

POLITICAL AFFAIRS *A magazine devoted*

to the theory and practice of Marxism - Leninism

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VOLUME XXV, NO. 7

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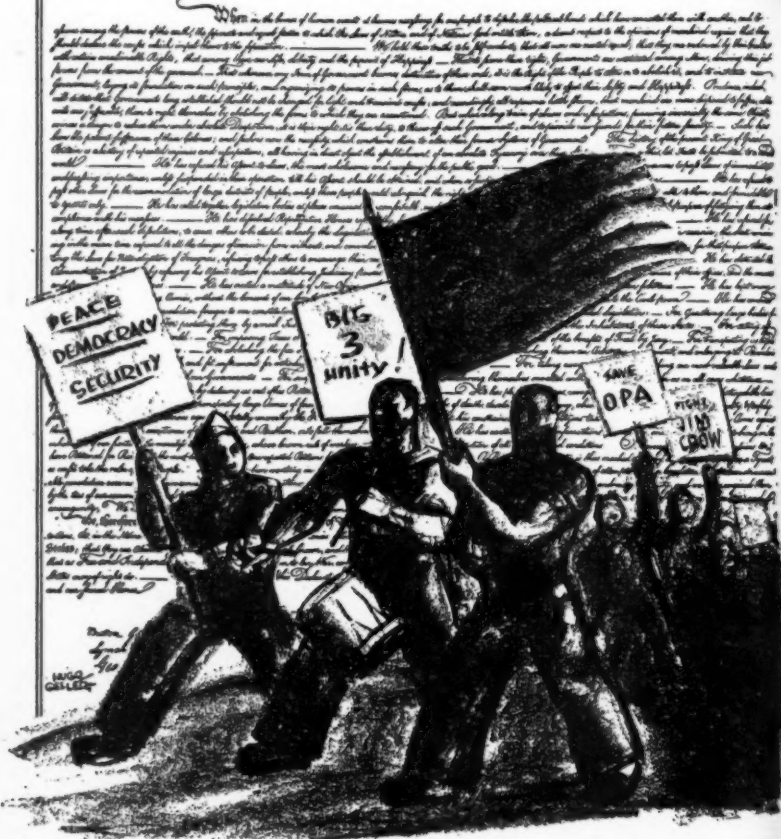
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Re-entered as second class matter January 4, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. POLITICAL AFFAIRS is published monthly by New Century Publishers, Inc., at 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., to whom subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be sent. Subscription rate: \$2.50 a year; \$1.25 for six months; foreign and Canada, \$3.00 a year. Single copies 25 cents.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,



JULY 4, 1946

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RECENT LABOR DEVELOPMENTS

By JACK STACHEL

RECENT WEEKS have witnessed the breaking of the railroad workers' strike by the Truman Administration acting in behalf of the big railroad monopolies and the passage of anti-labor legislation by Congress on the wave of the anti-labor hysteria engendered by the President's threat to use the armed forces to break the scheduled strike of the maritime workers. These are not isolated or incidental occurrences. They mark a new stage in the development of the reactionary trends in the Truman Administration. They reveal that monopoly capital and the government have definitely decided upon a complete break with Roosevelt's domestic policies, just as they had already previously broken with his foreign policies. These acts pull down the curtain on what has become known as the Roosevelt period of bourgeois reforms and open up a new period of more open capitalist dictatorship. This reactionary policy at home, aiming at unbridled exploitation and oppression of labor and the people, is but the inevitable

counterpart of the foreign policy of American monopoly capital—a policy seeking to establish world domination by U.S. imperialism.

It should now be clear to labor and all progressives that the post-war program of Wall Street is directed against the people of our country, no less than against the democratic forces the world over. The policy of "get tough with Russia," which expresses a desertion of the Roosevelt policy of friendship and peace with the peoples of the world, has its counterpart at home in the "get tough with labor" policy, which is in reality a desertion of the Roosevelt policy of anti-fascism and of greater economic security for the people. President Truman, who was elected by the people together with the late President on the pledge to carry forward the latter's policies, is now instead following the repudiated Hoover-Vandenberg policies in foreign affairs and the repudiated policies of the G.O.P.-National Association of Manufacturers policy in domestic affairs.

But already, only three weeks after this offensive against labor and the people on the part of Big Business and the Truman Administration, it is evident that reaction is meeting with mounting resistance to its plans and policies. President Truman by his threat to use force against the railroad workers was able to bring about the calling off of the strike on the terms demanded by the government. But the mari-

time workers, facing the same threat and the most extensive preparation on the part of the government to break their strike, have just scored one of the greatest victories of labor since V-J Day and have defeated all attempts to isolate and break their organizations. They emerge out of this struggle with unprecedented economic gains for their workers in the industry, and with a new and higher form of unity expressed through the Committee for Maritime Unity. At the same time, President Truman was compelled to veto the infamous, union-busting Case Bill which passed the Senate on the Saturday immediately following Truman's appearance before the joint session of the House and Senate. Even more important, the very House which had previously passed the Case Bill by a two-thirds majority upheld the veto in the face of the unanimous demand of labor, supported by substantial sections of the people generally.

TWO DANGERS

These important victories of labor and the people show that the offensive of monopoly capital can be beaten back. While there is no reason for complacency, there is also no reason for defeatism. In this connection, it is necessary to be on guard against two dangers in the further development of this fight. On the one hand, it is necessary to recognize the new stage in the reactionary offensive and to appraise fully the

meaning of the attack on the right to strike. The attempt of Big Business to rob the workers of their right to strike is in reality an attack upon the very existence of the trade unions as an instrument of struggle. Without the right to strike there can be no genuine collective bargaining. To rob the workers of this essential weapon, *i.e.*, collective withholding of their labor power—means actually to rob them of the right to effective collective bargaining. And to rob them of the means of effective collective bargaining is to destroy the free trade union movement.

The fact that the President talks of his anti-labor and strikebreaking proposals as being only temporary and emergency in character does not in the least lessen the danger. The fact that the President must first decide to seize an industry before the workers are denied the right to strike under his proposed legislation does not in any way lessen the danger. The President, under this proposed "emergency" legislation, has the power to declare any industry he wishes essential to the economy of the nation and then seize it in behalf of the employers' interests. This means that the President would actually have the power to prevent strikes and to use the full force of the government to break strikes in every essential industry. Those who would call upon labor to greet the President's veto of the Case Bill and weaken its fight against the Truman emergency legislation as a "lesser

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evil" are therefore following in the footsteps of the German Social-Democrats who paved the way for fascism in Germany by their policy of appeasement of reaction, of retreat before reaction, of bowing to one emergency decree after another. What they succeeded in doing with these appeasement and "lesser evil" policies was not to block the road to fascism, but to demoralize the labor movement, to weaken its resistance, and to assure the victory of fascism.

At the same time, we must guard against the second danger, namely, of already labeling as fascism what we have in the country to-day. To be sure, the acts of the Administration in behalf of Big Business are steps in the direction of fascism. To rob the workers of the right to strike, to draft labor as President Truman has proposed, is to strike at the very heart of the rights of labor and the people, at the most fundamental of our democratic liberties. This policy, unless checked and beaten back, will lead directly to fascism. There can be no appeasement of this trend, no compromise with it. But the system of more open reactionary dictatorship which already exists in this country is not yet fascism as such. To say otherwise is in reality to underestimate the danger of fascism to the people and also to weaken the fight against it. If what we now have under the Truman Administration is fascism, then some people will conclude that, bad as things are, they are still tolerable, and this will weak-

en the fight against the actual fascist danger.

REACTION'S MANEUVERS DEFEATED

It is necessary fully to understand the objectives of the present offensive of reaction and why the present techniques of strikebreaking are being used. Monopoly capital had, and still has, as its postwar program, the lowering of the living standards of the masses, as well as the weakening of the trade unions; for the purposes both of carrying through the attack on the living standards, as well as for the weakening of labor's role in mobilizing the people in resistance against monopoly's goal of world domination. But the great strike and wage movements following V-J Day, which culminated in the great strikes led by the C.I.O., not only succeeded in defeating these objectives of monopoly capital, but resulted in the labor movement's emerging greatly strengthened from this first phase of the struggle. Even though the wage gains were partly offset by the rise in prices granted to the monopolists by the Truman Administration, the workers did make substantial gains. Despite every attempt to weaken them from without and from within, the unions emerged stronger than ever. Moreover, the lessons of the great struggles gave a powerful impetus to the further organization of the unorganized, to a heightened struggle against the monopolists and to a rising demand for

nationalization of the basic industries and for independent political action by labor in alliance with all the common people. In the course of these struggles, the attempts of the reactionary leadership of the A. F. of L. Executive Council to weaken the C.I.O., which stood in the forefront of these struggles, received a major setback. A. F. of L. workers and, in some cases, entire A. F. of L. organizations, came to the support of the C.I.O. workers and even engaged in joint struggle. A high point in this unity was the general strike in Hartford, carried on jointly by the official bodies of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O.

Following this failure on the part of monopoly capital and its supporters, they made the most strenuous efforts to accomplish their purpose of weakening the labor movement by instigating dissension from within, where the frontal assault against labor had failed. This was the real significance of the attempt to disintegrate the C.I.O. by stampeding it into a witch hunt and purge of the Communists and those "labelled" Communists. This was no mere "business as usual," anti-Red campaign. It was a well-planned, nationwide plot, engineered by the big monopolists and carried forward in a concerted manner by all the forces of reaction. In this plot, the reactionary Social-Democrats were in the van, followed by the reactionary circles inspired by the Vatican, by the open fascists, by all the enemies

of labor and the people. A concentration point in this drive, following a warming-up period at the organizing convention of the utility workers, was the great convention of the United Steel Workers led by Philip Murray, President of the C.I.O. These forces calculated that, if they could succeed in stampeding this union, the largest and most important in the C.I.O. into a witch hunt and purge, it would then be relatively easy to carry this policy into the C.I.O., as a whole. As is known, these enemies of labor received a most resounding defeat at the steel workers' convention, which was, on the whole, a progressive convention, adopting positions on all major questions of foreign and domestic policy which deserve the support of all of labor and the people. Above all, the convention, under the leadership of President Murray, adopted a statement of policy, in the clearest language, affirming the right of every member to hold whatever political views he or she may desire. It categorically rejected any witch hunt or purge as inimical to the interests of labor and the nation, lashing out against those enemies of labor who wished to stampede this great union into such a suicidal course.

REACTION'S NEW TACTIC

Unable to break the labor movement or bend it to its will, either through a frontal attack in the field of economic struggle or through creating division from within, Big

Business, and the Truman Administration acting in its behalf, saw in the struggle of the railroad workers the necessity and the opportunity of trying out a new tactic, to attack labor through the open and full use of the government as a strikebreaker. It was for this purpose that the President went before Congress to ask for new power and for "emergency" legislation.

Why did the struggle of the railroad workers seem to be a good testing ground for this tactic? First, the railroad workers found themselves divided, with only two unions, the trainmen and the engineers, ready to strike and with the leadership of the other eighteen railroad crafts opposed to the strike, even though their position was in defiance of their membership. Secondly, they felt that public opinion could be more easily rallied against labor in this instance, since a railroad strike would, in only 24 to 48 hours, result in almost complete economic paralysis of the nation. Thirdly, the demands of the railroad workers were not known to the masses, who were under the illusion that these so-called "aristocrats" of labor enjoyed high wages and good conditions. They did not know that, thanks to the Railway Labor Act and the division of the railroad workers into many craft unions (and with conservative leadership), the railroad workers had been plunged down almost to the bottom as far as wages and living standards were concerned. Finally,

the labor movement was caught off-guard, not realizing at once, before the outbreak of the railroad strike, what was at stake for labor as a whole.

The form of strikebreaking used against the railroad workers and the new legislation proposed by President Truman differ from repressive measures in the past in many respects. In the past, the classical form of strikebreaking was primarily carried through by starving the workers into submission; by the use of company police and guards in the company-controlled towns; by the use of local and state police, local courts and injunctions; by private scabherding and strikebreaking agencies like the infamous Pinkertons, as well as by the occasional use of federal troops. But at present the trade union movement is organized to the number of more than 13 millions; there are new laws on the statute books, such as the Wagner Act; there is a new understanding on the part of the people as to the role of the trade unions; and labor is engaging more and more in effective political action. The old methods, therefore, no longer suffice. The full weight of the government is now necessary to break an important strike. And government seizure, which was developed during the war to assure an uninterrupted flow of supplies to the armed forces and was directed by Roosevelt mainly against the sabotage of the big monopolies, has become, in the hands of Truman, the

medium for breaking strikes. It must be said that this cannot be a welcome development even for Big Business, which is thus compelled to expose the role of the government before the people, bringing with it consequences which will in the long run by very costly to it. But all other methods having failed, this policy was decided upon in desperation.

Less than 48 hours after the President broke the railroad strike, it became evident that labor and the people would not take this attack lying down. Almost every section of the labor movement reacted instantly against the Truman emergency strikebreaking legislative proposals. Included were not only the heads of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., most of their affiliates, and independent unions, but even the leaders of the 18 railroad unions that had not joined in the strike. In non-labor circles, too, the progressive forces and liberty-loving Americans raised their voices. While the House passed the President's proposals post-haste, with only 13 voting against them, by Monday the Senate, having heard from labor and the people, was compelled to engage in long debate; in fact, it defeated overwhelmingly the draft-labor clause of the measure. While the measure as passed by the Senate remains vicious and dangerous and must be defeated, the Senate's action nevertheless did register the pressure of labor and the people. Now it devolves on labor and the people to continue and to increase this pressure

so as to bring about the defeat of the measure when the Senate version comes before the House.

The miners were the first to benefit by this great counter-offensive of labor and the people. There can be no doubt that this new legislation was directed against the miners, no less than against the railroad workers, whose strike had in fact been called off before President Truman addressed the joint session of Congress. The miners were thus enabled to enter into negotiations with the government, which had seized the mines, and to win a substantial victory. This victory is particularly significant, since the government was compelled to grant it while the miners remained away from the government-seized mines, returning to the pits only after the agreement was signed. It is clear that it was the great response and solidarity of labor which made possible the miners' victory, and not clever maneuvering by John L. Lewis. This, by the way, provides a good basis upon which the miners, who have for so long been kept isolated from the rest of the labor movement, can be rallied for the progressive policies of labor, for unity, and for independent political action jointly with all labor and all anti-fascist forces.

LESSONS OF THE MARITIME WORKERS' VICTORY

The great victory of the maritime workers should bring new encouragement to labor and the people in their

continued struggle against reaction. The shipowners had for months refused to negotiate in good faith. The President had threatened to use the Navy, the Coast Guard, and the full force of the government to break the strike scheduled for June 15 on the basis of the decision of the newly-formed Committee for Maritime Unity, organized in San Francisco on May 5. Even some of the leaders of the N.M.U. had, in a moment of weakness, succumbed to these threats and agreed to recommend a mere \$12.50-a-month increase to their membership, which promptly and unanimously rejected this proposal. Negotiations then began between the shipowners and the C.M.U., which acted for all seven affiliated maritime unions. Even these negotiations, brought about through the initiative of Secretary of Labor Schwollenbach, were made possible only by the decisive response of labor to the breaking of the railroad strike. As is known, the negotiations finally resulted in the seamen receiving wage increases amounting to almost four times the shipowners' original offer of \$12.50; and establishing, in principle, the basic 48-hour week instead of the 56-hour week, although for the present the seamen will actually work 56 hours, receiving overtime pay for the additional 8 hours.

How and why did the maritime workers win such a great victory, and this even without a strike? (Actually, in most ports, the strike did go into effect for a number of hours,

since the news of the actual signing of the agreement did not reach them before the strike deadline.) The answers are simple but important for all labor.

First, the maritime workers, like the miners, benefited from labor's reply to the reactionary legislation and the government strikebreaking.

Second, the maritime workers, instead of being divided like the railroad workers, were united as never before through the newly-formed C.M.U. The rank-and-file of these unions are militant and united, and were ready to fight for their demands under any and all conditions. The unions made every preparation for the strike, down to the minutest detail, and the shipowners and the government could hardly be mistaken about the results of such preparations.

Third, the rank-and-file of the A. F. of L. maritime unions would have nothing to do with any policy, whether it originated with Ryan or Lundberg, that did not respect the C.M.U. picket lines. Even the leaders of the A. F. of L. unions found it advisable to go along with this policy, no matter what their personal inclinations may have been. The teamsters and their local leaders also made it clear that they would respect the picket lines. The pledge of support from the Railway Trainmen by Whitney brought new strength to the maritime workers, since their support would be most important in the event of a strike.

Fourth, the full weight of the

C.I.O. and President Murray was placed behind the maritime workers. It was therefore made clear that any attempt to isolate the maritime workers, any attempt to label their projected strike as merely "political," and thus to break it, would find the whole C.I.O. arrayed on their side.

Fifth, one of the most decisive factors was the international solidarity pledged by the maritime workers of the other countries, who are affiliated through their respective centers to the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Finally, the maritime workers, because of the role they played in the winning of the war, because they were able in time to make known to the people their low wages and long hours of work, had gained great support among the veterans and the general public, with the result that citizens' committees and supporting citizens' meetings were organized while the negotiations were still under way. The people and labor, aroused by what was happening, found in their support of the maritime workers a concrete means of expressing themselves and of advancing the entire struggle against the reactionary monopolies.

These great victories—the veto of the Case Bill and the winning of major demands by the maritime workers—have already administered a great setback to the plans of reaction, to its agents in both major parties and in Congress, and to the reactionary, strikebreaking policies of

the Truman Administration. However, substantial as these victories are, they are only partial victories in a struggle which has yet to be won as a whole. The big job is still ahead. The danger is still here. The plans of monopoly capital to achieve world domination remain, and the attempts to weaken labor and to drive down the living standards of the people continue. The victories won so far only serve to demonstrate that labor and the people can defeat reaction's offensive as a whole.

But, in order to win, much more must yet be done. The Truman emergency bill must be defeated and labor must be on guard against new proposals for permanent anti-labor legislation. There must be a nationwide campaign to end the so-called "emergency" and all the war powers of the President. The campaign to organize the unorganized, the carrying forward of the drive to organize the South, which is not yet fully under way, must be taken up with the utmost energy. United labor action in every sphere must be taken up in the manner demanded by the present danger. The fight to save O.P.A., and against the menace of inflation, affords the opportunity of creating the greatest possible unity of the people in common struggle against the attempts of the monopolists and profiteers to drive down the living standards of the people. The new lessons learned as to the role of the monopolists and of the Truman Administration, which together with the

Hoovers and Vandenberg is intent on breaking up the basis for peace set forth in the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, makes possible the broad extension and deepening of the struggle for peace. Independent political action has been given unprecedented impetus. It must now be advanced under labor's leadership by new efforts to bring together labor, the farming masses, the Negro people, all anti-fascists, all followers of Roosevelt, into one united camp to influence the 1946 elections and to speed the building of a broad, people's, anti-fascist party, of which labor will be the backbone. In the fight for such a people's coalition, the fight for nationalization directed against the profits and the power of the monopolies can now become one of the most important levers for advancing the unity of the people against the monopolies, opening up new perspectives of peace, democracy, and security for the people.

Our Party, which has played an important role in these crucial days, has once more demonstrated the correctness of its policies and its warnings to the people. As a result, it has gained new strength among the

workers and all the anti-fascist forces. The lessons of the present struggles must be brought home to the people. New possibilities have opened up, not only for the advancement of the anti-fascist struggle and of the fight for peace, but for the widest propaganda of our fundamental socialist program. The success of our recent recruiting campaign, especially among the workers of the basic industries, should encourage a continued and systematic effort to build the Party, with special attention being given to the basic industries, including the railroad workers. Particular attention must be given to the much neglected work of building the Party among the A. F. of L. workers, who have shown a remarkable desire to struggle and for unity.

Finally, the lessons of this period must be discussed in all Party organizations. The mass of our membership must be drawn into these discussions, so that the Party as a whole may achieve greater clarity on, and higher theoretical understanding of, the meaning of the recent events, the present moment, and the tasks ahead.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN BLOC

By ALEXANDER BITTELMAN

BYRNES AND BEVIN have tried to deny Molotov's charge in his statement of May 27, that the United States and England have been acting as a bloc against the Soviet Union. But their denials, in form as well as content, have only served to confirm the charge. There can be no doubt that the governments of the United States and Great Britain—American and British imperialism—are acting in concert, by agreement, as a bloc against the Soviet Union and against all the other democratic and peace forces of the world.

This was clearly demonstrated, as shown by Molotov, at the first Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers, where the American and British delegates were lined up against the Soviet Union on most issues. Practically the same condition has prevailed at the United Nations Security Council sessions in New York. In the Far East, the American representatives seek to maintain and expand a monopoly position for American imperialism (MacArthur in Japan), resisting equal Soviet participation in the settlement of affairs there, reconsolidating reaction and combatting the democratic forces, with the virtual support of British

imperialism, which up to a short time ago manifested displeasure with the idea of American hegemony in the Far East.

In the Middle and Near East we find again that England and the United States are lining up against the Soviet Union. This is so in Iran and in the eastern Mediterranean. In the Arab countries an effort is now on foot to reach an exclusive Anglo-American understanding, as evident from the developments around the report of the Anglo-American Commission on Palestine, while the two imperialist governments are already working together to keep the influence of the Soviet Union, and of the United Nations as a whole, out of the Arabian Middle East.

The conclusion is inescapable that the American and British governments have abandoned the policy of Big Three collaboration—the Roosevelt Policy—supplanting it with the policy of an Anglo-American bloc which wages an offensive against the Soviet Union and against all other democratic forces. This development is a definite victory for the reactionary “get tough with Russia” camp, as well as for the adherents of the Churchill, criminal war-mongering line. It is the result of “the intrigues of international reaction which is hatching plans of a new war” (Stalin).

The reactionary, imperialist calculations underlying the development of the Anglo-American bloc are of a twofold character. First, it is the in-

tention of the ruling monopolies in these two countries to try to regulate, so to speak, their mutual rivalries and contradictions; to keep their fundamental rivalries—economic, financial, political and military—from breaking out of bounds, a possibility which is always present *because of the drive of American imperialism for world domination, including that part of the world now dominated by British imperialism*. The expectation among these imperialists is that they may be able to find solutions for their rivalries and to compose them at the expense of other nations. This is what they are now trying to do, while seeking to weaken each other at the same time. It is the intention of the ruling monopoly and imperialist circles of the two countries to impose upon the world the rule of Anglo-American imperialism, the hegemony of the so-called "superior" Anglo-Saxon races, which the Anglo-American bloc is designed to promote. Secondly, the ruling imperialist circles of these two countries are determined to prevent the consolidation of the new democracies in Europe, to check the growth of the liberation movements of the colonial and dependent peoples, and to circumscribe and weaken the influence of the Soviet Union in the affairs of the world. In other words, Anglo-American imperialism is unfolding by means of the bloc a broad offensive against all democratic forces and especially against the Soviet Union which is the main bulwark of progress and de-

mocracy in the world. The intrigues of international reaction for a new war arise from, and are fed by, this twofold character of the moving forces behind the Anglo-American bloc.

It is certain that the war dangers have materially increased. For this the responsibility lies with the Truman Administration. It lies with the attempt of American imperialism to establish world domination, to impose its will upon the Soviet Union and all democratic and peaceful nations. To say this, is not to overlook the fact that British imperialism is a major factor in world affairs and in the Anglo-American bloc, and that in certain parts of the world—for example the Mediterranean and the Middle East—it is British imperialism that is primarily responsible for the sharpening of the imperialist, anti-Soviet and war-mongering offensive. It does mean, however, that American imperialism is the leading power in the Anglo-American bloc, that American imperialist reaction is out to conquer the world, and that the Truman Administration is capitulating to, and is carrying out the policies of American imperialist reaction. This imperialist reaction finds its clearest political expression and main driving force in the Hoover-Vandenberg-Dewey elements dominating the Republican Party, together with their allies among the reactionary and poll-tax Democrats and the Hearst-Patterson-McCormick axis.

That is why the main responsibility for the growing war danger and for the rising tide of pro-fascist reaction at home, especially the attacks on labor, lies with the American monopolies and imperialists and with the Truman Administration which is carrying out their will.

It is not true that up until the first Paris Conference the U. S. government followed a policy of collaboration with the Soviet Union, and that it was Soviet intransigence that has "compelled" the American government to resort to a policy designed to build up the so-called West against the East. This fantastic version of recent developments, originating with the State Department, is only a clumsy attempt to obscure the fact that the war-mongering and war-hatching line of international reaction is becoming the line of the Truman Administration.

REACTIONARY FOREIGN POLICIES

What have been, and are, the concrete foreign policies of the Truman Administration?

In Eastern Europe, American policy gives open and hidden support to reactionaries and fascists and to all enemies of the new democratic governments, while refusing these governments loans or any other form of economic assistance. The loan to Poland has been virtually cancelled so as to exert reactionary political pressure upon the Polish government and to embolden the reactionaries

in Poland on the eve of the elections.

In Germany and Austria, American policy violates the Potsdam agreements in all major respects. This policy has resulted in the unilateral discontinuing of reparation payments to the Soviet Union from the American zone of occupation where Nazis, Catholic reactionaries and all other reactionaries are being built up—in the economy and in politics—as, against the labor and progressive forces. American policy sabotages the economic disarmament of Germany and has now begun to acquiesce in the British imperialism's policy of rebuilding German imperialism as a weapon against the Soviet Union and European democracy in general.

In France, American policy is openly anti-democratic and anti-Soviet, using economic and financial pressure to impose American imperialist influence upon French life. This was plainly demonstrated by the American maneuvers with Leon Blum in the negotiations for the French loan. True, the loan itself, as well as its timing with the eve of the last elections, has failed to buy the elections completely for American imperialism, but that was not because the Truman Administration did not try.

In Italy, the U. S. government follows a similar line, though not in all political details. In Italy, American imperialism seeks more sweeping economic and political monopoly positions—more so than in France.

And American policy opposes the just demand of Yugoslavia for Trieste in order to keep it, in fact, under the control of Anglo-American imperialism as a strategic center of imperialist power against the European democracies and the Soviet Union.

In the case of Africa, we find an interesting example of how the Truman Administration adjusts its foreign policies to the "needs" of the Anglo-American bloc. There, American policy was at first closer to the Soviet position, *i.e.*, a policy aimed to further the national independence of the Italian and British colonies in Africa. In this attitude, American policy was motivated by the "normal" imperialist urge to secure new positions for the American monopolies in Africa and to weaken the positions of the rival British monopolies. But now, with the development of the Anglo-American bloc, in which American imperialism receives support from British imperialism in other parts of the world (Far East, Germany, etc.), American policy is moving towards the British position, which is to leave Britain in control of its own colonies and of parts of the Italian colonies. Leaders of the American government have forgotten all their fine phrases about the independence of the African peoples. They have also seemingly forgotten their own dissertations about the need of doing away in general with the monopolistic position of British imperialism in the

Mediterranean region, where American monopolies have considerable ambitions.

As to the reason for this, there can be only one answer. The American and British governments have made an agreement, have established a bloc, to support each other in various parts of the world in the interests of ensuring their exclusive dominating position, in order to impose the will of Anglo-American imperialism upon the rest of the world.

This is not to say that Anglo-American imperialist rivalries in the Mediterranean, or other parts of the world, have disappeared. It does mean, however, that American policy seeks to subordinate these contradictions to the development of the Anglo-American bloc for world domination which is directed against the Soviet Union and against all other democratic and peaceloving nations and peoples. It is, no doubt, the purpose of the American government to try to find solutions to the Anglo-American imperialist rivalries within the imperialist bloc led by American imperialism, and to achieve this at the expense of other peoples and states, and also at the expense of Britain. Certainly, the Vandenberg wing of our bi-partisan imperialist foreign policy coalition seems quite determined to make British imperialism pay much more than it is willing to pay for the privilege of belonging to the Anglo-American bloc.

In the Middle and Near East,

American policy has joined hands with British policy to exclude all Soviet and United Nations influence from that area, to prevent the establishment of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the neighboring countries of that region (Iran, Turkey, etc.), to prevent the Soviet Union from establishing the military security of its frontiers in that part of the world where British imperialism especially is building up military war bases, and to combat the movement of the colonial peoples for national liberation and independence.

The report of the Anglo-American Commission on Palestine reflects these aspects of the present situation. It constitutes an attempt to reach an understanding for Anglo-American imperialist collaboration in Palestine at the expense of both peoples, Arabs and Jews, which could be widened later to include other Middle Eastern countries, excluding from that part of the world the influence of the Soviet Union and of the whole United Nations, and leaving still unsettled the full extent of the concessions which American imperialism expects from Britain as a result of such a deal. As far as the Anglo-American imperialists are concerned, the recommendation of the Commission for the admission into Palestine of 100,000 Jewish refugees, whose fate is of the greatest concern to the democratic forces of the Jewish people and of all peoples,

is nothing but an imperialist maneuver to obstruct the growth of Arab-Jewish anti-imperialist unity and to strengthen the respective rival positions of the two imperialist powers among the Arab and Jewish reactionaries in Palestine.

It has already been demonstrated that the question of Jewish immigration into Palestine can be solved only in agreement between the democratic forces of the Arabs and Jews for joint struggle for the independence of Palestine, for a free country of Arabs and Jews, guaranteeing the equal national rights of both peoples. It has also been demonstrated that the salvation of the European Jews, for whose sake the Anglo-American Commission was allegedly set up, lies in the democratic struggle of the peoples for the total eradication of fascism, anti-Semitism and reaction, and not in a so-called Jewish "Exodus" from Europe as advocated by Zionists. The United Nations should at once take over full responsibility for the 100,000 Jewish refugees in German camps, securing the wide opening of the gates of the United Nations' countries to the immigration of these refugees and providing the material means for their immigration and settlement.

In the Far East, American policy seeks to whittle down even the nominal independence of the Philippines, extending American economic domination there and building up the power of the most reactionary forces

in the Roxas government. In China, which American policy regards as a preserve of the monopolies in the United States—a preserve to be built up as a bulwark against the democratic forces of Asia and against the Soviet Union—the American government is maneuvering very intensively to strengthen the position of Chiang Kai-shek and to weaken the position of the democratic forces, especially those led by the Communists.

As to Japan, American policy is daily growing more aggressively imperialist and reactionary, and the same is true in Korea. Leahy's recent mission to London to discuss the acquisition of bases in the Pacific is one more move to make the Pacific secure for American imperialist hegemony, though many serious difficulties with England and the Dominions will be encountered. Furthermore, the scheduled atom bomb tests in the Pacific are obviously designed to impress the world with the readiness of American imperialism to use its military power to support its policies of conquest throughout the world in general and the Pacific in particular.

Coming to the Western Hemisphere, we meet with the latest Truman policy of militarizing the Americas, as it would the United States, under the hegemony of American imperialism. This is another and dramatic demonstration of the fact that American imperialism is determined to establish and maintain a monopoly position in the economy and politics of the Ameri-

can countries at the expense of the well-being and progress of their peoples, and at the expense of British imperialism, and to use the military resources of the hemisphere to impose the will of the American monopolies and trusts upon other parts of the world as well. As a consequence, the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the peoples of Latin America are becoming more intensified.

The foregoing review of American foreign policy demonstrates clearly the following two facts. One: it is not so-called Soviet "intransigence" or non-cooperation that is preventing the collaboration of the Big Three and is endangering the peace of the world, but the drive of American and British imperialism for world domination, the machinations of international reaction for war against the Soviet Union and all other democratic forces, the policies of the American and British governments which seek to realize Anglo-Saxon imperialist rule over all other peoples. Two: the American and British governments are working together as an Anglo-American imperialist bloc, waging an offensive against the Soviet Union and all other peoples, seeking to impose their will upon them, obstructing the making of peace, and creating the dangers of a new war.

Furthermore, a basic feature in the policies of this Anglo-American bloc is the deliberate attempt to rebuild Nazi and fascist strength in Germany, in the other parts of Europe

and in other parts of the world. The refusal of the Anglo-American bloc to take measures against Franco in Spain throws a glaring light upon the fact that these two powers obviously seek to preserve fascist Spain under Franco *as an outpost of world reaction in Europe*, in the Mediterranean, where the power of British imperialism is exclusive and monopolistic. And it is to this sort of policy that the Truman Administration has committed the United States.

WHO LEADS THE ANGLO-AMERICAN BLOC?

During the last few months, while the Anglo-American bloc was beginning to crystallize, Comrade Foster has repeatedly stressed the need of demonstrating to the masses of the American people, to the workers first of all, that American imperialism is no invention of the Communists but an evil reality whose economic basis lies in the American monopolies and trusts—in American monopoly capitalism. Secondly, the Truman Administration is following an aggressive imperialist policy which is threatening the freedom, democracy and peace of the world. Thirdly, this imperialist policy is now being promoted by the Truman Administration through an Anglo-American bloc, headed and led by American imperialism. The systematic propagation of these truths among the widest masses of the people is a basic requisite for the mobilization of the masses in the struggle for peace.

The spokesmen of American imperialism are trying very hard to hide from the masses of the people the aggressively imperialist nature of American foreign policy, especially the fact that this policy is capitulating to the drive of international reaction which is plotting a new world war. The spokesmen of American imperialism are also seeking to deny, though not very successfully, the existence of an Anglo-American bloc against the Soviet Union. The result is that the masses of the people, while awakening to the imperialist nature of American policy and to the existence of an imperialist Anglo-American bloc, do not yet realize fully that the source of these imperialist and warmaking policies of the Truman Administration is *American imperialism*, whose economic base is American monopoly capital—the trusts and large corporations.

All too often, certain liberal critics of American foreign policy tend to present the matter as though American policy is being led astray by Britain; as though the American ruling class, and the government, have been seduced by British imperialism into joining the Anglo-American bloc and pursuing a reactionary, imperialist and warmaking course. This is obviously a fantastic and unreal picture of America's present role in world affairs, which is actually the role of the incomparably strongest imperialist power, driving for world domination and building an Anglo-American bloc under its leadership

to achieve these objectives. The foregoing review of American policy demonstrates that fact conclusively. *It demonstrates the fact that the present American foreign policy is not in the interests of the American people. Hence, it is not American. It only serves the war-hatching intrigues of international reaction, whose backbone and main driving force are the American monopolies and trusts.* These forces are, in fact, sacrificing the interests of the United States, of the American people, to international reactionary conspiracies whose only beneficiaries are the American finance capitalists together with their British partners and other monopolists.

On the other hand, the argument is made that the United States and Great Britain have so many points of rivalry and difference in all parts of the world that it is unrealistic to speak of an Anglo-American bloc, especially of one led by the United States. Here is what James Reston writes in the *New York Times* (May 31, 1946) to hide the existence of an Anglo-American bloc under American leadership:

Washington and London are certainly not following joint policies in the Pacific and in the Near and Middle East. The United Kingdom is arguing for multilateral control of bases in the South Pacific; we are holding out for unilateral control in some places and for United States sovereignty over one or two islands that now belong to the British. This is scarcely London's idea of how to run a "bloc."

In the Far Eastern Commission, the lineup is not the United States and the British Commonwealth against the Soviet Union, but Gen. Douglas MacArthur versus the rest; in the Middle East, the United States and the British are together only in the sense that both are embarrassed by the competitive and combative habits of their private oil and civil aviation companies; and in Palestine, it scarcely can be said that President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee are dancing to the same tune.

The foregoing is supposed to show that there is no Anglo-American bloc in which both imperialist powers always and everywhere follow the same policies or pursue the same objectives. But this is deliberately misleading, for a bloc of that kind would no longer be a bloc but a complete merger which, of course, does not exist. Molotov exposed, in his statement of May 27, not the merger of the United States and England, not the disappearance of their mutual imperialist rivalries and contradictions, which are much sharper and much more embracing than Reston tries to represent them. *The real charge is that the American and British governments have agreed to support each other's imperialist claims in various parts of the world in the interests of establishing and maintaining their exclusive dominating positions at the expense of other nations and peoples.*

In other words, this constitutes a policy of an Anglo-American imperialist bloc. It presupposes differences, rivalries and contradictions,

and even their sharpening, which, however, the two powers intend to try to compose at the expense of others. It does not exclude at all the possibility of each of these two powers trying to resolve mutual rivalries *at the expense of the other* where this proves the easier course. Certainly, this is the orientation of American imperialism, which is the leading partner in the bloc, an orientation which the Vandenberg express most clearly.

The charge is that this Anglo-American bloc is not merely "differing" with the Soviet Union on certain questions, but is waging a reactionary offensive against the Soviet Union and against all other democratic forces, thus endangering the peace of the world. Finally, the charge against American imperialism is that it is the leader of this reactionary, imperialist and warmaking bloc. This fact imposes upon the American people and its working class the great and honorable task of spearheading and leading the historic struggle for checking and defeating the warmaking offensive of American imperialism, for dissolving the Anglo-American bloc, for returning to the Roosevelt policies of Big Three collaboration on the basis of equality, for the uprooting of fascism, and for the maintenance and strengthening of world peace.

In this historic fight for peace and democracy, the American working class and the labor movement are destined to play the part of the main driving force, vanguard, and, even-

tually, leader. Imperialist reaction knows that. Hence, the growing incitement against labor, its trade unions and political organizations, by the servants of imperialism, of the trusts and monopolies. Hence the speed and alacrity with which the Truman Administration jumped upon the labor movement, breaking the railroad strike and projecting methods of terroristic rule against striking workers. This—coupled with the monopoly efforts to reduce the people's standards—is the meaning of the Case Bill and of the Truman proposals to shackle labor. These measures are definite moves of a pro-fascist character, moves in the direction of fascist methods of rule, dictated by the monopolies, by the reactionary imperialists, in their preparations of a new world war.

Consequently, the fight against these labor-shackling measures is a fight, not only for the elementary democratic rights of labor and the trade unions. It is also a fight against imperialist reaction, against its war preparations, for preventing a new world war, for maintaining peace. It is a fight against the reactionary and warmaking drive of American imperialism, embodied in the so-called bi-partisan foreign policies of Vandenberg and Byrnes, to which the Truman Administration is capitulating and which this Administration is pursuing. A *united* struggle by the American people, headed by the working class, can and will defeat these policies and save the peace of the world.

ON THE MASTERY OF MARXIST-LENINIST THEORY

By M. I. KALININ

Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, who was President of the Soviet Union for 27 years until his retirement on March 19, 1946, died on June 3 at the age of 70.

Kalinin's entire life was devoted to tireless, self-sacrificing toil for the cause of the working class, for the victory of communism. He was, as the statement issued in the Soviet Union on his death declared, "a faithful comrade-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin, one of the most active architects and prominent leaders of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet State . . . giving all his strength to the consolidating of the socialist motherland, strengthening the union of workers, peasants and intellectuals . . . and the friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union."

The ceaseless struggle of Kalinin for the liberty and happiness of the Soviet people was at the same time a major contribution to the peoples striving for real freedom the world over, and will continue to be a source of inspiration to them.

We are reprinting, on the occasion of his death, the following brief, informal address, delivered by him to a conference of teachers in the Soviet Union, which was first reprinted in *Pravda*, January 5, 1939. In his simply-worded yet profound advice to the Soviet teachers, we see reflected this great Marxist-Leninist and man of the people, in whom worker, peasant and intellectual found an unfailing source of wisdom and understanding, and who, as a co-worker of Lenin and Stalin, was one of the foremost builders of the greatest achievement of our time, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.—*The Editors*.

WE NOW HEAR much about the study of the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism, about the study of the history of the Bolshevik Party. The main thing here is to master the very essence of this theory, to learn to make use of it in practice and to acquire the experience of the revolu-

tionary struggle of our Party. When reading the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Short Course*,* I was delighted by the profundity of its content, by the con-

* International Publishers, New York, 1939. Editors.

ciseness of the thought and the simplicity of the exposition, but I am unable now to remember it all textually. However, the point is not only what you remember, but mainly what you understand. Marxist-Leninist theory is no symbol of faith, no collection of dogmas, but a guide to action. When certain people explain the meaning of the mastery of Marxism-Leninism, they use such words as: "A work profoundly done," "particularly profoundly done," etc. But the point to understand is that the main thing in Marxism-Leninism is not the letter, but the essence, the revolutionary spirit. What is meant when we say: "to embrace Marxism-Leninism completely"? How are we to understand this? Does this mean the textual memorization of ready-made conclusions and formulas? Or does it mean the mastery of the essence of Marxism-Leninism and the ability to apply this theory as a guide to action in life, in one's social-political and personal life? The second will be the truer, the more correct, the more important. It is the main thing in Marxism-Leninism. And when we say, "to master Marxism-Leninism," this means to learn to see it dynamically.

Anybody can learn Marxism-Leninism by heart, more or less, but to master its essence and to learn to apply it is a more difficult thing. We know of many old workers who have taken part in political struggle. Yet they never possessed the *History of the C.P.S.U.* They had very little

chance of making a systematic study of theory. Perhaps they read a dozen revolutionary books in all. Yet, in their practical activity, they applied Marxism-Leninism quite correctly, correctly seized on the Marxist-Leninist line in solving one problem or another. This was because they understood, seized on, the revolutionary essence of Marxist-Leninist theory.

Marxism-Leninism needs to be studied, not for the sake of study itself, not for appearance's sake. We study Marxism-Leninism, not in order to gain formal knowledge of it, as the catechism was studied formerly. We study Marxism-Leninism as a method, as an instrument with the aid of which we correctly determine our political, social, and personal behavior. We consider that it is the most powerful weapon of man in his practical life.

Now we are faced with the following question, how to learn to make a more correct application of Marxism-Leninism in our practical work. Above all, it is necessary to know, if only in general outline, the theoretical foundations of Marxism-Leninism, to know, if only in general outline, the history of the Communist Party. When you study the history of the Party, you must examine how the Bolsheviks, under such and such circumstances, solved some particular practical problem. Why did they solve the problem in one way, and not in another? What was their point of departure? Why, for instance, did we boycott the Bulygin Duma?

What was our point of departure? Why was it that later, under less favorable political circumstances, we took part in the elections to the Second, Third, and Fourth State Dumas? In analyzing all such questions (and there were many such questions in our history, for many struggles took place), it will serve as a sort of model of the application of the Marxist-Leninist method, of the approach to the solution of other problems, in another, new political situation, to the solution of problems under present conditions.

It goes without saying that, in this connection, all the changes which have taken place, all the new conditions, must be borne in mind. Therefore, the main thing in studying Marxism-Leninism is to check up on oneself in the approach to the solution of those problems which today, now, are on the order of the day in various spheres of life. Sometimes, even a purely personal question may become transformed into a social and political question. Every day, an endless number of various personal incidents take place in one's life. To find a correct solution in these cases and correctly to understand how to approach them from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism—that is where the Marxist is put to the test.

Marxism-Leninism is the key which renders it possible to solve one question or another. It provides only the possibility of solving, but does not solve the question; it renders it possible to make a more

correct approach to the solution of problems. But it is no ready-made recipe for all incidents in life. It is in the solution, in the approach to the solution, of urgent questions that it becomes clear who is the real Bolshevik-Marxist and who the book-worm and wiseacre.

There are people who have really mastered Marxism-Leninism and are able to apply this theory in the solution of practical problems. On the other hand, there are people whose heads are full of learned texts, like sacks of potatoes, but who are unable to make practical use of this knowledge. Such people can tell you everything to the letter and will read you a lecture. But if you say to them that something has happened in their school—for example, a father has thrashed his son, a pupil in the school—and if you ask them how to make a correct approach from the social angle to this specific case, such people get all mixed up. And if they do make some proposal, it turns out to be an opportunist one, and will not correspond at all to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, even though they quote a pile of quotations. Opportunism is not always expressed only in the outright denial of Marxism-Leninism. Sometimes it reveals itself in bookishness, in a dogmatic approach to this theory.

The solution of practical problems on the basis of a real mastery of the essence of Marxism-Leninism constitutes a school of Bolshevism.

To study a text is only to study a text. To study Marxism-Leninism

in educational institutions, various study circles and seminars, to study it independently, etc.—all this is merely study. In making this study, the individual only acquires a book knowledge of Marxism-Leninism. But when he plunges into political life, into social activity, when he *applies* this method and has to do so consciously, then it is another matter. It is in the practical solution of the problems of life with which one comes into daily contact that Marxism-Leninism makes itself felt; there it is that the main schooling of Marxism-Leninism takes place, that the real Marxist-Leninist shows himself.

Just as for a technical engineer work in a factory is the practical application of his technological knowledge and the accumulation of experience, just as for the school teacher work directly in the school is the practical application of his pedagogical knowledge, so Marxism-Leninism is the living, organic unity of theory and practice.

I would like to make clear the thought that the mere learning of formulas and the conclusions of this theory is absolutely inadequate for the mastery of Marxism-Leninism. For one to really master Marxism-Leninism it is required, in addition, that one learns to make use of this theory in the solution of practical problems, and if we go further, to be able to enrich this theory with accumulated experience, to enrich experience, i.e., to be able to develop science and advance it onwards. Now

that is a most difficult thing.

The *History of the C.P.S.U.* has been written in a very popular fashion, but it requires a great amount of work from the reader. In this book all the bases of Marxism-Leninism are presented in the most concentrated form. As you read it, you need to think over every line—not to learn it by heart, but to think it over. The point is to learn to apply Marxism-Leninism in practice, and this is something that you must learn. But how to do so? One must learn from the examples of history, and, furthermore, in mutual intercourse and in the exchange of opinions.

Every phenomenon of life should be approached concretely, if you are a Marxist. And, it goes without saying, in the course of discussion between comrades one can better find one's bearings on a question. When you have read something, you have only taken one or three sides of it, but not the fourth. When, finally, you take all four sides of the problem, it turns out that it is not a square, but a cube, with six sides to it. Thus, in the course of discussion with others, your thought becomes polished and enriched.

Collective discussion should be combined with independent study, which is the basic method. Prepare your work at home, and, in the circle, at a meeting, make a report and develop discussion on the report. It is not artificial discussion that should be developed, but such discussion that will lead each one to ex-

press his real opinion on the question raised, such discussion in which people will not be afraid to say what they think. If there is but a drop of your own opinion in this report, I have no doubt that the discussion will be heated, and will be a splendid lesson in Marxism-Leninism.

It frequently happens that, when people speak of studying Marxism-Leninism, they imagine that they need only read Marxist literature, the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Actually, not only these should be read. The task is to read every book in a Marxist, Leninist, Stalinist way. Suppose some work of Chernishevsky is read. This can be done in different ways. A progressive reader of the sixties and seventies of the last century read it in his own way, a liberal reader of those days read it in his own particular way, and we, as Marxist-Leninists read it in our own way. Our understanding will be a different one. When you make a report on the work of Chernishevsky, when you examine Chernishevsky, when discussion develops and a mutual polishing of thoughts take place, then you will better master Marxism-Leninism. In discussions, one should speak in one's own words, in one's own language. I know that you have your own language. What is needed is that people argue and not artificially, but fundamentally, *i.e.*, in such a way that things develop to the point where, if not a "fight," then at least a serious, heated discussion takes place. That is how the ques-

tion should be stated. It is by this method of studying that one gains the best knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.

I think that you know the texts better than I do. I am certain of that. If I were to go through an examination with the rest of you, I would fail, would undoubtedly fail, as far as texts are concerned. But as far as concerns a Marxian approach to a problem, I think that I shall most likely make a more correct approach than you, I shall find the line of approach sooner, because long experience and practice, enriched by theoretical discussion, have sharpened my senses. I feel the falsity when an incorrect formulation is made. Thus, a new sense has appeared in me, one that has been developed in theoretical discussion and argument and has taught me to be on the alert. Therefore, you should not fear discussion, but should accustom people to it. Only in this way will a polish be given to your thought and your language. When you know that every incorrect conclusion and every incorrect formulation of yours will call forth an argument with you, then you will begin to be more attentive in searching for correct solutions.

Therefore, if you wish to understand Marxism-Leninism and to master this theory, reports and discussions on the basis of independent study will be of enormous benefit to you. Independent study is the basic method of mastering Marxism-Leninism.

U.S. IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION IN CHINA

By B. T. LO

PREFACING A DISPATCH ON the corruption on the Kuomintang dictatorship in China, the editors of *Time* (June 10, 1946), organ of the arch-imperialist Henry R. Luce, were elated at the Kuomintang's "winning China's civil war" and its "bright" prospect of "control of all Manchuria," which was characterized as the "*sine qua non* of a strong, independent China." The "appallingly bad" news sent by their correspondent, William Gray, was blamed on "Communist rebellion" and "failure of the U.S. to send enough prompt aid," besides "corrupt inefficiency" dealt in the report.

The story of the corruption and decadence of the Kuomintang regime is not new, and Gray's report only added a few more tragically amusing incidents to the account. It said that the "sovereignty" of the Kuomintang was but one of "greed, ineptitude and government preserved by force" and that this view was no longer confined to the radical circles, but a "realistic and fairly moderate

one, expressible in polite and capitalist company."

According to *Time*, Kuomintang liberal circles were reportedly discussing the following suggestion:

The United States should get into China politics deeply enough to set the Kuomintang house in order—or else the U.S. should get out. . . . If the Americans cannot somehow bring about a liberal revolution within the Kuomintang, then it had better clear out. China's Communists are not likely to be halted in their revolutionary tracks by anything but a good government.

Contrary to the wishes of Henry Luce and every other American imperialist, the "United States should get out" of China, for that is a basic prerequisite for the development of a strong, independent and democratic China as a bulwark of international peace and security. American imperialist intervention in China, as pointed out a year ago in the resolution of the July, 1945, Convention of our Party, had as its aim "to prevent a strong, united and democratic China" and to bolster up the reactionary incompetent Chiang Kai-shek regime." This warning was sounded before V-J Day, when America and China were allies fighting against the common enemy.

After V-J Day, our imperialist intervention became more open and direct. The cloak of helping China to become "strong and independent" a la Henry Luce and the mask of "democratization" of that country which was Earl Browder's stock in

trade for misleading the progressives were wearing thin. At the November Plenum of the National Committee of our Party, Comrade Foster blasted Browder's incredible statement at the July Convention of the Party that "American policy, whatever temporary vacillations may appear, is pressing toward the unity and democratization of China." At the same plenum, Comrade Dennis charged that "civil war against the Communists and other democratic forces of China has been unleashed by the Kuomintang, militarily supported by Washington."

Comrade Dennis further remarked:

In the Far East, as a counterpart of the policy of a "soft peace" toward Japan, the United States is aggressively intervening, in a reactionary way, in the internal affairs of China. It is intervening with armaments, loans, credits and diplomatic assistance on the side of the reactionary Kuomintang dictatorship. This intervention has reached the stage where American troops are now engaged not only in imperialist garrison duty, in supplying arms, in transport service and military training in China, but are becoming involved in warfare on the side of the reactionary Kuomintang—and of the Japanese puppet troops as well—against the proved patriots of China, the forces that have instituted, in the regions under their administration, the only existing Chinese democracy.

Dennis's factual summary of American intervention in China was

based, not on "inside dope," but on accounts in the press which everybody can read and understand, except those who are blinded with the illusion spread by Browder about the benevolence of imperialism in general and American imperialism in particular.

Our Party helped to bring the glaringly shameful role of American imperialism in China to the attention of the American workers and progressives, arousing them to rise in strong protest. Meanwhile eight of Chiang Kai-shek's American-equipped and trained divisions in northern Honan suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of the democratic armies led by China's Communists in less than two weeks last October. These events disconcerted the American imperialists and a heated controversy over tactics developed in the imperialist camp. Ambassador Major General Patrick Hurley, who had been directing American aid to the Kuomintang against the Communists, demanded, that the Truman Administration make an open statement of policy of all-out support of the civil war. In face of the strength of the Communists in China and of public indignation and rising labor struggles at home, the Administration, though it agreed with Hurley on everything in practice, balked at making a formal statement. Besides, Hurley's proposal for unreserved commitment to support the tottering Kuomintang dictatorship would hamper the freedom of maneuver to

use that regime as a pliant "tool and appendage" in the furtherance of greater imperialist objectives. The controversy ended in Hurley's resignation and the appointment of Gen. George E. Marshall as the President's Special Envoy to China.

The departure of Gen. Marshall to his post was accompanied by a Presidential statement charging him with the task of bringing about China's internal peace and the establishment of a democratic government in place of the Kuomintang dictatorship. This was hailed by some circles as a reversal of the policy pursued by Gen. Hurley, which, in the words of Earl Browder, represented only "temporary vacillations" in American imperialism's "pressing toward the unity and democratization of China."

Browder and his company of imperialist apologists seemed to have been vindicated by the events immediately following Marshall's arrival in China. A truce was concluded between the Kuomintang and the Communist troops, although it was confined inside the Great Wall. Cease-fire orders were enforced by tri-partite teams on many fronts, with the American members playing the decisive role. A Political Consultative Council of all parties was convened which agreed on a provisional coalition government, a constitutional assembly and the basic principles for a democratic draft constitution. A plan to demobilize, reorganize and integrate the Kuomin-

tang and Communist forces into a national army was endorsed, with Marshall as one of the signatories.

As stated in the *New York Times*, June 9, 1946, these agreements were signed in February, but, "In March the Kuomintang Executive Committee met and under right-wing pressure proposed revision of the political agreements. In April serious fighting broke out in Manchuria. Despite General Marshall's attempt at peace-making, the war engulfed much of Manchuria and large sections of China proper."

The *Times*, however, did not mention that it was Chiang Kai-shek who had given his word to carry out the Political Consultative Council's decisions. Chiang is also the authoritarian leader of the Kuomintang who has the power to veto any decision of a party convention or executive committee, "right-wing pressure" notwithstanding.

The *Times* also ignored the crucial fact that while Marshall was urging peace in Manchuria, American transports did not stop pouring Kuomintang reinforcements into that region. Nor did the Kuomintang artillery fail for one day to have two thousand American shells daily to blast the Communist defenders of Szepingchai for five weeks, and American marines guarded the Kuomintang supply route against Communist attempts to halt transportation so as to relieve their hard-pressed brethren.

THE SPREAD OF CIVIL WAR

The spread of civil war to Manchuria took place in April, at the end of which the withdrawal of the Soviet Army was scheduled to be completed. The Soviet army—after liquidating the Japanese Kwangtung Army in cooperation with local patriotic forces led by China's Communists who had been fighting the enemy ever since the seizure of Mukden in 1931—planned to withdraw from China several times prior to April. But each time it was delayed by the request of Kuomintang authorities in Chungking or Manchuria. It may be recalled that it was the Kuomintang government which forbade the Manchurian Army, under the command of Marshall Chang Hsueh-liang, to resist the Japanese when they started to occupy the region fifteen years ago, and subsequently Chang's forces were ordered to the northwest to fight the Communists. The dictatorship therefore had no forces in Manchuria during the entire war, except Japanese puppet troops which transferred their allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek after V-J Day. Yet the Kuomintang would not recognize the right of the local forces, now 300,000 strong to take over the cities from the Soviet army, while its own troops could not reach the region without American transport. The Soviet forces were thus detained awaiting the arrival of Kuomintang troops. Meanwhile, the local forces, consolidated into the Demo-

cratic Unity Army, were garrisoned in smaller cities and villages all over the region.

While making it necessary for the Soviet Army to delay its withdrawal the reactionary cliques within the Kuomintang organized anti-Soviet demonstrations after the signing of the Political Consultative Council agreements, and wreaked violence on Communist and Democratic League newspapers, headquarters and mass meetings, so as to prepare the way for the repudiation of the agreements. The Soviet Army finally decided upon complete withdrawal from Manchuria, rejecting the Kuomintang's new request to leave "token" forces at certain points. This left the Kuomintang authorities in utter confusion, as their forces recently transported to Manchuria by the United States, were concentrated in Mukden and narrow strips along the Peiping-Mukden Railway in southwestern Manchuria. They had neither sufficient units nor time to race to the important points before their occupation by the Democratic Unity Army. Thus, radiating from Mukden, their columns, constantly reinforced by American transport, pushed in all directions in battle formation.

Before the actual withdrawal of the Soviet troops, the Communists had made a proposal to the Kuomintang for peaceful collaboration in Manchuria. When the Soviet armies began moving out, the Communists renewed the proposal. But the Kuo-

mintang authorities were bent upon military occupation of every metropolis and county seat in Manchuria with its own armies or authorized puppets. The Democratic Unity Army was denounced as "illegal" by Chiang Kai-shek in his report to the People's Political Council, a sham parliament with members appointed by the Kuomintang.

To defend the local population and their democratic governments from the Kuomintang army the Democratic Unity Army halted the advance of the Kuomintang columns all around Mukden. The Kuomintang then concentrated its energy on reaching Changchun, the junction of the Chinese Eastern and the South Manchurian Railways and former capital of the puppet Manchukuo. The city was held by Kuomintang authorized puppet troops after Soviet evacuation. A strong Kuomintang column advanced from Mukden to take it over. The Communists again made a proposal that their forces would not enter Changchun provided the Kuomintang agree to settle all problems by peaceful negotiations, with the participation of other parties, in the spirit of the Political Consultative Council. The Kuomintang again declined. A stubborn defense was then put up by the Communists in Szepingchai, halting the Kuomintang Army. Meanwhile, Communist forces in the vicinity of Changchun drove out the puppets and the Kuomintang units flown in by Ameri-

can transports and took over the city. The Communists again asked for negotiation. Chiang Kai-shek intimated that he might talk peace if Changchun was given up by the Communists. For thirty-three days the Kuomintang Army was stalled before Szepingchai. Then the Communists evacuated this strong point and all other approaches to Changchun to let the city be occupied by the Kuomintang without a fight as a concession to induce the Kuomintang to accept their peace offer. But the Kuomintang columns kept advancing, vowing to take over Harbin and Tsitsihar further to the north. In the south, they pledged to wrest Antung on the Korean border from the Communists.

THE TRUCE OF JUNE 7

A new truce, however, finally went into effect on June 7 in Manchuria, but for only fifteen days. The Communists had asked for permanent peace. Chang Kai-shek countered with a proposal for a week's cease-fire. The Communists came back with a thirty-day offer. Doubling the Kuomintang proposal and halving the Communists' bid, Gen. Marshall brought about the present agreement. Chiang declared his readiness to resume hostilities unless arrangements were made to his satisfaction within this brief period. He proposed no political settlement. The National Assembly, which was due to be convened on May 5 but postponed indefinitely because of his

repudiation of the terms of the Political Consultative Council, was not mentioned by him. The all-party provisional government which was supposed to be inaugurated prior to May 5 was ignored. All that Chiang wanted was his right to "restore Manchurian sovereignty" in accordance with the Sino-Soviet Treaty.

Such a truce evoked no enthusiasm among the democratic, peace-loving forces in China. The Democratic League, which spoke for all the middle groups in China, was pressing for a permanent end of the war.

But even this brief respite was acceded to by Chiang Kai-shek only after his 184th division, defending the communications lines in southern Manchuria, joined the Communists and handed four strategic points over to them. Thus, to Chiang, the truce was not to be a prelude to general settlement, but a breathing space to reorganize his shattered forces with additional American aid and to impose his dictatorial regime on Manchuria, which in his words, is seen as the restoration of "sovereignty"—a sovereignty of greed, ineptitude, and government preserved by force, as readily admitted even in "polite and capitalist company" in China today.

The Manchurian situation touches upon the heart of the design of American imperialist intervention in China, which is part of American imperialism's over-all objective of world domination. A China under

the control of a reactionary dictatorship would be one of the best tools for an imperialist, anti-Soviet war. A war between China and the Soviet Union may offer better excuses for imperialist propagandists to label the Soviet Union an aggressor, as in the case of the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40. For how dare the weak, "peaceful" China provoke her mighty neighbor to the North? If the American public could be convinced that China has again become the victim of aggression, would it not be the sacred duty for America immediately to come to her rescue, to atone for the belated aid given her during the Japanese invasion? Japan, after having been "democratized" by Gen. MacArthur, might prove to be a more palatable ally to America in a common defense of "poor" China.

In this general war scheme based on China, Manchuria would be the best region to engineer Sino-Soviet hostilities. With Outer Mongolia independent, Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan) and Manchuria are the only Chinese territories now bordering on the Soviet Union.

But Sinkiang is isolated from the main sections of China and inaccessible to America due to lack of communications. Moreover, the province is thinly populated, and the majority of the inhabitants are non-Chinese. A conflict started there could attract little attention, either in China or abroad. Manchuria is different. It is overwhelmingly populated by Chi-

nese and closely linked to northern China by railways, highways, and sea routes. The region itself is the most highly industrialized in China, and is also rich in agricultural products. It has many railways, running to different sectors of the Soviet border. It is an excellent springboard for attack, as well as a powerful base for provisioning and sustaining a large army. It can draw upon the manpower reserve of northern China, particularly because of the cultural affinity of the population of both regions. Strategically, Manchuria and Japan would form two gigantic pincers in a coordinated operation against the Soviet's Maritime province.

This is why—apart from the direct economic benefits to U. S. monopoly capital that are involved in the issue—American imperialism is so anxious to control China and especially Manchuria. But no people is willing to serve as war tools of alien forces. A genuinely democratic government in China will maintain peace, enjoying mutually beneficial relations with the U. S. as well as the Soviet Union, since this is in line with the best interests of the people. It would not permit its population or territory to be used for imperialist designs. Only an unpopular and decadent regime such as the Kuomintang dictatorship will agree to serve imperialism's war objective in exchange for military and financial support to preserve it from collapse. That is why American im-

perialism can ill afford to permit the growth of real democracy in China. It strives to cover up its aims with proposals for what is only a dictatorship with democratic trimmings, so as to mislead the people.

Yet, in order to secure China and Manchuria as a war base, a certain degree of order and "stabilization" is necessary for the consolidation and development of war-making power. But this must not be seen as the imperialists' desire for genuine peace. The cause of real peace can be promoted only by democratic government and the promotion of the people's welfare. It is the very anti-democratic character and corruption of the Kuomintang dictatorship that make it a ready tool for imperialist aggression. To expect such a regime to maintain itself through peaceful and democratic dealings with the people would be the most dangerous of illusions.

THE AWAKENING OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE

This dual task of war preparation and maintenance of internal "peace" expected of the Kuomintang regime is rendered particularly difficult in view of the awakening of the Chinese people through a century of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic struggles, intensified during eight years of bitter battle with the Japanese invaders and their Chinese puppets. The anti-Japanese war has not only engendered an indestruct-

ible spirit of independence and freedom in the broad masses of China, but has also given rise to solidly organized, local and regional democratic governments in numerous parts of China. Such a people will not yield to domestic or foreign oppression. Meanwhile, the misrule of the Kuomintang in the territories in which democratic government has not yet taken root is increasingly driving the people to desperation and unrest, especially in view of the spreading famine and starvation, partly the result of Japanese war devastation, but largely aggravated by the corrupt Kuomintang dictatorship.

The Kuomintang regime, as reported by Mr. Gray of *Time*, can only maintain its existence by force, which means incessant civil war. But this regime has no means of waging effective war except with American aid. Yet, if the Chinese people could stave off the onslaughts of the Japanese army, which was among the mightiest in the world and whose driving power was enhanced many times by geographical proximity and long years of entrenchment, American aid will not subdue China's resistance but will only keep the country in constant turmoil and retard its recovery and progress.

Meanwhile the impotence of the Kuomintang regime and the insistence of American imperialism on maintaining it in power, is involving America more and more deeply in China's quagmire.

U. S. AID TO CHINESE REACTION

The American army stationed in China, it first announced, would be withdrawn by last November. A series of postponements made June the final month, and this was confirmed by Gen. Marshall during his return visit to Washington last March. But a recent announcement again postponed the withdrawal to the end of the year. Marshall also informed the press in the Capitol that American marines in China were soon to be reduced to a "peacetime" force. The maintenance of any kind of armed force in China by the U. S. is in itself a flagrant disregard of that nation's sovereignty.

In the middle of May, the American army in China announced the conclusion of an agreement with the Kuomintang to repatriate the Japanese civilians in Manchuria. This may lead to an attempted American military penetration to the Soviet border, since the Japanese immigrants are scattered all over the region, and would be another ominous threat to world peace.

The disposal of enemy nationals must be left to the allied nations in which they are found. The U. S. has no right to enforce unilateral action in connivance with a puppet dictatorial regime, which, according to an agreement participated in by the U. S. representative, should already have abdicated its authority to a multi-party government.

According to Robert T. Martin,

New York Post correspondent, American marines are stationed in blockhouses along the railways and highways in northern China, peeping at the indignant peasants much like their predecessors, the Japanese invaders. They have become virtually forces of occupation in an allied country. They were landed in China after the enemy's surrender. They are bewildered and demoralized to find themselves in the company of Japanese, puppet and Kuomintang soldiers fighting together against China's seasoned warriors of national liberation.

In order to avoid international complications the Communists have tolerated American provocations.

The wave of American "democratization," "pacification" and "unification," symbolized by Marshall's first arrival in China half a year ago, has long subsided, exposing more appallingly than ever the shameful face of American imperialist intervention. American marines in northern China are even offered "hunting the Communists" with a machine gun as a form of recreation to relieve their boredom, according to an eyewitness account in the American-edited *China Weekly Review*. Is it surprising that even liberal elements in the Kuomintang are disillusioned and suggest that Americans clear out of China?

The U.N.R.R.A. relief to China is partly financed by American taxes. But according to the most optimistic estimate, only 10 per cent of the sup-

plies actually reach the people in need, while other estimates are as low as 2 to 3 per cent. The proceeds from the bulk of these supplies either goes to the pockets of the Kuomintang's relief officials or for civil war purposes. While discrimination against the Communists is the rule, relief is also being used as a wedge to force the Communist-administered areas to open communication lines under the pretext of letting the supplies through. Attacking armies then follow. It is, of course, also used to feed the large armies fighting or blockading the Communist areas. These armies, according to the bi-partisan agreement, ought to have been partly demobilized to become producers instead of remaining unproductive consumers in the midst of tens of millions of starving peasants, and, what is worse, as agents of destruction. The Kuomintang relief agency, however, is demanding additional supplies from U.N.R.R.A. It may be noted here that the 900,000 regular forces of the Communists inside the Great Wall have already been one-third demobilized, despite the constant threat of Kuomintang attack and a greater proportion of their local militia has been released for civilian productive pursuits.

According to the President's statement on American policy toward China last December, loans were supposed to be withheld until peace prevailed in China and an all-party government began to function. But although the Kuomintang's applica-

tion for a credit of 500 million dollars was said not yet to have been granted, various sums totalling nearly one-fifth that amount had been certified by the Export-Import Bank up to May. Meanwhile, the source of a number of large items of Chinese outlays remains a mystery. With government finance in utter bankruptcy, sustained only by the issuance of paper money to the value of trillions, thus driving prices skyrocketing, how could the Kuomintang equip scores of divisions with American weapons, and even uniforms? Who foots the bill for American transportation of divisions upon divisions of civil war forces? The exchange stabilization fund, amounting to a half billion dollars, according to the announcement of Dr. T. V. Soong, came from America. However, the balance of the \$500,000,000 free credit granted to China before Pearl Harbor might still be considerable, but it does not cover all these items added together. Is America giving everything free to the Kuomintang, or accepting the worthless Chinese yuan as payment? In either case, it will be American taxpayers who shoulder the burden of nurturing the corrupt, warring Kuomintang, with nothing in return except the hatred of the Chinese people. And the burden will increase and the hatred deepen if the imperialists are allowed free rein to drag our nation into a contest with the liberty-loving masses of China.

U. S. POLICY IN CHINA

American relief, American armed forces and American loans and supplies are not helping China to become strong and independent, as Henry Luce believes, or democratic and unified as Earl Browder says. They are being used, as pointed out in the May 25 statement of the Secretariat of the National Committee of our Party, to prolong disunity, civil war and pro-fascist dictatorship in order to prevent the consummation of China's democratic unity and to trample under foot the sovereignty of the Chinese people. All these are the effect of the War and State Departments' frantic effort to turn China, one of our allies, into a strategic base against another of our allies, the Soviet Union. This has been the direction of U. S. war policy, both before and after the resignation of Ambassador Hurley. It does not matter that Gen. Marshall is not as crude in his methods as his predecessor. The facts are that while he has been ostensibly working for "truce" and "cease-fire," American policy as a whole has been aiding and abetting those reactionary forces in China which have been violating those "truces." The United States has been moving Chinese troops, supplying, training, and arming them to continue the civil war. American forces have even been active in the conflict either in blockhouses or on "human hunting grounds."

That there was no basic change in

American imperialist policy toward China with the substitution of Marshall for Hurley was pointed out by Comrade Foster immediately upon the former's appointment. Writing in the *Worker*, December 16, Comrade Foster attributed this event, and Byrnes going to Moscow for the Big Three Conference, to public pressure at home and abroad, and warned that there was no basic change in U. S. imperialist objectives. Thus, he wrote:

. . . Mr. Byrnes is going to Moscow with gentle words in his mouth, and Gen. Marshall is headed for China with a brand new restatement of policy toward that country. We may be sure, however, if they feel compelled to modify their tactics with regard to the U.S.S.R. and China, their basic objectives will be the same.

It is significant to note that with all the sweet words about democracy, freedom, prosperity, unification, and even sovereignty, for China, nowhere is the word "independence" found in Truman's entire statement. Independence is the basic aim of the struggle of all colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Only with unfettered independence can China evolve a full-fledged democratic government best suited to her own needs. But imperialism will not even *promise* her independence. As Foster commented on Truman's statement in the *Daily Worker* of December 18, the President lectured to the Chinese on unity and democracy with an air of su-

periority and arrogance, forgetting America's part in supporting China's reaction in the undermining of her unity and democracy and treating China as an inferior and dependent nation.

The Chinese people have reached that stage in their historical development where they could set their own house in order without outside "assistance," if it were not for imperialism which, with ulterior motives, seeks to intervene in China's internal affairs to retard her independent and natural growth so that China can be used as a pawn in a new World War. The American people must hold the Administration accountable for all the aid given to prolong China's civil war, disunity and despotism. No loans, credits, or supplies should be granted to China until solicited by a democratic government truly representative of the people. The most urgent demand of the American people upon its government is the immediate withdrawal of all our armed forces from China, for military intervention is the highest form of infringement upon a nation's independence. We need not worry about the fate of democracy in China once we respect her independence as our highest international obligation. Democracy and unity in China will be consummated with great speed once our support, especially military aid, of the Kuomintang regime, is withdrawn. Conversely, as long as our armed forces are in China, the reactionaries will

always count on our help; and peace, unity and democracy in China will continue to be placed in a precarious position.

An independent China free of American occupation forces will deprive imperialism of a vital war base

and thus add another bulwark to world peace.

Let us answer the call of China's democratic forces!

Let us end U. S. bribing of Kuo-mintang reaction and clear our armed forces out of China!

THE ROCHESTER GENERAL STRIKE

By **NORMAN ROSS**
and **MURRAY SAVAGE**

ON MAY 16, in Rochester, New York, City Manager Cartwright fired 498 city workers for joining a union—the State, County Municipal Employees, A. F. of L. This openly reactionary action set in motion a whole train of events, culminating in the Rochester General Strike, on May 28, which resulted in a complete defeat for the Republican City Administration and a great victory for the united A. F. of L.-C.I.O. labor movement.

Rochester is a city where the main industries, run by Eastman Kodak, Bausch and Lomb, and Stromberg Carlson are still unorganized. The first two of these giant corporations, which have what is almost a world monopoly in their respective fields, have bitterly fought and thus far successfully, the organization of their plants. These corporations exercise a heavy influence in all civic life, represented not least of all by their virtually unchallenged control of a subservient Republican City Council and the Republican machine behind it. The city administration dances to

whatever tune these corporations choose to pipe.

It was at the bidding of these corporations that Cartwright took the step of firing the 498 city workers, at the same time abolishing their jobs and turning their work over to private contractors. He freely and openly admitted that these actions were taken because the workers had joined a union.

The firings occasioned a storm of protest and resentment, not only from the city workers and the labor movement, but also from among the widest sections of the unorganized workers and the middle class. This storm was to grow until the whole plan of the open-shoppers and their Republican stooges was smashed. But why did the Republican Administration take such an obviously extreme undemocratic action? It was part of the plan of the local bourgeoisie to meet a situation which had been developing in Rochester, and reflected their confidence in their power which had been unchallenged since the giant unemployed demonstrations in Rochester, 15 years ago.

THE PLOT OF REACTION

Of late, in Rochester, certain events had occurred which had given rise to serious thought on the part of the monopolists. Many unions, both A. F. of L. and C.I.O., had been conducting organizing campaigns in the city, including campaigns in some of the basic shops. A local housing

movement had made considerable progress in rallying thousands of veterans for housing. A joint A. F. of L.-C.I.O. rally for O.P.A. had been held in town. Labor unity had begun to develop in Rochester on a firm foundation. After many years, leaflets, demonstrations, parades were again seen on Main Street. The Communist Party had spoken to thousands in two radio broadcasts, Party spokesmen had been interviewed by the local press, etc. All these developments were warning signals to the local trusts that their unchallenged domination was coming to an end. They therefore determined to smash this growing movement before its momentum carried it too far, for such a movement might result in the organization of open shops and lead to the development of independent political action which would mean an end to corporation rule through the obedient Republican machine.

It was with this in mind that the corporation strategists selected the city workers as their target; for it was felt that these workers could most easily be fired for the act of joining a union. This would fit in with the plans of the corporations, who were aiming to deliver a smashing blow through the city workers to the labor movement and its efforts to organize the city. It is interesting to note that at the time of the firings, only 71 of the 498 workers were members of the S.C.M.E. At the end

of the struggle, over 1100 city and county workers had joined it. Thus, although the local monopolists selected the city workers for their target because of the organizational weakness of the S.C.M.E., they finally succeeded only in giving terrific impetus to unionization. To show just how crass, how deliberate the firings were, it is sufficient to state that the S.C.M.E., before the firings, had not presented one single demand to the City Administration.

The whole apparatus of the bourgeoisie, from the Republican machine to the police, backed by the press and radio, was mobilized behind the City Administration. Injected into the struggle as spokesman for the corporations was Tom Broderick, Republican leader and key Dewey stooge upstate. Broderick asserted that as long as he was there labor would not control the city government by some "hidden hand." He maintained that only city-elected representatives would run the city and he would see to that. This nonsense, apart from its demagogy, was high comedy, because, first, Broderick does not even live in Rochester, but in nearby Irondequoit, and, second, he was never elected to any position by the people of Rochester, but presumed to take upon himself the direction and the responsibility for the entire affair. However, beneath these ludicrous aspects of the situation lies a real and sinister meaning—there is a real "hidden hand" in Rochester's

City Administration, but it is not the hand of the labor movement; it is the hand of Broderick, hatchet man for Kodak, Bausch, Stromberg, and the other reactionary local corporations.

Broderick's statement revealed the tight control in which the Republican Party is held by the corporations. Broderick spilled the beans that a completely undemocratic set-up existed in City Hall where the puppets moved when the city bosses pulled the strings. It was Broderick's action, moreover, which showed that the city government was not interested in public welfare, but in corporation profits. The eyes of many of the workers and members of the middle class were opened by the blasts of the labor movement exposing Broderick. It became apparent that all this talk of labor's "running the government" was the lowest kind of demagogy, used to obscure the actual political dominance of the corporations.

The City Administration, of course, did not rely on the statements by Broderick; it moved directly to smash the struggle of the locked-out workers through the use of scabs, the police force, and mass arrests totaling 261 workers. On one day, alone, 208 pickets, whose actions had been entirely peaceful, were arrested. This constituted by far the largest mass arrest in Rochester's history. More than half the police force was mobilized for intimidating pickets and

escorting scabs. In addition, real attempts were made to recruit large numbers of Negroes as scabs. This failed ignominiously, due especially to the activity of two Negro ministers, Rev. Bodie of the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and Rev. Pogue of the N.A.A.C.P., as well as to the support which the Negro people as a whole gave to the city workers. This is borne out by the reception given to the leaflet addressed to the Negro people issued by the Harriet Tubman Branch of the Communist Party, which was widely welcomed and even posted by several businessmen in the community.

Another major weapon of the corporations and the City Administration was the Gannett newspaper monopoly in Rochester. Gannett is, of course, representative of the most reactionary section of the national Republican leadership. As head of the fascist "Committee for Constitutional Government" Gannett has played a pro-fascist role in national affairs for many years. In the past a bitter foe of Roosevelt, Gannett is on the best of terms with Dewey, with whom he can and does easily find common reactionary ground. Naturally, Gannett's two papers, *The Democrat and Chronicle*, and the *Times-Union*, immediately jumped into the struggle, wholeheartedly supporting the Republican city officials.

Thus, a classic unity existed in the ranks of the bourgeoisie on the basis of a super-reactionary program. The

class character of the struggle was impressed upon events by the bourgeoisie itself through the use of the state apparatus, through the brutal firings, police terror, and support from the Republican Party, etc., through unity under the leadership of open-shop corporations, and through the unashamed Hitler-like policy of the press. It became apparent that it was the monopoly capitalists who had precipitated and were directing the struggle; and the people of Rochester, in the overwhelming majority, and far beyond the ranks of the labor movement, far beyond the working class, rallied to the support of the city workers. The bourgeoisie failed utterly in its attempt to portray the battle as one of the "people" against labor and against labor leaders. Instead, the vast majority of the population of Rochester saw the struggle for what it really was—a battle of the people against an undemocratic city government completely subservient to the big corporations.

A. F. OF L.-C.I.O. UNITY ESTABLISHED

Thus, labor was confronted with an adamant, arrogant Republican officialdom whose actions threatened to destroy or greatly weaken the entire labor movement in Rochester. The trade unions realized that every local, C.I.O. and A. F. of L. had a stake in this issue, a stake which went beyond the case of the fired

workers, important as it was. The unions rose to the occasion. They accepted the challenge to their existence, and took up the battle, which led, finally, to the routing, on this issue, of the corporations and their hirelings.

Both the C.I.O. and A. F. of L. reacted to the firings by sessions of their respective city-wide councils. The C.I.O. council, after endorsing the fight of the city workers, adjourned and met with the A. F. of L. Central Trades and Labor Council. At this meeting, a joint strategy committee was set up, composed of three A. F. of L. and three C.I.O. representatives. It was this committee which was given full power to direct the struggle, which it led to a victorious conclusion. Faced with unity among the bourgeoisie, the labor movement immediately realized the indispensable unity necessary for victory. Past cooperation between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. had laid a foundation which proved its tremendous value in this critical situation. Without unity, victory would have been very seriously jeopardized, if not actually impossible.

The strategy committee immediately set to work to organize the necessary actions and support. The first action was to organize picketing; and the pickets came, not only from the city workers, but from every section of the labor movement, particularly the teamsters, who played an

outstanding role from start to finish. The picketing was altogether peaceful, and when the mass arrests took place, a wave of feeling against the city government flooded the population.

Money was raised in the thousands for bail, relief, etc. Large sums were raised in the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. and among middle-class groups, as well as from union sources outside of Rochester. In addition, through the use of newspaper advertisements, through statements and leaflets, the position of the labor movement was brought directly to the people. The milk drivers acted as leaflet distributors, leaving a leaflet in every home with the daily bottle of milk. Citizens' support was expressed by a committee of Protestant, Jewish and Catholic clergymen, which visited Mayor Cartwright to request mediation of the dispute. A statement of support was published, signed by 66 prominent citizens, demanding satisfaction of the workers' demands. In addition, as was mentioned above, the attempt of the administration to divide Negro and white resulted in utter failure.

POLITICAL ACTION BY LABOR

All these steps served to organize and heighten the movement, but especially important was the labor movement's understanding of the political character of the entire struggle, which led the unions to enter boldly and resolutely onto the road of

political pressure. Here was the most vulnerable spot of the Republican Party, and it smarted under the attacks of the labor movement. It must particularly be understood that the Republican Party had deep roots among A. F. of L. members, many of whom were important elements of this machine.

Under the pressure of events, as well as the mass disgust with the Republican Party, the criticism and attack were increasingly directed against the Republican Party as such, including Governor Dewey. Attempts to restrict the attacks to a few local Republicans fell completely flat. The issue was understood among very wide sections of the people as a struggle against the Republican Party and the corporations and that only through such a struggle could it be won. There were several direct reflections of the depth of this understanding. One was a wholesale resignation of A. F. of L. leaders from positions in the Republican Party. These resignations took place at a Central Trades meeting, in full public view. The importance of this step must not be underestimated, because it hurt the Republican Party deeply, not only weakening its influence, but dealing serious blows to the Party apparatus itself. Another step, of like character and even wider significance, was the resolution adopted unanimously by the C.T.L.C. demanding that no Republican be invited to speak or to be endorsed at

the forthcoming A. F. of L. State Convention in August, which, incidentally is scheduled to take place in Rochester.

The attempts to salvage Republican prestige were centered about the person of Dewey. However, in answer to the request that he step in to grant the workers' demands, Dewey replied that the situation was "purely local" and of no concern to him. The statement of Dewey, at a meeting of the Association of State Civil Service Employees, condemning unionization of government workers, was publicized by the Gannett press. But before the struggle was over, Dewey was forced to change his tune, realizing that his position had been weakened by such statements.

Throughout this time, the Democratic Party preserved a tomb-like silence. When asked for a statement, Bush, the local Democratic leader replied, "No comment." A telegram was sent to Congressman George Rogers, reputedly a New Dealer. Rogers' reply was that he was too busy with the national strikes to bother about this local affair. When Rogers voted for the vicious Truman Bill, it became apparent with what kind of business he was occupied. Of course, the Democratic Party gave tacit approval, by its silence, to the reactionary Republican line.

Nor is it at all unimportant, in this connection, to mention that the labor movement rallied 5,000 people to each of two demonstrations in Washing-

ton Square, where years before the Unemployed Councils had held the last mass demonstrations in the city. At these demonstrations, ministers, prominent Negro citizens, middle-class leaders, etc., spoke and pledged their support.

All these actions and developments brought forth a tremendous response, overwhelmingly sympathetic to the discharged workers. Letters to the Gannett newspapers were in large majority pro-union, in spite of Gannett's bias. Discussion of the issue reached unprecedented proportions; it was the main topic all over town. All sorts of groups, including even two company unions, passed resolutions condemning the Republican officials and supporting the unions. The stock of the Republican Party hit a new low. There is no doubt that sentiment was overpoweringly against the Republicans. Thus, the labor unity and labor's political activity brought forth a larger unity of labor, the middle class, the Negro people, etc.

THE GENERAL STRIKE

As the struggle proceeded, the understanding and militancy of the working class rose steadily. Demands arose, especially from the A. F. of L. locals, that the strategy committee be granted the power to call a general strike. The teamsters council, the building trades council, and many other labor bodies passed reso-

lutions to that effect. Meanwhile, the C.I.O. indicated its willingness to cooperate in every action with the A. F. of L., up to and including the general strike.

Meanwhile, indications of serious retreat on the part of the City Administration, called forth by the force of the movement, began to manifest themselves. First, the City Administration made its initial retreat by restoring the jobs previously abolished. The Union rejected this as a solution because no promise was given that workers would be permitted to join the union or that their right for collective bargaining would be recognized. Secondly, a few days later, under the pressure of mass picketing and public protest, City Manager Cartwright called a three-day "truce," during which scab operations were suspended. The third retreat came when the storm of protest against indiscriminate arrests of peaceful pickets broke over the City Administration. Even Gannett published an editorial, still supporting the Administration's position, but deploring its tactics in the mass arrests. This was a sign that, among the local bourgeoisie, some were beginning to fear that the very opposite of the union-busting plan was actually resulting from the Republican anti-labor drive because of the magnificent fight the unions were putting up. Instead of isolating the labor movement as they had hoped to accomplish through an anti-labor

drive, the bourgeoisie and their Republican servants found that they themselves were isolated, with the whole city united against them.

However, the city officials, and the corporations behind them, while in serious difficulties, were not yet ready to recognize the S.C.M.E. and bargain with it. It was necessary for the labor movement, having won strong allies, to intensify the struggle before the capitulation of the city government could be achieved. The whole issue could not be settled unless a new and decisive action was taken to bring matters to a head. In short, the moment had come for the labor movement to pass over to the offensive and wrest the initiative from the power behind the City Administration, *i.e.*, the big corporations. The strategy committee, therefore, formulated its demands in the form of an ultimatum, with the clear implication that a rejection of the ultimatum would be answered by a general strike.

For the first time, the conditions for the settlement of the issue were formulated. These conditions became the demands of the general strike and later were adopted, almost completely, in the agreement settling the general strike. The main demands were:

1. Reinstatement of all workers, without prejudice.
2. Dropping of police charges against arrested pickets.
3. Recognition by the city of the

right of the workers to join a union of their own choosing.

4. Agreement by the city to bargain collectively with the union.

These demands were simple, demands recognized by law, and in fact, not only in Rochester, but nationally. They represented a bare minimum beyond which the unions could not retreat without seriously weakening the labor movement itself.

The issuance of the ultimatum turned the heat on. It was clear that the labor movement was indulging in no idle talk but meant seriously to call the general strike at the expiration of the time limit set for meeting the ultimatum. The ultimatum resulted in the first move for a settlement by the city; but the move came from Albany, where Hanover, of the State A. F. of L. had moved into the situation, by telephone. Negotiations went on all night. However, in spite of many calls and visits Cartwright could not be reached, nor did he make any promise or enter into negotiations of any kind whatsoever. It was clear that the general strike could not be called off merely on the basis of the vaguest of promises to which the City Administration was entirely uncommitted. (It is significant that during the course of the negotiations, Eisenhart, a top director of Bausch and Lomb, was in touch with Albany on the dispute.)

In the morning, the Gannett press published a false settlement story which had been issued by Dewey's

office in an attempt to force the union to call off the general strike.

Dewey had previously refused to enter into the situation, relying on his local stooges to defeat the labor movement, and he had indicated his support of reaction by denying the right of government workers to organize. However, the impending general strike forced him to intervene to salvage Republican prestige even at the sacrifice of his local comrades-in-arms. Dewey hoped thereby to emerge as the hero who averted the general strike, but *without committing himself or Cartwright to any agreement whatsoever.*

Naturally, the strategy committee rejected these fake overtures and proceeded with the general strike. Thirty thousand workers responded to the call and tied up the city. This blasted Dewey's fine hopes of a cheap victory and laid the basis for a victorious settlement for the workers within 24 hours.

On the night of the general strike, the log jam was broken and Cartwright agreed to meet, and did meet, with the strategy committee. At the moment Cartwright sat down with the labor representatives he capitulated to the demands of the general strike. That night the four conditions of the workers for ending the strike were agreed to and signed, with some face-saving phraseology included as the only solace to Cartwright and the corporations. All the major aims were won in a clear-cut smashing victory

for the labor movement. The union-busting drive in Rochester had suffered a tremendous defeat.

Our Party played a significant independent role in the general strike movement. Through leaflets and the *Daily Worker*, as well as through statements in the local press, the Party succeeded in presenting its ideological position to large sections of the people and thereby influenced the course of the struggle. The branches were active in circulating petitions, organizing protest telephone calls, etc. In addition, many comrades were active in picketing, relief work, and the distribution of leaflets. Individual Party members in the trade unions helped in important ways to give leadership, and to develop ideological clarity at every stage of the struggle. The Communist Party showed itself to be a vitally necessary part of the labor movement.

CONCLUSIONS

The first conclusion that must be drawn in Rochester is that the unorganized workers in the decisive shops are ready for organization. Defeatist moods and the traditional reactionary atmosphere, consciously fostered by the trusts, have been dispelled by the swift movement of the general strike. Rochester faces a progressive future, the future of a strong union town, freed from the 100 per cent domination of the open-shoppers. The strike revealed the funda-

mental weakness of the Rochester working class, *i.e.*, the fact that its basic section, the mass production industries, is largely unorganized. The strike movement, while enjoying the moral support of the unorganized workers, did not succeed to any appreciable extent in mobilizing these workers in the course of the movement or during the strike itself. This weakness will have to be overcome if the labor movement in Rochester is to continue to make real progress.

Rochester reflected on a small scale the struggle going on in the nation today with the bourgeoisie, which, regardless of tactical differences in its midst, is basically united in an anti-labor drive. The Truman Bill, the Case Bill, are national moves which have the closest relation to the drive on labor in Rochester. The general strike in Rochester showed that the drive of the bourgeoisie can be defeated. The unity of the labor movement was the basis for the victory there, the indispensable basis; for around labor unity was built the support of the middle class, the Negro people, church representatives, etc. By uniting its own ranks, the labor movement made possible the winning over to its side the majority of the people in the city and isolation of the bourgeoisie in the struggle.

The working class is ready for struggle today. Especially when it is aroused to an understanding of the issues at stake and enters into strug-

gle unitedly, does the working class show its fighting capacity. Because of mounting prices, reduced take-home pay, and the general reactionary offensive of monopoly capital on the domestic scene and in foreign relations, the workers, and the masses generally, increasingly reveal a tremendous capacity for action. And that action is not restricted to elementary forms, but advances to a political general strike, as in Rochester, or nation-wide struggles against the biggest monopolies, as in the steel, auto, coal, electrical and other strikes.

The reaction in the labor movement to the Truman Bill, the growing expressions of labor unity resulting from the present situation, bear out on a national scale the lessons of the Rochester general strike. The desire for unity among the workers of both A. F. of L. and C.I.O. is very deep; it can be the basis for the cementing of the unity of the labor movement in this country.

In the Rochester strike, the masses learned very quickly, grasping almost immediately the political nature of their struggle. The struggle was almost universally recognized as a struggle, not merely against a few Republican politicians, but against the Republican Party itself. The fact that the open-shop capitalist class was the main motive force of its political instrument, the City Administration, was immediately understood by the workers, and even by a

majority of the middle class. A real foundation has been laid for independent political action by the people of Rochester. The general strike in Rochester has been a brilliant confirmation of our Party's estimation of the political scene and the disposition of class forces in our country today. It shows both the possibility and the need for the masses, led by the working class, to strike out in new, independent, directions politically. It should be mentioned that, unfortunately, the American Labor Party, although it issued a statement condemning the Republican Administration, did not come forward aggressively enough in drawing the lessons for the workers. As a result, the need for independent political action and the popularization of the A.L.P. itself as a vehicle for such action were not made sufficiently clear to the masses.

This article would not be complete unless we point out some conclusions with regard to the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L. workers and, yes, the leaders of the C.T.L.C., showed themselves to be militant, capable fighters who are ready to put up a terrific battle against reaction. The existence of C.I.O.-A. F. of L. unity showed the great possibility for unity, especially from below. The extension of such unity below would go far to defeat the splitting tactics of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. Too long have Communists and other progressives neglected work in

the A. F. of L. through a sectarian and completely wrong estimation of the situation in the A. F. of L. Work in the A. F. of L. is as necessary as work in the C.I.O., and can achieve most positive results.

Rochester is a typical American town. Its struggle symbolizes on a

high political plane the postwar struggles of labor throughout the nation. It is a measure of the maturity of the working class as well as an augury for the future, that the working class of Rochester rose to its tasks and fulfilled them in such exemplary fashion.

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF J. M. KEYNES

By CELESTE STRACK

THE MONTH OF April, 1946, witnessed the death of the most influential, if not the best known, contemporary bourgeois economist, Lord John Maynard Keynes. The "school of thought" for which his views provided the inspiration, however, continues to play an important role, not only in academic circles, but in a much larger arena of policy and politics throughout the capitalist world. Keynesian economic theory, as Comrade Foster has emphasized, therefore requires critical appraisal from a Marxist standpoint. This article is merely an attempt to indicate the major outlines of the theory Keynes advanced, and to suggest certain main aspects of the evaluation which Marxist political economy can and must provide. It will be confined primarily to the theory as developed by Keynes himself,* although this, of course, embraces the fundamental outlook of his disciples as well.

* The most complete statement of Keynes' theory is presented in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, published in 1936, although many of his basic ideas were stated in earlier writings.

Keynesian economic theory represents the reaction of a section of bourgeois economists to the general crisis of capitalism and, particularly, to the impotence of traditional *laissez-faire* economics when confronted with the crisis of 1929. More specifically, it invokes various types of "state intervention" as instruments to "iron out" the "business cycle" and to solve the problem of chronic unemployment within the framework of capitalism, and in order to preserve that system.

In Great Britain and the United States, Keynesian thought provided the ideological elaboration for the key policies of bourgeois reformists in dealing with the crisis of 1929 and the ensuing depression, as well as for their more long-range program of reform of capitalism. The New Deal, in both its short-run and long-run aspects, embodied many of the practical implications of this "new theory." Keynes himself commented, in 1934, that "Mr. Roosevelt has made himself the trustee of those in every country who seek to mend the evils of our condition by reasoned experiment within the framework of the existing social system. If he fails, rational change will be gravely prejudiced throughout the world, leaving orthodoxy and revolution to fight it out." But "the great importance of the Keynes movement in our country derives from the fact that not only have the liberals come to believe in its major conclusions as gospel truth, but so also has the great bulk of the

trade union movement."* This fact is reflected in the remarks of Philip Murray in a recent article, in which he says:

Our demands for higher wages—a 30 per cent increase—are seen by some people as driving industry toward chaos. In reality meeting our demands will stabilize industry. According to the theory that stability of the American economy depends upon mass purchasing power, continued prosperity can only be achieved by maintaining adequate wage levels for workers.

This theory was not invented by us, but by men who are the bulwark of our economic system. They have long advocated that greater purchasing power on the part of the people is the only means of promoting lasting prosperity. These economists, such as Lord Keynes and Alvin Hanson, are not wild-eyed radicals.

Their views are not merely accepted by business; they are the foundation of business. . . .**

While major sections of American labor hold these views, consciously or unconsciously, it must also be noted that our Party was influenced by them in the form of Browderism, which was a vulgarized and, as Comrade Foster put it, "utopian" variation on Keynesian economics, "fitted to the needs of American imperialism." In ridding our Party of this influence, however, we are only taking the first step in a broader direction; we must also undertake the

waging of an ideological struggle within the labor movement, aimed at exposing the basic fallacies of Keynesian theory and at winning the working class for the principles of scientific Socialism. This does not preclude unity on immediate issues facing labor and the people, with some of those still influenced by Keynesian thought; but agreements with regard to a practical program do not necessitate a surrender on theory. Indeed, the fight for correct theory will enhance the fighting capacity of the working class and its allies.

Before we enter into a critical examination of Keynesian theory, however, a few more words on its objective role seem in order. In Great Britain, as in the United States, the theories of Keynes have been accepted, not only by bourgeois liberals, but also by important sections of the labor movement. The dominant leadership of the Labour Party is now engaged in putting essentially Keynesian proposals into effect. One of the key economic advisors to this group is Joan Robinson, an ardent follower of Keynesian theory. This illustrates the modern position of Social-Democracy, which today, for the most part, openly or tacitly espouses the newest brand of bourgeois economics, abandoning altogether even that lip service to Marx which earlier revisionists like Bernstein and Kautsky rendered.

Keynesian theory has been of service in other circles as well. In Germany, especially, it was utilized

* Wm. Z. Foster, "Leninism and Keynesism" *The Worker*, January 13, 1946.

** Philip Murray, "Will Labor Go Too Far?" *Magazine Digest*, April, 1946.

by the "economists" of Nazism. In fact, Schacht's organ, *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, declared that Keynes' ideas "represent the theoretical explanation and justification of National Socialist economy." While this does not place Keynes within the fascist camp, it is no accident that his theories served equally well the purposes of both bourgeois reformists and Nazis. Indeed, an examination of Keynes' writings during the twenties reveals that they included both a sharp anti-Soviet, anti-Communist bias, and a definite tendency toward the "corporate" approach.* His rebuke to the British Tories in 1929, on the eve of the crash (which he foresaw no more than other capitalist economists) was "that the capitalist leaders in the City and the Party are incapable of distinguishing novel measures for safeguarding capitalism from what they call Bolshevism." The Nazis were somewhat speedier in utilizing such "novel measures."

That Keynesian theory could be so well adapted to Nazi ends should emphasize its essential character as a prop for capitalism. And yet Keynes has been called a "revolutionary" in the field of economic theory. What gave rise to this characterization?

A "REVOLUTION" IN ECONOMIC THEORY

By 1929, and indeed long before

* See: Keynes, *A Short View of Russia and The End of Laissez-Faire*.

then, the "vulgar economists" of the marginal utility-marginal productivity (or "supply and demand") school, who had dominated capitalist economics since the middle 1800's, were completely bankrupt. The crisis of 1929 only called attention to their nakedness. Keynes undertook to clothe bourgeois economics once more with a set of theories bearing at least some apparent relation to economic realities.

In contrast with such earlier classical economists as Adam Smith and David Ricardo, who, in the period of developing capitalism, attempted to discover the real laws governing capitalist production and accumulation, later bourgeois economists had become mere apologists for the capitalist system, concerned almost wholly with exchange and "pricing." The "dangerous" implications of the labor theory of value of Smith and Ricardo having become evident, bourgeois economists retreated altogether from any objective theory of value, which would reveal the true nature of capitalist production, to a wholly subjective theory of value based on "utility" and aimed at upholding the right of capitalists to the "reward" justly due them for "waiting," "risking," "managing," or some other variation on this theme. They concerned themselves almost wholly with the sterile task of determining specific market prices through the laws of supply and demand. The entire body of bourgeois theory either ignored the question of cyclical crises

altogether, even going so far as to deny the possibility of general overproduction, or dealt with it as resulting from forces which were considered "outside" the economic system itself, ranging from sunspots to "interference" by trade unions or the state. Also ignored was the long term trend to chronic unemployment and the accumulation of surplus capital. The basic assumption was that the natural interplay of economic forces would result in "general equilibrium" in which all "factors of production," including both the labor force and capital, would be automatically and fully utilized. Thus, bourgeois economists lacked even the most primitive tools for tackling the problems of the general crisis of capitalism dating from World War I, or the cyclical crisis of 1929 and the ensuing depression.

Keynes attempted to change this situation, and in doing so broke with current bourgeois economics in several significant, although essentially superficial, respects. He directed attention once more to questions of production, capital accumulation, and national income, as compared to exchange and pricing. His analysis, however, was also based, as we shall see, upon a series of subjective "laws"; for he too recognized the "danger" of adopting the objective labor theory of value which inevitably leads to a recognition of capitalist exploitation and its consequences. He "attacked" the "rentier class," opposing interest as an unearned in-

come, but only because he felt it hampered the successful working of a system based essentially upon entrepreneurial profits accruing from active investment, which he wished to enlarge. This amounted simply to a "controversy" over the distribution of surplus value among the various groupings of the capitalist class. He recognized the problem of chronic unemployment, the existence of surplus capital, the tendency to "overinvest" in certain capital goods, and the development of cyclical crises as part of the "natural" or "unhampered" operation of the capitalist system; but he proposed to "solve" these problems within the framework of a system which inevitably and continually reproduces them on a larger scale and in an increasingly aggravated form. He broke with the concept of *laissez-faire*, advocating state interference in the economy, but only to achieve the same objective which motivated previous bourgeois economists—the maintenance of the capitalist system. Finally—and this was a matter with which much of his practical activity was concerned—he viewed money as an instrument for manipulation in achieving desired economic ends, rather than as the "neutral" factor which orthodox economists held it to be. This last revolutionary departure actually adds up to advocacy of—inflation!

That the Keynesian "revolution in economics" actually aimed at maintaining capitalism is, of course,

no discovery. But its apparent departure from "traditional" economics served to steer into safer waters many who, dissatisfied with orthodox sterility, might otherwise have turned to Marxism. Can Keynesian theory, however, actually solve, either theoretically or practically, the problems it sets for itself?

The answer to this question will be found in a more detailed examination of the main features of Keynesian theory, which we shall first summarize and then discuss.

KEYNESIAN THEORY SUMMARIZED

Keynes bases his analysis of capitalist production upon three main factors (or variables, which together determine the level of production and employment at any particular time. These three factors are "the propensity to consume," "the marginal efficiency of capital," and "the liquidity preference." Their operation may be roughly outlined as follows:

In any given period according to Keynes, the level of employment will be determined by the level of production of consumer goods and capital goods. This in turn will be determined by the "effective demand," which is the term used by Keynes for the volume of consumption (purchase of consumer goods) and investment (purchase of real capital goods). Thus, if a part of the national income is not spent for either consumer goods or capital

goods, "over-saving" will occur, resulting in a level of employment below "full employment." Keynes held that there is nothing inherent in the "natural" working of capitalist economy which will insure that such will not be the case. In fact, the long-run tendency of capitalism is in this direction for reasons given below; while the same cause (*i.e.*, over-saving or failure to purchase consumer or capital goods) also precipitates cyclical crises. But what determines "effective demand?"

According to Keynes, "effective demand" is determined by:

1. *The propensity to consume:* The term 'propensity to consume' of a person or a class of persons is used to indicate the proportion of his or her total income which that person or class may be expected to spend on consumption. What people do not spend on consumption, they 'save' and the savings become available for 'investment' by themselves or by others, *i.e.*, for spending on the means or materials of production. As a broad generalization, the smaller the income, whether of an individual or a community, the larger is the propensity to consume; people individually and collectively spend on consumption a larger portion of a small income than they do of a larger income. Therefore, out of a given total income of a community, more is likely to be spent on consumption and less is likely to be saved if the income is evenly divided between the individu-

al members than if it is unevenly divided."* (This definition by W. H. Beveridge, a well-known British follower of Keynes, is given because it is much less technical than Keynes' own definition but adds up to the same thing.)

The above amounts to an elaborate way of saying what every worker knows: that workers can rarely save and are frequently in debt, while the rich are hard put to it to spend their entire income. Thus, when a rise in national income occurs, as it does during "boom periods" for example, the small percentage of the population which "saves," saves an even higher proportion of its income, and spends a smaller proportion on consumer goods. Unless this money which is "saved" is used to purchase capital goods, "over-saving" and a reduction in employment will occur. But the purchase of capital goods, *i.e.*, investment, will be determined, not by the supply of available savings, but by the second factor in the Keynesian system, the "marginal efficiency of capital."

2. *The marginal efficiency of capital.* This is explained by Keynes as follows:

When a man buys an investment or capital-asset, he purchases the right to the series of prospective returns, which he expects to obtain from selling its output, after deducting the running expenses of obtaining that output, during the life of the asset. This series of

annuities . . . it is convenient to call the *prospective yield* of the investment.

Over against the prospective yield of the investment we have the *supply price* of the capital-asset, meaning by this, not the market-price at which an asset of the type in question can actually be purchased in the market, but the price which would just induce a manufacturer newly to produce an additional unit of such assets, *i.e.*, what is sometimes called its *replacement cost*. The relation between the prospective yield of a capital-asset and its supply price or replacement cost, *i.e.*, the relation between the prospective yield of one more unit of that type of capital and the cost of producing that unit, furnishes us with the *marginal efficiency of capital* of that type.*

The marginal efficiency of capital does not refer, therefore, to the actual rate of profit prevailing on existing investment, although it may be influenced by it, nor to the actual market price. It is a psychological concept based on a relationship between two psychological factors. It essentially reflects the "state of mind" or "state of confidence" of the capitalists and their "expectations," which will be subject to many considerations, both economic and political.

If the capitalists' "anticipations" are unfavorable, investment will be limited or will cease and unemployment will result. Keynes notes that there is a definite, long-range tendency for the "marginal efficiency of

* W. H. Beveridge, *Full Employment in a Free Society*, pp. 407-408.

* *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, p. 135.

capital" to decline, which, together with the falling "propensity to consume," tends to result in chronic unemployment. He also attributes the crisis stage of the "trade cycle" to the "collapse" of the marginal efficiency of capital. It should be emphasized, therefore, that this factor occupies a pivotal position in Keynes' whole analysis. The operation of the two factors so far mentioned, however, is combined with the influence of a third factor, the "liquidity preference."

3. *The liquidity preference* means the relative desire to hold money as against readiness to spend it for either consumer goods or capital goods. When business is good, the "liquidity preference" tends to be low; when conditions are bad, it tends to be high. This factor has a definite effect upon the interest rate, which Keynes is anxious to reduce in order to increase the profits of the entrepreneur (who presumably pays interest on borrowed capital out of his own profits). When people want to "hold on to cash," the interest rate is forced up, since they demand more for lending their money. In order, therefore, to decrease both the interest rate and the desire to hold money during periods of business decline, Keynes advocates a policy of "mild" inflation. He also advocates reduction of the interest rate in "boom periods," the implications of which we shall discuss later.

To sum up the Keynesian conclu-

sions from the foregoing, we are told that the declining "propensity to consume" which characterizes capitalism, together with the long-run drop in the "marginal efficiency of capital," and a "conventional" rate of interest which tends to remain at too high a level, result in "over-saving" and chronic unemployment. Keynes proposes to deal with this long-run tendency toward "stagnation" of the economy through two sets of measures, which are elaborated or emphasized in varying ways by his followers: (1) Increasing the "propensity to consume" by steps aimed at some redistribution of national income, mainly through a system of inheritance and personal income taxes, through very low interest rates which will reduce the income of the "rentier" class, and "perhaps other means." (While many followers of Keynes advocate substantial wage increases under this heading, Keynes himself held a very different view, calling at most for "slightly rising" wages in the very long run, but emphasizing primarily the need to *cut real wages* as a means of combatting depression.) (2) Increasing investment through what Keynes calls "socialization of investment" or a "socially controlled rate of investment." This includes manipulation of the interest rate, possibly nationalization of certain industries, and other government measures aimed at controlling and directing investment.

With reference to the "trade cycle,"

Keynes states that periodic crises are caused primarily by "a sudden collapse in the marginal efficiency of capital." This is due to the "growing abundance" of capital goods, their "rising costs of production," and "probably, a rise in the interest rate," all of which bring "disillusion" upon "an over-optimistic and over-bought market." The "error of optimism" which was prevalent during the "boom" is replaced by an "error of pessimism." Investment ceases, the "propensity to consume" falls sharply, the interest rate rises, and business remains in a slump until certain capital goods wear out, stocks are used up, and costs (including real wages!) are reduced to the point where investment slowly recommences. Keynes concludes that the "right remedy for the trade cycle is not to be found in abolishing booms and keeping us permanently in a semi-slump; but in abolishing slumps and thus keeping us permanently in a quasi-boom." This is to be achieved through lowering the interest rate *during the boom*, and otherwise stimulating investment so that the boom "may last." *The central remedy*, according to Keynes, *lies in measures which will preserve the "marginal efficiency of capital," i.e., profit "expectations."*

"PSYCHOLOGICAL LAWS"

We now have the main Keynesian propositions before us, and can turn to an appraisal of his theory and its consequences.

1. The three key factors or "variables" on which Keynes erects his theoretical structure are wholly inadequate as the foundation for an analysis of capitalist production, which Keynes purports to provide. Indeed, they disguise the true nature of capitalist production and accumulation instead of revealing it. All three are highly subjective "psychological laws" which are advanced in place of objective material factors. It is true that people's "reactions" must, to a certain extent, be taken into account in political economy; but the important question is "What causes these reactions?" What are the material forces at work which ultimately determine the trend of capitalist development?

If we look behind the "marginal propensity to consume," what do we find? "Unequal distribution of income," according to Keynes. But behind this? Not an eternal verity, but the actual historical relations of production that characterize capitalism, *i.e.*, the exploitation of "free" wage workers by the capitalist class, through the extraction of unpaid labor-time, or surplus value, and the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation. The problem of "unequal distribution of income" arises not in the field of distribution, but from the nature of capitalist production itself.

And what is the "marginal efficiency of capital?" Essentially, the "expectations of the capitalist." But on what are these based? Keynes

himself admits that they may be affected by the "abundance of capital goods" and "costs of production." Nevertheless, psychological factors of "pessimism" and "optimism" are decisive for Keynes. Again we have a confused and subjective "explanation" which conceals the real determining factor from the standpoint of the capitalist class, that is, the actual *rate of profit*. This is established not by "psychology," but by the ratio between the surplus value (s) extracted from the workers by the capitalist class to the total capital invested, including both constant capital (c) represented by machinery, raw materials, etc., and variable capital (v), represented by wages. This ratio Marx expressed as

$$\frac{s}{v + c}.$$

Since surplus value (s) is extracted only from living labor, which is supplied by the labor power purchased by wages (v), even the rate of profit does not reveal the actual exploitation of the worker, which is shown by the ratio of surplus value to wages (s/v). This entire relationship is, of course, entirely hidden by Keynes. Furthermore, Marx clearly explained how the growing proportion of capital invested in the means of production and the individual form invested in labor power results in the tendency of the rate of profit to decline. He also showed how the inability of the capitalists to realize in the market the surplus value which has been produced follows inevitably from the major underlying

cause of cyclical crises, the contradiction between the social character of production and the individual form of appropriation. Here, then, is the objective reality behind Keynes' long-range decline and cyclical "collapse" of the "marginal efficiency of capital," which is only the muddled subjective reflection of the actual process of capitalist production and accumulation.

The "liquidity preference" is again a subjective approach, this time to the rate of interest, which, as we have seen, Keynes wants to reduce. Here we may note that the division made by Keynes between the active investor who receives profit and the "lender" who receives interest is largely artificial, since the major source of funds which are "saved" and "lent" is precisely the same centers of monopoly capital which control active investment, *i.e.*, the banks and the large corporations. Consequently, Keynes' "crusade" against the "rentier class" and his efforts to extinguish the interest rate simply amount to an effort to transfer surplus value to the other side of the ledger where it will appear as profits on direct investment—for essentially the same grouping. It is true, of course, that the development of monopoly capitalism (which Keynes fails to analyze) has brought into existence a parasitic "coupon-clipping" stratum which delegates to salaried managers many of the functions previously performed by the capitalist entrepreneur. But the *basic control* of both saving and in-

vestment lies in the hands of finance capital, which receives into its pockets both interest and "profit."

THE PROBLEM OF CYCLICAL CRISES

2. The failure of Keynes to establish an objective theory of value as the basis for analyzing capitalist production (which of course he is unable to do, since he aims at the preservation of that system and cannot afford a searching analysis of its fundamental nature) contribute to the contradictions in which Keynesian theory becomes enmeshed when it attempts to "solve" the problem of cyclical crises.

We have seen that for Keynes the "cause" of the crisis is the "collapse" of the "marginal efficiency of capital." According to Keynes, this is in turn determined "by the uncontrollable and disobedient psychology of the business world!" No doubt the capitalists do undergo certain "psychological" experiences at this point; indeed, some have been known to commit suicide. We are concerned, however, about the situation of the mass of the people, and we shall learn little of the causes of this from Keynesian "psychology." The key to the problem was supplied by Marx, and it even creeps into Keynes in one unexplained little word. He refers to the fall of "disillusion" upon "an over-optimistic and *over-bought* market." Now what is meant by an "over-bought" *investment* market (for that is what Keynes refers to)?

Keynes does not supply the explanation, since he is off into the world of pessimism at this point. But Marx does give it. What has in fact occurred is the "relative overproduction of capital." In other words, investment, especially in capital goods, has been overextended relative to the actual market which is limited by the basic relations of capitalist production. The point has been reached at which the capitalist cannot *realize* the surplus value which the workers have produced. This limitation of the market is the inevitable result of a system which is founded on social relations of production which constantly tend to reduce the consuming power of the masses. On the other hand, the productive forces tend to expand, not in relation to the ultimate market for commodities, but rather absolutely, based on the constant, restless search of capital for fresh profit.

If this is the fundamental cause of crises, how will Keynes' "remedy" work out? He proposes to *increase* the expansion of private capital investment during the "boom" period, through lowering the interest rate and other measures. But this will lead ultimately to a *still greater* overproduction of capital, relative to the market, and to an even more violent crisis. This is not to say that reducing capital investment during "prosperity" would help; here Keynes is right when he says this would merely result in a "permanent" depression. In fact, the general

crisis of capitalism is characterized by just such a tendency toward chronic depression, with even the "prosperity" periods since the First World War (with the exception of the recent war period) having been marked by the accumulation of surplus capital which could not be "profitably" invested and by correlative continued unemployment.

On the other hand, the Keynesian "cure" of further stimulating private investment will not make the patient well; indeed, it would tend to aggravate the next seizure. Even expanded, direct government investment has the same net result, insofar as it enlarges the productive forces of the economy, through such measures as construction of public power systems, etc. Eventually, this too contributes to the gap between production and lagging consumption. Of course, it is true that public works programs and many types of government investment benefit the workers by creating additional employment, etc.; but they cannot be considered a method of *eliminating* crises.

Confronted with this question Keynes shifts his approach: "If we were to suppose that contemporary booms are apt to be associated with a momentary condition of full investment or over-investment . . . the case of those who attribute the disease to underconsumption would be wholly established. The remedy would lie in various measures designed to increase the propensity to consume by the redistribution of in-

comes or otherwise; so that a given level of employment would require a smaller volume of current investment to support it."*

Here we have that aspect of Keynes which is most heavily emphasized by liberal reformists and Social-Democrats (although *not* by Keynes himself). If the problem is really one of overproduction, then, according to the Keynesians, it must in fact be one of under-consumption! And the solution must therefore be to increase the purchasing power of the workers so that the market can absorb what is produced. Together with this, the interests of capital and labor will be "harmonized" and all will be well. But this is the same "underconsumptionist" argument which Marx and Engels demolished nearly a hundred years ago! Marx pointed out then that "relative overproduction" is not at all the same thing as "underconsumption." If it were, how are we to explain the fact that cyclical crises occur only under the capitalist mode of production, although underconsumption has existed in every prior society?

Furthermore, "It is purely a tautology to say that crises are caused by the scarcity of solvent consumers or of a paying consumption. The capitalist system does not know any other modes of consumption but a paying one . . . If any commodities are unsaleable, it means no solvent purchasers have been found for

* *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, p. 324.

them, in other words, consumers . . . But if one were to attempt to clothe this tautology with a semblance of a profounder justification by saying that the working class receive too small a portion of their own product, and the evil would be remedied by giving them a larger share of it, or raising their wages, we should reply that crises are precisely always preceded by a period in which wages rise generally and the working class actually get a larger share of the annual product intended for consumption."^{*}

The "underconsumptionists" take as their starting point for explanation—and remedy—of crises, not the capitalist relations of production, but only the division of income. But the lag of consumption relative to production is not essentially a matter of "distribution" of income; it arises from the very nature of the capitalist mode of production, which operates only on the basis of the drive for profits. On the one hand, in its search for profits ". . . the capitalist mode of production has a tendency to develop the productive forces absolutely . . . regardless of the social conditions under which capitalist production takes place. . . ."** On the other hand, any increase in the wages of the working class is confined within certain circumscribed limits which are set by the requirements of capitalist production itself.

It is this conflict which makes crises of "relative overproduction" inevitable.

With reference to the limits upon the increase in wages, Marx says that this is reached when the decline in profits which results from a rise in wages "touches the point at which the surplus-labour that nourishes capital is no longer supplied in normal quantity . . ." Then "a reaction sets in: a smaller part of revenue is capitalised, accumulation lags, and the movement of rise in wages receives a check. The rise of wages therefore is confined within limits that not only leave intact the foundations of the capitalistic system, but also secure its reproduction on a progressive scale. The law of capitalistic accumulation, metamorphosed by economists into a pretended law of nature, in reality merely states that the very nature of accumulation excludes every diminution in the degree of exploitation of labor and every rise in the price of labor which could seriously imperil the continual reproduction, on an ever enlarging scale, of the capitalistic relation."^{*}

Keynes, from the capitalists' standpoint, recognizes this problem when he calls for overcoming the crisis through decreasing the real wages of the workers, in order to increase the "marginal efficiency of capital." It does not follow from this, however, that the workers should be

^{*} Marx, *Capital*, Volume II, Kerr edition, pp. 472-476.

^{**} Marx, *Capital*, Volume III, p. 292.

^{*} Marx, *Capital*, Volume I, p. 680.

guided by Lord Keynes' advice! Nor is there any danger that they will. For Marx's explanation of the law of accumulation of capital does not mean that the workers cannot secure any increases in wages under capitalism or successfully resist pay cuts; what it does mean is that these are confined within certain limits, which will permit the continued existence and expansion of capital. Thus the fight for all measures aimed at increasing mass purchasing power, for social security, public works, taxation of the rich, etc., are a vital part of the struggle to defend the mass of the people from the worst blows of the capitalist crisis. But this must not be accompanied by any illusion that the basic conflict between the tendency of capitalist production to expand absolutely and the relatively narrow limits set on the consuming power of the masses can be overcome within the framework of capitalism.

The same basic difficulty presents itself with reference to the proposed "social direction" of investment which is Keynes' answer to the anarchy of capitalist production as a whole. Keynes recognizes that in a planless economy "the illusions of the boom cause particular types of capital-assets to be produced in excessive abundance. . . . It leads, that is to say, to *misdirected investment*." Marx analyzed this aspect of economic crises far more thoroughly, pointing out that it arises from disproportions in the economy, espe-

cially by a lack of balance between the production of capital goods and that of consumer goods. In wartime, of course, investment in the main is directed by the government, and the market itself is guaranteed in the same way. But under peacetime conditions, into what channels can investment be "directed" where it will not ultimately outstrip the capacity of the market, or result finally in "disproportions?"

While, in a bourgeois-democratic country, some controls over the unlimited exercise of power by monopoly capital may be established through the strength of labor and the people's movement, including nationalization of certain industries, this cannot eliminate the basic planlessness of capitalist production as a whole, which exists, not only in the economy of an individual nation, but throughout the entire world system of imperialism. Such over-all control can be achieved only through complete *socialization of the means of production* under the direction of the working class, *i.e.*, through the establishment of socialism.

It should be noted, however, that Keynes does not envisage even such limited curbing of finance capital by the labor and people's forces. What he has in mind, and what the "Labor" government in Britain is now establishing, is a National Investment Board on which not labor and the people, but the representatives of finance capital themselves would exercise the "control" over

their own investment. If this is the real objective, then it must be said that the most complete efforts in this direction so far were made in fascist Germany and Japan! But did this eliminate, in those countries, the basic anarchy of production which characterizes capitalism? As the whole world now knows, it only deepened and intensified the competition and conflict which accompany and are an integral part of the development of monopoly or finance capital. The sharpest and most profound expression of this fact was World War II, which fascism precipitated as the only "answer" to the internal and external economic (and political) contradictions in which it was enmeshed.

Thus, that which under capitalism inevitably gives rise to crises, *i.e.*, the anarchy of production, resulting in overproduction relative to consuming power (which the Keynesian school dimly glimpses), is in fact the inevitable expression of the conflict of productive forces and production relations. And the anarchy of production cannot be removed without removing capitalism itself.

CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT

3. With reference to the inadequacy of Keynes' long-run analysis in which the growth of chronic unemployment is dealt with, a few main points should be noted. Keynes falls back upon the concept of "hoarding" (*i.e.*, "over-saving," in his

terminology) as responsible for chronic "underemployment"—that is a growing quantity of savings are used neither for consumption nor for investment. We are informed that this is due to growing inequalities of income as well as the declining "marginal efficiency of capital." But at no point does he give a satisfactory objective analysis of the reasons for those two trends. Keynes nowhere really discusses the growth of monopoly, which increases the inequalities of income and narrows the market still further through its policy of artificially high prices and resulting reduction in the consuming power of the workers, as well as large sections of the farmers and middle classes. Nor does he deal fundamentally with the dividing up of the world market which limits still further the extensive range of "profitable" capital investment. The entire question of monopoly and imperialism is never *effectively* tackled by Keynes or by his followers. The Keynesian acceptance and defense of the capitalist system make impossible, of course, a complete and correct analysis of the "problems" it presents, including the growth of monopoly side by side with deepened and sharpened competition; at most there are limited and distorted "flashes" of insight. Consequently, the "remedies" will not cure the patient, for the diagnosis is incomplete.

The obstacles to realization of the long-range Keynesian reform pro-

gram, whose objective is the saving of capitalism from its own contradictions, are basically the same as those which will render ineffective the Keynesian proposals for eliminating cyclical crises. The general crisis of capitalism cannot be overcome without the elimination of the capitalist system itself.

This does not mean, of course, that labor and its allies can achieve no gains or improvement in their position through struggle for a program of immediate demands, including many based on specific proposals advocated by followers of Keynesian theory. But these gains can be made only through struggle *against* monopoly capital and not through the "harmonizing" of class interests which Keynesian thought presupposes. This struggle will not be advanced, indeed it will be impeded, by illusions about the possibility of preventing crises and overcoming the tendency to chronic unemployment within the frame-

work of capitalism. We have ourselves just experienced the disastrous effects of such illusions in terms of the results of Browder revisionism. It is therefore of the greatest importance that Communists within the labor movement conduct a vigorous struggle for Marxist theory, and against the illusions fostered by Keynesian thought, at the same time that we unite in a practical way with all those with whom we share a common program of immediate demands.

Finally, it must be repeated, this article is intended merely to contribute in a limited way to a discussion in which, the author hopes, others will participate, for the furtherance of Marxist clarity on this topic. Further analysis is needed of Keynes' theories, as well as a critical examination of American followers of Keynes such as Wallace, Hanson, Stuart Chase and others, and particularly of the Browderite version of Keynesism.

THE GERMAN LABOR MOVEMENT SINCE V-E DAY

By HANS BERGER

I

THE IMPERIALIST Winston Churchill, class-conscious to his finger tips, mentioned in his Fulton speech the then-impending merger of the German Social-Democrats and Communists in the Soviet Zone as one of the important accusations against Soviet policy. This negative, reactionary appraisal of the importance of this new development in the ranks of the German workers is sufficient proof of its international significance. If Churchill, the rabid imperialist preaching the gospel of an Anglo-Saxon war-axis against the Soviet Union for the domination of the world by Anglo-Saxon imperialism, speaks with such anger about the merger of the working class parties in Germany, then he understands better how to estimate its great potentialities as an anti-imperialist factor than, unfortunately, many progressive forces in the United States, even in Communist circles.

No one—except reaction and its various apologists—can desire that anything should be forgotten of what the Germans did to the peoples of the world. Never must the hatred

of German fascism, of German barbarism, and its instigators and causes cool off. Never must the guilt of the German people and its duty to make reparations for that guilt, recognized by the class-conscious workers in Germany, be brushed aside. And never must all necessary security measures against the Germans—as laid down in the Potsdam decisions—be weakened, as long as they have not given indisputable proof that they have created a different, a progressive Germany. It must not be forgotten for one moment, especially in the present complicated international situation, that German reaction and fascism, together with its mass influence and its root source, German finance-capital, though weakened, is by no means eliminated. If we see that even in such countries as France, Poland, etc., reaction is trying to go over to the offensive, it would be ridiculous to believe that in Germany the forces of reaction, however they camouflage themselves, have been eliminated or rendered harmless.

As necessary as it is to keep all this in mind, it would be wrong not to see the new in the developments in Germany, to continue to look upon the Germans in the old way—as during the war—and to overlook the fact that victory over Hitler-Germany has also brought historically important changes in the German people. The destruction of Hitler-Germany has liberated the German working class, the first victim of the Nazi dictatorship which

crushed and demoralized it, and decimated the ranks of its most advanced fighters.

The dialectic of life is already answering the question as to whether, and in what tempo, the German working class can rise again. It is true that the development of the German labor movement is proceeding unevenly in the different parts of Germany; and many German workers are yet burdened with many relics of their unhappy past, prone to yield to the influence of reactionaries of the most varying kinds—among them especially the reactionary labor leaders. Nevertheless, the German working class is already giving unmistakable proof of its ability to learn the lessons of the past, to draw the correct conclusions from its experiences, and to organize and reorganize its own ranks.

As a matter of fact, the development of the German labor movement since the destruction of Hitler-Germany by the Allied armies is encouraging for the world labor movement and discouraging for international reaction. For it proves that, in the long run, one cannot destroy the Communist Party, and the influence of Marxism-Leninism upon the working class, even with the most bestial terror and the most "scientific" methods of corrupting the masses.

With all its errors and mistakes, with all its faults and backwardness, with all the zig-zags—and what disastrous zig-zags!—in its historic

march forward, with all of its obvious necessity to start from scratch, we can truthfully say that only one year after V-E day, there exists a big, fighting, German labor movement that knows better than in the past what to do and how to do it. One year after the defeat of Hitler-Germany, we find that a large section of Germany—the Soviet zone—in which the two working class parties have merged into the Socialist Unity party, has been radically transformed. And the transformation is such that it demonstrates to the world and to the German masses that the German problem can be solved and it shows the way in which it can be solved.

What do we find in the Soviet zone?

A united trade union movement has been built, which includes to date 18 industrial unions, with approximately 4 million members. For the first time in Germany's history, a radical bourgeois-democratic land reform has been carried through. In Ostelbien—the land east of the river Elbe, the historical scene of the Junkers—the land of the Junkers has become the land of the peasant, thereby destroying the economic basis of the political and social power of the great agricultural capitalists, of the remnants of German feudalism, the eternal sword of German reaction and imperialism, the most important ally of the force that brought Hitler to power—German finance-capital. This land reform,

carried through with the active participation of the landless and poor peasants, agricultural workers, and Germans expelled from other countries, has brought the peasants and workers together in the fight for the establishment of a new, democratic Germany. The Hitler state with its apparatus has been destroyed, and a new democratic state, based on the self-administration of the people, has been created. The economic and administrative apparatus has been thoroughly cleansed of all reactionary forces; and no trusts, cartels, large concerns, or big private banks exist any longer in the Soviet zone. All economic institutions of a monopolistic character have been taken over by the governments of the provinces, cities, and villages. Workers' councils in the factories and trade unions are actively participating in the fight against economic sabotage, in the clearing of the factories and enterprises of fascist elements, and in the planning of production for the restoration of the economy. A new democratic school system is being built and mass education is taking place on the broadest possible scale for the eradication of all remnants of fascism, Prussianism, and military ideologies. Hand in hand with this goes the encouragement of cultural and scientific activity. In every sphere, a new economic, social, cultural and political life is coming into being. Under the leadership of the class-conscious workers new forms of social life are being created in order

to change the character of the masses of the German people.

This is indeed a militant, anti-fascist democracy. It is militant and anti-fascist because it is led by the party of the class-conscious workers who have learned the lessons of the sad years of capitulation under the Weimar Republic and the hell of Nazi dictatorship. It is not Socialism, because capitalism remains, even though it is a capitalism seriously weakened by the destruction of the monopolies, Junkers, and the old reactionary state apparatus. It is, therefore, not the dictatorship of the proletariat; for, although the workers are the guiding and most consistent leaders of this new German democracy, the democratic parties of the bourgeoisie (as well as of the big peasants) have full freedom of political existence and organization; and the provincial governments and administration in the Soviet zone represent coalitions of the working class party and the democratic parties of the bourgeoisie. Those employers not guilty of war crimes or of having aided the rise of fascism, and who are ready to adapt themselves to the new conditions, still remain proprietors of their enterprises, although their individual profit interests are subordinated to the general policy of reconstruction and to the new social consciousness of this new German democracy. This militant, anti-fascist democracy is neither anti-clerical nor anti-atheist. Although it insists on the democratic principle of separa-

tion of church and state as against reactionary attempts to subordinate education to the power of the churches, it defends the right of every citizen to belong or not to belong to a church.

This, in brief, is the kind of Germany that is being created under the leadership of the class-conscious workers, in closest cooperation with the peasants and the toiling masses generally, and in coalition with the democratic, anti-fascist parties of the bourgeoisie. The Red Army has, of course, been of tremendous and decisive assistance in the task of eradicating fascism during the occupation, and has encouraged and given practical help to the progressive forces. At the same time, one must not forget that all this help could not have achieved the present results without the ability of the class-conscious workers to learn, without their long experience and working-class traditions. The best traditions of the German labor movement, together with the aid of the Red Army, made this tremendous resurgence and awakening of the German labor movement possible. *And this awakening expresses itself most significantly in the fact that both of its historical parties, Social-Democrat and Communist, have finally learned the lessons of the thirty-year war within the labor movement.*

In 1863, Ferdinand Lassalle organized the "Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiter Verein" (General German Workers' Association). Wilhelm

Liebknrecht (father of Karl) and August Bebel, the great workers' tribune, organized the Social Democrat Workers Party in 1869. The year 1875 witnessed the unification of both these parties into the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which soon became the political party of the German working class. Bismarck and the German ruling class of his time had the same hatred and the same fear of a unified German working-class party as have the reactionaries of today. And just as the Socialist Unity Party of today is denounced by its enemies, at home and internationally, as a party in the service of a foreign power, meaning thereby the Soviet Union, so the Social-Democrats, of the time before the First World War, were always called "vaterlandslose Gesellen," i.e., "men without a country."

The decisive split in the German labor movement, with all its terrible consequences, had its origin when, under the influence of German imperialism, the majority of the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions went over openly into the camp of German imperialism upon the outbreak of the First World War. This split was not healed but deepened after 1918 when the Right-wing leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, in alliance with the big capitalists, Junkers and generals, crushed the revolutionary democratic movement. It thus came about that after 1918, instead of completing the democratic revolution,

the Weimar Republic did nothing else but guarantee a breathing spell for the resurgence of German imperialism. The split labor movement, its component parts fighting each other, was felled by the blow of fascism, and fell prey to its terror and corrupting influence. The revisionism of the Social-Democratic Party in Germany, and the inability of the emergent German Communists to render it harmless because of the strength of the reformist influence upon the decisive strata of the workers, led to the downfall of the working class in Germany and to the downfall of Germany itself.

Wilhelm Pieck, the old comrade-in-arms of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Franz Mehring, and Ernst Thaelmann, expressed the self-criticism of the German Communists when, at the last convention of the Communist Party, before the merger, he enumerated their main errors of the past:

Development of a certain sectarianism as well as of a certain dogmatism; *far-reaching ignoring of the national peculiarities*; often of certain arrogance towards other strata of workers, as well as isolation from the masses; further, the tendency to transplant mechanically the experience of the Russian October Revolution to Germany. Another fundamental error of the Party consisted in leading the main struggle against the Social-Democratic Party, whose members were made responsible for the reactionary policy of their leaders. The high point of this

error was the participation of the Communists in the referendum against the Braun-Severing government in Prussia.

Despite these recognized, very serious mistakes, the main obstacle to the establishment of a united front against fascism consisted in its rejection by the Social-Democratic Party and the trade union leaders. Even after the coup d'état of Papen in Prussia in July, 1932, they refused to call the general strike together with us. The same happened on the most fateful day of German history, on January 30, 1933.

Despite its weakness and errors, the German Communist Party has carried through consistently the following principles: First, the struggle against imperialism and militarism, for peace and understanding between the peoples, and for friendship with the Soviet Union. Second, the fight against reaction and for a democracy that would give the toiling masses decisive influence upon the policy of the state, with the final goal of the realization of Socialism. Third, the struggle for winning the majority of the working class and for the realization of its unity and of its alliance with the peasantry. Fourth, the fight for permanent improvement of the living conditions and working conditions of the toiling masses and against exploitation and oppression. *Of these revolutionary traditions of our Party we are rightly proud. We will take them into the Socialist Unity Party.*

II

Through the close cooperation of the Social-Democrats and the Communists, fundamentally important initial advances were made in the

creation of a new Germany in the midst of the physical and moral rubble which was the terrible heritage of Hitler-Germany, and its war. Both working class parties then made a decisive step in furthering the organic unity of both parties, by the creation of the Socialist Unity Party. April 21, 1946, the official date of the unification, is a historic date for the German and the international labor movement. The tragic gap created by the split in the German labor movement is closing again. Two imperialist wars, Hitler-Germany, the Hitler war with all its terrible devastation, and the loss of national sovereignty were necessary to create a new, a more mature German labor movement. For the unity expressed by this new party is not a simple return to the unity which existed prior to 1914. It is a unity on a much higher level than ever existed in the German labor movement, a unity basing itself on the movement's terrible experiences, on the lessons of the Socialist October Revolution, the bankruptcy of the Weimar Republic, and twelve years of Hitler dictatorship.

The creation of the Socialist Unity Party was not the result of a simple decision on top, on the part of leaders only. Millions of workers were drawn into the discussion pro and con. An intensive theoretical discussion was developed in magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets, as well as in the ranks of the members of both parties. All the experiences of

the past, the immediate practical tasks, the future of Germany, the relation of democracy to Socialism, and the Marxist character of the new party were brought home to the masses. The preparation for unification was at the same time a powerful work of enlightenment of the German workers and broad masses, organized by the class-conscious workers. And the enemies of unification in the ranks of the Social-Democrats, the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois occupation authorities spared no efforts to prevent it.

Max Fechner, one of the most outstanding leaders of the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party, declared at the last district conference of the Berlin Social-Democrats (April 13, 1946) in answer to the Social-Democrats opposed to the merger:

If today word-splitters raise the question of whether the Central Commission (of the Social-Democratic Party) has the right to speak for its policy, then this question is answered by the fact that already in the autumn of last year all district conferences in the Soviet zone that had been democratically organized recognized with unanimity the Central Commission as the leading organ of the party. What is the situation today? 630,000 members have been, beyond any question, registered by the Central Commission. Of these 630,000 members only 5,000 have been in principle against the merger.

At the time of the merger the Communist Party had 600,000 mem-

bers, of whom 205,000 were registered in the Western Zone. In April the new Socialist Unity Party had, in the Soviet zone alone, 1,300,000 members, and 200,000 applications for admission to the new party were on hand. Not counting the very numerous Communists and Social-Democrats in the Western zone who are in favor of the new party, the Socialist Unity Party has already today more members than the Social-Democrats and Communists combined had in the whole of Germany before Hitler came to power.

The Socialist Unity Party is a Socialist Party. That means that it is guided by scientific Socialism! "The goal of the Socialist Unity Party is the elimination of all exploitation and oppression, of economic crises, poverty, unemployment, and imperialist war threats. This goal, the solution of the vital national and social questions of our people, can be achieved only by Socialism."

While stating that its final goal is Socialism, the new party, however, sees as *the immediate task for Germany, not Socialism, but the creation of 'an anti-fascist, militant parliamentary democracy, with a parliament elected by secret ballot, and a government created under the leadership of the majority party or a coalition of different parties.* The Socialist Unity Party sees in the working class the only consistent democratic force in Germany. It is the only force that can eliminate all danger that the new German

democracy, the elections, the parliament, the government, the state apparatus as a whole, and the economy may be exploited again, as after 1918, for the victory of German imperialism, whose position and influence in Germany is still strong, and which has powerful allies in the capitalist countries of the world. The German working class, states the declaration of principles of the new party, cannot simply jump over the historically necessary stage of the completion of the democratic revolution. The new party is guided therein by the advice given by Lenin in his famous "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution":

The democratic revolution is a bourgeois revolution. The slogan of Black Redistribution of the land, or "land and liberty"—this most widespread slogan of the peasant masses, downtrodden and ignorant, yet passionately yearning for light and happiness—is a bourgeois slogan. *But we Marxists must know that there is not, nor can there be, any other path to real freedom for the proletariat and the peasantry than the path of bourgeois freedom and bourgeois progress. We must not forget that there is not, nor can there be at the present time, any other means of bringing Socialism nearer than by complete political liberty, a democratic republic, a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.* Being the representatives of the advanced and the only revolutionary class, revolutionary without reservations, doubts and retrospection, *we must present to the whole of the people the task of a*

democratic revolution as widely and as boldly as possible, and display the maximum of initiative in so doing . . . (My italics—H.B.) (V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, International Publishers, Vol. III, p. 122.)

III

One of the factors accelerating the merger was the urgency of the German national question. The Socialist Unity Party would not be a Marxist, a Socialist party of the German working class, if it underestimated the importance of this question in the struggle for a militant, anti-fascist, democratic Germany. The new party stated in its manifesto:

The Socialist Unity Party is truly the national party of the German people; for its program serves Germany's present and future. The Socialist Unity Party is an independent party, deeply rooted among the working people, holding itself free from all alien influences, and regarding the well-being of the German nation as its highest aim.

In this connection, the leaders of the Socialist Unity Party have stressed many times that they consider Berlin as the capital, and the Ruhr and the Rhineland as the heart of Germany; and they have bitterly criticized all separatist and federalist movements in Bavaria, the Saar, the Rhineland, and Hanover, or wherever such movements have been organized. Certain people—for instance Walter Lippmann—therefore accuse the leaders of the Socialist Unity Party of being nationalists and

assert that Germans will be Germans whatever their political face may be, thereby insinuating that the leaders of the Socialist Unity Party also are German imperialists.

That Germans will remain Germans is obviously true, and as long as Germany is not under its own sovereignty and is split into separate parts, a national problem will exist for the Germans, the problem of regaining sovereignty and a unified national state governed by Germans for Germans. The coming into being of a German nation, as of other nations, was a result of the inevitable, historical development of human society. The creation of a German national state was a historical progressive development; but its historic misfortune was (1) that the national state was created much later in Germany than, for instance, in France, England, and the United States, and (2) that it was brought about, not by a bourgeois-democratic revolution, but by a reactionary compromise between the German bourgeoisie and the Junkers, effected under the leadership of the Junker Bismarck. The German imperialist bourgeoisie and its main allies, the Junkers, the great agricultural capitalists, who brought Hitler to power, destroyed by its brutal aggression the national sovereignty and the German national state. They used the national question successfully as a bait to win the masses over to their robber imperialist program which aimed to dominate the world and

to destroy the national freedom and independence of other nations. The only class that could have solved the German national question after the defeat of 1918, the German working class, was not able to become the leader of the German nation, to destroy the forces of reaction and imperialism, and thereby safeguard the existence of Germany as a nation. Under much more complicated conditions, this task stands anew before the German workers. At a time when the danger threatens that Germany will be permanently split by the forces of German and international reaction; that the German working class-movement will be "zone-ized"; *at a time when the Germans can count on the support of the democratic forces of the world in solving their national problems only if the guarantee is given that the new German Reich, the new German national state, will not again be a danger to other peoples*—at this time the Socialist Unity Party calls upon all Germans, especially the workers, to rally round the banner of a militant anti-fascist democracy as the only way to solve the national problem of Germany. In doing this, the Socialist Unity Party is fighting a difficult battle against the forces of German reaction, against the remnants of fascism, against all the still powerful forces of German imperialism that are again attempting to exploit the national question to prevent the swinging over of the masses of the peasants

and urban petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia into the camp of militant democracy. German reaction tries to keep rooted in the minds of the German people the reactionary, imperialist idea that only by a victorious war of revenge, by serving as *Landsknechte* of the imperialist powers, can the Germans restore their national independence. *The Socialist Unity Party, on the other hand, in full accord with the Potsdam decisions, rightly identifies the struggle for a new, militant, anti-fascist democracy in Germany, with the struggle for national sovereignty and independence, and vice versa.*

The Socialist Unity Party is therefore the only German party, and a governing party at that, that fights for the solution of the German national question, not by imperialist and chauvinist means, but on the basis of an uncompromising struggle against German imperialism and its basic social components, monopoly capital and the Junkers, coordinating the real national interests of the Germans with the basic interests of the international progressive, democratic camp. As the party of the class-conscious workers, it is the deadly enemy of the German imperialists and fascists and, where it has the power, as in the Soviet zone, it is destroying them far more successfully and thoroughly than are the French, British, and Americans in their zones. From this it follows that there can be no basic differences between the policy of the German Socialist Unity Party

and the policy of the class-conscious workers in France, Poland, etc. There are, especially, no differences between the German Socialist Unity Party and the Communist Party of France with regard to the Rhineland and the Ruhr.

So long as the German class-conscious workers cannot give, by their influence and power in the whole of Germany, the necessary guarantees against a new German aggression, it is only natural that the French Communists should demand that, for the sake of the security of France, the Ruhr and the Rhineland be placed under international control, instead of being maintained by British imperialism as an arsenal of German imperialism and a continental springboard for British imperialist policy, in which the calculation of a resurgence of a reactionary Germany plays a very important role.

IV

The influence of the Socialist Unity Party is also penetrating into the other zones of Germany. In the mines and factories of the Ruhr and the Rhineland, in Hamburg, in all industrial centers, as well as in many Social-Democratic organizations in the western zones, the sentiment for the Unity Party is growing, despite all the roadblocks being erected by the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders.

In the bitter battle of these reactionary leaders against the Unity

Party and against those Social-Democratic rank-and-filers and functionaries who are in favor of it, the reactionary leaders find very valuable political, moral, and financial support in the British Labor Party, in the American Federation of Labor, and last, but not least, in the policy of the occupation authorities of the Western Powers. The fact that the labor movement, the political as well as the trade union movement, is very much hampered by the division of Germany into zones, is exploited to the fullest extent by the reactionary labor leaders who, very much to the comfort of the British and American occupation authorities, concentrate their attacks upon the Soviet Union and the Communists, and against unification with the Communists.

What is the essence of the occupation policy of British and American imperialism today? It is to transform the part of Germany they occupy into a bulwark against the Soviet Union, with the aid of the Right-wing Social-Democrats and other reactionary forces within the churches. From this stems the "weakness" of the policy of de-nazification, the "hesitation" to destroy all the remnants of the German army and the fascist police, the conciliatory attitude towards well-to-do Nazis, and particularly the brotherly attitude toward the German industrialists and Junkers, toward the trusts and cartels, and the great agricultural capitalists. (It is known that Mr. Robert Murphy even wanted to pro-

test against the land reform in the Soviet zone.)

All this, naturally, is hampering and slowing up the tempo, of the rebuilding of the political and economic organizations of the workers in the Western zone. Instead of encouraging and helping them, as is being done in the Soviet zone, the Western Powers mistrust and fear the class-conscious German workers. At the same time, this situation is encouraging the activation of German reaction which has remained, in the main, in possession of its privileged economic positions and, adapting itself, as after 1918, to the exploitation of "Democracy" western style, is regaining political power under a different mask. This is evidenced, for example, in Bavaria, Hamburg, and Hanover, and in the industrial areas of the Ruhr and the Rhineland. If the Germans have been rightly accused of never having, in their entire history, thoroughly cleansed Germany of reaction, then truly the behavior of the Western Powers is now more German than that of the Germans themselves.

Despite these unfavorable conditions, the Communists in the western zone are making progress in rebuilding their organizations—not a very easy task for a party whose cadres and leaders were more thoroughly decimated by German fascism than those of any other political group. In many places they are working together with the Social-Democrats. While leading a sharp ideological

struggle against the reactionary exponents of the policy that tries to keep the working class split, they are working patiently, wherever possible, with the Social-Democrats, as well as with the democratic, anti-fascist forces of the bourgeoisie. Since the Socialist Unity Party is not yet "licensed" in the Western zone, the Communists, and the Social-Democrats who favor the Unity Party, are forced to maintain their old separate identities.

If the lack of close unity and of a single united party of the working class is of great advantage to the forces of reaction in such a country as France, it is all the more so in Germany. All reports from the Western zone reveal that there the broad masses are much more under the influence of reactionary ideologies, of confusion, despair, and hopelessness, than in the Soviet zone. This, of course, is the consequence, not only of the policy of the occupation authorities of the Western Powers, but also of the fact that the advanced workers are not yet acting in unity, are not following one political and organizational plan and using the combined forces of both parties in the struggle for the political and moral leadership and re-education of the German people. Whatever progress in this direction is accomplished—and progress is being made—takes place in spite of the occupation policy of the Western Powers.

The year which has passed since the defeat of Hitler-Germany proves

that the decisions of Potsdam, if carried through, are a realistic basis for bringing imperialist Germany on to the road to becoming an anti-fascist democracy. The development in the Soviet zone is witness to the fact that it can be achieved in the whole of Germany, provided that the Western Powers give up the idea that German imperialism, *i.e.*, the Junkers and monopoly capitalists, have to be preserved "in the name of democracy," as a potential force against the Soviet Union and for "business" reasons. This conception, however—no matter what the inter-imperialist differences may be on the question of whether American, British, or French interests shall dominate Germany—has more and more become the guiding line of the policy of the United States and Great Britain on the German problem. *The German problem is considered to be a pawn in the British and American offensive against the Soviet Union.*

After 1918, the reactionary Social-Democrats' policy of coalition with the generals, big capitalists, and Junkers to crush the German revolution was applauded and encouraged by the international anti-Sovietees, who saw in a defeated Germany the potential *Landsknechte* to be used against the Soviet Union. Similarly today, the international anti-Sovietees, and their agents in the camp of the working class—the Right-wing leaders of the British Labor Party

and the reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L.—applaud and encourage all attempts of the reactionary German Social-Democrats to prevent the reorganization and reformation of the German labor movement on the basis of the Socialist Unity Party. Ruling directly over a big part of Germany and being masters of death and life for many millions of Germans, the Western Powers can use their influence in the most dangerous way to prevent the creation of a new Germany, the realization of the program of the German Socialist Unity Party.

This is why, not the Churchills, but the international labor movement, and especially American labor, must assert its own independent policy on the destiny of Germany and give all possible help and encouragement to the German Socialist Unity Party. The great, new, historic opportunity to create a peaceful and progressive Germany must not be destroyed by those forces that would like to reverse the march of world progress. Let us not forget that, with the downfall of Hitler-Germany, aggressive American imperialism is now the main danger for the forces of progress, and tries to pursue the same policy of world domination that Hitler-Germany did. And such a policy attracts and is attracted by all reactionary and fascist bandits, of whom there is no shortage, especially, and above all, in Germany.

THE NEGRO AND THE AMERICAN NATION

By DOXEY A. WILKERSON

(A DISCUSSION ARTICLE)

DURING THE PAST sixteen years, ever since the adoption of the "Resolution on the Negro Question" in 1930, American Marxists have interpreted the Negro question as that of an oppressed nation, pointing to the attributes of "nationhood" being developed by the Negro people in the Black Belt territory (where in 1930 they constituted a slight majority of the population), and to the "national minority" characteristics of the Negro population outside the Black Belt.

The immediate practical program of the Communist Party throughout this period called for vigorous struggles against white chauvinism and all forms of anti-Negro discrimination, in both the North and South, for the attainment of full Negro democratic rights. However, the theoretical premise that the Negro people in the Black Belt constitute an oppressed nation led the Party to posit, as the necessary ultimate program for the liberation of this Negro nation from oppression, the establishment of its *right* of self-determination. The sys-

tem of ideas associated with this view was popularized through the slogan "Self-Determination in the Black Belt."

Communist theoretical writings and discussions on this question have consistently implied or clearly expressed the view that the ultimate destiny of the Negro people (*i.e.*, "self-determination") lies in some separate form of statehood, with the *right* even to secede from the United States. The 1930 Resolution, for example, called for "establishment of the state unity of the Black Belt," for bringing "together into one governmental unit all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes."

Thus, ultimately at least, the Black Belt territory was to be organized into a separate, autonomous governmental unit, *following which* the Negro majority in that area would exercise its "right of self-determination"; that is, it would determine whether to remain as an integral part of, or to federate with, or to secede from, the larger American nation.

THE NEED FOR BASIC RESEARCH

It should be noted that "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" has never been advanced by the Communist Party as an immediate program of action. As a general theoretical approach to the Negro question, however (except during the period of Browder revisionism), this

program of ultimate state autonomy has been warmly defended against all who questioned its validity.

It has recently been proposed that the Communist Party now revive the slogan of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" and reaffirm as its theoretical position on the Negro question the system of ideas heretofore associated with that slogan. For the many reasons set forth in the following pages, I am of the opinion that any such action would be theoretically incorrect and, therefore, tactically disastrous.

Having thus defined my point of view at this stage of our discussion, I hasten to add that neither I nor any of the other participants in this discussion appear to have the necessary factual information for a conclusive, scientific resolution of the issue. We are throwing our opinions and speculations back and forth at each other with a fervor and skill worthy of the scholastics of the Middle Ages—and with but little more factual basis for our polemics. This is not the method of science.

The Negro question in the United States is a fundamental question; and its concrete manifestations during the recent period of profound and significant change should be approached in a genuinely scientific manner. This we have not yet done. Even so simple a task as tabulating the 1930-to-1940 population shifts in the 477 Black Belt counties used as a basis of James Allen's study a decade ago (*The Negro Question*

in the United States. International Publishers, 1936) appears still to be carried through. Precise and comprehensive data are lacking on the status and trends of the Negro population in the North and South, the development of the Negro bourgeoisie and proletariat, industrialization in the South, the mechanization of southern agriculture, political potentials and participation by the southern white and Negro masses, and a host of other questions germane to our present speculative discussion on "Self-Determination in the Black Belt."

We cannot, and must not try to, resolve this issue finally without a far more systematic and definitive investigation of the facts than is reflected by this and the preceding contributions to our current discussion of the Communist position on the Negro question. Our Party must yet take steps to guarantee a truly scientific approach to this question.

It would be logical to end my discussion at this point, and to devote all of the limited time I have available to helping to gather and interpret the many facts which we all need as the basis for conclusions of tested validity. There may be some value, however, in setting forth my admittedly tentative conclusions about the proposal to reaffirm the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" slogan and program as the theoretical position of the Communist Party on the Negro question in the United States. Subject to the basic qualification which inadequate data

impose upon our entire discussion of this question, here are my views.

THESES ON THE NEGRO QUESTION

On the basis of such fragmentary data and superficial observations as are at hand, it is my opinion that the strongly separatist program expressed by the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" slogan does violence to the concrete manifestations of the Negro question in the United States, and therefore is undialectic, un-Marxian; and further, that this program militates against the unity of the *whole* Negro people and tends to aggravate existing divisions between the white and Negro masses of the South, and therefore is inadequate to promote that maximum working-class unity and strength which the economic and political struggles of this period so urgently require. I believe that we should discard the slogan and develop an entirely new approach to the Negro question.

The reasons for this judgment and the lines along which I think a more fruitful program needs to be developed are set forth in the following eight "theses on the Negro question."

First: *The Negro people have taken on the characteristics of a nation only in rudimentary form; they are still in a very early stage in their development toward nationhood.*

Historically, throughout two cen-

turies of slavery and seven decades of severely limited "freedom," Negro Americans have always been the victims of acute exploitation and oppression. The fundamental motivation for this oppression lies, of course, in the drive of the ruling landlords and bourgeoisie for super-profits based on unpaid or grossly underpaid labor.

This super-exploitation of the Negro workers has been facilitated by the factor of "race." Physically differentiated in appearance from the rest of the American population, the Negro could more easily be isolated and subjected to special oppression. It was for precisely this purpose that the rulers of our society invented the many slanderous myths and stereotypes about the Negro people, nurtured attitudes of white chauvinism, and sought to perpetuate the Negro-white divisions thus created by the artificial device of "racial segregation."

The factor of "race" operates also as a unifying force among the Negro people themselves. They recognize the superficial attribute of skin-color as the basis of their oppression. The Negro masses, therefore, have come to be highly "race-conscious." There is a strong feeling of kinship among Negroes everywhere—so much so that a Negro businessman in Chicago senses a sort of personal identification with a Negro sharecropper murdered by landlords in Mississippi; and a Negro worker in Florida gets deep satisfaction out of the election of

a Negro Congressman and a Negro Councilman from Harlem.

This unifying influence of a common racial origin has been further strengthened by centuries of common struggle against anti-Negro oppression in America. Traditions and attitudes of peculiar significance to the Negro people have developed and find expression through various forms of art. A Negro small bourgeoisie has emerged, dependent largely upon and seeking hegemony over the Negro market. A strong Negro proletariat has been developed, especially in the great industrial centers of the North. Powerful Negro organizations with varying programs have been built, entirely or predominantly Negro in composition and universally dedicated in some manner to helping to extend the boundaries of Negro democratic rights.

Thus, three centuries of common experience in America have transformed the Negro population from an agglomeration of separate African tribesmen, coming from widely different cultural backgrounds and speaking different languages, into a social-political group characterized by a greater degree of homogeneity than any other large sector of the American population. A common medium of expression (English) and concentration largely in a common territory (the Black Belt) have enormously facilitated this process. Through force of harsh circumstance and common experience, a definite

community of Negro citizens—"the Negro people"—has been developing within the American nation as a more or less unified and distinct component of the total population. This development is still in process. It is symbolized, in part, by ever-growing use of the term "the Negro people."

Marxists understand this development as the emergence of a new nation, still in the early stages of growth and not yet conscious even of its own nationhood. It is correct, therefore, to characterize the Negro population in the Black Belt as an "oppressed nation," and the Negro population outside of the Black Belt as a "national minority," subject in varying degrees to those same basic patterns of discrimination which have grown up around the feudalistic slave-survivals in the agrarian South. Moreover, there are political insights of major importance which flow from this understanding of the Negro question as a *national* question. It is this theoretical premise that leads Marxists to recognize the *special* character of the Negro question, and thus to avoid the Socialist Party's error of viewing the oppression of the Negro people as merely a part of the larger class struggle of our nation. It is on this conceptual basis that we view the whole Negro people (not merely the Negro proletariat) as natural allies of the working class. It is on this basis also that Marxists work to strengthen both the Negro liberation struggles and the more

general working-class struggles by hastening the developing collaboration between the two.

It must ever be borne in mind, however, that we are here dealing with a nation in embryonic form, far less developed *as a nation* than any of the other oppressed peoples for whom Marxists justly raise the demands of self-government and independence as an expression of their inherent right of self-determination. It must also be borne in mind that the existence of a Negro nation in the Black Belt, generally admitted to be in a very early stage of development, by no means leads necessarily to the inference that the future of that nation lies along the path of continuing maturation *as a nation*.

Second: *Marxist theory recognizes that the problem of each nation may call for a unique solution; and it by no means implies some form of independent statehood as a necessary means to the exercise of the right of self-determination.*

Several principles which are basic to a Marxist approach to the national question are (1) the right of a nation freely to determine its own destiny, (2) the need for a flexible approach to the varying manifestations of the national question at different times and in different places, and (3) the probable necessity for a specific solution to the problem of each oppressed nation, developed in the light of the concrete historical and contemporary conditions under which it lives. The

following quotations from Joseph Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question* (International Publishers, 1942) are illustrative in this regard:

A nation has the right freely to determine its own destiny. It has the right to arrange its life as it sees fit, without of course stamping on the rights of other nations. That is beyond dispute. (P. 24.)

A nation has the right to arrange its life on autonomous lines. It even has the right to secede. But this does not mean that it should do so under all circumstances, that autonomy, or separation, will everywhere and always be advantageous for a nation, for the majority of its population, for the toiling strata. (*Ibid.*)

But what solution would be most compatible with the interests of the toiling masses? Autonomy, federation, or separation? All these are problems the solution to which will depend on the concrete historical conditions, in which the given nation finds itself. Nay, more. Conditions, like everything else, change, and a decision which is correct at one particular time may prove to be entirely unsuitable at another. (P. 25.)

It follows from this that the solution of the national problem can be arrived at only if due consideration is paid to historical conditions in their development.

The economic, political, and cultural conditions of a given nation constitute the only key to the question of how a particular nation ought to arrange its life and what forms its future constitution ought to take. It is possible that a specific solution of the problem will be required for each nation. If, indeed,

a dialectical approach to a question is required anywhere it is required here in the national question.

In view of this we must declare our decided opposition to a certain very widespread, but very summary manner of "solving" the national problem, which owes its inception to the Bund. We have in mind the easy method of referring to the Austrian and South Slavic Social-Democratic parties, which supposedly have already solved the national problem and whose solution the Russian Social-Democrats should simply borrow. It is assumed that whatever, say, is right for Austria is also right for Russia. (Pp. 25-26.)

Thus, it is quite incorrect to assume that Marxist theory holds that any nation, under whatever circumstances, can find a solution of its problem as a nation only through some more or less separatist or autonomous form of political organization. Yet this is precisely the assumption which has been dominant in Communist interpretations of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" for more than a decade.

Thus, it is also incorrect to assume that the highly successful national policy of the Soviet Union, which has liberated and enriched the lives of the once sorely oppressed nations of Czarist Russia, is applicable to the American scene. The theoretical Marxist principles on the national question there developed and tested through experience are, of course, universally valid. Their application to any particular national question, however, must always be made in

full accord with the concrete manifestations of the problem at a particular time and place. Indeed, to do otherwise would be highly undialectic, un-Marxian. Yet most past interpretations of the slogan, "Self-Determination in the Black Belt," have been heavily weighted by what appeared to be a more or less mechanical application of Soviet policy and experience to the national question as it affects the Negro people in the United States.

Third: *The perspective for the Negro people in the United States is neither toward disintegration as a people nor toward statehood as a nation; it is probably toward further development as a national minority, as a distinct and increasingly self-conscious community of Negro Americans.*

The "integrationist" theory of Browder revisionism on the Negro question would imply the gradual disappearance of the Negro people as a distinct sector of the American population. Ultimately, in the case of the Negro and other peoples, there will come a trend toward the amalgamation of nations; but this will not happen until long after the advent of socialism as the dominant form of the world social order.

Present and probable future trends are in precisely the opposite direction. The Negro people are building up their national organizations for ever more militant struggles as a people. They are becoming increasingly conscious of their oneness as Negro

Americans. They are struggling with ever greater unity and power to attain their full stature as a people. The perspective is for continued development along this line. The Negro people clearly are not moving toward disintegration, or toward the loss of their identity (as in the case of Polish-Americans or Italian-Americans) through the process of integration and attendant assimilation.

Neither are the Negro people moving toward statehood. The perspective of a separate Negro republic, autonomous region, or other separate form of political organization in the Black Belt is inconsistent with the concrete social, economic and political realities and trends of the American scene, of which the Negro people are increasingly an integral part.

The very tenuous Negro population majority in the Black Belt a decade and a half ago (3/10 of 1 per cent) has probably been dissipated already by the known decrease in the number of Negro-majority counties, from 189 in 1930 to 172 in 1940. The coming mechanization of Southern agriculture will hasten and extend this trend. The concentrated Negro population in the Black Belt territory will probably continue to spread out to other parts of the South, and in lesser degree to the North and West.

Parentetically it should be noted that our great emphasis in the past upon the Negro population "majority" in the Black Belt was ill-advised,

because it incorrectly seemed to make the whole concept of the "Negro nation" hinge upon a slender statistical margin. We should understand, however, that the theoretical validity of this concept cannot be undermined merely by showing that Negroes constitute something less than one-half of the population in a more or less arbitrarily defined area. At the same time we must also understand that persistent and significant trends toward greater dispersion of the Negro population would, indeed, undermine the very existence of the Negro nation in the Black Belt.

The Negro bourgeoisie is still an insignificant factor in the American economy, and a very minor factor in the economic life of the Negro people themselves. Even Negro life insurance companies, which represent the strongest sector of Negro business, hold only about three per cent of the life insurance in force for Negro families. The Negro bourgeoisie will continue to grow, but there is little likelihood that, at this stage in the development of American monopoly capital, it will yet emerge as a dominant economic force in the life of the Negro people.

The Negro proletariat is far more substantially developed than the Negro bourgeoisie, a fairly unique feature of the Negro question as compared with national developments elsewhere in the world. This fact is a positive asset for the Negro people's movement and for the working-class movement as a whole be-

cause it raises the possibility of the Negro proletariat achieving hegemony over the Negro liberation struggle, a most salutary development which even now is well on the way toward maturity. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Negro proletariat is mostly without the Black Belt area of the Negro nation, and, further, that its orientation is toward increasingly close and organic relations with the white industrial workers of our country.

The highly developed cultural (*i.e.*, artistic) expressions of the Negro people, likewise, are now for the most part outside the territorial area of the Negro nation. This aspect of Negro life will unquestionably flourish still more in the period ahead, and it will tend increasingly, as at present, to merge with and enrich the cultural life of the American nation as a whole. It must be understood, however, that such a development, although expressing the deep-set emotions and aspirations of all the Negro people, will for a long time be shared but meagerly by the oppressed Negro masses in the towns and on the plantations of the Black Belt.

The growing political maturity of the Negro people shows no tendencies toward development along separatist lines. Rather, Negro voters, in both the North and South, are developing as an increasingly important sector of the broad labor-progressive coalition upon which the future of American democracy depends.

As the C.I.O. southern organizing drive grows in power, as the Negro-Labor alliance becomes increasingly firm, and as the polltax and white primary barriers to Negro suffrage are overcome, the Negro people of both the North and South will more and more take their place as an integral part of that progressive political movement which will one day find organizational expression through a third political party of national proportions. They will play a major role in the struggle to defeat American imperialism and strengthen democracy; and in this very process they will hasten their own liberation from Jim Crow oppression.

Thus, the most significant recent trends in the development of the Negro people appear to be away from, rather than toward, the further maturation of the Negro nation in the Black Belt. Indeed, it is highly probable that the Negro people in the Black Belt have already reached their maximum stage of development *as a nation*, that the future growth curve of this Black Belt nation is downward, and that the Negro people of that area will become increasingly integrated into the even broader liberation struggles of the entire Negro people throughout the country, all fighting for full democratic rights for Negro citizens in every section of the United States.

It is toward dignity and equal status *as Americans* that the Negro people are moving. As they grow in unity and political maturity, their

consciousness as a distinct and organized component of the American population will be enhanced. They will, in time, assert political demands commensurate with their growing maturity and strength—perhaps even for the shifting of county and state boundary lines to achieve full political expression in local areas of Negro majority population. But they will raise these demands as Negro Americans, and within the federated state structure of the United States.

It is not along the line of a separate Negro republic or autonomous region, even in the Black Belt, that the probable future development of the Negro people lies. It is, rather, along the line of an increasingly organized and self-conscious *community of Negro Americans*, functioning as an integral part of the larger nation, and struggling with ever greater unity and power for the destruction of Jim Crow barriers of all kinds, for the attainment of full economic, political and social equality as Americans.

In short, the probable future growth of the Negro people in the United States is not toward further maturation as a nation, but rather toward further development as a distinct national minority.

It should be pointed out that this perspective of the Negro people as a developing national minority fully conserves all of the strategic advantages which arose from Marxists' original characterization of the Negro question as that of an oppressed

"nation." Within the theoretical framework of the Negro people as an oppressed "national minority," the *special* character of the Negro question remains intact, and the whole Negro people are still correctly viewed as the natural allies of the organized working class.

It should also be pointed out that the further development of the Negro people as a national minority, rather than as a separate nation, is fully consistent with the political traditions and structure of the larger American nation of which they are an integral part. Unlike the Soviet Union, whose many peoples, in already more or less advanced stages of nationhood, led naturally to the adoption of an over-all *federated republics* pattern of political organization, the United States was not built upon an already existing group of nations, but rather upon a population consisting of many nationality groups which, in time, came to be welded into one nation.

The over-all *federated states* pattern of political organization is the one which evolved for our nation; and it would be quite inconsistent with this whole political development for the small, almost completely surrounded Negro nation in the Black Belt, unique in all America, to mature as a separate republic or autonomous region within the borders of the United States. Indeed, such a development is difficult to conceive. Far more natural, and probable, is it that the young Negro nation in the Black Belt will in time disappear, and that

the Negro population of which it consists will develop increasingly as a part of the organized *national minority* of Negro people throughout the country, struggling for full democratic rights and dignity for the Negro people everywhere.

Thus, the strongly separatist program expressed by the slogan of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" is inconsistent with the probable destiny of the Negro people in America. It does not conform to the concrete historical, economic, political and cultural conditions of this national question in the United States. It is, therefore, undialectic, un-Marxian.

Fourth: *The overwhelming majority of the Negro people abhor and reject any proposal that they separate—in any form whatever, even temporarily—from the American nation as a whole.*

There are many historical and current evidences of a strong antipathy among Negroes toward any separatist solution of their problem as a people.

The successive colonization schemes proposed even during the dark days of slavery were all decisively rejected by the articulate spokesmen of the Negro people.

During Reconstruction, when the Negro people in the Black Belt held some power of decision, their choice was clearly to join hands with their white fellow-citizens to build democratic state governments in the South

as an integral part of the U. S. A.

When reduced to a state of virtual slavery during the late 19th Century, the Southern Negro masses chose to join hands again with the white masses in the Populist Movement's vain bid for a Democratic South.

The Garvey Movement of the early 1920's, when postwar reaction so thoroughly disillusioned the Negro people, was a substantial development along separatist lines. It unquestionably tapped deep roots in the freedom aspirations of the Negro people during that period. But even at its height the Garvey Movement never commanded the sympathy of most Negro Americans, and its two or three present-day organizational heirs are but isolated and insignificant sects with no real mass support.

The important Negro mass organizations are all committed to a program of full democratic rights for the Negro people as citizens of the U. S. A.; never do they call for attainment of separatist goals. Recognized non-Communist leaders of the Negro people, the extensive Negro press, representing all shades of political orientation, and the informal discussions of Negroes in their homes and local groups—not only in the North, but also in the plantation South—all point to the deep-seated desire of the Negro people to exercise their full democratic rights as *Americans*, "without discrimination on grounds of race or color." They reject any proposed solution of the Negro question through some form

of organic separation from the United States.

Thus, the strong separatist implications of the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" program are not only theoretically incorrect; they are also a source of irritation to the Negro people, serving only to alienate from the Communist Party many Negro workers and intellectuals who would otherwise be among our staunch supporters.

In this connection, it should be pointed out that the rapidly growing popularity of the Communist Party among Negroes during the early 1930's was by no means based upon our slogan and program of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt." It developed in spite of that slogan and program—which, fortunately, relatively few Negroes knew about anyway, and fewer still understood. The prestige of the Communist Party among the Negro people was originally built, and is now being rebuilt, primarily on the dual basis of (1) consistent Communist leadership in militant struggles for Negro democratic rights, and (2) the progressive national policy of the Soviet Union.

Fifth: The present and probable future trend for the Negro people is toward more and more victorious struggles against the special forms of oppression to which they are subjected.

During the recent anti-fascist war the Negro people moved forward rapidly toward freedom and security

on many fronts. But this development has now been slowed down considerably, and in some respects reversed. The postwar upsurge of anti-Negro reaction—reflected by mass firings in industry, strengthened opposition to legislative reforms, and especially the revival of lynch terror in the South—represents a serious threat, indeed, to the further progress of the Negro people toward their historic goal of full democratic rights. The same is true, in somewhat lesser degree, of the threat which postwar imperialist reaction poses for the working class as a whole.

Any complete and sustained triumph of imperialist, pro-fascist reaction in our country now would, with certainty, sharply reverse the recent trend toward the extension of Negro democratic rights, and drive the Negro people backward to new low levels of oppression. Such a development might well give rise to another strong wave of anti-white, separatist tendencies such as engulfed large sections of the Negro people during the reaction which followed World War I. It might produce a greater readiness, even eagerness, on the part of the Negro people for some form of separate organization of their political life along autonomous lines.

Apparently on the assumption that this is the perspective for America as a whole, and for the Negro people in particular, some observers caution against discarding the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" program

as the main theoretical approach of Marxists to the Negro question. Recognizing its "practical" limitations at this time, they envision the day when this separatist program will yet be on the agenda of history.

Let us be clear that *one* of the alternatives which this period of history poses for our country is, indeed, that of a fascist America with a horribly enslaved Negro people. *But where is the Marxist who actually holds to this thoroughly defeatist perspective?*

Our very lives are predicated upon the sure knowledge that the working class, not the imperialists, will triumph in the decisive struggles now shaping up in our country and the world. Without under-estimating for a moment the vicious offensives which pro-fascist reaction has already begun to launch against the Negro people and the whole working class, we are busy mobilizing the people for struggle with full confidence of victory.

Marxists understand that the capitalist roots of imperialist reaction are already in process of decay. Completely unawed by these still dominant and highly dangerous forces of reaction, we focus our attention upon and help to strengthen the new and emerging progressive forces in our own country and throughout the world. These forces were never more powerful and effectively organized than right now, and they are growing stronger all the time. Although serious struggles still lie along the way,

we know that the forces of progress will organize the future of our own country and all the world.

This is the broad political perspective, not that of triumphant reaction, in terms of which we must view the Negro question in the United States. And in terms of this perspective we can more readily see the Negro people continuing to move forward toward equality and dignity as Americans.

Even the wholesale discharge of Negro industrial workers during the past year has not completely wiped out the wartime employment gains of the Negro people—nor is it likely to do so.

Although gross disparities in educational opportunity still remain, the growing struggles of the Negro people and their allies are winning constantly improved public school facilities for hundreds of thousands of Negro youths.

Restrictions upon suffrage in the South are being weakened and broken down, and the Negro people are coming to form an increasingly important sector of the American electorate.

A truly major blow was landed against the whole rotten structure of Dixie segregation when eminent Negro attorneys won their recent Supreme Court case to bar Jim Crow travel arrangements on interstate buses.

Bars against Negroes in organized baseball have begun to crumble. Able Negro citizens are moving more and

more into important elective and appointive positions in government. At least four major plays of Negro life are shown on Broadway during the current season. The "American Mother of 1946" is a distinguished Negro woman from the South, with a family of which any mother would be proud.

In short, despite organized, still dominant, and now increasing reaction, the Negro people are continuing to make progress—in almost all areas of our national life. They are organizing and fighting with increasing militancy toward complete liberation from the shackles of Jim Crow oppression. And more and more they find effective white allies in their struggle.

The road ahead will surely present no unbroken chain of victories for the Negro liberation movement. On the contrary, some serious and sustained set-backs are certain to develop. But the path along which the Negro people are moving *does lead forward*. Moreover, in the over-all working-class and people's struggles now shaping up in our country and in the world, there are likely to develop situations in which the Negro people will hasten toward their goal of full democratic rights at a pace which pre-occupation with the threatening forces of reaction would never lead one to envisage.

Thus, our out-moded separatist doctrine of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" cannot now be supported on the premise of a sharp

and long-sustained downward trend in the Negro freedom curve. The perspective is for quite the opposite. Let us not polemize on the basis of some *possible* course of history in which we, ourselves, do not believe.

Sixth: *A correct Marxist approach to the Negro question must contribute toward maximum unity of the Negro people as a whole.*

The Negro people throughout the country are, and will increasingly become, *one* organized community within the general population. They do not look upon themselves as "Southern Negroes within the Black Belt," "Southern Negroes outside the Black Belt," and "Negroes in the North and West," but rather as *Negroes*—all subject to much the same types of discrimination, despite important qualitative differences in different parts of the country. Their growing national organizations, embracing and fighting for the rights of Negroes in all parts of the United States, are an expression of this developing unity of the entire Negro community.

So, likewise, do the main oppressors of the Negro people regard them as one. Place of residence is quite irrelevant to the United States Government when it proceeds to segregate all Negroes in the armed forces. Although forced to temper their policies somewhat by the greater strength of the democratic forces and traditions in the North and West, big real estate interests, financiers and industrialists above the Mason and

Dixon Line continue their discriminations against Negroes *as a people*. Southern plantation landlords and industrial employers make no fine distinctions as to whether the Negroes they exploit are within or without the Black Belt, but wring from their labor all the special surplus value which the degree of Jim Crow discrimination in their particular localities permits.

It is true that the main base of Negro oppression lies in the Black Belt area, from which it extends in varying degrees throughout the country. It is also true that a fundamental solution of the Negro problem in the Black Belt is pre-requisite to the attainment of full freedom and dignity by Negroes in other parts of the South, and in the North and West. But it does not follow that the correct approach to a solution of the Negro problem calls for a sharp programmatic distinction between the one-third of the Negroes within the Black Belt and the two-thirds of the Negroes outside the Black Belt. Indeed, a program which clearly recognizes the basic common factors in the oppression of *all* Negroes, and which seeks further to weld unity among Negroes *everywhere* for effective struggle *as a people*, is one which can bring maximum strength to the Negro people's liberation movement and to the organized working class generally.

Thus, "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" as the *main* theoretical approach of the Communist Party to

the Negro question has the limitations, first, of direct reference to only a one-third minority of the Negro people, and, second, of failing to embrace and unify the whole Negro people for concerted struggle against their common oppressors. We need a much more comprehensive approach than is expressed by this slogan.

Seventh: *A correct Marxist approach to the Negro question must contribute toward maximum unity of the white and Negro masses, in both the North and South.*

The growing collaboration and unity of the Negro people with the labor-progressive movement as a whole is one of the most salutary developments in the political life of America. It has been strikingly evident in recent political campaigns, in organized labor's struggle to defeat the anti-union attacks of monopoly capital, in the campaign to maintain price controls, and in the struggle to reverse the imperialist war policy of the Truman Administration. It is of the utmost importance that this development be extended.

This is essential to guarantee people's victories in the elections of 1946 and 1948, to assure the success of labor's campaign to organize the South, to give Southern workers the necessary power to uproot the feudalistic plantation system, depose their oligarchic Bourbon rulers, and proceed to build a genuine democracy in the South.

This is essential to lay the basis for building a powerful third party in America, for checking our nation's drift toward imperialist war and fascism, for giving the working class the strength it must have to withstand the coming cotton crisis in the South, and the even more general and disastrous crisis which is coming in the American capitalist economy as a whole.

This is essential to guarantee the victory of socialism in our country.

The "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" program falls far short of what is required to build maximum unity between the white and Negro workers in the South, or even in the North. Indeed, considering the anti-Negro poison on which Southern white workers have been nurtured, the Negro majority-rule implications of this program serve but to drive an even sharper wedge between the white and Negro masses. In addition to being theoretically incorrect, this separatist program plays right into the hands of the Southern demagogues who maintain power largely through playing on the bogey of "Negro domination."

We need a theoretical and programmatic approach to the Negro question which more clearly embraces the common interests of the white and Negro masses of the South, and which is conceived deliberately to rally them and the white workers of the North in unified struggle *with the Negro people* toward those freedom and security goals which they all

hold in common, and which they can achieve only through joint struggle. Such a program would give maximum expression to the historic Marxist doctrine that "labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Finally: *A correct Marxist approach to the Negro question must contribute toward maximum unity of theory and practice.*

There has long been an anomalous division between what we Communists have called our "theoretical position" on the Negro question ("Self-Determination in the Black Belt") and our "practical tasks" of day-to-day struggles for Negro democratic rights. We have commonly expounded our "theoretical position" with vehemence; and then, as if putting it on ice for safe-keeping, we have turned to the quite unrelated "practical struggles" of the moment. I say this practice is anomalous because Marxists, above all others, stress the necessary *unity of theory and practice.*

The situation here involved is not to be compared with our ultimate goal of socialism and the immediate struggles, short of direct agitation for socialism, which we undertake from day to day. In the latter case our practical struggles flow directly from, and contribute toward, our ultimate theoretical goal of socialism. Our day-to-day struggles for Negro democratic rights, however, are hardly expressive of the strongly separatist "state unity" interpretations

we have heretofore given to the slogan of "Self-Determination in the Black Belt."

Those immediate practical struggles for Negro democratic rights are, however, fully consistent with the objective realities of life about us and with the deep-seated aspirations of the Negro people. They are consistent with the imperative need of building democratic unity between the Southern white and Negro workers for common struggles to carry through the still unfulfilled democratic revolution in the South. They are also consistent with our need for a united working class for the achievement of socialism.

Life itself has forced us to adopt a correct immediate "practical program" in relation to the Negro question in the United States. Although the process is somewhat the reverse of what should be the case with Marxists, let us not hesitate longer to bring our theoretical position on this question into full harmony with the completely valid program of day-to-day struggles which we already embrace.

CONCLUSION

It was not the purpose of this analysis to outline a well-rounded positive program for the Communist Party on the Negro question, but rather to define and evaluate our previous theoretical position concerning the right to self-determination in the Black Belt, and to sug-

gest the general lines along which necessary revision of that program should now be developed.

The conclusions which flow from the analysis are, briefly stated, as follows:

First, the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" program and slogan, interpreted with the strong separatist emphasis of the past, do not conform to the concrete historical, economic, political and cultural realities of the Negro question in the United States. Moreover, now to revive and attempt to reinterpret the slogan after more than a decade of misuse would be highly confusing. The slogan should be discarded.

Second, a new theoretical approach to the Negro question should be developed by American Marxists. Such an approach should:

1. Interpret the Negro people as a young nation in the very early stages of development;
2. Recognize that with the Negro people in the United States, as with all oppressed peoples, the Marxist approach to a solution of the national question must be flexible, and must grow out of the concrete economic, political and social conditions of the people concerned;
3. Raise the perspective of further development of the Negro people as a national minority within, and functioning as an integral part of, the larger American nation (rather than development as a maturing nation moving toward statehood);
4. Raise the perspective of contin-

ued progress of the Negro people toward full democratic rights;

5. Embrace the common needs of the whole Negro people, strengthening the unity and organization of all Negro Americans everywhere—within the Black Belt and without;

6. Recognize the common sources of the oppression suffered by both the white and Negro masses in the South, and call for maximum unity between the Negro people and the southern white workers, and between them and the workers of the North, in concerted struggles for the freedom, security and enduring peace of all Americans; and

7. Unify Communist theory and practice on the Negro question.

A theoretical approach to the Negro question developed along these lines would correct the Leftist errors which have come to be associated with the "Self-Determination in the Black Belt" slogan. It would point toward that form of "self-determination" which corresponds to the aspirations and probable destiny of the

Negro people in the United States. It would lay the basis for Marxist unity of theory and practice on the Negro question. It would promote the developing unity of the Negro people, draw closer the growing ties between the white and Negro masses, and enhance the prestige and influence of the Communist Party among both white and Negro Americans.

Such a theoretical approach to the Negro question would tend to strengthen the liberation struggles of the Negro people, enhance the unity and power of the working class as a whole, and hasten the coming victory of socialism in the United States. Let us proceed to develop such an approach.

Third, a systematic program of fundamental research on the Negro question should be undertaken at once. Only on the basis of far more comprehensive factual information than is now at hand can there be any final scientific resolution of the theoretical issues here drawn.

BOOK REVIEWS

A WELCOME BOOK ON ORGANIZED LABOR

By ROBERT WOOD

THE TRUTH ABOUT UNIONS,
by Leo Huberman. Pamphlet Press,
New York. Price \$1.00.

Leo Huberman's *The Truth About Unions* is a refreshing, vigorous antidote to the stream of falsehood and malice about labor which flows from the pens of the Sokolskys and Peglers, and from the polluted editorial pages of the capitalist press. It is one of the very few volumes available which attempts to clear the poisoned atmosphere and give the true story of labor.

It is a valuable presentation of how organized labor came into being, how unions function, and what some of their aims and problems are. In presenting the details in a sympathetic and progressive manner, Huberman has written a book which should find its way into the hands of great numbers of workers and of members of the middle class, whose knowledge of the labor movement is at best often very elementary.

The author has told the story in simple language. The large-type volume is illustrated by the superb drawings of Harold Price, and is priced at one dollar.

ITS SPECIAL VALUE TODAY

While a book such as this is always welcome, its possibilities for service today are immensely enhanced because of the savage attacks against labor in the recent period.

Philip Murray made this clear, when, early in June, in his demand that Truman veto the Case Bill, he stated that "a vast anti-labor crusade" was in the making. This reactionary crusade, with the President of the United States as its persistent champion, has as its monstrous purpose the destruction of the independent labor movement, and the creation of a submerged and subservient working class, whose organized voice will be stilled so that monopoly and its government agents can make unhampered preparation for imperialist aggression. The struggle to keep the labor movement free is, therefore, the central point in the fight for democracy and peace.

Truman had his tongue in his cheek when he recently told a college graduating class that he would like to see an American economy of small units. These mouthings have to be set alongside his breaking of the railroad strike, when he acted on behalf of the most aggressive sections of finance capital. For two huge Wall Street octopi control fully eighty per cent of the railroads of the country. (In a study made by the Federal government in 1939, the National Resources Committee found

that the House of Morgan and Kuhn, Loeb & Co. controlled nearly 20 billions of dollars in railroad property.)

A reading of Huberman's book will better qualify a person to analyze such urgent issues and more successfully sift fact from reactionary fancy. Already, the "public," that great majority body of the working class and its allies, is beginning to see through the frenzied distortions of monopoly and its press. A study made by the Elmo Roper organization, and published in the June issue of *Fortune*, found the public shifting its opinion concerning the issues involved in the strike struggles of the past months. *Fortune* detected "a considerable break in the ranks of management's staunchest supporters." Roper's survey posed the following question: "Suppose you had been acting as a referee in labor management disputes in the past three months, do you think your decisions would probably have been more often in favor of labor's side or more often in favor of management's side?" In January, 25.7 per cent voted for labor and 44.7 voted for management. But in June, the vote was: 37.1 per cent for labor and 36.6 per cent for management. Even these figures indicate that many millions of Americans still have to learn the "Truth About Unions," and it is for that reason that Huberman's book is of special importance today.

Huberman's book also provides information on how the labor movement came into being and highlights the main historical points in its development. It does an excellent job of explaining the detailed organizational structure of trade unions, from the local body up to the top executive councils of the A. F. of L., C.I.O., and

Railroad Brotherhoods. The author makes clear the distinctions between the closed shop, the union shop, and the status of workers under contracts containing a maintenance of membership clause.

The author notes a number of the early contributions made by labor to the nation's progress, including labor's pioneer role in the struggle for free public schools and the abolition of the vicious custom of imprisonment for debt.

There are many other factual details in the book which is uniformly progressive in approach.

SOME WEAKNESSES

Here and there, however, Huberman's formal narration of labor's story lacks the sense of motion, of clash between the forces which strive to achieve a powerful labor movement and those which seek to crush it. In a number of instances, he presents only one side of a problem. He thus tends to "describe" unions rather than to present the problems labor faces and the process and struggle through which they are solved. While this might be overlooked in a volume which merely aims to supply general information for the broad public, it lessens its value as a thoroughly useful instrument for education inside the trade unions as such.

For example, Huberman devotes a chapter to describing the inner life of a progressive local in the United Steelworkers, C.I.O. His emphasis is on union democracy. He introduces Joe Worker into the union. Joe, who is new in the labor movement, is more than pleased at the democracy and companionship he finds in his local union.

But Huberman fails to follow this account of democracy in action with the other side of the coin, the lack of inner democracy in many other locals, especially in the A. F. of L. He even generalizes: "... the same is true of the A. F. of L.'s International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers . . . and for all 104 national and international unions of the A. F. of L."

This is simply not so. Few members of New York's Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, for instance, will accept it. And Joe Worker must be forewarned that in a number of unions there is undemocratic domination, against which Joe must be encouraged to fight. It is true that several sections later, toward the end of the book, Huberman presents a chapter on racketeer-dominated unions. But the fight to change their character is only one part of the problem of the struggle for inner-union democracy.

The same one-sided approach appears in his observation that unions have a record of living up to their agreements. He quotes the president of the U. S. Steel Corporation to prove that fact. But a fact of equal importance which is left unstated is that *management*, as a whole, always tries to violate its part of the contract. So notorious is this practice that, at the Steel Workers' convention in May, Murray made a point of denouncing the steel corporations for their widespread attempt to whittle down the contracts forced upon them by the recent strike struggles.

Monopoly capital, through its press and its agents in Congress and in the labor movement, tries to split working-class unity. Among its most potent

weapons are Red-baiting and chauvinism. The growth and strength of unions depend on unity, yet Huberman scarcely deals with it. Furthermore, he devotes only a few paragraphs to a description of the advances the Negro has made in the labor movement, but these comments are static in form. He does not give a living picture of the forces trying to free the Negro people and those working against their progress.

Huberman omits entirely a discussion of Red-baiting as a tactic to destroy unions. Yet it is the most widespread, the most insidious, and potentially the most ruinous weapon wielded against labor. Today, it is not only the weapon of the Rankins in Congress, of the Hearsts and Howards, but it is being used against the C.I.O. and all progressive labor by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L.

Thus, Robert Watt, A. F. of L. International representative, told the May convention of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce that "Communist agents" were responsible for the recent strike movement. In the same way, William Green clamors for collusive contracts with Wall Street's Southern monopolies. The great C.I.O. drive in the South, Green recently declared, presents the Southern workers with a choice "between a foreign-controlled organization and an American organization."

Huberman omits any mention of the Communist Party. The Party played a decisive role in organizing the unorganized, in fighting for industrial unionism, for inner-union democracy, for Negro rights and working-class unity, and continues to make great contributions to the labor movement.

Had the author presented a rounded picture of the rise of the modern labor movement, the role of the Communists in making that progress possible would have found its rightful place.

While Huberman refers to some of the present developments for independent political action, his treatment is inadequate. The organization of P.A.C. merely led, according to the author, to its support of "progressive candidates in both parties." The question of labor's independent political activity is not set in the framework of its past or future, of the efforts made since the birth of organized labor to break its domination by the capitalist parties.

Nor is there any reference to international unity of the trade union movement and its expression in the World Federation of Trade Unions. This or-

ganization, embracing sixty million workers, from 50 countries including the United States, and affiliated under one banner, described by Murray and Hillman as "the greatest force for peace and unity in the world today," surely deserves some mention.

The weaknesses noted above, and others, would have been avoided if the author had approached his subject in a more rounded fashion, in terms of the real life process of motion and conflict. *The Truth About Unions*, however, it must be emphasized, is an effective and informative volume, whose publication today is especially timely. It should be circulated as widely as possible to enlighten the people on the broadest scale as to the workings of the trade unions, and their special role and significance in the struggle for peace, security and democratic advance.

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