

Foster Discusses Communist Aims

By A. B. MAGIL

THE recently published draft program of the Communist Party speaks for itself, in the opinion of William Z. Foster, the party's chairman. "It meets the basic needs of the American people in regard to three great problems: looming depression, the advance of fascism and the danger of war," he said in an interview at his home.

"The proposals in the draft program express the ideas and wishes of the vast majority of the American people."

Four hundred and fifty thousand copies of the draft program are now being distributed in pamphlet form under the title "The American Way to Jobs, Peace, Democracy."

Foster emphasized that in presenting this draft program, the Communist Party was inviting the widest discussion and welcoming comment and constructive criticism from Americans in all walks of life. On the basis of this discussion, a final version of the program will be published later this year.

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"ONE TRIBUTE to the effectiveness of our draft program," Foster continued, "is the fact that certain publications are going to considerable lengths to misrepresent it in order to prevent the people from knowing its contents." He referred specifically to two articles by Will Lissner in the March 17 and April 11 issues of the New York Times and an unsigned editorial in the March number of the ADA World, organ of Americans for Democratic Action.

"Lissner writes that the draft program is 'Communism's "new look"' and that it was decreed in Moscow," Foster said. "According to him, the draft program represents a revision of "the new tactical line" issued by the Party in May, 1949 in the name of William Z. Foster."

"This is vicious nonsense. Is there anything new in the draft program? There certainly is. In the first place, the conditions and problems it deals with are new in the sense that they are not the same as they were even a year ago.

"Second, the need for the broadest unity in solving the common problems of the American people is today more urgent than ever be-

fore, and this too is reflected in the draft program.

"Third, flowing from the first two is the new tactic we project for the 1954 and 1956 elections. This tactic is based on the fact that, except for a few local and state situations, there is no immediate prospect that decisively large masses will break away from the existing two-party structure."

"Therefore, the draft program, while warning against any illusion that the Democratic Party can be transformed into an anti-monopoly, anti-war, farmer-labor party, proposes that organized labor act as an independent force in the Democratic Party and in some cases in the Republican Party; that it take the initiative in building a broad coalition of all independent-minded voters to elect an anti-McCarthy Congress this year.

"Success in the 1954 election would make it possible to work for the election in 1956 of a new administration to block fascism and war, a government more responsive to the people's demands. This would help create a situation that would make possible the emergence of a mass third party, led by Labor and its allies. Such a party could lead to the victory of a farmer-labor government which would not only check fascism and war, but defeat the fascists and

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From the address of Eugene Dennis to the jury:

"Repressive measures are the surest way to crucify the Bill of Rights and to force millions of people to walk carefully and look behind them before they speak. The way to overcome such a police state atmosphere is to enforce the Bill of Rights and to make sure that every American—Jew and Gentile, Negro and White, native and foreign born, Communist and non-Communist—is secure from economic, social or political penalty for his or her belief, race, creed or color."

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June 10th will see an outpouring of New Yorkers who will join with Paul Robeson, Dr. Edward K. Barsky and others in a pledge to continue and intensify the fight

Interview With Foster

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war instigators and curb the power of the trusts.

"In all these respects the draft program is new. But is it an about-face or a revision of our basic line? Not at all. Lissner refers to the statement issued by me in May 1949, published under the title 'In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders.' The basic approach—unity in the struggle against fascism and war—was the same in that document as in the draft program. But naturally after five years there are many new elements in the situation that have to be taken into consideration in applying this basic line.

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"TODAY the fight against fascism is primarily a fight against McCarthyism. The fight against war is a fight to end the war in Indochina, to outlaw the atom and hydrogen bombs, to bring about the settlement of international differences through peaceful negotiations. Today the fight to defend the living standards of the American people is especially a fight to compel the government to adopt measures to cushion the disastrous effects of the approaching economic crisis on the workers, farmers, Negro people, and middle classes.

"As for that old phonograph record about 'orders from Moscow,' this is stupid. In his second article Lissner says that the Soviet economist, Eugene Varga, 'wrote the basic part' of our draft program. In the first place, what's wrong with Varga? He happens to be one of the best economists in the world, and we Communists offer no apologies for learning from the best minds of all countries. In the second place, the 'proof' that Lissner offers only makes a fool out of Lissner. He quotes such sentences from our draft program as 'Signs of an economic crisis are increasing. Production is falling. Unemployment is growing.' He says all these ideas came from Varga. If that's the case, two-thirds of the economists of the United States are taking their ideas from Varga. By Lissner's test, the New York Times itself is carrying out the Varga line."

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AMONG the "revisions" of past Communist policy, Lissner wrote in his March 17 article, is the fact that the draft program speaks of a "Negro nation" in the South. I asked Foster what he thought of this. His latest book is "The Negro People in American History" and he is an authority on the Negro question.

"This is of a piece with the other 'revisions' that Lissner has discovered. The fact is that for the past 25 years our Party has taken the position that the Negro people in the Black Belt of the South constitute an oppressed nation. Our draft program makes the fight for equal rights for the Negro people in the North and South one of the central questions before the entire American people. The program calls for federal action 'to wipe out every form of discrimination in employment and job opportunities for Negro workers,' as well as for Mexican, Puerto Rican, Indian and Jewish workers, for women and young people. It calls for federal legislation to outlaw poll-tax, lynching, segregation and jimcrow and for guaranteeing 'equal educational opportunities and the right to full representation' for the Negro people."

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TURNING to the question of McCarthyism, Foster said: "Lissner criticizes us for characterizing McCarthyism as American fascism. We have no monopoly on that characterization. Ex-President Truman said that McCarthyism is fascism and Rep. Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr. recently spoke along the same lines. Millions of Americans are becoming aroused at McCarthyism because they see in it the ugly face of fascism. We Communists don't quarrel merely with the methods of McCarthyism, but

with its objectives. It is trying to destroy democratic liberties and create a police state in which the war-inciting Wall Street trusts will rule as they please. That's why the draft program poses as a life-and-death question for our country the creation of a broad anti-McCarthy, anti-war coalition to save us all from the Hitler path."

Among other distortions in Lissner's articles Foster cited the fact that "he criticizes us for not advocating force and violence. We never have. Despite all the slanders and the Smith Act frameups, we have never advocated the violent overthrow of the government of the United States. In this respect there is no difference between the draft program and the long established Party policy."

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WHAT ABOUT foreign policy? As against Lissner's falsifications, Foster had this to say about the proposals in the draft program:

"Lissner condemns our draft program because it demands the recognition of the Chinese People's Republic. It's an outrage that the State Department refuses to recognize a government of 500,000,000 people and compels its stooges to dance to its tune. Whether Dulles and Eisenhower like it or not, People's China will sooner or later be a full-fledged member of the United Nations—and the sooner, the better for world peace.

"Lissner says we are against 'assistance to other western countries to fight Communist aggression in Asia and Africa.' The movements in Asia and Africa are basic popular movements and the attempt of Dulles to stifle these democratic revolutions and prevent the colonial and semi-colonial peoples from setting up whatever governments they choose is also bound to fail. Such policies have nothing in common with the will and interests of the American people, but originate in Wall Street. Our government's outrageous intervention in Indochina and the threat of even more direct intervention, including the sending of troops, is arousing increasing opposition in our own country. The fraud that the government put over on the people in 1950 in the Korean war can't be so easily repeated today.

"Lissner also doesn't like the proposal of the draft program for ending the cold war and developing East-West trade. I venture to say that this is in harmony with the will of 95 percent of the peoples of the world. It is in harmony with and is urgently required by the interests of the American people. The attempt of the Wall Street imperialists to boycott the socialist countries is not only stupid and ineffective, but is worsening the growing economic crisis in the United States."

TURNING to the editorial in the ADA World, Foster said that the ADA was attempting to take a position against McCarthyism and the Communists simultaneously.

"The fact is that by criticizing McCarthy on the ground that he is not an effective fighter against Communism the ADA leadership and others who follow that line have simply walked into his trap. No matter how furiously these people insist on their anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, McCarthy and McCarran, like Hitler and Mussolini, lump them all together with the Communists in order to destroy the liberties of the entire American people. Though the ADA editorial warns against 'any form, shape, or manner of united action with the Communists,' the fascists are busy forging a unity of persecution. Under these circumstances the ADA policy is suicidal. It doesn't represent the interests of the members of that organization or of the American people."

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WHAT ABOUT the charge of "infiltration"? According to Lissner, one of the goals of the draft program is "infiltrating the Republican and Democratic parties."

The editorial in the ADA World also says that "the Communist Party directed its members to infiltrate the ADA and other liberal and labor organizations."

"These statements are complete distortions of our position," Foster declared. "There is no such thing as Communist 'infiltration.' We favor organizing the anti-war, anti-monopoly forces wherever they are. Our draft program says:

"No one group in America can achieve these things. The unity of all democratic and peace-loving forces is needed—unity on one issue or a score of issues—unity irrespective of ideological and political differences on other questions and on longer range goals."

"The program calls for unity of all independent-minded voters, whether Democrats, Republicans, or Progressives, in order to elect an anti-McCarthy Congress in 1954 by defeating every McCarthy-McCarran-Dixiecrat type of candidate, every pro-fascist and rabid war-monger."

"Both the Lissner articles and the ADA editorial are based on the Big Lie of the 'Soviet menace.' Outside of the United States this lie has been pretty thoroughly discredited. As our draft program says: 'It is the Big Lie that the Soviet Union menaces this nation that has made possible the inroads of McCarthyism.'

"This Big Lie now threatens not only the peace and liberties but the very existence of the American people. The hydrogen bomb has made it clearer than ever that only a policy of 'peaceful coexistence between the capitalist U.S.A. and the socialist Soviet Union,' as our draft program proposes, can save millions of Americans and civilization itself from destruction."

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THE KEY question in developing the struggle against the consequences of the approaching economic crisis, against McCarthyism and war is the role of the working class. The draft program proposes that organized labor, apart from the economic battles it must wage, use its political weight in an independent way even though for the most part it continues to operate within the two-party system, primarily within the Democratic Party. There will also be an important role for candidates of the American Labor Party and the Progressive Party in the national campaign.

"A tremendous responsibility falls on the organized workers to create that unity in 1954 and thereafter which can defeat wage cuts, win a shorter work week, increase unemployment benefits and social insurance, force the government to launch a large-scale public works program; which can defend the Bill of Rights and hurl back McCarthyite fascism; which can end the 'dirty war' in Indochina, win U.S. recognition of People's China and her admission to the UN, re-establish East-West trade, prevent the rearmament of Germany, and compel our government to agree to a sharp reduction in armaments and the outlawing of the atom and hydrogen bombs.

"The issue is not communism. It is McCarthyism, war, looming depression. Irrespective of past or present differences, we propose that labor and all democratic forces get together and start working together to save the entire American people from the terrible dangers that face them."

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"THIS IS the heart of our draft program. That program speaks for itself. I'm confident that if hundreds of thousands of Americans are given the opportunity of reading this document, free from misrepresentations, they'll find themselves in basic agreement with it."

