

Bulletin

OF THE WORKERS PARTY

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SOME COMMENTS ON THE RESOLUTION ON THE
UNITED STATES BY THE NATIONAL COMM.

By Fred Norman

In many ways the American resolution is the most important one before the convention. It is on this political basis that the party will carry on its organizational activity. Yet so self-evident are the inadequacies of the National Committee resolution that its supporters are forced to admit its deficiencies. In fact, the most distinctive feature of the National Committee resolution is that it has "nothing" to say. The rise of the PAC, state intervention, the GM slogan: "Open the books", are duly noted and recorded. But there is not one scientific generalization, conclusion or perspective of the developing objective situation in America today upon which to build the party program.

Speaking of the coming crisis all the resolution in essence says: "It will be featured by mass unemployment, fierce struggle and greater class consciousness on all sides, a factor which is ever present today" (p.8). "The rise and development of the PAC movement is highly significant" (p. 11). "Already important changes have taken place in the conduct and political thinking of the classes... this new attention paid to the state is a phenomenon of great significance" (p. 8, emphasis ours). Fierce struggle, greater class consciousness, etc. these characterizations of the period ahead are applicable to all periods of the class struggle of the present epoch. The author of the present National Committee resolution recognizes only what everyone recognizes. However, to analyze the new and the decisive elements in the situation, demand more than those vague generalizations.

Further, "The inhibitions and frustrations felt by the working class during the war are now ending and great struggles that cannot but fail to have a sharp political character will ensue." How "sharp" will the "sharp political character" of the "great struggle" be? This is precisely the question which separates the two resolutions and which the National Committee resolution fails to answer.

The Pre-Revolutionary Period

At one point the National Committee resolution wanders off and says: "Each class will strive for supremacy in the next stage of American capitalism." (p. 4). Evidently, the sentence crept in by mistake, for the National Committee resolution implies and Shachtman made it definite at the city wide meeting on "Building the Party", that for the majority no pre-revolutionary period exists today. Irving Howe, most explicit in asserting that we are not in a pre-revolutionary period, poses the question to Johnson: "In a word, are we entering a revolutionary or even pre-revolutionary period?" (Bulletin, Vol. I, No. 9, p. 28)

The theme which runs through the National Committee resolution is the backwardness of the American working class: "Vigorous economic actions as characteristic of the American working class as its political backwardness will be particularly characteristic

of the period ahead." (p.1) For the Majority the measuring rod for the political development of the American proletariat is the existence or non-existence of the ILP. Similarly, the measuring-rod for a pre-revolutionary period is the existence or non-existence of a mass revolutionary party. Without an ILP the proletariat remains in a primitive political stage of development. Without the mass revolutionary party a pre-revolutionary period does not exist. That is what the Majority leadership thinks! Upon these subjective estimations they base their resolution. "Without these objective changes which are not only independent of the will of separate groups and parties, but even separate classes, a revolution as a general rule is impossible. The sum total of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation." (Lenin, Selected Works Vol. 5, p. 174).

It is upon objective realities that the Founding Conference of the FI and the Minority resolution bases itself. The Founding Conference bases the Transitional Program on the existence of a pre-revolutionary period which is characterised by 1) the state, politics and international relations of the bourgeoisie are blighted by a social crisis and 2) the masses are forced again and again, by the pressure of the crisis to move onto the road of revolutionary out-break, with, 3) every serious demand of the proletariat or even the petty bourgeoisie directly challenging the bourgeois control of society.

This, in essence, is what the Founding Conference Thesis said about the present period in 1938, not only of the world as a whole but also including the USA. The Minority resolution states most emphatically that it is even more true today. Since the NC resolution clearly implies no pre-revolutionary period, it has a responsibility to the membership to explain on what perspectives the Transitional Program was built.

The Majority leadership must also cease confusing the membership with distorting propaganda for the socialist revolution (pre-revolutionary period) with agitation for the immediate seizure for power (revolutionary situation).

The Boom

The majority resolution seems to have taken the bourgeoisie seriously when they speak of a "post-war boom." Irving Howe, again is most explicit: "American imperialism in a privileged position can thereby temporarily 'ease' its internal problems" (p. 20). The bourgeois publicists and economists continually hammer away at the proletariat about a post-war boom - by which they mean a period of prosperity - for no other reason than to mislead and quiet them. If the NC resolution speaks of that type of boom, it can only mean greater class "peace". Therefore, their predictions are that the sharper class struggles will be centered mainly around immediate demands.

However, the facts are quite to the contrary. The rapid downward spiral of national production resulting from the termination of war production; the rapid assembling of an industrial reserve

army of many millions; the further enslavement of the working class to the machine, aggravated by the rapid technological development stimulated by the war; the end of eased capitalist discipline of production during the war; the lowering of living standards, etc. These are not only the objective reality but also the subjective experience of the American working class. It is this which has developed the social thinking and high level of consciousness of the proletariat. On the basis of a keen awareness and correct evaluation both of the objective reality and the subjective experience, the party must bring to the working class revolutionary propaganda which generalizes the experiences in terms and conceptions of the proletarian revolution. Only then will the party be able to recruit more than in ones and twos.

The Transitional Program

Despite their verbal acceptance of the Transitional Program the Majority has in reality rejected it. For them the Transitional Program is merely a general historical guide for the entire epoch, and not a concrete program to bridge the gap between the present objective situation and the mentality of the workers. The concrete application of the Transitional Program is not only necessary for the next two years, but for the next two months and even next two weeks. The Majority does not think so. Contrast the following from their resolution: "Its (the party-F.N.) membership must be in the forefront of the struggle of the organized workers for security, seeking to develop the progressive forces in the struggle for a labor party and the economic advancement of the masses." (p. 12)- with the following passage in the Founding Conference Thesis: "The strategic task of the next period - a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organization - consist in overcoming the contradictions between the maturity of the objective revolutionary condition and the immaturity of the proletariat and the vanguard---. It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find a bridge between the present demands and the socialist program of revolution." In fact the NC resolution and the Transitional Program clash, for they seem to see two different tasks for the present period. The NC resolution rejects the existence of a pre-revolutionary period and therefore the task of mobilizing the masses for the socialist revolution is pushed off into the future. The result has been the party program is closer to the minimum-maximum demands of the old socialist organizations - (immediate demands today, struggle for the socialist revolution in the future) than to the Transitional Program.

Because the NC resolution denies the existence of a pre-revolutionary period, they see the task before the party as:

1. giving leadership to the labor movement in the struggle for security, and,
2. raising the level of the proletariat to that of an independent labor party.

On the other hand, the Transitional Program bases itself on:

1. the existence of a pre-revolutionary period,

2. the fact that the mentality of the working class under the blows of the objective crises can change very rapidly,
3. the task of the party in the present period is the systematic mobilization of the proletariat for the socialist revolution - factory committees, rank and file committees, workers defense guards, etc.

"The Fourth International's program of Transitional demands which seemed so "unreal" to near sighted politicians, will reveal its full significance in the process of the mobilization of the (our emphasis) masses for the conquest of state power (p. 43, Manifesto of FI on The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution.)

Labor Party - Reformist or Revolutionary

By their presentation of the labor party in the press and by the lack of clarity in the resolution on the character of the ILP the Majority can only succeed in sowing reformist illusions in the party members and in the LA readers. Even the 1944 resolution on the American question, while assuming the probable reformist character of the LP, added: "...the WP must put forth such a road... as will help the masses shed their reformist illusion..." (NI Jan. 1944). Two years have passed. We ask the comrades of the Majority: "What demands and what road do you propose as will help the masses shed their reformist illusion." None could be found in the resolution!

The reason is clear! With their conception of the proletariat the majority believes that the absence of even a reformist LP precludes the possibility of coming to the workers with revolutionary propaganda. Once the LP is established, the majority all but says, "we will catch up, for we will have a political arena to work in."

This is not the conception of the LP that Trotsky introduced into the American movement. He insisted that although the LP might crystallize into a reformist LP, the task of the American movement was to do everything possible to make it a "revolutionary" LP. It must link up with its propaganda for the LP the propaganda for the Transitional Program - the mobilization of the masses through Factory Committees, workers defense guards, Rank and file committees, consumers committee, etc.

Trotsky saw the LP in terms of mobilizing the masses for revolutionary action. The Majority leadership accepted this in 1938. They must explain their change! (The publishing of the conversation with Trotsky on the LP and Transitional Program would clear up the deal for the party membership!).

The Political Contents of the Strike Wave

Starting with the mentality of the workers and not with the developing objective situation, the Majority remains on the surface of events and fails to see the essential advance of social and political development in America. They fail to see in the strike the movement of the proletariat to change bourgeois society and the growing consciousness of their role in society.

They estimate the upsurge of the proletariat by the form of the struggle, i.e. the strike wave as merely more rigorous economic struggle no independent labor party as continued political backwardness. Along with their subjective approach of starting with the mentality of the workers and not with the objective situation, they look at the trade unions and commence with the reformist leadership and not the pressing rebellious masses who even in the midst of the war clashed sharply with their suppressors. The NC resolution takes no cognizance of the growing struggle (rank and file movements, wild cat strikes, etc.) of the militant rank and file with the "labor lieutenants of capital." Nor does it offer perspective, program and organizational forms to the militant rank and file in present and coming struggles against their reformist leadership.

The frantic attempt of the CIO leadership to limit the UAW strike to one company (GM) is indicative that the temper and mood of the masses was such that one word from the trade union leadership would have set a national general strike in motion.

When Reuther appeals to the public, posing labor as the class to lead all society, and when Murray and Green pose a Labor Government like that in England at one point during the strike, it is indicative that such is the explosive nature of the coming period, that on the basis of economic struggle, the reformist leadership was forced to pose the most drastic political and "social solutions."

The relative "peacefulness" and lack of "violence" in these unprecedented strikes lies above all in the complete solidarity and strength of the workers in their struggles.

Whereas the NC solution does not recognize the movement of the proletariat towards the socialist revolution, the minority recognizes that the response and growing consciousness of the masses in the strike wave is a response to the ever deepening crisis of capitalism. It is not reflected in a complete socialist consciousness of the nature of capitalist crisis and decay. But in their movement and growing acceptance of revolutionary action, we understand the striving of the proletariat to establish a socialist society.

Fascism and Democratic Demands

The WP has been in the forefront of the struggle against Fascism (Madison Square Garden, Gerald L.K. Smith). Armed with the correct perspective and program for combatting the growth of Fascism, the party could really give leadership to the workers and win recruits in this most important struggle. And what does the Majority resolution propose against the growth of the counter-revolutionary Fascism but the familiar "struggle for democratic rights." (Those who thought that German "retrogressionism" applied only to the "smashed and atomized" proletariat of Europe, should now recognize it has encompassed the U.S.). "The struggle for democracy means a struggle on behalf of the Negroes, Jews and foreign born...This democratic struggle will encompass the right to

strike and all democratic rights of the people..." Further "it will be directed against all tendencies towards totalitarian developments..." Fascism (not mentioned) bureaucratism, militarism, totalitarianism, all thrown together.

First of all, the majority "carelessly" neglects to differentiate the dictatorship of the military machine from the Fascist dictatorship. For the latter there is first necessary a feeling of desperation of large masses of people.

Then it fails to make clear that Fascism is the expression and living proof of the revolutionary crisis. In 1935 to 1938 the American workers built the powerful CIO and carried out mass sit-down strikes. From 1937 to 1939 Father Coughlin had millions of radio listeners and the Nazi Bund held meetings in Madison Square Garden. The offensive by the working class was met by the counter-offensive of the bourgeoisie who used the restless petty bourgeoisie as their mass base. Therefore, in order to anticipate and combat the efforts of the coming counter-revolution, one must understand the present movement of the proletariat toward the social revolution. The tactical turn of the majority resolution toward a defensive struggle for democratic rights in the U.S. is dangerous and defeatist. There is no reason for it. The American proletariat is on the offensive today while Fascism is on the defensive. The strategic initiative is on the side of the proletariat and they can continue to maintain and further the present advantageous position only by "resolute progress toward social revolution." *

Compare the vagueness of the NC resolution on this important question with an excerpt on it from the minority resolution:

"The Party in its propaganda therefore teaches to the proletariat the importance of establishing, not only in empirical practice but in its own agitation and propaganda, its role as the leader of the nation against the incipient counter-revolution and for the reconstruction of American society." (p. 33)

The Polemics of Irving Howe

The polemical efforts of Irving Howe should have been directed not at Johnson but at Trotsky and the methods of scientific socialism.

What is the heaviest artillery in Howe's armory? He insists American imperialism will "temporarily 'ease' its internal problems." And this from a supporter of the NC resolution which promises "sharper class battles" in the immediate period! For Howe a Labor Party with revolutionary content is "mumbo-jumbo." He prefers to concede in advance that the Labor Party will be reformist. Unless he is guaranteed seizure of power within two years, he will not put forward revolutionary propaganda. He confuses propaganda for the socialist revolution with agitation for the

*The actual text of the Minority Resolution is as follows: "The strategic initiative is now on the side of the proletariat. Though Fascism is now on the defensive, the proletariat can only continue to maintain its present advantageous position by resolute progress toward social revolution."

immediate seizure of power. Howe claims that Trotsky proposed factory committees when the trade unions had exhausted their function. Does Howe know what he is talking about? Trotsky proposed the slogan in 1938, just a year or two after the rise of the powerful CIO. And as Howe will never understand, Trotsky proposed factory committees, precisely because of the social experience of the CIO. Howe, outdoing himself, explains that factory committees was a legitimate slogan during the war, but not for now. Can any one really believe this, except by being totally blind to the tremendous social impact that the war has had on the American working class?

Howe measures the revolutionary instinctiveness of the working class by the degree of contact which our party has made with the working masses. He fails to see that the pre-revolutionary nature of the present situation depends not at all on the size of our party. Secondly, what shall we contact the working masses with - a reformist labor party, agitation on the trade union level, admonitions to their political backwardness, assurances that the internal situation will be eased, defensive struggle for their democratic rights, theoretical articles about socialism?

Which method should the party accept? The one above or the one Comrade Trotsky put forth:

"The problem of the sections of the Fourth International is to help the proletarian vanguard understand the general character and tempo of our epoch and to fructify in time the struggle of the masses with ever more resolute and militant organizational measures." (Founding Conference, p. 27).

Because Howe does not recognize the process whereby the instinctive rebelliousness of the masses is transformed into awareness and consciousness under the impact of the developing objective crisis, he cannot see the proper relation between instinct and awareness.

When he stated that "the war will teach the American workers social thinking" did Trotsky underestimate the role of the party? We would like to ask Comrade Howe, how did the Open the Books slogan arise? And the PAC? And the Labor Party tomorrow? Are these social phenomena due to the efforts of our small party or to the rapidly developing objective situation.

Conclusion

Our contention in brief is that the Majority resolution has in effect rejected the Transitional Program and the conceptions of the "revolutionary" labor party and has instead accepted in part the Retrogressionist conceptions of the proletariat. Rejecting the objective situation as the basis for the party program, they have substituted a subjective estimation of the "mentality of the workers." Precisely because of this, it is necessary to reintroduce the strategic orientation and the scientific estimation of our epoch of the Founding Conference. This is what the

minority resolution has attempted to do.

Leave aside the minority resolution entirely and contrast the following scraps of writings of Trotsky with the profuse writings of the Majority, and the correctness of our purpose will be clear:

"Our tasks don't depend on the mentality of the workers. The task is to develop the mentality of the workers. That is what the program should formulate and present before the advanced workers. Some will say: good, the program is a scientific program, it corresponds to the objective situation, but if the workers won't accept the program, it will be sterile, possibly. But this signifies only that the workers will be crushed since the crisis can't be solved any other way but by the Socialist Revolution."

"That is why all the arguments that we cannot present such a program because the program doesn't correspond to the mentality of the workers are false. They express only fear before the situation. Naturally, if I close my eyes I can write a good rosy program that everybody will accept. But it will not correspond to the situation and the program must correspond to the objective situation. I believe that this elementary argument is of the utmost importance. The mentality of the class of the proletariat is backward, but the mentality is not such a substance as the factories, the mines, the railroads but is more mobile and under the blows of the objective crisis, the millions of unemployed, it can change rapidly." (Our emphasis)

"We claim to have Marxism or scientific socialism. What does "Scientific Socialism" signify in reality? It signifies that the party which represents this social science departs, as every science, not from the subjective wishes, tendencies or moods, but from objective facts, from the material situation of the different classes and their relationship. Only by this method can we establish demands adequate to the objective situation and only after this can we adapt these demands and slogans to the given mentality of the masses. But to begin with this mentality as the fundamental fact would signify not a scientific but a conjunctural demagogic or adventuristic policy."

These analytical remarks seem to be directed pointedly at the NC resolution. It is on this basis stated so superbly that we must reject the NC resolution and arm ourselves with the perspectives and program which are required for the party in the present period.

POLITICAL PARTY OR TRADE UNION PARTY

By Joe Leonard and Chet Marco

The NC resolution on the United States give a correct description of the economic perspectives of the American bourgeoisie, but fails to derive clear political perspectives for the party. Instead of an analysis pointing to the tasks of the coming period, the resolution is primarily a list of developments. The resolution should analyze the struggles and slogans of most importance for the coming period and indicate in what arenas we should expect the greatest responses. As it is, the resolution reads like a report for a progressive trade union leadership because it assumes from the outset that the party will concentrate virtually all its efforts and members (and attention) on the unions. The question of political movements and concentrations in arenas outside the unions does not even come up for consideration.

As the party correctly predicted, during the war there was considerable ferment in the union ranks against the patriotic leadership. "Unauthorized" strikes, stoppages and slowdowns were organized and led by shop stewards and committeemen. Militant union men led by "shop steward factory committees" amounted almost to unions-within-unions whose basis of organization was in the factory rather than in the meeting hall.

But today the situation is changed. The union leadership is not what we would wish, but it is not nearly so far out of line with the demands of the workers. In the recent strike wave the leaders did not swim against the tide of the ranks; the ranks did not carry the fight further than the leaders were willing to go. The strikes were prepared by the leaders, called by the leaders, and ended by the leaders. The issues were settled in Washington, not on the picket lines. Price increases and company security clauses, although resisted by the ranks, were in general accepted by the ranks.

With virtually the entire adult population of the country in the military service or in industry, heavy concentration on union work during the war was indicated for the party. This was necessary both to cushion the party against the draft and to take advantage of the rising revolt we foresaw in the unions. But it is high time to end our neglect of non-union work. Whereas for the past five years the party's identification of the working class with the union movement was 50% correct, in the coming period it will not be 25% correct. The unions will continue to shrink in size, just as the working class has already dwindled by millions from its war maximum. From a simple arithmetical point of view, some changes in the concentration and character of our work are implied.

Largely as a consequence of the destruction of the economies of the rest of the capitalist world, America faces a boom period.

But even booms bear the mark of capitalist decline: there will still be mass unemployment. We cannot tell yet whether the boom will seriously collapse or be transformed gradually into a war economy, but in either case, mass unemployment will be with us until the revolution or World War III.

We cannot approach the unemployed union men solely from within the unions. Their problem is not the same as that of the employed union member. They will see, despite their pro-union sympathy, that other union men have the jobs and seniority but that they themselves will not get back to work via the union and its seniority list. These unemployed, many of whom will be veterans, cannot be contacted in the factory; we shall have to visit them at home or find them in organizations which are not primarily occupied with union problems.

In every union where we had influence, the best people were hit disproportionately by the lay-offs. This is not at all because of company discrimination but because those most receptive to our ideas whose lives had been profoundly changed by the war, especially the younger men workers, were both the shortest in seniority and peace-time skill. This was especially true of our own party people; what reason is there to believe that if we get back into industry again, we won't be the first to be booted out in the next mass lay-offs as we were in this? A large percentage of our party members are out of industry now (and our women members, by and large, will probably not be able to get back into the factories); it would be a serious mistake to turn our backs on non-union work and engage all our best people in a frantic effort to get inside factory gates.

The masses are turning more than ever to the government to solve their problems. This means that political work outside the unions has more possibilities in almost the same proportion. We do not need to depend so much on the class struggle in the factory to provide an entree into the political thinking of the masses.

The Problem of Housing

The demobilization of the Army and Navy has already precipitated the most acute housing crisis in American history. The veterans organizations are starting to act, as witness the March 25th demonstration of the American Veterans Committee which demanded that the Fifth Avenue mansions be opened up. Our party vet committee has sent a letter to the AVC, but we must not, we cannot, continue to tail-end such developments. The housing crisis will only subside when sufficient masses are so impoverished that they can no longer hope to pay rent in any sort of housing project; that is, the market demand will subside but not the need. The party has got to "get hep" to the situation, end its ignorance of such things as the Congressional hearings on the Ratman Bill (the AVC made good use of this testimony), and start some serious work. It is probable that the vet organizations will take the lead on this question and rally other sections of the popula-

tion around them. We'd better be in there, and sooner rather than later.

The Problem of World War III

The open sparring for world domination between Russia and the United States has broadened the political horizon of the masses and stimulated much thought and discussion. It is becoming apparent to greater and greater sections of the population that there is no great period of peace ahead. Peace-time conscription, universal military training, armies of occupation, atomic bombs, American intervention, Russian expansionism, the UNO farce, American loans and European famine, the colonial revolt - all are becoming coalesced in the popular mind as part of the "prospects" for the next war. It will be possible for the party to intervene on some, if not all, of these questions in the coming period.

We have already raised the slogan "Withdraw the Troops." An anti-conscription campaign can easily be the spearhead for general anti-war work. We must inaugurate anti-militarist work among students and among the conscripts. We should not confine our agitation to union halls and factory "rest-rooms", especially as the post-war proletariat will be largely exempt from the peace-time draft.

Anti-Imperialism

The NC resolution mentions the responsibility of exposing the role of the imperialist powers. But it is clear that all that is involved is a manifesto or public meeting from time to time to salve our consciences that we are doing right by the other sections of the International. The task of working with or within the American foreign groupings is not posed at all, nor is the utilization of comrades (seamen and others) to establish organized contact overseas with movements of revolt.

The party has forgotten the virtues of front organizations, a useful method of relating arena to program. (Some of our newer members apparently think that front organizations are not honest politics, worthy only of Stalinists, that we must always appear under our own banner.) The Porto Rican population in NYC can be easily approached on the "colonial question". The party might fruitfully devote attention to operating in or even building an anti-imperialist Porto Rican organizations.

The Search for Political Arenas

Housing, anti-war, unemployment, anti-imperialist, Negro, vet - these are the major non-union fields of political work, but there are others, which while not as important, must not be totally neglected. There is a storm raging in New York City around the school system: racial discrimination in the schools, reactionaries on the Board of Education, the Quinn case, and the overcrowding and underpaying problems. The Jews, many of whom are already socialistically inclined (e.g. the Hashomer Hatzair) are in

turmoil over the Palestinian crisis and the scandals of the "de-nazification" program in Europe.

What is needed is not a dive into these movements and organizations (such as the vet organizations or the Negro organizations) but a search. If we are alert to political developments as they affect people, we will find arenas for fruitful work soon enough. If we understand how situations develop awareness in the people involved, we will know how to exploit that awareness and lead it to a higher level. We must approach existing organizations, not with the single yardstick of percentage proletarian composition, but rather as forums in which to expound our program.

The Demobilization Scandal and How We Muffed It

The party should not have been caught flat-footed by the GI demonstrations over the demobilization slow-down. The hypocrisy of the War Department and the mood of the soldiers was known even to the general public. Even FM was running a campaign on the question (which they subsequently struck when it conflicted with their "enlightened" foreign policy). But we were in the unions, no use to talk to us. (credit Housman). The slogans of "Withdraw the Troops", "The Duration Plus Six Months", "No Peace-Time Conscription" could have been used in a penny pamphlet, in street corner meetings, in veterans work, and in the mayoralty campaign. The whole truth of American imperialism could have been taught to the masses using the sure-fire start of "The men were drated for the duration plus six months, which is March 2, 1946. Why doesn't the government keep its promise to "our boys"?"

The one "mass" meeting we did hold, after the event, failed to explain that the significance of the demobilization slow-down lay in the War Department's use of it as a means of forcing through a peace-time conscription bill. Except for Saul Berg's remarks, the meeting was devoted to a sort of high-class griping and an explanation of the class character of the Army.

Does anyone doubt that we could have projected our influence into the situation? The labor movement, concerned with the attitude of soldiers and returning veterans, could have established an alliance. In coming strikes, soldiers could be reminded on what side the workers ranged themselves when the interests of the soldiers were at stake.

Nothing but for-the-record support could have been expected from the labor bureaucrats, but more could have been expected from a revolutionary party. Not only resolutions, but sympathy actions could have been proposed in the unions. In particular, we could have appealed to merchant seamen when 400 American ships, some of which actually "bumped" GI's to take munitions aboard, were diverted from re-deployment to gun-running for the British in Java.

It was necessary, also, to get access to the soldiers them-

selves. The ferment among them created an arena for us, opened their ears to us, and gave us a protective cover for our agitation. It would have had to be done carefully, but with adequate preparation we could have gotten a leaflet, unsigned or issued by a front organization, overseas. The bourgeois press would soon enough have enlightened the masses as to the real authors.) We could have explained to the GIs the full meaning of their own demonstrations, and we could have exposed the milk-and-water vet organizations. On this basis we could have become a factor in vet organizations.

The best group functioning on the demobilization situation was an organization that called itself WIVES. PM had a picture of Gen. Eisenhower with his back to the wall, faced by a bunch of these women demanding the return of their men. A few of our party women (perhaps the ones the PC was unable to develop into a cadre during the war) could have done good work there.

Unfortunately, the demobilization scandal is not the only blank spot in the party's record of political activity. The British intervention against the Greek resistance movement shocked the American people, but did not shock us into anything more than editorials and a "mass" meeting. Indonesians drew a little better - our own private picket line one morning. The 1944 presidential campaign was in its last weeks before we issued our statement. And now a movement has been organized in Freeport, Long Island, as a consequence of the anti-Negro outrages, but the best it can hope for from us is mention in Labor Action.

The party's neglect of the veteran question, is only ending now, ten months after the end of the war in Europe and six months after V-J Day. Comment will be in order when the NC resolution appears before the party, but good or bad it will remain a paper resolution because we are going to concentrate on house to house LA subscription drives and 60% proletarians on branch executive committees. The Negro resolution, too, will indicate party policy but not party activity. As for housing or anti-imperialist work, there may be a motion in some union...

The Disease of Unionitis

There is a political, not an arithmetical, reason for the party's failure to engage in political work. It is not because we have been sending too many people into the unions. Nor is the answer to be found in the formula "inadequate forces." Nor is the trouble that the party overestimates the importance of unions. These factors are all involved, but the root of the problem lies in the concept of the party as a politically functioning force. It is a question, not of the party's program, nor of the mood of the masses, but of how to link the two together.

The basic problem is not whether to go into the unions, but how to go into them. Some one will snicker: "How many different ways can you go into a factory?" The answer is: at least two: you can go in with the empty notion of "roots in the proletariat"

or you can go in politically. Shachtman said in a conversation: "Going into the trade unions is not political work - it is the preparation for political work." That's what we've been doing; instead of drawing workers to us as a consequence of the party's political activity, we go in and then - then we expect the trade union fractions to do what the party should have been doing.

Campaigns cannot be carried on by the union party members^{alone}. The campaigns on the transitional slogans we are emphasizing should be led by the party, or by a special organization set up by the party. Then our union party members can work politically without finding themselves put into executive posts by the union bureaucrats. Then they can function as Marxists in the trade unions, instead of as unionists in the Marxist party. The party cannot continue to look to its trade union fractions to carry that part of the ball that belongs on 14th Street. For example, an inter-union progressive group, with non-unionists admitted, based on the slogan for a Labor Party - then our fraction members could urge their union to join a movement, instead of resting after passing a resolution. We must try to make an arena for the Labor Party movement.

The party is obsessed with the idea of moving the masses via the unions. (Some members talk as if the two were identical.) But the unions are not the only link in the chain (to use Lenin's figure) by which the masses can be set into motion. Suppose some veterans form a militant organization to fight for housing. Is it out of the question that as this organization's campaign approaches a climax, unions could be brought to see the necessity of participating? Wouldn't the union vets then be able to make much more effective speeches to the union membership? And is it altogether unthinkable that a vet party member who was in the vet organization but not in the unions could ask and get permission to speak to union memberships and ask the unions to join the fight? A union card is not the only ticket to a union floor, and a union floor is not the only place that workers listen. The party substitutes the unions for the working class, and the working class for the masses.

The Problem of Party Growth

A party which cross-eyedly fixates on the union movement and lets itself become indifferent and inactive toward the whole mass of "bacilli" in the rest of society is bound to describe party growth independently of the political situation. That is, the party's stages, according to the NC "Resolution on the Party" are defined internally, in terms of the party rather than as a reflection in the party of the development of the mass movement. The resolution talks of becoming a mass party as if it were a matter of simply bigger sub drives, doubling the membership rolls, etc. But a Marxist party can only become a mass party in a revolutionary situation; not only is that one of the signs of a revolutionary situation, but conversely, only a revolutionary situation can create the conditions under which the masses, significant masses, will flock to the leadership of a socialist party which preaches

governmental overthrow. The masses will not support a party of social overturn until they, the masses, are ready for social overturn. The role of the revolutionary party consists in hastening the development of the masses to this point, and beyond, but it can only do this by means of political activity and propaganda, by intervening in the political arenas that can be opened up around it.

The description of the party as at the turning point from a propaganda group to an agitational party, set forth in the NC resolution, fails to emphasize that the proper functioning of a Marxist party lies in the integration of agitation and propaganda. The leadership will reply, "Of course, but there is a shift of emphasis." Granted, but from the beginning a party which seeks to influence masses must combine agitation and propaganda in a way that is quite incompatible with the spirit of the NC resolution. The resolution builds a wall between two types of party, and two stages of development of the same party (the "saving" statements about 'no wall intended' notwithstanding).

The problem of party growth is not to "continue to concentrate, as now, upon individual recruitment" (NC resolution p.12) nor to drink ourselves happy in union work while waiting for a Labor Party to be formed, but to find roads to the masses. It is up to us to find, not the masses, but the political roads to them; the party cannot choose union work as an alternative to working in political arenas.

It is necessary to collect and concentrate all the "drops and streamlets of popular excitement that are called forth by the conditions" and combine them "into a single gigantic flood." Our party works only in the unions for streamlets, and consequently converts the WP into a sort of inter-union fraction executive committee.

The question of where and how we should concentrate our forces is decided, above all, by a political analysis of the tempo and stage of the general political scene, not by the arithmetical introspection of "have we the forces?" The party dive into the unions was decided when we had the perspective, in 1938 on the adoption of the transitional program, that the coming war would not end without placing the revolution on the order of the day. There was a political reason, therefore, for rushing to the most important troops, the vanguard of the revolutionary army which we expected to start moving very shortly. We rushed into the unions because we expected that the political crises would take care of the problem of politicalizing the workers. Today we have a very different evaluation of the stage and tempo of the politicalization of the masses. A corresponding difference in our activity is implied.

The NC resolution talks of winning workers to us in the shop by our "superior activity." But our task as Marxists is not so much to show the workers what good union men we can be, but to

break them from trade unionism. Of course, our ability as unionists is important, but our main approach to them should not be superior unionism, but Marxist politics, our program. The proper way to attract union workers to our leadership is, not to compete with the present bureaucratic leadership on its own level although that will be necessary also, but first and foremost to raise political demands, to point out on every occasion the socialist political lessons to be drawn from their experiences, the socialist generalizations that they must make about their problems if they are to rise above the trade union level. The workers do not keep on voting for Roosevelt or the Republicans because they are not sufficiently class conscious or union conscious, or even because they do not engage in trade union political struggles against the government, but because they do not generalize their union experience into what Lenin in "What Is To Be Done" calls Social Democratic consciousness. We cannot break them from the hold of the bourgeois political parties until we break them from trade unionism; the two processes are almost identical.

Our party unionists tend to function too much on the basis of "superior activity" and not enough on the basis of our superior socialist ideas. A revolutionist should seek, not to occupy himself primarily with the "drab daily struggles" of the union, but to function as much as possible in the way that only a Marxist can function. Where, during the war, were the shop papers, e.g., a "Brewster Socialist" or a "Sperry Spark"? Why is it possible for Reuther to put forward our transitional demands without any cry of "Trotskyist"? Reuther does not understand the new UAW program in the same way that we do; he limits the struggle to the trade union level, but we will not be able to make our interpretation of the program effective if we limit our agitation to: "Why doesn't Reuther do something with these slogans?" We must explain to the workers, not what they know already, i.e. the union struggle, but the general class struggle and the role of the bourgeois government. We must use Reuther's own slogans as starting points in our agitation and propaganda.

The party has been subordinating the question of finding or creating movements to being in the proper class milieu; it puts "where we are" ahead of "how we are going to accomplish our aim"; it puts class considerations of arena ahead of political considerations of arena. The party's activist tactics flow from our historical perspective instead of our specific political strategy and analysis.

At this point the argument is certain to be raised: "But you are denying the whole Marxist conception of the historic role of the proletariat. You want to forget class lines and just run thither and yon with our program; those are petty-bourgeois political methods."

Two points must be made clear. First, what is involved is not at all the conception of the proletariat as the class leadership of the socialist revolution, which is not raised or questioned in any way, but the question of approaching this histori-

cally decisive class. We are discussing how best to get this class to assume leadership, how best to get the masses into motion. It is understood, we repeat, that the heterogeneous masses cannot think of winning power, or of entering the period of decisive revolutionary show-down, unless the working class marches at the head; (and, we add for the benefit of some of the Johnsonites, even the masses in motion under the leadership of the working class cannot make a successful revolution if they are not led by the Marxist party.) Thus, if the masses are in motion under the leadership of the proletariat, the task of a party which is lagging behind its historic responsibilities in size and influence is, perhaps, to take some such running dive into the working class organizations as we took into the unions, and try to paddle back to the party's program from there - but we are not at such a stage of development. Our task today more closely resembles that described by Lenin in "What Is To Be Done?":

"The economic struggle merely brings the workers "up against" questions concerning the attitude of the government towards the working class. Consequently, however much we may try to "give to the economic struggle itself a political character" we shall never be able to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the degree of Social Democratic consciousness) by confining ourselves to the economic struggle, for the limits of this task are too narrow... (it is impossible) to develop the class political consciousness of the workers from within...

...The reply to the question: What must be done in order that the workers may acquire political knowledge cannot be merely the one which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers.. usually content themselves with, i.e., "go among the workers". To bring political knowledge to the workers the Social Democrats must go among all classes of the population, must despatch units of their army in all directions."

The party is fond of repeating: "Fifty worker members in a mass union are worth more than 1500 members in a petty-bourgeois organization." This is true (a) in a revolutionary crisis, and (b) historically in the sense that workers have vastly more "social weight" than petty-bourgeois. But only Johnson talks seriously of American soviets in two years. Today, it is necessary to work in political arenas both within and outside of the unions; we will enter the pre-revolutionary period with only the "key 50 worker-members" if we do not change our tactics. It is not yet a question of static comparison of a petty-bourgeois organization to a union, but of how to get to lead both.

The second point that must be made in answer to the above argument is this: It may be that there are no good arenas outside the unions, that the party can find no comparably fruitful fields of work (not because it hasn't looked, which is the present reason, but really because of the objective situation.). The party's analysis indicates that there must be fruitful arenas on the contemporary American scene. If that analysis is wrong then it may be that the perspective of "everyone into the

factories" summarizes nearly all we can do at present. Even in that case, however, the basic criticism expressed in this article holds true: we will still have to politicalize our party work instead of making trade union fractions take the place of the party.

The Problem of "Inadequate Forces"

The Minority organizational resolution presented to the 1940 (split) convention and reprinted in the March 1946NI, accused the Cannonite leadership of attributing all the failures and shortcomings of the party to the "objective situation". The same resolution, although it called for a union drive, also said "The Transitional Program...has been put into effect spasmodically or not at all. The taking of bold steps calculated to speed the party's intervention in political events is frowned upon...The idea of facing toward the unions and the factories can become... meaningless without a party activity which would realistically make possible contact with and success in those fields. Party activity in the trade unions means not so much the elaboration of grandiose "trade union policies"...but the popularization of our...slogans...This means the revival and extension of the campaign principle of party activity...distribution on a large scale of... cheap pamphlets each confined to a single slogan...This is especially true of the work among the Negroes as a group...The activity of the Negro department has already shown how fruitful this work can be...An attitude of alertness and boldness, of seizing on appropriate occasions, can often make such mass actions possible and fruitful." There is none of this spirit or intent in the 1946 resolution.

The present leadership prefers "inadequate forces" as an explanation. The weakness of all such explanations is that they are derived, not from an over-all analysis of the situation but only from a single part held up for attention arbitrarily. The Cannonites were able to point out certain difficulties, even unforeseen difficulties, in the objective situation. The Stalinists are always able to point out that certain things have changed ("Times have changed") when their line does one of its periodic reverse-spins. In the same sense it is possible to point out that we would not have the same shortcomings if our forces were adequate. But it is an excuse.

Significantly enough, the excuse of inadequate forces is never accompanied by a plan of how we should apportion them (the NC organizational resolution points only to the factories), nor by a hint as to what we would do if we had more adequate forces, nor and this is the most important, an analysis of why we haven't developed greater forces in our years of existence or of why we haven't developed more of our old members into people capable of exercising leadership. Every convention we pass a resolution in which we declare the wonderful prospects for wholesale recruitment and real growth. The single fact that the next convention and its resolution does not deal with the "prospects" outlined the time before is eloquent enough answer. We have gotten out of the habit of re-reading the documents of the preceding convention.

Does anyone seriously think in his private soul that the party would be a factor in American politics today if the draft had touched us more lightly? Or that our isolation today is primarily a consequence of our having entered the wrong factories at the beginning of the war? Those members who can answer "Yes" without mental reservations are in for an awful let-down when the coming period finds us functioning in no important respect differently from the war period, and with the same sporadic, microscopic success. (Those who object to the adjective "microscopic" had better wake up: it is not by comparison with the SWP that history will judge us, but by comparison with the political opportunities and necessities.)

The final blow to the "inadequate" theory is that where we do or did have sufficient forces our gains have all too often been disappointing and conversely many of our most significant strides have been taken in situations which involved an unimpressive number of members. The outstanding example of the situation in which we had plenty of forces was New York City; after nearly five years in the unions we ran a "culminating" mayoralty campaign. The report of the City Committee passed at the last City Convention tells the sad story.

The system of Red Sundays, that is, the quota race in the LA subscription campaign is another example of how we divert the forces we have. Lacking an orientation into the political currents, the party visits the masses house by house, that is, in general. Just as we go into the unions "cold", we go to the masses before a political campaign. We try to win the workers to listen to our politics by writing of trade unions in our paper, and we try to get the masses interested in our party in a correspondingly political way. The low price of the subs and the persistence of the members usually succeeds in satisfying the arithmetical quota, but the percentage of renewals six months later always shows the superficial nature of the gains that were heralded in the organization reports and the LA "plug" column. As with the unions, we cannot locate among the masses first, and commence political work afterwards. We must enter a neighborhood politically, as part of a campaign. We cannot go among the masses and then put down roots. We must put down roots as we go (and ruin the metaphor).

The result of our trade union approach to political work is that we have come to characterize an organization by the percentage of workers, petty-bourgeois, and bourgeois members it has. We characterized our influence by the number of LA's we passed out. We characterize our membership by the number of union members. We characterize an executive committee by its percentage of proletarians. We cannot make a revolution by arithmetic. Revolutions are made by political activity. We must measure the party's roots by its political influence, which in an extreme situation might be enormous yet involve only a handful of people. (In fact, wherever we have made significant strides in trade union situations, it has always been one or two members who have exerted 9/10ths of the influence with the rest of the fraction tailing along.)

We approach the problem of recruitment in the same way. Instead of looking upon an influx of members as a consequence of effective ideological intervention in the political currents, we have converted it into a question of quotas and statistics. The yardstick a party uses is significant. Even Trotsky's yardstick has been dropped: Any member who goes into a factory and a union for six months without bringing a worker into the party should be dropped to the rank of sympathizer.

To "work among the masses" means to do political work which influences and reaches masses. "Changing the social composition" of the party is not a matter of transplanting our present membership into factories, but of pointing campaigns toward workers. The way to start is not by immersion in the unions but by exerting influence through our superior politics. The first method (acquisition of union cards) is the one for which we really do not have the forces.

The coming period, even though the drafted leaders are back, will find our leaders still making perpetual use of the theory of inadequate forces, \$15,000 and a raft of new functionaries notwithstanding. And then, like the afternoon shadow after the Kansas jackrabbit, as Cannon would say, there follows a comparison with our favorite yardstick - the SWP: "We're not doing badly. Look at the SWP. Why, if we had their forces..."

What the Party Can Learn From Its Past Successes

Mention was made above of significant gains made in situations in which our forces, as usual, were "inadequate." The Buffalo Workingmen's Welfare League grew out of the Fifth Ward Housing Project Committee. (The Fifth Ward in Buffalo includes most of the Negro section.) It was organized by two party members, neither of them active in any union. The Negroes they attracted were mostly union men, and they belonged to a union, a factory, and an industry (steel) in which we did not have a single member. A campaign was waged which included getting a Negro speaker before a mass audience attending a special meeting of the City Council. The Housing committee was changed to the Buffalo Workingmen's Party as the elections drew near, petitions were circulated and we got on the ballot, and headquarters (complete with a loudspeaker that worked) set up on the main drag right next door to Republican and Democratic Ward headquarters. Except for the last two weeks of the campaign, practically all the work was carried on by the two (white) party members and the Negroes they influenced. We were able to recruit and get subs and spread the name of our party concomitantly with our activity, which grew out of an alert and bold response to the opportunities latent in the housing scandal.

The Madison Square Garden mass demonstration in February 1939 was the most successful mobilization we ever engaged in. Its effectiveness was not limited by our forces; in all probability it would have been just as successful if we had had only one-half or one-quarter of our forces available. We were unprepared to organize or continue the anti-fascist movement we rallied and might

have launched that night. It should be noted, however, that the demonstration did not result from getting motions through union meetings, but from being "on the ball" as a political party.

The Ludlow referendum was once considered a legitimate subject for a party campaign. The campaign petered out, not because we were a small party, but mainly because we never really looked to see where we could send people to build up support for it. Through the five turbulent years of war the only positive penny pamphlet we put out (and almost the only penny pamphlet of any kind) was "For a Cost-plus Wage" - a simple union demand. No wonder we didn't rally masses to us in the unions!

Today, when we discover in New York City that maybe we have adequate forces the cry goes up to colonize. Colonization is legitimate and necessary, of course, but instead of concentrating in political work, we send people out of town, not to do political work really, but to carry our mistaken perspective to new ground.

The YPSL was not infected with unionitis. It worked in a political arena, the ASU. Its spirit, alertness, growth of influence, recruitment were very promising until it left the ASU (which was correct, but unfortunate) and tried to implement Bulletin #4 of the Youth which was based on the perspective of a pre-revolutionary period. If anyone today thinks the lessons of the YPSL are not applicable to an adult party, let him re-read the 1940 Minority organizational resolution. Incidentally, the YPSL and ASU were predominantly petty-bourgeois in composition. It may be heresy in our party to say this today, but the fact is that with young militant petty-bourgeois contacts we got a periphery and a recruitment of people with education and brains, which offers some advantages over "raw" workers. (Before the lynching bee starts - this is not to imply that we should concentrate on the pettybourgeoisie, only that we shouldn't neglect them.)

Today we have a new Youth organization which has already done encouraging anti-conscription work and anti-Jim Crow work at Brooklyn College. We will not be able to develop or use the Youth properly if we try to infect them with "unionitis".

We have been talking about the need for a Labor Party for seven years. In the absence of this arena we have been politically isolated; stewing in our own juice. In a membership meeting on the Negro question, Coolidge replied to a charge that he was neglecting the Negro organizations: "I don't forget the Negro organizations - I want to break 'em up." Properly understood this is correct, but how are we going to break them up, in Labor Action and the UAW or inside the Negro organizations themselves?

Labor Action reflects the party's isolation. Even Johnson sees that we overemphasize the negative side of the class struggle although he draws wrong conclusions. The vet column is written about the vet instead of at him. The conspiracy of silence in American newspapers about Russian atrocities and rasc slave labor, both in Eastern Europe and in Russia itself, is maintained in La-

bor Action because we tail-end the political situation instead of looking upon ourselves as active interventionists in the political currents. Similarly, we have not exploited the propaganda possibilities of the role of Stalinism in Germany, although even the bourgeois press is hopped up about it. The 8-page paper will undoubtedly show a big improvement because it will add some political weight to our top-heavy union coverage. However, the real solution to the problem of the paper lies in party activity. The Cannonites "talk themselves up" in their paper as though they were really participants in events. We will not be able to avoid doing likewise, however, until we are actually involved in the struggles of the veterans, the houseless, the unemployed, the Negroes, and the masses agitated by the prospects of another war. When our party is functioning where and how it ought to function, we will not have to worry about the content of the paper.

The party contracted unionitis as a result of several circumstances. We were not untainted with it when we "turned to the masses" after our trip through the Socialist Party. Cannon developed his clique on his "trade union show." The war necessitated a certain amount of going "underground into the mass movement", and this was decidedly deepened by our perspective of a pre-revolutionary situation. The dissolution of the YPSL lost us our least diseased wing, and the final blow was dealt by Trotsky. Trotsky's hammering at us as petty-bourgeois fixed Cannon's line for life - from then on the trade union show was the only show in which he was interested. And for us, opposition though we were, the disease became chronic also, although not so deep-seated.

Unfortunately, the infection has deepened with our continued isolation from the political arenas of our society. Already there is discernible a confusion in the minds of many party members of the distinction between trade union politics and Marxist politics. Side by side with a blurring of the distinction is a forced separation, an inability to relate the two in practice. The theoretical consequence is a theory that the politicalization of the masses arises directly as a result of their economic struggles.

The party has not developed such a theory, but Johnson has. At bottom, it is the common basis of the party's position and Johnson's that has enabled Johnsonism to arise in our midst.

The Significance of Johnsonism in Our Party

The Johnsonites share the party's unionitis, but they carry it one step further. They obliterate completely what the party only subordinates and puts to one side: the distinction between trade union politics and Marxist politics. (It is significant that the position with which Johnson has had the greatest success is on the Negro question. This is because, in spite of its chauvinism and historical bones, it does not suffer from unionitis). Unaware of this difference (except, by implication, on the Negro question) the Johnsonites do not see the role of the party in bridging the gap; they conclude, quite logically, that capitalism automatically engenders socialist consciousness in the masses. And what is more reasonable, from this point of view, than to con-

clude from capitalist decline that we must be in a revolutionary period. In this revolutionary period, which is co-extensive with capitalist decline, every time two workers throw rocks at a cop (or there is a riot in Harlem) it means that the proletariat is launched on the road to power. The imperialist (not revolutionary) defeat of the Nazis indicates that the European socialist revolution is on the order of the day; soviets are around the corner in every country, the party's task is to talk socialism.

The party does not support these heresies, but it does share with Johnson the confusion of trade union struggles with political struggles. The confusion will persist as long as the party ignores the consequences of the fact that today the trade unions are not political arenas. This does not mean that we should not send people into the unions, but it does mean that to concentrate on sending and keeping our forces in the organizations of economic struggle is to tail-end or stand aside from most of the significant political struggles of the period. Those who doubt this should read Lenin's polemics against the Economist statements: "The Social Democrats are now confronted with the task of, as far as possible, giving the economic struggle itself a political character" and "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable method of drawing the masses into active political struggle." How can the party, with its present orientation, refute such discredited ideas?

The party should ponder the similarities between the Johnsonite tendency and Cannonism. That Johnsonism can rise and spread in our party, after our struggle against Cannon, is at least a sign that we took the virus with us when we left the SWP. Our democratic ideas will not forever protect us from the demoralization that must spread in a politically isolated sect which has drowned itself in the trade union struggles. The Johnson group grows in the soil of low party morale; we may crush Johnson, but a similar tendency will spring up somewhere else. We will not be able to avoid the very type of self-hypnosis we criticize in the SWP and in Johnson's resolutions. Note the following from the introduction to the NC Resolution on the United States: "The Party proved...its distinctive ability to convey the transitional program into the specific context of the American life during the war years. With a membership deeply rooted in the factories and unions, and armed with the transitional program the party has every reason to face the period ahead with confidence in its growth and the reception of its program." Or from the NC Resolution "On the Party": "...enabled us to move so speedily, almost from the first day of our existence into broad agitational work among non-party and even non-political proletarian masses." (p. 6)

The isolation and demoralization of the party in the coming period is assured, to the extent that the formula of the NC organizational resolution is applied. To put it very crudely: our main (not our only, but our main) public activity consists in urging upon the labor movement a program of action, in telling the labor movement what it must do. (See Eber Amendment No. 11)
"Organizing the party around the systematic direction of the party

forces and supporters in the labor movement" means...a trade union party.

The Problem of Leadership In Our Party

Comrade Erber understands that the Political Committee has been living a life of its own, so to speak, apart from the rank and file party members. In his Amendment No. 14 Erber calls upon the national leaders to develop new leaders from the ranks. But he does not illuminate the question of why we have not been developing new leaders in the past.

One cannot escape the conclusion that something is wrong in a movement with such a rich history, with such an enormous historical task before it, which finds itself after ten years a tiny sect depending to an alarming degree on a single leader. This is partly a result of world historical developments, and partly a sign that the party is losing faster than it is gaining.

Our party suffers an enormous membership turnover. Not only have we lost many secondary leaders, and promising young intellectuals who might have become leaders, but we do not completely replace them. The political level of the party is dangerously low, and it is not due to the influx of large masses of raw workers.

For the past few years we have seen many people leave us for "personal" reasons. Don't these people have personal problems before they come into the party? What is it that makes their personal problems more important than party loyalty? We cannot continue to take the attitude of the WCTU which inveighs only against the evils of liquor and brushes aside all considerations of what drives people to drink.

During the early period of the war we said that those who left us were yielding to bourgeois pressure. But the problem is not to establish that the ones who left were the weakest, but why we remain so small. Besides, it was to be noted that many who left, unlike the Social Democrats of 1914, did not capitulate to the bourgeoisie - they remained anti-war and close to us politically. We cannot forever bear our chests to the wind and mutter truisms about "faith in the revolution" and "petty-bourgeois soul-sickness." We cannot keep facing ourselves in the mirror instead of facing the situation.

Many of those who left us, both those with petty-bourgeois backgrounds and those who were "true-blue" proletarians, left simply because they could not find their place in an isolated sect. In a sect breaking out of isolation, it would be a different story. A political party must have room for, and make good use of, those intellectuals who cannot function well in factories. It is these elements, among others, who will furnish "adequate forces" for work in non-union political arenas.

Within the party, among those who do not leave, we see older members taking back seats, not functioning at their highest capacity. We see serious morale problems breaking out, today in Philadelphia, tomorrow in Buffalo (where there are no Johnsonites), yes-

* The whole discussion of the cadre, inclusive or exclusive, is mainly beside the point. It is a substitute for a discussion of the question of leadership. Not what it shall be called, or who shall be in it, but how to get it.

terday in New York. (See "The Political Committee and New York Leadership" in the December 1945 pre-City Convention Bulletin.)

It is nothing short of pathetic the way people with eight or ten years in the movement stand around a situation with their hands in their pockets and bleat for the PC to send or write or say the magic word. The leadership begins to take the attitude, in spite of itself, that the ranks should leave to the PC the initiation of ideas on the political question of the day. The situation is a little like that of a spoiled child; the more the mother does things for it, the more whining and helpless it gets.

That which needs to be done to correct the internal situation must be initiated by the leadership. Erber's suggestion of conscious "leader-development" is one such step. Publishing summarized minutes of PC discussions would help to cut down the gap between itself and the membership and give the members a chance to see who contributes what. The PC ought to invite attendance from time to time of comrades who have something special to contribute on some subject on the agenda of that meeting.

But these suggestions, and others along the same line, are little better than stop-gaps. Just as the weaknesses of the SWP were forced into the open by the beginning of the war, so at the end of the war our weaknesses (the resolution on organization speaks of "disintegrating tendencies") are becoming apparent. The membership told to go back into the factories is inarticulately expressing the sentiment: "What is there to make us believe that the next four years will be any more fruitful than the last four"? They feel no great prospect of our breaking out of our isolation. A \$15,000 fund and new organizers (remember Cannon's "Give me the \$10,000 and 20 organizers and I'll build the party"?) do not answer the question of how we are going to work.

The coming crisis in the party (we haven't seen anything yet) will be a consequence of our consistent neglect of opportunities to intervene in the vital political struggles going on around us. Internally we fail to train leaders, externally we lack initiative and attractiveness. Failure to hold members, failure to recruit significantly, failure to achieve lasting results in the fractions, poor morale - we can partially and temporarily escape these by following the path of the SWP and becoming a trade-union party, and for this Cannon is far better situated and travelling faster. The only other alternative, and along this path lies a decisive victory over the SWP, is to reject the NC perspectives and adopt an activist orientation of finding political roads to the masses.

Joe Leonard
Chet Marco

April 10, 1946

AMENDMENTS TO THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROPOSALS

By Roy Gould

These organizational proposals are not submitted so much as counter-proposals to the 14 points of the National Committee, but rather as amendments. The NC's proposals are good. They are in themselves evidence that the leadership of our organization is still flexible and alert to its tasks. Our leadership is not bogged down in routine, but is striving to build our party up to its historic tasks. Their experimental efforts must be pushed even more boldly in some directions, however, while in one or two of their proposals, in our opinion, they are going too far.

I. Our first proposition is that this should be an organizational convention, as well as a political one. To make it such will represent a minor revolution in itself for our party. But it is necessary and can easily be effected by a simple expedient. In arranging the agenda, put the organizational questions on before the European political questions.

Knowing the minds of our people, there is no danger of their lingering fondly over the organizational problems, whilst a juicy bit of SP-CP-CGT lies just across the ocean. But once they get their teeth into the latter, they could not be enticed away during a month long convention.

II. For similar reasons those questions concerning labor and union activities and American politics should come early on the agenda. Only after these immediate problems are cared for should the more distant and hypothetical questions reach the floor.

III. In amending the NC's Labor Action proposal, we do not question the turn from mass distribution to a self-sufficient 8-page paper, based on a stable circulation. However, it is not desirable to push this turn so sharply as the NC suggests. It would be a mistake to cut off mass distribution at certain factories and union meetings. The 8-page edition would be expensive both in newsprint and in mailing, as well as cumbersome to distribute. The Militant distributors have a difficult job. Therefore, a compromise is proposed as follows:

Enlarge Labor Action to 8 pages.

Arrange the same type of article as has been appearing, particularly the union news, on pages 1, 2, 7 and 8. Run off bundles of these outside pages for continued mass distribution at selected factories. The trade union department of the NC should aid in selecting these distribution points from the strategic view-point of the center - consulting with local branches and local concentrations.

Every branch should also receive at least a limited bundle of the 4-page edition for occasional distributions at political and union meetings.

The 8-page paper would go to mail subscribers, and as bundles

when specified. This would not prevent any branch from ordering as many of either sized edition as it is willing to pay for.

IV. One of the fairest and most successful organizational innovations of the WP was the graduated income tax, with deductions for dependents, medical expenses, etc. Not only did it raise more money more regularly during a difficult period, but it appealed to most members as a fair, scientific plan. It made them willing to pay more, on the grounds that many, if not all, of the members were sacrificing equally. Under such a system many members are willing to pay very high dues, but under any voluntary or haphazard system, this willingness disappears.

We recognize that the recently abandoned dues quotas were high - so high as to interfere with recruitment and to drive otherwise good members to seek special exemptions. The answer to this problem is not to abandon the graduated income tax principle or to complicate it beyond recognition. The answer is to maintain the old system, but with a lowered rate of assessment. Our expanding membership will make up the difference, and if this does not produce enough revenue, special campaigns may be necessary in addition to the tax.

Many members rebel at the idea of returning to special campaigns or fund drives. The tax was so much simpler and fairer. In case that special drives are necessary, the pressure should be put on those not paying their full share of dues, as well as sympathizers who respond more readily to special campaigns.

V. Our next amendment is for the purpose of implementing the re-industrialization program. Several years ago our organization recognized its petty bourgeois background and set out resolutely to lift itself by its own bootstraps and to transfer itself to the working class. The efforts made by the majority of comrades testify to their sincerity and their zeal. The state of the labor market aided this program and it was fairly successful. More recently the draft and reconversion have undone most of our industrial concentrations, though some have been salvaged.

If the original program was correct, it is also correct at the present time to send our returning service men and our young recruits into new concentrations. In fact, there is no other way to our ultimate goal.

The purpose of this proposal is to suggest a better method of effecting the reindustrialization program than the forthright directives sent out by the PC.

Our comrades returning from the services are mature. They can be reasoned with and do not require arbitrary rules to guide them into the places where they can best serve the movement and the organizations. Furthermore, many of them may not be ideally suited to factory work and may have plans for furthering the socialist movement in other directions. Their own judgments concerning mat-

ters of their personal aptitude are as valid as the opinions of the PC.

Others have sound financial reasons for wanting to get a better education at once. Many of them could be sent to trade school on their way to an industrial concentration - thus killing two birds with one stone.

A clear statement of the party line plus a reasonable amount of social pressure should be enough to orient the serious ones. Those who wish to go to college in spite of this should not be obliged to appeal their cases to the PC as if they had committed some crime. The PC can play a constructive role in this program. It will have the opportunity of personally discussing this problem with many of the returning service men.

VI. The PC can do more to re-enthuse the ranks for re-industrialization by example than it can by stern directives. That is, the PC members can to a greater extent than before take their turns in the factories too and show that we are really a workers party. They could enter into active union fractions for a period of six months or longer, depending on the individual circumstances.

The return of several service men with experience as full time functionaries at the center makes such a plan possible. In fact a similar plan (only half as thorough) was inaugurated in 1941 with very good results and was only abandoned with the manpower shortage at the center.

My plan is much more thorough-going and would be even more inspiring than the former mission to the provinces. This time those PC members who are young enough and physically able would actually participate in the struggle, not just lead from the sidelines.

For example, in the former experiment men were assigned to Chicago and to South East Missouri. The former acted as a party organizer and advisor. The latter, instead of functioning in Southeast where he should have been, stayed most of the time in St. Louis about 200 miles away, and sent others down to Southeast. He did an excellent job of organizing workers long distance, but he could have done a still better job had he been able to function directly.

We now have ample leadership and there is no reason why segments of our leadership, even the highest, should not get into the factories for a year or two, serving as examples and as an inspiration to the ranks. In fact it is an opportunity for their own continued education and for carrying their theories directly to the American workers. It is a golden opportunity to inspire our entire membership with a new enthusiasm for their task.

VII. The most important of these proposals is one designed to improve the method of electing the NC and to make the selection of our assembly as democratic as is theoretically possible. Within the framework of democratic centralism, every reasonable safeguard to the democracy should be utilized, especially if it does not

interfere with the centralism.

Hitherto our NC has been nominated by individuals or leadership groups, who are themselves chosen for this high task by virtue of the fact of their leadership on some distant and even irrelevant European political question. Thus in 1941 the plurality and the two minorities of the NC were chosen on the basis of leadership and position on the Russian question. In 1944 leadership revolved, technically at least, about the National question. (If it had to revolve about some one question, the labor party issue would have been more immediate to our problems as a vanguard of the American working class)

We recognize that our top leadership has tried not to abuse this situation. They have striven for collective leadership. They have striven to take ideological and geographical considerations into account. Their goal, no doubt, has been to approximate proportional representation for what they considered to be the minorities of the party, but they had no accurate means of registering the proportional will of the party, other than their own guesses, excepting of course on the distant theoretical problems of the European movement, mentioned above.

Under this system, the judgments and preferences of the leaders who draw up the single compromise slate of candidates may easily exclude members from the NC who would have drawn ample support from the membership to justify their inclusion. Such a result is almost inevitable. Furthermore, an unscrupulous leadership in the future could easily take advantage of this system to destroy collective leadership entirely.

The solution is not to step backward to an arbitrary geographical representation - that is, the bourgeois method of choosing "democratic" assemblies, a system which lends itself to the worst machine and minority rule. We must keep our election "at large." However, we must make sure that the membership itself decides which issues are relevant in their choice. Full collective leadership can only be guaranteed by a mathematical relationship, allowing each minority within the party its exact quota on the NC, and at the same time allowing each minority to form itself on whatever issue it may deem important.

This can be achieved precisely by electing the NC by the Hare system of proportional representation, (a) with the party membership as a whole voting or (b) with only the delegates to the convention voting. (a) would be more accurate and (b) would be easier and perhaps good enough.

RECONVERSION PROGRAM OF THE WORKERS PARTY
(Supplement to the Resolution on the American Question)

For Workers Struggle!

For Socialism!

I

1. The National 20-hour week

4 hours a day. 5 days a week

The productive capacity of the U.S.A. makes a secure, dignified and completely human life possible for all, now, today. Production during the war proved it.

The shortening of the working day is the first requirement if the worker is to develop and express himself as a truly social being.

2. Workers Control of Production

By factory committees democratically elected by rank and file workers in order:

a. To inspect the books of the capitalist class and to secure production for the use of men in place of production for capitalist profit.

b. To make the workers masters of and not the mere tools of the machine.

3. Workers Defense Guards

Only the organization of strike pickets into permanent and disciplined workers guards can defend the workers and the country against police brutality and Fascist violence and aggression.

4. A Guaranteed Minimum Annual Wage of \$5000.00 per family

Only such a wage can enable industrial and farm workers to enjoy the facilities they create.

Only a wage that rids the family of the limitation, the competition, the degradation of poverty will permit building harmonious relations between husbands, and wives, parents and children, between man and man, race and race.

5. Abolition of Jim Crow

The organized working class with the mass organizations of the Negroes must systematically wage merciless war against Jim Crow which weakens, divides and dishonors the whole class, disgraces the whole nation.

This is a fundamental necessity if Labor, Negro and White, Gentile and Jew, are to resist and overcome the common enemy, the capitalist class.

For full economic, political and social equality for Negroes and all racial and religious minorities.

II

No program can be fought for today unless organized labor leads the great masses of the people against capitalism's crime of constantly raising the cost of living.

1. Fight the Rising Cost of Living

Experience proves that this struggle must not be left in the hands of compromising, cowardly and vacillating trade union leaders. Organized action by the unions must be supplemented and supported by rank and file committees, committees of farmers, consumers, housewives, tenants and by every variety of local, regional and national mass action.

a. No Wage Cuts

An immediate federal law to establish \$40.00 a week as the minimum wage in all industries.

b. Fight Against Inflation and Black Markets

Representatives of organized labor and of the independent mass organizations of the people shall participate in conjunction with the Federal and State authorities to:

- i. establish commodity prices.
- ii. allocate and distribute scarce commodities, including housing to guarantee the minimum of essential requirements to the poorest workers and farmers, irrespective of their wage status.
- iii. mobilize the people against the black markets which live off scarcity and inequality.

c. Automatic increases in Wages to Meet any Rise in the Cost of Living

Organized labor must lead the nation in waging an immediate struggle for:

2. The Return At Once of All American Armed Forces From Abroad

3. Vocational and General Education, to any standard required, for youth, unemployed workers and ex-service men at government expense, supplementary to unemployment insurance at regular trade union rates.

III

In the world-wide struggle between capitalist barbarism and the new age of peace and plenty, the great majority of the American people passionately need a better world, a world of:

1. Planned Economy

2. Socialization of the Means of Production

3. Control and Development of Atomic Energy in the Interests of Civilian Production and Consumption.

4. The Substitution for the Standing Army of a Peoples' Militia, Indissolubly Linked up with the Factories, Farms, Mines, etc.

5. Fraternal Unity with the Workers and Farmers and Their Parties and Organizations all over the World, including Germany and Japan,
6. Freedom of the American Colonies

While missing no opportunity to struggle for this program, organized labor must demonstrate to the nation that this program can never be realized without:

An Independent Labor Party

based upon the trade unions, the rank and file committees of the workers, consumers committees, farmers committees, mass organizations of the Negroes and all other mass organizations.

This Independent Labor Party must mobilize the masses of the people to establish:

A Workers Government

which will

- a. institute the truly democratic rule of the workers and farmers and all the exploited.
- b. exercise the great power of America to help in the establishment of the World Socialist Federation, the only safeguard against capitalist barbarism and the Third World War.

Workers, establish an alliance with the farmers, the exploited middle classes, the masses of the Negroes, the ex-service men and the youth to protect the democratic liberties of the people, win them over to the program of the Workers Party, carry it through to the end, and break the resistance of the capitalist monopolists and reactionaries who seek to oppose the wishes and the will of the great majority of the American people.

The Use of the Program by the Party

The slogan of a four hour day and a five day week should be the central slogan by which the party brings to the masses:

- a. its concrete conceptions of a socialist order
- b. its immediate stop-gap for any mass unemployment.

That the workers might not immediately accept it is not an argument against the slogan. Its significance is that, not being posed merely as 20 hours a week, it allows the party propagandistically to raise all questions of capitalist production and socialist relations of production, and consumption (leisure, education, for higher productivity, emancipation and equality of women, etc.) in concrete terms, understandable to the workers.

At the same time, Section II of the Program enables propaganda to revolve around the simplest and most immediate of issues, fighting the high cost of living, the release of American soldiers, etc.

The mere reading of the program must be an education for the workers. The program aims at making concrete the workers' resentment against the bloody chaos of contemporary capitalist society and linking the struggle for immediate demands to the need and the concrete vision of a civilized life for the working class.

The program at the same time must fortify the worker against the specific capitalist propaganda of the age, the incessant hammering into the workers' mind that socialism and planned economy mean totalitarianism. For this among other reasons, the program emphasizes always the active intervention of the masses themselves, their self-activity, their self-mobilization, as the embryonic form even under capitalism of the full democracy of the working class which will in time unloose their full creative power and safeguard them against totalitarianism of any kind. Part II of the program gives the immediate concrete axis for struggle. It can be changed and supplemented as the concrete situation demands.

The program, by constantly emphasizing the activity of the workers as a social force in the process of solving social problems, makes the workers grasp the conception not only of socialism as plenty for all, tomorrow or in the distance, but of the self-mobilization of the masses today as the need and duty of the working class, leading inevitably to violent social revolution tomorrow. Thus, the working class is made to see social revolution as the inevitable end of its attempt not only to win a decent life but to substitute its own activity for the tyranny of capital and the bureaucratic leading strings of its labor lieutenants.

The program does not hide the idea of revolutionary action or seek to smuggle it in as some discovery to be made by the workers at the last moment. Addressing itself to the militant workers, it guides itself and attempts to teach the workers the truths of communism and the methods of social revolution. Not to do this is to deny our whole analysis of the epoch and to create an imaginary working class which at this stage is unable to produce sufficient workers who are able to understand from the Workers Party the harsh truths of modern society.

The party or the individual party member does not at all times under all circumstances advocate all sections or all aspects of the program in the same way. The activity of the individual party member has been, is and always will be adroit response to a concrete situation. There will be one response in the democratic UAW, another in the bureaucratic UMW, yet another in a period of quiescence, still something different in a period of sharp crisis, varying according to the strength of the Workers Party in the particular situation, and innumerable other qualifications and modifications. But in this epoch, the party press, the general propaganda, pamphlets, speeches, education, etc. set the strategic line of the party's approach to the working class and arms the individual party member in his individual approach to contacts in the

shop. The same strategic line, appearing in the press with flexibility, firmness and ingenuity, stimulates the workers to bring to the party or the individual member their observations, enquiries, and even their doubts about the policies of the Workers Party as the party of social revolution. Thus, the very sobriety and close attention to the daily business of the union, which must distinguish every party member, should form precisely the wedge by which the advanced workers who read the party press will be driven to raise with the Trotskyites the problems of the social revolution. That the worker may disagree should not unduly trouble the party activists. If the epoch is what we say it is, that disagreement will be turned to agreement in the case of increasing numbers. What is imperative is that the workers, while respecting us for our devotion and resource in our daily activity, should know what we stand for, not merely for a workers government and nationalization, but for the self-activity of the workers on the road to social revolution.

If the social revolution is not posed, the constant emphasis of the party upon the present barbarism and the coming destruction of our society by World War III, can only lead the worker to an attitude of hopelessness or a belief that these tremendous problems can be solved by parliamentary or constitutional means. In neither case does he feel impelled to join the revolutionary party. On the other hand it is the bold posing of revolutionary socialism and revolutionary action which meets the instinctive desires of the advanced worker, pierces through the shell of bourgeois ideology and pulls him toward the party.

April 8, 1946

J. R. Johnson

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THE PROGRAM OF THE MINORITY

The coming convention of the Workers Party is confronted with opposing resolutions on all the main questions facing the party.

These differences began to appear in 1941 following the first convention of the Workers Party. Although the political differences remain within the framework, aims and principles of the Fourth International, the majority tendency in the Workers Party shows a growing divergence from the theories and methods of Marxism, the traditions of Bolshevism, and the program and perspectives of the Fourth International.

Therefore, for the purposes of the convention, the minority proposes to form an organized faction because it is firmly convinced that the party line must be radically changed in order to overcome the gap which exists between the radicalization of the American masses and the growth of the Fourth International in the United States.

The Workers Party is based upon the fundamental conception of a Bolshevik Party as one in which groupings and factions have the fullest right to existence.

The minority is fully aware of its responsibilities as members of a faction. It intends to be scrupulous in its observance of them.

It is also aware of its rights and it expects from the leadership of the party, precisely because it is in the majority, a scrupulous observance of the letter and the spirit of all its rights. The minority will expect the cooperation of the party leadership in trying to minimize the inevitable frictions inherent in factional relations. An important part of this cooperation is the education by the majority against rumors or accusations, either in public or in private, that the minority intends or proposes to split the party and join the Socialist Workers Party.

The minority particularly wishes to draw the attention of the membership to the fact that it does not propose factional division in branches, branch executive committees and other organizational units of the party except in the highest policy-forming bodies.

The minority further declares that it will do its utmost to give an example of how a Bolshevik Party conducts factional struggles for the education of the party as a whole and to help convince the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International of the feasibility of unity and the sincerity of the Workers Party in this question.

Those comrades who understand and appreciate the significance of the general political line advocated by the minority should understand that it is not only their right but their highest duty to the movement to resist moral intimidation of any kind and to join the proposed faction. To follow the organizational course resulting from their political convictions constitutes not disloyalty

but loyalty to the party.

While the minority does not in any way minimize the importance and significance of its position on the Russian question, it does not consider agreement on this question a prerequisite for joining the faction. It invites those comrades to join who accept the general line of this declaration and of the minority resolutions presented to this convention.

In the light of the above, the minority submits the following program to the membership:

Program for the United States

1. For the reaffirmation of the analysis of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International that the United States, as part of world capitalism is in a pre-revolutionary period.

Against theories of American "exceptionalism."

For the transitional program which is based on the objectively pre-revolutionary situation.

Against basing a transitional program on the conjectural backwardness of the masses.

For carrying on the day-to-day tasks in the framework of the concrete, actual, i.e. revolutionary perspective.

Against the opportunism which concentrates the attention of the workers on immediate demands while posing socialism as some distant and ultimate goal.

2. For the advocacy of a Labor Party distinguished from the very beginning from a reformist labor party and inseparably linked with the revolutionary purpose of the transitional program.

Against the sectarianism which opposes the slogan of the Labor Party.

For the propagation of the concept of workers' control of production and a workers' government based on factory committees. For propaganda and agitation for rank and file trade union committees, stewards committees, etc to open the books and to control production as a step in the development toward factory committees.

Against the abstract use of slogans of nationalization, workers control of production and workers government, without linking them with concrete forms of mass action and organization.

For the propagation of the concept of workers defense guards in connection with every strike and street demonstration.

Against the concept that the propagation of workers defense guards presupposes preparation for the immediate seizure of power.

3. For the reaffirmation of the position of the Third International (First Four Congresses) and the Fourth International, that the Negro question is part of the national question.

Against the Debsian conception that there is no Negro question outside of the struggle between labor and capital.

For the recognition by the party of the immediate practical significance for the building of the party which lies in the tremendous revolutionary energy of the Negro masses.

Against any deprecation of the independent mass struggles of the Negro people. Against any program which implies breaking up the independent Negro organizations.

International Program

4. For the reaffirmation of the analysis of our epoch as being profoundly revolutionary and the analysis of the proletariat as capable and striving to take the most drastic measures to tear down capitalist society.

Against the theory of retrogression.

For the reaffirmation of the analysis of the Fourth International of our epoch as the death agony of capitalism.

Against any estimate of our epoch which poses the possibility of a world bureaucratic collectivist social order.

5. For the reaffirmation of the analysis of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International that the decay and ruin of bourgeois democracy only poses more sharply the perspectives of proletarian power.

Against all conceptions that the proletariat has been hurled back to the conditions of its birth, capable of struggling only for democratic rights.

6. For the reaffirmation of the position of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International that democratic slogans play only an incidental and episodic role. For the slogan of workers (or workers and peasants) republic. Advocacy only of a constitution based on the Soviet Power for advanced countries like France and Italy.

Against the conception that workers today can be brought into motion only by democratic slogans. Against raising the slogans of the democratic republic or "the most democratic constitution" for advanced countries like France or Italy.

7. For the reaffirmation of our traditional analysis that a revolutionary situation can exist without a mass revolutionary party.

Against the theory that the situation in Europe and elsewhere cannot be revolutionary because of the absence of a mass revolu-

tionary party.

8. For the Marxian analysis that Russia is a capitalist state, the most advanced outpost of the world-wide movement toward statification.

Against the theory that bureaucratic collectivism is a new social order.

Against the theory that Russia is a workers state and demands defense by the working class, conditional or otherwise.

9. For the concept that the Stalinist parties, outside of the U.S.S.R., are working class parties.

Against any theory that these parties are the political expression of a new class.

For critical support to the Communist Parties, outside of the U.S.S.R., whenever they oppose the bourgeoisie (e.g. France, China).

Against any policy of abstentionism towards the Stalinists.

Against Stalinism chiefly because, more than any other party today, it frustrates and betrays the desires of the masses for social revolution.

For the self-mobilization of the masses towards workers democracy as the only safeguard against the Stalinist and reformist misleaders of the proletariat and as the only solution to the economic-political contradictions of capitalist society.

Building the Party

10. For the transformation of our party, now a propaganda group, into a mass party of the working class.

For the proletarianization of the party membership.

For a paper which appears openly and obviously as an organ of revolutionary socialism and which presents "the truths of Communism and the methods of social revolution" concretely related to the class struggle.

For a paper which will address itself mainly to the militant elements of the working class.

Against any reversion to concentration on the radicalized intelligentsia.

For a paper which acts as a recruiting agent in harmony with the rhythm of the developing class struggle in the United States.

For agitation which is governed by the strategy of the transitional program of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International.

Against superficial mass agitation which attempts week in and week out to bring the whole working class into motion. Against all pretensions of a small mass party.

11. For the education of our movement in the fundamental theories, history and traditions of Marxism.

Against the dilution of our political education under the disguise of "popularization."

12. For the reaffirmation of the principle of democratic centralism based on a firm political line.

Against vacillations, irresponsible attitudes and actions of a political leadership towards the political positions which it has adopted or which are posed before the Fourth International.

For the reaffirmation of the principle of the proper relationship between the political line and the party regime.

Against the confusion of political issues by injections of disputes on regime.

Against any proposals of a "cadre" aimed at overcoming the failures and political weaknesses of the party by organizational means.

13. For the unity of the Trotskyist movement in the United States on the principle of democratic centralism.

Against the Cannonite conception of a monolithic party.

For posing the unity question in terms of the vital needs of the American proletariat and the Fourth International.

April 8, 1946

J. R. Johnson	-	N.C.	Member
F. Forrest	-	C.C.	" (N.Y.)
Ruth Phillips	-	" "	" "
Sol allen	-	" "	" (Phila.)
Irving Marnin	-	" "	" "
Martin Harvey			
Bessie Graham			
Tom Brown			
George Tobin			
Freddy Dutton			
Helen Bright			
Ria Stone			
Lea Dillon			
Carl Santen			
Ike Blake			
Artie Parks			
Dave Biller			
Mickey Bryant			