

The
COMMUNIST

JUNE



Stalin on Mastering Bolshevism	JACK STACHEL
Communists and the United Front	GEORGI DIMITROFF
The Textile Drive	EVELYN B. GORDON
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REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Right-Wing Democrats in Rebellion. What Will the President Do About It? Marking Time, Retreating, or Going Forward. Bad Advice from Wall Street. Leftward Is the Only Good Course. Smash Rights and Build Up Progressives. Possible Role of Progressive Democrats. Can They Assert Themselves? Labor and Farmer Democracy Must Step Forward. Present Situation in Congress. What Labor's Non-Partisan League Could Do? Relief and the Budget. Independent Action and Promotion of Differentiation in Democratic Party. Are We Too Busy For Political Action? Realize Decisions of March Conference of Labor's Non-Partisan League. Dimitroff on the Historic Role of the Communists. The People's Front Policy and Building the Communist Party. Tasks of the Day and Perspectives. The Struggle on the Theoretical Front.

WILL President Roosevelt go through with the program of his Madison Square Garden speech ("we have just begun to fight")? Or will he permit the Right wing of his party, in collusion with the Republicans, to sabotage that program to death?

To put this question does not mean to accept the President's program as adequate even for the moment. Labor and its allies, the forces that are moving towards a People's Front in this country, have their own program for which they should fight more independently and unitedly than is the case today. Because of these considerations, labor and its allies are vitally interested in such a course of political realignment, a process now under way, which would further consolidate and strengthen the progressive forces and weaken the reactionary forces in the ruling party of

the country—the Democratic Party. Hence the President's attitude towards the Right wing of his own party, especially the attitude of the genuine progressive elements among the Democrats, assumes increasing importance.

What the Right wing in the Democratic Party is trying to accomplish at the present time is fairly obvious. Its immediate purpose is to nullify the people's mandate of the last elections by forcing the President to fold up or curtail considerably even his own moderate interpretation of that mandate. To cut relief to the bone, preparatory to its total abolition, to abandon or vitiate all labor and farm legislation, to prevent any further checks or controls upon the monopolies, to saddle upon labor semi-fascist anti-union and anti-strike legislation, to save the Supreme Court's usurped

power, to draw the United States government into a sympathetic attitude towards the fascist war-makers abroad—these, in large, outline the immediate plans of the Right wing of the Democratic Party which are the same as of the dominant forces in the Republican Party.

For the longer run, this reactionary wing is out to recapture for itself control of the Democratic Party. It has its eyes definitely fixed on a number of important municipal elections this year, New York's mayoralty elections being one of the decisive spots; and also on the Congressional and state elections in 1938. All this, of course, as stepping stones to the presidential nomination and elections of 1940.

Garner and Byrnes, Connally and George, Byrd and Copeland, Burke and Walsh, King and Tydings—this is the Senatorial cabal of the Democratic Party that is engineering the conspiracy against the people.

What is the President planning to do to counteract the designs of the Right wing—designs which are seeking to put into effect, in collaboration with the Republicans, *the latest programs of the Manufacturers Association and of the Chambers of Commerce*? What are the progressive forces in the Democratic Party planning to do about it?

Thus far (and at this writing) the Democratic Right wing, and the reactionaries, generally, continue on the offensive and on a number of crucial issues are holding in their hands the initiative. This is seen most clearly, as already commented upon in these columns, on the fundamental question of the budget. Fundamental in this sense: just let the reactionaries have their

way on "balancing" the budget at the expense of the people, and all reforms will go to the winds; also on the Supreme Court fight, which was begun by the President, the Right-wing Democrats and their Republican associates have managed to pass over from the defensive to the offensive where they still are, unless something has happened in the last few days.

We shall see in a moment that this need not have been so at all; that the reactionaries could have been kept on the defensive right along, and on all issues, had the camp of progress, outside as well as inside the Democratic Party, especially the labor and farmer forces, pursued a more aggressive and united line appealing directly and continually to the masses of the people. *This is what has to be done now.*

The Right wing of the Democratic Party has been threatening quite openly to split the President's party should he insist upon his Supreme Court proposals and other parts of his program. And the President's "friends" from Wall Street are now trying to persuade him, gently and sweetly, to listen to the voice of moderation and "unity" and to compose his differences with the Right wing "by compromise."

The case for these friendly Wall Street Democrats has been put most convincingly by *The New York Times*. We shall have to quote from it rather copiously.

"There are sound reasons for hoping that the administration will be satisfied with the enactment of those measures on its present program which are *practicable and consistent with the Democratic platform*, and that the Supreme Court issue will not be fought out to the bitter end. Who will profit from such a controversy, protracted throughout a whole

summer of bad feeling, angry charges, resentment and recrimination? Only the most partisan and most determined opponents of the President himself and all he stands for: they would be delighted, of course, to see the Democratic Party *wreck its unity*, perhaps for years, in a bitter factional dispute." (May 16, *our emphasis—A.B.*)

It would have been good had the *Times* summarized the measures which it considers "practicable and consistent with the Democratic platform." It would then have been clear that this means the abandonment of all the proposals contained in the President's Madison Square Garden speech. It also means the withdrawal of the President's Supreme Court proposals, as is seen from the following:

"As matters stand, a knock-down fight on the Supreme Court issue holds a promise of defeat for Mr. Roosevelt, whichever way it ends. Either the President will 'win the battle and lose the war,' by dividing his own party, or, in the rejection of his plan, he will suffer an unnecessary loss of prestige. Those who value his prestige as a unifying force and who admire his capacity for brilliant leadership will wish to see this loss avoided. To close the ranks of the Democratic Party, at the price of a magnanimous withdrawal of a plan which has deeply divided it, is still the true course of statesmanship." (*Ibid.*)

The New York Times, and the Wall Street elements for whom it speaks, are fairly consistent in their political orientations. They seek to restore the old and traditional two-party system—a system in which the two major parties differed largely in that one was "in" and the other "out," a system that received a mortal blow in the last national elections. These Wall Street elements, those "friendly" to the President, are profoundly opposed to such

political realignment as helps to consolidate the class forces of the People's Front into a power strong enough to contest successfully in the not too distant future for control of the government.

Hence, the above urging for "peace and unity" in the Democratic Party, at the price of graceful capitulation to the Right wing, a "true course of statesmanship." We do not know the orientations and perspectives of the President. But we do know that the acceptance of the proposals of the *Times* means capitulation to the Democratic Right wing and an effort to restore the old and discredited two-party system.

From this it does not follow that the President's *present* course is tenable. The fact is that that course has about played itself out. It no longer keeps the Right wing of the Democratic Party in submission while it very effectively demoralizes the progressive and near-progressive elements in that party. In other words, the President's old course is no longer able to carry forward his own very moderate and inadequate program, the program of his Madison Square Garden speech.

Even from the point of view of carrying forward the President's own program, *a change of his present course is called for*. This cannot be in the direction of *The New York Times*, for that means abandoning his program. It therefore must be in the direction of the progressive forces in his own party as well as outside. A change to the Left.

Washington rumor has it, on the authority of an unnamed Democratic Senator,

"... that the President would not be averse to a realignment of the party to take in certain liberal and progressive groups. I do not believe he would hesitate to force the court bill or a modified version of it through Congress even if that meant a permanent party split, as I believe likely." (*World Telegram*, May 15.)

Events of the next week or two will show how much substance there is to this assertion that the President would not be averse to a Leftward shift in his party and policies. But whatever the truth of the President's intentions, a shift to the Left is the only course open to him if he really means to carry forward his own declared program. Else, he must go backward, or, standing still—be defeated.

* * *

SPLITS from the Democratic Party seem almost inevitable. The Al Smith and John W. Davis wing is still in the Democratic Party and is now making a desperate effort to stage a comeback to national leadership especially through the forthcoming municipal elections in New York. The Southern reactionaries of the Democratic Party have a powerful hold upon the Congressional machinery and are now on the war-path against Roosevelt's policies and his leadership in the party. True, these two centers of reaction in the ruling party are not united by far, and will find great difficulty in achieving unification. But if Roosevelt does not shift to the Left, these two camps of reaction (even though they march separately) may do a good deal of damage to his leadership and policies because they are hitting at the same objective, and are supported by powerful monopolies.

Regardless of the outcome of the fight of the reactionaries, they will split the Democratic Party just the same. Should they succeed in their major objectives (which is not very likely), they will make it impossible for the progressive elements to remain in the Democratic Party: they will force these elements out just as the dominating Republican elements have forced *their* progressives out. On the other hand, should the Right-wing Democrats fail in their major objectives, they will split away themselves. They will for a period of time remain nominally in the party, to gather their forces, to undermine the President's, to sabotage his program, all the time conspiring together with the Republicans. Then, at a crucial moment, on the eve of the national elections either of 1938 or 1940 (depending upon the tempo of development), they will split formally and join with the Republicans to defeat the Democratic Party.

For the progressives in the Democratic Party, and for the President who still seeks to stand between the latter and the Right wing as a "unifier" of both, the question is not one of avoiding a split of the Right wing. That cannot be avoided because the Rights will not agree except on their own terms. It has to be accepted right now as a starting point for all discussions on the political perspectives that the Rights will split, either by going away themselves or by squeezing out the progressives. Therefore, the real question is one of *isolating* the Rights within the Democratic Party and among the masses, of *displacing* them from all positions of power in the party and in the government, of *rendering* them im-

potent to block labor, farmer and progressive legislation.

Whether President Roosevelt can or will embark upon such a course remains to be seen. But it is absolutely certain that, were he to embark upon this progressive course, he would be fully successful *because the relationship of class forces in and around the Democratic Party, and especially in the country at large, is fully favorable and mature for such a course.*

The labor and farmer democracy of the country, which made possible Roosevelt's victory last November, and which is moving the historic political realignment now in process, is growing and is becoming more conscious day by day. It is more of a power today than it was in November. Besides, and most important, the working class factor in this camp of democracy is growing in organized strength, economically and politically. The C.I.O. unions in the basic industries are growing, the progressives in the American Federation of Labor are consolidating, Labor's Non-Partisan League has adopted a platform (March 8) whose realization will make labor a leading factor in the political life of the country.

The great and substantial social group of white-collar workers is being unionized and, with the extension of C.I.O. activities among them, will soon find itself organized with labor in one big movement, serving as an important bridge for labor to the middle classes of the cities. Independent economic and political organization among the toiling farmers is lagging. And this needs to be overcome. But here too the decision of Labor's

Non-Partisan League to collaborate with the farmers for progressive legislation, when *translated into action*, is bound to accelerate most powerfully the rallying of the toiling farmers to the progressive camp. The Negro people are leaning very definitely towards this camp, seeing in the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League a valuable ally. The women of the country are still sadly neglected by the progressive camp. But is there any doubt that this field is fully ripe for significant achievements, organizationally and politically? As to the youth, its urge towards the progressive camp is becoming more pronounced every day. No one can doubt that.

And these are the American people. A social and political bloc of these class forces—the forces of the People's Front—would administer to the Rights in the Democratic Party, and to reaction generally, a much more thorough and lasting defeat than they suffered last November. It would open the way for a true People's Front government in the United States. It would bring into existence the powerful party of labor, farmers and progressives to back and support such a government.

President Roosevelt can choose to lean upon these class forces more definitely and more openly and in this way defeat the Rights in the Democratic Party and drive forward *successfully* for the realization of his own program. True, these forces will not and cannot (their social position won't allow them) rest satisfied with this program as the limit. They will necessarily, especially labor and its allies, go much beyond that and to their final and complete liberation. Should the Presi-

dent dislike this perspective, what other alternative has he got if he means to fight on for his program? As we said before, he can stand still and be defeated, or, he can move backward and be taken into camp by the Rights. In either case, defeat of his declared program and abandonment of his pledge to fight for it ("we have just begun to fight").

It is true that from the point of view of *immediate* steps, especially in Congress, attention has to be paid to the fact that most of the strategic positions in Congress (chairmanships of committees, etc.), are in the hands of Right-wing Democrats who are opposed to the President's program; that substantial groups of members of both Houses are, mildly speaking, not very enthusiastic about this program. This certainly presents various tactical and technical problems for the administration with which we need not concern ourselves here. But what are the broad problems of policy and political strategy that arise from this situation? With these we must concern ourselves here.

The problems are as stated above: an appeal to the people, to the masses, against the sabotage and treachery of the Right wing; a systematic political campaign to isolate these Rights in the country as well as in the Democratic Party; a constructive policy of bringing forth prominently the progressive elements in the Democratic Party, paving the way for them to assume positions of influence; all necessary measures to defeat the Rights before the people in forthcoming elections. If the President chooses to shift to the Left, for the sake of his own program, this, it would seem, has to be

his orientation. It can be nothing else.

By way of example, one can point to the South. Southern Democratic reactionaries dominate the Congressional machinery. But do these people speak for the South? Yes, for the dying and disappearing but *not* for the young and growing South of white and Negro. While this young and growing progressive South of white and Negro labor, toiling farmers and middle classes, has as yet no representation in Congress that would speak for it *fully and completely*, still there are Congressmen and Senators that come pretty close to expressing its point of view on one or another issue. We need only mention Congressman Maury Maverick of Texas or Senator Black of Alabama. The point is for the administration to base itself upon *these* spokesmen of the South because it cannot base itself any more (if it ever could) upon the Garners and Burkes. That is, if it means to fight for its own program.

* * *

PROGRESSIVES in the Democratic Party are confronted at present with the urgent and inescapable task of *asserting themselves*. They cannot afford to continue in the present attitude of waiting most of the time for a Presidential lead and initiative. Party discipline, no doubt, imposes upon them certain formal obligations. Yet within these very obligations the progressives in the Democratic Party have considerable leeway of displaying more initiative and political independence than has been the case in this session of Congress.

It is, of course, true that the progressive Democrats do make themselves

felt and heard every now and then, that they do exert an influence upon the administration favorable to the toiling masses, whenever these progressives try to do so. The trouble is that they do not try often enough and not always in the most effective way. Surely, at the present turn of political affairs, with the Right wing of the Democratic Party on the war-path and with the President still marking time (at this writing), it devolves upon the progressive Democrats, inside Congress and out, to display real initiative and activity in the matter of Farmer-Labor and progressive legislation and in the general cause of combating the offensive of reaction.

Two things are especially necessary to make the progressive Democrats truly effective in the country, in Congress as well as in their own party. One is a clearer and more definite progressive line—a line that is more in accord with the demands and aspirations of labor, the toiling farmers and the middle classes; the other is reliance upon these forces for support and political collaboration with them.

Why, for example, do these progressive Democrats appeal so rarely to the people, and to their own constituents, to mobilize them against the Right wing and to rally organized mass support for their own measures? It is done occasionally and with good effect. But in the present situation, this has to become a regular practice, a policy, a political method.

Why, for example, do we see so little effort on the part of the progressive Democrats to establish systematic political collaboration with the organized progressive movements of the workers,

the toiling farmers, the Negro people, the youth?

The answer probably is: lack of realization that this is the thing that has to be done to combat successfully the Right wing. This—and lack of initiative. Too much dependence upon Presidential leads.

There is also another side to the question, perhaps more important. It is the fact that the organized political movements of the workers and farmers are themselves doing very little to promote and encourage and support the initiative of progressive Democrats. We have in mind Labor's Non-Partisan League, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the Wisconsin Farmer-Labor-Progressive Federation, the Commonwealth Federation of Washington, the Farmers Union, the Holiday Association and last but not least the Farmer-Labor-progressive bloc in Congress.

Here, again, one could point to many examples where these Farmer-Labor forces did support and encourage the initiative of progressive Democrats. And such collaboration was universally productive of good results. But it was too sporadic and occasional to answer the needs of the situation. What is necessary is that this should become a regular practice, a system, a political method.

But this is not all. What is also necessary is *better organization and more independent political activities by the organized movements of the workers and farmers*. There is no better way of promoting and encouraging the initiative of the progressive Democrats as well as of the (nominally) Republican progressives than for organized

labor and its allies *themselves* to engage in systematic independent political action. This is a political axiom which has to be brought home to the progressive labor and farmer movements.

In the first instance, to Labor's Non-Partisan League. Following its national conference in March, which adopted a political platform and program of organization, the basis has been laid for a successful political advance by labor and for effective collaboration with labor's allies. These were most important decisions. One is tempted to say—historic. But these decisions *still have to be realized*.

Labor's Non-Partisan League pledged itself to work for labor, farmer and progressive legislation and to collaborate with the farmers and other progressive forces towards these ends. A great pledge. More than two months have passed since that decision was made and yet Labor's Non-Partisan League is still very little in the picture of struggle for labor and progressive legislation. That is, with one major exception: the Supreme Court issue, and to this we shall come in a moment.

What is the matter? Here is a big fight in progress on the question of the budget, relief, "economy," involving everything of vital concern to labor. Let the Republicans and the Right-wing Democrats succeed in their designs to balance the budget at the expense of the people and nothing will be done in the vital matter of relief, farm legislation for the toilers of the farm, housing, education, youth, etc. Yet Labor's Non-Partisan League does not seem to be concerned about it.

Take just one phase of this fight: the relief appropriations for the next fiscal year. Roosevelt proposed \$1,500,000,000 which is totally inadequate. The Right-wing Democrats are trying to whittle it down to one billion which would be a disaster. The Republicans are supporting the Right-wing Democrats while at the same time setting out to abolish federal relief altogether, a la Hoover. All the forces of reaction in the country, the whole Liberty League crowd, are mobilized behind the schemes of the Right-wing Democrats and the Republicans. Clearly, a fight of first-rate importance for labor.

On the other hand, there is the program of the Workers Alliance calling for an appropriation of \$4,000,000,000—three billion for the W.P.A. and one billion for direct relief. This program is incorporated in the Boileau Bill (H.R. 5822). There is also the Maverick-Voorhis Bill calling for \$2,500,000,000. Many mass organizations of workers, farmers and middle classes have endorsed one or the other of these bills. Large demonstrations are being organized by the Workers Alliance throughout the country in support of the Boileau measure. A vital struggle of great consequence to labor and its allies.

But where is Labor's Non-Partisan League? It surely is not indifferent to it. It cannot be indifferent to the fate of 10,000,000 unemployed and their families. It cannot be indifferent to the big political implications of this fight, to its effect upon the political realignment in the country. Then why this silence and passivity?

Is the Manufacturers Association silent? Is the Chambers of Commerce

silent? No, far from it. They are quite vocal and are backing to the limit the activities of the Right-wing Democrats and of the Republicans. Why, organized capital is the chief inspirer of the budget-balancers and relief-cutters. Should Labor's Non-Partisan League be less active and politically alert? Should labor's political mass weapon be less devoted to the interests of its class than the organizations of capital are to their class? Impossible!

We don't have to be told that the chief leaders of Labor's Non-Partisan League are not wasting their time in idleness, that they are engaged in the greatest union organization drive that this country has ever seen, and that this union organization is basic and fundamental to the economic, political and social advance of labor. Certainly, we know that; we have been working towards precisely such an upsurge for decades, and are doing now our utmost to promote the unionization of labor and the growth of the progressive trade union movement. But we cannot accept as serious the attitude which says: "We are too busy organizing unions, so we cannot be active politically." This is childish. Labor's Non-Partisan League has itself made known several times its conviction that economics and politics are inseparable, that both must go hand in hand at the same time.

Now, see the difference it would make to the political picture of the moment if Labor's Non-Partisan League were to step into the situation, into the fight for adequate relief to the unemployed workers and starving farmers, into the fight for a people's budget. Organized labor would be mobilized in full force to back the pro-

gressive measures in Congress. The toiling farmers and middle classes would follow this lead. This would at once change the relation of forces in Congress itself. The progressive Democrats would be encouraged to show more initiative. They would collaborate with the Farmer-Labor progressive bloc. The resulting force in Congress would almost certainly be strong enough to beat back the attacks of the Right Democrats and their Republican allies and to force through progressive measures on relief and on the budget in general.

For the longer run, such political activity by Labor's Non-Partisan League would promote powerfully the political realignment, strengthening the independent political power of the working class, drawing into action its allies, and encouraging the initiative and work of the progressive Democrats. And this longer run is not so long. It is the municipal elections of 1937 and the Congressional elections of 1938. And even 1940 is not so far off. The time element is very important in the trade union drive. It is *equally* important on the political field.

Yes, Labor's Non-Partisan League has displayed considerable activity in support of the President's Supreme Court proposals. That was of great importance. But here too the scope of mass mobilization was hardly commensurate either with the needs or with the great possibilities at the command of the League. In plainer language, much more could be done, and can still be done, to mobilize active support for the President's proposals and *for the curbing of the Supreme Court's usurped powers*. The more

deeply the masses are convinced of the need of curbing these powers, the more readily and widely will they support the partial measures of the President.

Then, the question of organization. The March conference of Labor's Non-Partisan League decided to organize branches of the League in every county where large numbers of workers reside and work. We greeted this decision as of far-reaching importance insisting at the same time that the organization be built on the principles of democracy. Two months' have passed and little has been accomplished along these lines. That has serious consequences. Little organization means little political action. Insufficient political action means insufficient struggle for labor and progressive legislation. It means little effective work for the promotion of the political realignment in the direction favorable to labor and its allies, in the direction of the People's Front, in the direction of the Farmer-Labor Party. The reactionaries are making use of this weakness.

We therefore stress once again: *Realize the decisions of the March conference of Labor's Non-Partisan League.* Organize the independent political activities of the workers and farmers. Collaborate systematically with the progressive forces in the Democratic Party as well as with the progressive Republicans. Stimulate and encourage the consolidation of the progressive camp and raise the initiative and activity of the working class within it. This has been necessary right along. It has become mandatory today in the face of the offensive of the reactionaries and of the approaching elections.

REVIEWING the present world situation, the struggle for work class unity and for the People's Front, Comrade Dimitroff concludes as follows:

"It follows, therefore, that in order to achieve success in the struggle for working class unity, for the united People's Front, it is necessary to work day in and day out and untiringly to strengthen and consolidate the ranks of the Communist Party and of the entire Communist International. This is dictated by the vital interests both of the international proletariat and of the whole of advanced and progressive mankind." (See article in current issue—p. 516—*Ed.*)

These thoughts have to be impressed very deeply upon all Communists as well as upon the labor movement in general. But for the moment, first of all upon the Communists, the membership of our Party.

All too often, and in the rush of daily mass struggle, Party members are apt to lose sight of *the historic role of the Communists* in the mass movements of the working class and its allies. With the result that the propaganda of Marxism suffers, the theoretical level of the leading cadres of the labor movement is not rising to catch up with the growing perplexity of tasks, recruiting of new members into the Communist Party is lagging, winning of broad circulation for the Party press is not attended to properly—in short, Party building is seriously neglected. And, as Comrade Dimitroff says, when Party building is neglected, the struggle for working class unity and for the People's Front also suffers.

Very appropriately, Comrade Dimitroff quotes from the *Communist Manifesto* on the historic role of the Communists in the ranks of the proletariat. And on the basis of Marx and

Engels, he defines more concretely the role of the Communists in the present world situation.

He speaks of the role of the Communists as that of a *uniting link* in the ranks of the proletariat itself as well as in the camp of the People's Front. That should be well understood. The Communists, and they alone, can best play that part because they can see best the interests of the working class as a *whole*, because they can see best "the further perspectives and aims of the working class struggle." They can see this best because they are Marxists, because they take as their guide to action the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Every thoughtful member of the working class and conscious participant in the class struggle can see from his own experience that this is so. Communists have been working for industrial unionism, for independent political action and for a progressive labor movement *for nearly 20 years*. They worked and suffered for these aims when the labor movement as a whole was deeply saturated with craft union prejudices, with bourgeois conceptions of politics, demoralized by reactionary leaders. Why was this so? Because the Communists understand what was needed for the working class as a whole, because they foresaw and foretold the "further perspectives" of the working class struggles.

Communists are "true sons of their class and defenders of the interests of their people." (Dimitroff.) They fight for everything in the interests of their class and of their people. They are, in other words, fighting for the same things that the class as a whole fight for.

Yet the Communists are more than that. They are always the *most consistent* fighters for those things that all workers are fighting for. Why? Because they are "free from all links with and dependence on the bourgeoisie," because they are "thoroughly consistent internationalists," because they aim furthest—to socialism, they see furthest by means of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Today, the American working class as a whole is entering independently the arena of class struggle and is taking the lead of the other democratic and progressive forces. This we have foreseen and struggled for. And together with our class we are engaged in the struggle today. Yet we do more than that: we point to the perspectives of the struggles of the day, to the People's Front and Farmer-Labor Party; we point to the role which the People's Front can play as a transition to the socialist revolution; we display ourselves and encourage others to display more consistency in the realization of the common tasks of the moment *thus enabling the movement as a whole to reach its next and higher stage*; we help to eliminate and resolve into unity the various sectional and craft contradictions and prejudices within the labor movement as well as within the camp of the People's Front.

Very effectively, Dimitroff says:

"When we carry on a resolute struggle for the defense of democratic rights and liberties, against reaction and fascism, *we do so as Marxists, as consistent proletarian revolutionaries*, and not as bourgeois democrats or reformists. Where we come forward in defense of the national interests of our own people, in defense of their independence and liberty, we do not become nationalists or bourgeois patriots; we do as proletarian revolutionaries

and true sons of our people. When we come forward in defense of religious freedom, against the fascist persecution of believers, we do not retreat from our Marxian outlook which is free of all religious superstitions."

Communists in the mass movements are Marxists and consistent proletarian revolutionists. They fight together with their class for all its needs and demands, for the needs of its allies; they are the most devoted constructive workers in the building up of the power of their class and its allies. And much more than that. They propagate Marxism widely, they enlighten the masses on the class nature of their struggles, urging consistency in the prosecution of the daily tasks, showing the perspectives and preparing for the next step. They win converts to Communism, to the Party's independent line; they recruit members systematically, win readers for the Party's press and *build the Party* "day in day out and untiringly." They build the Party "numerically, organizationally and ideologically." They seek to win "the confidence and support of the best and foremost elements of the working class and of the working people generally."

That is what Party members do when they fulfil "*the historical role of the Communists in the ranks of the international proletariat.*"

Engels used to stress the point, especially in connection with the theoretical lag of the American labor movement, that the working class is strongest where it engages in the class struggle on three fronts: the economical, political and theoretical. We should stress that point here especially now. The American working class used to display exceptional militancy on the economic

front but sadly lagged on the political and totally neglected the theoretical front. Today, the American working class is entering the political as well as economic front linking the two together and steadily eliminating the political lag. But the theoretical neglect is still acute and is becoming more so every day. As Dimitroff observes:

"It must not be forgotten that the further the People's Front movement develops and the more complicated the tactical problems of the movement, the more necessary does it become to make a genuine Marxian analysis of the situations and of the relation of the opposing forces, the more necessary does it become to retain the reliable compass of Marxian-Leninist theory." (*Ibid.*, p. 515.)

We must train our own Party in this theory as its guide to action. We must bring that theory to the leading forces of the working class movement, to the thousands of young and capable working class leaders in the progressive labor movement, to those who have made possible the historic advance of the C.I.O. and of Labor's Non-Partisan League. Educational work in the unions, especially those under progressive leadership, is assuming truly grand proportions. This shows the widespread urge to knowledge and theory. This urge we must help to meet with the theory of Marxism-Leninism.

Putting the task of the Communists in a nutshell, Dimitroff says:

"Correctly to combine the operation of the policy of the People's Front with the propaganda of Marxism, with the raising of the theoretical level of the cadres of the working class movement, with the mastery of the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as a guide to action—all this we must learn and teach our cadres and the masses day after day." (*Ibid.*)

A. B.

STALIN ON MASTERING BOLSHEVISM

BY JACK STACHEL

WHenever Comrade Stalin makes a report it is of the greatest significance not only to the Soviet Party and the masses in the Soviet Union, but to all the Parties of the Communist International, and to all the toilers of the world. The report of Comrade Stalin to the recent meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *Mastering Bolshevism*, is of the greatest significance and of tremendous importance to our Party and to the American masses.

Comrade Stalin made his report in connection with the counter-revolutionary activities of the Trotskyites and the smashing blow they received in the Soviet Union. He opened his report by analyzing the causes which made possible their counter-revolutionary activity, how they wormed their way into high places of government, into institutions of the Soviet Union and the Party, carrying on their activity over a period of time, how they were detected and rooted out. It is important to note in connection with the "carelessness" discussed by Comrade Stalin that six years ago, in a famous letter entitled "Some Questions Regarding the History of Bolshevism," written in 1931 and addressed to the editors of the magazine *Proletarskaya*

Revolutsia Comrade Stalin warned the Party:

"Some Bolsheviks think that Trotskyism is a faction of Communism, which has made mistakes, it is true, which has done many foolish things, which has sometimes even been anti-Soviet, but which is, nevertheless, a faction of Communism. Hence, a certain liberalism in dealing with Trotskyites and people who think like Trotsky. It is scarcely necessary to prove that such a view of Trotskyism is profoundly wrong and pernicious. As a matter of fact, Trotskyism has long since ceased to be a faction of Communism. As a matter of fact, Trotskyism is the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, which is carrying on their struggle against the Communists, against the Soviet government, against the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

"Who gave the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie its intellectual weapon against Bolshevism, in the form of the thesis of the impossibility of building socialism in our country, in the form of the thesis of the inevitability of the degeneration of the Bolsheviks, etc.? That weapon was given it by Trotskyism. The fact that all anti-Soviet groups in the U.S.S.R. in their attempts to give grounds for their arguments for the inevitability of the struggle against the Soviet government referred to the well-known thesis of Trotskyism of the impossibility of building socialism in our country, of the inevitable degeneration of the Soviet government, of the probability of the return to capitalism, cannot be regarded as an accident.

"Who gave the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the U.S.S.R. its tactical weapon in the form of attempts at open attacks on the Soviet government? This weapon was given to

it by the Trotskyists, who tried to organize anti-Soviet demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad on November 7, 1927. It is a fact that the anti-Soviet actions of the Trotskyists raised the spirits of the bourgeoisie and let loose the work of counter-revolutionary sabotage of the bourgeois specialists.

"Who gave the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie an organizational weapon in the form of attempts at organizing underground anti-Soviet organizations? This weapon was given to it by the Trotskyists, who founded their own anti-Bolshevik illegal group. It is a fact that the underground anti-Soviet work of the Trotskyists facilitated the organized formation of the anti-Soviet group within the U.S.S.R.

"Trotskyism is the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

"That is why liberalism towards Trotskyism, even if it is shattered and concealed, is stupidity bordering on crime, bordering on treason to the working class.

"That is why the attempts of certain 'litterateurs' and 'historians' to smuggle the disguised Trotskyist rubbish into our literature must encounter determined resistance from the Bolsheviks.

"That is why we cannot admit a literary discussion with these Trotskyist smugglers."

From this we can see that Comrade Stalin with his great knowledge, vision and experience already saw in 1931 the whole course which Trotskyism had traveled, and characterized it as counter-revolutionary and as the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, Comrade Stalin points out in his report that it was necessary in January, 1935, and subsequently for the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party to call these problems to the attention of the entire membership and to Party organizations. Why was it possible, he asks, for the Trotskyites to carry on wrecking, assassination, sabotage, anti-Soviet war plots with fascist governments for

such a long time before they were detected?

In this connection, the bourgeois press and a large section of the Social-Democratic press throughout the world attempted to make capital out of the struggle that was conducted against these Trotskyites, fearful of the fact that the Trotskyites were caught and unmasked as never before. They spoke of something being fundamentally "wrong" with Bolshevism. They tried to make the masses believe that at bottom the cause of this must be the economic collapse of the Soviet Union. Of course, they could hardly convince even themselves. It is true, however, that in the discussion which we have had, we had to answer the questions of many workers, honest and sincere, who were bitter against the Trotskyites, but who asked, how was it that the Party was so tolerant of the Trotskyites; how was it that they were allowed to do so much damage before they were discovered? And certainly the answer which Comrade Stalin gives furnishes us with a tremendous and powerful weapon to smash all the slanders and arguments of our enemies who try to make capital out of the cleanup of these counter-revolutionary renegade traitors.

Comrade Stalin proves, first, the soundness of the Bolshevik Party; and, second, he proves that far from economic difficulties it was economic successes, it was precisely the successes in the construction of socialism which unfortunately created some political carelessness that led to an underestimation of the damage which these remnants of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie could do within the bor-

ders of the Soviet Union by becoming the agents of fascist governments.

What was the source of this political carelessness which made it possible for these people to carry on their activity for so long a time?

First, Comrade Stalin points out the tendency among many Party comrades in the Soviet Union and Party organizations to forget that socialism has triumphed thus far only on one-sixth of the globe. The Soviet Union is surrounded by capitalist countries which are ever organizing against the Soviet Union, which send in their agents, their provocateurs, and which with the assistance of the Trotskyites who mask their views, who carry Party cards in their pockets, were able to do much damage to the cause of socialism. In this connection, particularly important, he points out, is the fact that the Party did not remember sufficiently the role of the present-day Trotskyites, which, of course, was already clear from the brilliant analysis made by Comrade Stalin way back in 1931—a characterization of Trotskyism as no longer a tendency within the working class, because it did not have a program with which to come before the masses. Naturally, the Trotskyites did not wish to come to the Soviet masses with their counter-revolutionary program, a program which called for the restoration of capitalism. I remember when I spoke on Trotskyism in New York, one of the workers asked me a question. She said: "Why are they such stupid people? Do they expect the Soviet masses to flock to their banner if they come out for the restoration of capitalism?"

Well, they didn't come out openly with such slogans to the masses. That

was precisely the character of Trotskyism which they concealed in their program. Outwardly they spoke for socialism, but they organized wherever they could to impede the growth of socialism through sabotage, to destroy the socialist state through their alliance with Japanese imperialism and Hitler fascism. It is clear that they did not come to the masses and tell them that their program was the restoration of capitalism with the aid of fascist intervention. Naturally, they could not come to the masses with such a program, any more than a stool-pigeon in a trade union would come to the union with a program of wage cuts. That is not the way stool-pigeons work. A stool-pigeon may talk of struggles and try to provoke premature strikes. The stool-pigeons in Spain talk about immediate socialization and at the same time do everything possible to undermine the People's Front government, thus aiding Franco and international fascism. This is, in short, the character of Trotskyism today, Comrade Stalin points out—it is no longer a tendency in the working class. It is unable and afraid to bring its program into the open, having degenerated into a small gang of arsonists, assassins, saboteurs, spies, agents of imperialism.

Another thing which Comrade Stalin emphasized that has a tremendous bearing on our work in this country is the wrong theory that the Trotskyites, because they are few, and the Soviet masses (scores of millions) are so many, that this small, insignificant counter-revolutionary band can be ignored. Comrade Stalin gives us a very convincing example when he says that it takes tens of thousands to build

bridges, but a few can dynamite and destroy them if there is not the necessary vigilance. Trotskyism acted as it did, degenerated to what it is today in the Soviet Union, precisely because of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union. Here too, Comrade Stalin makes clear that the bourgeoisie, its remnants, did not give up with the victory of socialism; but on the contrary, seeing their cause becoming more hopeless, they become more desperate and resort to any and all methods in their efforts to undermine the socialist state. Because it is isolated from the Soviet masses, unable to bring forward its program, Trotskyism was compelled to look for allies, and to become the agent of international fascism, since the program of Trotskyism coincided with the plans of Hitler Germany and imperialist Japan for an attack against the Soviet Union and their international war plans generally.

This political carelessness of many Communists and Communist Party organizations in the Soviet Union developed side by side with the tremendous successes in the Soviet Union, the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan and the complete collapse of all Trotskyite predictions as to coming difficulties on the economic front, the growing abolition of the contradictions between the working class and the peasantry, the tremendous rise in the cultural and general well-being of the people, the strengthening of the authority of the Party among the masses, the rise of new cadres in the socialist state, the abolition of classes, the promulgation of the new Stalinist Constitution—all this took place in the

last few years and all this made the Trotskyites so desperate, and sharpened the teeth of the Japanese and Hitler governments.

Unfortunately, it was this development, these great successes, which created political carelessness where the Party did not always remember that the successes on the economic field, the great achievements of the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party, did not solve all problems. The Soviet Union still remains the only socialist state, surrounded and encircled by capitalist and fascist states and enemies. The remnants of the bourgeoisie within the borders of the Soviet Union have not given up but, on the contrary, have become more desperate. More and more tendencies developed for comrades to become engulfed in the work on the economic front, carrying through successfully the slogan raised some six years ago by the Bolshevik Party and Stalin to "master technique." But in the mastering of this technique, in which such great wonders were performed, there was often a failure, simultaneously with the achievement of that mastery, to give attention to the more basic general questions of political work and to the whole international situation.

Without pressing this question further, it can be seen that this frank, self-critical analysis by the leadership of the Bolshevik Party is a model to all of us, because after all, here are achievements, here are successes. If this great Party which has conquered capitalism and stands at the head of the masses on one-sixth of the globe, which has successfully built socialism—if this great Party of Lenin and Stalin

can approach its problems in such a self-critical manner, what an example it furnishes to us. This model gives us fundamental lessons on how to develop our own work, how to combat Trotskyism, how to clarify every weakness in the correct Stalinist manner, in order to score new victories for the toilers, for our class, for the future of socialism in this country.

What lessons can we learn in this country from this analysis of Comrade Stalin as to the role of the Trotskyites, and their relation to our central problem—the organization of the People's Front against war and fascism? Comrade Stalin in his speech speaks about the reserves of Trotskyism, warning against the danger of thinking that the whole problem is finished. He speaks not only of the remnants of Trotskyism in the Soviet Union, but he speaks of the reserves of Trotskyism in its so-called "fourth international," two-thirds of which, he says, are spies and provocateurs. He mentions a number of countries including the United States, wherein he speaks of certain "gangsters of the pen" giving dishonorable mention to the gentleman who bears the name of Max Eastman. We, in this country, can ill afford to underestimate the role of this gang which is an agent of fascism, of everything that is rotten and reactionary in the country. Here too, we cannot judge the Trotskyites by their program. They will suit their program to their needs. They will be for the Farmer-Labor Party in one place and against it in another. They will be for the C.I.O. in one place, and against it elsewhere.

In Minnesota, the Trotskyites are

united with the most reactionary group of splitters in the A. F. of L., with the Meyer Lewis clique and the reactionary employers' Citizens Alliance. In the Socialist convention in Chicago, they wrote resolutions against the Farmer-Labor Party; in Minnesota, they carry through the same policy by trying to destroy the Farmer-Labor Party, which is showing itself to be a model to all progressives so far as fighting for the interests of the masses under the leadership of Governor Benson. The Trotskyites tried to split the Farmer-Labor Party, and endorsed the infamous Latimer for mayor of Minneapolis.

From that point of view, it makes one laugh when some of the Socialists believe they scored a victory over the Trotskyites when they went on record for the Farmer-Labor Party, and adopted Thomas' resolution. But the Trotskyites remained in the Socialist Party, and the Trotskyites are not worried at all about a program. All they are interested in, all they maneuvered for at the convention was to remain within the Socialist Party, poison it, try to win it, to use it as a stool-pigeon agency in the struggle against the trade union movement, against the Farmer-Labor Party, against the Communist Party-Socialist Party united front. Some of these Socialist comrades, unfortunately, even those who claim they are against Trotskyism, have a funny habit of showing how they are against them. They say, we cannot expel them (the Trotskyites) just now. Perhaps after the convention, we will expel them, one at a time. And after the convention is over, they tell us: well, you know we must have a double policy

against the Trotskyites. We must fight against them, but we must also defend them. When we meet with you, we must defend them. So you see, first they refuse to expel them, then they must defend them because they belong to "our" party (the Socialist Party.).

Certain Socialists said they were ready to expel all Trotskyites except those in Minnesota, because in Minnesota they are not sectarian, they are really "mass" people, they have a base, they can be for the Farmer-Labor Party, they are o.k. When the Trotskyites in Minnesota exposed themselves in the endorsement of Latimer so that even Thomas had to feel a bit ashamed at the convention, suddenly these Socialists changed their tone. Now they said, we will expel the Minnesota Trotskyites, but nobody else. Well, they carried through both policies, they didn't expell the Minnesota Trotskyites and they didn't expel the others.

The Trotskyites in this country are small in number. They were only a few hundred when they were expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. And they didn't multiply very fast. They remained a small handful. But they began to do business. The first thing they did was to unite with Muste. He took the jump and organized the American Workers Party. Then the Trotskyites united with them and formed the so-called Workers Party of the United States, and before long—they finished Muste. They sent him first to the hospital and then to the church. Fortunately, the Communist Party took all the good elements from Muste and brought them to the Communist Party, at their head Louis

Budenz, Arnold Johnson and many others, comrades who are doing very excellent work in the Communist Party and the labor movement today. When the Trotskyites got through with their kill, they then looked around, and the Socialist Party was the next victim. I have not yet been able to figure out just how and why the Socialists admitted them into their ranks. However, I must say this: that all the Socialists who really want to build their party admit that their admission was a mistake. That is a step forward. If they were to begin to correct that mistake, that would really be a step forward.

These few hundred Trotskyites, because they were able to conceal themselves, or as Comrade Browder has stated, because they traveled with false passports, Socialist Party membership cards, were able to get into many organizations, trade unions, the Workers Alliance, and in the name of the Socialist Party are able to carry on much poisonous work, destructive to the best interests of the labor movement.

What are they doing? Take any field of work, for example, the trade unions. At this very moment a campaign is being developed by the ruling class of this country to try to rob the workers of the gains which they are making through their militant struggles, through their organization into the unions affiliated to the C.I.O. The capitalist class, which was compelled to grant important concessions to the workers because the workers were organized—this same capitalist class with all the cunning which it possesses, is now trying to rob the workers of these very concessions through all sorts of anti-labor legislation, through promot-

ing splits in the trade union movement, and through trying to split the very forces of the C.I.O. Part of all these plans is the usual Red-baiting campaign. In the very center of this Red-baiting campaign stands the A. F. of L. Executive Council, and the campaign manager of this Red-baiting campaign is none other than J. P. Frey. And since Mr. Frey began his campaign a couple of weeks ago as a result of a special meeting held in Washington, where plans were laid for this campaign, day after day, new evidence rolls in of the role of the Trotskyites, showing them to be actual spies and stool-pigeons whose purpose it is to point out the Communists, whose purpose is to try and disrupt the forces of the C.I.O., and who, in many cases, can hardly be distinguished from the old professional stool-pigeons whom we have known and uncovered in such centers as Pittsburgh, Detroit, Youngstown, Akron.

When we see these things we can appreciate the great significance of the speech of Comrade Stalin on this question. In Detroit, the ruling class is trying to undermine the growing automobile workers' union, to disrupt it from within. They are trying to create Red scares and "purges" even where they don't exist. A group of Trotskyites, a small clique, is playing a special role there absolutely indistinguishable from the bosses themselves and their agents. They tried to provoke strikes so that the union could be charged with breaking the agreement at the very moment when the employers wanted to prove to the Senate of Michigan that the unions were responsible for this situation, and thereby gain

passage of the anti-sit-down law, at the very moment when Congress was making attacks against the unions, and when the so-called friends of labor stated that they found themselves in difficulties because of the charges of irresponsibility on the part of the unions. Here we see directly the hand and the role of Trotskyism, few as the Trotskyites are—how much damage they can do; again proving what Comrade Stalin says, that we cannot ignore them just because they are so few.

Here also we can say it takes thousands to build what only a few wreckers can destroy. And that is why we must be on guard against them in the American trade union movement, that is why we must expose the character of Trotskyism, its role, and not be fooled into underestimating them because we know beforehand that they are few. So are the old-time professional stool-pigeons who will be replaced in many places; they are few in the Ford plants and other plants compared to the millions of workers, but nevertheless, they were able for years to disrupt the efforts of the workers to organize. Already in the textile campaign, the Trotskyites have wormed their way into the drive by presenting a Socialist Party card; in the Workers Alliance, in the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota, and many other places, where promising movements are beginning.

Trotskyism is the enemy of the peace movement, of the trade union movement. It is the agent used by the bourgeoisie to disrupt the trade union movement and all efforts made to unify the trade union movement. It is the enemy of the People's Front, because

it is the counter-revolutionary advance guard of the bourgeoisie, it is the fascist agent operating in the ranks of the working class itself.

The Trotskyites operate in the Socialist Party; they have made headway in the Socialist Party, due to lack of vigilance and organization on the part of the honest Socialist workers. But it would be a mistake to conclude from this that the Socialist Party is a Trotskyite party; or, that all of the leaders of the Socialist Party are Trotskyites. That is not so. There is confusion; there is passivity. But the great bulk of the Socialists are honest and sincere, and wish to fight for the immediate interests of their class, to fight for socialism. We must understand both sides of this question, and we will not for a moment give up the struggle to do everything in our power to unite with the Socialists everywhere, as we did in New York for May Day, in Chicago, in Boston, and in many other cities of the country. We will in every place aid the Socialist Party towards a more correct approach to the question of the day, trying to draw them closer to work with us, always with the objective of destroying the influence of Trotskyism in their party, of helping the Socialists take steps to drive them out of the Socialist Party as they must be driven out of every labor organization; and we shall continue this policy and this work until it bears fruit.

Let us now examine the great contribution of Comrade Stalin in connection with the immediate tasks of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Union in raising the slogan of "mastering Bolshevism," without for a mo-

ment weakening the fight to "master technique." In his summary, Comrade Stalin warns against extremes when he says that six years ago it was correct to raise the slogan of "master technique"; that that was what was needed at that time. Today, he says, we raise the slogan, "master Bolshevism." That does not mean that we are going to forget all about economic problems, problems of socialist construction. He says, perhaps the comrades will sigh with relief again, that now they can discuss political questions and not be busy with economic victories and complicated problems. Comrade Stalin says "No"; we are going to raise the political level of the Party, improve the political quality of our work, but at the same time we will give the greatest attention to solving the economic problems. These two things go together and are bound up together. In the same spirit, without in any way making any mechanical parallels, what lessons has this for our work in the United States?

Our central problem is to organize the masses for the People's Front, and at the same time build the Communist Party in the course of building the People's Front. We also have raised the slogan "to the masses" which is, so to speak, our slogan of mastering technique. We have not yet mastered it, but it cannot be denied that we have made tremendous progress. Our Party everywhere is entrenching itself in the more basic sections of the American proletariat, among the steel and auto workers, among the marine workers, the textile workers, among the American masses generally. We have shown in the recent steel campaign, in the auto strikes, in the maritime struggles,

that our Party has stored up experiences, that our Party has comrades with ability, that our Party has experience which was recognized and in demand by those who were responsible for leading the organizing campaigns in these industries.

This was a great tribute to our Party, a tribute that was not gained in a day, but which is the result of the whole history of our Party, its program, its policy and its leadership. Such comrades like Comrades Foster and Browder, leaders of our Party, have been identified with some of the outstanding struggles in the American labor movement. It was because of all these things that we have been able under the present favorable conditions to make the contribution that we did in the field of organizing the unorganized, in the fight for trade union unity, etc. This work is not finished. We still face some of the more difficult problems, problems of organizing the many millions of unorganized workers. Thus far, only a small percentage of the workers in this country who are as yet unorganized have been brought into the unions. There are still more than 25,000,000 workers to be organized. The task is not completed.

There is the task of consolidating the unions, of developing leadership and democratic procedure in the unions, organizing strata of exploited Negro masses, etc. And if we raise the question now of greater political alertness, of attention to political problems—of mastering Bolshevism—it is not because we believe that the job of sinking our roots among the masses, that the job of organizing the masses in the basic elementary organizations has been

completed, and that we have no tasks left. Not at all. We raise the question rather in the sense that we must organize the masses, build the unions, consolidate the unions, insure their existence against Red-baiting attacks which are being made and will always be made by the capitalists. We need to educate the masses politically; we need to educate the masses to understand what their role is, what is the actual relationship of forces, what are the underlying fundamental forces of capitalism; on the question of the danger of war, and finally, the necessity of the People's Front, and how to build it. To solve these questions, which are the questions of millions today, we need the Communist Party. And we raise this question today of mastering Bolshevism because we know that only our Party works in this way; and at the same time never forgets its ultimate objectives, its fundamental program, the struggle for socialism. We must keep these issues before the masses in order to blaze the path of today which leads to tomorrow, and this is part of our work today, tomorrow and every day. And it is in this sense that we have already time and again raised the question of the importance of politicalizing our mass work.

At our last Plenum, and particularly in the speech of Comrade Browder, we raised very clearly and sharply the question of the tendency of division of work: which shall it be—mass work first or Party work first? Our Party has time and again correctly placed the question that our task is with the masses, yet at the head of the masses; that our task is to be the most loyal section of the united trade union move-

ment, in building, in strengthening it; that our task is to be the most loyal section of the developing People's Front, against fascism and war; but never to forget to unfold our independent position on all questions, develop our independent activities in the name of our Party, and at the same time hold forth the ultimate perspective of socialism. On the basis of this correct Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist approach to our problems we can today see our weaknesses clearly. We can also see the solution much more clearly because of this great speech and contribution of Comrade Stalin.

We are building the trade unions, the mass movement generally, but we forget to build the Communist Party. We forget to build the Communist press because we are too "busy." We do not mind if someone else does it. We keep a few comrades in the office and we say it's their job to build the Party, and our job is mass work, building the unions, the People's Front.

No one will say this in theory, because as Comrade Stalin says of the Bolshevik Party and we say of our Party perhaps not to the same degree: after all, our Party is the Communist Party. But comrades are so steeped in practical work. I spoke the other day to a comrade active in a union. He is an official of the union. He said to me: "What do you want me to do? I work from eight in the morning until eight and ten at night. I take up all the questions. I don't have time to read the *Daily Worker*." And this from a leading comrade. A few days later I spoke to a leading comrade in Detroit. He asked me whether it wouldn't be possible for the *Daily Worker* to print a

one-page bulletin once a week giving the major events that happened because the Party leaders in the unions do not have time to read the *Daily Worker*. Here you have a situation with so many things happening—Supreme Court struggle, elections in Detroit, civil liberties fight, legislative problems, where the Party strives to give the line on these questions—and the leadership and the leading comrades do not read the *Daily Worker*. How will they give leadership to the workers?

We could not have Bolshevism without technique at present in the Soviet Union, because Bolshevism now means socialism. You cannot have socialism without technique. Bolshevism in America today means a mass movement, a Labor Party, mass trade unions, a movement not only embracing thousands but millions. That could not be done without the united front with the Socialist Party, of the working class, united unions fighting for trade union unity, fighting for the Labor Party. Without that we cannot Bolshevize the Party. You Bolshevize the Party in struggle. If we are at the head of the masses but lose ourselves in the mass movement then the Party ceases to function. If a Party member is in a union and acts only as a good union member, then where is the face of the Party?

On the question of the work of the Party organization, the relation of the various sub-organizations to each other, the relation to the various committees, the question of Party education, the work of the lower Party organizations, etc.: those who have read the report and summary of Comrade

Stalin carefully, as well as the report of Comrade Zhdanov, and the resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, know how much attention the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the report of Comrade Stalin have given to these questions of improving the work of the Party. This has tremendous significance for us, because this is one of the weakest spots in our whole work. This is one of the problems which is not being solved satisfactorily. We are going to try now, as we all should, to study again and again the experiences and lessons and teachings of Comrade Stalin, to try to improve ourselves and once and for all make progress in the solution of these problems. The solution of the problem of Party organization, of the work of the lower organizations, particularly the establishment of correct relationships between the various committees and organizations, involves the whole success of the execution of the line of the Party.

Comrade Stalin in his report stresses the question of political education. He speaks about capitalist encirclement. How about our own encirclement and what happens to our ideology? For instance: a new comrade, a worker, joins the Party. He comes into the Party unit—not yet a full Communist—is willing, and is given work. That comrade lives in a home, has a family, has relatives; let us suppose he is a Catholic worker at present in New York. Every time he spends evenings at home with relatives or friends, he hears attacks against the Party. He does not believe them; however, he comes to the Party meetings, and he does not hear enough

as to what we stand for, does not get answers to all the numerous questions that trouble him. Very often the unit does not get him to read the *Daily Worker*. How do we know that? Because the majority of the Party comrades throughout the country do not read the *Daily Worker*—at least, not regularly. This worker is subject to all sorts of pressure from the bourgeoisie, and only when we are able to answer all these questions and free him of all prejudices and illusions will he be a real Communist.

We have not solved the problems of fluctuation, etc. We have not made a sufficiently fundamental approach to the question. Here the decisive thing is the Party unit. After all, the unit will determine whether that comrade remains in the Party or not. It is true he may have a problem in the union, or in the fraction; but that is very seldom. But even that can be taken up and solved at a proper unit meeting. What does that mean? What could happen to such a comrade? Let us say he is a union member and he is drawn in because someone says to him that he ought to be in the Party, and he comes to the first meeting, to a second meeting. And supposing he would come into a unit and he would find the first meeting: instructions from the district to do something; assignments from the section; collection of dues; he might even be asked to buy a *Daily Worker*. Second meeting: instructions from the district; assignments from the section; a letter from the District Committee; announcement of activities; assignments. But he has political problems bothering him and would like to have them discussed. He may

not like the way something is done in the Party and would like to have a say about it, but he does not get the chance. He could make up his mind, well, this is an organization where you do as you are told, and well, I am not ready for that. That is, if he goes into such a unit. Most of our units are a little different. In New York, probably, there are no longer such units. In other districts, I know there still are.

Are we afraid to have our Party comrades discuss Party problems? We are not afraid. The Party line, if it is correct, can stand the test of discussion. It is not a question of fear. It is more because the work is not organized that way. To a certain extent, the problem must be tackled from the Central Committee down, to establish with certainty that the Party comrades will have the possibility to discuss and decide on major political questions. It is impossible, we know, to take a vote on every question in every unit. To accomplish this, it is necessary to go beyond the unit also, and to establish organs through which the Party press can speak. For this purpose we have to speed up the decision made at the Ninth Party Convention last June, and repeated at the last Central Committee meeting at the end of the year, which called for the reorganization of the Party along lines that will make possible the development of the greatest possible democracy. Wherever it is advisable, and the size allows, we will organize county committees which will be composed of delegates from every shop unit and branch on the basis of proportional representation; to meet once a month and to be a real political

body to discuss problems and make decisions. They will have, of course, an executive. It will be something like a county convention in permanence, with direct connection with every unit, bringing problems from the units, and bringing back discussion and resolutions to the units. That will be a great improvement and will really make possible the raising of the discussion on important political questions and the development of greater initiative which has to go with that on the part of the units and the counties.

The whole problem of the activity of every Party member, the assignment of work, the question of the ability of the member, the question of financial requirements, individual home problems; the question of work in the mass organizations, in the unions—are all problems that need studying. Very often we tell a comrade to read the *Daily Worker*, and then discover he cannot read, and he has to be helped with that. The Party must become a place where the Party member can come and get help with his problems.

There is plenty of improvement to be made in the higher bodies of the Party, in the district committees, county committees, and in the Central Committee. Our Central Committee at its next meeting is going to discuss most seriously all of its problems on the basis of our work, our tasks, and in the light of the report of Comrade Stalin. I am sure we are going to make great steps forward as a result of that next meeting.

It would not be bad for most of us to re-read the decisions of the Seventh World Congress. Read it in terms of what has happened in America in the

last year and see what these decisions really mean. You will appreciate the great significance of that Congress, the significance of the People's Front in France, in Spain, the significance of the whole movement which is worldwide now in beating back fascism. If you will apply these decisions in the United States, you will understand the role our Party played in the last election campaign.

Was the line of the Party correct in the elections in terms of what is happening in the country today? Could you conceive of what would be happening if Landon had been elected, if Hearst were in control? The Party policy was correct. It was the line of the Seventh World Congress and the Communist International. There are the successes of the C.I.O. to which we have made our contribution, and we partly are responsible for this whole movement which is developing today. Our Party is advancing with and through the masses; but our Party is not making enough progress. The weaknesses which I have enumerated and tried to indicate are there: they

are real; they are serious. But it is my conviction that in the spirit of Comrade Stalin's report, in the spirit of self-criticism of which we have the great example of our Bolshevik Party, which is always a model for us, that we will take to heart and very seriously review our work, unit by unit, fraction by fraction, and the result of this will be the improvement of our work everywhere. If we correctly raise the question of the People's Front and work properly in the coming months, if we take the leadership in the struggle against reaction, giving proper guidance to the masses, it will be possible for our Party to become an official section of that People's Front. And in the course of this movement, our Party can build itself up from its present size to a Party two and three times its present number. Surely, this will demonstrate to everyone beyond shadow of doubt that there is no conflict between political work and mass work in the trade unions, between united front and People's Front; that we can build a strong, powerful Communist Party, marching forward to socialism.

COMMUNISTS AND THE UNITED FRONT

BY GEORGI DIMITROFF

THE entire international situation at the present moment is developing under the sign of feverish preparations by fascism for a new division of the world by a war of conquest, and at the same time under the sign of the establishment of international proletarian unity and of the gathering of the forces of the working people, of supporters of democracy and peace for a struggle against fascism and war.

The fascist aggressors in the West and the East are making all possible haste to come to an agreement as to the ways and means and objects of their aggression. Berlin, Rome and Tokyo are linking up their forces by various pacts and military agreements. The intervention of Hitler and Mussolini in Spain, their war against the Spanish people as well as the acts of aggression of the Japanese militarists in China are without doubt stages in the preparation of a big war.

FASCISTS UNITE FOR WAR

In spite of the difference of interests existing among these incendiaries of war they have joined forces to carry on undermining work in non-fascist countries which stand for the maintenance of peace; they are in every way supporting the reactionary parties and groups in these countries, organizing

coups d'etats against governments and regimes which are inconvenient to them and their reign, and everywhere are sowing counter-revolutionary anarchy.

Their criminal hand may be seen in the treacherous activity of De la Rocque and Doriot in France, Degrelle in Belgium, Henlein in Czechoslovakia, in the machinations of the fascists in the Scandinavian and Balkan countries, in Hungary and Austria, in Poland and the Baltic states, in the policy of the pro-Japanese elements in China, as well as in the Hearst circles in the United States.

Vitally interested in the greatest weakening of the capacity of peoples to defend themselves against fascist aggression, in disorganizing the labor movement and obstructing the People's Front that is being built up against the fascist aggressors, the fascists utilized the Trotskyites everywhere as their agents. They are giving their patronage to the establishment of the Fourth International, this medley of renegades and traitors to the working class and agents of the secret services. The fury of the fascists is directed especially against the Soviet Union, against the great land of socialism, the most powerful bulwark of peace, liberty and progress of the whole

of mankind, the most stubborn obstacle in the way of fascist aggression.

SOVIET PEACE POLICY

There can be no doubt that the fascist rulers of Germany and Italy and the fascist-military clique of Japan would have already ignited the flames of a world war had there been wanting such a mighty sentinel of peace as the Soviet Union, had not serious advances taken place in the ranks of the international proletariat in the direction of strengthening the struggle against fascism and establishing the united People's Front, had the Spanish people not succeeded in so heroically beating off the attacks of fascism, had the French proletariat not established an anti-fascist People's Front and had the Chinese people not taken the path of uniting their forces in an all-national front against Japanese marauders.

But all this only hindered the fulfilment of the insidious war plans of the fascist incendiaries. They have not given up their plans and never will do so voluntarily. After the rout of Mussolini's fascist hordes at Guadalajara the foreign interventionists hurled new forces against the Spanish people. While making peaceable declarations to Lansbury, a labor leader suffering from childish naivete and political blindness, Hitler is intensifying his preparations for dealing a blow at Czechoslovakia, the destruction of which independent state, according to fascist conception, is necessary to "pacify Europe."

German fascism is preparing to engulf Austria, and is plotting fascist coups d'etats in Belgium and other countries. The Japanese militarists in

their turn are trying in every way to smash up the democratic opposition in Japan itself, the more aggressively to hurl themselves against the Chinese people.

HOW TO BEAT FASCISM

The experience of many years has gone to prove that the fascist incendiaries of war are not to be held back by any persuasive arguments. There is only one effective means of curbing them, and that is a united and unbroken struggle of the masses of people against fascism in the different countries and on an international scale. Only united action of the international proletariat, rallying around itself all sections of the working people, all progressive and democratic elements, all genuine supporters of peace, can succeed in curbing the impudently brazen fascists and putting an end to their robber plans once and for all.

All recent events go to show that in those places where the proletariat takes action against fascism with unanimity and determination, where the working people are rallied together in a united anti-fascist front, fascism is unable to enslave the working class, to subjugate a nation which has decided to defend to the utmost and by all possible means its rights, liberty and independence.

The nine-month struggle of the Spanish people, who are sturdily beating off the armed attacks of fascism, the success of the People's Front in France, and the growing anti-Japanese movement in China, have already led to results which undoubtedly go to confirm this truth, as well as the entire historical significance of the united People's Front in respect to the strug-

gle against fascism and war. Living examples now exist in a number of countries for everybody to convince himself that in those places where the People's Front has been established, where the masses resist fascism and do not follow the rotten theory of "don't tease the fascist beast," there fascism meets with defeat. The successes of the People's Front in the non-fascist countries not only bar the road to fascism in these countries, but also exert an irresistible influence over the masses of the people in the countries of fascist dictatorship, and undermine its basis. The first serious defeats which the fascist interventionists have met with in Spain, especially at Guadalajara, have already raised the curtain which covers up the internal rot, contradictions, and instability of the fascist regime, and have led to an increase of anti-fascist sentiments in Italy and Germany.

HISTORICAL MISSION OF WORKERS

At the present period history is allocating a great mission to the international proletariat, that of saving mankind from the barbarians of fascism and from the horrors of a new imperialist blood bath being prepared by fascism.

At the present stage the specific way of fulfilling the historical mission of the international proletariat is as follows:

To help the Spanish people to rid themselves of the fascist violators and interventionists; to help the people of Germany and Italy to smash the chains of the fascist regime; to help the Chinese people in their struggle against the Japanese marauders; to help the

small nations defend their liberty and independence, and to establish an impregnable barrier against the fascist aggression in the West and in the East. And the fulfilment of this mission is quite within the powers of the international proletariat if they act as one man and in an organized fashion.

THE FOREMOST DETACHMENT

The very foremost detachment of the international proletariat — the working class of the Soviet Union—is a state organized force. It stands at the head of a mighty state which is on guard over the peace and liberty of all the peoples.

The working class of the U.S.S.R., under the guidance of the great party of Lenin and Stalin, overthrew the landowners and capitalists in over one-sixth of the earth's surface, established the proletarian dictatorship, achieved the triumph of socialism and are operating genuine democracy as secured in the new constitution of the U.S.S.R.

When speaking of the tremendous international significance of this Constitution, in his report at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, Comrade Stalin said:

"Today, when the rabid wave of fascism is bespattering the socialist movement of the working class and besmirching the democratic strivings of the best people in the civilized world, the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. will be an indictment against fascism, declaring that socialism and democracy are invincible. The new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. will serve as moral assistance and real support to all those who are today fighting fascist barbarism."

THE SPANISH PROLETARIAT

Another heroic detachment of the international proletariat, the working

class of Spain, is in the front line fighting against fascism. It is drawing the Spanish people more closely together in the ranks of the anti-fascist People's Front.

The Spanish proletariat, headed by the People's Front government, are the leading force of the armed people and with their bodies are defending not only the liberty and independence of their own country but also the interests of the entire international proletariat and the general cause of democracy and peace.

The working class of France, which began by establishing the united front in their own ranks, linked up their trade unions into a single confederation of labor which now covers more than 5,000,000 workers, and have established a People's Front against which the trick intrigues of French fascism are being shattered. The success of the People's Front in France is giving a powerful impulse to the movement of the People's Front in other countries.

For the first time in the history of America, the working class of the United States is displaying its independence as a class, uniting its forces into mass trade unions and actively taking the lead of the democratic and progressive forces in the country against reaction and fascism.

In England, the working class, which constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population and possesses powerful organizations, constitutes a tremendous force whose relative weight in the international working class movement is increased by the special position occupied by England in world politics.

Should militant united action

among all the forces of the labor and Communist movements be brought about, the British proletariat would be in a position not only to drive back reaction of all kinds in its own country, but also to play an important role in the international struggle against fascism and war.

WORKERS' UNITY GROWING

Without indicating all other countries in detail, it may be remarked with no exaggeration whatsoever that the movement of working class unity is growing, though not at the same pace everywhere, not only in the countries which are menaced by fascism and the aggression of the fascist states, but also in the countries of the fascist dictatorship.

The establishment of united action by the international working class against fascism, the common enemy, the moral enemy of the whole of mankind, is the chief *urgent* task facing the working class organizations throughout the world, the *supreme* demand of the moment.

This is a difficult and big task, one going beyond the bounds of the ordinary current tasks of the labor movement. But if this task is solved it will bring about a fundamental change in the course of political events, will give them a new direction in the interest of the working people and will make of the working class and its organizations a force exerting tremendous influence over the fate of its own people and also over the fate of the whole of mankind.

What is required first and foremost to fulfil this task of such tremendous historic importance?

FASCISM—THE MAIN ENEMY

First, what is required is that all working class organizations should recognize the need for concentrating the struggle against the *main* enemy, against the most reactionary section of the big bourgeoisie, against fascism. What is required is that, in determining their policy, all working class organizations should make their starting point *the defense* of the interests of *their own class*, and should not act to benefit the interests of the bourgeoisie. By making their starting point their own class interests, the working class and its organizations thereby defend the interests of all the exploited, of the entire people. An end must be put to the policy of reconciling the interests of the exploiters and exploited. One cannot, as is said, serve at one and the same time both god and Mammon. One cannot be for the rebel generals and for the Spanish people. One cannot be in favor of a victory of the Spanish people, and seek a compromise with General Franco.

One cannot vow one's sympathies for the Spanish Republic in words, and in deeds refuse it the means of defense in order to oblige the British conservatives. One cannot declare one's readiness to carry on a struggle against fascism and at the same time badger the Communists, the most consistent fighters against the fascists.

Second, what is needed is to defeat the *enemies of the united front* in the ranks of the labor movement. The masses of the workers are thirsting for united action, but a non-critical attitude toward "authoritative people" and a badly understood loyalty to their organization frequently prevent the

workers from opposing those leaders who are preventing the establishment of a united front by their dishonest maneuvers. Since these leaders have no desire to subordinate themselves to the general and supreme will of the working class, since they prefer to serve the bourgeoisie and place their personal careerist interests above the interests of the working class, it is the elementary duty of every working class organization to find within itself sufficient courage, to find ways and means to fulfil its will to unity despite all obstacles.

Third, what is needed is that all those who are carrying on a campaign of slander against the U.S.S.R. be given the most determined rebuff. The struggle against the U.S.S.R. is a struggle against socialism, the great aim of the working class recorded in the program of the overwhelming majority of the working class organizations throughout the world. The struggle against the U.S.S.R. is a struggle against the greatest victory of the working class in the history of mankind, a victory which multiplies the forces of the entire international proletariat and working class people by many times. The struggle against the U.S.S.R. is a most important part of the insidious plan of the fascists directed toward splitting up the forces of the international proletariat so as the more easily to attack them separately, to destroy the labor movement, and to place the working class and all the working people in the capitalist countries under the yoke of the fascist dictatorship. One cannot be an enemy of fascism and at the same time carry on a struggle against the U.S.S.R. —the advance post of the international

anti-fascist movement. One cannot be a Socialist or even an honest democrat if one is not resolutely and entirely on the side of the Soviet Union, the great land of socialism and real democracy for the whole of the people.

The attitude toward the Soviet Union is in essence the touchstone testing the devotion of every individual active in the working class movement, and of every working class organization to the interest of the working class, and their loyalty to socialism.

TROTSKYITE DEGENERATES

Fourth, what is needed is while carrying on the struggle against fascism to be absolutely merciless in dealing blows at *its Trotskyite agents* who are a gang of spies, diversionists, terrorists and police provocateurs in the service of German fascism and the Japanese militarists. The Trotskyite degenerates, on instructions from the fascist intelligence services, are carrying on subversive work against the land of socialism, are doing everything possible to deepen the split in the working class movement and to prevent its unity, and are striving to disintegrate the People's Front movement from within. Everywhere their actions are those of wreckers of the working class movement and disorganizers of the struggle of the masses of the people against fascism. International proletarian unity against fascism is unthinkable and impossible unless a struggle is carried on against the Trotskyite agents of fascism.

Such are the most *elementary conditions* necessary to bring about united action of the international proletariat against fascism and war. But it is pre-

cisely the activity of those leaders who have the decisive word in determining the policy of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals which runs counter to the fulfilment of even these elementary conditions. Not only do they systematically turn down the proposals of the Communist International as regards joint action in defense of the Spanish people, but they suppress the initiative of those organizations of the Second International which take part in a common front with the Communists against fascism and the German and Italian interventionists in Spain. In vain did the delegates of the Socialist Party and the General Workers Union of Spain endeavor at the London conference of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals to break through the wall of cold indifference toward the heroic struggle of the Spanish people. In vain did they appeal to these Internationals for support in their struggle by way of joint action of all organizations of the working class.

The Spanish delegates left the conference profoundly disillusioned. Both Internationals in the decisions they adopted did not go beyond the bounds of declarations and decisions acceptable to the British conservatives.

The enemies of working class unity, the reactionary leaders in the ranks of these Internationals, not only sabotaged decisive all-around support for the Spanish people, but they go further. They are adopting all measures to split the People's Front in Spain itself, carry on intrigues, sow mistrust, set the Socialist leaders against the Communist Party, thereby weakening the stronghold of the People's Front

and the defensive power of the Spanish republic. In addition, at the present time, when the example of the French proletariat, who have established united action, and on the basis of the People's Front have driven fascism back, is raising the spirit of the workers of all countries, the reactionary leaders are weaving a network of intrigues directed toward sowing mistrust between the Socialist and Communist Parties of France, toward undermining the People's Front and preparing the conditions for the establishment of a coalition government of the bourgeoisie and Socialist Party, directed against the Communist and the People's Front movement. Thus, they are ready to sacrifice the interests of the working class for the benefit of the most reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie. As far as these leaders are concerned, the main enemy is not fascism, but Communism. As far as the Citrines, Bevins, and Adlers are concerned, the main enemy is not Franco but Dolores Ibarruri, heroine of the Spanish people; not De la Rocque and Hitler, but Thorez and Thaelmann.

It would be naive to think that united working class action could be achieved by extortions, by attempting to persuade or invoking the aid of the reactionary leaders. International proletarian unity cannot be achieved without a stubborn struggle of all the adherents of unity against the overt and covert enemies of unity.

Voices are sometimes raised in the Socialist ranks to the effect that the Communists, by their open and clear-cut criticism of the conduct of the leaders of the Socialist and Amsterdam Internationals, render difficult the es-

tablishment of a united front. But is it possible to achieve the establishment of the united front without engaging in resolute criticism of those who hinder it by all possible means? What sort of people would we who are active in the labor movement be if we did not openly state the entire truth on a question of such great importance to the entire working class?

He who is silent about or attempts to cover up the harmful actions of the reactionary leaders in the ranks of the working class is doing no service to the cause of working class unity. He who supposedly in the interests of the united proletarian front gives up the struggle against the enemies of this united front and gives up criticizing reformism, which subordinates the working class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie, is doing a poor service to the working class.

THE CONGRESS DECISION

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in proclaiming the policy of the united proletarian and People's Front, pointed out that:

"Joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organization not only does not preclude, but, on the contrary, *renders still more necessary* the serious and well-founded criticism of reformism, of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and the patient exposition of the principles and program of Communism to the Social-Democratic workers."

He who does not follow these directions of the Seventh Congress is a poor fighter for working class unity and for the People's Front against fascism and war. He who thinks that the existence

of the People's Front frees us of the necessity for conducting a struggle for the basic principles and fundamental interests of the working class movement against theories and viewpoints hostile to the working class is deeply mistaken. The cause of the united front will not suffer from such a struggle: it only stands to gain from it. Moreover, such a struggle is a necessary condition for the real development and consolidation of the united People's Front of struggle against fascism and war.

POLICY OF THE UNITED FRONT

It should never be forgotten that in carrying on a consistent and stubborn struggle for the establishment of a united People's Front the Communists are not pursuing a policy of establishing an unprincipled bloc; they are pursuing a policy based on principles.

When we carry on a resolute struggle for the defense of democratic rights and liberties, against reaction and fascism, we do so as Marxists, as consistent proletarian revolutionaries and not as bourgeois democrats or reformists. Where we come forward in defense of the national interests of our own people, in defense of their independence and liberty, we do not become nationalists or bourgeois patriots; we do so as proletarian revolutionaries and true sons of our people. When we come forward in defense of religious freedom, against the fascist persecution of believers, we do not retreat from our Marxian outlook, which is free of all religious superstitions.

When carrying out the policy of the People's Front against fascism and war, when participating in joint action

with other parties and organizations of the working people against the common enemy and fighting for the vital interests and democratic rights of the working people and for peace and liberty, the Communists do not lose sight of the historic need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, which has outlived its day, and for the achievement of socialism, which bears with it the emancipation of the working class and of the whole of mankind.

Correctly to combine the operations of the policy of the People's Front with the propaganda of Marxism, with the raising of the theoretical level of the cadres of the working class movement, with the mastery of the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as a guide to action—all this we must learn and teach our cadres and the masses day after day. We must not allow a situation where "you cannot see the wood for the trees." We must not allow practice to become divorced from theory, a gap to develop between the fulfilment of the urgent tasks of today and the further perspectives and aims of the working class struggle. It must not be forgotten that the further the People's Front movement develops and the more complicated the tactical problems of the movement, the more necessary does it become to make a genuine Marxian analysis of the situation and of the relation of the opposing forces, the more necessary does it become to retain the reliable compass of Marxian Leninist theory.

* * *

The proletariat is the most consistent fighter for the establishment and consolidation of the united People's

Front against fascism, both on a national and international scale.

Without the proletariat, the People's Front is altogether impossible. The proletariat is the main driving force of any anti-fascist people's movement, of any mass movement in defense of democracy and peace. The proletariat fights jointly with the democratic petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and intellectuals against their common enemy. But the proletariat must rely primarily on its own forces, on the unity of the ranks of the working class movement in each country and on the unity of the international working class movement. For the more united and organized the proletariat is the more truly will it be able to defend its class interests and the better will it be able to fulfil its leading role in the ranks of the united People's Front. Hence the Communists and all class-conscious workers are faced with the task of sparing no efforts, of stopping before no difficulties, of not leaving even the smallest possibilities unused in order to advance the cause of united working class action on a national and international scale. This must be developed until trade union unity is fully achieved and a united mass party of the proletariat is established.

And here it must be clearly stated that proletarian unity will be the sooner achieved, the successes in establishing and consolidating the united People's Front will be greater, the stronger the Communist Parties themselves become numerically, organizationally and ideologically, the more they enjoy the confidence and support of the best and foremost elements of the working class and of the working

people generally. For Communists are the most resolute and consistent fighters for working class unity on a national and international scale.

As far back as the dawn of the establishment of the International Communist movement, Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*, in defining the historical role of the Communists in the ranks of the international proletariat, declared:

"They have no interests apart from those of the working class as a whole . . . thus, in actual practice, Communists form the most resolute and persistently progressive section of the working class parties of all lands; whilst as far as theory is concerned, being in advance of the general mass of the proletariat, they have come to understand the determinants of the proletarian movement, and how to foresee its course and its general results."

True sons of their class, defenders of the interests of their people, free from all links with and dependence on the bourgeoisie, thoroughly consistent internationalists, the Communists will best of all be able to play the role of a uniting link in the ranks of the proletariat itself and also among all the parties, organizations and groups of the working people, democratic petty bourgeoisie, peasantry and intellectuals in the struggle against fascism and war.

It follows, therefore, that in order to achieve success in the struggle for working class unity, for the united People's Front, it is necessary to work day in and day out and untiringly to strengthen and consolidate the ranks of the Communist Parties and of the entire Communist International. This is dictated by the vital interests both of the international proletariat and all of advanced and progressive mankind.

THE TEXTILE DRIVE

BY EVELYN B. GORDON

AFTER years of struggle for improved conditions and union recognition, textile workers by the thousands are now answering the call of the Committee for Industrial Organization and are joining the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee. They are following in the footsteps of workers in the great steel and auto drives. As soon as the C.I.O. began to talk of the drive in textile, manufacturers began to make "wage adjustments." The 5 per cent and 10 per cent increases in pay were designed to stop the drive of the T.W.O.C. But they did not have the desired effect. Since the formation of the T.W.O.C. by the C.I.O. textile workers, North and South and even in far-away California, have signed the "blue pledge card" for union membership.

While the pledge card drive is under way, we find over 70,000 textile workers already working under T.W.O.C. agreements with mill owners. The number is increasing daily. The agreements cover over 150 mills. The largest of them are J. & P. Coats, the largest thread firm in the world, employing 4,000 workers; the Bigelow-Sanford carpet mills with 6,500 workers; and the Viscose Company, employing 20,000 workers, one of the large rayon-producing firms in the country. In the Bigelow-Sanford mills and the Viscose the workers gained a 10 per

cent increase in wages and one week's vacation with pay after a year's employment. Since the drive started, and inspired by the great auto "sit-down," Reading hosiery workers staged their "sit-down" strike and won union recognition.

The textile industry, which employs over one million workers, is divided into many branches. A table appearing in the *Textile Notes* for April (monthly service of Labor Research Association) gives us an idea of the size of the textile industry and how it is divided into branches and mills:

Branch	Plants	Employee
Cotton textiles	1,000	453,000
Woolen and worsted	600	170,000
Silk weaving plants	1,000	97,000
Hosiery	780	146,000
Silk and rayon throwsters	350	75,000
Underwear	606	67,500
Rayon yarn producers	20	54,000
Outerwear (sweaters, etc.)	1,100	50,000
Carpets and rugs	54	32,000
Cotton fabrics (narrow)	200	12,500
Total	5,710	1,157,000

Over one-half of all textile workers are women. Some 35 per cent of them are married women workers. This should do away with the old fable that "women won't organize because they leave the mills after they are married." This proves that women are in this "traditional women's" industry to stay.

Special demands to meet the needs of these women are a problem of great importance to the T.W.O.C. drive. The support of the Women's Trade Union League can be very useful in this campaign. It must be realized that to attain full organizational results in textiles, it is necessary that women workers be brought into leadership in the drive, and special methods of work among these women be developed.

Even though the textile industry is considered a "sick industry" *net* profits of the leading textile companies showed a marked increase in 1936 over 1935. Here are a few companies in the long chain of textile mill profits reported by Labor Research Association:

	<i>Net Profit</i>
American Woolen Co.	\$1,929,983*
Bigelow-Sanford Carpet	1,672,447
Industrial Rayon Corp.	1,361,460
Mohawk Carpet Mills	1,261,505
Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mills	1,279,066
Sanford Mills	1,968,804
Ludlow Manufacturing Ass'n.	1,959,710
Cannon Mills	4,275,558

Profits, prices, dividends and salaries all are up and trade papers and government figures agree that not since the war has the textile industry experienced such a sustained high degree of prosperity.

At the same time the average wage of the textile worker is the lowest of any industry in the country. According to government figures, the average wage for all manufacturing in 1936 was \$22.75 per year, but the average weekly wage in textile for the same period was \$16.12.

* Plus \$3,536,860 invested by the American Woolen Co. in the installation of new speed-up machinery.

THE ELLENBOGEN BILL

The \$18.50 minimum wage demanded in the Ellenbogen bill certainly deserves full support by the T.W.O.C. This is another important aspect of the vast organization campaign of the T.W.O.C.—the National Textile Act (the Ellenbogen bill). This extends the scope of the drive to the political front as well, and makes possible the political and economic mobilization of over one million workers. The Ellenbogen bill has tremendous implications. It brings up again the whole question of the "Solid South" versus the Roosevelt program, and on the final vote on this bill will hang not only the exposure of many reactionary Southern Democratic representatives and senators, but of all congressmen and representatives. If properly utilized this can spur the organization of a broad, progressive, political movement of the textile workers. Wherever it is possible the forces of Labor's Non-Partisan League should be mobilized.

The Ellenbogen bill as originally introduced provided for a set of model labor provisions and set a \$15 minimum wage and 35-hour work week, vacation with pay. As revised in January, 1937, the bill contained a provision for an \$18 minimum wage and a 35-hour week. The rising cost of living and the slightly raised wage-level of the textile workers as a whole made the wage revision necessary. Both drafts contained provisions for the establishment of wages above the minimum.

The present session of Congress, however, through the Sub-Committee on Labor, appointed to report on the National Textile Act (now H.R. 238),

redrafted the bill to provide again for a \$15 minimum wage and increased the maximum hours provision to 40 hours.

In the brief supporting the bill, Francis J. Gorman protested against the revised draft of the bill, and in a series of detailed statistical charts and analyses, upheld the contention of the union that the minimum should be \$18 and the hours, 35. He proved by Labor Department figures that for the four years from 1933 to 1936 inclusive the textile industry as a whole, and in each of its important sub-divisions, only managed to average a little over 35 hours per week. On the question of the proper minimum he pointed to the wide spread of mill margins, the increased rate of profit, the enormous salaries of textile officials, the increased price of textiles on the market and the increase in the consumption of fibres, which is generally conceded to be a good barometer for profit volume.

It has been said by representatives of the Labor Department and Congressional representatives that the present draft of the bill has more than a fair chance of passing. In fact, industrialists themselves seem to think so. The attitude of the industry, as shown in its attitude at the present hearings, is, first, that they don't want any legislation at all, and, second, that if they must have legislation they prefer the \$15-40-hour arrangement to the \$18-35-hour draft of the bill.

This does not mean that the textile workers' representatives for one minute support the present revision. Gorman emphatically stated that the union did not favor it, and protested the fact that it was drawn up without any consultation with labor at all. The

support for the bill mobilized in the field, therefore, must be around H.R. 238 as originally introduced by Congressman Ellenbogen on January 7, 1937—not as redrafted by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee the first week in May.

The present draft of the bill contains, in addition to a lowering of the labor standards set forth in the January draft, a provision for compulsory government enforcement of labor agreements and contracts. This must be fought by everybody working in connection with the Ellenbogen bill. The reactionary tendency toward compulsory intervention in trade union questions—compulsory arbitration, for example, and, finally, incorporation of the trade unions—is a very dangerous one, and we must all be on guard against it.

The struggle for passage of the bill should be particularly carried on in the South. The Southern Democrats must be made to take a stand. However, political support in Congress is going to be easier to mobilize in the North and East, because many New England manufacturers are in favor of the bill. The disadvantages of the wide wage-differential between Northern and Southern textiles is a good argument for mobilizing politicians in the North. In every textile state, however, the campaign to organize the workers into the T.W.O.C. should be coupled with mobilizing support for the Ellenbogen bill.

THE FORMATION OF THE T.W.O.C.

As one of the affiliated unions of the C.I.O. the United Textile Workers mobilized the workers in support of the C.I.O. organization drive in textile,

even before the Textile Workers Organizing Committee was formed. Through years of experience in organizing the textile workers, the United Textile Workers found the craft form of organization out of date and against the best interests of the membership. In recent years it has followed the industrial form of organization and has been known as one of the more progressive unions in the A. F. of L.

The delegates to the 1936 convention of the United Textile Workers represented a dues-paying membership of over 100,000, with union locals in almost every important textile center. It was at this convention that the ground work for this great textile drive was laid. Resolution after resolution in support of the C.I.O. was adopted.

Shortly after the convention President Thomas F. McMahon resigned to become Commissioner of Labor in Rhode Island. Francis J. Gorman, recognized by all as a progressive labor leader, became President of the U.T.W. He used his office as President to advance further the program and principles of the C.I.O. among the textile workers. It was this preliminary work in the U.T.W. that paved the way for the last step which led to the formation of the T.W.O.C.

We are reprinting here the agreement reached between the C.I.O. and the U.T.W. for this drive:

"1. A Textile Workers Organizing Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee for Industrial Organization. Such a committee shall consist of a Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer, and such additional members as are deemed necessary by the Chairman of the Committee for

Industrial Organization, _____ of whom shall be from the United Textile Workers of America.

"2. The Textile Workers Organizing Committee shall have full authority and power:

"(a) To administer outstanding and existing contracts between members and the United Textile Workers of America, or one of its affiliated federations or locals.

"(b) To handle all matters relative to the organizing campaign to be instituted on behalf of all the textile workers of this country.

"(c) To fix the initiation fees and dues for all new members, and to grant dispensation from the payment of initiation fees or dues for present members, and to require, if it so determines, that all initiation fees or dues that may come into the United Textile Workers of America from any other source, shall be turned over to the Textile Workers Organizing Committee for campaign purposes.

"(d) To deal with employers of textile workers and execute agreements on an industry, employer or any other basis in the discretion of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee.

"3. The United Textile Workers of America shall turn over its funds to the Textile Workers Organizing Committee to be used in the organizing campaign. The several officers and agents of the United Textile Workers of America shall place themselves under the jurisdiction and orders of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee.

"4. The Committee for Industrial Organization shall contribute such sums of money as conditions of the

organizing campaign require. The disbursement of the funds shall be made by the Secretary-Treasurer of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, subject to the rules promulgated by such committees.

"5. The Committee for Industrial Organization shall have complete power and authority to determine the details incident to the termination of the organizing campaign, the disbanding of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, and the reorganization of the United Textile Workers of America for the benefit of its present members and new members who join during the organizing campaign."

The T.W.O.C. was constituted as follows: Mr. Sidney Hillman, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, chairman; Francis J. Gorman and Emil Rieve for the U.T.W.; Thomas Kennedy for the Mine Workers, and an additional five members.

Chairman Hillman got to work at once and appointed regional directors. There are now about nine such regions and every region again is divided into sub-regions with sub-regional directors and hundreds of organizers scattered in every important textile city. In some sections the volunteer organizer system, so useful in organizing steel, is used; in other sections it is yet to be introduced.

As the drive progresses all active members of the U.T.W. locals find themselves involved in the great union-building campaign. Although some of the old locals show a tendency to feel somewhat neglected and some of their leaders find it hard to adjust themselves to the new campaign, these are

problems resulting from building a new organization on the foundation of the old and will be overcome in the course of the development of the union.

This is perhaps the widest drive in the history of the textile workers. It certainly is the best financed one. Once the textile workers begin to recognize that this is their drive there will be plenty of room in it for all those able to give leadership.

As contracts are signed, new locals of the T.W.O.C. are being chartered, many of these based on the old U.T.W. locals now in the field, but bringing into them many more new members. This results in the enlarging and strengthening of the old locals as well as adding many new ones.

TEXTILE WORKERS HAVE HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

For years textile workers have struggled against their miserable conditions. Throughout the history of America textile workers were found in strikes for union conditions and union recognition. Even the South has a history of textile unionism. The first convention of the U.T.W. in 1901, records a great number of delegates from the South. The U.T.W. was the first international textile union and it was formed as a combination of several independent unions. Only during the last few years has the U.T.W. stood unchallenged as the only nationwide union of textile workers.

The textile workers were determined to build a certain type of union. Through their bitter experience in the struggle against the mill bosses they have learned the need of unionism, but

they have also learned the meaning of rank-and-file control of their unions. The greatest struggles of the textile workers were carried on by militant unions and even the 1934 general strike called by the delegates to the 1934 convention of the union was carried on and spread in the main by the rank-and-file workers through their "flying squadrons."

Textile workers are careful and suspicious of their "organizers." They trust no one but their elected representatives, and the latter are watched and judged by their action. Textile workers are for democratically-controlled locals. The drive has just begun. The form it assumes will depend a great deal upon the textile workers themselves. The active participation of all textile workers in this drive will assure its success.

The T.W.O.C. with the backing it receives from all the C.I.O. unions and from the labor movement generally cannot fail to succeed. This campaign is bound to succeed because of its very nature. Textile workers have always wanted a *national drive*. Textile workers in the past learned the value of a movement which receives the backing from the rest of the organized labor movement. This drive provides all this and more. Unlike the past struggles this campaign is conducted in a period when the workers have won for themselves the right to belong to unions. This is written into the Wagner Act which says:

"Employees have as clear a right to organize and select their representatives as the company has to organize its business and select its own officers and agents."

"A union is essential to give laborers an

opportunity to deal on an equality with their employer."

Textile workers know that this law was written with their very blood. They have not forgotten their struggles for unionism for which their brothers and sisters paid with their lives. They remember the 1934 strike and the 15 who were killed. They have not forgotten Marion, N. C., where seven were murdered. They remember their "singing woman," Ella Wiggins, who was shot for no other crime but picketing a mill. They remember Gastonia and all other struggles for unionism.

Textile workers are satisfied in feeling that they played a great part in forcing the nine old men to put their o.k. to the right of labor to organize into unions.

The files of the National Labor Relations Board are full of the names of textile workers blacklisted for union activities. *Now, with the fear of the blacklist eliminated, the textile workers are ready for this drive.*

DISRUPTIVE FUNCTION OF THE A. F. OF L.

The organization of the textile workers is the job of the entire labor movement and not only of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee or even of the C.I.O. This is particularly true in the South. It is this drive that requires the *unity of the entire labor movement. Without such unity the whole movement will suffer.*

While the T.W.O.C. is conducting the drive in the South and has established offices in almost every important textile center, the A. F. of L., through its agents, is making public announce-

ments that they are going to organize the South on the basis of Americanism a Southern union for the Southerners. They are applying the same methods of disruption, stimulating bigotry and racial and political prejudice that the employers have been using for years.

President Green and his stooge in the South, George Googe, are confusing the minds of the textile workers in the South. For they certainly cannot and will not organize the South any more than they organized the North.

And while the A. F. of L. and Googe are trying to disrupt this great movement to organize the Southern textile slaves, our *Daily Worker* reports:

"The organized labor movement of the entire South is being profoundly stirred by the great labor developments in the country—especially by the C.I.O. textile campaign.

"There is hardly a labor body in the South which does not reflect the movement for mass organization. The handful of A. F. of L. officials, stubbornly trying to pursue their out-of-date policies, even at the cost of a split, have been handed several setbacks in the last week or two in the highest bodies of the labor movement here.

"These developments are of high importance. The struggle for unity is by no means over. But the already favorable outlook for unity and for success in the textile drive in the South has considerably improved as the Textile Workers Organizing Committee of the C.I.O. begins to pick up speed in its work, now nearing the close of its first month."

At the same time there are a number of political implications involved in the Southern textile drive. The reactionaries in the Democratic Party, composed in the main of mill owners, have been forced to accept certain progressive measures in substance, but in reality they have sabotaged them from the

start. Many of the Democratic Party leaders are talking of a split within the party. They are fighting to destroy all progressive gains which the workers have made, and are specifically attacking the organizing drive.

To meet this attack, unity is essential. Unity in the labor movement can be achieved through this drive in the South. It should serve as a great unifying force to bring the entire organized labor movement together. The Southern textile workers should receive the full support from all labor bodies, North and South. Resolutions should be passed especially in the North demanding that Green stop his splitting and disruption of the labor movement.

The response to the drive in the South is great. Textile workers are signing up in the thousands. The fact that the Southern Federation of Textile Workers, which Green tried to create in order to split the textile workers, has now affiliated with the T.W.O.C. is proof that the textile workers are out to build a united organization of the C.I.O. in the South.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE T.W.O.C.

The members of the Communist Party have no other interest in the textile drive than to advance the best interests of the T.W.O.C. The Communist Party members in the textile industry are working together with the rest of the workers to win improved conditions and union recognition, just as in steel and auto the Communists, who are organizers in the drive, are distinguished by their devotion to the cause of labor and by their readiness to sacrifice all for the drive.

For years the Communists worked

single-handed to bring the message of industrial unionism to the workers. Today the Communist Party hails the T.W.O.C. drive and in every textile center the Party is actively helping in the campaign.

Our Party is giving full support to the textile drive. The workers know, respect, and have confidence in the Communists. Many textile workers, members of the Communist Party, are known to the textile workers from former struggles in the industry. And known textile workers, now in the ranks of the Communist Party, can say with pride and modesty: "Yes, I am a Communist and am proud of it." And rightly so. Is it not true that for years the Communists have stood alone in the struggle to organize the unorganized textile workers into industrial unions? And is it not true that while we American Communists are taking part in the daily struggles of the workers for their immediate demands, we can proudly point to one-sixth of the world where the Communist Party is building socialism, is establishing a society where there are no classes, no bosses to profit out of the exploitation of the workers? We then can point out how textile workers live and work in the Soviet Union. We can point out that while at the World Textile Conference they could not agree even for a 40-hour week, in the Soviet Union textile workers are working only a 35-hour week and every sixth day is a rest day. We can point to the social insurance the Soviet textile workers receive, vacations, maternity insurance, etc.

THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

Textile workers are eager for organ-

ization. They are joining the union by the thousands. The agreements signed by the T.W.O.C. are considered as only temporary. In fact, some of the agreements are for carrying clauses which stipulate that 15 or 30 days' notice can be given for changes. The textile workers are looking forward to the government to pass legislation which will be in keeping with the election promises of the Roosevelt administration.

Our Party is the only political party which is giving full support to the textile drive. The program of our Party covers the needs of the textile workers. What we must do in this drive is to bring the program of the Party to the textile workers. We must show that the Party fights for industrial unionism, for organizing the unorganized, for curbing the dictatorial powers of the Supreme Court, for the extension of democratic rights, for the defeat of reaction and fascism.

These issues once popularized will receive the full support of the masses. The mass of textile workers must be made to realize that *our policies and our program will benefit them. We must prove to the workers that we as Communists are fighting in the interests of the workers, that we are advancing their own ideals, that we are fighting for the very things they themselves have wanted all their lives.*

It is not enough for our Party membership to be "just good union members." The job for our Party is to politicalize the struggles of the workers. We can do this through education, mass meetings, celebrations of victories of the textile workers, special Party leaflets which deal not only with building the union, but also with all other

needs of the workers, the high cost of living, etc., radio talks which are advertised in advance; and, of course, we must organize the drive for the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* in every textile district.

At the last meeting of the Central Committee of our Party, Comrade Browder said:

"In textile we see great struggles developing that promise much greater achievements than those of 1934. The situation today is such, what with the mood of the textile workers, that if all progressives work right and take the job seriously, the workers can make many gains. That is why it is essential for the Communists to work harder in textile, to give better guidance and stand out as the most courageous workers."*

Our comrades must play an important part in this drive. For example, we can bring leading union people into the Party. We can and should develop a drive to get subscriptions to the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*. We, of course, can resolve to read the *Daily Worker*, too, not to mention *The Communist* and *Party Organizer*. We can pass these on to other workers after we have read them.

The fraction must play an important part in building the shop units in their own places of work. Leading textile comrades who are doing union work should realize that the work of organizing a mill can be much easier if we build a unit in this mill.

Comrade Foster said that Communists must be the best union men in the shops, that it is our job to make progressive workers outside of our Party

politically conscious and thus aware of the need for joining the Party.

After the 1934 strike, Comrade Browder said that more Communists in the union would make such strike defeats impossible. We are on the eve of even greater struggles, and more Party members will safeguard a victory in these struggles.

The building of the Party in the textile industry cannot wait until the drive is over. Our Party is a party of class struggle. *We cannot postpone the building of the Party. It can be built only in the struggles of the workers.*

There are, of course, many new methods of building the Party. Faced as we are with a rising union movement, our Party certainly can play a great role in helping to develop the union consciousness among the textile workers. Classes can and should be organized everywhere. New leading workers are coming to the front, but these workers need our guidance. And while individual guidance is necessary it is always best to get a group of workers together and thus broaden our influence. Socialist competition in building our Party certainly can best be used right now when the textile workers are on the march.

Comrade Jack Stachel has correctly pointed out:

"While it is necessary to proceed with caution in some sections of the country in order to carry on Party organizational work in textile, there may also be a tendency on the part of the comrades to conceal the identity of the Party. *The Party has a real role to play, a role which it does not conceal from anybody.*"

In those places where the Party members have learned what their role is, there we are building the Party.

* Earl Browder, *The Results of the Elections and the People's Front*, pp. 51-52. Workers Library Publishers, New York.

FOSTER'S NEW BOOK

BY ALEX BITTELMAN

FROM BRYAN TO STALIN. By William Z. Foster. International Publishers, New York. \$2.50.

IN THE preface to his new book, *From Bryan to Stalin*, William Z. Foster says:

"In this book, I have tried to show those forces which impelled me, an American worker, to arrive at these revolutionary conclusions, to become a Communist."

This alone would make the book an outstanding event. To see the path to Communism traveled by an American worker, as Comrade Foster modestly introduces his work: from Bryanism to the Socialist Party, through Left-wing militancy and anarcho-syndicalism, then to the broad highway of progressive trade unionism, and finally and inevitably to the camp of Communism and its world leader, Stalin—to be shown this path of passionate struggle and thought is in itself a deeply inspiring education.

But when a work of this kind is done by one of the most experienced and dynamic leaders of American labor, whose thoughts and struggles have played such a decisive role in shaping the destinies of the American labor movement and who today, together with his closest comrade-in-

arms, Earl Browder, stands at the head of the most advanced detachment of the American working class, then the work before us becomes much more than a significant and outstanding book. It becomes a program and guide for every progressive trade unionist in the great forward march of labor at the present time. It becomes a powerful call to action for the People's Front against fascism and war. It becomes a wide and brightly lighted pathway to Communism, to the Communist Party, to Leninism and to Stalin, for all class conscious workers in the United States.

It is a piece of historic writing that is invaluable. No one participating in the present upsurge of the progressive forces of this country can really be fully conscious of the origin of this upsurge, its present significance and perspectives of development without reading this book. And for the much needed history of the Communist Party of the United States, Foster's book lays a broad and solid foundation.

Broadly speaking, Foster's work runs along three main lines: (a) trade unionism and independent working class political action; (b) the relation of the working class to the middle classes; and (c) the role of the Communist Party in the mass movements. In large outline, these are problems of

the labor movement of all countries, and their successful solution in Leninism constitutes the most powerful weapon of working class liberation. Comrade Foster shows historically *the peculiarities and specific features* of these problems in the United States. He shows how the advanced American workers have struggled to find a solution for them, the set-backs and achievements in the course of several decades, and the eventual theoretical and political clarification reached when the advanced American workers made Leninism their own and formed the Communist Party.

SYNDICALISM AND PURE-AND-SIMPLE TRADE UNIONISM

The retarded and slow growth of the political independence of the American working class in the past has been a subject of much study and comment for many, many years. In their time, Marx and Engels devoted great attention to this peculiarity in the development of the class struggle in the United States. So has Lenin in a later era, and still later—Stalin. With the findings of Marxism-Leninism as his guide, Comrade Foster unfolds and lights up his own experiences in wrestling with the problem of economics and politics, trade unionism and independent working class political action.

While developing a broad and, at times, highly militant trade union movement, the bulk of the working class and of the trade unions were following the capitalist parties in politics. The politics in which the unions did engage were not of a proletarian class character which make the working class politically independent and

enable it to become the leader of all toilers in the struggle against the capitalist class. Rather these trade union politics were of a narrow craft character, highly opportunist, and largely subjugated to the interests of one or another section of the capitalist class.

This was the condition that the boy Foster found in the late nineties when he began to think in terms of class struggle. He was deeply stirred by the great economic struggles of the workers. As he writes: "The numerous strikes were rapidly developing my proletarian class instinct." (P. 20.) While on the political field, it was Bryan, especially his campaign in 1896, which attracted him.

"Of course, I was quite unable to judge of the middle class political content of Bryan's platform, but it looked to me like a real fight against the great trusts that were oppressing the workers and farmers in common so I gave the movement such support as a lad of 15 years might." (P. 20.)

Had the advanced American workers of the 'seventies and 'eighties followed the advice of Marx and Engels on how to link up with the mass movements in the spirit of the *Communist Manifesto*, Comrade Foster might have found a more favorable condition for his own development. He might have found more substantial beginnings of an independent mass working class political party, a party that could have led independently the proletarian struggle against the emerging domination of finance capital instead of following in the tail of Ryan, that could have rallied *to itself* the rebellious farmers and middle classes of the cities, and that could even have entered into an alliance with Bryan against the

parties of the trusts but as an independent political force. Many a setback, and many wanderings into devious by-ways would have been spared American labor and its most advanced representatives that entered the class struggle in the late 'nineties had the course of political development in this country been such as Marx and Engels were orientating the American movement towards.

The first criticism that Comrade Foster heard of the Bryan movement from a proletarian point of view was not that which followed from the position of Marx and Engels but one which had the sectarian twist of the Socialist Labor Party. It was at the now famous open-air meeting, in the summer of 1900, on Broad and South streets in Philadelphia.

"That street meeting indeed marked a great turning point in my life." It made Foster a Socialist. It most likely also injected into him (what the boy Foster could hardly feel) that strain of Socialist Labor Party sectarianism and semi-syndicalism which hampered for a time his development toward a Leninist point of view.

There were, of course, serious objective factors arising from the economic and political peculiarities of this country (the expansion of the frontier, the specific combination of extensive and intensive development of American capitalism until the end of the nineteenth century, the absence of revolutionary bourgeois-democratic tasks before the working class, its specific composition, etc.), factors which militated against the more rapid and even growth of the political independence of the American working

class. Foster deals with all these factors and the role they played. Here we concern ourselves mainly with the subjective factors that obstructed for a long time the growth of this independence and the emergence of a Marxist-Leninist party.

Foster joined the Socialist Party. But what was the character of the politics that prevailed in that party?

"Domination of the Socialist Party by these middle class intellectuals condemned the party to a policy of opportunism. Their conception of the party's role was to serve as an instrument of the petty bourgeoisie against the advancing big capitalists; which meant a near-Bryan movement under a new guise. They attempted to subordinate the working class into supplying the fighting troops of the middle class." (P. 29.)

Foster rebelled against this condition and found himself in the Left wing. This was an important turn; for rebellion against reformism and opportunism is a first step to revolutionary Marxism, to the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. Lenin's writings were needed to direct this rebellion into the correct channels. But these writings were practically unknown here at that time. The Left elements in the labor movement were deeply saturated with syndicalism and sectarianism. Hence—

"It was an easy step for me to conclude from the paralyzing reformism of the Socialist Party that political action in general was fruitless and that the way to working class emancipation was through militant trade union action, culminating in the general strike." (P. 47.)

The road thus began to twist into syndicalist and anarcho-syndicalist channels. And that's what happened. "It was chiefly disgust with the petty-bourgeois leadership and policies of

the Socialist Party that made me join the I.W.W."

It was highly significant for Foster's future development that his first serious conflict with the I.W.W. and his eventual break with it came on the tactical question of "boring from within" rather than on the more fundamental issue of syndicalism and anarchism. These continued to be regarded by Foster as the most correct expressions of working class revolutionary theory and principle in common with the I.W.W. But he parted with them on the question of which was the best way of *winning the masses* to these principles. Foster had reached the conclusion that the best way was for working class revolutionists to work within the existing mass organizations of the workers, the trades unions, and that meant, at the time, the American Federation of Labor. The orthodox I.W.W. favored, on the contrary, the organization of separate anarcho-syndicalist unions.

It was largely on this issue of "boring from within" which Foster insisted upon, accompanied by many other developments which we cannot go into here, that *he eventually became the creator of the modern Left and progressive current in the American trade union movement—the creator of that current and its chief organizer*. This was in the fateful years of the first world imperialist war with the great strikes and organizing drives in meat packing and steel led by Foster who was then an organizer of the American Federation of Labor, with the spread of Left and progressive movements in nearly all unions, with the fresh resurgence of movements for independ-

ent working class political action and labor parties, with the raising within the American Federation of Labor of the issue of industrial unionism and the developing of the struggle for amalgamation of the craft unions into industrial unions.

This phase of Foster's development, and his role in the labor movement, deserve special attention today. What was it that Foster fought for most particularly in the A. F. of L. during the years of the world war? For the organization of the unorganized, especially in the basic industries; for industrial unionism and amalgamation; for independent working class political action and a labor party. On these main issues he was creating and organizing the Left and progressive forces in the trade unions, the more advanced elements later uniting in the Trade Union Educational League and collaborating with the progressive forces outside of it.

The fight for these issues, and the crystallization of the Left and progressive trade union forces in the process, continued all through the post-war period under Foster's leadership, undergoing various changes. We speak of the historic role played by the Trade Union Educational League and later by the Trade Union Unity League in the fight for the organization of the unorganized, for industrial unionism, for a progressive and class conscious trade union movement.

It was through these great fights, in which the Communist Party and Comrade Foster played a leading part, that many of the conditions had been prepared for the present magnificent upsurge of the progressive labor move-

ment. It was through these very fights that the Communist and Left forces in the trade unions gained the knowledge, experience and influence which enable them now to contribute so constructively and effectively in the present forward march of labor, in the present new and higher stage of the American labor movement.

It was truly said by Comrade Dimitroff that:

"For the first time in the history of America, the working class of the United States is displaying its independence as a class, uniting its forces into mass trade unions and actively taking the lead of the democratic and progressive forces in the country against reaction and fascism."

Many powerful objective factors have contributed to this great change: the profound stirrings and experiences of the masses during the crisis years, the waning prestige of capitalism and of big business, the deep influences of the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union, the rise and menace of capitalist reaction and fascism, the experiences of the People's Front in France and Spain, the resurgence of the traditional Farmer-Labor democracy of America on a new and higher level in which the working class is assuming the position of leadership. All these have contributed mightily to the far-reaching shift in class forces and to the emergence of the working class as a leading progressive force in the country.

From Bryan to Stalin, the book of Foster's own life and experiences, is also the story of the great transformation of the American working class. It is the story of how the creative and advanced forces of the American pro-

letariat have worked, suffered and struggled through many decades to bring about a condition when the working class should begin "displaying its independence as a class," should begin "uniting its forces into mass trade unions," should begin "taking the lead of the democratic and progressive forces in the country against reaction."

WORKING CLASS AND MIDDLE CLASSES

This was one of the difficult problems—the relation between the working class and the middle classes—with which the advanced elements of the American proletariat have struggled for a long time. So did Foster. And it was in the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin that the problem found its correct solution.

Currently, in the course of the history of the American labor movement, this problem was given many "solutions." The pure-and-simple trade unionist of the Gompers tradition had a narrow craft union approach to the question. It was this approach that dictated such positions as trade unionists joining forces with big business on the questions of tariffs and of "gold versus silver"—in opposition to the middle classes of city and country on these very issues. The result of such narrow craft union politics was to split the working class politically, to isolate it from its natural allies among the middle classes and to make it the plaything of the monopolies. It resulted also, as is known too well, in preventing the organization of the workers even into trade unions.

Socialist reformism had a different "solution." It was the adoption of the

point of view of the middle classes and the subjugation of the proletariat to the petty bourgeoisie. The Socialist Party, under reformist leadership, was therefore a party of proletarian and middle class elements in which the middle class elements were exercising domination—ideologically, politically and organizationally. The result of this is also well known. It drove the proletarian and militant forces out of that party which was itself an adjunct to various petty-bourgeois movements.

These were the prevailing "solutions" that young Foster found when he began to participate in the labor movement in the late 'nineties; these and the Left propaganda of the Socialist Labor Party (remember the open-air meeting in Philadelphia) which advocated a sectarian and semi-syndicalist position on the question. To the Socialist Labor Party all non-proletarian classes were just one "reactionary mass" with which the working class must wage "uncompromising" war. The sectarian and syndicalist had no idea of allies among the middle classes.

True, the correct Marxian solution was already public property at the time. Marx's fight against the anarchists as well as against pure-and-simple trade unionists on this issue had pretty well established programmatically the correct political relations between the working class and the middle classes. Engels' specific advice to the American Socialists were numerous and highly practical and concrete. But these views, for many reasons, were not the prevailing views.

And so it happened that upon joining the Socialist Party Foster took up the fight against the petty-bourgeois

domination in that party. He writes:

"The fight, centering around the main question of proletarian versus petty-bourgeois control of the Party, developed into a struggle for power with many ramifications." (P. 32.)

It was the fight that led to the split of 1909. For Foster and most of the proletarian militants engaged in this struggle between the Right and Left groups in the party, that fight resulted in a break with the Socialist Party altogether and in joining the I.W.W. In other words, from the morass of reformism into the pitfalls of syndicalism.

The harmful effects of this entanglement with syndicalism were, fortunately, only temporary. *Foster's urge to the mass movements* soon brought him into the American Federation of Labor, to leadership in the big mass struggles and organizing drives. And although still guided for a time by syndicalist ideas, he was intensively digesting and evaluating *the experiences* of the mass struggles, *the logic of events*, all of which were preparing him for a significant turn in the direction of Leninism and its solution of the relations between the working class and the middle classes; the solution which calls upon the proletariat to display its independence as a class and "actively to take the lead of the democratic and progressive forces." (Dimitroff.) The historic victory of the socialist revolution in Russia under Bolshevik leadership and a close study of the teachings of Lenin and Stalin have had the effect of producing that *qualitative change* in Foster's outlook and approach, a change, maturing quantitatively for years, which made

him an outstanding builder and leader of the Communist Party.

PROGRESSIVE UNIONISM AND THE ROLE
OF THE COMMUNISTS

"My whole experience of many years in the revolutionary movement had prepared me to readily become a Communist." (P. 156.)

This short sentence should be read and re-read, studied and reflected upon by all truly progressive and Left trade unionists. Foster's experiences are those of one of the most influential and dynamic leaders of the Left and progressive forces in the American labor movement, in fact, the creator and organizer of these forces of the modern Left and progressive trade union current. And in this are contained several significant lessons.

Let us state some of them briefly.

1. When the experiences of a Left and progressive trade unionist in the American labor movement are lighted up with the theory and teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the resulting product is Communism. Isn't that true? This is the great truth which Foster's life to date and his book demonstrate afresh beyond any doubt.

This is the truth which thousands of Left and progressive trade unionists of today are in need of seeing and digesting. They need this truth for their own selves, for the good of our class, for the progress of the American people. They need to read and study Foster's book.

Let them reflect for a while just upon this one idea. The conception of progress, like all other things, is relative: what is progressive today, may not be so progressive tomorrow. Con-

sequently, when the American working class and the labor movement are marching forward with the increasing tempo that they do, its progressive forces must make *doubly sure* that they will always be in the van, that they will not find themselves all of a sudden at the tail end.

Is there such a danger of slipping to the tail end? Yes, there is. And where does it come from? It comes from lack of perspective, the habit of living theoretically and politically from hand to mouth. It comes primarily from the absence of revolutionary theory which alone can light up progressive practice, keep its perspectives clear, and insure its leading role in the forward movements of the masses.

There is only one such theory. It is Marxism-Leninism. It is incorporated in the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. *From Bryan to Stalin* shows that this is so.

2. Communist workers and trade unionists are able to play *the constructive, the unifying, the politically enlightening and theoretically leading role* in the present forward march of labor and its allies because they are the most consistent progressive element guided by the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. Precisely because they are Communists.

This truth, so convincingly demonstrated in Foster's book, needs to be digested not only by those hesitating progressives who seem continually in danger of being tripped up by the slanders of the Red-baiters. This great truth needs to be digested by Communists themselves, especially by Communist workers in the trade unions. A Communist member of a union in-

creases his value to the working class, to the progressive trade union movement, and to the forward march of the people not by being less of a Communist but, on the contrary, *by being a better Communist, a Bolshevik.*

And that means better and more competent constructive work in organizing the unorganized and building the unions as a democratic and progressive force for the benefit of the

working class and its allies; more of a unifying force of the working class itself and of the working class leadership in the general democratic and progressive camp; more consistent political enlightenment of the masses; more thorough-theoretical equipment in the teachings of Lenin and Stalin and the widest propaganda of these teachings.

In short: "From Bryan to Stalin."

THE PEOPLE'S MANDATE IN MINNESOTA

BY NAT ROSS

THE people of Minnesota last fall gave a clear mandate to their legislators for progressive legislation as part of the overwhelming victory of the Farmer-Labor Party. In his inaugural address Governor Elmer Benson outlined a comprehensive program designed to meet the needs of the people. He pointed out that "The overwhelming majority of our citizens said that they will no longer be content to suffer at the hands of a system which, during periods of so-called prosperity, gives them nothing more than a mere existence, and during periods of depression inflicts upon them misery, hunger and want." He then proposed legislation beneficial to labor, the farmers, the unemployed, the youth and all sections of the population.

Before considering the status of this legislative program, let us examine the relationship of forces in the legislature.

The lower House is composed of 131 members elected on a "non-partisan" basis. Nevertheless, 51 of these are avowed Farmer-Laborites and constitute the more or less consistently progressive bloc. The reactionary bloc numbers about 45 and is composed mainly of Republicans supported by a few Democrats and "Independents." The remaining thirty-odd representatives constitute the so-called liberal

bloc and are made up in the main of liberal Democrats with a few liberal Republicans and independents. The major political tendency of this group might be characterized as supporters of Roosevelt in state politics. In reality, the liberals joined with the Farmer-Laborites to organize the House and to assume leadership over the most important committees. One of the leaders of the liberal bloc was elected speaker of the House and another, chairman of the powerful rules committee. These were a few of the concessions made to the liberals by the Farmer-Labor administration and legislators as the result of an understanding that the liberal bloc would support the progressive legislative program.

It is important to note that ten of the present members of the liberal bloc belonged to the reactionary group in the last session of the Legislature. Joining the liberal-Farmer-Labor bloc was the result not only of a desire to obtain better committee assignments and job influence, but especially the pressure of the people and the temper of the times. It indicates that in the political upsurge now taking place in America, not only masses of Democratic and Republican supporters can be broken away from the old-line parties, but also certain leading elements and groups can

be won over in the direction of a people's movement. While they bring remnants of the old influences into the new setting, still they can play a progressive role.

The Senate is a hold-over from the 1934 elections and is dominated by the reactionaries. Even here, however, the people's mandate has affected some of the formerly reactionary senators. While no fundamental realignment has taken place comparable to the changes in the House, nevertheless the control of reactionary majority is less vigorous and stable. Differentiation has not gone as far in the Senate as in the House. Of the 67 members, 23 are Farmer-Laborites and the remainder compose the reactionary bloc. A small section of this majority bloc does tend toward taking an independent position on some issues, but as yet it lacks the definite character of the House liberal bloc, to which it might be compared. The reactionaries are buttressed by certain reactionary state departments, the state supreme court, the press and other agencies of capitalist propaganda and pressure.

Early in the session it was clear, given the composition of the Legislature, with the lame duck Senate slightly weakened but still made up largely of the agents of utility, banking and landholding interests, that Governor Benson's legislative program was bound to meet serious opposition. Enactment of the program demanded, first, the development of an all-inclusive mass movement behind this legislation, and, second, the perfection of a hard-hitting inner organizational apparatus between the administration and the liberal Farmer-Labor bloc.

A number of significant actions were taken by Governor Benson. At the state convention of the Farmer-Labor Association, three weeks after his inaugural address, Benson reaffirmed his inaugural program before the eight hundred delegates who represented every important mass organization in Minnesota. He called for the organization of the unorganized, and declared:

"There will be many occasions when your voice may be needed. There will be public committee hearings on matters of pending legislation. The special interests will be there, ably represented by the best brains that money can buy, pleading their cause. You will have to be on your toes, prepared to present the case for the people. . . . The members of our state Senate must know that the people are watching them, or they are apt to lapse into forgetfulness. You can go a long way to see that they do not become forgetful. . . . A people's lobby has no six-course dinner to offer, but they are effective, nevertheless."

This speech undoubtedly played an important part in stimulating the people to find ways and means of putting over their legislative program. Furthermore, early in the session Governor Benson called a joint meeting of the two houses in order to present his case on a number of vital issues. On this occasion he utilized the radio to speak directly to the people from the rostrum of the Legislature. In order to arrive at a clearer and more harmonious understanding with the progressive bloc in the House, Benson has, on a few occasions, spoken at the liberal-Farmer-Labor caucuses.

He recently declared that he would call a special session if there was any serious tampering with his tax proposals at the regular session in the direc-

tion of imposing burdens on the workers, farmers and small homeowners.

A number of other acts have indicated the Governor's intention and his willingness to fight for Farmer-Labor principles. His action in the timber workers' strike is noteworthy. At the outbreak of the strike, which involved some 5,000 lumberjacks throughout Northern Minnesota, he declared as a general principle that "striking workers must never go hungry or cold, irrespective of the merits of the controversy." Within a few days after the strike began, the Governor appointed a committee composed of trade union leaders, legislators, and the relief director to investigate the strike and bring it to a speedy conclusion. The militant fight of the lumberjacks and the vigorous action of Benson secured a settlement which brought many improvements in the conditions of these bitterly oppressed workers. The Minnesota Timber Workers Union, affiliated to the Carpenters International, grew from a few hundred at the beginning of the struggle to a dues-paying membership of four thousand at the present time.

Governor Benson also intervened on the side of the workers in the American Gas Machine strike in Albert Lea. The picket lines were brutally smashed by the sheriff and his deputies, fifty-two of the leaders arrested, and the union headquarters demolished. The reign of terror against the militant workers was broken when Benson intervened, upheld the rights of the strikers, condemned the criminal action of the authorities, and announced he would remain in Albert Lea until a satisfactory agreement was arrived at. His

declaration announcing a five-day week with no reduction in pay for state employees under his supervision, his persistent fight in behalf of the farmers and the unemployed at the various conferences of governors and in his meetings with Roosevelt show evidence that Benson is carrying out the people's mandate.

While the Governor's militant leadership has influenced the Farmer-Labor and liberal legislators, one must not assume for a moment that even among the Farmer-Laborites there is real unity of purpose or an approach to even the major legislative questions. The Farmer-Laborites can be divided into three groups. First, a Left-wing progressive group which leads in the fight for the Governor's proposals. Second, a group that supports the Benson and Farmer-Labor program but without much determination or vigor. Third, a small group of Right-wing Farmer-Laborites, most of whom are hostile to progressive legislation. This latter group tends to disrupt the unity of the first two groups with the main body of the liberal bloc, which together forms the dynamic force in the House. If one examines the personnel of the militant, progressive group which accounts for some 20 or 25 out of the 51 Farmer-Laborites in the House, they will find that many of these militants are members of trade unions, farm organizations, cooperatives, the Workers Alliance, etc.

The lesson of the Minnesota House is clear, namely, that the masses must increasingly select, as their representatives, people who have shown themselves worthy in the struggles and leadership of labor, farm and other mass

organizations. It should be noted that it is precisely this group which works in close cooperation with the Left-wing forces in the mass movement (including the Communists) and which in the main supports the demand for an all-inclusive Farmer-Labor Party.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR

Most of the proposals made in Governor Benson's inaugural address have been thrown into the legislative hopper. As this is being written the Legislature is in motion on a number of major bills. Let us examine two important bills that were defeated in the House. The first was a bill calling for party designation in the election of legislators. This measure was defeated by a close vote mainly because the liberals broke with the Farmer-Laborites. It was obvious that the liberals preferred to remain without any definite party ties as being more advantageous to their personal political fortunes. It should be noted, however, that the Benson forces did not aggressively use every form of mass pressure and parliamentary maneuver to prevent this defeat. Another vital measure lost was the power bill which called for an amendment giving the state the right to take over power sites, develop them, etc. The vote was 67 to 63, the reactionary bloc winning over a section of the liberals by using the cry that the state was going into business, introducing socialism, etc. In general, the defeat of these two bills reveals the relative weakness of direct mass pressure from the people for these measures, the inability of the Benson administration to unite the inner forces to drive through these bills, the cleavage between the

liberal and Farmer-Labor blocs, and the capitulation to the reactionaries on the part of the small Right-wing Farmer-Labor group.

Among the more important bills that have already been passed by the House but not acted upon by the Senate are the following: the income tax bill which increases the top rate on corporation income in excess of \$150,000 to 16 per cent and top rate on individual income in excess of \$100,000 to 25 per cent. This measure would bring in approximately \$14,000,000. It is now before the Senate which is making every effort to pare it down. The moneys and credits tax bill passed by the House is expected to net several millions. The homestead exemption bill for the first \$4,000 assessed valuation is intended to save small homeowners and farmers some \$2,000,000 annually. The present old-age assistance law has been amended to drop the age eligibility from 65 to 60 and to raise the maximum monthly allowance from \$30 to \$50.

Important bills that have been reported out of committee and now face action on the House floor are as follows: a \$17,000,000 relief appropriation measure, a bill replacing the Farm Bureau by a democratic farm organization, a measure providing for compulsory cooperative education in the schools, a bill providing for a 30-hour week except in agriculture, and a bill requiring the union label on all state printing. These bills and a number of others are now on the House General Orders.

It is clear that how much of the progressive program becomes law depends primarily upon action taken by the

Senate. In the past few weeks the strengthening of the Farmer-Labor-liberal alliance and the development of a serious people's movement for progressive legislation has had repercussions in the Senate. In the first part of the session the Senate killed a number of important bills or cut the appropriations they called for. The latter tactic accounted for the drastic reduction in the seed-loan appropriation from the \$2,000,000 adopted by the House to the \$750,000 passed by the Senate. The 44-hour bill for women which passed the House was defeated in the Senate. The vote, 47 to 38, indicated that the Senate line-up was broken on this measure, but not sufficiently to put it over. One of the most interesting features of the present session is the fact that, in the main, the reactionaries are on the defensive. With a few exceptions, they have not introduced reactionary legislation, but have rather adopted the method of killing or curtailing progressive measures.

PRESSURE GROUPS

During the first six weeks of the session, while the legislature was being organized, committees set up, bills being drawn, the reactionary forces were much more active than the masses of the people. In this period there was a tendency among the trade unions and other groups within the mass movement to feel too confident about the passage of progressive measures. There was apparent a tendency to wait and give the reactionaries a chance to hang themselves, to wait until the bills had been drawn and introduced.

The most important reactionary po-

litical forces in the state are grouped around the power, railroad, mining, flour, packing, liquor and banking interests. On a number of occasions these capitalist forces have brought groups of people before the public hearings on various bills. These people are in the main employees in offices and banks and other white collar and technical groups under the sway of big business. At other times more direct methods are utilized. The Mesaba Railroad, subsidiary of U.S. Steel, compelled 350 employees to sign a petition opposing tax increases on railroad and mining concerns. This resolution was sent to Farmer-Labor Senator Homer Carr who firmly replied that he would support legislation that would require a greater proportion of "the vast earnings of these companies to meet requirements for schools and social security legislation." The open-shop Honeywell Corporation in Minneapolis compelled 1,930 of its employees to sign a petition against increased taxes on business and industry. The power and other interests are engaged in vigorous lobbying to try and win the representatives from the small communities on the grounds that utility company branches are the main tax support of these small towns. Elaborate banquets and entertainments, free to legislators, are another means employed to influence legislation. The St. Paul Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Great Northern Railroad have expensively wined and dined legislators. The mining interests, part of U.S. Steel, maintain an active lobby throughout the session. The recent defeat in the Senate of the Oleomargarine Bill resulted from the large sums of

money expended by the packing trust, much of which, according to political circles, found its way into the pockets of senators. The effect of big business reaction on the Legislature was apparent in the vicious refusal of the reactionaries in the Senate to permit Farmer-Laborite Edward Hagen, chairman of the House Tax Committee, to speak on the income tax proposal before a tax hearing committee. This was a dramatic, if impudent, expression of the desperate determination of big business to fight the Farmer-Labor tax proposals, which constitute the key to the entire progressive legislative program.

In spite of a slow start, the forces of the people have already acted positively in the fight for progressive legislation. The state convention of the Farmer-Labor Association held in January, and the numerous district, county and city conventions both prior to and after the state meeting, went on record for a real people's program. These conventions are attended by delegates from all the important mass organizations, trade union, farm, unemployed, cooperative, Farmer-Labor clubs, etc., in the state. The State Convention called for broad mass action behind the progressive program and 23 Farmer-Labor representatives in the House presented a resolution which declared in part:

"We feel, however, and are getting more convinced daily, as we sit in the legislative sessions, that two things are imperative to our success:

"First, we need the backing of all those who are interested in the Farmer-Labor legislative program, and who will benefit by it. We are aware of the existence of a reactionary Senate, and many reactionary and wavering

legislators who will do all in their power to block every measure aimed to benefit the people. In the light of this, a campaign to inform the people of this state on the merits of our legislative program is necessary. The Farmer-Labor Association and its affiliated bodies, the trade unions, the Workers Alliance, the farmers' organizations, the cooperatives, can and must as speedily as possible undertake such a campaign. Mass pressure on the Senate and the House to enact the Farmer-Labor program will be of tremendous help to us in the legislature. You are in a position to mobilize such, and we call upon you to render this service in the interest of our people.

"Second, unity of purpose in the ranks of the Farmer-Labor Party is the only assurance of our success. . . ."

In spite of the individualistic lobbying tactics of the State Federation of Labor bureaucracy and their opposition to vigorous mass pressure, the trade union movement has taken certain measures, although somewhat inadequate, to press for labor legislation. This is seen in the activities of the House members who are also trade unionists, and in the social insurance committee of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union, and the railroad brotherhoods. Among the most active of the mass pressure groups have been the Farmers Holiday Association and the most important cooperatives. Pressure of the cooperatives in the past secured the formation of a new House Committee dealing exclusively with cooperative questions. The Workers Alliance of Minnesota has been an active force in the fight for social security and relief measures. It has formulated a program for national and state legislation in concrete terms which has influenced broad sections of the unemployed and W.P.A. population as well as workers in the social service and relief field. While enthusiastically en-

dorsing the Benson program in the main, the Workers Alliance made certain amendments to it. Youth groups have actively campaigned around the Youth Bill and the Farmer-Labor women, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and other groups have organized support for peace and women's legislation. A very important contribution to the movement for social legislation is the mass support being won for the Adult Education Bill. This measure has the united support of the State Federation of Labor, the Farmer-Labor Association, the State Federation of Teachers, the State Department of Education, the Minnesota Educational Association, the Minnesota Emergency Teachers Association, the Minnesota Council of Adult Education, the Northern States Cooperative League, the Farmers Holiday Association, the Workers Alliance and numerous other groups.

THE PEOPLE'S LOBBY

Mass pressure for the legislative program reached its high point with the organization of the People's Lobby. Somewhat belatedly, the lobby was finally organized early in March. The executive committee included: John Bosch, President of the Farmers Holiday Association, chairman; Representative Harold Peterson, Secretary of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Association, vice-chairman; Sander Genis, Twin City organizer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and Minnesota Chairman of the C.I.O.; Charles Egley of the Farmers Union, Louise Finch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Roman Becker, former state head of

Workers Education, executive secretary. The broad character of the executive committee was augmented by a sponsoring committee of 90 representing every progressive element in the state, leaders in Farmer-Labor, trade union, unemployed, youth, peace, women, veterans and other sections of the mass movement, including a number of Communists.

The People's Lobby activities began with the issuing of 60,000 copies of a six-page call which concentrated on ten key "must" bills of the progressive program. The "must" bills included the measures on taxes, agriculture, labor, cooperatives, social insurance, youth, veterans, unemployed and adult education. This was followed by a 60,000 edition of a four-page, tabloid size, lobby newspaper. Both of these important publications were well distributed. Copies of each were mailed to 1,000 organizations in the state, 7,000 to a selected list of key individuals, to every newspaper in the state, and mass distribution at trade union, Farmer-Labor, farm, unemployed, youth and other meetings.

This was preparatory to a statewide mass gathering at the St. Paul City Auditorium on April 4, and a mass pilgrimage to the capital on April 5. The mass gathering at the Auditorium, on a preliminary check, indicated that the attendance was more than merely individual and that the majority attending constituted delegates from all progressive organizations in the state. The registered attendance (preliminary figures) indicated about 2,500 individuals. The high point was reached with the militant address of the governor, fresh from his triumph

at Albert Lea, which even the capitalist press had been compelled to recognize as correct and courageous.

Monday morning was given over to industrial and district conferences on aspects of the legislative program. The pilgrimage to the capital began late in the morning with the appearance before the Senate at noon of three representatives from the People's Lobby. These spoke directly to the Senators, and to the mass of the lobbyists in the rotunda over a public address system, on different sections of the "must" legislation. Later, from 3 to 5 p.m., eight representatives of the lobby spoke before the House. The people's lobbyists were presented to the House by Governor Benson. Each spoke on a phase of the progressive program. The highlight here was the militant speech of Chester Watson, state president of the Workers Alliance.

The lobbyists, knowing the key importance of the Senate to the fate of the program, and not overly impressed with their formal reception at noon, crowded the committee rooms where the Senators were discussing important legislation. Hemming in the legislators, the workers and farmers gave vent to their indignation at the Senate's tactics of killing or emasculating the people's bills. The subsequent attacks on the lobbyists in the Senate and in the capitalist press regarding these incidents give some indication of the effectiveness of the lobby.

Still rankled by the Senate reception and indignant at the unprecedented locking of the Senate chambers after adjournment, many of the lobbyists began to discuss the necessity of a sit-

down in the Senate as a means of driving home to the reactionaries the seriousness of the people's purpose in coming to the capital. With workers and farmers milling around the entrance to the Senate chambers, the guards finally opened the doors. Hundreds crowded into the chambers, forming an orderly "people's senate" and proceeded to elect a chairman and other officers.

Learning of this move on the part of the others, the lobbyists who were still hemming in some of the Senate committees consented to release the members on the agreement that they state their position on the major bills to the "people's senate." Five of the Senators did report and were courteously received although some of the "people's senators" made it plain to some of the reporters that they did not approve of their stand and urged a more careful consideration of the demands of the masses.

The "people's senate" then decided to occupy the chambers until the Senators gave more concrete evidence that they would discontinue their policy of killing, curtailing or stalling the "must" measures. About 200 remained throughout the night. At 8:30 Governor Benson appeared, congratulated the lobby again on its effectiveness, recommended that the "senate" adjourn and carry the struggle into every organization and community. The "senators" then adopted a motion to comply with the Governor's suggestion with the proviso that unless the "must" bills were passed, they would call upon the Governor to call a special session and organize a larger pilgrimage to fight for the lobby program.

The reactionaries in the Senate broadcast all sorts of wild stories and charges in regard to the conduct of the lobbyists and particularly the sit-down feature. They accused Benson of inciting to riot and threatened impeachment proceedings against him. The capitalist press took up the cry and in news stories and editorials utilized the situation to attack Benson, the progressive legislators, the mass organizations and their leaders, particularly the Workers Alliance. Benson correctly pointed out that this was simply a smokescreen behind which to hide from the people of the state the determination of the reactionaries to flaunt the will of the masses as revealed in the November mandate. The reaction culminated in criminal charges of interfering with the Senate's business (the Senators had refused to allow the chambers to be cleaned Tuesday morning in order to pretend that they were unable to convene as a result of the sit-down) against the leaders of the "people's senate." Four, all leaders in the Workers Alliance, were arrested and jailed in lieu of the preposterous bail which had been set at \$1,000 each. The Senator who filed the charges, sensing the unpopularity of his action, offered to go bail for some of the men, but the latter refused his face-saving gesture in no uncertain terms.

Progressive opinion is incensed over the shabby efforts of the reactionaries to cover up their fight against the Farmer-Labor legislation. A Civil Liberties Defense Committee has been organized around this frame-up, headed by the fighting Farmer-Labor Congressman, John T. Bernard. Undoubtedly this stupid action on the part of the

reactionaries will prove a real boom-érang. The people are out to vindicate their civil liberties and to carry through their program.

The wide support accorded the People's Lobby has stimulated a determination to make it a permanent feature in the fight for progressive legislation. Follow-up plans for the lobby include the setting up of committees in the counties and congressional districts, the organizing of mass meetings at which legislators will be asked to report directly to the people, and for an organized campaign of letter-writing by the masses to their representatives in the legislature.

The lobby likewise revealed certain weakness. Among the more important are the following: the tardiness in getting the movement under way; the failure to link up national legislative questions with the state program; the inadequacy of the physical preparations for transporting, housing, feeding and accommodating the lobbyists, and the failure to mobilize the maximum of support from the rank and file in the trade unions and other mass organizations.

Nevertheless, in spite of these shortcomings, the People's Lobby marks a real step forward in Minnesota. It succeeded in drawing into the mass struggles sections of the population never before reached in an organizational way. It had, and will continue to have, an influence on the Legislature, particularly the Senate. It has a real importance for the Farmer-Labor movement: it will tend toward consolidating their forces, strengthen the progressives, isolate the Right-wing and compromising elements, and encourage

the movement toward an all-inclusive mass party. It brought greater sections of the masses into close contact with the known Communist leaders in the mass organizations. And unquestionably it is a real stimulus to the formation of a People's Front movement capable of fighting fascist-minded reaction and war.

The regular session adjourned, having reached a deadlock on the tax question. During the last days of the session the reactionary Senate majority violently opposed all of the progressive House tax proposals which were based on ability to pay, and also deliberately failed to act on a number of other major bills passed by the House. The reactionary Senators used the subterfuge of an omnibus tax bill to protect the big corporations, at the same time expecting to force a deadlock unless the House agreed to the Senate proposals. A deadlock without passage of tax legislation would mean the inevitable increase of the state levy on real property. In order to defeat this maneuver of the reactionaries to raise the state levy which would have added further burdens on a large section of farmers and small home owners, Governor Benson issued a call for a special session beginning May 24, for the purpose of passing the necessary tax legislation and the appropriations for relief and education. Once more the final answer to this question rests with the masses. Now more than ever, the workers, farmers and small business people must band together behind the projected plans of the People's Lobby, and the various mass organizations, and develop the broadest possible struggle in order to put over the Farmer-

Labor program in the special session.

It is clear that in this whole struggle for progressive legislation the Communist Party has played a constructive and dynamic role. Already at the Farmer-Labor convention a year ago which drafted the platform for the recent campaign, the Communist delegates helped to insure a progressive and militant platform. Throughout the period of the campaign the Communist Party aided in clarifying the issues involved, the need for unity of the masses in the face of the threat of reaction, and the need for a mass movement capable of putting over the needs of the people. The constructive role of the Communists in the Farmer-Labor victory in November is recognized by wide sections of the progressive masses. Immediately after the election victory the Communist Party pointed out that the central objective of the common people must be to organize pressure for the legislation called for in the platform. The Communists in the trade unions, farm organizations, Workers Alliance, etc., called for the linking up of the economic struggles to the political fight for progressive legislation. This position of the Communists made it possible to break down the syndicalist tendencies in the Timber Workers Union and bring this powerful union into the fight for the legislative program. The participation of a big delegation from the lumberjacks in the People's Lobby testified to the effectiveness of the Party work. This same linking of the economic and political struggle made it possible to break the Trotskyite and syndicalist tendencies among the members of the Independent Union of All Workers which led

the Albert Lea strike. This activity of the Party has won it many new friends and supporters and it has been possible to recruit into its ranks certain leading forces in the trade union, farm, unemployed and political movements. These people have recognized that the Communist Party constitutes the most clear-headed and principled fighter for the immediate needs of the people as well as the most vigorous and practical fighter in preparing the masses for socialism.

In this situation the role of the Trotskyites has been one of out-and-out disruption and splitting of the united forces of the progressive masses. The Trotskyites completely control the small Socialist Party in Minnesota, having expelled or forced out the honest Socialists who opposed their usurpation of the party label. Their attitude toward the Farmer-Labor Party was expressed in their official statement to the national Socialist Convention a year ago, in which they stated: "A Farmer-Labor Party can only pave the way for fascism." During the election campaign they tried to disrupt the unity of the masses behind the Farmer-Labor candidate, ran V. R. Dunne against a Farmer-Laborite for state office, and objectively aided the reactionaries. They have consummated an alliance with the reactionary craft union forces in Minneapolis headed by William Green's personal representative, Meyer Lewis. Since the campaign they have openly opposed the Farmer-Labor Party at every turn and viciously attacked Governor Benson's program. When Benson's State Liquor Dispensary Bill was introduced, the Trotskyites, together with the reac-

tionaries and racketeers in the labor movement, joined hands with the liquor interests to fight the bill. Since then it has been announced that it was the liquor underworld that financed this campaign against the Dispensary Bill in which the Trotskyist Dunnes played the leading role. Desperate as such a step may seem, the Trotskyites went beyond even this point of degeneration when they bolted the regular Minneapolis City Convention of the Farmer-Labor Party, in company with their reactionary racketeering allies, and nominated strike-breaking Thomas E. Latimer for re-election as mayor of Minneapolis. The character of this alliance is apparent in the former charges brought against Latimer by the Trotskyites and by the letter of Latimer to J. Edgar Hoover a year and a half ago when he accused the Trotskyites of being racketeers, extortioners, and linked with the underworld. The effort to smash the Farmer-Labor Party parallels their efforts to split the labor movement. Both campaigns are conducted under a smokescreen of Red-baiting which would do credit to Hearst at his best. In the lobby struggle the Trotskyites made every effort to destroy its organization and effectiveness and were completely isolated from this significant movement of the Minnesota masses. The Trotskyites are rapidly exposing their counter-revolutionary role to all progressives. To maintain themselves they are constantly being forced into alliances with more and more disreputable elements in the labor and political movement and are being shunned by the masses.

WE MUST WIN THE WOMEN

BY MARGARET COWL

"We see equality declared in all the democratic republics, but in the civil laws dealing with women and her position in the family, in the question of divorce, in every step, we observe inequality and degradation for women. And we declare that this is a violation of democracy, particularly with regard to the oppressed. The Soviet Power, more than any other of the most advanced countries, has realized democracy by the very fact that not a single trace of inequality for women has been left in its laws."

THIS, in part, was the answer of Comrade Lenin to the attacks by bourgeois writers and leaders who said that there was no democracy in the Soviet Union. In this statement, Lenin included all women. But he especially stressed the inequality of working class women under capitalism. Women of the capitalist class enjoy rights that are denied women of the working class. But within their own class, these women have a lower status. Within the working class, women are not equal with men. The same is true of women of the middle classes. And especially is this true of Negro women, who are the most oppressed and downtrodden section of the Negro masses.

That man should dominate woman, particularly in family life, is generally accepted as a natural thing in capitalist society. In the *Origin of the Family* Engels states:

"It is one of the most absurd notions, derived from eighteenth century enlightenment, that in the beginning of society woman was the slave of man. Among all savages and barbarians of the lower and middle stages, sometimes even of the higher stage, women not only have freedom, but are held in high esteem."

This freedom of women existed at a time when private property had not yet developed.

"Human labor power," said Engels, "at this stage does not yet produce a considerable amount over and above its cost of subsistence."

According to the division of labor at that time, the task of obtaining food and the tools necessary for this purpose belonged to the man; he owned the latter and kept them in case of separation, as the woman did the household goods. According to this social custom, man also became the owner of the new source of existence—cattle and, later on, of slaves. Riches were accumulated that were produced by the labor of others. Man became the owner of private property, the exploiter of human labor power. Society was divided into the owners of the means of production and those who had nothing but their labor power to sell. Property began to be transferred through the male line. A defeat in the position of woman was the result.

"The men seized the reins also in the house," says Engels. "The women were stripped of their dignity, enslaved, made tools of men's lust and mere machines for the generation of children."

In Sparta, where women managed the land, while men were fighting, they could inherit and retain landed estates as their own. Here women were admitted to commercial centers and afforded educational opportunities. In Athens, women received only movables as their dowry. Here education for women was obtained under great difficulties. In Egypt, women of the commercial and propertied classes acquired full rights of property with testamentary powers and could protect these rights and guard against arbitrary divorce. In England, under the guild system, marriage to a guild member conferred upon a woman her husband's rights and privileges as his assistant or partner and she shared in the social and religious life of the guild. As a widow she continued to control and direct the business which she had inherited from her husband. English records indicate that in the seventeenth century there were women among ship-owners, shopkeepers, etc. As capitalism developed the wives of the prosperous members of the bourgeoisie tended to become idle. Women of richer farmers were able to withdraw from farm work. But the status of the majority of women was not improved. They continued to be doubly oppressed and exploited.

In his interview with Clara Zetkin, in 1920, Comrade Lenin pointed out that the inseparable connection between the social and human position of woman and the role of private

property should be strongly brought out by the Communist Party.

"That will draw a clear and ineradicable line of distinction between our policy and feminism. And it will also supply the basis for regarding the woman question as a part of the social question, of the workers' problem, and so bind it firmly to the proletarian class struggle and the revolution."

A glance at the history of struggle for women's rights will tell that Lenin spoke from a deep knowledge of the experiences of the working class struggles. In the Paris Commune of 1871, where the working women heroically defended the Commune, Louise Michel became a leader not only of the Union des Femmes, but also a recognized leader of the French masses. In 1879 the French Socialist Congress went on record in favor of woman's social and political equality. In 1925 ten women were elected to the Paris municipal council on the Communist Party ticket. They were not permitted to take their seats. With the coming of the popular front government in France, a number of women for the first time were appointed as members of the Cabinet.

In England it was the National Union of the Working Classes, which in 1831 included in its program a demand for suffrage for all adults of both sexes. In 1838 the Chartists included woman suffrage in the People's Charter. Only in 1907, after mass demonstrations supported by the labor movement of England, and hunger strikes on the part of women, under the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst, were women qualified to vote in municipal elections and to serve as members of municipal bodies. In 1928 women in

England were given the same voting rights as men.

In the United States, in its early stages, the movement for woman suffrage was closely tied up with the movement to abolish slavery of the Negro people. The militant leaders for woman suffrage included Negro women fighters such as Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth who were also very active in the movement to abolish slavery. White women were agitated for the abolition of slavery. At the Women's Rights Convention in 1848 held at Seneca Falls, N. Y., the first organized women's movement in the United States was formed. Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone and Susan B. Anthony were leaders in the fight for woman suffrage. Susan B. Anthony agitated not only for the right of women to vote, but also for equal pay for equal work and shorter hours for women, and supported their organization into the trade unions.

In 1867 the National Labor Union supported full political rights and equal pay for women. The support of women's rights by labor, the many strikes conducted by working women for shorter hours, helped to win the right to vote for women in some states. In 1869 certain states adopted woman suffrage laws. But an amendment to the federal constitution was defeated. It was only in September, 1918, that President Wilson, who was not an advocate of woman suffrage, but thought it a necessary measure "vital to the winning of the war," proposed that the National Suffrage Amendment be passed. By 1920 it was ratified by the states as the 19th Amendment to the

Constitution of the United States.

Clara Zetkin was a pioneer fighter for women's rights on an international scale. It was she who made clear the Marxian position on the woman question at the First Congress of the Socialist (Second) International, held in Paris in 1889. Together with August Bebel, she fought the reactionary position of Vandervelde on the woman question at the Brussels Congress of the Socialist International in 1891. Vandervelde argued against Socialist activities for the emancipation of women. He was opposed to women entering industry. At the Twelfth Congress of the same International, in Stuttgart, in 1907, Clara Zetkin together with Lenin fought to defeat an amendment of Victor Adler which did not specifically mention that the struggle for suffrage should always be accompanied by the demand for equal rights for men and women. Lenin demanded that women be mentioned separately, to indicate that they live under special conditions, and to raise their problem in a special way. The Adler amendment was defeated.

The socialist revolution in Russia greatly influenced the granting of suffrage to women in a number of countries. The German republic granted women the right to vote in 1918. In the same year the French Chamber of Deputies favored women suffrage. But the Senate would not yield and women in France today still do not have the right to vote. In 1926 women in Spain were given certain franchise rights, and in 1931 the Spanish republic extended these rights. The present participation of women in the fight against fascism in Spain is establishing a status

of equality for them in public life.

With the coming of fascism, women's rights in Germany were annulled. In Italy they lost their voting rights to the municipal elections. In Japan even feminist movements are being suppressed. It is evident that the fight for equal rights for women is closely connected with the revolutionary movement. A temporary defeat of the working class, as in Germany, carries with it a setback in the position of women.

The feminist movement poses the woman question as an antagonism between the sexes. In the United States the Woman's Party advocates an amendment to the United States Constitution for equal rights for women. It propagates the idea that the mere adoption of such an amendment will abolish the unequal status of women. We see that it is many years now since the adoption of the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments, which did not solve the problems of the Negro people, who still live in the most barbarous conditions. Where the Negro masses have organized to improve their economic conditions the fight for equal rights has become more effective. The organization of the Negro workers with equal rights into the trade unions, under the leadership of the C.I.O., means a more developed movement for equal rights of all the Negro people.

The Equal Rights Amendment proposed by the Woman's Party is accompanied by agitation which, if enacted, would wipe out all laws that to any degree protect the economic conditions of women who work. The supporters of the Woman's Party amendment find themselves lobbying together with representatives of the reactionary Manu-

facturers Association to suppress laws that tend to raise the economic conditions of women. When the minimum wage law was declared unconstitutional by the New York courts, the wages of women laundry and hotel workers dropped by nearly 50 per cent. Whenever the wages of workers in the lowest paid categories, and women are in this category, are raised, it is a protection at the same time for the wages of higher paid workers. Minimum wage laws do help to hold up women's wages. Once wages are raised for the lower paid, all workers fight to maintain that raise. This fight is generally coupled with the fight for shorter hours, so that all will have work. The demand for equal pay for equal work is a very important demand in the struggle for equal rights for women, but alone it limits the struggle to raise the wages of women in the more skilled trades. It affects a minority of women workers. Most women work in unskilled trades. This demand should be accompanied by a demand for technical training schools for women, established by the government at the employers' expense. Minimum wage laws are an aid in increasing the wages of women. The trade unions and many important women's organizations do not support the amendment sponsored by the Woman's Party.

A new movement for equal rights for women was started in the U.S.A. in 1936. This is the Women's Charter movement. It supports the organization of women into trade unions. It especially supports the struggle of working women to gain better economic conditions and works for the passage of special laws that protect economic

conditions of working women. It is a movement that strives for the abolition of laws discriminating against women. It recognizes that, organized into the trade unions, women are in a more advantageous position to fight for equal rights. Until white women support the movement of the Negro women for equal rights, they cannot be successful in maintaining their own victories. The very progressive element in the Women's Charter movement is that there is already a discussion about the need to work for equal rights for Negro women.

Clara Zetkin, for many years a leader of women, emphasized that the social and political equality of women with men "depends entirely on their [women's] economic independence. An inevitable condition for this economic independence is labor," she stated.

Modern society gave many women an opportunity to earn their own living. But for the great majority this economic independence became beneficial not to the woman but to the employer. Women changed one master for another. Daily, many of these women are in danger of being pushed back into the same position of economic dependence upon man, especially in fascist countries are women driven out of employment. Single women are forced to work as unpaid servants or in industries producing war materials at very low wages. Often women are forced to lose the opportunity to earn their own living if they choose to become mothers.

In capitalist countries there is no adequate maternity insurance. The capitalist state is not interested in the protection of the family; it wants an

increase in population for war purposes. This attempt to be economically independent causes women often to lose their health and get old before their time. Family worries and the care of the home are not removed as responsibilities for the great mass of women who work. The condition is made worse because her work outside her home is needed to help maintain the family. Karl Marx shows how in the past the wages of the husband was based on the upkeep of the family. But with simplified methods in production, the labor of the entire family had to be given for these wages.

Speed-up in industry affects woman's physical appearance. Competition for men in marriage develops. Mean and petty characteristics often develop. Widespread unemployment destroys their future. They become broken in spirit or demoralized and yield to prostitution where they are enslaved by gangsters and their life is short. Many home relief bureaus try to force women into low-paid domestic work. High school and college graduates who cannot get work in department stores work as servants, forcing Negro domestic workers out of their jobs. The latter are forced to work for as little as 10 cents an hour in order to keep alive. White-collar workers on W.P.A. projects, many with years of training and service, find themselves forced into a position which gives them a lowered standard of living.

Fascism degrades women and destroys their family life; it dictates their love and home life. In Germany young girls are forced to wear the ugly Nazi uniform. Fascism as the war-maker destroys young men, and breaks the

hearts of mothers and sweethearts. It makes human machines of women to breed babies for war purposes.

Capitalism cannot arouse the enthusiasm of women. Their attempt to be economically independent is turned against them.

"For the complete emancipation of women and for their real equality with men, it is necessary to establish social economy and the participation of women in general productive labor. Only then will women occupy the same place as men."

This is the teaching of Lenin.

In the Soviet Union, where the new human being has emerged, the relationship of the sexes has undergone a complete change. There is complete equality for women according to law and in actual practice, in the family, in the state, in society. An end to the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship have made this equality a reality. Stalin, in his speech to the Stakhanovites in 1936, remarked that in the past in Russia there could not have been such women as there now are in the Soviet Union—the new women, free, happy human beings.

In the Soviet Union women have more leisure and opportunity to develop culturally, even when interrupting their work and activities to have children, than the great majority of women in capitalist countries where they must take part in the great struggles of the labor movement for the right to live, in the fight of the people's movement against the forces of fascism, for themselves and for their families. The state protects and assists women in the Soviet Union. Any remnants of the old idea that women are

inferior to men which may still linger in the mind of anyone is fought by the Soviet government. Women are helped to improve their skill, to raise their wages. This is done at the expense of the government. Not just a few are helped, but millions.

Woman's health is protected by the short hours of work—minimum wages for all workers, vacation with pay, payment of full wages for eight weeks before and eight weeks after childbirth, the protection of the right to her job after sickness or childbirth. No unemployment exists. Cultural, recreational, social activities, and participation in public life are made easily available to millions of women. The government gives particular attention to drawing women into such activities. Housewives are encouraged to engage in voluntary useful work to beautify the communities and workers' centers. Leaders of the Soviet government address meetings of housewives and encourage them in their work.

* * *

From 1928 to July 1, 1936, five million new women have been added to those already earning their own living in the Soviet Union. Now there are 8,492,000 women workers, or 34 per cent of the total of employed in the entire country. Of these the largest single group, or 2,908,000, is in large-scale industry. In offices there are 2,258,000; in trade and communal feeding, 781,000; in state farms and machine tractor stations, 628,000; transport, 446,000; the building industry, 402,000. In addition, there are millions of women collective farmers. These are not just figures to be compared with figures in

capitalist countries. Although even here there are already more women employed than in the United States. These figures speak a political language. The largest group of women are in large-scale industry where wages are highest. Released from petty household drudgery by special communal facilities on the part of the Soviet government, helped in the raising of her children by the establishment of nurseries, more and more millions are becoming independent of man economically. The marriage relationship becomes one based only on love and true companionship.

Article 122 of the new Soviet Constitution under these conditions actually means equality for women. It guarantees what the revolution gave them:

"Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

"The possibility of exercising these rights of women is ensured by affording women equally with men the right to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, maternity leave with pay and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens."*

Not even the most democratic bourgeois republic can compare with this new Soviet Constitution, particularly as it pertains to women.

The new law on abortions in the Soviet Union has already made a marked change in the attitude of many young people to the duties and obligations of family life.

When Clara Zetkin mentioned to Lenin that there are many good com-

rades who are not in favor of special work among women, he answered:

"That is neither new nor proof. You must not be misled." And then he pointed out facts which give food for thought; that there were not as many women as men in the Party; that there were very few women in the trade unions in capitalist countries. Comrade Lenin stressed that we—

"... must find our way to them, we must study and try to find that way. That is why we must put demands favorable to women. Our demands are practical conclusions which we have drawn from the burning needs, the shameful humiliation of women in bourgeois society, defenseless and without rights. We demonstrate thereby that we recognize these needs and are sensitive of the humiliation of women, the privileges of the man; that we hate, yes, hate everything, and will abolish everything which tortures and oppresses the woman workers, the housewife, the peasant woman, the wife of the petty trader—yes, and in many cases the women of the possessing classes.

"Not as reformists do, lulling them to inaction and keeping them in leading strings," Lenin continued, but "as revolutionaries who call upon the women to work as equals in transforming the old economy and ideology."

Up to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, our Party's work among women was done along very narrow lines. Some progress has been made since then. We have succeeded in developing a corps of women comrades for work among women, women whom we have won for the Party in the course of mass work. This corps is still very small compared to the objective conditions and the good opportunities for work among women. We are only now beginning to develop Negro women comrades to be leaders among the masses.

In steel and coal centers there has

* *Constitution of the U.S.S.R.*, p. 42, International Publishers, New York.

developed the new women's trade union auxiliary. Unlike the old form of auxiliary which devoted most of its time to tea parties, etc., this new auxiliary has set into motion thousands of wives of workers in basic industries. These auxiliaries help the workers win higher wages and the recognition of their trade union. They help to build the trade unions. They are helping to get women workers into the trade unions. They involve the entire family and in some places, the community, to support the strikers.

These auxiliaries cement the unity of white and Negro women in the fight against the monopolies, against the attempt to increase rents. Entire families of organized workers and trade unions become involved in the struggle against these forces of blackest reaction, the monopolies, who raise prices and rents. The movement against high prices is a very important part of the labor movement struggle for an improved standard of living. Such a movement is important in the work to build the Labor Party. In Detroit, in 1935, the housewives, who started the very broad movement against the increased prices of meat, climaxed this movement by the election of Mary Zuk to the City Council on a people's ticket. In the election campaign she was supported by the auto workers. In a number of places these auxiliaries involved trade union lodges, women's organizations, and entire families of workers to participate in a peace parade on Mother's Day. The women's brigade which was a result of the work of auxiliaries during the strike of the auto workers in Flint, and Detroit, Michigan, is now being adopted as a form of activity by

the women on W.P.A. projects and wives of W.P.A. workers to fight against the attempts to cut appropriations for these workers.

The trade union auxiliary developed out of American conditions. It exists only in the United States and in Canada. It is close to the trade unions and is an important part of the trade union movement. It is a form that will move masses of women into action as part of the activities of the labor movement.

The activities of the new auxiliary received their incentive mostly from the great meat strikes of the housewives in 1935 which started in New York upon the initiative of the Women's Progressive Councils. This movement popularized the new method of lowering prices—the consumer's strike.

The struggle against the high cost of living is being talked about by many workers, particularly organized workers. In Gary, Indiana, and in Chicago, there are broad movements against the attempts to raise rents and gas rates. The auxiliaries are active in this movement. The trade unions support it. In New York the attempt to raise milk prices was defeated. There is at present a movement to cut the rise in the price of bread. The reactionary forces of the country are attempting to make New York City their central place of operation. A broader movement in New York against rising prices would prove to be a vital weapon in the fight against reaction. The coming municipal elections in New York should see masses of housewives in action against rising prices and rents. This in turn will help the progressive forces.

Never before were the working

women so eager to come into the trade unions as they are now with the C.I.O. drive to organize and to raise the wages of the lowest paid workers. The new wave of strike struggles, in which many women are participating, proves this. The big union drive among the textile workers will add even more incentive for women to organize into the trade unions. But the women are not coming into the trade unions fast enough. Even in the automobile industry, the women are least organized.

Women have special problems—family, religion—which do not affect men as much as they do women. Special attention should be given to these problems. It is true that women are not so large in numbers in the large mass production industries, but the bearing that women's labor has upon the wages of men is of extreme importance. The new simplified methods in mass production industries will bring women into these industries. Up to now the production of steel has been a man's industry. Such simple methods as standing behind a glass wall and pressing a button to make steel are now being devised.

In recent years there has been an increase of 20 per cent of women in the automobile industry. To keep women out of such industries is not to the interests of the working class. It would mean creating a reserve army of cheap labor that would be used by the employers to fight the trade unions. To try to prevent married women from holding jobs would seriously affect the married life of workers, as it did when Section 213 of the National Economy Act, denying the right to married women to work in government posi-

tions, was passed. We find cases here of women even divorcing their husbands and engagements to marry being broken off. There are masses of women in public service, such as telephone operators, and the great mass of white collar workers who are of particular importance, especially in large cities, to the organized labor movement in its fight for progressive legislation.

The organization of women into trade unions will mean a better base for the movement for equal rights for women. To help the Negro women organize into the trade unions means to broaden out this equal rights movement.

The Women's Trade Union League should be strengthened. This organization can become the important center for the organization of women into trade unions. It can help to train women who are suited to the task of organizing women. It could give the lead in the movement for labor and social legislation for women. The special problems that women have in strikes and organization can be better taken care of through the Women's Trade Union League. It can become a real helpmate to the trade unions.

The Women's Charter movement will not be just another middle-class women's movement for equal rights when the women in the trade unions become its chief support. The Women's Charter movement will then broaden into women's mass organizations. Its work for the enactment of laws favoring women and abolishing laws discriminating against women will have deep significance in the creation of a national women's congress for peace and equal rights. A "women's people's

front," as Clara Zetkin once called it. A women's movement of this type would be a real force against reaction and a real help in the creation of a People's Front.

Thousands of women are participating in the peace movement in the United States. Masses of women are in the work to support Spanish democracy. On May 9 in ten different cities, broad committees which included women's mass organizations held peace parades and peace meetings to celebrate Mother's Day. Flowers were sold on the streets in many cities to support the Spanish women fighting fascism. Now the movement to adopt the children of Spanish parents who died in the fight against fascism will do much to broaden out the peace movement among women. The Mother's Day peace committees should continue and take on this very important work. This will help to develop an independent women's movement that will give organized expression to the contempt women have for fascism and the hatred they bear towards war.

Comrade Stalin in his recent speech said that it is necessary to find the link that will move the whole chain. In the work among women, this link is the developing of more forces for that work. That means to recruit women into the Party faster than heretofore. The women's Party units that have been organized under certain special conditions have already helped to keep the new women Party members. These units helped to adjust the activities of

the new women comrades with their family problems. Experience has proven that the holding of special Party conferences of women comrades helps in broadening the work among women in industry and among the wives of workers. It helps in the building of the necessary Party commissions for women's work. A check-up on the recruiting of women into the Party and the keeping of these new members is made at such conferences. The question of special attention to the developing of forces among the Negro women is also helped by such conferences.

At the Seventh Congress, Comrade Dimitroff stated the main task in our work among women when he said:

"While fascism exacts most from youth, it enslaves women with particular ruthlessness and cynicism, playing on the most painful feelings of the mother, the housewife, the single working woman, uncertain of the morrow.

"Communists, above all our women Communists, must remember that there cannot be a successful fight against fascism and war unless the broad masses of women are drawn into it. And agitation alone will not accomplish this. We must find a way of mobilizing the masses of toiling women around their vital interests and demands, taking into account the concrete situation in each instance, in the fight for their demands against high prices, for higher wages on the basis of the principle of equal pay for equal work, against mass dismissals, against every manifestation of inequality in the status of women, and against fascist enslavement.

"We must spare no pains to see that the women workers and toilers fight shoulder to shoulder with their class brothers in the ranks of the united working class front and the anti-fascist People's Front."

THE HOUSING QUESTION-1937

BY SIDNEY HILL

THE housing question is not peculiar to our times. Under capitalism, workers and farmers in the low-income groups have always been poorly housed according to the standards prevailing in a particular time and place. This is especially true of the United States, where the much-vaunted "American standard" is popularly supposed to set an example for the world.

When the Bureau of Commerce published its Real Property Inventory (R.P.I.) in 1934 many people got a rude shock. The Real Property Inventory carried out by 12,000 C.W.A. workers was the most comprehensive and thorough survey of urban housing conditions ever undertaken. It included 64 cities in 48 states and covered 2,633,135 dwelling units* in 1,931,055 buildings. The number of people living in these units was 9,074,781. Here are some figures in percentages of the total units investigated by the Real Property Inventory:

- 17.1 per cent are overcrowded
- 60.0 per cent need repairs
- 49.4 per cent have no furnace or boiler
- 30.4 per cent have no gas (for cooking)

* In this article the term "dwelling unit" means housing accommodations for one family. A dwelling unit, therefore, may be a single flat in an apartment house or it may be a small detached house.

24.5 per cent have no tubs or showers
17.3 per cent have no private indoor toilet

These are average figures. The conditions in many cities, particularly small industrial and company towns, are much worse than would seem to be indicated. For example, the general average shows that 24.5 per cent of the dwelling units had no bathtub or shower, but many cities reported as high as 58 per cent without such facilities. Moreover, the Real Property Inventory figures deal with dwelling units occupied by owners and by tenants. When only the tenant-occupied units are considered, the conditions are even more wretched.

Slum housing is usually associated with urban centers. But another government survey* reveals that equally bad or worse conditions are to be found on the farms. According to this survey "the ordinary farmhouse in the United States has no telephone, no electric lights and no running water." While the average farmhouse is crowded, unsanitary, cold and almost devoid of comforts or conveniences, those occupied by tenant farmers and sharecroppers are often far below the minimum

* Bureau of the Census, 1930, covering 3,624,283 farms operated by owners and 2,644,355 farms operated by tenants or sharecroppers.

standard ordinarily set for animals. We cannot in this article begin to itemize such things as leaky roofs, cracked walls, crumbly foundations and dampness. A few figures, however, will suffice to present the picture.

Some 19.4 per cent of owner's farm-houses were lighted by electricity but only 4.8 per cent of tenant houses were so lighted. Running water was found in 21.8 per cent of owner's houses and in only 7.2 per cent of tenants'. Still another survey* brings even more such facts to light; for example, that about 70 per cent of all farm houses have unimproved outdoor toilets. Additional details would be unnecessary; these few figures speak eloquently enough.

In an effort to conceal the underlying causes of the miserable housing conditions revealed by these surveys, the bourgeois press is making a great show of indignation at the disclosures. Feature writers are pressed into service by even the most conservative newspapers, "class magazines," and picture weeklies to shed crocodile tears over the disgraceful homes of the poor. They are very careful, however, to make the whole thing appear to be a new discovery. Bad housing, it seems, is a more or less temporary condition brought on by the "recent depression." It can easily be corrected if we put our minds to it, if we follow this rose-colored housing scheme or that.

The fact is, of course, that housing exposes are not new at all. History is replete with similar disclosures of in-

tolerable slum conditions, with loud breast-beating on the part of the ruling class, with the same "solutions" and promises, and almost always with the same negative results.

* * *

At the present time the United States is in a serious housing crisis. Not only are housing conditions sub-standard but in the last year there has developed an actual market shortage of dwelling units. The extent of this shortage is not known exactly but estimates of the quantity of housing immediately needed to adequately house the American people vary from the 6,000,000 dwelling units of Secretary of Commerce Roper to the 14,000,000 of the American Federation of Labor. The figure generally accepted is 10,000,000 dwelling units.

The current shortage has been aggravated by the almost complete cessation of new construction during the crisis and depression. Even last year only 150,000 dwelling units were produced in the whole country as compared with the 600,000 units produced in 1926. Other factors are the increase in the population, the increase in the total number of families, and the obsolescence and wrecking of old housing.

An accurate measure of the critical nature of the housing shortage is the accelerating increase in rents. When housing accommodations become scarce rents shoot upward. On March 7, 1937, the United Press made public a survey which it had conducted of rents in twelve key cities. This survey showed "that rents have mounted from 5 to 15 per cent with prospects of a continued increase." The following are

* Farm Housing Survey, a 1934 C.W.A. project under the direction of the United States Department of Agriculture and the State Agricultural Extension Service.

quoted from the United Press survey:

Chicago: rent rise of 15 per cent since crisis low. Housing shortage severe, especially in sub-standard areas.

Pittsburgh: rents 10 per cent above 1936 average, construction costs rising, facing acute shortage, greatest need in \$35-\$45 rent class.

Detroit: rents up 15 per cent in January.

Memphis: real estate board raised rents 10 per cent last fall and increasing 5 per cent more April 1. Housing shortage "terrific."

San Francisco: Rent rise 15 per cent last two years, but still under 1923-25 level by 20 to 30 per cent. Berkely, Oakland and all East Bay communities report serious housing shortage.

New York: rental increases in Metropolitan district 5 to 15 per cent in past year. Vacancies in lower brackets have almost disappeared.

This situation, involving as it does intolerable, sub-standard dwellings, a growing shortage of accommodations and sky-rocketing rents, has naturally brought forth a number of programs for solving the present housing problem. As I pointed out earlier, the housing question and its "solutions" are old stories. Consequently we shall find it very helpful to review some of the housing experiences of the past as an aid in evaluating current proposals and in formulating an adequate program.

* * *

Programmatic housing reforms began in Europe in the nineteenth century. The Industrial Revolution with its transition from hand manufacture to large-scale production brought

masses of rural workers into the big towns. Industrial changes necessitated alterations to the cities. Streets were widened, workers' dwellings were demolished on a large scale and congestion in the poorer residential areas became intolerable. The poverty and misery of the working class at that stage of capitalist development were described in great detail by Frederick Engels in *The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*.

As a result of these industrial upheavals and the wretched living conditions of the great mass of workers, the bourgeoisie undertook innumerable housing reforms. Not all of these reforms were altruistic. In many cases epidemics sweeping from the slums into the better residential districts resulted in the destruction of the worst hovels and some improvements in housing sanitation. In other cases, slums were cleared and new houses constructed for military reasons. In Paris, for example, the Bonapartist regime instructed City-Planner Haussmann* to replace the crooked streets of the working class districts with broad avenues in order to make street fighting and the erection of barricades as difficult as possible. But despite the variety of reasons which impelled the ruling class to reform the slums, the results were everywhere the same: the scandalous alleys and rookeries disappeared to the accompaniment of lavish self-praise from the bourgeoisie on account of this tremendous success, but they immediately appeared again somewhere else and often in the adjoining neighborhood. (Engels.)

* Haussmann was Prefect of the Seine Department from 1853 to 1870.

An interesting example of how this works out has been presented by Engels. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England* he describes the City of Manchester as it looked in 1843 and 1844. On page 80 (*et seq.*—S.H.) he tells of a group of workers' houses situated on the Medlock River which under the name of "Little Ireland" was for years one of the worst blots on Manchester. In 1873, Engels wrote *The Housing Question*. By that time "Little Ireland" had disappeared and on its site stood a railway station on high foundations. According to Engels,

"The bourgeoisie pointed with pride to the happy and final abolition of 'Little Ireland' as to a great triumph. Now last summer a great inundation took place. . . . It was then revealed that 'Little Ireland' had not been abolished at all, but had simply been shifted from the southside of Oxford Road to the northside, and that it still continues to flourish." (*The Housing Question* p. 75.)

It seems that the rise of the river had flooded a group of workers' dwellings which had escaped public notice because they were built along the embankment below the street level. These dwellings were no better than caves into which the mud and slime of the river had no trouble penetrating.

Engels concludes this case history with the following:

"This is a striking example of how the bourgeoisie solves the housing question in practice. The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely *shifted elsewhere!* The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of

any other social question affecting the fate of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself." (*The Housing Question*, p. 77.)

The Housing Question was written on the occasion of an attempted introduction of the petty-bourgeois ideology of Proudhon into Germany. When Engels concluded that a completely adequate solution of the housing question was not possible until the capitalist system was abolished he was replying to the Proudhonist theory that in the provision of a little house and plot to each worker lay the touchstone of a better economic and social life for the masses. According to Proudhonist theory, "as the *wage worker* in relation to the *capitalist*, so is the *tenant* in relation to the *house owner*." Engels hastened to point out that the shortage of decent housing is not exclusively a working-class problem; workers suffer in this respect *in common with the middle classes*. Moreover, the relationship which exists between the tenant and the landlord or between the home owner and the mortgagee is of only secondary importance. It does not matter whether the tenant is an industrial worker, a farmer, or small business man or a shop keeper; the vital factor for him is not where or how he lives, but how he makes his living. In other words, the factor which really determines whether the people enjoy a better life is not the homes in which they live; but rather their relationship to the capitalists who own the factories, shops or offices in which they work.

It is quite simple to illustrate this. Although reactionary interests are

frequently opposed to slum clearance and new workers' housing, not all capitalists are averse to such a reform. As far back as 1873, Engels wrote,

"English industrialists . . . had realized that for factory production in the rural districts, expenditure on workers' dwellings was a necessary part of the total investment of capital and a very profitable one, both directly and indirectly. . . . The English factory, mine and foundry owners had had practical experience of the pressure they could exert on striking workers if they were at the same time the landlords of these workers." (*The Housing Question*, p. 24.)

We have even more recent proof in some of the industrial towns in the United States where the provision of relatively decent housing has not brought the benefits which are supposed to follow from such an improvement. The workers living in the model city of Hershey, Pa., who were forced to go on strike for adequate wages and recognition of their union and who were brutally attacked by the agents of their industrial "benefactor" will testify to the truth of our contention.

The housing problem, as we have seen, is only one of the numerous secondary evils which grow out of capitalism. A complete solution of this problem is possible only through the social ownership of the means of production, but it does not follow that all efforts to better present housing conditions must wait until that happy day. After all, if workers received sufficient income to pay the market rent for adequate shelter, the housing question would be largely solved even under capitalism. The fact remains, however, that the housing conditions of most workers are already so intolerable that it becomes immediately

urgent to demolish or rehabilitate the slums and undertake a comprehensive program of new housing at rents the masses can afford. The lesson to be learned from Engels is that a workers' housing program must be related to the trade union struggles and to the growing people's political movements against reaction and fascism.

* * *

The disillusioning housing experiences which Engels has recorded have continued to repeat themselves since his time. Nevertheless, we frequently find housing reformers and experts in this country saying "Europe did it—why can't we?" Let us see just what Europe did accomplish in this direction.

Between 1919 and the present, about 1,400,000 dwellings were constructed in England, Wales and Scotland, with the help of more or less government assistance. A recent British Labor Party pamphlet* has the following to say about this record:

"Relatively this is a substantial achievement, but it has proved entirely insufficient. Not more than three-quarters of these houses are available for letting, and even then the rents of the great majority are above what the average worker can afford to pay. A fair number are occupied by persons who do not ordinarily come within the 'working class' economic category, and the majority are occupied by only the better-paid workers, or by workers who have to pay more rent than they can afford. It is entirely proper that the better-paid worker should be provided for but it is beyond dispute that the lower-paid worker has been very largely neglected."

That is the general picture. A study

* Published under the title *An Exhibition on Working Class Housing*, April, 1936.

made by the Architects' and Technicians' Organization of London states that "58 per cent of the families for whom the London County Council estates were presumably intended could not take advantage of the new buildings."

The Architects' and Technicians' Organization estimates also that "only 12½ per cent of all post-war government housing has been within the reach of most working-class families." These are the fruits of the English slum-clearance program: a great quantity of housing was provided for the middle income groups; builders and real-estate men made huge profits from the construction and the sale of land; and the mass of workers got what they received in Engels' time—practically nothing.

But even those few families of low income who managed to get into the new housing estates found themselves to be not so well off. A striking example of this is the now famous experience of the city of Stockton-on-Tees. Following the World War, the town council of Stockton vigorously pressed a housing policy which included the demolition of slums and the building of new houses. In the fall of 1927, a slum area known as "Housewife Lane" was evacuated, and the 152 families living there were moved to an improved area, the Mount Pleasant estate. A similar area, known as Riverside, containing 289 families, remained in the original condition thereby providing a check on the experiment. The Housewife Lane area consisted of old houses with one or two rooms, and the sanitary conditions were bad. The Mount Pleasant estate seemed to offer every-

thing that modern sanitary science could demand.

Nevertheless, much to everybody's surprise, the removal to the new quarters was followed by a rise in the death rate. During the five years following removal, there was a general increase in the death rate of 8.74 per 1,000 among the population of the new Mount Pleasant estate. No such increase occurred among the families remaining in the Riverside slum area.

Dr. C.G.M. M'Gonigle, Medical Officer of Health for Stockton-on-Tees, made an exhaustive study of the various causes of death in the new area and concluded that the increased rate could not be ascribed to such environmental factors as housing, drainage, overcrowding or insanitary conditions. There was only one striking difference between the living conditions in the two areas: in the Mount Pleasant estate rents were higher and consequently there was less money to spend on food, medical care and other necessities.*

Many similar experiences could be cited from other English cities.** In these cases slum-dwelling families were moved into clean, modern homes only to find themselves worse off with respect to health as a result of the greater proportion of their incomes which had to go for rent in the new homes. This shows that the fight for better housing must be accompanied by a fight for higher standards of living through the

* *Poverty and Public Health*, by C. G. M. M'Gonigle and J. Kirby, 1936.

** Report of Medical Officer of Health, City of Hammersmith, 1932. Minority Report on Housing Policy, City of Leeds, 1933. Health Reports for Glasgow, Manchester, *et al.*

trade unions and a progressive political movement.

This brief analysis of the housing question will prepare us for a critical examination of current housing proposals and pending legislation in our own country. It will also guide us in formulating a realistic, low-rental housing program which not only calls for the demolition of slums and the building of new dwellings, but which will actually make these homes available to the masses at rents they can safely pay.

* * *

Any consideration of current housing proposals in this country must begin with the New Deal administration. We know today that since 1933, there has been considerable "pump priming" through public works, but practically no public housing. Only about twenty thousand families will be accommodated by federal housing projects in the United States after four years.

New Deal surveys showed that one-third of all our dwellings were unfit to live in, that the construction industry was flat on its back, and that millions of workers in the home-building field were unemployed. Nevertheless, while billions were spent on the construction of roads, dams, and other P.W.A. projects, less than one hundred million dollars were expended on housing for the low-income groups.

But just as the experience of English housing showed, the rents in the new P.W.A. projects place them out of the reach of the very families for whom they were supposedly built. There is the case of Techwood Homes

in Atlanta, the first federal project to be completed by the Housing Division of the P.W.A. last summer. Rents at Techwood are \$7.39 per room per month (5.58 plus \$1.81 for heat and electricity). This rental is just about twice as much as most Atlanta families can afford. Consequently, it is no surprise to learn from Housing Division publicity releases that the fortunate occupants of this extensively ballyhooed project consist largely of "store clerks; service men, salesmen, and small business operators."

The Housing Division does not tell us what happened to the several hundred Negro families who formerly occupied shacks on the site where Techwood was built. We can, however, make a good guess on the basis of a survey made by Howard Whipple Green, Cleveland housing authority, of the P.W.A. Outhwaite project in that city. Mr. Green found that 84 per cent of the families displaced by the new housing relocated within a radius of one mile of their former dwellings. Negro families, who were more numerous in the area, moved even shorter distances than the white families. No one will deny that this is slum clearance. But it is clear that, in the process, those in whose interests all this was allegedly undertaken were unceremoniously dumped into neighboring slums.

A similar case is the federal housing project River Houses in Harlem. The announced rents are to average \$7.00 per room per month. Of the 20,000 applications which were filed by eager Harlem families, only 574 can be accommodated in the finished project. While it is true that the announced rentals are lower than those charged

by private landlords for comparable accommodations in Harlem, it is already perfectly clear from the requirements for admission that the eventual occupants of River Houses will not be the lower-income groups at all. Many more such cases could be cited but these two are enough to outline the situation.

The administration was not nearly so stingy with the owners of real estate and with the mortgage institutions. Few people realize that during the same period in which public housing was suffering one set-back after another, the real-estate interests of the country received the handsome gift of some five billion dollars, through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation.

The Home Owners Loan Corporation was created in 1933 "to save the distressed urban home owner whose home is mortgaged from losing it through foreclosures." The H.O.L.C. relieves the distressed home owner in the following manner: first, it gives the mortgage holder (the bank) its good 4 per cent negotiable bonds in exchange for the defaulted mortgage. This old mortgage is then replaced by a new one, the net result of which is that the home owner is now indebted to the H.O.L.C. instead of the bank.

John Fahey, president of the H.O.L.C., reports that about three billion dollars have been paid out to take over the mortgages of nearly one million small homes, and that

"... more than 90 per cent of this money has gone to the commercial banks, savings banks, insurance companies, building and loan associations and mortgage companies, and has

had the effect of strengthening their resources in a very important way."

With homes being foreclosed at the rate of a thousand a day after the great crash, the government eased the bankers out of a tight spot by taking over their sour mortgages. In exchange, it gave them good, interest-bearing, negotiable bonds. As for the small home owner, he is no better off than he was before. It is true, of course, that foreclosure was temporarily delayed, but he finds it just as difficult to meet H.O.L.C. payments as he did the payments to the bank. The proof of this is contained in the latest H.O.L.C. publicity releases, which indicate that foreclosure actions have been started or consummated on 160,000 homes. This means that 16 per cent of the owners who were "saved" by the H.O.L.C. are now losing their homes. Moreover, it is known that the delinquency rate on H.O.L.C. payments is 25 per cent and possibly higher, so that there is every reason to expect the foreclosure rate to continue upward. The benevolent H.O.L.C. has become a hard-fisted collection agency.

Another active New Deal agency is the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. This corporation was organized to do for the distressed farmer what the H.O.L.C. accomplished for his urban brother. Consequently, it is almost unnecessary to add that the \$2,000,000,000 fund with which it was provided went to bail out the mortgagees. In theory, of course, the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation was going to aid the unfortunate small farmer. In practice, however, it again happened that the banks and the mortgage companies were "refinanced" out of a

tight spot, and the government became the largest farm-mortgage holder in the country. The latest figures give the delinquency rate in F.F.M.C. payments as 18.6 per cent and foreclosures already executed as about 50,000.

Here we witness one of the amazing contradictions inherent in capitalism. From all sides—from the President, from the builders and from the manufacturers of building materials—come cries that the revival of the home-construction industry is a vital factor for prosperity; but in practice the operation of mortgage-investment finance has resulted in an almost complete throttling of residential building. We have in this country the ability, in terms of technique and materials, to provide decent housing for all, yet ten million American families are living in sub-standard and overcrowded homes. Millions of building trades workers and technicians are still partially or totally unemployed, but the nature of the capitalist property system is such that the need of the real estate market for a *scarcity* of housing comes before the need of the great mass of the population for an unlimited *abundance* of decent dwellings.

There are, of course, other reasons for the failure of an adequate housing program to take hold in our country. There is, for example, the insufficient support by the great labor unions and the public at large, and there is the determined opposition on the part of reactionary groups to any progressive public undertaking, including housing, but enough of the problem has been outlined thus far in this article to give us a good idea of what a comprehensive slum clearance and low-rent

housing program is up against.

The provision of decent homes for the masses of the population under capitalism revolves around the question of government subsidy. It is generally admitted that capitalist enterprise has not been able to build new dwellings for the low-income families. The simple fact is that these families cannot pay enough in rent to interest the private builder, who, under the capitalist system, must be able to make a profit on his investment. If the slum dweller is to be adequately rehoused, the difference between what he can pay and the cost of the housing must be made up by the government.

The Brookings Institution has estimated that in 1929 almost half of all American families had an annual income under \$1,500. By 1934, three-quarters of all families had incomes under this figure. According to the "minimum decency budget" studies of the Department of Agriculture, a family with an annual income of \$1,500 can afford to spend only twenty dollars per month on rent, or about five dollars per room. Most families, of course, can safely pay even less than this for rent. On the basis of normal market conditions in the home-building field, the rental of a newly constructed room ranges from twelve to twenty dollars per month. Limited-dividend projects, such as the Knickerbocker Village and Hillside projects in New York, with government loans at 4 per cent and profit limited to 6 per cent, have been able to rent at from ten to twelve dollars per room. Recent P.W.A. projects with a 45 per cent outright subsidy from the government, a low interest rate, and tax exemption

are able to rent at about seven dollars per room per month. We see, therefore, that to date none of these methods has touched the needs of that half of our families, who today live in the slums.

The housing issues of the moment are reflected in two bills now before Congress: the Wagner-Steagall bill and the Scott bill. Both measures involve the use of generous government subsidies, and both claim to be an approach to a solution for those for whom adequate housing is otherwise not available. The Wagner-Steagall bill proposes to set up a permanent United States Housing Authority to include all present emergency federal housing agencies. With the exception of a few "demonstration" projects, most of the housing under this bill would be carried out by local authorities and "limited-profit agencies" to whom the Authority would supply the funds. The Authority would have at its disposal \$1,000,000,000 over a period of four years, or enough to build about three hundred thousand dwelling units, accommodating one family each, in that time. This fund, which is to be raised through the issuance of bonds guaranteed by the United States, may be advanced to the local housing authorities, only in the form of loans payable within sixty years.

In addition to the above, the Wagner-Steagall Bill provides for an appropriation of \$50,000,000. This sum may be paid out in regular annual grants or subsidies to local authorities for the purpose of keeping the rents low. The annual payment which the United States Housing Authority agrees to make to each project will be

sufficient, according to Senator Wagner, to bring the rents down to about six dollars per room per month.

It is apparent from this brief summary that the Wagner-Steagall bill is a progressive measure. It provides for a permanent federal housing agency independent of the temporary relief set-ups, and it makes possible a low rental.

This bill, however, contains several very serious deficiencies. In the first place, the quantity of construction is inadequate. It provides for only three hundred thousand dwelling units in four years as compared with the ten million units which is commonly accepted as the immediate need for families of low income. Moreover, it is not made mandatory in the bill that all of the three hundred thousand units be constructed. In the second place, there is no guarantee that a really low rental will be realized in practice. The six-dollar rate is theoretically possible under the bill, but, since there is no specific maximum rental established, the United States Housing Authority could easily set a higher rate. The all-important term "families of low income" is defined in the bill as "families who cannot afford to pay enough to cause private enterprise in their locality to build an adequate supply of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for their use." This definition is unsatisfactory, because, in the hands of a reactionary Authority, it lends itself to grave abuse.

Finally, the United States Housing Authority is given entirely too much discretion. Suppose the directors turn out to be persons like Peter Grimm, reactionary New York real estate man,

who was called upon by the President to "coordinate" federal housing agencies in 1936. Under the Wagner bill, the Authority, if it wished, could (1) refrain from building even the small quantity of housing provided, and (2) establish a rental rate which would be out of the reach of the low-income families for whom the bill was designed. The reader will notice that it is precisely in these connections that previous housing schemes have proven disillusioning.

The housing bill introduced by Congressman Byron M. Scott of California is strong where the Wagner bill is weak. The Scott bill* provides for the construction of not less than ten million dwelling units within ten years. In its first four years, the Scott bill would provide ten times as many dwellings as the Wagner bill. This construction is *mandatory* under the bill and is not left to the discretion of a board of directors.

The Scott bill establishes a maximum rental of five dollars *or less* per room per month. Occupancy is limited to those whose annual income does not exceed \$1,000 for a family of two, plus \$250 for each dependent. In other words, a family of four would be limited to \$1,500 per year.

A housing fund of \$1,000,000,000 for the first year is to be appropriated out of the treasury and replenished annually, on the basis of estimates of need by the United States Housing Authority. Under the Scott bill, the

entire original cost of a project is put up by the government in the form of an outright grant—85 per cent by the United States Housing Authority and 15 per cent by the local agency. Consequently, the rental charge is based only on the cost of operating the project, plus a payment in lieu of local taxes, but in no case may the rent exceed five dollars per room per month. In New York City, where it costs about four dollars to maintain a room per month (including heat, hot water, and other services), there would be one dollar per room per month available for municipal charges. If the city granted complete tax exemption, the rental could be four dollars. In other parts of the country, the rental could be even less.

If the question before us were merely one of making a choice between the two bills, the answer would be easy. It is perfectly obvious that the Scott bill is the only one which really begins to fill the great need which exists for decent housing for over one half of the families of the United States. The Scott bill, moreover, squarely faces the hard fact that these families cannot afford to pay more than five dollars per room per month without sacrifices of food and other necessities.

However, there are other practical considerations which present themselves. Of the two, the Wagner-Steagall bill is the only one with even a remote chance of passage in this session of Congress. Furthermore, the Wagner-Steagall bill, with all its defects, remains a forward-looking measure. It establishes the principle of publicly subsidized housing, and it makes possible a low rental, although it doesn't

* The Scott Housing Bill (HR. 4292) was formulated by the Inter-Professional Association, in collaboration with the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians, and Congressman Scott.

guarantee it. This explains why Senator Wagner's bill has already aroused the opposition of real estate and other reactionary interests. These interests, as we have indicated earlier in this article, have succeeded in obstructing the public housing movement for a long time. They prevented the passage of the Wagner-Ellenbogen housing bill in 1936, and are even more active this year. As a result, the present bill has been lying in committee for two months. The bill will continue to remain in a Congressional pigeon-hole unless the millions of wretchedly housed city and rural workers assert themselves through their trade unions, tenant organizations and Farmer-Labor parties.

It becomes our task to support the Wagner-Steagall bill and force its passage at this session of Congress. At the same time, it will be necessary to point out the deficiencies in this bill and to attempt to bring it up to the standard set by the Scott bill. Practically speaking, this means: (1) that the Wagner bill should be given a larger appropriation; (2) that the construction of a really sufficient quantity of housing should be made mandatory; and (3) that a maximum rental of not more than five dollars per room per month should be established if we wish to avoid the unfortunate experiences of previous housing schemes.

The most important point, however, is that the support of a housing program must be intimately related to the other phases of the movement for better living conditions. It must be related to the fight for more adequate relief, because there are millions of families who cannot even pay the five dollars

rental. It must be related to the struggles for trade union organization and higher wages and unemployment insurance, so that the families who may be housed under the program will be assured of a sufficient supply of food, clothing, and other necessities. The Stockton-on-Tees experience, which we discussed earlier in this article, must not be repeated here. And, finally, a housing program must be related to the progressive political movements which can enforce the letter of the legislation and prevent the historical abuses which, our study shows, have been put over in the past in the name of slum clearance and workers' housing.

* * *

A discussion of housing would not be complete without a word on the present problems of the slum dwellers. After all, even if the Wagner-Steagall bill should be made into law, there would be a gap of a year or more before the first dwellings could be built. In New York City, for example, the Wagner bill as now formulated would provide dwellings for about fifty thousand families in four years. But according to Langdon Post, Tenement Housing Commissioner, there are now five hundred thousand families living in "old-law" tenements, most of which are firetraps. Since 1901, over one thousand, five hundred men, women, and children have been burned to death in New York's tenements, and each year fifty more are added to this terrible list.

Here again we are confronted with one of capitalism's innumerable paradoxes. In New York City, a series of

housing laws culminating in the present Multiple Dwelling Law were passed during the last 75 years. These laws were designed to wipe out or rehabilitate, once and for all, the insanitary, firetrap "old law" tenements which disgrace the city. But after all these years, not only are there 65,000 "old law" tenements, housing 500,00 families, still existing, but recent attempts on the part of the Tenement House Department to enforce the law have resulted in extreme hardships on the very people the law was designed to help. The reason for this predicament is that the closing up of illegal, sub-standard buildings results in the eviction of the occupants who live in the slums. The present housing shortage, particularly in the low-rental categories, makes it almost impossible for those families who are vacated by the operation of the Multiple Dwelling Law to find new quarters. Or if they do manage to find a vacant apartment, it is at a higher rent. The bankers and other owners of slum tenements have been quick to take advantage of a situation for which they are largely responsible in the first place. These owners are now pretending that their traditional refusal to improve the "old law" tenements is due to their deep consideration for the slum dweller (they also admit, however, that the necessary alterations cost more than they are willing or, in some cases able, to spend). Despite their "deep consideration" for the slum dweller, the landlords have shown no reluctance in raising rents. It now becomes necessary for those who must live in tenements, as well as those who are struggling to save their hard-won small

houses, to save themselves from their "benefactors" through immediate militant action.

The millions of American families who are forced by poverty to live in the slums cannot depend only on Washington for a solution to their problems. Legislation seeking to clear blighted areas and build new homes is important and must be supported by all progressive-minded people. In the meantime, however, there is a great deal which can be done to make the existing slums dwellings safer and more habitable. As a result, tenant organizations throughout the country have developed around a two-fold program: (1) long-range slum clearance and housing, and (2) enforcement and liberalization of laws relating to the improvement of the existing slums.

To many this may seem a contradiction. "Why patch up and thereby perpetuate the rotten slums?" they ask. "Let us tear them down and build decent dwellings in their place." It would, of course, be ideal to be able to do that, and in the Soviet Union the elimination of sub-standard housing is proceeding on a huge scale. In our own country, however, slum clearance and public housing have been beset by many difficulties. An example of a realistic approach to the question is the program of the New York City-Wide Tenants' Council, which is composed of affiliated tenants' unions. This organization is interested in national legislation such as the Wagner-Steagall bill and the Scott bill. But its activities are centered on the enforcement of local laws covering the safeguarding and improving of existing tenements and the prevention of rent increases.

Rent strikes, demonstrations, and legislative pressure have proven to be effective instruments in this movement.*

A program for the urban and rural homeowner stems from the facts we have cited in connection with the Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. In the first place, homeowners must demand an indefinite moratorium on foreclosures. Secondly, they must fight for easier terms from both the H.O.L.C. and the F.F.M.C. These terms should be (1) an extension of the amortization period from 15 to 30 years, and (2) a reduction in the rate of interest from 5 per cent to 2½ per cent. Similar demands must be made of the millions of private mortgages—the banks, the insurance companies, *et al.*

A precedent for the kind of organization necessary to carry out such a program has been set by the actions of homeowners and farmers several years

* Militant pressure by tenant and other progressive groups in New York caused Governor Lehman to sign the Murray Prior Lien Bill (S. 1143) after it had been passed by the legislature early in May of this year. This bill will enable the city to step in and make the necessary repairs in tenements where the owner is financially incapable or unwilling to comply with the Multiple Dwelling Law. The cost of these repairs becomes a first lien, or charge, against the property and must be paid back by the owner in ten years.

As an example of how the housing question is becoming an important social issue, the Pontiac, Michigan, Local No. 159 of the United Auto Workers of America (C.I.O.), according to *The New York Times* of May 22, served notice on the owners of 3,000 houses occupied by members of the union "that rentals had increased so heavily as to absorb wage increases," and that rent strikes would be called "in which they would hold their dwellings but refuse to pay rent" unless reductions were forthcoming by June 1.

ago. United action committees under the United Farmers League and locals of the Holiday Association have won many concessions and resisted numerous sheriff's sales and foreclosures. The Consolidated Home and Farm Owners Mortgage Committee of New York State did very good work in 1934. Such organizations and committees are ready to be revived and enlarged and, for effective action, must be related to the forthcoming Farmer-Labor Party election campaigns. Although a number of homeowners' bills have been introduced in Congress, none of these legislative measures is entirely satisfactory. The formulation of an adequate homeowners' bill must spring from, and be part of, the homeowners' movement itself.

We realize, of course, that the basic problems of the inadequately housed urban and rural slum-tenant and the destitute small homeowner will never be completely solved until the capitalist system which raises these problems is abolished. Nevertheless, it is obvious that a good measure of improvement and relief of the housing conditions of the masses can be won by organized militant action. To the extent that a realistic housing program enlightens people concerning the iniquities of the capitalist system and unites them in a broad militant movement which has learned from the mistakes of the past, to that extent will such a program actually help build the People's Front against reaction and fascism, and prepare the masses for the bigger and decisive struggle for socialism.

FLOOD CONTROL

BY JAMES HARMON

DEATH, destruction, chaos and despair have again ridden the flood waters of the Ohio River and its tributaries, a tragic prophecy of what may happen again next year. Floods are nothing new in the United States. DeSoto saw them when he discovered the Mississippi. And each generation since has seen them. Only in those historic times there were no lowland farms, towns, cities and centers of population and industry.

The floods of our generation challenge those of all history. The reason for floods are many, but they are not hard to find if we examine the historic development of westward expansion, and the plunder of the natural resources of the country by the ruling class and the total lack of any sort of plan regarding land utilization. The climax of this disregard of land planning has brought distress to millions of croppers and tenant farmers.

As the flood waters recede, pious editorials and sensational headlines also recede and disappear. The work of flood prevention and control remains to be done just as in the previous years. The capitalist papers have taught that floods are a natural calamity, an act of God, like volcanic eruptions uncontrollable and beyond the power of man. However, there is nothing to support them in the works of competent

technologists and scientists on the subject. Of course there is one exception, some of the editorials in the *Engineering News Record*, that technical organ of the bankers and industrialists. Sometimes the editorials disagree with the technical material that discusses methods of flood prevention and control.

The technical facts show that not only can floods be controlled, but there is a large measure of prevention within the power of man. It means the reclamation of natural resources, the stewardship of the social capital of America for the producers, the workers and small farmers only if they begin to speak and recognize their own class interests in the problem of conservation. The task of making effective a program of conservation is the task of the workers and farmers. It means solving the problems of the sharecropper tenant farmer, dust bowl farmer, of floods, of power utilization, and to this end all efforts should be united to make effective immediately the six-billion-dollar program of the Roosevelt administration.

The most usual floods, those of the past months and of Spring, 1936, are clearly caused by an overtaking of the natural water courses. Thereafter, such floods are rated as floods either by reference to maximum gauge heights or to corresponding maximum rates of

flow through the given channel. Our discussion is concerned with the type of flood defined above, those which ordinarily result from excessive rain or melting snow and ice or some combination of these circumstances.

FLOOD PREVENTION AND CONTROL

This problem is not one of engineering alone. In its broadest sense a scientist would consider it one of social relations, the relation of man to his habitat. If the scientist were a Marxist he would consider it one step higher, as a complicated problem in political economy and social planning of the highest order.

Morris L. Cooke, former Administrator of Rural Electrification Administration, has summarized the problem of conservation as:

“. . . maximum present and future benefit from the use of natural resources; maintenance of renewable resources at a level commensurate with the needs of society; prompt adjustments to the advance in technology; balancing of natural against human resources; harmonizing the objectives of conservation with conditions of the present and future economic order.”

The problem of flood control and prevention is a problem of conservation of the human and natural resources of our country.

Engineers not because of their choosing have not been concerned with a genuine integrated program that would offer a material solution to so pressing a problem as floods. There is, however, a splendid body of technical material that has accumulated through the work of the various agencies of the federal government in this field.

To make this knowledge a reality it

is necessary to have powerful progressive legislative blocs or a Farmer-Labor Party that would enact the necessary legislation and safeguards which would enable the toilers and the technicians to carry to fruition their programs against the wishes of the all-powerful industrial masters of the great utilities and mass production industry trusts.

An integrated program of flood control and prevention would include the control of soil erosion, prevention of sedimentation of reservoirs, providing water for domestic and industrial purposes and farm irrigation, especially in time of drought, reforestation, storage reservoirs, dikes, and cheap hydroelectric power. To the latter point the utility owners are devoting their chief barrage of injunctions and propaganda against government ownership and operation.

The approach to the technology of flood control and prevention can best be divided into two sections; first, upstream engineering, which would comprise all those methods of land treatment and soil conservation that would increase or restore the capacity of soils to absorb and infiltrate waters, and the retardation control of surface flowage of unabsorbed waters; the second part, downstream engineering, which is concerned with the control of powerful forces exerted by water; it includes great reservoirs and storage basins, spillways, dikes, and hydroelectric developments that should be the regular concomitant of this harnessed force.

The practice of the Army Engineering Corps, which does 90 per cent of the flood-control work, has been primarily a piecemeal job of downstream engineering without the necessary reforestation and soil-conservation program

that must go to make a program complete and effective.

Urgency of upstream engineering flood prevention, with its central theme of erosion control, is more important than the problem of flood control and its engineering edifices which are rendered practically useless without it. The annual losses by soil erosion are far greater than of floods, \$400,000,000 per year. The problem is less localized, the threatened result is the destruction of the most valuable farm lands and with it the whole complicated industrial economy that capitalism has built.

Level lands, cultivated or uncultivated, have a minimum hazard in loss of top soil (of which there is generally only six to eight inches to produce crops) by the run-off and wash-off action of water. But, only 75,000,000 out of the necessary 350,000,000 acres of crop land of the United States fall within the classification of level lands. The nation is then dependent essentially upon sloping lands for cultivation, which must be protected.

At present, an area of about 100,000,000 acres of once fertile farm land has been ruined. This area is equal in size to Illinois, Ohio, Maryland and North Carolina combined. The prospect is that 100,000,000 acres still largely in cultivation are now gradually losing their top soil, and that another 100,000,000 acres of good land are now threatened. It will not stop unless the government stops shifting the burden to the individual farmer, because adequate treatment is beyond his economic ability and is not limited by farm, county or state boundaries. It is a national problem and cries for treatment as such.

The farmer in many cases has been

pictured by the capitalist press as an ignoramus who does not understand his own technical problems. Farmers know what must be done to solve the erosion problem which they did not cause. The blame can be laid at the doorstep of the extreme greed of manufacturers anxious for markets and cheap raw materials, as well as the railroads and land speculators who helped promote the expansion westward. In this westward trek, forests were cut down and land unfit for crops was stripped of its grass cover. Lumber companies, mines, and railroads took part in the destruction. Rugged individualism ruled; social planning was unthinkable.

In April, 1936, *Facts for Farmers* said,

"Can the farmers afford the cost of erosion control? On the ten demonstration projects soon to be completed the average cost per acre came to \$6.67; in Duck Creek, Texas, it amounted to \$11.18 per acre. These figures understate the cost. They give an average cost per acre for the whole area covered and not just the eroded portion within the total area; they do not include maintenance costs or losses to the farmer of taking land out of production; and they do not include the cost of supplies, equipment and labor furnished by the C.C.C.

". . . With small farmers fighting to ward off foreclosures they cannot afford to pay the cost of terracing, of building check dams, or of shifting from commercial crops to grass. Even the cost of strip cropping or contour furrowing is proportionately higher for smaller farmers who lack equipment necessary for economical operation."

If erosion is allowed to go unheeded and unchecked, it will drive the farmers off the land and raise the price of food for the city workers and endanger the food supply of the nation. The degradation of the social capital of

America goes forward at an increasing pace. The cumulative loss estimated by soil erosion specialists since 1900 is \$10,000,000,000, enough to pay for three flood control and prevention programs on a full complete national scale. This sum does not include the annual damage resulting directly from floods.

Besides the direct threats of soil erosion to the economic life of the farmer, the food supply and the rendering inadequate of the downstream flood control engineering works, there is still another; it menaces the water supply storages of great industrial centers. The great cities of America are forced to go further and further away in order that a regular supply of water for domestic and manufacturing purposes may be had. Boston had to go sixty-two miles away to tap a stream. New York now brings part of its supply over ninety-two miles away and plans now to go over 290 miles down to the Delaware Water Gap at an estimated cost of \$392,000,000. The Hetchy-Hetchy Reservoir, built at a cost of \$125,000,000, supplies part of San Francisco water from a distance of 200 miles.

To protect these very important and expensive reservoirs, large tracts of land must be protected in the various watersheds and basins. The protection means the proper vegetation and forests to bind the soil and provide the necessary return of organic compounds that make them more absorbent. The life of the reservoir, and in turn the material prosperity and existence of the population, are dependent on effective soil management and land utilization.

Water uncontrolled in its erosive action takes up the soil in fine particles

called silt. Many of the storage reservoirs of the Southern Piedmont have been filled by silt to the top of the dam within less than thirty years. One major reservoir on the Colorado River in Texas was filled in the course of five years. The Elephant Butte Reservoir in New Mexico, estimated to have a life of 220 years at the present rate of silting, will be useless in times of protracted drought at the end of sixty years. And in Western Illinois and Iowa, railroads have had to raise tracks and bridges in accord with progressive building up of stream channels and valleys with erosive debris. This catalogue of destruction could go on to show hundreds of other examples of how the water supplies and the lands of our country are being squandered at a rate so startling that it surpasses any historic period, civilized or barbaric, and at a cost that is incredible by any system of accounting. The price of protection and conservation is only a very small fraction of the accelerated cost that the people must bear for the rapidly depreciating social capital, our lands and waters.

The great drought in the so-called "dust bowl" area has created an unenviable record in the annals of American agriculture. This drought has lasted for almost three years and reduced three-quarters of the farming population to a relief status. The dust storms that ravage the "dust bowl" and accompanied the drought have the closest relationship to the problem of water conservation in all its phases and to soil erosion. Because with the drought came that other dreaded enemy of the soil of the great grain and cereal plains; the wind.

Government reports showed that on

May 11, 1934, the farmers of these areas watched wind whirl aloft to the sky "over 300,000,000 tons of the fertile topsoil". The estimated annual loss is 3,000,000,000 tons of soil ravaged by wind and water. Consider then the position of the farmer whose sole capital in the land for productive purposes is the six to eight inches of top soil that swirl in the air, cutting off sunlight to a somber grayness, giving him dust pneumonia and asthma, and reducing him and his family to the status of serfs on relief.

The control and prevention of dust storms must take place within the realm of soil treatment itself. H. H. Bennett summed up the causes thusly:

"The enormous dust storms of the last two years were the result of an accumulation of circumstances, climaxed by several years of intense drought. Overgrazing, followed by mechanized cultivation of grain and the consequent destruction of natural sod cover, had bared the soil of the high plains. Then came the drought."

Crop failure for several years bared the land completely of cover and a soil baked dry and powdered blew easily before ready winds.

In the limitless reservoir of the soil, in its ability to retain moisture, and by careful crop management, dust storms can be controlled. Expedient measures such as listing and clodding fallow fields are not lasting measures. A permanent solution of the dust storm problems calls for the conservation of moisture by soil and engineering structures so that it may be utilized in times of protracted drought. Such a plan calls for financial assistance by the government so that the farmer can take some of his land away from his income paying production and assign it to a

cropping system that will keep vegetative cover almost continuously on the land. These provisions carried out at Dalhart, in the Texas Panhandle, by the Soil Conservation Service over an area of 20,000 acres produced complete control of wind erosion of the soil.

OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF A COMPLETE FLOOD CONTROL AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

Ample evidence has been shown of the urgency and absolute necessity for entering into a long-term national program that will conserve our land and water resources. There has been much money spent on flood control, something like the sum of \$1,500,000,000 in the last ten years. But in spite of vast expenditures these works have been of little avail to the waters that must flow steadily toward the sea; ask the farmers in the Ohio Valley and the workers in Louisville.

The Roosevelt administration attempted schemes to tinker with these fundamental problems of national resources, but with practically little or no success. The rulers of our country find themselves in a desperate position. If they don't do something, it means that their own properties and holdings are endangered from year to year. Of course, they usually pass on the increased costs to the lowly consumer and worker; the small farmer and worker suffer most in these disasters.

All work that has been done to date, and that includes T.V.A., has been this careful crazyquilt patching so that the worker and farmer will bear the cost, while the banker's interest, the industrialists' and grain speculators' prices, and the utility magnates' rate structure will remain undisturbed. This is the

nucleus of capitalist "planning", conservation of the small group of exploiters at the expense and misery of the millions of workers and small farmers.

The Soil Conservation Service has determined the physical facts but cannot make them effective to protect the land. When the Supreme Court rejected the A.A.A., the Act was expanded to provide soil conservation if the farmer reduced his cash crop acreage. Such a set-up proved conclusively that it couldn't fight soil erosion, because its primary objective was to get around the Supreme Court decision. In practice, the county committees which administered the act were controlled by the large farmers and absentee corporation owners, who had now a better means than the old A.A.A. to drive the smaller farmer off the land.

The new "ever normal granary plan" offered by Secretary Wallace on February 8, 1937, before a group of national farm leaders is nothing more than a revival of the old A.A.A., plus the inadequate soil conservation benefits, plus a crop insurance plan which would go to the large landowners again the way the old A.A.A. curtailment benefits did.

Many earnest and sincere people have pointed to the accomplishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority as a step toward "socialism", a genuine attempt at social planning. It is true that T.V.A. represents an excellent indication of the great possibilities that the technical talent of America can achieve, but it certainly is not all that would-be "social planners" have boasted of. This project was initiated primarily for war purposes, the production of nitrates, but was extended later to include development of the entire watershed with hydroelectric power

and its general conservation of water and land resources features. The Supreme Court decision upheld the T.V.A., not in any direction of conservation, but as a war baby.

The work of engineers in and around T.V.A. represented the best in scientific land utilization. To protect the watershed of the Norris Lake and Dam, T.V.A. acquired 100,000 acres of land and there carried out the whole range of scientific management of forestry, soil mechanics, and mining. Another aspect of T.V.A.'s rounded hydrologic program was the development of electricity by hydroelectric means. T.V.A. was going to challenge the utility magnates of the U.S.

When the eighty square miles of storage space for water of Norris Lake were cleared, T.V.A. created a new type of rural refuge. Every tree under the waterline was felled, bridges, churches, houses, schools and even graves were removed. And 4,000 families, about 20,000 people, were made to leave before the rising waters of the reservoir. The families that suffered most from this man-made flood were the tenants and the sharecroppers. Neither T.V.A. nor any other government agency made any substantial provision for them. These people only lost the bare homes they had by the condemnation proceedings, they got no money. Consequently, they did not have the money to move far, and they have not the money to buy land. In any event, there is only submarginal land available around the dam. These tenant families must either squat on the very worst land which, incidently, T.V.A. planned to retire from cultivation, or wander along like nomads.

What was the position of other work-

ers, the forestry workers who were to maintain the watershed and raise the annual deficiency of timber above normal requirements? They were given houses and twenty-five acres of land at a modest rental and about 100 days of work in the forest at \$2.50 to \$3.50 per day. Their farming practices will be models for poor farmers. They are taught fireside industries to trade with each other or with the "outside" for cash. Gardens will yield 80 per cent of their food.

So, with this type of "planning", we have a return to a colonial economy with wages at about \$250 per year, less rental of house and land, less food not raised on the land, less farm and household appliances and medical expenses.

What about the ambitious power program? At present, the Commonwealth & Southern Power has obtained an injunction from Judge Gore at Nashville, Tenn., so sweeping that it prevents the extension of T.V.A. power lines to areas not even served by the utilities. And, meanwhile, the Authority itself is divided over just what policy to pursue. Doctor A. E. Morgan is pleading for friendly cooperation with the utilities and Mr. Lillienthal is practically ready to throw down the gauntlet and fight for cheap power for everyone in the territory administered by the Authority. There are other members of the committee with differences of opinion but these two represent the most important poles on which the policy must eventually see-saw, depending on who can exert the most pressure politically, the workers and farmers or the utilities.

While the small farmers and other members of the rural community are girding for the fight for cheap light

and power, John C. Parker, Vice-President of the Consolidated Edison Company, told the winter session of the Convention of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers of his opposition to President Roosevelt's electrification proposals. Mr. Parker was also critical of what he termed, "the current abnormal interest in power problems". The power industry, he asserted, is being injured by "widespread and exaggerated enthusiasm" of those who are constantly urging the development and extension of electric power.

Yes, by their own admission, the power bosses are afraid of this great interest of the workers and farmers in the amount of money that they must pay tribute each month. Everybody hates a utility. The question of control of power will be a political fight in this country of the most stirring kind. There must be a showdown soon because of the development of other drainage basins such as Boulder Dam, Bonneville and Grand Coulee, all federal power projects.

SUMMARY OF FLOOD CONTROL AGENCIES

Of course, this problem has been recognized by past administrations at one time or another. A report last year by the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians showed that there are at least eleven federal agencies that deal with some aspect of flood control. The most important of these, the one which spends the most money, is the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army (civilian function). Each of them has done some work, and has made some contribution to the problem.

But it now remains to consolidate their function under one special agency

that will be empowered to plan and carry out its work by the proper appropriations from Congress.

Appropriations are important; money goes a long way to make a program possible. Last year when the floods came there was (as there is this year) a flood of bills to remedy the whole situation. Famous last year was the billion-dollar omnibus flood control bill, which Congress abandoned at the request of the President for another bill calling for only \$300,000,000 that would take care of immediate needs. This they passed but never appropriated the money. That is how the flood situation was remedied last year. What will the answer be this year?

This year the President has just sent the program of the National Resources Board to Congress. This program calls for an expenditure of \$6,000,000,000 over a period of six years, with a lump sum annual appropriation under regular budget procedure for expenditures on approved projects. These projects, though, are to be timed for the time when the Board in control thinks that the "economic pump" needs to be primed. In the words of President Roosevelt, this is a long-range plan "... to provide the best use of our resources and to prepare in advance against any other emergency". If such plan were to be courageously carried out, it would be necessary to appropriate \$6,000,000,000 yearly over the whole six-year period.

The lack of scientific management

of the natural resources of America must stand for all time as one of the greatest indictments of capitalism as a system of political economy. From a country wonderfully endowed with the richest of natural wealth, we are now facing a country that is being stripped bare, with floods mounting in intensity each year, and a farming class that is being reduced to serfdom. America, as no other country in the world today, represents a travesty of civilization; the most advanced capitalist technology with the wild flood waters putting out the fires in its great steel centers and the skyscrapers of its crowded cities standing cold, idle, deserted. These are the monuments to capitalist greed that is ravaging a country and its people.

We Communists have said many times how we love America for the beauty of its land and the strength and revolutionary tradition of its people. Then, we must take this responsibility and show the people how to fight for the preservation of America for themselves and their children. We can show what the planned greed of capitalism has wrought of America, the farmers' and workers' poverty, floods, dust storms, a denuded, cheerless countryside. The time is short. Competent technologists believe that we have less than twenty years to complete the task of conservation. Now is the time to begin to save America for the workers and farmers, for progress, plenty and peace.

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