

Documents of the 2nd Party Congress of the Communist Labor Party

Contains the Program and the Constitution of the CLP and the resolutions adopted at the 2nd Party Congress.

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Jobs, Peace, Equality The Communist Labor Party

What is the Communist Labor Party? What does it stand for? Why should I support it, why should I buy its papers, pamphlets and books? This pamphlet answers these basic questions about the Communist Labor Party. It tells the origin and history of the Party and difference between it and the Communist Party, USA. Also includes the Party Program.

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JOBS
WITH
PEACE

BY J. FREED

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The author is a member of the Communist Labor Party. This is a revised edition of the pamphlet originally issued in September 1975 under the title *FIGHT FOR JOBS*.

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THE THINKER



Happy days of the 30's and of the 70's!

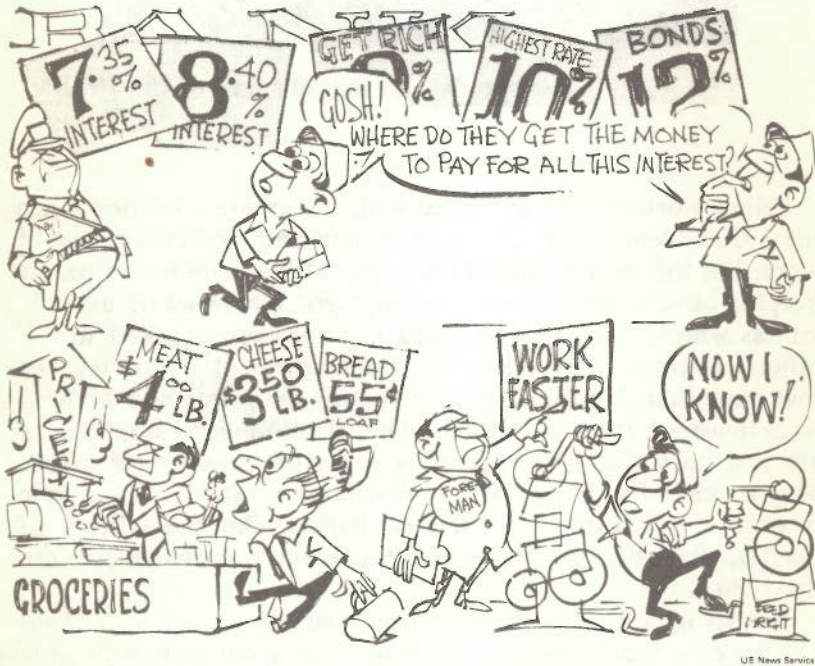
Fellow workers! We are faced with the greatest burden since the 1930's Depression. Ten million men and women are out of work, but this is only part of the story. Millions more are barely keeping alive on short weeks; unemployed farmworkers and the jobless who've exhausted benefits are not even counted in the official statistics. Even the U.S. Department of Labor tells us that more than 22 million people, mainly the young and women, want to work but can't find jobs. The 10 million jobless on record are just part of a larger growing army of unemployed. And, despite cheerful noises from Washington about "economic recovery," spokesmen for the capitalists like the editors of *Fortune* magazine predict at least 8 percent unemployment into the 1980's. (1)

The struggle to get jobs is just one part of the life and death battle being fought by the working class around its economic well-being. Whether working or unemployed, each and everyone of us has had to face a runaway inflation rate which monthly further cuts into our small earnings. If you made it back to work

after the worst days of the 1974-75 slump, the joy of again being able to make a living is quickly smashed by the realization that we are expected to work harder and faster than ever before. The demand of the capitalists who own the factories is "More productivity!"

Those remaining unemployed are being driven into absolute poverty. Millions have had their unemployment benefits exhausted and have been forced on to welfare, while at this very time every form of social insurance such as foodstamps, aid to schools, subsidies for public medical care have been drastically cut or eliminated altogether.

We will not allow this situation to go on. The working class has fought hard against the abuses of capitalism. Our grandparents and parents and those before them built this country with their sweat and blood. Now we have to fight for jobs. This is a first step in our struggle for peace and socialism.



LESSONS FROM THE PAST

The first thing is to organize a FIGHT FOR JOBS movement of millions of workers in every part of the country. For an example we can look to the massive unemployment movement in the 1930's. Here is the Preamble of the 1930 Charter of the National Unemployment Council, one of the major organizations of that movement:

Mass unemployment has now become a permanent feature of the economic system under which we live. Millions are denied the opportunity to work and earn a livelihood for themselves and their families. The menace of unemployment hangs over the head of every worker in every industry and occupation.

Ownership of the wealth and means of production—the mines, mills, factories, railroads and land—is concentrated in the hands of an ever-diminishing number of bankers and industrialists.

Only the organized mass pressure and struggle of all victims of mass unemployment and insecurity, Negro and white, can force the owners of wealth and their governmental agents to provide the means of safeguarding the home, the family and the very existence of the masses who face and suffer poverty in the midst of plenty.

Our task is to see that not one unemployed worker or his family shall be without decent food, housing and clothing.

Our aim is to win security by forcing enactment of the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.

As the means to this end we direct ourselves to the development of a mighty united fighting movement, that shall include all workers and poor farmers, regardless of sex, race, nationality, religious or political faith or affiliation. This unity for militant and determined struggle shall be effected through the National Unemployment Council of the United States.

The National Unemployment Council and other organizations like the Workers' Alliance carried out the following work:

- - - Called and organized national marches and demonstrations like the one on March 6, 1930, which drew over 1 million in coordinated rallies in major cities across

the country; it called the National Hunger March on Washington during March, 1931.

- - - In cities and counties across the country, Unemployment Councils were set up. These Councils included representatives from both unemployed and employed workers, from affiliated local unions, neighborhood, social and church organizations.

- - - At the factories recently unemployed workers were organized into Workers' Alliances that helped provide food, housing and medical attention, along with fighting for unemployment relief from the factory owners.

- - - In neighborhoods, Unemployment Councils organized tenants' unions, fought against evictions and arranged for public welfare and food for needy families. In rural areas there were demonstrations organized against farm foreclosures; food, shelter and clothing were provided for jobless farm laborers.

It is just this type of movement we need today. In every city we must wage a determined struggle for jobs, and against cutbacks in food stamps, medical care, aid to the poor and aged, and against evictions and mortgage foreclosures. This effort must be based on getting the support of as many unions, church social and action groups, youth organizations and senior citizen groups and neighborhood organizations and block clubs as is possible. Whether organized in the form of an unemployment council, or a coalition, or just through informal cooperation, it needs the united action of all workers and all progressive people.

Massive unemployment and the crippling cutbacks in social programs have hurt some workers more than others, and our efforts must give special attention to their needs. In particular, young workers and Negro workers have been hit the hardest. With millions of experienced workers still on lay-off, others with no prospect of returning to their former jobs, the employment possibilities for young workers between the ages of 16-21 is dismal. Here we have to fight to get government action on part-time and full-time jobs for young people, meaningful jobs which don't just last the summer, and where they can get meaningful training. Moreover, unemployment among Negro workers is at least 20 percent, and as high as 50 percent or more

among Negro youth; here, too, immediate government action is necessary.

The most reactionary sections of the capitalist class are supporting the use of intimidation and terror to keep the working class divided and weak in the face of the current crisis. The main victim of this intimidation and terror is the Negro people. This can be seen quite clearly in cities like Boston, New York and Chicago where the economic and social dislocation caused by the current crisis has created the conditions for fear and confusion to spread in the working class. This situation is being used by various fascist gangs to instigate acts of harassment and violence against national minorities, particularly Negroes. The working class must be united in order to be strong in the fight for jobs, and this means first and foremost a militant defense of the Negro people against such gangs as the Ku Klux Klan, Nazi Party, ROAR and the Posse Comitatus, or whatever name they appear under. Our efforts must work for the unity of all workers and must fight against the deportation of undocumented workers. In our fight for jobs we must not let our class be divided by the capitalists on the basis of nationality, borders, age and sex.

The working class has not remained idle faced with the economic crisis. During 1975 there were hundreds of demonstrations and rallies held at city halls, state capitals and in Washington D.C. demanding jobs, better and extended unemployment benefits. The largest of these were the February 5, 1975, jobs rally called by the United Auto Workers Union attended by more than 10,000 workers, followed several months later on April 26, 1975, by a "JOBS NOW" rally called by the AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department, attended by over 75,000 workers who came from all over the country.

In many unions, members fought to form unemployment committees or reactivate social and community service committees. This kind of action among auto workers in Detroit led to the formation of a Detroit Unemployment Council which early in 1975 fought to keep the large Chrysler Jefferson Avenue plant from closing permanently, and battled for the extension of SUB (supplementary unemployment benefits) to all workers regardless of duration of employment. Workers at Bethlehem Steel in Los Angeles organized an Unemployment Committee through their union local and worked with other unions and community organizations to get government action on unemployment. These are just a few examples of what took place

in almost every industry in every major city in the country. While most of these efforts were temporary and focused on a few events, they give us an idea of what can be done on a much larger scale.

Among the workers who've returned to their jobs the form of the struggle has changed. Speed-up, unhealthy and unsafe conditions, and low pay become the issues for the workers on the job. Every demand for greater production, infringements on seniority, or discrimination becomes the basis of a battle. This year the rubber workers, who suffered heavy unemployment in 1974-75, returned to their jobs prepared to fight around health and safety issues and getting cost-of-living increases. Their summer 1976 strike was a militant and dedicated battle against the profit-hungry rubber barons. In another action, nearly 120,000 coal miners in eight states staged a massive one month wildcat strike, one of the longest in the coal fields, against the use of court imposed fines and injunctions on their union; at stake was the right of the miners to strike to defend themselves against unsafe conditions and to enforce the call that: "Coal will be mined safely, or not at all!" And one of the most significant developments in the working class movement was the recent merger of two major textile and garment unions and their launching of a campaign to organize southern textile mills. This action was the result of massive unemployment in the textile and clothing industry on the East Coast, partially the result of the economic crisis, but more the result of the capitalists relocating their factories in the South to take advantage of open shop laws and low wages. This undertaking is the first time since the 1930's that the trade unions in this country have acknowledged that the fight for jobs must undertake the battle for union organization of the South, and Southwest, with the immediate demands being repeal of all right-to-work laws, and wage parity with the workers in the North.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO END UNEMPLOYMENT?

The Communist Labor Party holds that the only real solution to the problems of the working class is the elimination of capitalist exploitation and the capitalist class. This will require a socialist revolution. But revolution and socialism do not happen overnight. The struggle of the working class against capitalist exploitation will be long and difficult, and many battles still have

to be fought. These battles will be to gain the everyday needs of the working class like jobs, decent education, housing, and peace.

Ending unemployment is a matter of greatest urgency. Therefore, the Communist Labor Party puts forward the following demands under the general banner: **JOBS WITH PEACE! A JOB FOR EVERY WORKER AT THE EXPENSE OF THE MILITARY BUDGET!**

1. Decent Unemployment Benefits for All Workers.

2. Immediate Federal Government Action on Jobs.

3. Reopen the Factories. An End to Compulsory Overtime. Strict Enforcement of a 35-hour Week. No Speed-up.

JOBS WITH PEACE

We reject the call "JOBS NOW" as a trick of the capitalist class to put us to work producing war materials. We will no longer accept the creation of work which makes us accomplices in the mass murder of people in the colonies and neo-colonies. The working class of the United States of North America correctly opposed additional military aid to the collapsing fascist regimes of South Vietnam and Cambodia, and would not permit intervention in Angola or southern Africa on the side of colonialism and the fascist apartheid regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa (2). We must resist being stampeded into accepting increased military production and preparation for war as a way of getting jobs—death and destruction can be no substitute for productive jobs, decent housing, good health care and other things needed by the working class around the world. No new war in Korea! No new military action against Cuba! No war in the Middle East!

Unemployment benefits are not a solution to economic crisis, but they are necessary for survival. The present system is unsatisfactory since many workers are not covered, others have run out of benefits, and in general weekly benefits are so little that the standard of living of the workers and their families is

kept below even the government-set poverty level. The unemployment system must be changed so that benefits are extended to all unemployed workers without restriction. These benefits must be increased above present levels and they must be provided for the duration of unemployment.

Providing jobs for workers is the only real way of combatting unemployment, and since private industry prefers profits to the well-being of the people, the federal government must be forced to step in and put people back to work.

The struggle to get effective and long-lasting Federal government action on jobs comes down to whether the government will allocate funds for productive and socially necessary employment, or for unproductive, wasteful and destructive military procurement. In 1973, Congress passed the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act which provided for government-sponsored jobs when unemployment went over 6.5 percent. During the 1974-75 period, Congress allocated not more than \$5 billion for all job creation programs, including CETA and special programs for young people. Yet, this very same Congress sees nothing wrong in approving a total military budget of \$135 billion for 1977, enough money to create at least 15 million jobs! The allocation of this money for the military budget and the preparation for war only serves the interest of the capitalist class in carrying out imperialist campaigns and adventures against other countries. With more than 10 million people still unemployed, with city after city closing schools and laying off vital workers, with major cutbacks in social services, every penny must be directed back into productive work. One of the things we must do is get behind a strengthened version of the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill which would guarantee every adult a useful job at a decent wage.

Finally, a productive job is needed for every worker. Unemployment benefits and government-sponsored work programs can only be temporary measures; factories, mills and plants must be reopened, workers rehired and production resumed on a full-time basis. The people of the USNA as well as others around the world need food, clothes, housing, transportation and other basic necessities. Further, this new employment must be on the basis of decent working conditions, shorter hours and decent wages. The productivity of workers in this country has increased enormously since the 1930's, yet the 40 hour week remains, and the beneficiaries are the capitalists, not the workers. Moreover, these decent wages and working

conditions must be extended throughout the country, to the South and Southwest; they must be extended to Puerto Rico and wherever US corporations operate factories, mines and mills. If the capitalists will not reopen the factories and call back and rehire the jobless, if they will not return to the workers the benefits of their labor in the form of shorter hours, better conditions and decent wages, then the working class must fight to see that the laws needed to force them to do so are enacted and enforced.

In waging our struggle for jobs we cannot have any illusions about the causes of the crisis which has thrown so many of us into unemployment and poverty. This current crisis, and all similar crises in capitalist society, are caused by the unrelenting drive of the capitalist class for greater and greater profits. The fact is that almost all wealth comes from the labor of workers; yet, today nearly 85 percent of the population of the USNA work for the benefit of less than one percent who own the factories, mills, mines, large farms, banks and stores. The greater the profits extracted from our labor, the less we are able to buy back what we produce; the result is—an overproduction crisis.

Today, we can look back to the words of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the first great leaders of the revolutionary working class of the world, and find the causes of the capitalist crisis. Marx and Engels wrote in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 1847:

... Modern bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and or its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society. In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an

absurdity—the epidemic of overproduction. Society suddenly finds itself put back into the state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

. . . But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

STOP THE DRIVE TOWARD FASCISM AND WAR!

Workers! The crisis facing us is not just economic; it is more than unemployment and poverty. It is a political crisis, too.

War is the direct outcome of capitalist crisis. In the last 45 years there have been six capitalist crises, and each period of major crisis ended in war—World War II, the Korean War, and the war in Vietnam and the Indochina area. The redivision of the world through war and the intensification of exploitation in the colonies and semi-colonies are the only way out for the capitalist class when an over-production crisis hits. This is why the USNA ruling class desperately tried to hang on in Vietnam; why daily there is saber-rattling about the Middle East, and why hun-

dreds-of-millions of dollars are spent on arming Israel; this is why there is constant imperialist propaganda about “defending” the fascist regime in South Korea and why, in the midst of a grave crisis, the ruling class insists on spending \$120 billion on its war budget.



But the ruling class also knows that while they need war, we, the workers will not fight another war! We want peace! This is why the capitalist class and all its agents are prepared to use the most backward, reactionary, and violent means to force a war on us. The imperialist drive toward war requires fascism to subdue the anger of the workers. We cannot forget the past. During the 1930's Depression, sections of the capitalist class organized a

fascist movement in the USNA. This was a time when thousands of Negroes were tortured and lynched by the Ku Klux Klan, and thousands of Mexican and Cuban workers were arrested, beaten and then deported; this was a time when workers were shot down for striking or demonstrating for jobs or for the right to organize unions, and when fascist and pro-fascist gangs like the Silver Shirts, the Christian Legion, America First Committee and others roamed the country spreading their poisoned ideas and their campaigns of intimidation and terror. The political climate created by this fascist movement allowed hundreds-of-thousands of Japanese-Americans to be rounded up and sent to concentration camps at the beginning of World War II; and it was the revival of this reactionary movement which allowed the McCarthyite witchhunts to take place during the Korean War.

Today there are similar signs of danger—signs of fascism and war. We have seen that the government and its police agencies have openly and callously committed criminal acts of assassination, robbery, spying, intimidation and terror. We saw an unelected President side with gangs like the KKK and ROAR and come out against busing, against the struggle of the Negro people for equality. In 1975, we heard Governor George Wallace of Alabama declare his sympathy for Nazi Germany and the fascists of Japan during World War II. And, in 1976, we saw both Democratic and Republican parties ignore the desire of the people for peace, and openly declare intentions of increased hostility against the Soviet Union and the rest of the socialist countries. Finally, each day we see gangs like the Ku Klux Klan, Nazi Party and ROAR becoming more bold, openly recruiting and waging their campaigns of hate and terror.

Fellow workers. We must unite, organize and repulse the vile thrusts of the capitalist class! We must fight for jobs! We must fight against fascist terror and all reactionary gangs! We must prevent a new war!

Read:

The People's Tribune

The political paper of the Communist Labor Party . . . analysis of national and international events.

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Footnotes

(1) Lewis Beman, "The Slow Road Back to Full Employment," *Fortune*, June 1975, p. 86.

(2) The Communist Labor Party uses the United States of North America (USNA) to differentiate the USNA from the United States of Mexico or the United States of Brazil, etc. The USNA is a multi-national state, comprised of the imperialist oppressor nation, the Anglo-American nation (which consists roughly of the northern east, the midwest and western regions); its direct colonies, the Negro Nation and Puerto Rico; and the oppressed Southwest region.

