Party is a unified and effective force in advancing the struggle for the workers' interests through the combination of democratic decision and centralized leadership. Its reason for development is not some "Russian" peculiarity. Rather, its roots for existence are in the very development of monopoly capitalism and centralized state power, the growth of a national labor movement, and the consequent new role and tasks of a revolutionary workingclass political party.

The workingclass political party in the United States did not always operate on the principles of democratic centralism. In the old Socialist Party, prior to 1919, discipline was unknown and convention policies were not adhered to by members, elected officials, state organizations or party newspapers. Each went its own merry way. In fact, there

(Continued on Page 7)

Reiteration About Imminent War Disarmed the Party

By JOSEPH CLARK

NEW YORK

Comrade Foster writes in his article on the Draft Resolution:

"The first serious element of political confusion in the Party began early in 1954, with the agitation of ex-Comrade Starobin and Comrade Clark, successively foreign editors of the Daily Worker, to the effect that the Party's fight against the war danger was both wrong and fruitless. This was a blow at the very foundations of the hard-pressed Party's morale. They abandoned, too, the Party's position that American imperialism was striving for world domination. Significantly, they also resurrected some of Browder's revisionist conceptions. This disruptive agitation, which tended to shield American imperialism from attack and to disintegrate the mass struggle for peace, was not without negative effects in the Party, especially in view of the prominence of the writers concerned."

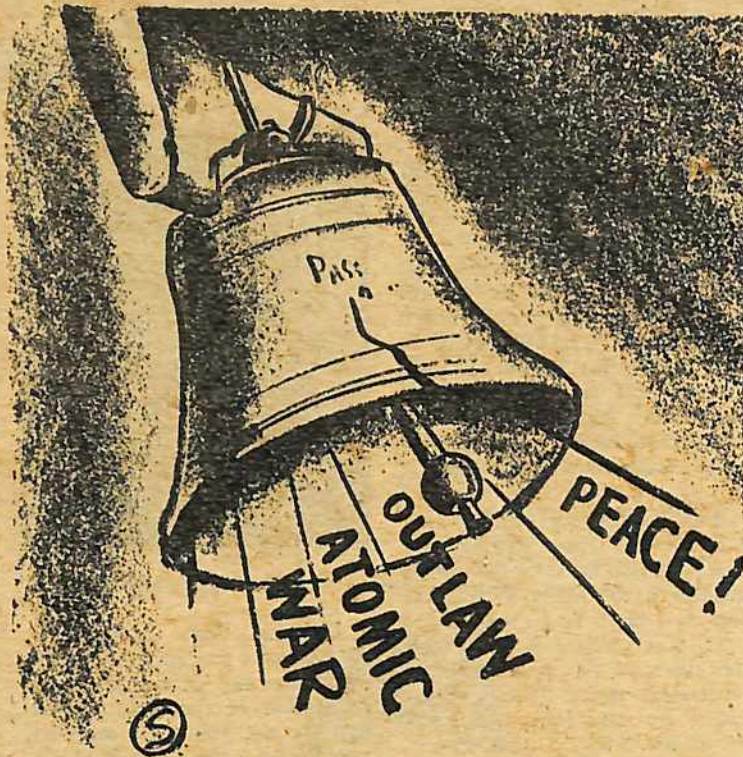
Party members may wonder about this explanation because my writing since early 1954 has appeared in the Daily Worker and Sunday Worker, Masses and Mainstream, New World Review, Daily People's World, and the pamphlet, "Geneva—Road to Peace." I have also spoken at meetings on two coast-to-coast tours. With this material before them no one has suspected, to my knowledge, that I was really engaged in "disruptive agitation," busy "shield(ing) American imperialism from attack," and working "to disintegrate the mass struggle for peace." Comrade Foster makes such sweeping attacks without bothering to quote, cite or name a single bit of evidence. And this, unfortunately, is the method he uses in his entire article to describe the many evil influences which he sees at work within the Party.

Frankly, I was as surprised as other comrades were, at the vehemence of Foster's attack. Though we have had differences, I respect his invaluable contributions to American labor.

It is true that I have been critical of some aspects of the Party's estimate of the war danger. But, primarily, this criticism was directed against the absence of a fight for peace and the isolation of the Party from the actual and real fight for peace that was being conducted by the American people. To talk about inevitable war dangers out of hearing of the American people seemed to me to be a poor substitute for a fruitful fight for peace.

The key to a successful fight for peace, not only from early 1954, but throughout the entire post-war decade, was recognition that the real issue was peaceful coexistence. The only conclusion which readers of Foster's articles could draw was that while the Soviet Union favored coexistence there was no chance for real coexistence as long as Eisenhower or Stevenson, or for that matter Knowland or Reuther, were in power in the United States. Since there was no realistic chance that Comrade Foster, or even Vincent Hallinan would head up an American government, Foster disarmed the Party with his reiteration about inevitable and imminent war.

Thus, in a Daily Worker article published on June 18, 1954, Foster assailed Walter Lippmann for saying there is "a faction in the Administration and in Congress" (Radford, et al.) "which is trying to entangle us in a general war." Foster wasn't satisfied with that concession. He identified all the forces which he thought were trying to entangle us in a general war at that time: "Actually they are the official policies of the Eisenhower government itself, with its program



of world conquest and war. And the chief war spokesmen are Eisenhower, Knowland, Dulles and company, with such Democratic leaders as Stevenson and Douglas, applauding the war program from the sidelines. Even more dangerous, Meany and Reuther, the heads of the two great labor federations, are also warmongers of the most militant category."

DROP IN MEMBERSHIP

This then was Foster's idea of how to kindle a mass struggle for peace. The Communist Party had been reduced considerably in membership. The influence of the Party had been largely dissipated. And Foster was telling our ranks that they had to fight not only Radford and Knowland, who were then pursuing the most bellicose policies, not only Eisenhower, who at times appeased Knowland and McCarthy, not only Stevenson, but also the leaders of both CIO and AFL, the labor leaders being even more dangerous than Radford and Knowland! Shades of the disastrous social-fascism theory!

As though anyone could forget, the period we're talking about is the one in which the Korean war ended, in which the threat to involve us in the Indochina war was defeated, in which McCarthyism was being discredited, in which a merger of the two great labor federations was being prepared and in which the most important struggle of the Negro people for first-class citizenship since Reconstruction days, was under way. This was the period when on a world-wide scale the forces of peace had become far stronger than the forces of war.

And instead of making even the slightest efforts to involve us in the mainstream of these stupendous developments Foster was warning day after day about the deadly peril coming from the entire ruling class, from both major parties, from the entire leadership of the labor movement, and everybody and everything except the few thousand within reach of his repeated warnings. Perhaps the most revealing example of this fatalistic position, which tended to prevent any who followed such counsel from doing anything fruitful for peace, was Foster's view of the labor merger as a factor spreading the war danger. In the October, 1955, issue of Political Affairs he wrote:

"In striving to liquidate the cold war, the greatest weakness of the peace forces in the United States is the ultra-reactionary character of the Meany group of mis-leaders now dominating the AFL and soon to have their influence spread further, through the current merger of the AFL and the CIO."

To nail down his actual disavowal of the possibility of

peaceful coexistence Foster developed the theory that the capitalists and all who supported them were divided into "War Now" and "War When We Are Ready" groups.

Just a few weeks before agreement was reached to hold the Geneva summit conference Foster wrote an article for the Daily Worker on April 8, 1955 under the title: "Is There a War Party?" His answer was:

"In fact, there are two war parties among the agents of monopoly capital." The first war party which wanted war immediately, according to Foster, consisted of Nixon, McCarthy, etc. Foster then continues:

"The second group is the 'War When We Are Ready' crowd, typified by Eisenhower and Dulles, Truman and Stevenson and by the main top leaders of the AFL and CIO."

ANOTHER P.A. ARTICLE

It is true that Foster also wrote about peaceful coexistence and the fight for peace, in addition to writing about these above-named groups who would not and could not choose peace, in his view. But what was characteristic of the war parties was that in Foster's descriptions they were composed of "adventurers," "madmen" and "putschists." This would hardly put them in the category of forces which could be subdued or tamed, or subject to peaceful coexistence. This was illustrated by an article in Political Affairs in January, 1954 in which Foster warned of "the possibility that Wall Street imperialism, which is basically resolved upon war, may, in the face of the rising peace sentiment in the world, try to precipitate the war and drag its unwilling allies into it, by provoking some incident as a pretext for launching a sudden general war."

Who then is putting the damper on "the mass struggle for peace?" In Foster's view even victories for peace, rising world peace sentiment and the unwillingness of America's allies, only leave us with the perils of "sudden general war." This is so, he explains, because "desperate capitalist gamblers are now dictating United States foreign policy." How in the world we were going to stop war under such conditions Foster gave no indication.

Fortunately in the Daily Worker and Worker we did try to show how to impose peace. And, most fortunately in the draft program of the Party, issued in 1954, the stress was on a realizable fight for peace and for a new foreign policy based on ending the cold war and on peaceful coexistence. Comrade Foster and Comrade Betty Gannett did not support the draft program's treatment of the fight for peace. I subscribed to it wholeheartedly and all we wrote

in the Daily and Sunday Worker supported the position taken by the draft program. But as an indication of what went on instead of discussion in those days, Comrade Foster attacked certain unnamed writers of "the press" for allegedly failing to support the program. Meanwhile the written discussion on the draft program, as it appeared in the Daily Worker, featured one attack after another, the first by Comrade Zipser, on the peace section of the draft. Most of these articles followed a single pattern. They attacked the draft for not stressing the danger of war sufficiently. Those of us who enthusiastically supported the draft section on peace were not even asked to write a line in this discussion. The final program was changed under this onslaught.

The present draft resolution of the Party correctly criticizes those tendencies toward a line of imminent and inevitable war during the period under review. I would recommend to the comrades that they re-read the draft program of 1954 to see that at that time there were those who recognized the significance of the peaceful coexistence issue and how to fight for peace.

In citing the position I took in this fight I do not want to imply that I had not contributed more than my quota of mistakes. My failure to report objectively from the Soviet Union, when I wore rose-colored blinders, is a case in point.

The very first article I wrote for the Worker when I returned from the Soviet Union rounded up the sentiments and efforts to end the Korean war in the face of the threats made at that time by Syngman Rhee to prolong it. At that time, too, I suggested to the Daily Worker editorial board that the next big fight after Korea, would be the struggle to end the Indochina war. And overall I said was the need for a campaign to ban the H-bomb. When Dulles put forward his massive retaliation position, which he stated would last an entire historical era, I wrote in the Worker, Jan. 25, 1954:

"Dulles' new program for 'an entire historical era' rests on the greatest force for evil in the world today—the threat of atomic and hydrogen bomb war. Dulles would use these monstrous weapons where the 'old' ones have failed. This is a threat to the American people in the first place.

"However, in the face of popular revulsion against atomic warfare the 'new' foreign policy will last less of a 'historical era' than the former policy."

RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES

This estimate was based not on any concept of the inevitability of peace, but on the actual relationship of forces in the world—with Soviet H-bombs to match American H-bombs—and, as my article pointed out, on the "world peace camp and the will of the American people." My contention and the Daily Worker contention was that you had to fight for peace, fight to end the Korean war, then the Indochina war, to bar intervention in Quemoy and Matsu, to ban H-bomb tests. For example, Joe Starobin wrote in the Feb. 14, 1954 Worker:

"Unless public opinion forms swiftly against sending another man, or a cent, or a gun to Indochina, we may find ourselves in the same terrible quicksand as we were in Korea."

That was the kind of warning that meant something. It was based on the real situation and the real danger and the real opportunity to preserve peace. Search through the Daily Worker and Worker of these years and it reveals this constant exposure of Wall Street imperialism. At the same time it shows how peaceful coexistence can be

won even while imperialism continues to rule in our country.

I quote Joe Starobin's contribution above as typical of the Daily Worker's fight against war. But I do not agree with Starobin's contention today that the C.P. is incapable of correcting its mistakes.

To people who took Foster's writing literally the Geneva conference was a puzzle. After all, the "war party" had not been thrown out of the government, and yet there was the historic summit meeting which marked a turning point in the fight for peace and the first big step toward ending the cold war. Foster's writing about Geneva tended to make it appear that this was a six-day wonder. Four heads of government got together and somehow changed the world situation by themselves.

Geneva was no puzzle to those who appreciated the meaning of peaceful coexistence, and the struggle to bring it about.

Here's what I wrote in the pamphlet on Geneva published soon after I returned from having covered the summit meeting for the Daily Worker:

"Geneva was a triumph for the idea of peaceful coexistence. It was not a 'six-day wonder.' It brought about wonderful changes in six days, but what happened in the ten years before, made Geneva possible. The real origin of Geneva was in the great victory over Hitlerism in World War II which profoundly altered relations among the powers. It was a victory of American-Soviet cooperation. And after that victory every effort to instigate another world war came up against these new relations. Above all, they came up against the people everywhere who wanted no such war."

By giving the impression that Eisenhower was precipitating World War III, instead of exposing Eisenhower's reluctance to end the cold war, Foster unwittingly contributed to making Eisenhower appear as a peacemaker after the Geneva conference. In reality it was the pressure of world events and pressure by the American people which brought Eisenhower to Geneva. After the conference he was reluctant to go forward to ending the arms race and the cold war.

It is a mark of real progress that the draft resolution envisages a thoroughly democratic Party based on majority decisions and the right to dissent even after such decisions are made. This was not true in the past. Thus views which I expressed or allegedly expressed on war and peace became subjects of discussion even though I was not in on these discussions.

MEMO ON VIEWS

Finally, in June 1955 I was asked to write a memorandum expressing my views. I have not only been critical of Foster's position on war, but also on several other questions, which I discussed as follows in my June, 1955 memo:

1.—I emphasized that the reconciliation with Tito was not diplomatic or tactical, but represented a recognition that Yugoslavia was building socialism. It also affirmed a principle, previously violated, of the absolute independence of Communist Parties and the diversity of various paths to socialism.

2.—Our uncritical attitude toward the Soviet Union led us to portray the USSR in a way which was unbelievable. Socialism would come in a far different way and would have far different characteristics in our country than in Russia.

3.—We failed to stress the democratic path to socialism and our adherence to civil liberties now, and in the future, under socialism.

(Continued on Page 5)

Errors in Trade Unions Due to Running Too Far Ahead

(Continued from Page 1) whose support we had on important immediate issues. This policy isolated us from these very people.

A FEW EXAMPLES

To cite a few pertinent examples: I mentioned earlier the amalgamation movement during the twenties, a mass movement in the real sense of the word. Our program rallied the support of some of the most important sections of the labor movement, such as the railroad unions, etc., because the workers realized that the craft unions no longer answered the needs of the mass production industries. It grew so fast that it required the personal intervention of Gompers to stop this movement. However, our program also included the organization of a farmer-labor party, which the workers and the leaders of that movement were not ready for. Unmindful of this, we proceeded with the organization of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party in 1924 in Chicago.



This organization was neither labor nor farmer nor federated. The labor movement, which refused to join this Farmer-Labor Party, did officially endorse the LaFollette campaign. This was the only time that the AFL ever endorsed a third-party candidate.

This still-born Federated Farmer-Labor Party, far from advancing the movement for a third party, isolated the Left and brought about a split between them and other progressive forces such as Fitzpatrick, leader of the Chicago Federation of Labor, facilitating the efforts of the reactionaries to heighten their expulsion campaign against the Left in the unions. Again in the early thirties, on the initiative of the Left, we began organizing the unemployed and launched the campaign for unemployment insurance. The AFL (1931) was opposed to this as a "dole." Because these were issues of great concern to the workers, a new attitude developed towards the Left, and their positive contributions were widely recognized. But again, we did not know how to consolidate this influence.

When, after the depression years production was resumed, the workers began to clamor for organization. To meet this situation, the Roosevelt administration passed a number of measures, such as the NRA. The workers, eager for organization, grasped at this legislation, particularly Section 7A which they interpreted as giving them the right to organize into unions of their own choosing. But the Left, instead of linking itself with this sentiment of the workers for organization, denounced the NRA as a fascist measure, a position which could not be understood by the ordinary worker. The conservative leaders in

the trade unions followed a contrary policy. They characterized the NRA as a Magna Carta of labor and cashed in on it. Unions which had been reduced to skeleton organizations quickly became organizations of hundreds of thousands, such as the ILGWU, textile, etc. When the Supreme Court, under pressure of the reactionaries invalidated the NRA, we staged a demonstration also denouncing the NRA. Thus, in many industries the newly organized workers did not identify the Left with the advance of their unions.

We took a similar negative position towards the Wagner Act in its early stages, but fortunately corrected ourselves in a later period. I have often raised the question of evaluating our tactical line toward the NRA and the other New Deal legislation of that period. This was never done—not even in Comrade Foster's book on the Party.

AMERICAN LABOR PARTY

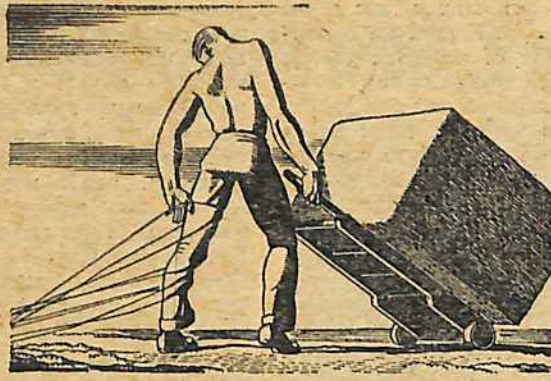
Another example, which may be very controversial, is the question of the American Labor Party in New York State. When the ALP was organized, it included both the Left and important right-wing unions. It is true that technically the Left later won the majority in the primaries. However, since we were well aware that the Left actually represented a minority of the affiliated unions, and we may say a minority of the membership, would it not have been better tactics knowing that Rose and Dubinsky were determined to split, for the Left to have worked as a minority in a united labor party rather than taking complete control of the leadership?

Now to come to more recent events—the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947. We were definitely correct in opposing the Taft-Hartley Act and fighting together with the rest of the labor movement against its acceptance. However, we agreed that there might come a time when we would have to retreat. This was correct theory, but in its application we went off at a Left tangent.

When the most important trade unions agreed to sign the affidavit under protest and to work for its repeal, the unions under Left leadership persisted in the original policy, which the workers could not understand and considered foolhardy. This leftist policy led to the removal or resignation of the Left leaders in the unions. The policy was changed only after the Left lost leadership in many unions.

Much has been said about the premature organization of the Progressive Party which undoubtedly had its influence in sharpening the relationship between the Left and the other forces in the CIO and was a contributing factor in the expulsion of the Left unions. Here again we saw a repetition of the mistake made in the organization of the Farmer-Labor Party in 1924, supporting the organization of a third party which did not have the support of a goodly section of the organized labor movement.

Our policy and tactics in relation to the Marshall Plan brings to my mind some fundamental questions as to our methods of work in trade unions and other mass organizations. I believe that in the main our policy toward the Marshall Plan was correct. Some of our criticism was later substantiated by important trade union officials. The Left had a right and duty to fight for its position at the CIO convention in 1948. However, the majority of the delegates thought otherwise. They rejected the position of the Left and came out in favor of the Marshall Plan.



This required a readjustment of tactics so that the Left could continue to work for its position within the limits of the majority decision. Instead, Communists and other left-wingers proceeded as though no decision had been made, thus giving some semblance to the charge that we do not recognize majority decisions, that we have no organizational loyalty and recognize an authority over and above the organized labor movement.

UNION DISCIPLINE

The Left Wing confronted similar problems in many unions in relation not only to general political issues, but even ordinary trade union questions. It is a tradition in the American labor movement to have organized groupings around certain programs. Even such an old conservative union as the Typographical Union has organized groupings. The mistake of the Left which played into the hands of the reactionaries was to be careless about union discipline, about accepting majority decisions if they did not fully conform with the left-wing program.

In my own experience I can recall in the ILGWU such incidents. In 1923, at the expiration of the agreement in the dress industry, the union, under the inspiration of the left-wing forces, developed a series of demands for the employed. Among them was the demand for the 40-hour week and week work. After months of negotiation the leadership, under the pressure of the rank and file, concluded a compromise agreement gaining the 40-hour week but giving up the demand for week work.

It is true that this was a compromise settlement but it nevertheless registered an important gain. It was one of the first unions to establish the 40-hour week by agreement. Instead of recognizing this as a substantial victory and utilizing it to strengthen the union so as to prepare for the achievement of week work in the next agreement, we denounced the settlement as a sell-out, thus allowing the right-wing leadership to take credit for the establishment of the 40-hour week which properly belonged to the Left wing.

We saw a more recent example in the Transportation Workers Union in 1948 on the

question of the increased fare. The left-wing forces in the union were correct in opposing a policy of gaining wage increases for the transport workers at the expense of the rest of the community. However, the overwhelming majority of the transport workers thought otherwise. They were convinced that no increase was possible (perhaps wrongly) without an increase in fares.

After placing their position before the membership, the Left forces in the Union, in my opinion, should have been guided by the will and decision of the majority of the membership. Instead, they continued to advocate their own position, thus playing into the hands of those who were maneuvering to split away from the Left-wing forces in the labor movement.

What conclusions must we draw from these experiences? We must learn to distinguish between our own advanced program and such issues on which the workers are ready to follow us. It is necessary to convince the workers of the correctness and practicability of our advanced program.

How do we explain the fact that many of our experienced trade union comrades allowed themselves to make such mistakes? I think, in the main, it was due to the fact that the comrades somehow felt that the Party must go on fighting for its program irrespective of the response it gets even among the most advanced sections of the workers. Indirectly this expressed a sort of patronizing and superior attitude towards the workers, an attitude which in effect said that even on practical day-to-day problems of the mass organizations, we know best what is good for you.

If we want to reestablish our influence and prestige among the masses, it is not only necessary for us to be the best builders of the organizations, but also to show that we are the most disciplined. While not giving up our program we have to learn how to work within the limits of the democratic decisions of the organizations.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

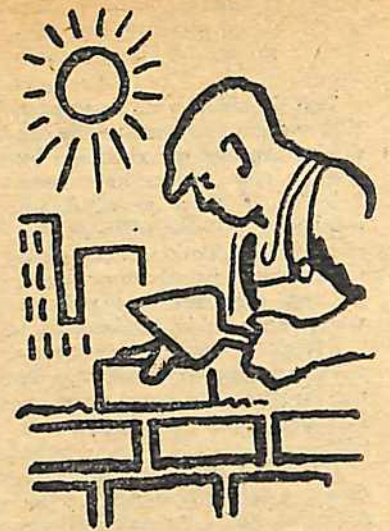
Now a word on the questions of party organization and methods of leadership. I think we

must do away with the conception of the all-wise ones who have an answer to every problem. No important decision should be made in any field without prior discussion and consultation with the people most directly involved. I felt somewhat annoyed while reading Comrade Dennis' report about the mistakes of the Left in trade-union work. Many of these decisions met with little enthusiasm on the part of the trade union comrades and were often accepted merely as a matter of discipline.

Another point is the selection of leadership for work in the various fields. I think such leaders should be chosen in the first place from the particular field of activity and also through discussion and consultation with those of our comrades most directly involved. I know of many instances where changes in leadership were made that would never have been approved had the group been consulted about the new leadership.

I do not wish to minimize the crisis which the Party is experiencing now. I do not look forward to miraculous improvements in the immediate future, but I do think that the present self-critical discussion and the proposed improved methods of work will help. The democratization of the Party, the greater readiness on the part of our comrades and the leadership to have our ear to the ground, will definitely help us make a comeback as a constructive force in advancing the welfare of the people.

I agree with the perspective of a mass party of socialism in the U. S., but I do not see the conditions for the emergence of such a Party in the immediate future. Any attempt to rush such a development will, in my opinion, result in repeating some of our Leftist mistakes all over again. I think we should do all in our power to strengthen our Party. In doing so we will create one of the effective forces necessary for the building of such a party of socialism in the U. S.



Emphasis on Imminent War Disarmed the Party

(Continued from Page 4) ism, as well as under capitalism. 4.—We had thrown out the splendid advances made from 1935 to 1939 in connection with the great American tradition.

I also said in the memo that we should be staunch enough friends of the Soviet Union to be able to criticize them when wrong things took place there. "Above all," I wrote, "it should be clear to us and to the world that we copy no one, that we operate within the framework of a universal science of Marxism, but that science remains science only if it is developed here on the basis of our own history and conditions."

In that memo I argued that we did not contribute sufficiently to the exposure of Wall Street imperialism and to the fight for

peace because we did not see that the greater strength of the forces of peace over war was based on the following factors:

- 1.—Socialism was now a world system, not confined to one country, but including one-third of the world.
- 2.—The anti-imperialist camp had been strengthened by the independence won not only by China, but India, Indonesia, etc.
- 3.—The strengthening of the Soviet Union, which included their mastery of the A-and H-bomb.
- 4.—World peace sentiment and the struggle for peace.
- 5.—The conflicts among the capitalist powers.

That memo became a subject for constant slander and attacks against me and my alleged position by Comrade Foster. But the Party members could get no ink-

ling of what I actually said in this memorandum, so fearful were we at that time of free discussion. I don't pretend that all I wrote in that memo stands up. I wouldn't quote Stalin today as I did then, to give but one example of its shortcomings.

Still the views expressed anticipated much that was accepted only after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. How tragic that the critical and frank reappraisal of so many political and theoretical questions could take place only after that Congress.

But because the draft resolution strongly affirms the right of free exchange of opinion and democratic procedure I believe we can repair the damage caused in the last ten years.

Draft Resolution Points Way for Party

(Continued from Page 1)

now be apparent to all: intellectual conformity in our ranks; a parochial outlook on scholarly and cultural developments outside our party; neglect of fundamental research into many areas of American life; deep-going bureaucratic practices which have stifled independent thinking and initiative, and driven many thousands of able men and women out of our party; seeming validation of the slander that our policies are shaped to serve the needs of the Soviet Union; and, with it all, the extreme political isolation of our party.

My emphasis here on harmful subjective factors does not reflect an underestimation of the powerful objective influences that have contributed to our party's isolation. Rather, it is an effort to focus attention on those internal weaknesses which we are in a position to correct, by ourselves. Nor does this one-sided emphasis reflect an overall negative estimate of our party's role in the past. Despite its serious errors, our party has made very important contributions to social progress in the United States; and I have always been proud of my membership. I know that I am a better American because of my experiences and development as a Communist.

It is this over-all positive estimate of our party's role in the past, together with the conviction that it has a vital role to play in the future, that dictates my grave concern over our deep-rooted tendencies toward smug and arrogant conceit, deadening conformity of thought, and uncritical adherence to hoary doctrines which—whatever their validity in other periods and places—are but anachronisms on the American scene.

Is this the kind of Communist Party that can play an increasingly vital role in the political life of our country today? Our present critical state of affairs clearly demonstrates that there is no future along this line.

Is this the "Marxist-Leninist Party" some of our comrades are so insistently demanding that we preserve? Nothing is more alien to the living, growing, truly authentic science of Marxism-Leninism.

Is it "liquidationist" to propose that we break sharply with the dogmatism and doctrinarism by which our party has been hobbled all these years? I am convinced that the main danger of actual liquidation comes from those among us who now stand pat on doctrines and policies which are clearly bankrupt.

I think the draft resolution represents a very important step in the direction our party must go in redefining its orientation and role.

It would have us become, first of all, a self-critical party, conscious of our major sectarian errors and determined to correct them. The old cock-sure arrogance would be gone; and we would be more modest and tentative with our answers to the people's problems.

Second, in an effort creatively to apply Marxist theory to the concrete conditions of American life, this resolution comes up with proposals which make a lot more sense than former efforts mechanically to impose formulas developed in other lands and times upon the qualitatively different conditions of our country.

PEACEFUL TRANSITION

Note, for example, the somewhat more rounded and convincing handling of the peaceful transition question, along with the perspective of full civil liberties and multiple parties under U. S. socialism.

Note that "our main strategic aim in the period ahead" is defined as the formation of "an anti-monopoly coalition" government—an intermediate stage on the road to socialism; and that the "main blow" is to be directed

at the monopolies.

Note that we are here called on to orient toward an extended period of peaceful, though competitive, coexistence; to establish more correct and helpful relations with the labor movement and the Negro people's movement; and to "reappraise" our always untenable theoretical position on the Negro question.

Note especially that the party here envisioned would shun any posture of seeming apologist for all that goes on in the Soviet Union or of ideological dependence upon the C.P.S.U., adhering to more valid principles of proletarian internationalism. Moreover, it would "further develop its independent theoretical work," with "ceaseless re-examination and reappraisal of theory in the light of ever-changing reality." And these are but a few

as they press for even more advanced proposals which we are now competent to effect. (And there is no question that the draft resolution should and can be progressively modified.) But none of us can afford to underestimate the extent to which this resolution, as it now stands, marks a very substantial break with much of our sectarian past. Just imagine what would have happened to any Communist advocating many of these policies a few years ago! These comrades, too, have the obligation to join in active support of the forward-looking proposals of this resolution—even while they press for further advance.

PHONY ISSUE

It has been alleged that the draft resolution seeks to abandon the principles of Marxism-Leninism as the theoretical foundation

lated experience. Once valid propositions become obsolete; new propositions are developed; and specific applications of general principles necessarily vary under different conditions. None understood this better than the great teachers of scientific socialism; and it is this—truly "Leninist"—approach to our theory that is expressed in the draft resolution.

Read what the resolution says on pages 55-56. This is no abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principles; it is a scientifically correct reaffirmation of those principles.

Some comrades object to "qualifying" our adherence to Marxism-Leninism by the phrase "as interpreted by the Communist Party of our country." Whom would they have do the interpreting?

The whole question is being blown up all out of proportion. Why, the very term "Marxism-Leninism" is coming to be regarded as a kind of shibboleth by some of our comrades; unless one does obeisance by using this precise term on every occasion—rather than "Marxism" or "scientific socialism"—he is suspected of "abandoning Leninism." One comrade even accused the Jefferson School of "downgrading Lenin" because she saw only the pictures of Marx, Lincoln, Douglass and Roosevelt hanging in the outer office!

The basic issue raised by the draft resolution is not whether to abandon or downgrade Leninism, but whether to abandon our former doctrinaire distortions of the whole of Marxist theory. Shall we now proceed CREATIVELY to apply and further develop the principles of scientific socialism on the basis of the realities of social life in our country? This is the real question our party has got to answer.

SOME PROPOSALS

Does the resolution before us adequately define the outlook required for our party to re-emerge as a vital force in American life? I do not think so; there are many respects in which I think it needs to be improved. Here are a few:

I should like to see the resolution begin with a spirited reaffirmation of our love of country, our thorough devotion to the interests of our fellow-Americans, and our aspirations for the United States to forge ahead in this period of "competitive coexistence"—on the only basis possible: abiding peace, respect for

about it—except really to start grappling with our unsolved problems. Our party simply cannot make the turn now required unless we take a serious approach to the theoretical education of our entire membership; and the resolution should call for a program to this end.

I am generally in agreement with the resolution's handling of the Negro question; and I do not go along with assertions by some comrades that white chauvinism is rampant in our movement. Still, I think the resolution should make very clear the importance of positive and vigorous INNER-PARTY discussion and education on the question of white chauvinism, as an ideological buttress for effective participation in the mass struggle for Negro rights.

The mechanical balancing of "Achievements" vs. "Errors" in the resolution tends to obscure the inter-relations between the two; and the catalog of "Achievements" is unduly boastful, often seeming to confuse what we TRIED or INTENDED to do with what WE actually accomplished. I think these two sections should be rewritten.

In view of the fact that our big swing to the Left following World War II came in large measure as an over-correction of Browder-revisionism, it seems unthinkable to me that we can go into our national convention with a resolution which makes no pretense at analysis of the whole Browder period.

The resolution is eminently sound in its assertion that "the unfolding of a correct mass policy by the party, as well as its ability to attract and hold masses of socialist-minded Americans, requires extensive changes in its structure and methods of work"; but I think the National Committee was unduly "bearish" in advancing concrete proposals along this line. The recommendations made are good; but we also need specific guarantees that conventions are truly delegated bodies, that officers and leading committees are democratically elected—and subject to recall by the membership, that our membership is fully involved in discussions of basic changes in policy, and that there can be no expulsion on grounds of policy disagreement.

I assume from the resolution's silence on "vanguard party" and "democratic centralism" that we are now to accept a more modest and realistic conception of our role as an advanced sector of the labor and people's movements, and also to abandon whatever lingering ideas there may be about an American Communist Party of "iron discipline" and "monolithic unity." If this assumption is correct, I am in full agreement. I prefer, however, a more explicit dealing with these questions.

AGAINST DISSOLUTION

I strongly oppose any suggestion that we dissolve our party, or even that we try now to implement the resolution's correct orientation toward a broad, united party of socialism. The one is unwarrantedly defeatist; and the other seeks futilely to jump over stages.

I have come around to the belief, however, that a fundamental reorganization is now in order. I think that our 16th national convention would do well to change the name of our organization, and also to register formally what is already a fact of life—that we are much more of a political-action association than we are a "party" in the American sense of that term. A few weeks ago I considered this proposal desirable but probably "too advanced" to win overwhelming support by the time of the convention; but the more I listen to discussions "down below," the more I am convinced that our membership is way ahead of our National Committee on this question.

Changes in the name and (Continued on Page 8)



EVERYTHING CHANGES

of the many ways in which this resolution would have our party break with its doctrinaire past.

Third, the draft resolution holds out new long-time perspectives for the Marxist movement in our country—"a united party of socialism"; and it calls upon our party now to "strengthen in every way its organization, mass work and influence" as a necessary means to this end. Moreover, it envisions a far more democratic organization than our party has ever been, with "bureaucratic concepts of party organization [and] systems of leadership" supplanted by "guarantees of real inner-party democracy."

In short, this resolution would have our 16th national convention register far-reaching changes in the Communist Party as we have known it these many years; and I am convinced that the outlook here defined indicates the direction in which we MUST move if we are to recoup our serious losses and emerge as a vital force in the political life of our country.

Some comrades assail the draft resolution from the Left (or is it the Right?), charging "revisionism," "liquidationism," "Browderism" and all manner of sins. I think they do a service to our party in so far as they insist upon good, sound reasons for all proposed changes. (Certain it is that we have not yet developed fully the theoretical basis for all the proposals advanced by this resolution.) But none of us can now be content with a let's-hold-the-line-where-we-are position; for rigid stand-pattism today means death for our party—or, at best, further degeneration towards one more of those insignificant little sects that the forward movement of history has cast to the side. These comrades, too, have the obligation to join in the search for new paths that open up a real perspective for our movement.

Some comrades assail the draft resolution from the Right (or is it the Left?), expressing "keen disappointment" and the wholly negative judgment that "this is the same old stuff—nothing new or inspiring." I think they do a service to our party in so far

of our party, that it reflects what amounts to a conspiracy to downgrade Lenin theoretically. From where I sit this looks like a thoroughly phony issue.

Are there among us some who do, indeed, want to forget about Lenin's teachings? Of course there are. I, too, read one "Bernard's" letter to the Daily Worker, asserting that Marxism-Leninism is for Russia, Marxism-Maoism for China and for the United States—well, it is even less clear. And I've heard similar ideas from other sources. But it would be gross distortion to claim that this nonsense represents a current in our movement. It's not even a trickle; and it certainly does not warrant a big campaign to defend Leninism against the machinations of the so-called Right.

The teachings of Lenin are an integral part of the body of Marxist thought; and I know of no significant move to abandon them. Have I overlooked proposals to throw out Lenin's profound analysis of the imperialist stage of capitalist development, or his elaborations on dialectical and historical materialism, on the class character of the state, on the national and colonial question, on the fight on two fronts, on the necessary leading role of the working class, guided by its Marxist vanguard?

Let us be specific: Who wants to throw out what teachings of Lenin? Perhaps the comrades making so much ado about preserving Leninism are really concerned about certain principles omitted from my enumeration above. Perhaps they want us to reaffirm Lenin's teachings on the inevitability of war, on violent revolution, on the one-party dictatorship of the proletariat, on the form of party organization developed half a century ago in Russia. If it is these out-moded propositions of Lenin that they want to preserve, let them say so, specifically, rather than hide behind omnibus formulations about "downgrading Lenin theoretically." Our debate could then proceed around clearly defined issues.

Scientific socialism, like any other science, grows and develops on the basis of accumu-



the sovereignty and dignity of all other nations, thoroughgoing democracy here at home, and the socialist reorganization of our economy.

The resolution's somewhat euphemistic discussion of the party's previously "over-simplified concepts" of its relations to other Marxist parties should be modified into a more forthright, self-critical analysis—along with reaffirmation of our very positive estimate and special high regard for the Soviet Union and other socialist lands.

It is unfortunate, at this late date, that our National Committee is in position to do little more than recommend a committee "to BEGIN drafting" a basic written program, and that the resolution has to leave open so many important theoretical questions for further study. But I guess there is nothing to be done

Political Action Body

(Continued from Page 1)

COPE. While declaring no official adherence to any party, COPE committees generally maintain relations with the Democratic Party to press labor's viewpoint, often exerting powerful influence, as in Michigan. These bodies serve to unite trade unionists behind various candidates and on legislative and political issues.

OTHER GROUPINGS

There are, however, other political groupings, which, while not official labor bodies, have been able to function as groups of unionists advocating a certain viewpoint. One such grouping is ADA, whose orientation is generally Social Democratic and to which top union officials like Walter Reuther belong.

Fact is the CP is the only group seeking to function as a political party within the labor movement, often appearing as though it were trying to project itself from the outside. It often appears also as the only political party seeking special status in trade unions. This has contributed to resentment and confusion among honest workers, aside from red-baiting lies that have been spread among them.

It is apparent, for example, among workers active in politics. A certain air of duplicity is fostered when such workers learn that a fellow-worker is not only active in an organization of one of the major parties, but is also a member of another party, the CP.

Much of this, I submit, could be avoided if the CP were transformed into a Communist political action body (the name is beside the point at the moment) whose members seek to win support for a certain viewpoint and are at the same time among the most active trade unionists in working for the immediate economic and political objectives of the labor movement.

While such a body would speak out on issues of general concern to the labor movement, it would avoid, as an organization, involvement in internal union tactical questions. Individual members, as trade unionists, would join with other union members on this or that issue, as is normal practice within unions.

2. It would accord with what has largely been our method of work and with the way it is likely to be for some time to come.

The complexities of American political life, including restrictive electoral laws, make it extremely difficult, and often impossible, for a minority political group to function as a political party in the full sense. In European countries, such as Italy or France, the electoral setup makes it possible for a party to run a full slate of candidates and still enter into coalitions with other parties and groups.

NOT POSSIBLE HERE

This is not and has not been a possibility for some time in our country. The form of political coalition here makes it possible for organized groups of varied viewpoints to enter into either loose or formal coalitions within the framework of the two-party setup.

The Party has recognized facts of American life for some time now. In actual fact, we have not functioned as a political party in the full sense in many years. Even when we have run candidates, it was not as a political party running a full slate. This was true in the Davis and Cacchione campaigns in New York, as well as the later Curley Flynn, Gerson and Charney campaigns.

Often in such campaigns the

candidates did not even run on a Communist Party ticket, although they were known as Communists. I do not say there was anything wrong with that; on the contrary, I believe it was entirely correct. Our electoral tactics must always be concerned with how to further the coalition while bringing forward our own independent viewpoint.

Yet it is this concern plus electoral laws which in fact have prevented us from acting as a full political party, but rather as a political action body, an organized group holding to the Communist viewpoint. I believe transforming ourselves formally into a political action body would recognize this reality and remove a contradiction which hinders more effective work.

3. Such a move would avoid the shoals of liquidationism and of self-asserted "vanguardism."

A Communist political action body would have nothing in common with proposals to set up merely an "educational" institution or to dissolve and look for a new start. It would be what its name implies—an action body, a struggle as well as educational organization. It would seek to initiate struggles on immediate issues independently (through legislative work and leaflets, for example) as well as in joint action with others. It would also present its position on longer-range questions to the people, especially to the main bases for progress, labor and the Negro people.

It could sponsor individual

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Morale Indispensable for Building Party



(Continued from Page 2)

bring to mind a picture of small boys throwing stones at the stars.

I must say that I find nothing laughable in the brand of anti-Soviet "humor" that some people are circulating in the intimate coffee klatches of some circles in our Party. What was once a "joke" only in Trotskyite "Marxist" circles now gets a strained laugh from some comrades as evidence of their new resolved independence and "non-partisan Marxist approach." But they make a mockery of themselves, those sunshine socialists among us, who brazenly scoff at and mock the heroic exertions and monumental accomplishments of the great Soviet people. Such slanderous inventions in the mouths of Communists do violence to the spirit of internationalism, are a manifest of their own ignorance of the historic realities of Soviet accomplishments, and are callously con-

temptuous of the great debt which the world's toiling and oppressed peoples of all nations owe to the Soviet people.

Such indulgence in snide and humorless "jokes" at the expense of the Soviet Union cannot be judged funny; rather such indulgence exposes the simple-mindedness of the jokesters who play at this shameless game.

A DISSERVICE

At a time when most of the peoples of the world are responding to the Soviet peoples' concerted seeking after new bonds of friendship, mutual respect, cultural interchange, and dynamic peaceful relations, the scoffers do a disservice to themselves and real harm to the furtherance of that understanding so needed for developing higher relations of peaceful and fraternal co-existence. In recognizing that appreciation of the accomplishments of the first workers' state of socialism, this does not call for exaggerated and uncriti-

cal laudation. It is also decisive to see that by making concessions to the bourgeois publicists' mirthless anti-Soviet "joke making" is fraught with the danger of cultivating cynicism and spiritual rot among avowed socialists.

Comrades, in addressing ourselves to all those necessary tasks of critical review of the past and bold probing into the future pathways for our Party, let us have a solicitous regard for the spirit of our Party and of all those whom we influence. Nothing is more precious, more inviolable than the fighting heart, the will of our Party's members to triumph over all adversities and achieve such a turn as it is necessary to take to advance us along the way to our historical goal of socialism. Whoever tampers with the will of the vanguard of the class to be and to lead the class and oppressed people in struggle commits the unpardonable offense.

As to our course of conduct in this discussion, I shall be guided by an oft-quoted aphorism of my father:

"God give me the patience to accept that which cannot be changed.

Give me the courage to change that which can and should be changed.

And above all, give me the wisdom to know which is which."

And this I do know, that we live in an age when the toilers, the underprivileged and oppressed peoples of the whole earth have found their common cadence for the march forward along a hundred freedom roads, all of which lead inexorably to communism.

Against Discarding Democratic Centralism

(Continued from Page 3)

were as many different varieties of socialism as there were advocates. Did this help or hinder the movement? Similarly, the national center had no authority to react to new developments and issues and outline a definitive program of action to influence the labor and people's movement. In each area a separate and many times a different policy was conveyed to the workers. Did this help the workers or their class enemy?

To pose the question this way is to make it clear that abolition of the principles of democratic centralism would mean a different type of party than international experience has proven is necessary in the struggle for socialism. Without democratic centralism there would be no party of action based on a common policy; no instrument of common guidance and influence for the large American working class and its allies, scattered over a vast area; no subordination of the minority to majority decision, providing the ability to act as an organized force, based on ideological unity.

The solution of the problem honestly bothering many comrades is to have the entire party—with the greatest vigilance from the membership—actually guarantee the functioning of the democratic practices upon which democratic centralism rests. Towards this end there is much room for improvement. Certain guarantees can be inserted into our constitution, the branches must play a more decisive role in the party, leadership should be held to account and called upon to make more systematic and regular reports.

BUREAUCRACY

An accompanying problem is the wiping out of the corroding influence of bureaucracy in leadership at all levels. Essentially bureaucracy is a sign of isolation of leadership from the party members and the problems and struggles of the workers. It expresses itself in trying to lead by mere directives instead of by coming in contact with the

membership and talking it over. A by-product of bureaucracy is vanity and boastfulness, resentment of criticism and inability to practice self-criticism, as well as lack of consideration for other comrades and their problems.

No one in our leadership, including myself, has been fully free of some of these characteristics. During the 1951-54 period my impression is that some comrades in responsible posts displayed impermissible signs on all sides of bureaucracy, including its by-products.

While guarding against mechanical application, a substantial section of the national leadership should be factory workers and in all district committees they should constitute the majority. The full-time comrades must spend a greater part of their time in the field, mingling with and helping the Party sections and branches in their work and talking to non-Party workers at meetings or otherwise. New basic policy questions that arise between conventions should be discussed with the Party members before arriving at decisions. Leading comrades must constantly listen to the ideas from the ranks and be alert to new developments.

The acceptance of proposals whose consequences would undermine proletarian internationalism would also destroy the Marxist character of our Party. To declare that "The influence of the international Marxist movement on our Party is a source of much of our disorientation" is factually wrong as regards our own Party and slanders the world Communist movement. In so far as we mechanically applied the experiences, tactics or organizational forms of any other Party, we alone were responsible for such errors.

Fundamentally we have nothing to be ashamed of in our past practice of international solidarity. Our defense of mistaken actions in socialist countries was not done knowingly. Some letters have inferred that in the future we should adopt an atti-

tude of neutrality towards the Soviet Union. I hope our Party will never do this. We should continue to hold high the banner and practice of international solidarity. We should defend our class and our brother parties from capitalist attack and slander at all times while exercising our responsibility to critically examine the form of applicability of all Marxist-Leninist precepts to the American scene. Communists everywhere are making history today and we should not stand on the sidelines awaiting the judgment of history on each event.

OBJECTIVE FACTORS

The reasons for our Party's difficulties cannot be separated from a number of objective factors—war drive of U.S. imperialism, pro-fascist developments and repression of our Party, the privileged position of U.S. capitalism growing out of the wars, the economic conditions of the workers, etc. These are factors that cannot be ignored or brushed aside in my opinion.

True, a Left-sectarian influence in our thinking and work resulted in certain policies and tactical errors on our part that made it easier for the bourgeoisie to increase our isolation from the mainstream of the labor and democratic movement. To say "our isolation was self-imposed" is to misread history and practice self-flagellation.

While it is absolutely correct to emphasize the need of our Party functioning in the American democratic tradition and having a better grasp and knowledge of American history and conditions, the purpose of this is to increase our effectiveness as a Marxist-Leninist party—and not to separate us as an "independent" Marxist party based on some new forms of American exceptionalism.

The tremendous tasks confronting the American workers and the need for decisively changing the reactionary interfering role of American imperialism in the affairs of other nations make it urgent to realize a united party and National

Committee. The membership will exercise its authority to examine the role, contributions and work of each Party leader, and to strengthen the leadership by the addition of politically equipped workingclass members with the closest ties to the workers in the basic industries and workers' organizations.

Long years of experience in our Party will reveal there is no basis for any artificial separation of leaders into "old" and "new," or "young" and "elderly." The giving of the best in each comrade results in that necessary collective character of the leadership that will benefit the entire Party. Irrespective of different viewpoints, all aimed at making our Party more effective in its great liberating socialist role, I am confident there will be unanimity that in such a collective leadership both Comrades Foster and Dennis have a special role to play.

I add my voice to those comrades who favor the national center of our Party in the industrial Midwest.

As one who treasures his 34 years membership in our Party, 25 of them as a National Committee member, it is not easy to be forcefully excluded from my adopted country and to function temporarily in exile. Like many comrades I remember the rough road we have had to travel and take pride in the great contributions our Party has made to the workers' movement and therefore to the nation. I know that the great majority of our members have confidence in our Party and will never associate themselves with ideas of "wasted years."

Our members—based on their knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, their training by the Party in the midst of the class struggle over the years, and, above all, their confidence in the ability of our Party to battle relentlessly and successfully against the most brutal, corrupt and power-drunk bourgeoisie in the world—will set right what has to be corrected without adopting a policy of demolition of the principles upon which Communist parties the world over are based.

Must Treasure Passion Which Brought Us to Communism

By HELEN LAZARUS

IT IS WELL in times of crisis to turn back to fundamental concepts. At the moment our errors loom large in our thinking because we have a vision of perfection. We must not lose that vision nor our constant search for improvement, but we must take care not to destroy what is good and valid in our eagerness for correction. In order to learn from our mistakes we must know what we are. We must come close again to the core of passion and vision which, at one time or another, has moved every one of us. It seems to me, this is a time for summing up what was important and essential in one's life as a Communist, and proceed from there.

For myself, I would single this out of a complex and rich experience: the Communist movement has taught me to live with courage and face life boldly. Man is master of his fate, master of the world and all that is in it. What he does not understand as yet, he will learn in succeeding generations; where as yet he stumbles blindly, others will walk with assurance. As

mankind in the past has learned to subdue nature, mankind in the future will learn to rearrange society for the benefit of all. The dialectic of life necessitates death and decay, pain and error—but man has within himself the means of achieving immortality. There is immortality in the work and thought man leaves behind him, there is immortality in the love, the sense of brotherhood, he leaves within the heart of another human being. Alone, man is helpless, weak and afraid, but joined together with his brothers and sisters, united with his own kind, man is invincible—mankind endures.

This is the vision, the conviction and belief that has made heroes of Communists, that has made of Communist parties in many lands and under many trials, parties of heroes. To achieve personal happiness, man must face life boldly, he must walk upright and hold the hand of his fellow-men. No religion, no faith or philosophy I know of comes as close as the Communist movement to realizing this in both theory and practice. A Communist is never alone, he has brothers and sisters in every land on earth. I have personally experienced this soli-

arity and friendship many times. Brotherhood, as it is practiced in the revolutionary working class movement, is free from the blinders of condescension and pity, there is a constant search for greater integration in personal and social relationships. Of course, individual levels of realization vary and much of our current discussion is justly concerned with many serious shortcomings in our practice. But the movement on the whole keeps prodding and urging the individual along, demanding exacting standards and thus, raising the level of the individual in a way which justifies the most optimistic faith in the human potential.

PRIMACY OF LABOR

Courage and self-confidence, brotherhood and working together—these are fundamentals of a Communist's life. Another basic concept is that of the primacy of labor, the idea that work, both manual and mental, is the primary source of all wealth and progress and personal happiness. Honor to work and honor to workers—for with work comes dignity and a purpose to life, with work comes orderliness and creativity. With

work come the important lessons of workingclass organization; the group is stronger than the individual, the collective is wiser than the sum total of its members.

Because there is a dynamic in the interplay of people and ideas, of theory and practice, of error and correction, the party also is more than the sum total of the individuals who belong to it. The party is a collective, embodying not only the present with its difficulties, but also the struggles, the wisdom, the lessons of the past. And because of its fraternal ties with the movement toward socialism in every land, the party also represents the future. To me, there can be no doubt of it, the Communist movement represents the conscience of the century. Even those who abhor and distort it, who deny and malign it, correct their own selfishness and extend their own meager charity under the relentless prodding of the party, who has taught strength to the weak and pride to the oppressed.

We must not, in the process of criticism, deny our achievements. We have in our ranks the greatest minds, the finest talents the world over, the most

courageous and dedicated men and women of our time. The movement has attracted them, but more—it has shaped them, not only the well-known and famous, but the thousands upon thousands of unknown heroes of the working class. The Communist Party improves and elevates people, it helps them to flourish as individuals. Where it does not do that, where people are hurt and thwarted, the party, too, is injured and betrayed. Because, in its very essence, ours is the party of human dignity and honor, the party of faith in the human being.

We will not hide our mistakes, nor will we deny them. We will mature and grow in the struggle for corrections if we remember that we are struggling for more than programs and tactics and organizational forms; we are struggling for the minds and hearts of people. We must keep alive and treasure the passion which first brought us into the movement, that spark of conscience, that love of our fellowmen. Because it is this that is most precious: this is the core and the heart and invincible strength of the Communist movement.

Let's Not Swing To Extremes

(Continued from Page 2)

the conditions that will make it necessary for them to do so? This needs far more clarification than has been given so far.

I want to discuss the approach to a peaceful transition in the U. S. in another article so as to develop it more fully. In the meantime, one thing of great value emerges from the discussion of the past months—the many areas of ideological weakness in our movement which have been uncovered in the process of the discussion. This in itself poses a challenge and an opportunity for our Party in a big way. In tackling these wishy-washy theoretical pockets we will do much to regain and to advance our strength and influence among the people.

CLEVELAND EXPERIENCE

One of the more startling experiences in this respect has come to the surface in our Cleveland Party, reflecting the stronghold of white supremacist ideas. A number of comrades have developed an approach that white Party members should, as a matter of policy, move out of areas into which there has taken place a heavy influx of Negro people. There are several such areas in Cleveland. They categorically reject the possibility of making a struggle to maintain these areas as integrated areas. They develop theories that it is impossible for white Communists to participate in mass work in such mixed areas, especially if the majority of the community is now Negro.

Basically, this approach is a theoretical justification for the maintenance and the extension of segregated areas. It is an argument for the ghetto, regardless of the subtleties of the arguments advanced. It accepts the idea that Negro and white cannot live side by side, participate jointly in community mass organization and mass work. In other words, it rejects the principle of integration as morally wrong and unpractical. More than that, it projects the role of the Party not as a vanguard in the fight for integration, but as a vanguard in moving out of such areas.

Thus in the practical problem faced in the community the entire moral concept of white supremacy, of the impossibility of Negro and white to coexist finds defenders in our movement. For if we accept the premise that we cannot live side by side, work together in mass organizations, etc., then the whole approach of the Dixiecrats against

desegregation of schools, for jimcrow and for the ghetto, is justified. Because of the long lapse of struggle on such questions in our ranks, such reactionary bourgeois ideas find fertile ground. Wherever even a beginning is made in tackling anew in a basic way such problems, we run into experiences which begin to cast a light on the real sources of our isolation from the Negro people.

While the views expressed above are not widespread, they have emerged quite strongly because of key posts occupied by those holding them. The great majority of the membership in these areas strongly reject and oppose this approach.

It is my earnest feeling that in coming to grips with many of these problems our Party will grow ideologically and organizationally. This can be done to the extent that we refresh our entire movement with a new appreciation of the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism, as applied to the conditions of America, not the least of these being our approach to the Negro people. This lesson is already being drawn by our comrades who have come to close grips with such issues. One woman comrade, gaining new strength and understanding from some basic reading in the course of seeking an answer to the above problems, stated with considerable conviction: "Anyone who wants to throw Marxism-Leninism out of our Party will have to see me first."

This approach is also becoming manifested generally in the ranks of our shop workers, especially in the basic industries. As they read the wishy-washy proposals for the dissolution of the Party, for the abandonment of Marxist-Leninist theory, they make an almost automatic judgment: "That guy never worked on a GM production line."

Let me state flatly, with no ifs and buts, that there will be no dissolution of the Communist Party despite any happy anticipations some may have in this respect. Our working-class membership will make sure of that. They will also insist that an accounting be given to them of any watering down of our basic theoretical concepts.

Our Party, far from being finished, is gathering strength for a new leap forward. It is clearing its mind of cobwebs, of petty-bourgeois illusions, setting its house in good order as a party of the American working

Draft Resolution

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structure of our organization should not be made in a vain effort to conceal our identity as Communists, as an organization based on the principles of scientific socialism. Rather, they should be made for the actual and avowed purpose of dramatizing for our countrymen—and, indeed, for ourselves—the fact that American Communists are effecting a radical break with their sectarian past. Such changes might also facilitate our "unfolding a correct mass policy," and enhance our ability "to attract and hold masses of socialist-minded Americans."

Finally—and this is at once the most important and the most difficult—our resolution should be imbued throughout with the confidence and enthusiasm which the rapid forward movement of the world's peoples now inspires in true Marxists everywhere. The contours of this "new world situation" are outlined in the "Foreword"; but its spirit never quite breaks through that stodgy prose which has come to be our hallmark. Our problem here, of course, is not only one of semantics and rhetoric; it is also one of vision. Let us fight for and win genuine unity around the exciting new perspectives now opening up for our country and all mankind; then will we draft a policy statement for the American Marxist movement that is not only "correct"—but also inspiring.

Political Action Body

(Continued from Page 7)

we have earned that position. This arrogating to ourselves of a vanguard title has helped breed a certain arrogance in our ranks which, in turn, has repelled many class-conscious workers. I believe our task now is try to come forward as an organized trend among workers, Negroes and other sectors, an organized trend which seeks to compete with others for the adherence of these sectors, while joining with others, and often supporting others, on issues of immediate concern to the masses.

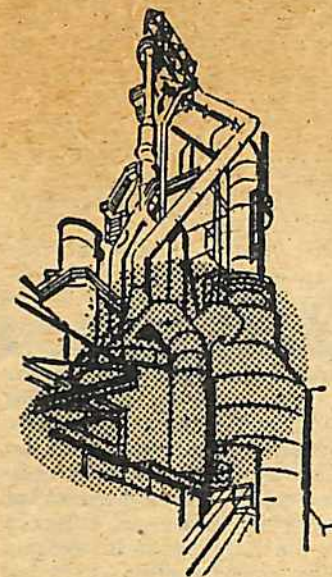
we have earned that position.

I believe the establishment of a Communist political action body, with all that it implies, would facilitate the solution of this task.

In saying all this, I feel it necessary to add the footnote that I do not believe that organizational steps by themselves will provide the answers we need today. Basic to everything are questions of ideology and application of theory to American reality.

I feel it also necessary to state that the form of organization I propose must be combined with features to democratize our structure, as put forward in Dennis' report and other articles—including the right to dissent and protection of the rights of the minority within the organization.

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