

Place the Party on a War Footing

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EXTRACTS FROM REPORT FOR THE CENTRAL
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IT IS necessary to begin the consideration of *all* phases of the work of our Party by referring to the international situation and the imminence of the war danger. It is still quite clear that the working class is not yet aroused to the fact that the new imperialist war has begun and that it is a question of a very short time before it drags the entire world into the field of active participation in this war. And what is true of the working class is also to a certain degree of our Party.

There can be no question that our Party, its membership, its leading organs, do not yet realize that they are functioning on the eve of war, that we are already entering into a new period in which our Party as the vanguard of the working class, will be called upon to solve the most tremendous tasks. It is clear that the Party does not yet understand this fact because when the Party understands this fact, we will make a much more decisive change in the entire life of our Party from top to bottom.

We are still functioning with an atmosphere of peace time. The tempo of our work is not in the slightest degree adjusted to the tasks of war. We are moving as leisurely, as carelessly, as if we had an indefinite period of time before us to prepare for decisive class battles. It is necessary that this convention shall be an instrument for bringing about a change in this respect throughout District 2. It is certainly impossible for us to mobilize the working class for struggle against imperialist war when our Party itself does not realize the imminence of this war and the tasks that it places upon us. It is only necessary to point out, in order to prove completely the correctness of this statement, how weak have been our actions in mobilizing the workers even for the most elementary protest demonstrations against Japanese imperialism which is already carrying on the war and has great armies mobilized within a few miles of the borders of the Soviet Union.

When we face such a situation as this and see such a weak response from our Party, then we must awaken to the seriousness of the problem that this poses for us. It is a fact that a tremendous

change must be brought into the Party with respect to the struggle against the war. We have got to so rouse the masses of workers to the meaning of the war danger that it will be possible for us not only to bring masses in the street in demonstrations, but to concentrate masses of workers specifically against specific shipments of munitions to Japan and develop these actions further to the actual stopping of munition shipments. The forces for such actions exist. But these actions do not materialize because our Party is not doing its duty. And this is the first point that we must emphasize, which must color our work in every other field. To the overcoming of this weakness, every other phase of our work must be subordinated, made to contribute to the bringing forth of a real bolshevik policy in action in the struggle against the war danger.

The problems of the struggle for the daily needs of the workers are intimately bound up with the struggle against war. We must guard against that error, however, which says that the development of the everyday struggle constitutes the struggle against war. The everyday struggle for the immediate needs of the workers is the foundation for the struggle against the war, but if the struggle against war is confined only to the daily needs of the workers, to the exclusion of specific actions on direct questions of the war, such as the struggle to stop the shipment of ammunitions, the demonstrations against Japanese consulates, etc., then we are falling into the most dangerous sort of opportunism. We must very sharply combat any tendency within the movement to belittle the importance of those special actions against war by putting up against it, as opposed to it, the development of the struggles for the daily needs of the workers, the economic struggles and the immediate struggle against the police terror, etc. Not the one against the other, but the development of *all* phases of the struggle. In the struggle for the immediate needs of the workers we must show the workers the intimate connection of the struggle with the mass revolutionary fight against the preparations for war and against the carrying out of the war, such actions as against munition shipments. Precisely one of the acute points of our work is the development of these close interconnections of these phases of struggle so that the workers can understand and feel that this is correct.

CRISIS IS REACHING NEW LOW STAGE

The main driving force which is mercilessly dragging country after country into the orbit of war is precisely the same deepening and sharpening of the economic crisis which is multiplying the daily misery of the toilers throughout the United States as well as throughout the whole world.

The crisis has by no means yet reached its bottom. In fact in the weeks immediately preceding this convention we have seen the sharpest intensification of the crisis that has yet been seen since it began almost three years ago. A very sharp drop in industrial production and business activity in the past month is in itself only a prelude to a new and bigger crash which is coming in the course of this summer. The financial crisis which was temporarily halted, or delayed in its development, by the extraordinary measures that were taken by finance capital is again coming to a new head. And due to the very measures that were taken to limit the sharpness of this financial crisis, it is now about to break forth with new force and intensity. Quite probably in the month of July or August we will have such a storm of bankruptcies throughout the United States as has not been dreamed of yet, with the resulting intensification of chaos in industry, commerce. All of the accumulation of the misery of the masses is going to be multiplied in the next months.

Together with the multiplication of mass misery, comes the sharp speeding of the development of war which is already generally accepted as the only way out by the leading circles of capitalism. In this situation of the rapidly growing misery and starvation of the masses and the extreme sharpening of the war danger, it is quite clear that our Party is unprepared for its tremendous tasks. Our Party has not yet learned how to perform these tasks. Our Party is not yet even thinking in terms of the tasks that face us. The task of our Party is to learn so to work that it can mobilize and organize around the slogans expressing our revolutionary program, not tens of thousands of workers, but millions of workers, and to conduct this mass mobilization in such a way as to sink the roots of the Party among the masses and organizationally guarantee that this leadership of ours over the masses will be something strong and permanent and not subject to the fluctuation of the daily winds that blow.

CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN WORDS AND DEEDS

How is this change to be brought about in the work of our Party, the change that will make our Party capable of carrying through this work? Our Central Committee resolution speaks of the establishment of close personal contact with the workers. Is that the basis of our method of work today? I think there is now no one that does not realize that precisely the absence of close personal contact of the Party, of its members with masses of non-Party workers—just this absence of personal contact is the main weakness of our Party's work today and the source of most of the

mistakes in the Party's work. This is precisely one of the outstanding examples of the continued influence within the Communist Party of the old opportunist social-democratic methods of work. We must understand that our struggle to change our methods of work is not a technical question, but is a political question, it is a political struggle, it is the struggle for the bolshevization of our Party; the struggle for the liquidation of social-democratic remnants.

Let us examine this problem from several angles. Let us understand something of the depth of this problem so that we will not take it in a formal, vulgar way. Another expression of this lack of contact with the masses, another angle to it is the difference between words and deeds, which is a characteristic feature of social-democratic ideas and methods. An essential feature of making a Bolshevik Party is to close the gap between words and deeds. Our approach to the masses is too much in the realm of words only.

All of our agitation and propoganda will be effective only to the degree to which it is bound up closely and intimately with the elements of actions of the masses, so that there exists no longer this deep chasm between what we say and what we do. And the establishment of close personal contact with the masses is brought about primarily *through the development of mass action*, so that our Party and its members appear before the masses as leader and organizer. We must close the gap between words and deeds, as the first condition for establishing those contacts with the masses which will really make our Party the Bolshevik vanguard of the workers. How is it possible to win the working class away from its reformist, social fascist leadership unless we cleanse our Party of all the remnants of social democracy, its ideas and methods? It is impossible. And this struggle to transform our Party is an essential, indispensable part of the struggle against social fascism, of the struggle to win the majority of the working class. It is impossible for our Party to move forward one step, except upon the basis of clarification, and cleansing the Party itself from within.

STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC REMNANTS

This question of bolshevizing our Party, driving out the influence of social fascism, this is the question that was raised by the famous letter of Comrade Stalin, on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the struggle on the ideological front. The struggle to make the Party conscious of its own history is a question of decisive importance to the Party; linked up with it is every question of our program, every question of the historical development of this program of the past.

This question that was raised by Comrade Stalin is a thousand times more sharp and acute for us, because our Party, in spite of the fact that it has quite a long history, is a Party largely composed of workers who as yet know very little about the history of the Party. A majority of the members of our Party have come to us in the years 1930-31-32 less than 3 years in our movement. What have we done to consolidate this mass of new members, to school them in the history of bolshevism, the understanding of bolshevik principles and tactics, building of the Communist Party and the leadership of class battles? By far not enough. We have made the barest beginnings and unless we strengthen the bolshevization of our Party, we will not be able to perform the tasks that this period throws upon us.

Especially sharp are the weaknesses, shortcomings of our Party in its basic orientation towards the decisive sections of the working class—expressed in our penetration of shops, factories, mines and mills. The essential feature of a bolshevik Party is that it roots itself in the decisive sections of the working class and only thereby is it able to be the practical leader and organizer, the vanguard of the working class in its struggles. A characteristic feature of a social democracy is that it bases itself upon the parasitic elements, the aristocratic elements, the elements of labor aristocracy, the bureaucratic apparatus in the lower organs of the government, middle class elements, etc. At the same time it keeps the decisive sections of the working class passive, politically unorganized, politically expressionless. But how much difference is there really between our forms of organization and the old social democratic form? To what extent have we seriously turned our heads to developing this specific bolshevik form of Party organization rooted in the shops? We must say that we have carried through this task in the most formal, lifeless, unenthusiastic way. We have been quite ready to surrender to every difficulty that we found along the road and we used these difficulties as an excuse for not carrying through penetration of the shops.

WHICH IS THE "PARTY"—OFFICE OR NUCLEUS?

Listening to much of the discussion about overcoming bureaucratic methods I have noted a widespread opinion that if a Party or trade union functionary speaks in a loud sharp tone, this is bureaucratic, but if he speaks gently and softly then this is a good non-bureaucratic approach. As for myself I am all for the soft voice as opposed to harsh speaking, but I object to this being put forward as the essence of the question of bureaucracy. In fact some of the

worst bureaucrats that I have bumped into in my life were the softest speakers. I am quite sure that when the energies of our Party really become released from below and the members begin to surge forward to the masses, we will then experience a bit of harsh speaking in the struggle against bureaucratic methods of work, in the struggle against every form of opportunism. The question of the tone of voice is not the essence of bureaucratic methods. It is possible for us to more definitely fix just what we are fighting against. I think that it will help to understand this a little if we point out the characteristic features of all manifestations of bureaucracy, *that it looks upon the office, the bureau, as the all-important place*. That is, that aside from the Party office, there is no Party; to go to the Party means to go to the Party office; to be out of the office means to be out of contact with the Party. This conception of the office as the Party, this is the essential characteristic feature of bureaucracy in every one of its manifestations, and precisely this is clearly, therefore, the thing that hampers us in pushing the Party in the shops and in the neighborhoods.

Because we have this idea that everything has to come out of the office this is the reason why our units, both in the neighborhoods and the shops, have so little initiative of their own, have so little inner life. They don't see their units and the work in the shop as being the *supreme* expression of the Party. The office is merely an incidental connecting apparatus, to bind together the various living bodies which are the Party. This conception of the office as the Party leads to the neglect of all the really vital, living features of Party work and stunts the development of the Party, hampers the growth of connections among the masses and it is this that we have to fight against.

This has got to be changed. And we have got to develop bolshevik initiative, bolshevik organization down below. The units of the Party must begin to function, to take charge of their own problems and contribute to the functioning and direction of the next body above them. And in the section we have got to crystallize the real political collective leadership that stands on its own feet, that doesn't have to wait until a circular letter comes from above before it knows what to do, that is able to take bolshevik initiative and bolshevik responsibility for the work in its section.

Such bolshevik initiative we must have. And this cannot be created from above. This can only be created from below, from the membership of the Party, by the membership of the Party putting forward its best material into the leadership of the units and the sections and especially workers from the shops. In the preliminary organization of this district convention, the comrades have

already spoken from the floor about the weakness of this convention, the weak representation of workers from the shops and from the trade union work appearing as the leaders of our Party. This is quite true. Whatever may be the merits of any particular issue that has been raised it is generally true in the Party that we have an artificial division between the Party work and the trade union work and even a division between the trade union work and the unemployed work. Such an attitude pictures our work as a water-tight compartments, with the natural result that precisely those elements best qualified to give a Bolshevik character to the Party leadership are very often shunted to one side in the Party committees. In their places comes forward the perfect functionary, the one who never does anything except go from one inner Party meeting to another inner Party meeting.

I do not speak against any particular individuals. I speak against the system and the approach to our work that we have had in the past, that takes the very best proletarian material we have and in the course of a few months his work in our apparatus, transforms him into a good bureaucrat. I think that most of the comrades suffer from these bureaucratic methods of work. We cannot blame these comrades, we have to blame the system of work of our Party that distorts the work, spoils the best proletarian comrades that we have. We must, therefore conceive the struggle against bureaucracy precisely in these terms of changing our methods and developing the collective work and not in the disintegration of our cadres into warring individuals each one of which is trying to prove the other as a worse bureaucrat than he is. This tendency I have noted around District 2. The tendency to try to establish a graduated scale of bureaucrats, number one is 99% bureaucrat; number two is 87% bureaucrat, the third is 55% bureaucrat and so on down the line. This is an indoor sport which does not bring forward political or organizational problems facing the Party and what we have to understand is that we find certain old methods of work that have got to be driven out of our movement (and we are not interested in establishing certain morale judgment about the individual).

The turning of the attention of the Party towards the real problems of the class struggle, away from the sterile routine of offices, away from the bureaucratic methods and towards the real realities, the problems of the masses and their struggle for bread—this is the essence of the change we have to make and in making this change we will also dissolve a lot of wrong conceptions and distorted ideas that influence the work of the Party. We will break through and dissolve the sectarian practices that we have developed around the very important, vital, significant slogan of the united front, break

down these sectarian methods whereby we have prevented the development of the real united front connection with the masses, together with our Party.

Occasionally, we find the attempt to theorize these weaknesses and justify them. We have to conduct an unrelenting struggle against every attempt to justify our weaknesses. The moment anyone begins to tell us that, "Yes, this may be bad, but it is inevitable; you cannot do anything about it," such an attitude is a danger signal and we have to mobilize all the forces of the Party against any such ideas and begin to press upon it and liquidate it. Especially does this refer to shop work. There are plenty of difficulties in shop work. We must recognize these difficulties in order to overcome them, but we cannot allow the enumeration of these difficulties to slow down or halt in any way the constant pressing for the real development of shop activity and the building of the shop units, and we must begin concretely to discuss all these difficulties for the purpose of overcoming them. I think that the delegates here can contribute one hundred times more to this than I can, if when they speak in this discussion, everyone who has had any experience in conducting any Party work in the shop, or trade union work in the shop or work of connecting up shops with the unemployed, should speak concretely about these problems here in this convention. This is the best contribution you can make to a Communist Party convention and if you have no experience of this kind to speak about, perhaps you had better be silent and let someone else have double time who can speak about the shop.

These comrades are the builders of the Party. Nobody else. Nobody can build the Party by routine inner Party work. The only way the Party can be built is by the conduct of this work in the shops, in the industries and by building trade unions, in building the unemployed councils.

BUILDING NEW CADRES

We must have especially clarification in the interconnection of the various phases of our work. We must have a clear understanding of the Party as the leader, the organizer, the responsible organization for everything and every organization. And then we must understand that the mass organizations, even which the Party directs and gives leadership to, have to coordinate their work with one another, and have to really develop a movement that includes all of our organizations. There should not be allowed to grow up a Chinese wall between one phase of the work and another. We must establish that the task of the Party in these mass organizations is also to

activize and bring forward non-Party workers into leading positions and crystallize them in leading committees without mechanical Party control of Party majorities in the committees of these mass organizations.

The function of the Party is to lead, but this can only be done if through this leadership, we create large cadres of non-Party workers as leaders. And we haven't given serious attention to this yet. For all of the conferences we call, in mass organizations, no matter how small the proportion of Party members in these organizations, the Party member is usually elected as a delegate to our conference. Is this because he is such an unchallenged leader of the non-Party masses? No, it is because he didn't understand that his first duty is to develop some non-Party worker as leader who would be elected naturally to our united front conference. That is why we also have such a shortage of forces, because we are narrow and sectarian in our work and do not systematically develop and bring forward those workers who are capable of doing leading work, who are not members of the Party. We have to trust these non-Party workers and help them and push them forward and develop them. It can be done.

WIPE OUT THE STENCH OF THE SLAVE MARKET

Now I must speak especially about two other fields of mass work in this District in which we have special opportunities in District 2, but in which we are especially weak. First of these is the work among the Negroes, winning the Negro masses to the revolutionary movement. New York has perhaps the worst showing of any part of our Party on the question of Negro work. Both absolutely and relatively, New York City is the largest center of Negro population in the world, and these hundreds of thousands of Negroes here are at least 95% proletarian, overwhelmingly working class. They suffer from the most extreme exploitation and oppression, the most exploited section of workers in New York. But what do we have among them? What work are we doing among them? How much organization have we got among them? Almost nothing. Is this because the Negroes are especially difficult to approach, because we have not found a political program which will win their support? Not at all. This mass of Negro population has its eyes turned towards the Communist Party. They are distinctly friendly to our Party. Why aren't we able to effectively work among them?

In the first place, the reason for our failure is that the Party as a whole still has not mastered our Party program on the Negro question. How many of our Party members in New York understand that the Negro question is a national question? How many of our comrades understand that when they echo the Socialist Party slogan

that the problems of the Negroes are simply class problems of the working class, that this is an opportunistic refusal to recognize the national question among the Negroes? How many of our comrades in this district understand that it is wrong to say that we give equality to the Negroes by treating their problems exactly the same as we would the problems of the workers everywhere? And because our members do not understand these things, it is impossible for us to win the Negroes organizationally and consolidate our influence among them.

The Negroes understand that our Party is something good for them. They understand that something new has come into their life with the coming forward of the Communist Party with its program on the Negro question, and therefore they are friendly to our Party, they listen to us. But when we go among them, our members are not able to consolidate this influence that we have. On the contrary, a very large proportion of those Negroes who have come to our Party in the past have not remained, that is, when they were outside of the Party, they saw something good that they want to join but when they got inside they did not find themselves at home.

I know that many very honest workers, members of our Party, get very indignant when we say to them that they are suffering from the influence of white chauvinism. But the fact remains that most every white worker who has grown up under the influence of American institutions, is influenced by the ideology of white chauvinism. The only way in which we can destroy the influence of this ruling class system of ideas about the inferiority of the Negro in the minds of the workers, is by the conscious development of the understanding of the Communist program on the Negro question and the development of a sharp struggle against every manifestation of the influence of white chauvinism.

White workers express white chauvinist ideas without even being conscious of it. We have lived so long in this poisonous atmosphere of the American capitalist system that we no longer smell this stink of the slave market that still hangs around our clothes and we carry this stink around with us without knowing it. But the Negro can smell it. Oh, the Negro can smell it, you can't hide it from the Negro masses, and because he smells this stink of the slave market still around our Party units and our Party committees, he doesn't believe what we say about our program. He has had promises from political parties ever since the Civil War destroyed the system of chattel slavery, and he no longer has any faith in promises. Our program will only mean something for the Negroes when we begin to realize it in the daily life, to realize absolute unconditional equality

of the Negroes in our movement, in our trade unions, in the unemployed councils and in our Party, and a complete liquidation of unconscious and half-concealed examples of the influence of white chauvinist ideas. That means that we must systematically carry through a program of political education of our Party on the Negro question. Secondly, we must carry on serious mass activities in the Negro neighborhoods to raise the struggle for the immediate needs of the Negro masses, and thirdly, upon the basis of this mass struggle and the development of mass organizations, recruitment of the best workers from among the Negroes into our Party, and the systematic promotion of leading cadres from among the Negroes.

Finally, a word about the Latin-Americans. We have several hundred thousands of Latin-Americans in New York City, but we have very few in our Party, very few in our trade unions, very few in our unemployed councils and very few in our workers' clubs or any other kind of organizations, and yet the Latin-American workers are especially susceptible to approach by us. They have revolutionary traditions from their own countries. They all come from semi-colonial countries, they are under direct oppression of the United States or British imperialism, sometimes both. Almost all of them have had some kind of experience in revolutionary struggle in their own home country. They are natural enemies of American imperialism, even before they are workers and they are doubly prepared for us, because of the especially oppressed conditions under which they work in the United States, which is almost as bad as that of the Negroes and they are more or less homogenous, speak the same language. I raise the question as a most serious, immediate, burning political question for District 2, that within the next six months to have the beginnings of mass organizations among the Latin-American workers. Possibilities exist. All that is required is a serious systematic bolshevik approach to the solution of this question, establishing mass organizations among the Latin Americans in New York under the leadership of our Party. It can be done and it must be done.

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EXTRACTS FROM CONCLUDING WORDS

We had some excellent contributions in the discussion on the question of shop work. I think, however, it is necessary to say that the main characteristic of our discussion as a whole is that it reflects the weakness of our orientation towards the basic work of the Party. That only the barest beginnings have been made. Because this beginning is so small, we especially value all those contributions that have been made, but we must set it as our task between now and the next District Convention that we will register a decisive advance

in this respect. *We cannot by any means be satisfied with these small beginnings.*

Now, I must also speak for a few moments of some of the questions that were raised by Comrade Zack. Comrade Zack gave us a very rich and fruitful discussion and demonstrated again in his speech that he is one of our most reliable and productive workers—an essential part of the leadership of the Party. At the same time, in his otherwise excellent speech, there are certain things that must be polemized against.

I think we have to say that Comrade Zack did not yet demonstrate complete realization of the very serious practical importance of much more energetic action to get the trade unions involved in the struggle for the unemployed. This is not just a question of Comrade Zack. This is a general phenomenon in every district, or almost every district, that our trade union organizers tend to separate themselves from the unemployed work and fail to take up the issues of the unemployed in their trade union work and it is not only a question of involving the trade union members in the building of unemployed organizations. Trade unions themselves have a special task of fighting for the unemployed and these tasks are being generally neglected.

In spite of the fact that Comrade Zack overcame some of the shortcomings of his attitude in practice on this question of our work in the reformist unions, he still reflected in his speech the lack of sharp consciousness of the pressing nature of this problem.

Comrade Zack accuses those who object to the formula of "the decline of the A. F. of L." as harboring consciously or unconscious tendencies toward the liquidation of the red trade unions. But for the red unions themselves, this is the most dangerous kind of an argument (*Applause*). Because this argument makes the basis of the existence of the red unions the simultaneous decline of the A. F. of L. and assumes that if we were faced with the fact that the A. F. of L. is not declining, that it might be correct to liquidate the red unions. We accept no such assumption whatsoever. For us the necessity of building the red unions does not arise out of the decline of the A. F. of L., but if the A. F. of L. were growing or flourishing, it would be necessary for us to build the red trade unions just the same. (*Applause.*) The necessity of building the red trade unions arises out of the class struggle at a particular moment and a particular industry and above all it arises out of the question, determined by life itself, whether it is possible to continue the development of the independent leadership of the revolutionary elements within the old unions. In industries where masses of workers are organized in the reformist unions, there, usually, our most important task is to

build the revolutionary opposition inside the reformist unions and remain within those reformist unions up to the point where to continue to remain in them would mean the surrender of the revolutionary work that we have to do. Beyond that point we do not go. We have no desire whatever to be in reformist unions merely to hold membership in them. We are there to do revolutionary work and when the time comes when this revolutionary work can no longer be carried on without the establishment of independent red unions, then we unhesitatingly establish these red unions, no matter what is happening with the rest of the A. F. of L.

So to think that to speak about the "decline of the A. F. of L." gives a sounder ground to our red unions is a serious theoretical mistake. (Interjection by Zack, "I never said it.") Further, this formula, "decline of the A. F. of L." makes it possible under the shield of this formula to develop lots of other ideas, ideas that Comrade Zack might not develop because he is an old, experienced comrade who is already guarded against many deviations that younger comrades could easily fall into by developing this formula. In the first place, it gives a blanket characteristic to the whole development of reformism in the economic struggles. But can we give a blanket characterization? No, we cannot.

The development of reformism, of social-fascism, in the trade union field is a very complex thing. It is true that the top bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. is experiencing very sharp difficulties. The bureaucracy is faced with the fact that its old slogans no longer have such a strong hold upon the masses, is having to readjust itself and in almost a panic seizes upon new slogans. Every few weeks or every few months they come forward with some new demagogic slogans which are quite a serious departure from some of their slogans of the past. It is also quite true that this top bureaucracy exercises over the masses a diminishing influence precisely because of this condition. But while this is happening to the whole top leadership of the A. F. of L. something else is happening a little below them. That is the serious development of the left reformists, the Musteites and the semi-Musteites, who are comparatively new phenomena in the American trade union field, that arise practically coinciding with the economic crisis. Are we to say that left reformism is declining in America in the trade union field? On the contrary, it is rising. And it is precisely this left reformism which is the most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary trade union movement as well as of the Communist Party. And we are in a very great danger of blinding many of our comrades to the sharpness of these problems when we bring forward and emphasize the formula of "the decline of the A. F. of L." What we must fasten in the heads

of the comrades are the concrete problems of the struggle against social fascism and especially the struggle against social fascism in the economic field, in the field of building the revolutionary trade union movement, and not to give them any illusions that the problems of these struggles are getting easier and simpler every day, but they are getting more difficult and more complex every day, and we must prepare our comrades for the difficulties, for the complexities of this struggle.

Then one further argument of Comrade Zack. Comrade Zack took exception to that part of the resolution which speaks of the lack of trade union democracy in our organizations. He argues that bureaucracy can exist in class collaboration unions, but not in the class struggle trade union, or if it exists in the class struggle trade unions it is only to the extent that these unions are not actually engaged in struggle, but insofar as they are engaged in struggle, bureaucratic methods disappear. This is wrong. There is no magic whereby the class struggle trade unions automatically throw off the inherited practices of past trade union experiences in America. Revolutionary trade unions grow and develop, and especially in the very early stages they carry over remnants from the past and they even independently develop certain bureaucratic methods of their own because of their lack of experience. There is only one thing that will break this down—not the automatic process of the class struggle, but conscious educational work of our Party in the leading of these revolutionary trade unions and the conscious struggle for the elimination of these bureaucratic remnants. It is our task to consciously carry through this change. I think it should be sufficient to prove this point, to point out that in the greatest economic struggle that we have ever led directly by our red trade unions, the miners' strike of a year ago, a struggle in which we had the unchallenged leadership of forty thousand miners in a fierce battle, in which the workers had confidence in our unions, even after they were defeated in this battle—when the miners had abandoned this struggle, thereby broken to an extent with our trade union—when the union was still trying to continue this struggle—they still had a feeling of confidence in our union even after they had broken away from it, so that our union today exercises a tremendous influence over these miners. This is the best example of leading a large body of workers in a sharp fight. Can we say in face of this example that there were no bureaucratic methods in this strike? We certainly cannot say it. In fact the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Communist International takes precisely this strike, the best example of our work, to show us the existence of bureaucratic methods of our trade union work, to show us the dangers that arise from

this, to show the absolute necessity of overcoming this danger. I think it is necessary for us to emphasize this resolution of the E. C. C. I. on the lessons of the strike struggles and to request the comrades to give very serious attention to studying this resolution again. It directly throws light upon every problem of our trade union work and the conduct of strike struggles and the Party has not yet by any means thoroughly made these lessons its own property, mastered these lessons. We must study it again and again.

One final point on the question of Negro work. I think it is necessary that in approaching this question we shall have a very clear understanding of its fundamental importance for our Party. The Party cannot become a mass Party, cannot become a Bolshevik Party, unless it wins masses of Negroes, the most active, honest, devoted loyal proletarian Negroes. We have not accomplished this. We cannot rely upon formulas, correct as our formula may be, for the solution of this problem. One thing is clear. Just so long as honest, energetic workers, Negroes, do not feel themselves thoroughly at home in our Party, just so long is something the matter with us and we have got to find it and correct it. Just so long as the Negro workers who come in contact with our Party do not naturally unite with us, and stay inside the Party, the influence of white chauvinism is still at work, and the responsibility for this rests primarily upon the white comrades, and we cannot compromise by one-thousandth part of an inch on this question. That means that the struggle against the influence of white chauvinism must be a permanent feature of our work. The struggle against white chauvinism will not end until after the revolution—and some time after the revolution. What is true of our Party is much more true of the trade unions and still more true of the working class generally. And we have got to make the white comrades, especially those who occupy responsible leading posts, we have got to make them understand politically the program of the Party, we must make them politically sensitive to every concrete problem of the day that has any relation to the problem of the Negroes. And we must say that our Party is not yet sensitive enough to react to these problems. And very often we drive Negro workers away simply by our lack of sensitiveness, lack of reaction to these problems, by our failing to see them, even the smallest one when it arises.

The very smallest problem may become of the most extreme importance in winning the confidence, not only of one Negro worker, but of thousands of Negro workers. This, the white comrades must understand, especially the leading comrades—that is, that it is they who have to win the Negroes. At the same time it is also necessary to say that the Negro comrades have a very special part to play.

Our Party certainly will not be able to win over the Negro masses without the assistance of the Negro comrades, members of the Party. We must struggle to break down the distrust of the Negro masses, the distrust which they have of all organizations in which the white workers predominate in numbers; a distrust which is absolutely justified by their historical experience. We must and can break it down by our work and primarily by the work of the white comrades. At the same time, the Negro comrades have to furnish that absolutely essential part of the work by giving to the Negro masses the concrete example, the live example of Negro workers who have put their absolute confidence in this Party. The Negro comrades have to consciously understand and carry through this task of dissolving the distrust towards our Party. They can do this not by putting forward the Party as a perfect and complete organization from which the influence of white chauvinism is completely absent. Such an attempt to defend the Party would defeat itself because every Negro worker who comes into the Party will inevitably have experiences that prove to him that white chauvinist influences do exist. But our Negro comrades have to point out to the non-Party Negro masses, not that the Party is perfect, but that the Party is conducting an organized struggle against this, and that the Party is not only the organization that will conduct this struggle against white chauvinism, but it will ultimately destroy white chauvinism.

Finally, I want to express again my feeling that the work of this convention has shown some small progress, is beginning to carry through the line of the Fourteenth Plenum, but that we must, while emphasizing every point of progress, keep clearly before us the main feature of our work, that is, to make this progress of ours one hundred times more swift and effective, to throw ourselves into the revolutionary struggle with more strength, as a solid, crystalized Bolshevik mass Party in the United States.