

political affairs

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*A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism***Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER; Associate Editor: HYMAN LUMER****Notes of the Month**

by Hyman Lumer

TERROR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Though world opinion has long been outraged by the brutal racial oppression practiced in the Union of South Africa, the shocking events of the past few weeks have evoked a world-wide storm of unprecedented dimensions.

Massacres have been followed by a ban on public meetings and by waves of arrests without charges and without trial. But the protest movement gathered momentum. New demonstrations occurred, with added shootings by the police, and thousands stayed away from work. On March 28, a general one-day work stoppage was called, which in Johannesburg was 90 per cent effective. The work stoppages were met with the outlawing of the chief African organizations and declaration of a state of emergency, with severe penalties for encouraging strikes. The strikers were literally driven back to work by police armed

with whips, clubs and guns. But all the savage violence and repression has not succeeded in putting down the resistance, and the struggle continues.

WORLD REACTION

Throughout the world, the reaction to the mass murders was swift and vehement. Strong protests came immediately from other African and Asian countries. The socialist countries spoke out in strong condemnation. The American State Department issued a statement regretting "the tragic loss of life resulting from measures taken against the demonstrators of South Africa." A number of Latin American governments also protested, and the government of Brazil, declaring its "complete revulsion toward racial discrimination," asked the American republics to take a joint stand. In the British Parliament, the House of Commons unanimously adopted a resolution deplor-

ing the Verwoerd policies.

On April 1, in response to numerous demands for action, the United Nations Security Council, with Britain and France abstaining, approved a resolution recognizing the situation as one which "might endanger international peace and security," deploring the shootings and the government policies and actions which gave rise to them, and calling upon the South African government to abandon its policies of apartheid and racial discrimination.

Everywhere, religious and other organizations and leaders have spoken out, and the reaction of organized labor has been especially pronounced. A strong protest has been issued by the ICFTU, and there have been innumerable actions by labor organizations in different countries. Here, Walter Reuther has called on the government to institute an official boycott and George Meany has urged that it take the lead in securing UN action. On the West Coast, the ILWU has initiated a boycott on the handling of South African goods. And so on.

The Verwoerd government has angrily criticized the UN and other actions as meddling in South Africa's internal affairs—an argument like that of Hitler when mankind was revolted by his treatment of the Jews. Nevertheless, the world has made it plain that such oppression cannot be considered a private affair, any more than the persecu-

tion of the Negro people in the United States can be so regarded. The fact is that world opinion is almost solidly lined up against Verwoerd and his supporters. This fact they are apparently so far determined to ignore.

BACKGROUND

The Union of South Africa is industrially the most advanced of African nations. It has a population of nearly 15 million. Of these, 3 million are white, of whom 55 per cent are Afrikaners of Dutch ancestry while the rest are chiefly of British extraction. There are 10 million Negro Africans, about 1½ million "Coloreds" of mixed ancestry and some 500,000 Indians.

The country is ruled exclusively by the whites, but its work force is more than 80% African and Asian in composition. In mining, Africans make up 87% of the work force, in agriculture 92%. In fact, the entire economy of the country rests on a foundation of cheap African labor, in turn based on extreme racial oppression.

Of course, such racial oppression in South Africa is nothing new. It goes back some 300 years, its present form appearing with the development of the mining industry, when the need for cheap labor in the mines led to wholesale dispossession of Africans from the land. The current policy of apartheid was intro-

duced in 1948. At that time the Nationalist Party, representing the Afrikaners, defeated the United Party, spokesman of the British elements, and took control of the government.

Apartheid is a policy of the most extreme racial repression, a South African transplantation of the Nazi racist policies. Indeed, its chief architect, Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd, who was from 1948 to 1958 Minister of Native Affairs, himself was an avowed Nazi supporter, as were other leaders of the Nationalist Party before him. During World War II, as editor of *Die Transvaaler*, he openly used that newspaper as a tool of the Nazis in South Africa.

Under the policy of apartheid, the few rights previously allowed Africans were withdrawn. In 1913, the land had been divided into "European areas" encompassing 87 per cent of the total area and "native reserves," consisting of the remaining 13 per cent. Crowded into these impossibly small reserves, large numbers of Africans were compelled to go to the cities to seek work or to rent land in the white areas. Now the renting of such land was prohibited, and the right of Africans to live and to move about within the white areas was severely restricted. A rigid segregation was enforced, with sharp penalties on both Africans and whites for violation.

Africans were excluded from the universities, and educational facilities were reduced to a mockery designed only to teach obedience and efficiency as the white man's servants. The right to be represented in Parliament by a handful of whites, little as this was, was taken away. The rights of African trade unions were abolished.

At the heart of the apartheid policy is the compulsory pass system, introduced in its present form in 1951. From the age of 16 on, every African must carry a bulky pass book at all times. He cannot travel or obtain employment without it. He can get it only if he agrees to take a job provided by the labor bureau. His employer endorses the book once a month and may, if he wishes, comment on the bearer's work. The pass books serve as a means of controlling the movements of Africans at every step and of forcing them into the low-paying jobs in mining and farming, thus providing an unfailing source of cheap labor.

Hundreds of thousands are arrested every year for violations of the pass law. When they are unable to pay the fines, as is usually the case, they are sentenced to work on the big farms as prison labor. Small wonder, then, that the pass system has become the most hated feature of apartheid and the prime target of resistance.

SOURCE OF OPPRESSION

To many liberal observers the conduct of the Verwoerd government appears simply as an incomprehensible, irrational fanaticism. How can Westerners understand a man like Verwoerd, asks the *New Republic* (April 18, 1960). The Afrikaner, it says, is "the oddity of the 20th century. . . . He is not out of step, but marching in the opposite direction."

Fanatic, Verwoerd and his followers are, but their fanaticism is no more incomprehensible than that of Hitler or that of the southern racist rulers in our own country. Like these, it is a product of imperialism—of the rule and needs of monopoly capital. The economy of South Africa is dominated by foreign monopoly capital, chiefly British, but with the United States running an ever closer second. From \$50 million in 1943, American investments in this area, as given by the Department of Commerce, rose to \$140 million in 1949 and more than \$350 million in 1959—close to half of all United States investments in Africa.* United States exports to South Africa in 1959 amounted to \$427 million.

The superprofits of monopoly capital depend upon a supply of

cheap labor—on keeping the Africans in a state of virtual slavery and the most abysmal poverty. The apartheid policies are but an extreme effort to maintain this, particularly in the face of a growing national liberation movement in Africa. If these policies evoke protests today, it is because in their utter rigidity they tend to alienate world opinion and in the end to be self-defeating. But the fact remains that substantial parts of the profits ground out of the brutal oppression of the South African Negro worker find their way into the pockets of American big business, just as do those sweated out of the southern Negro worker and sharecropper here.

RESISTANCE TO APARTHEID

Resistance to the policies of racial oppression is also not new, nor are mass shootings of Africans. For example, such massacres occurred in 1921 and 1922 under the "liberal" General Smuts, and again in the 1952 passive resistance campaign. Nevertheless, the current resistance possesses decisively new features.

First of all, it occurs in a radically new setting. Thus, whereas in 1952 the only independent states under African control were Liberia and Ethiopia, there are today ten independent African states, and it is expected that by 1963 there will be no less than twenty. It occurs in a

* These figures understate the actual investment. For a more detailed account, see W. Alphaeus Hunton, *Decision in Africa*, International Publishers, 1957, Chapter 10. This book is extremely valuable as a basis for understanding developments in Africa, and should be read in full.

world of triumphant, advancing socialism and national liberation. This has had its effects in South Africa. A new chapter has opened, in which the oppressed groups—Africans, Coloreds, Indians—are determined that they will not passively submit to such inhuman treatment any longer. The shootings at Sharpeville and the later police violence did not terrorize the Africans. Their resistance was not broken but solidified, and whatever the setbacks, it will grow.

The main organization of the Africans is the African National Congress, founded nearly 50 years ago. Headed by the highly respected Chief Albert Luthuli, its membership is estimated at from 70,000 to over 100,000. It is a highly influential organization, with close ties with the Indian Congress, the People's Colored Congress and the Congress of Democrats, an organization of progressive whites. Its program is contained in the African Freedom Charter, adopted in 1957 and calling for equal rights for all in a South Africa which belongs to all who live in it; restoration of the national wealth to the people; land reform; the right to work, leisure, culture, housing and medical care; freedom of movement and domicile. Its aim is a non-racial people's democracy.

About a year ago a younger, dissident group broke with the ANC to form the much smaller Pan-

Africanist Congress. According to Brian Bunting of the newspaper *New Age*, they objected to the former's ties with the Indians, Coloreds and whites, and advocated an exclusive black nationalism. They also considered the ANC as under Communist influence and expressed themselves as opposed to "imported ideologies."

The current campaign of resistance was initiated by the PAC. The action was originally opposed by the ANC as being insufficiently prepared, but this organization has since plunged into the struggle and taken the initiative. The situation has become transformed, and with it the relationship of the organizations to one another and to the people. The outlawing of both organizations and the imprisonment or exiling of their leaders, together with the mass arrests and beatings, have rendered the struggle much more difficult for the present, but there is no doubt that as it continues, effective organization will improve and unity will grow.

The strength of the movement lies in the fact that the labor of the Africans forms the base of the economy. The crippling effect of even the limited work stoppages so far has shown how effective this economic weapon can be, especially if combined with the boycott. It has already spread alarm among substantial sections of the businessmen, who have begun to demand some

easing of the apartheid policies.

Another factor is the long-standing friction and animosity between the Afrikaners and the English-derived whites. It was this which underlay the assassination attempt on Verwoerd. Among the English elements, and particularly within the United Party, there are many who call for a policy of moderation.

The "modification" which these groups advocate, however, is very limited, and the United Party, no less than the Nationalist Party, supports a policy of segregation. And when the chips are down, this "moderate" opposition tends all too readily to capitulate. Thus, on the bill introduced in Parliament to outlaw the African organizations and declare a state of emergency, the United Party voted with the government and the bill passed by a vote of 128 to 16.

To be sure, some of the changes advocated are not insignificant, and such a step as abolition of the pass laws would be an important victory. But the Africans have made it clear that they will not settle for "moderation"—that they demand nothing less than full equality. And they have made it increasingly plain that they intend to fight until they win it.

The present upheaval will not blow over, whatever reverses it may suffer, nor will it be resolved by "moderation." It can only culmin-

ate in a revolutionary upheaval which will give birth to a truly democratic and independent South Africa—a part of the expanding community of free African nations.

Of vital importance in achieving this goal is the support given by the rest of the world. The pressure of world opinion must be brought increasingly to bear on the situation. The UN must back its resolution with economic sanctions against the Verwoerd government, and a worldwide boycott of South African goods must be imposed.

In this country, it is urgent that Congress act to condemn the actions of the Verwoerd regime. The boycott movement initiated by the ILWU must be extended to other sections of the labor movement. And the voice of the American people must make itself heard in unmistakable terms.

The support of the heroic struggle of the Negro people in South Africa for their freedom is intimately linked with the fight for Negro rights in our own country. The racism of a Verwoerd is supported and even hailed by his Dixiecrat counterparts here as justifying their own barbarism. Nor are we immune from the outbreak of violence matching that perpetrated by the South African rulers.

In Birmingham, Alabama, writes Harrison Salisbury in the *New York Times*, (April 12, 1960), "more than a few citizens, both white and Ne-

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gro, harbor growing fear that the hour will strike when the smoke of civil strife will mingle with that of the hearths and forges." In Montgomery, special mounted sheriff's posses are organized. Vigilante groups are appearing, and the Ku Klux Klan shows growing signs of activity.

The need for federal intervention grows ever more urgent, and the failures of Congress and the Eisenhower Administration become ever more glaring. The passage—after weeks of debate—of utterly worthless civil rights legislation is a major setback in the struggle. But here, too, the fight goes on. Here, too, the Negro people reject so-called "moderation" and are prepared to accept nothing less than full equality. And here, too, the fight will be won.

THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA

During the past few months, relations between the United States and Cuba have been deteriorating at a growing pace. The hostility of American ruling circles to the Cuban revolution has been given increasingly open and sharp expression, an especially brazen example being the recently published reply authorized by President Eisenhower to a letter from a group of Chilean students questioning United States conduct in Latin America.

Among other things, the reply

charges the Castro regime with deliberately making derogatory and hostile statements about the United States government and people, and with arbitrary and illegal actions in its land reform program. It praises the "contributions" of American investors to the Cuban economy, and it piously disavows intervention in Cuban affairs as "distasteful."

Its crowning effrontery, however, is the charge that Castro has betrayed the Cuban revolution.

The Cuban press promptly denounced the letter as consisting of lies and hypocrisy, and as "an arrogant and intolerable interference in Cuban affairs." These appellations it richly deserves, for despite its disavowals it is a direct encouragement and incitement to the counter-revolutionary forces in Cuba and elsewhere, who are more and more coming into the open, and it is a disturbing indication of mounting preparations for direct armed intervention.

Eisenhower's charge, with its implication that the internal affairs of Cuba are subject to approval or disapproval by the government of the United States, is in itself an insult to the Cuban people. What is equally important, however, is the question: just wherein does this alleged "betrayal" lie? Clearly, what disturbs Eisenhower and the big business interests for which he speaks is not the possibility that the interests of the Cuban people may

be betrayed. It is rather the firm determination of the Castro regime not to allow a free hand to the forces of counter-revolution. It is the stifling of *this* voice that angers Eisenhower, and it is precisely the fact that the revolution is *not* betrayed that leads to his protests.

The tone which Eisenhower takes toward the Castro government stands in startling contrast to the attitude of his administration toward the bloody butcher Batista, who received open support and unlimited arms, plus an American military mission in Cuba, right down to the very end of his efforts to maintain his tyranny. But then, Batista never threatened to expropriate the American monopolies. On the contrary, he created a "favorable climate for investment" and joined wholeheartedly with American big business in the merciless robbery of the Cuban people.

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

The sole concern of American monopoly capital today is the fate of the more than \$1 billion it has invested in Cuba—over 10 per cent, in this one small country, of total United States private investment in Latin America. When Eisenhower speaks of the "contribution" of these investors to the Cuban economy, what he omits is the huge sums in profits withdrawn by them from Cuba year after year and the

wretched poverty inflicted upon the Cuban workers in order to extract these superprofits.

Here, according to Carleton Beals (*The Nation*, May 2, 1959), is the true picture:

For fifty years Cuba has cooperated extravagantly with American business, and it has known only dictatorship and semi-starvation for most of its people. The sugar industry, accounting for 81 per cent of the island's exports, employing the largest number of workers, provides pauper wages for three or four months of each year. For the rest of the year, these workers and their families—except in the case of a few enlightened large corporations which have provided permanent land plots—are cast forth from their thatched huts (such as the Si-boney Indians lived in five centuries ago) and their huge unsanitary barracks to sleep in public plazas and under the arcades, scrounging for odd jobs, begging, stealing, fishing in garbage cans, their children unschooled, rarely enjoying medical care. Such is the blight of the world's worst rural sweatshop industry which knight-errant Castro, harassed at home and abroad, seeks to remedy.

The Castro regime has deposited one of the bloodiest dictators in Latin America. It has, in a remarkably short time, restored order and completely reorganized the state machinery. It has taken a series of initial steps toward establishing economic independence and freeing the

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country from the status of a virtual American colony which has been imposed on it for the past fifty years.

The Castro government has seized the property of Batista supporters and counter-revolutionary elements. It has taken steps to expand and diversify Cuban industry. It has placed the American-owned Cuban Telephone Company under a government director and has cut the rates charged by the Cuban Electric Company (which supplies 90 per cent of Cuba's electric power) by 30.5 per cent. It has clamped down on oil explorations by foreign companies. It has begun to build desperately-needed housing, schools and roads. It has placed restrictions on the further private foreign investment in Cuba. It has acted to regulate prices and wages and to protect workers from unjust dismissals.

Of particular importance and most advanced is the process of land reform, being carried out under direction of the National Institute for Agrarian Reform (INRA). Expropriation of large landed estates, nearly all foreign-owned, is well under way, and recently the taking over of United Fruit Company's 272,000 acres was begun—a first step in the expropriation of the nearly 2 million acres owned by 13 United States sugar companies. The government is paying for this land with 20-year bonds bearing 4½% interest, based on the assessed valuation for tax

purposes. The INRA also sets up farm cooperatives, of which some 500 already exist, and is establishing an oil distribution system, rural "stores of the people" and other such institutions.

This is the Cuban revolution. It is not a socialist revolution and is not led by the Communist Party. It is a democratic revolution, seeking to establish the true national independence of Cuba and the freedom of its people to control their own political and economic lives. As such it has the fullest support of the Cuban Communists. It is the most advanced wave of the tide of national liberation which has begun to sweep Latin America, and is a beacon light to its sister Latin American countries.

It is exactly this which causes such consternation in American ruling circles, for the democratic interests of the Cuban people are incompatible with those of United States monopoly capital. The land reform is especially a source of alarm. The State Department contends that "there must be prior payment of the proper indemnification in cash, in the amount judicially determined." It also regards the proposed compensation as inadequate, since the assessed value of the land is far below its actual market value.

But such protests have a hollow ring. The procedure being followed was not invented by the Cubans; it is similar, for example, to the pro-

gram imposed by General MacArthur in Japan after World War II, which provided for compensation in 24-year bonds at 3½% interest. Moreover, the companies which now cry that they are being cheated by being paid only the assessed value of the land have for years escaped the payment of millions in taxes through this same undervaluation. Finally, there is nothing which requires the Cuban government to keep in force laws adopted by previous regimes for the benefit of the very foreign exploiters against whom the revolution is directed.

CUBAN-SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT

Equally disturbing to American big business is the recent Cuban-Soviet trade agreement. This provides for the purchase of 1 million tons of sugar a year for the next five years, at world market prices. Twenty per cent of the payment is to be in dollars, the rest in Soviet goods. In addition, the Soviet Union has provided a credit of \$100 million, repayable in twelve equal annual installments at 2½% interest, either in dollars or in goods. The goods to be supplied to Cuba under the terms of the agreement include oil products, wheat, iron and steel products, aluminum, chemicals and various kinds of machinery.

In American business and government circles, this agreement is

characterized as one which is disadvantageous to Cuba and delivers her into Soviet bondage; at the same time, threats of economic retaliation are being widely made.

United States purchase of Cuban sugar is governed by the Sugar Act, under whose terms Cuba and other sugar-producing areas are each allotted an annual quota, for which a premium price is paid, about two-thirds higher than the world market price (currently the latter is about 3 cents a pound; the bonus is between 2 and 3 cents a pound more).

This is portrayed as being of great benefit to Cuba, and the Soviet trade agreement is decried on the grounds that the price paid by the Soviet Union is much lower. But this is a one-sided, misleading picture.

The quota-bonus system is not at all designed to assist Cuba. Its purpose is rather to support artificially the costly and inefficient domestic sugar industry. It plays the same role as the customary price-support devices in other phases of agriculture. It is used instead of these because it leaves Cuba and not the United States holding the unsaleable sugar surpluses. Currently of an annual Cuban output of some 5½ million tons, the American quota accounts for 3 million, leaving 2½ million to be disposed of elsewhere at world prices, if markets can be found.

Further, quotas and premiums are determined not by negotiation

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but unilaterally by Congress in this country. And finally, the price bonus goes into the pockets of the American firms which own virtually all of Cuba's sugar acreage.

For Cuba, the Soviet agreement is highly advantageous, since it relieves her of some 40% of the backlog of sugar over the American quota. Also, the purchase of farm equipment and industrial machinery from the Soviet Union will be of great benefit, and moreover will not entail the unfavorable balance of trade arising from transactions with the United States. But most of all, the agreement is a major step toward freeing Cuba from its economic bondage to American sugar interests.

Present sugar quotas expire at the end of 1960 and the Sugar Act comes up for renewal in Congress at the end of June. Already there are numerous proposals to penalize Cuba by cutting her quota and bonus, as well as in other ways. The Administration has sent to Congress a proposed extension of the Act which includes discretionary authority for the President to reduce quotas. The debate on extension will no doubt provide the stage for a further stepping up of the attack on the Castro regime, and for a drive to use the Act as an instrument of economic retaliation.

THREAT OF INTERVENTION

Permeating the whole picture of

American-Cuban relations is the fear of armed intervention—of the "Guatemalization" of Cuba. This fear exists not only in Cuba itself, where all-out preparations for defense are being made, but is widespread in Latin America, and no amount of glib assurance to the contrary by United States government spokesmen can allay it. And with good reason.

To be sure, Cuba is not Guatemala. The Cuban people—twice as numerous as those in Guatemala—are much better able to defend themselves, and there is no doubt whatever of their enthusiastic support of Castro. Furthermore, sentiment on this score in Latin America generally is extremely acute, even among those who oppose the Castro policies.

There has been a constant succession of raids by Florida-based planes on Cuba—raids which the American authorities have professed to be powerless to prevent. If nothing worse has happened so far, it is only because all-out intervention is not an easy matter. But the threat of such intervention is no less real because of the difficulties entailed; these only mean that more careful preparations must be made. And such preparations are being made. The excuse is the old red herring of "Communist subversion." The question is posed by *New York Times* writer James Reston (February 19, 1960) in these words:

But is the situation in Cuba merely a national revolution now going through an angry anti-American spasm for domestic political reasons—as many observers here believe—or is it a revolution plus a Communist conspiracy?

... if it develops into a Communist conspiracy, with Premier Fidel Castro's connivance or even against his will, then there is little doubt that Washington will regard such a development as a threat to the security system of the Hemisphere.

A hint of the Administration's thinking was given by Secretary of State Herter's reference, in a television interview on March 20, to the existence among the Latin American countries of "a compact with regard to Communist Governments among themselves." The reference is evidently to the anti-Communist Caracas declaration of 1954, adopted reluctantly under strong United States pressure just prior to the intervention in Guatemala. And he has since declared that "Communist dictatorship" would not be tolerated in Latin America. The Eisenhower letter is itself a step toward laying the base for intervention, as is the obviously sharpened State Department tone since then.

The Cuban government has refused to be stampeded by the growing anti-Communist barrage, and Castro has denounced anti-Commun-

nism as a smokescreen for counter-revolution. He has also made it clear that Cuba would not allow either the Caracas declaration or the Rio Treaty of 1947, which states that an attack on any one American republic is to be regarded as an attack on all, to be used as a basis for invading Cuba's sovereignty.

It is clear that if the schemes of Wall Street are to be defeated, the American people must take a firm stand against intervention, and in defense of the sovereign rights of the Cuban nation. Solidarity of American and Cuban workers against a common exploiter, American monopoly capital, is in the interests of both.

What Cuba needs is aid in the form of long-term, low-interest loans and credits. The big American corporations with investments there hope that lack of capital will stifle the revolution and preserve their lucrative investments. But the best interests of the working people of our country demand not only that our government cease its efforts to destroy the revolution but also that it provide such economic aid.

American people must be told the truth about Cuba. Once they know the truth, there is little doubt that they will rally to her support.

April 18, 1960.

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The Negro People and the 1960 Elections

By Claude Lightfoot

THE 1960 ELECTIONS are being waged in circumstances of great changes among the Negro people. As a consequence, the Democratic and Republican Parties are confronted with a Negro electorate quite different from that of any previous period in our history. The Negro people's movement, no longer satisfied by small concessions, is placing demands for drastic changes in the second-class citizenship status of Negroes. The concept of *freedom now* gains momentum with each passing day. Unlike the situation which prevailed at the time when the NAACP raised the slogan "Free by 63" and relied upon court actions to achieve it, today's movement is developing a strategy and tactics which project it forward as the most dynamic and compelling force on the American scene today.

All strata of the American people are greatly effected by actions undertaken by this movement. All who ignore it can do so only at the expense of sacrificing something which is very dear. All who embrace it find an ennobling quality which makes life more meaningful. In addition, a key is provided which will enable other forces to unlock doors that lead to the solution of related social problems. Indeed, the prob-

lems of the American Negro are so intertwined with those of labor and other oppressed groups that there can be no substantial social advance without providing a solution to these problems.

NEW CONCEPTS AND LEADERSHIP

Out of the crucible of many struggles there is emerging a pattern of generalized concepts which, in time, no doubt will become guiding principles of a united Negro people's movement. First and foremost is the concept of mass struggles as opposed to exclusive preoccupation with the legal phase. The Negro people have learned through bitter experience that reliance upon court victories does not suffice to do the job of winning freedom. Hence, more emphasis is being placed on forms of struggle based on grass roots activity.

Forces in the NAACP which heretofore relied solely on the legal struggle, and deprecated mass actions under today's circumstances, are being forced to embrace mass activity as a principal weapon. This is most clearly demonstrated in what is happening around the student sit-in strikes in the South. These have already assumed the character of a national peoples' crusade. Supporting

actions of a mass character are developing everywhere and the NAACP is playing a pivotal role.

Another element in the arsenal of weapons being used in freedom's fight is the economic boycott. The Negro market, which is estimated at between 15 and 20 billion dollars a year, is being utilized to batter down the walls of jimcrow. Experiences of the boycott weapon, which was used successfully in Montgomery and is now being used to support the actions of the students in the South, must be generalized. Ways and means must be developed through which this 20-billion dollar a year market can be thrown fully into struggle against the big monopolies and the people who force segregation upon American life.

The Negro liberation movement is also giving birth to a new type of leadership. Gone are the days when the Uncle Tom type of leader who counseled patience, resignation and abject grovelling at the feet of the mighty could derail the people's struggle. Today, militant, dedicated, self-sacrificing leaders are emerging as the dominant force in the Negro movement.

In charting its direction, this movement is becoming increasingly conscious of its own inner strength. It is well aware of the impact of its actions on forces that are regarded as potential allies. In previous periods, the Negro was conscious

of being part of a minority group and often tailored his actions in accord with that which was acceptable to forces whose aid he sought. Today, while not rejecting support from such forces, and still very deeply aware of its necessity, he nonetheless sets a pace and tempo of struggle which is not always in accord with how far his allies are prepared to go. In some situations this momentarily creates friction, but in the long run the struggle for Negro-white unity will be elevated to a higher level and not diminished as a consequence of this approach.

In the political arena, we also find a pattern of conduct which shows that the modern Negro liberation movement not only has a *desire* for freedom but, more importantly, that it is learning how to *fight* for freedom. The Negro electorate in 1960 is objectively and subjectively prepared for a new realignment of political forces in the country. There is widespread dissatisfaction with both the Democratic and Republican Parties. It is the unreadiness of labor, the farmers and other democratic forces which holds back the flow of progress.

Obviously the Negro movement by itself is incapable of bringing into existence a new people's party, although its actions will contribute greatly toward building it. In the condition of the 1960 elections, broad and significant forces are at work

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generating a new approach to the electoral struggle. What are some of the elements of this approach? First, there is a growing recognition of the inherent power of the Negro vote. This is to be seen mainly in the northern industrial areas, but it also exists in the East, West and some parts of the South.

POWER OF THE NEGRO VOTE

Last year at the NAACP Convention, a group of Chicagoans released a document which pointed out the latent power of the Negro vote in national as well as in local elections. The document read: "The potential power of the Negro vote is popularly underestimated. A study by the *Congressional Quarterly* revealed that in 61 Congressional districts, outside of the South, the percentage of Negroes was larger than the percentage by which the winning candidates carried the districts." Today the total number of such districts stands at 107.

Presidential elections, of course, are decided by electoral votes. A total of 531 are divided among the states according to their population and the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes cast in a state is awarded all of its electoral votes. Thus, the candidate who receives the greatest number of popular votes in the state of New York wins all of that state's 45 electoral votes. Pennsylvania and California,

with the next largest populations, have 32 each. Illinois has 27, Ohio 25, Michigan 20, New Jersey 16, Missouri and Indiana 13 each, Kentucky 10, Maryland 9, Oklahoma and West Virginia 8 each and Delaware 3.

These states, which alone possess 261 electoral votes, only 5 short of a national majority, are traditionally carried by majorities of less than 4%, while the percentage of Negroes among the total population in each exceeds that number. The 1950 Census showed in New York 6.5%; Pennsylvania 6.7%; California 4.6%; Illinois 8.1%; Ohio 6.8%; Missouri 8.3%; Indiana 4.8%; Kentucky 8.2%; Maryland 15.6%; Oklahoma 6.6%; West Virginia 6.4%; Delaware 13.3%. Today, most of these are undoubtedly higher.

These figures reveal that the Negro vote is potentially much more decisive in determining the outcome of the Presidential and Congressional races than is the South. The Communist Party should help popularize these facts, especially in preparation for the coming national conventions of both major parties.

At the Democratic national convention, many northern liberals and so-called moderates will attempt to appease the Dixiecrat southerners, arguing that party unity, inclusive of the South, is a prerequisite to winning the national elections. The figures quoted above are a sufficient and eloquent answer to this line of

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reasoning. These people give to the southern Dixiecrats a strength that they do not have. Only once in this century, in the 1916 elections of Woodrow Wilson, were the electoral votes of southern states decisive in a Presidential election.

INDEPENDENT FORMS

The Negro electorate, confronted with the fact that there exists at present no force with sufficient strength to challenge the rule of the two major parties, is orienting its electoral policies within the framework of the two-party system. However, as we approach the 1960 contest the Negro voters are adding some new qualities to their approach. They are evolving new tactics to meet old situations. In fact, they are beginning to utilize some of the same tactics which have been employed by reactionary elements in both parties to prevent the passage of any significant legislation on behalf of the Negro people.

Countless times, reactionaries within both parties have broken party discipline and joined bipartisan coalitions to "keep the Negro in his place." Negroes are now joining in independent forms of activities within the two major parties as well as effecting non-partisan and bipartisan forms of struggle to achieve their goals. As a result, many Negro political leaders are beginning to break down party discipline where the welfare of the

Negro masses is concerned.

The growth of independent activity within the two parties has been developing for some time. But the whole process was greatly accelerated by the Powell victory against the Tammany Hall machine in New York last year. Negroes all over the country have been emboldened by these actions, and are beginning to take on powerful machines in their own localities. Certainly the current campaign being waged in the 23rd Congressional District in the Bronx around the candidacy of Mrs. Anna Hedgeman, a Negro woman leader, is an outgrowth of the Powell victory. And in my judgment there is no campaign in the state of New York which assumes greater importance than one to guarantee that the first Negro woman enter the Congress of the nation.

Also indicative of this growing trend is a message which was sent to Congressman Powell by home rule forces in the Lawndale area of Chicago, who wrote as follows: "We have noted with pardonable pride the militant stand you have always taken for the rights of minorities and particularly the Negro minority. Your inspiring victory over Tammany's exploitation of the Negro people in Harlem was outstanding. Currently we are being subjected to the same conditions in the Lawndale community in Chicago and we are waging a

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concerted campaign for home rule against absentee white leadership. It would certainly lift the morale of the Negro community in Chicago if you could speak for us and help us solidify this vast Negro potential for political leadership." Congressman Powell accepted this invitation and his appearance helped to broaden the fight against machine domination.

In a growing number of communities, Negroes are finding means of self-expression and are waging a fight for Negro rights and representation in their own parties. For example, there exists in California the Democratic Minority Committees which reflect the aspirations of Negroes and Mexican-Americans. Similar movements exist in Pittsburgh's 9th Ward, where the Negro movement is fighting against outside controls. In St. Louis a committee of 10,000 has been formed to defeat any candidate who fails to fight against the jim-crow policies of that city. All over the South, with Texas outstanding, there are organizations of Negroes which stand out as independent formations. Thus, the growth of independent activity takes varied forms in different localities, but the substance and content are exactly the same.

Another feature of the new approach that is emerging in the 1960 elections is the growth of non-partisan and bipartisan activities. Here-

before Negroes have been extremely partisan in their political activities. During the twenties, when most Negroes were Republicans, for a Negro to declare himself as a Democrat was synonymous with being a traitor to his race. During the thirties and forties, when the Democrats won the allegiance of the Negro voter, a Negro Republican was regarded as very reactionary or backward. In such situations, unity between Negro Democrats and Republicans on any kind of political issue was an impossibility. Today this is no longer the case.

In the last year or two there have been several developments in which Negro Democrats and Republicans have found common cause in one way or another in the political arena. Negroes are learning to place their primary loyalty to the advancement of the struggle for Negro rights, as opposed to loyalty to the white overlords who pull the strings in the two major parties. They are beginning to put flesh and blood on a slogan uttered by the late Congressman Oscar DePriest who once said: "My mother brought me into this world a Negro, long before man made me a Republican."

THE MEMPHIS EXAMPLE

There have been numerous examples recently which prove that there are many areas where cooperation among Negroes, regardless of political affiliation, can be se-

cured. One of the most outstanding of these was Memphis, Tennessee. In a city election there last year, the Negro community united its forces and put an all-Negro slate in the field. The candidates, as well as the supporting forces, were composed of Democrats, Republicans and independents. In this situation, all of them temporarily forgot their partisan divisions and united to project the issue of Negro representation into the race, which otherwise would have been a lily-white affair.

As a consequence of their efforts, the white ruling class of Memphis was shaken up and came to the realization that a new power had emerged in that city. They became extremely frantic when it appeared that one of the Negro candidates, Sugarmon, was a possible winner. He was running for an office where four white candidates were in the field. The white rulers realized that with the white candidates dividing the white vote, and with Sugarmon carrying the solid Negro vote, he would break through and be elected.

Hence, the white ruling class went to work and through its press succeeded in getting the withdrawal of some of the white candidates. Incidentally, the local Scripps-Howard paper was one of the most vicious in the attack that was made during the campaign. Nonetheless, Sugarmon came close to being

elected, polling the highest vote in the South since the days of Reconstruction. The forces which put this slate in the field have organized themselves on a permanent basis into what is now known as the Shelby County and Tennessee Voters' Association.

The Memphis experience should be studied. Inherent in it may be a pattern which may eventually emerge throughout the whole South. For throughout the South there are Negro formations operating within the Democratic Party, almost like a party within a party. These units may in time—and especially if large numbers of Negroes are enfranchised—be formed into a Negro party which would maintain coalition relationships with other parties and forces. Such a development may well become a forerunner for a new people's party.

NEGRO VOTERS' LEAGUE

Another example of non-partisan and bipartisan electoral activity was the Chicago experience. Chicago, like most large metropolitan industrial centers, has an exceptionally large percentage of Negro voters. There are almost a million Negroes in Chicago—the largest ethnic group in the city. This group votes overwhelmingly for the Democratic ticket. The Democratic Party could not hold power without this vote. Yet, Negroes are repeatedly rewarded by lily-white slates for city-

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Last year an organization was formed, called the Chicago League of Negro Voters. Its leadership, as in Memphis, is composed of Democrats, Republicans and independents. The president of the organization, Attorney Lemuel E. Bentley, is a Democrat. Its vice-president, Dr. T. E. Howard, formerly of Mississippi, a leader in the fight against the lynchers of Emmett Till and a Republican candidate for Congress in the last election, indicates the bipartisan character of the organization. The League of Negro Voters, after surveying the absence of Negro representation in city-wide offices, came to the conclusion that this situation should be challenged. This organization, barely three months old and with no money or grass roots organization, nonetheless put its chairman up as a candidate for City Clerk.

Even the most astute of Chicago's politicians and leaders were astonished at the result. Bentley received over 58,000 votes, running second, ahead of the Republican candidate in many wards throughout the city. Overnight the League became a respectable organization. Negro leaders, labor leaders and white liberals, who refused to support the League's efforts in its initial stages, have since been participating in various activities conducted by it. Despite these initial limitations, the League has become

a potent political force in Chicago politics. The Democratic Party juggernaut in Chicago has been weakened and made more sensitive to the Negro people's demands.

Likewise, the League, by its efforts, has emboldened the Negroes to wage a more determined struggle in the councils of the two major parties. For example, a Negro alderman was elected for the first time to the powerful Rules Committee in the City Council. A Negro member of the City Council admitted publicly that the decisive argument in the Council during the debate was the existence and activity of the Chicago League of Negro Voters. Another example was that of the Negro Republican ward committeemen, who heretofore had never raised their voices on anything within the councils of the Republican Party. This time, five Negro ward committeemen organized as a bloc and fought for a Negro candidate for City Treasurer. They lost by only one vote.

MIDWEST CONFERENCE

The experience of Memphis and Chicago were pooled and a Midwest conference was held in Chicago a few weeks ago. A hundred and forty-two delegates, representing eight states and twenty-eight organizations, responded and once again the concept of independent non-partisan and bipartisan activity took on a new meaning. Delegates

from various areas pointed out experiences, which were similar, although varying in form from place to place.

For example, in St. Louis the form is a Committee of Ten Thousand, which is dedicated without partisan regard to the defeat of candidates who will not work to eliminate discrimination. In Cleveland, the form is cooperation among Negro elected officials, both Democrat and Republican. This is manifested in the City Council where there are eight Negro councilmen, of whom five are Democrats and three are Republicans. It was reported that these councilmen meet on a bipartisan level to advance the general welfare of the Negro community. There are other areas throughout the country where this is happening.

Significantly, a panel at the Midwest conferences, among other things, highlighted this form of cooperation. The panel consisted of such prominent Democrats and Republicans as Attorney Laurence E. Kenneth, Republican and assistant states attorney of Illinois; Attorney Robert M. Holloway, assistant states attorney and Republican candidate for municipal judge, Attorney Sidney Jones, Jr., former alderman of the 6th Ward of Chicago and Democratic candidate for municipal judge; Attorney Harold Washington, former president of the Third Ward Young Democrats;

Charles E. Gaines, former vice-president of the Young Republicans of America. It adopted a resolution which stated: "Be it resolved that we call upon Negro political leaders of both major parties to come together regularly, irrespective of Party affiliation, to study proposals for joint action on local problems and to win equal representation in their respective areas."

A number of other areas reported that Negro Voters' Leagues exist or are in the process of being formed, among them towns such as Milwaukee, Maywood and Rock Island, Illinois, Youngstown, Ohio, and Erie, Pennsylvania. And the conference called for the building of Voters' Leagues everywhere, notwithstanding the existence of other forms of independent political organization. It was felt that the existence of independent formations such as the Powell movement in New York, the movement in the 23rd District in the Bronx, or the California Democratic Minority Committees does not obviate the need for League-type organizations. This need is dictated by the fact that even though other organizations are more independent than hitherto, they are not entirely free under all circumstances, and in some situations they may have to curtail their actions or face certain consequences within their parent organizations.

A good example of this is what

happened in New York in the last judicial elections. The Republican and Liberal Parties backed a Negro candidate, Judge Samuel R. Pierce, Jr., who was serving out an unexpired term, for re-election. The Democrats ran a white candidate. Pierce was defeated, and when the votes were counted it was evident that the main reason for his defeat was the lack of votes in Harlem. In fact, he carried some all-white Assembly Districts with a larger vote than Harlem gave him. It is ironic, but true. Harlem, which gave Negro America such a lift when Powell defeated Tammany, in this instance contributed to the defeat of a Negro candidate on a higher level.

Why the contradiction? It arose because there was no independent non-partisan force in Harlem which could have rallied the Negro voters irrespective of what the Powell forces might do. Perhaps there were good reasons why the Powell movement did not go all-out for Judge Pierce. We do not know. But in any case, the Negro community should not become a prisoner of the limitations placed on it by the Powell movement's party affiliation.

Hence, in addition to encouraging the building of independent formations of Negro voters within the two parties, it is also vitally necessary to have independent forces that stand as a buffer and can do

things when it is impossible to achieve them through the present partisan forms. With this in mind, we are proposing that our Party give serious consideration to this problem in every Negro community throughout America.

Now, what are some of the chief characteristics of a League of Negro Voters? A panel at the Midwest conference dealing with this problem went on record recommending the setting up of formal organizations in all areas where there is a significant number of Negro voters. It recommended that such organizations should concentrate on the following activities:

- 1) A continuous door-to-door registration program. That is very important. Registering the Negro vote in the north is essential to winning the right to vote in the south. For the full potential of the Negro vote is largely determined by how that vote is used, and surveys indicate that in many, many instances the percentage of Negroes who actually vote is much below the percentage eligible to vote. Therefore any organization which has on its program the question of registration, irrespective of how a voter votes, is increasing the power of the Negro vote is much below the percentage will take the proper focus. The panel placed special emphasis on the potential voters recently arriving in the community, particularly those com-

ing out of the South. These are coming by the thousands every day, people who have never had any voting experience.

2) Pointing up the issues of special importance to Negroes and keeping them before the public both during elections and in non-election periods.

3) Exerting pressure on political parties to back candidates favorable to Negro rights, as well as Negro candidates for office commensurate with the numerical strength of the Negro voters.

4) All-out efforts to secure the election of endorsed candidates, with equal determination aimed at the defeat of opposed candidates.

5) A continuous educational program in conjunction with all organizations in the Negro community, aimed at informing Negroes of their political responsibilities and rights, and of the efforts necessary to secure these rights.

6) Close cooperation with other organizations whose aims include the securing of equal political representation for Negroes. This is the bridge through which these organizations cross over into joint activity with other organized political action groups such as PAC-COPE or any of the other independent formations and guarantee Negro-white unity irrespective of the fact that the League is an organization of Negro voters.

These were the main program-

matic points presented for a League type of organization. It was implied, too, that one of the main areas of work should be of a grass roots legislative character which would insure popular response to various measures before governmental bodies.

One of the things a League organization should avoid is attempting to perform the role of a political party. The Memphis and Chicago experiences were unique. In certain circumstances machines must be challenged, even, if necessary, by weak and inadequate forces. However, this would be exceptional and not the general rule.

The Memphis Organization of Negro Voters is now also entertaining the outlook of building a national organization. With countless voters' leagues throughout the South, and with new ones cropping up throughout the North, the objective appears to be realistic. And all progressive and forward-looking forces should assist in the realization of the goal.

INFLUENCE THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

The emergence of a powerful liberation movement already locked in decisive struggles around the lunch counters and the jails of the South; efforts to unify the Negro voters throughout the country; the building of a powerful organization of Ne-

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egro workers by A. Philip Randolph; the coming June convention of the NAACP which will undoubtedly reflect these currents—all these will confront the policy makers of both the Democratic and Republican Parties with problems they have never had to face before.

The basis for uniting every one of these currents in Negro life in positive political action is the proposal of A. Philip Randolph to organize marches upon both the conventions. If these marches are organized successfully, they will have a powerful effect on the battle for democracy in America. It will help to lift the Negro question before the people of the world and enlist great moral pressures to bear upon America's racial policies.

In connection with the march on the conventions, the struggle must be lifted to a new and higher level. It is no longer sufficient to press for a good platform and for pious declarations and vague generalities which belong to yesterday. Our Negro brothers who are on the front line battling for democracy in the South face unprecedented forms of terror, and general declarations will serve no useful purpose. The key question that must be placed for all the nation and the world to hear is a declaration from these conventions that they will nominate candidates who will protect the constitutional rights of Negro citizens in the South and North, and that there

will be no limits to what is done to achieve this result.

In 1954 the Supreme Court issued its famous decision on desegregation in the school. Six years later, only token integration has been achieved. What little has been done has been accomplished in the face of tremendous terror and intimidation.

If the executive and legislative branches of the government had been in harmony with the Supreme Court's decision, things by now would have been different. Congress is presently debating bills which deal mainly with voting rights. But even if a good bill is passed in this session of Congress (which at this moment seems highly unlikely) the problem will not be solved. The *New York Times* recently conducted a survey in some of the Black Belt counties of the South, which showed that there were few Negroes who would attempt to vote even if Congress should pass the bill. This is quite understandable in view of the fact that loss of job or life hangs in the balance.

If the federal government is not prepared to protect the rights of Negroes, we will witness a wave of terror the likes of which this country has never seen. It is therefore imperative that the executive branch of government, through the Presidential contenders as well as through Party organs, make known its intention at the coming conventions.

The midwest conference of the

Democratic Party, held in Detroit on March 25-27, adopted a platform on civil rights which states: "Many civil rights problems require combined federal, state and local action for their effective solution. Any proper concept of state's rights includes the imperative of states' responsibilities." This is excellent so far as it goes, though it has certain limitations. In particular, it does not place the question of coming to grips with the Dixierat bloc in Congress or within the councils of the Democratic Party.

Nevertheless, it is the kind of document behind which all progressive Americans should rally. Of course, it should be borne in mind that even good documents, like the Supreme Court's desegregation decision, mean little if the will to do is absent. Therefore the choice of candidates is of equal importance.

At the present moment, the picture is not too bright. All of the declared candidates, Democrat and Republican, with the single exception of Senator Humphrey, are equivocating, and in some instances are breaking bread with the Bourbon South. However, even this can be changed if a powerful people's movement exerts timely pressure.

In keeping with the electoral policies of our Party as developed at the 17th National Convention and further elaborated in the report of Comrade Gus Hall, this National Committee is urged to plunge full

force into the elections and help implement the various currents and trends that are emerging in the 1960 elections. We must find out in our various localities who are the forces that are moving toward independent non-partisan or bipartisan actions and we must help lay the basis for the marches upon the two conventions. I am certain that both Negro and white Americans are ready to rally providing there is organizational leadership.

In conclusion, I want to quote from a poem that I think dramatizes the spirit that permeates Negro life in 1960. In *John Brown's Body*, Stephen Vincent Benet wrote:

Sometimes there comes a crack in
Time itself.

Sometimes the earth is torn by
something blind.

Sometimes an image that has stood
so long

It seems implanted as the polar
star

Is moved against an unfathomed
force

That suddenly will not have it any
more.

Call it the *mores*, call it God or Fate,
Call it Mansoul or economic law

That force exists and moves.

And when it moves

It will employ a hard and actual
stone

To batter into bits an actual wall
And change the actual scheme of
things.

Mass Movement in Illinois

by James West

A RISE IN ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES for peace and in support of civil rights marks the current phase of the 1960 elections in Illinois. Among the peace activities are the Left-initiated Bridges labor peace meeting and the American Friends Service Committee labor peace meeting at which Emil Mazey delivered an historic call for disarmament and peaceful co-existence.* They range from the Emma Lazarus Clubs' successful picket line at the West German Consulate and a coming Warsaw Ghetto Memorial and Peace Meeting to the Sane Nuclear Policy Committee's petition campaign, a series of meetings addressed by Linus Pauling and a number of other peace actions, meetings and conferences sponsored by the Friends and other peace organizations. A number of new features emerge from this resurgence of vitality among the peace forces:

1. A breakthrough, still in its initial phase, has been made in the labor movement. This is seen not only in the Mazey and Bridges meetings and the growing activities of the Friends' labor committee, but also in the initiative of a group of Chicago middle-level unionists for a midwest delegation to the USSR.

2. There are beginnings of new

growth of the various peace organizations, which find a new receptivity among the people.

3. The efforts of the peace organizations are being united, as in the joint activity of the Friends, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Sane Nuclear Policy Committee around the showing of the film "On the Beach," and in the mutual support of these and other peace groups for their respective activities—for example, an Easter Peace Rally on April 16th and six other peace activities taking place in March and April.

4. There is revived initiative and activity by the Left, expressed in many ways and often not unrelated to the broader peace activities, but still having to realize the full potential of even the present capacity of the Left.

5. Of special significance is the beginning of the introduction of the fight for peace into the election campaign by political action and peace organizations. There is the very important, clear-cut position for peace adopted by the Democratic Federation of Illinois (DFI) at its Janu-

* The full text of Mr. Mazey's speech was published in *The Worker*, April 17, 1960—ed.

ary convention, and the no less important decision of the Board of Directors of the Independent Voters of Illinois, affiliate of the ADA, calling for a nuclear test ban. The Chicago Sane Nuclear Committee has decided to set up platform and political action committees for the elections, to publish a 1960 political action handbook for peace, and to sponsor grass roots expressions and delegations for peace to the two party conventions, as well as visits to candidates to urge support for its program. That these decisions are seriously made is seen in the fact that four SNPC leaders and members are running for delegate to the Democratic convention. Two of these are also members of DFI, while two additional DFI members are also running for election as Democratic delegates.

The significance of this becomes apparent when one scans the program of DFI. It calls upon the Democratic Party to "commit itself to carry on imaginative, affirmative negotiations to end the cold war and to promote disarmament." It calls for "multilateral, controlled reduction of national forces," and for "the United States to make clear to the world that it favors a moratorium on nuclear tests." And it demands "full and accurate disclosure of the effects of fallout and other nuclear weapons phenomena."

Further, it says, "to help lay the groundwork for disarmament and

other effective international programs, the U.S. should develop a more positive policy toward the question of admitting China to the U.N., and should re-evaluate the pledge of armed intervention in defense of Formosa." With respect to Latin America, it calls upon the government to abandon the policy of support to dictatorial regimes, advocating instead encouragement of "democratic institutions on the basis of self-determination" and a policy of their fostering economic development on the basis of "their own self-interest." It further urges the government to "take all possible steps to encourage elimination of Nazi and neo-Nazi movements and their symptoms in various parts of the world."

On other issues, the DFI calls on Congress to implement the recommendations of the Federal Civil Rights Commission, to enact legislation detailing the inherent right of all persons to travel freely anywhere, to repeal the Walter-McCaran and Landrum-Griffin laws. It calls for a little Wagner Act in Illinois, a state FEP and open occupancy laws, and many other measures in the fields of health, welfare and education, all of which add up to elements of a people's, anti-monopoly program.

In brief, it appears that the peace forces at this stage are concentrating on preparations for what can become massive pressure on the plat-

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form committees of the two major party conventions. At this moment, however, the aspect of pressure on the candidates lags. Only two Congressional candidates have taken a clear-cut stand for peace. In the primary fight for the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate, there is competition on the peace issue among the candidates, while Democratic Senator Douglas, assured of nomination, continues to advance the outmoded cold war "positions of strength" policy. Following the April primaries, Douglas and the Democratic candidates for Congress should logically become focal points of the mounting pressures of the peace movements in the election.

ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The civil rights issue, in its many forms, is the other major question arousing thousands of people to activity in Chicago. This includes the many young people's actions in support of the Southern sit-ins, in which the NAACP youth and other forces are playing an important part, and which have once again called into action the local youth-march forces.

There is an extremely important West Side local struggle in the 24th Ward, which has a Negro majority, for home rule against an absentee white ward committeeman and his political machine. Despite temporary set-backs, this movement gained

great breadth at its high point and will surely win its objectives in the near future. In the course of this struggle, a new level of political consciousness is being achieved, which could lead to transforming this area of the West Side into a stronghold of people's independent political action. In the 2nd Congressional District, a Negro candidate has entered the Democratic Primary for the first time against Congressman Barratt O'Hara.

Especially significant is the rise and development of the Negro Voters' League movements in Chicago, a number of other Illinois cities and towns, and other parts of the Midwest. The Midwest Conference of Negro Voters, with over 140 delegates from eight states, mainly Illinois, was a landmark in advancing the concept of United Negro political action above partisan interests to promote the just demands of the Negro people. While this movement is still in its infancy, its validity and potential are such that it attracted the serious attention and participation of important officeholders, Negro and white.

An acute problem in Chicago, which urgently demands special attention, is the South Side situation where an alert machine built over the years by Congressman Dawson has proven able to intervene into and frustrate almost every attempt at mass political activity by labor and the people. In the NAACP,

in the attempts to build the American Negro Labor Council, and in many other ways the Dawson forces are in evidence, working to make sure that no mass political movement arises which might challenge the hold of the entrenched machine. In light of this and other factors, there is no assurance at this moment that A. Philip Randolph's call for a march on the two party conventions will be answered by a mass response without a tremendous amount of effort on a number of fronts.

THE CHICAGO SCANDALS

No discussion of the issues in the Illinois elections would be complete without a few words on the scandals which have rumbled through Chicago. In rapid succession we have had the bail bond scandal, the traffic ticket fix scandal, the payroll scandal, and now the police burglary scandal. All of these took place under the rule of one of the strongest Democratic city machines in the country. But the Democrats have no monopoly on corruption. In Illinois, as elsewhere, corruption is bi-partisan. The memory of the Hodge fraud and embezzlement scandals under Republican Governor Stratton is fresh enough, along with other factors, to make it very doubtful that the G.O.P. is fated to come into a wind-fall of votes from the local scandals.

Generally, these scandals will not materially affect the vote on national offices, and there are no may-orality or councilmanic elections this year in which voter sentiment could be registered. Only the gubernatorial primaries in both parties offer opportunity for some voter expression. In all likelihood, the anti-machine vote will be higher than in most previous years, but the opportunity for an anti-machine candidate to win the Democratic nomination is effectively nullified by the three-way race in which two liberals, Stephen Mitchell and Joseph Lohman, oppose the personable and relatively untainted machine candidate, Judge Otto Kerner.

But the problem of fighting corruption in political life is something more than the question of whether or not it can be registered in these given elections. We can be sure that even if these scandals should blow over, more will explode in the future.

The big problem in a city like Chicago is how to develop an approach to an electorate which overwhelmingly votes Democratic, among which there are moods that "you can't fight City Hall," which does not see a GOP alternative, and where the labor leadership in the main is tied to the machine, while business and reform elements are weak and often looked upon with skepticism.

Where is the electorate to go, in

such circumstances, if they are not to become apathetic, cynical and even prey for reactionary demagoguery? This is where the building of the independent, labor, liberal and Negro people's political action movements becomes decisive.

There have been reform movements in the past, but none of them have been able to come to grips effectively with the problem. To the contrary, the cancer has grown to such proportions that a dangerous apathy and numb acceptance of it is widespread.

I think there is a not very complicated explanation for this. It is not simply that people are callous and indifferent. Rather, I think there is a widespread awareness that this corruption permeates just about everything in American life, so "why get excited about a few hundred forged signatures in one ward," or about "the underpaid cop who is only trying to better his position, even if mistakenly?"

What does this mean—that nothing can be done in that ward? I think not, provided we have the forces and the know-how, something can be done. But we must also see this problem of corruption, payola and all the rest within the perspective of the anti-monopoly struggle—that it is not the small-time ward heeler or the underpaid cop who are responsible alone or primarily, but that it is the monopolies which are the sources of this corruption

and decay, which set the standards of moral conduct by which little would-be big money-grubbers act.

It is in this sense that the old type reform movements are inadequate, in that while they attract certain better government and liberal forces, they seldom attract the mass of working class and Negro voters. In this respect, we have to develop sensitivity to certain big national issues which can help to bring *monopoly* corruption and its really big crimes against humanity into sharp focus in ways which are close and meaningful to people's daily lives.

For example, we recently have become aware of a new, active movement in Illinois called the Prairie State Health Federation, affiliated with the National Health Federation which recently has announced 9,000 dues-paying members. This movement is waging an energetic campaign, in the legislature and mass educational arenas, against what it calls the Food Monopoly and Drug Trust. It especially singles out for attack the "Rockefeller Financial Empire." Its chief concern is health, especially such problems as malnutrition and the use of poisonous additives, sprays and preservatives. It is reminiscent of the popular anti-monopoly movements of another day—the public power struggles, the public traction movements and so on. We should seriously encourage all such movements which tend in the anti-mo-

nopoly direction, for they too are some of the streams which must pour into the great anti-monopoly Niagara.

LABOR ACTIVITY

Recently some 400 local unions were represented at the first Cook County conference of PAC and LLPE, where a unified COPE was set up. There was a good attendance of Negro unionists. There were congressional district panels on the congressional contests. COPE chairmen for almost every congressional district were introduced. Of particular significance was the announcement that COPE in Cook County would work with the Teamsters on political action. The Teamsters themselves are setting up their political action machinery.

Though no issues were discussed at the COPE conference, on the ground that it was purely an organizational gathering, it was a most important step forward. At the same time, one wonders what the COPE leadership here would have said on issues that would have been any different from the speeches at the recent Midwest COPE conference in St. Louis. There, not a word was said on the civil rights struggles in the South and elsewhere, while the cold war drums were beaten as though there were no changes in the world.

None of this detracts from the

basic importance of COPE. If anything, it underscores the need for patient, persistent work within it. But it also points up how illusory it would be to regard COPE as the main or sole vehicle for influencing the course of the 1960 elections and it underlines the need for developing an approach to COPE which encompasses the building of other forms of political action that are more responsive to the big issues of the day—which encourage rather than discourage mass participation on local, state and national levels.

It is necessary to face the practical fact, for example, that the Cook County COPE conference, and apparently COPE policy nationally, forecloses primary activity, forbids the local COPE organizations to endorse state or national candidates, binding them to the decisions of the state and national COPE organizations. Nor can it be forgotten that most of the labor leaders in Cook County and Illinois are tied to either the Daley or the Stratton machine, and look upon the mass building of COPE as a threat to the machines they support.

It is therefore necessary to supplement efforts to build and develop COPE with work among the great mass of unionists and others who are Democratic voters, as well as, in some areas, among the Republican voters. In a city like Chicago, the decisive arena is among the Democratic electorate. The growth of

the DFI and of the IVI is therefore extremely important. Such a development within the Democratic Party is essential toward an effective challenge to the machine for leadership of the mass of Democratic voters, and toward breaking the alliance of many, if not most, of the labor leaders with the machine.

In fact, if a similar development were to take place among Republican voters in some areas, that, too, would be a very healthy thing. Far from detracting from the building of COPE, it would serve as a stimulus to developing labor's independent political action and organizations and would help to free them from some of the fetters now holding them back.

I think our political action outlook must stop being a one-dimension affair, in which we see only one organization or movement and subjectively decide to "concentrate" in a narrow, limited way. The old experiences with the Washington Commonwealth Federation, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Democratic movement, and others, as well as the newer experiences with the California Democratic Club movement, the New York movement around Lehman-Roosevelt-Finletter and the Illinois DFI are sufficient, it seems to me, to establish the national justification of these developments and

the validity of a general policy calling for the stimulation of like developments wherever possible, looking to their link-up and coordination nationally.

Finally, I think the 1960 elections require far greater participation by the Communist Party, including efforts to bring forward the Party's independent policies and program, than has been true in many years. This is a highly concrete question. Illinois law, for example, requires every candidate for public office to sign a non-Communist affidavit, thereby legally barring any Communist from running for state, local or Congressional office. It further requires such a huge number of signatures to put minor party presidential candidates on the ballot that the Progressive Party couldn't place Wallace on the ballot. It is evident that a special problem here is to develop an effective fight for the ballot rights of minority parties in general and of the Communist Party in particular.

At the same time, despite these legal restrictions, the Communist Party in Illinois will campaign in terms of popularizing the Party's national program and policies, as well as by projecting a specific Illinois and Chicago program for well-being and social advance in a democratic United States at peace with the world.

The California Scene

By Dorothy Healey

SINCE THE START of the year there have been several political developments in California that reflect the diversification of the developing grass roots movement. These are expressed in the Council of Democratic Clubs Issues Conference, in several important labor conferences, and in new political organization among Mexican-Americans. Although they reflect differing levels of consciousness and differing stages of organization, much of their activity is drawn from a common pool of participants. Because of their differing levels of consciousness and organization, there is much pull and tug among them. But what is significant is the new level of participation with a much greater political comprehension of basic issues.

The 1960 Issues Conference of the Council of Democratic Clubs provided a demonstration of the growing strength of grass roots political organization. Approximately 3,000 Californians gathered from all the counties in the state to debate issues which are decisive to the well-being of all Americans. Such a large gathering would have had significance if it had been convened for the more usual activity of selecting and endorsing candidates; it is even more

important that this number gathered to debate and resolve their opinions on political issues.

Equally important were the methods they used to arrive at their conclusions; there was no small resolutions committee where all the political debate took place, with the larger bodies merely saying aye or nay to resolutions rapidly placed before them. They gathered in panels and sub-committees on such topics as U.S. policy and our atomic future, human rights, agriculture, underdeveloped nations and U.S. policy, and water and power. In each panel the most vigorous discussion ensued, culminating in positions that generally reflected politically independent-minded people determined to fight for policies that safeguard the real welfare of the nation.

Because of the vigorous debate and because the participants represented a true popular cross-section, including Negroes and Mexican-Americans, it is important to detail some of their conclusions. Among those of the panel on U.S. policy and our atomic future were the following:

The delegates voted unanimously that we should continue to seek a universal agreement on the cessation of

nuclear weapons tests and that such a test ban could be the first step towards lessening of world tensions and achievement of general disarmament. . . . Sixty per cent of the delegates felt that the U.S. should be more resolute in its will to achieve a worldwide agreement and more flexible in its negotiations for a test ban in Geneva. . . . In the event the Geneva negotiations deadlock, 65% of the delegates felt that the U.S. should unilaterally suspend nuclear tests indefinitely. . . .

There was near unanimity of opinion that serious study and planning should be undertaken immediately to prepare in detail for the conversions from a heavily military to a peacetime economy. It was suggested that the National Peace Agency proposed by the Democratic Advisory Council should also assume overall responsibility for this economic planning, and that the Democratic Party should stimulate progress toward this goal by calling a national conference of consumer, labor, industry, scientific and governmental representatives to outline the steps needed to develop a peacetime economy. . . .

A bare majority felt that rather than insuring our security, the present strategy of deterrence pursued indefinitely will eventually result in war. As the years go by, and more nations become able to produce nuclear weapons, deterrence becomes less effective and the possibility of accidental thermonuclear war grows even greater.

The policy statement on human rights includes the following: federal registrars in the South and the policing of election practices by fed-

eral referees or marshals; heavy penalties for interfering with registration or voting; establishment of a California Human Rights Commission, charged with elimination of discrimination in the fields of housing, public services, education and other areas. It also advocated abolition of the House Un-American Activities Committee; abolition of state and federal loyalty oaths; review of the Sobell case; citizens' committees to "watchdog" the police departments and receive complaints; abolition of capital punishment; endorsement of the Forand bill and adoption of either state or federal health insurance plans available to everyone.

The Issues Conference called for repeal of the Landrum-Griffin Bill, but then endorsed the enactment of "sincere anti-corruption legislation as called for by labor and others." In agriculture, after urging enactment of federal and state legislation to protect agricultural workers, it proposed measures to protect the farmers including the following:

Encourage the formation of cooperatives to enable farmers to share in the profits from marketing and processing of farm products, and the supplying of farmers with goods and services; encourage the adoption of a Wagner Act for agriculture to protect the farmers' right to bargain collectively in selling their produce; encourage anti-trust legislation to prohibit retailers from assuming control of the pro-

duction or processing of an agricultural product in order to drive down the prices.

The sharpest controversy took place in the panel on water and power. Here an alliance of small farmers and labor correctly opposed the Administration's proposed water bill because of its failure to guarantee against "unjust enrichment" by not including the 160-acre limitation policy initiated in the New Deal period. The Conference resolution "reaffirmed the traditional opposition of the Democratic Party to unjust enrichment and land monopoly" and urged continued study to find further effective means to discourage land monopolization. But its failure to insist that the special session of the legislature amend the Burns-Porter water bond issue, to be voted on in November, to include the 160-acre limitation, made these positions strictly paper resolves.

This conference testified to the viability of the CDC as a grass-roots assemblage of California Democrats. Many observers had questioned whether it could continue its forward-looking political positions after a Democratic administration was elected with the resulting pressures not to take too advanced positions on controversial issues.

* * *

It should be noted that the CDC is an extra-legal arm of the California Democrats, and not an official part of the state Democratic Party

machinery. It is, however, composed of clubs which can be chartered *only* by the legal machinery, namely the County Central Committee. It does, therefore, to a large extent represent the thinking of organized Democrats. However, as is generally true, those who participate regularly in the organized life of a political party are a minority of registered voters, and are usually more politically sophisticated and informed about issues and candidates. From this, too, comes the big challenge to the CDC—its need constantly to expand its organization, its influence and its alliances on every level with labor, the farmers, and the Negro, Mexican-American and other minority groups.

It is probable that the fight for Negro and Mexican-American representation would be enhanced by their increased participation in the activities of the regular clubs and the CDC, but it is undeniable that this struggle will be greatly stimulated by the independent political organization of these enormously significant nationalities. The Democratic Minorities Conference, organized by Negro and Mexican-American community leaders, has not realized its potential because it has not made its main emphasis the building and participation of the rank and file, but has been rather the property of top leaders.

The call for a state-wide conference to organize a Mexican-American

Political Association, to take place in April, represents the determination of the million-strong Mexican-American population of California to force increased recognition.

There is no doubt that the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin Act is stimulating labor interest in independent political organization. The most dramatic example of this was the state Carpenters' convention which called on the state AFL-CIO to summon a political action conference of all labor, specifically including the Teamsters, the ILWU and the railroad brotherhoods. If the State COPE fails to act favorably on this proposal, the Carpenters are prepared to take the initiative in organizing such a conference.

Further evidence of this reaction was the speech of John Donovan, President of the Western Conference of Printing Specialties and Paper Converters, before the conference of the Los Angeles County Federation on Landrum-Griffin. Donovan had shocked the Conference with his demand that labor not live with the law but fight it every step. He said that when labor accepted and learned to live with Taft-Hartley, they accepted punitive legislation; further, that when they endorsed the principle of labor reform legislation they accepted the idea of government intervention in labor's internal affairs. While the conference did not officially project Donovan's position, there is no doubt that his

speech reflects the same mood of indignation and fight as did the Carpenters' conference.

The AFL-CIO legislative conference in San Francisco indicated this slowly maturing consciousness both in its vote on peace as the most important issue, and in the call from the Building Trades Council for a united legislative conference of all labor.

The decision to organize three congressional district-wide COPE organizations in Los Angeles County as pilot projects is a further reflection of the need for labor political organization. In the 19th CD, for instance, representatives of the UAW, ILGWU, IBEW, Operating Engineers, Painters, Laborers, and the Clerks have already met together to plan the assembly district organization of all their members. Further, the Legislative and Educational League of the Steelworkers and the Citizenship Councils of the UAW here had increased authority and participation.

When grass roots unity is established amongst all of these movements, combining their strength in a single mighty movement, we will not only witness the development of new political formations but the impact on the contributing organizations will be enormous.

* * *

The serious apathy that was so noticeable in January has been somewhat diminished as a result

of the impact of the CDC Issues Conference, the labor conferences, etc. As a result, the indifference to the question of assembly and congressional candidates has been considerably lessened. In a number of districts, congressional district nominees have filed who reflect either strong liberal or labor backing. The most notable exception to this is in the decisive area of Negro representation; up to this time no Negro candidate has filed in any congressional district.

This is particularly unfortunate in the 15th congressional district where the incumbent, Gordon McDonough, represents the most conservative Republican interests, in a district which is over one-third Negro, as well as Asian and Jewish. There is little doubt that one of the reasons for the reluctance of a Negro candidate to file is that the community leaders want to have some guarantee of support from labor and liberal groups, with accompanying financial support. Previous years have seen important campaigns around Negro representation with far too little organized support coming from predominantly white organizations.

In two assembly districts, Negro candidates have filed against white incumbents, one Democratic, the other Republican. It is our opinion that both should be given concentrated support.

The reaction of Negro commu-

nity leaders to the failure of white allies to do more than pay lip service to the needs of the Negro people is demonstrated by an editorial in the *California Eagle* on the Brown delegation to the National Democratic Convention. It says:

The mountain that labored and brought forth a mouse has a blood brother in the Democratic committee that labored and brought forth four Negro delegates, two from the North, two from the South, to serve on the 162-member delegation. The Negro is much less than a partner in Democratic Party affairs despite his unbroken allegiance since 1934; he is a little boy to be rewarded with a pat on the head or a stick of candy from an all-knowing and all-wise Great White Father. . . . The irony of it is that Negro votes are responsible for Democratic control of the legislature and furnished the margin of victory for Democratic state officials last year. Negro Democrats are still second class members of their party in California.

The warning is obvious; it is not enough to pass good resolutions in support of Negro equality; this must be translated into concrete support for Negro candidates.

Labor representation on the Brown delegation is somewhat better. Twelve union officials are listed as delegates, one of whom is a Negro. The delegation is committed on the first ballot to Brown as favorite son; it is still anybody's guess as to subsequent ballots. Newspaper polls

say that a majority of the delegation indicated Symington would get a big vote. If this is true, it would certainly be contrary to the polls taken of California voters as recently as March 17, which show greater preference for Stevenson and next for Kennedy. The stronger position by the CIO conference on peace and the growing national peace sentiment has impelled some of the Democratic candidates to give greater emphasis to this question. Symington's missile-gap nonsense fell with a thud in California, and other candidates reacted to this flop with increased sensitivity to this decisive issue.

However, the translation of this desire for a world at peace has special complexities in California, and particularly in Southern California. California received 21 per cent of the total war budget contracts in 1958,

with the lion's share in Los Angeles. With six out of every ten manufacturing employees working on arms in metropolitan Los Angeles, it is obvious that the war budget is of great significance in the economy of the state. If the fight for peaceful co-existence is to include the working class of the state, it will be necessary to develop the most concrete approaches to the fight for a peacetime economy.

This is one of the issues which independent peace forces are particularly emphasizing. Thus, on April 23 a conference co-sponsored by the Friends and the Women's International League will take place, centered on disarmament and its relation to our economy. In addition, independent forces are urging forums and discussions on this question in the labor **movement**.

The articles by Claude Lightfoot, James West and Dorothy Healey are based upon reports rendered at the March, 1960 meeting of the National Committee, CP, USA, held in Chicago. The article by Fred Blair also is based upon a report made there, but it has been brought up-to-date in view of the April primaries in Wisconsin—The Editor.

The Wisconsin Primaries

By Fred Blair

POLITICAL OBSERVERS all over the country are weighing the results of the Wisconsin presidential primaries of April 6. These primaries are always examined seriously because they come early. But more than that, they are watched because their results have been significant in the past for national contenders. Wendell Willkie and General MacArthur are two GOP candidates who gave up the national race after being rejected by Wisconsin voters.

Paradoxically, those who win the delegate race in Wisconsin do not necessarily get the nomination in the national conventions. But the Wisconsin results are always taken into consideration, and sometimes affect the final choices made.

Partly, this comes from the nature of Wisconsin's economy and the traditions that have helped shape its politics—traditions influenced by the national composition of the people and the location of the state between the frontier regions and the older, more stratified capitalist regions.

Wisconsin in 1960 is not the Wisconsin of 1900 or even of 25 or 30 years ago. Now Wisconsin is an industrial state with a population of four million, and a metropolitan

center of over a million in and around Milwaukee; with a farm population less than one-half of what it was twenty years ago; with a Negro population of close to 70,000, at least seven times as large as twenty years ago; with the economy of the smallest rural area as well as the largest industrial center openly dominated by absentee monopoly capital owners from New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit and elsewhere.

Yet, despite these changes, and despite the loss of many of the original national characteristics by the assimilation of third- and fourth-generation descendants of the earlier settlers, there are still strong currents of independent political action and thought in Wisconsin, strong democratic and liberal traditions, strong sentiments for peace and against militarism, and strong feelings for independent labor political action and farmer-labor-liberal coalition efforts directed against monopoly, plus strong (though grammatically unclear) allegiance to socialism or fundamental political and economic reform. Such general features should be borne in mind when examining the race between

Humphrey and Kennedy as well as the Nixon vote.

The whole nation knows the general facts about the April primaries in Wisconsin. The purpose here is not to repeat things generally known or emphasized, but rather to present facets better seen on the spot than from afar.

Generally speaking, as a Wisconsin observer quipped after April 6, "All the candidates were gratified by the results; but none of them were satisfied." Thus, Kennedy beat Humphrey, but not decisively as had been predicted, and as he might have wished. Humphrey, though he did not win, got as much as he expected to get, if not what he hoped. Nixon, though he claims to have expected some such result, appears to be facing trouble, along with his party, because of the small Republican vote in a traditionally Republican state—even though he was unopposed.

Wisconsin election law allows voters to cross over from one party to another in the primaries, and to split their votes among candidates of various parties in the final elections. Thus there is great latitude for political maneuvering, and an opportunity for people to express themselves on issues by voting for people they identify with those issues.

Partly because of this, but mainly because of the tempo of developments in the country as a whole

and in the world the April primaries became a focal point of a battle over issues, rather than, as it appeared in the beginning, solely a contest of personalities.

The key to understanding the results of the Wisconsin primaries, therefore, is to be found through considering the pre-primary campaign as a struggle in which class forces began aligning themselves according to their understanding of the basic issues involved. This was one small sector of the great struggle developing all over the nation which will register one way or another in the November elections.

Considering the results from this point of view, we can make this general judgment: Wherever Humphrey spoke out clearly on the issues and made it clear that his position was more progressive than Kennedy's, he won over Kennedy. Thus, Humphrey beat Kennedy in farm areas by aggressively contrasting his record with Kennedy's, and carried the Negro wards of Milwaukee by his stand on civil rights. Humphrey gained ground in the face of Kennedy's well-financed and well-organized machine by his stand on peace and disarmament, which finally forced Kennedy to speak up along the same lines. Humphrey carried areas where liberal, pro-Stevenson forces were strong.

But in one key respect, the issues were not brought out clearly—that is on the rights of labor. Here

Humphrey could not point out that his record was better than Kennedy's, as he could on the farm question, civil rights, and peace. Workers could not clearly see any difference between the two candidates in this respect. Responsibility for this lies not only with the candidates and their campaigns, but particularly with the national leadership of the labor movement, which in the main apologized for Kennedy's labor record, stood aloof publicly from the candidates and issues, and failed to influence its membership or clear up their understanding of issues.

Because of unclarity among workers as to where their class interests lay in the elections, it was possible for them to be rallied on religious lines. Thus four heavily industrialized districts, the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th, with Catholic percentages of from 34% to 47%, gave Kennedy a margin of 106,000 over Humphrey.

This could not have happened if the issues had been made clear to these workers. Long experience has shown that whenever workers or farmers who are religious-minded, be they Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, see even dimly the real class issues behind a candidate, they disregard even powerful figures in their church and vote for the person they think best regardless of religion. It must be remembered that Milwaukee, which now gives Kennedy such a margin over Humphrey, was always a stronghold against McCar-

thy, who was also a Catholic. There were Catholic farmers and Negroes who voted for Humphrey April 6. But, though many Catholic labor leaders backed Humphrey, Kennedy got the vote of the majority of Catholic workers. And this made the difference.

The tendency for the vote of Catholics to solidify behind Kennedy was enhanced in the last week of the campaign by the appearance of an ad, published by certain Humphrey supporters in 350 local newspapers, that was construed as anti-Catholic by most people, though in retrospect even the *Milwaukee Journal* termed it rather innocuous. It may well be that this ad served as the catalyst to jell the Catholic voting bloc, whose appearance in Wisconsin is giving such concern to all politicians, including Kennedy himself.

Much attention has been given to the Republican cross-over vote. A sampling by Republican researchers of five strongly Republican counties—Marquette, Outagamie, Walworth, Waupace, and Waushara—showed that 35.5% of the Republicans in those counties crossed over into the Democratic primary (*Milwaukee Journal*, April 8). These counties generally give the Republicans from 57% to 70% of the vote. The Catholic population ranges from 9% in Waushara to 46% in Outagamie county. In four of these counties Nixon outpolled both Kennedy and Humphrey. In three of

them Humphrey beat Kennedy; in the other two Kennedy beat Humphrey. In the least Catholic county, Waushara, Nixon polled as much as Humphrey and Kennedy both, though Humphrey won. In the most Catholic county, Outagamie, where Catholics are 46% and Republicans usually 57% of the voters, Kennedy polled 13,310 to 4,491 for Humphrey and 10,264 for Nixon. It will be noted that Kennedy polled 47% of the total vote in this county—almost the same as the percentage of Catholics in the county!

The Republican cross-over appears to be mainly of conservative Republicans and Catholics voting for Kennedy in industrial regions; while in farm areas and in Negro communities there was a cross-over of liberal Republicans and some Catholics for Humphrey. The most conservative Republicans, and most of the non-Catholic Republicans, stayed in line for Nixon, heeding the admonition and warnings of the GOP state leadership against the dangers to their party inherent in a big Democratic vote. This cross-over has alarmed Republicans all over the country about prospects for the fall, and is resurrecting the supposedly dead Rockefeller forces, and forcing Nixon out of his position of noble silence.

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At the same time that they expressed their preference for presidential candidates, the voters of Mil-

waukee were choosing a mayor, alderman, county supervisors, and city officials in a general election in which candidates ran as non-partisans. In general, candidates did not commit themselves on the Humphrey-Kennedy contest, though both candidates for mayor and most of the candidates for other offices were Democrats, running as non-partisan.

Nevertheless, the presidential primary contests were reflected in one form or another in aldermanic and supervisory races.

Most interesting in this respect was the vote in the three wards with large Negro populations. Kennedy beat Nixon in all three. In the 2nd ward, the incumbent alderman, Mrs. Vel Phillips, was a prominent Kennedy supporter, the only one among Negro candidates. She won re-election by a safe margin over her white opponent, the only one of three Negro aldermanic candidates to be elected. There are many Catholics in her ward, including quite a few Negro Catholics. She polled 2,724 votes, a thousand more than her opponent. Yet, in that same ward, Humphrey polled 2,492 votes to Kennedy's 1,571 and Nixon's 592!

The Negro vote demonstrated three points of some importance:

1) There was a strong feeling for action on civil rights and Humphrey became "Mr. Civil Rights" to Milwaukee Negroes, who united

strongly behind his candidacy.

2) There was a strong feeling for Negro representation in government, and united action of voters to achieve it. This was expressed in the re-election of Mrs. Phillips, in the strong vote cast for the other four Negro candidates on the ballot, and in a write-in vote of over one thousand for a Negro aldermanic candidate in the 13th ward. Though this write-in candidacy helped reelect the more conservative of two white candidates, it indicated, nevertheless, the desire for Negro representation. For the first time, in this election, the 5th District Union Voters League, an organization of some years standing, made up of Negro trade-union officers and members, supported a slate of candidates different from that of the official labor political committee—a new step towards independent political action by this group.

3) The number of Negroes voting was far less than those eligible to vote, not more than 35%. There is no doubt that if more Milwaukee Negroes had voted, there would have been several times more Negroes elected to office, and Humphrey would have polled several thousand more votes in these wards.

One comment is necessary on the presidential primaries. Though Kennedy beat Humphrey, Kennedy did not get a thing out of Wisconsin *that he did not already have*. Kennedy made no headway among

farmers, liberals, and the Negro people; Humphrey did make headway in these areas, while Nixon lost ground for the Republicans there, and even lost conservative support that went to Kennedy. Kennedy did *not* get a labor vote; though he won the vote of a big segment of workers, it was a vote for him as a fellow-Catholic, and *not* as a person representing the interests of labor as a whole. Thus, the Wisconsin elections demonstrated that Kennedy would not draw from the forces which traditionally have given the Democrats victory over the Republicans in a presidential race—labor, the Negro people, the small farmers and the liberals. Kennedy drew his support from people swayed by appeals to religious prejudice, from conservative business elements, and from those affected by the expenditure of vast sums of money to glorify him and obscure the issues. Humphrey continually gained more ground during the campaign. Kennedy did not.

THE MILWAUKEE ELECTION

The outstanding fact about the Milwaukee municipal elections this year was that there was no Socialist candidate for mayor. In 1898, the Milwaukee Social-Democratic Party entered its first municipal campaign. In ten years it was a political power in the city, and in twelve

years, in 1910, it swept the elections against the Republicans and Democrats, when they combined to enact non-partisan election laws for the city to curb the Socialists. Since 1910, in only one election, in 1944, has there been no Socialist in the final race for Mayor.

With the withdrawal of Zeidler from the contest because of ill health, there was no other Socialist of sufficient stature to run. An era has come to a close in Milwaukee politics.

If Zeidler had stayed in the race, he could undoubtedly have been re-elected through the solid backing of organized labor and liberals, plus middle-class "good government" forces. Or his support could have gone to another person of the same general description. With none on the scene it was divided between the two Democratic candidates, Reuss and Maier. The size of that support was sufficient to carry them both through the primaries and defeat the outstanding reactionary candidate, Bowman, a Republican.

The final election between Reuss and Maier was marked by considerable bitterness, and some division of the labor and liberal forces in the Democratic Party. For their own reasons, the Hearst *Milwaukee Sentinel* backed Maier with daily editorials, and the Bowman forces supported him. Reuss had the support of Zeidler's own Public Enterprise Committee. Maier beat Reuss by over 25,000 votes. This outcome

was a surprise to many people.

Reuss attributed his defeat to a feeling among the people that he could serve them best by remaining in the U.S. Congress as representative from Wisconsin's 5th District. This is likely one of the factors in the vote. Another might be that Reuss, coming from a family of bankers, might be less amenable to pressure from labor circles than Maier, who has been identified, as state senator, with the labor unions.

The result of the mayoralty race opens up new problems and possibilities for the fall elections. Congressman Reuss may have been weakened in his support by his defeat in the race for mayor. His district has strong Republican organizations in it, and the congressional race there has always been close. Liberal Democrats and labor forces, along with the Left, will need to move swiftly to formulate objectives and tactics to ensure that the voice of a liberal in Congress from the 5th District will not be lost this fall.

Maier's elevation to Mayor opens up his state senate seat to newcomers this fall. Here is an opportunity for a Negro to step forward and become the first of his race in the state senate. Also, with the announcement of a white assemblyman that he is candidate for Maier's senate seat, an opportunity opens up for a Negro to become an assemblyman from this district and join Assemblyman Coggs at the state capi-

tol. The showing of some liberal candidates for alderman may open up possibilities for increasing the liberal and labor strength in the assembly this fall, since ward and assembly districts are identical.

A few words are in order on the withdrawal of Zeidler and election of Maier. The kind of "socialism" espoused by Zeidler and his predecessors was opportunist, Right-wing, anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, eclectic. But the kind of socialism is not so important as the fact that tens of thousands of Milwaukeeans in the past, and today, have identified and still identify socialism with liberalism, progress, and a better life here today as a stepping stone to a better future. If that political judgment is taken for a starting point, one can see that the political objective in the years ahead should be to enter into united front actions with these thousands of Milwaukeeans and, in the course of united efforts for limited objectives, help clear up understanding among the people of what socialism really is.

The Milwaukee City Attorney's race deserves come consideration. Noting that the withdrawal of Zeidler from the mayoralty race left no candidate to embody the traditional Socialist-Liberal sentiments of the voters, M. Michael Essin, a well-known attorney and former head of the People's Progressive Party of Wisconsin, whose candidate for governor he had been, decided to enter

his name against that of John J. Fleming, who was running unopposed. In five days' time, Essin's supporters collected 2,000 signatures and put his name on the ballot.

By means of his candidacy, Essin and his supporters hoped to inject the real issues into this campaign. Fleming is an outstanding reactionary, who in recent years conducted vicious campaigns against Zeidler and against a liberal city attorney.

The labor unions took a no-endorsement stand on this race. Essin's supporters had no money. The newspapers gave absolutely no publicity to the candidates in the city attorney's race—with the exception of one red-baiting article attacking Essin in the *Sentinel*. Thus there was the strange situation that the one race which incorporated the traditional contrast between conservatives and liberals in Milwaukee elections was completely hushed up by the press, radio, and every agency of information.

Fleming relied upon being better known to get elected, and he won over Essin by a vote of about 181,000 to 29,831. Under the circumstances, Essin's vote is not insignificant. With sufficient funds to break the wall of silence, a substantially larger vote could have been won in this campaign.

* * *

The Communist Party of Milwaukee is small, and its members did not fully participate in the cam-

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paign. Yet a number of its members worked closely with former members, sympathizers, and acquaintances of liberal points of view for various objectives. In the course of this informal coalition work, they have been able to influence developments considerably—in some cases as much as, or even more than had been done with a much larger organization.

The way history is going now there are many thousands of people in our city and state who think along the same lines that we do about individual issues, and who are working for some of the things we want. We have found out during the last few years that they welcome working with us. There is a definite working relationship develop-

ing between Communist and non-Communist liberals and progressives, on a conscious basis of rejecting red-baiting and red purges.

In Milwaukee it is impossible to enter into any coalition activity without having to contend with the disruptive actions of Trotskyites, renegades from Communism, and anti-Communist Socialists. But if we consistently advocate the correct policies, mobilize support for them and work hard for them, the disrupters get themselves isolated from the non-Communist liberals who sincerely want progress.

Limited as our experiences are, they point towards development of greater united front activities and eventual growth of our influence and organization.

Readers will be interested in knowing that International Publishers, in New York City, has just published a revised edition of W. Alphaeus Hunton's *Decision in Africa*. This 1960 edition contains an extensive post-script dealing with events in Africa during 1958 and 1959; a paper-bound copy costs \$1.85—*The Editor*.

IDEAS IN OUR TIME

BY HERBERT APTHEKER

THE MYTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN RACISM, Pt. II*

THE CURSE OF NURTURE

In our secular age, the Curse-of-God explanation for the oppression of the Negro people, and the jim-crow system reflecting and bulwarking that oppression, no longer is fully effective. While it does continue to have weight with many hidebound white religionists, their numbers are steadily declining; moreover, from within, a less racist interpreting of the sacred texts is becoming more and more common.

At the same time, the Curse-of-Nature explanation has been falling into disrepute, as modern scientific inquiry—itsself part of the decline of imperialism and the rise of socialism—has demonstrated in one field after another the untenability of racist views.

While both these Curses still retain considerable potency in corrupting the American White Mind, nevertheless it is a fact that they have been significantly diluted, especially among our liberal-minded white people. For these reformistically inclined and moderationist folk, a more sophisticated myth has been necessary if they were to be provided with a rationalization for the monstrosity of jim crow of sufficient persuasiveness to save them from the heresy of radicalism.

This myth, particularly widespread among the more enlightened white professional and middle-class groupings, may be called the Curse of Nurture. It may be substantiated with very elaborate statistical charts and impressive two-volume works; it will focus upon sociological phenomena and so carry with it at once an apparently objective and scientific aspect; it will, also, obviously fit in with the tinkering and "good government" and commission-of-inquiry approach that forms the tactics of "moderation"—that are, in other words, splendid instruments for delay, and sharp tools forging acquiescence. Not least among its virtues is the fact that it affords endless opportunities for "detailed studies" lavishly financed by tax-deduc-

* The first part of this article appeared in the April issue.

tible grants, thus simultaneously gratifying philanthropic impulses and career-making needs.

The textbook for this school is Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy* (N. Y., 1944).^{*} Analytically, the core of this work lies in what its author calls the "vicious circle" theory. The natural inferiority of the Negro is taken to be unproven (though not, necessarily, untrue), but the socially-induced inferiority of the Negro is held to be a palpable fact. Starting with this "fact," the segregation of the Negro, which induced it, simultaneously is a consequence of it; for the real inferiority—even if its cause be (mainly) social—makes the Negro an unpleasant neighbor, to be blunt about it, and hence pressures arise for his segregation. This develops added inferiority, which intensifies the urges towards discrimination, which further accentuates the inferiority—and so on forever and forever. Indeed, a vicious circle.

Like a circle, neither a beginning nor an end is discernible. In place of real causation, is offered a description of things as they are, and from this description is extracted an "explanation" for its being. But the main alteration in the description which allows it to serve this dual function is verbal—the source of the oppression is explained by calling that which is oppression by the euphonious title, "socially-induced inferiority" and then insisting that it is the latter which "causes" the former.

The socially-induced inferiority of the Myrdalian school is nothing but oppression and poverty; what it is, in fact, and what the bulk of Myrdal's 1,500 pages are devoted to demonstrating, is that the Negro is paid least, fired first, hired last, most poorly housed, least educated, most often ill, most often jailed, and dies earliest. This *is* the system of jim crow; one does not elucidate the source of the system, by renaming its consequences and then asserting that the renamed entity is the "cause" of the system in the first place!

Having no beginning, the vicious circle has no end; hence, in what way to bring an end to that without end, one cannot tell. All this fits in with the Myrdalian idea that "everything is cause to everything else"; it suits perfectly a program of excruciating patience, high-level politicking, and the absence of mass action directed at the elimination of real grievances and the achievement of fundamental advances.

Incidentally, the development of a fairly substantial Negro bourgeoisie and professional group tends to embarrass the Curse of Nurture mytho-

^{*} The present writer published a critique of this work in 1946, under the title, *The Negro People in America* (International Publishers, N. Y.)

logists; what does one do with those obviously not "cursed"? The reply is: one seeks to win them over and wean them away from their own masses. So profound and incisive a Negro scholar as Professor E. Franklin Frazier finds in his *Black Bourgeoisie* (Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1957) that this has been accomplished; yet, the present writer finds it impossible to agree and feels this is much too pessimistic as to the present and in error in terms of projecting the future. Actually, recent developments would tend to show that faltering and vacillating elements within the Negro bourgeoisie may well be left behind as Generals without troops, for increasingly the rank and file are acting for themselves and developing their own leaders and their own tactics and their own basic demands.* This is in tune with—and in part responsive to—developments in the rest of the "Free World"; there is every indication that the future will see the still more rapid development of that process and not its reversal.

In this connection, it is important to observe that while capitalist prosperity has improved to a degree the absolute living conditions of large numbers of Negro people, the latest government figures still place the average annual income of Negro families at \$2,711, which is about half the figure required for a "minimum standard of decency." Furthermore, while unemployment has been a pressing problem for a varying percentage of white workers, it has been for years and remains today a keen problem for double the percentage of Negro workers, so that while about one in fourteen white workers are unemployed, about one in seven or eight Negro workers are out of work. And, really of decisive importance in comprehending the temper of the Negro people today is the fact—as pointed out by Lester B. Granger of the National Urban League, this past April—that the Negro family income has actually deteriorated in the 1950's *as compared with the income of the white*, so that while it amounted to 54% of the white in 1950, it came to only 51% of the white in 1958.

Fundamentally, the Curse of Nurture idea is related to the basic rationalization that exploiters have used for their systems even before the modern refinement of racism was concocted. That is, it is a form of the argument that the poor are poor because they are no good—reflecting the dual meaning of the word "poor": without money, and without merit. Rulers and their apologists always have seen nothing but degrading and

* The Reverend Martin Luther King, at a meeting sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, held in Raleigh in mid-April, made this quite explicit. Referring to the student sit-in movement, he said: "It is a revolt against those Negroes in the middle class who have indulged themselves in big cars and ranch-style homes rather than in joining a movement for freedom." He added: "This is an era of offensive on the part of oppressed people. All peoples deprived of dignity and freedom are on the march on every continent throughout the world."

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enervating effects stemming from oppression; they have missed altogether the ennobling, strengthening impact, and the growth of a feeling of solidarity and of selflessness. In addition, they altogether ignore the integral relationship between the cause of justice and the cause of the oppressed. At the same time, these rulers and their lackeys cannot appreciate the decaying effect that their position and their role have upon them—socially, ideologically, and ethically.

THE "NEW NEGRO"

The dominant press and the drawing rooms of wealthy whites in the North and in the South are buzzing with worried and puzzled references to the "New Negro." The usage, while containing some elements of rather grudging respect or awe, at the same time contains invidious content so far as the parents and grandparents and ancestors of the present front-line fighters in the Negro struggle are concerned. Some of this emphasis on the "New Negro" is filled with chauvinist ignorance or fantastic misinformation about the history and character of the American Negro people.

It is an interesting fact that this idea of the "New Negro," recurs in the history of the United States. Negro struggle, while constant as the Mississippi River, tends to be especially turbulent at particular times just like Old Man River. Invariably these high points of struggle evoked expressions of alarm and puzzlement, and regret that the "Old Time Negro"—concocted in the master's dreams—had disappeared. One gets this in the colonial press from 1720 through 1740; in the press of the Young Republic from 1790 to 1802; the slaveowners scream that the damned Abolitionists have created a "New Negro" from 1821 to 1832. So it goes through the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Populist movement, Niagara and the founding of the NAACP, the renaissance of the 1920's, the militancy of the New Deal—and now here we are back again, learning nothing, admitting nothing, understanding nothing, and gaping with wonder at the "New Negro" who seems really affronted by Jim Crow and wants to vote and live decently and drink a democratic cup of coffee and get a good education for his children.

The inspiring Negro youth of today are the true sons and daughters of heroic parents and grandparents, who themselves learned courage, endurance, ingenuity and the will to be free from *their* parents and grandparents before them.

"Liberty or Death" was the slogan of Gabriel Prosser, the 22 year-old slave blacksmith of Virginia in 1800; "die silent as you shall see me do" was the cry of one slave prisoner to another, as he saw his comrade begin

to yield to the torture-devices of the Charleston police in 1822; "I do not feel *guilty*" was Nat Turner's reply in 1831 to the slaveholders who came to torment the insurrectionist, loaded down with chains as he was in a Virginia jail. Tens of thousands fled slavery—moving only by night, advertised for like mad dogs, able to trust not a soul, covering hundreds and even thousands of miles—and made it, year after year and in making it forged the greatest single epoch of perseverance and sheer bravery in the entire history of the United States. And ignoramuses, who tremble at a loud noise and find their courage only when, as part of an armed mob, they are lynching a single unarmed Negro, such ignoramuses marvel at the "New Negro"!

This insistence on the "New Negro" plays into the hands of the gradualists and moderationists, too, for it carries with it the idea that this "New Negro" is too impatient. This has a certain logic to it, if, indeed, the Negro people in the past were content with their chains and adored jim crow; if now, suddenly, something "new" has appeared and change is wanted all of a sudden! But, of course, the chains have been worn *and have rankled* for over three hundred years, and that has been not only too long, it has been three hundred times longer than that!

And now—six years after the Supreme Court called for "all deliberate speed" in the eradication of segregated education—one finds that 94% of the southern schools remain completely segregated and that in most of the remaining 6% the desegregation has been of a token kind. Certainly there has been "deliberation" here, but what about the "speed"? Moderationism and gradualism always have been devices for thwarting significant change and for curbing the wrath of the masses; for maintaining—with only the essential concession and elasticity—the system of exploitation and indignity. If further proof were needed of this, the history of the years since the 1954 decision of the United States Supreme Court is that proof.

Is there anything at all new about the Negro movement today and the temper of the Negro people? Of course there is; so, too, did Frederick Douglass differ from Nat Turner, and Martin Luther King differs from Richard Allen. But there is one essential that is not "new" and that is the fact that from Richard Allen in the 18th century to Nat Turner in the pre-Civil era to Frederick Douglass of the Civil War and Reconstruction epochs to the Reverend King of today the inspiration has been the passion for freedom, and the goal has been the discontent with slavery and second-class citizenship.

Frederick Douglass, for a time, finally got most of the country, and the United States Government educated up to the point of seeing that

his demands were necessary demands for the national interests as a whole; instead of hanging him for seeking what Nat Turner had sought, the President of the United States invited him to the White House to seek his advice as to how best to eliminate slavery and save the Republic.

Today, the struggle of the Negro people in the United States for basic democratic rights and for full equality has gained the deepest sympathy of all enlightened mankind; and in one-third of the world enlightened mankind constitutes the ruling power, the states, the governments. And in much of the rest of the world—in Africa in the first place, and in Southeast Asia, Italy, France, Great Britain, and in Canada and Latin-America—the government of the United States finds itself measured and condemned by what it does do and does not do so far as the Negro people are concerned. At home, too, the numbers of white people who wish well to the Negro people in their struggles count many millions; increasingly, also, tens of thousands among them are understanding the basic connection between their own welfare, the progress of the nation, the security of world peace and the elimination of the jim-crow system.

So, now, the Negro people, over eighteen million strong, and over three hundred years denied their freedom; having behind them centuries of splendid history and magnificent leadership and immortal sacrifice; feeling the rising swell of international comradeship in a world moving irresistibly towards full popular sovereignty; sensing the increasing good-will of millions of fellow Americans who are white and at least growing uncertainty of other millions of white Americans as to the righteousness and viability of racism; knowing their own decisive power in the trade-union movement and in the politics of the nation; comprehending very well the instrument that lies in their economic might, both as consumers and as producers—now, the Negro people are striking out straight and true, without compromise and with intense seriousness, for “all the marbles”—for full equality and first-class citizenship in this period, in our own time.

This movement carries within it enormous potential—for smashing the two-party system and really revitalizing American politics, for organizing the South and invigorating the entire trade-union movement, for basic political and social changes in the South, thus removing a fundamental bulwark of reaction from the grasp of the ruling class. *The successful struggle against slavery saved the soul and the body of our Republic once; the successful struggle against jim crow can save the soul and body of our Republic again.*

Arna Bontemps, the Negro novelist and poet—of an age to be among the fathers of the present generation of Negro youth battling so inspir-

ingly in the trenches of liberty—in a fine poem, "A Black Man Talks of Reaping" spoke of "my children" who "feed on bitter fruit." On this food, they have become strong men and women, as another poet, Sterling A. Brown—also, in age, among the fathers of the present fighters—said in his poem "Strong Men":

*What, from the slums
Where they have hemmed you,
What, from the tiny huts
They could not keep from you—
What reaches them
Making them ill at ease, fearful?
Today they shout prohibitions at you
"Thou shall not this"
"Thou shall not that"
"Reserved for whites only"
You laugh.
One thing they cannot prohibit—
The strong men . . . coming on
The strong men gittin' stronger
Strong men . . .
Stronger . . .*

Amen.

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The Struggle for the Defense of Democracy in Bourgeois Countries*

THE TIME IS LONG PAST when the bourgeoisie of Western Europe and North America was a revolutionary class, a standard-bearer of democracy. Having come to power and solidified its class domination, it turned away from those slogans which were pronounced by its ideologists in the epoch of struggle against feudal absolutist reaction. The further they travelled along this road the more their flowery words about democracy, freedom and equality became transformed in bourgeois society into deceit and illusion. Democracy—for the rich, freedom—for the rich, civil rights—for the rich—that was the interpretation which was placed on the principles that were triumphantly proclaimed during the period of the bourgeois revolutions. With the entry of capitalism into its imperialist stage the process of decay of bourgeois democracy was especially intensified; and so was the process of its replacement with open forms of the political despotism of monopoly capital.

But the bourgeoisie, having become a reactionary force, never succeeded in suppressing the striving of the masses toward democracy. The working class, all laboring people, have been taught by their own experience how much even a minimum of democratic rights and freedoms mean to them, to their every-day existence;

thus, they continue to exert the strongest pressure upon the ruling classes. It was precisely due to this pressure that the Republican form of government was established in many bourgeois countries, democratic forms of political life developed, and universal suffrage was put into effect.

The democratic achievements of which the bourgeoisie of certain countries now boast are not at all its work. It did not hand them to the popular masses, but rather these achievements were literally wrested from the bourgeoisie in sharp struggle over many years. The facts show that democracy in the bourgeois countries has gained a foothold *in spite* of the vacillations, betrayals and counter-revolutionary sentiments of the bourgeoisie. Only as a result of the struggle of the working class supported by other laboring classes and segments of the population, did, for example, the republican form of government triumph in France. In England it required decades of struggle by the working class, it required the great efforts of the Chartist movement, in order to wrest the elementary reforms of the electoral law. Quite significant is also the history of the estab-

* This essay forms chapter 18 of the *Foundations of Marxism-Leninism*, a new work recently published in the Soviet Union. The translation has been done here for *Political Affairs*—ed.

lishment of the trade unions by the working class; the path to the legal existence of the trade union is literally flooded with the blood of the toilers.

Lenin noted the constant struggle between the democratic and anti-democratic tendencies in bourgeois society. "Capitalism in general and imperialism in particular," he wrote, "turn democracy into an illusion—and at the same time capitalism generates democratic strivings among the masses, creates democratic institutions, sharpens the antagonism between imperialism which negates democracy and the masses which strive for democracy." (*Works*, Russian edit., XXIII, p. 13)

This antagonism still prevails fully in our day. Moreover, it has become sharper in connection with the intensified efforts of the imperialist bourgeoisie to take away the democratic rights of the worker, to reduce and curtail democracy. The struggle in defense of democracy has acquired in our time the character of a primary task for all the progressive forces in the bourgeois countries. The main weight of this struggle falls upon the shoulders of the working class.

We must keep in mind that the democracy in the form in which it has been built in the developed capitalist countries is an aggregate of multifarious and heterogeneous phenomena. It includes the forms and methods of political domination and state power which have been developed by the bourgeoisie and which serve its requirements (the replacement of the hereditary power of a monarch by the elected power of a president and a parliament, the introduction of a multi-party system, etc.) No matter how

developed these forms and methods of power might be, they remain in essence the forms and methods which serve the bourgeoisie in *suppressing* its class adversaries.

At the same time the concept of democracy encompasses the entire complex of rights and freedoms which have won by the laboring people in the process of struggle over many years: Freedom of speech, press and assembly, freedom to demonstrate and to strike, the right to organize their trade and political organizations, etc. These rights, very incomplete and limited as they are by the inequality of property prevailing in bourgeois society, nevertheless provide the laboring people with the possibility of defending their interests. They make it possible to fight for the passage of laws which limit the arbitrary rule of the employers in determining wages and hours, in regulating wage rates, in the field of social security, etc.

Thus, not everything in bourgeois democracy is of equal value to the working masses. Most of all they are interested in maintaining and expanding their civil rights, since in the sum total, these rights guarantee the workers the maximum possible under the conditions of capitalism—freedom for class struggle, freedom to defend in a legal way their immediate needs and interests and to struggle for their ultimate class aims.

But the working class is not indifferent to the fate of bourgeois democracy as a whole when the forces of reaction infringe on it. Bourgeois democracy as the form of class domination of the bourgeoisie offers the working people far more favorable con-

ditions for defending their rights, despite all its defects, than such forms of bourgeois domination as fascism and other varieties of overt dictatorship of finance oligarchy.

The attitude of Marxists to bourgeois democracy cannot be the same under all conditions. It is well known, for example, that during the time of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin and the Russian Communists carried on a struggle against all political parties which under the flag of defending *bourgeois* democracy attacked the establishment of *proletarian* democracy. The point is that in that period the flag of bourgeois democracy in Russia had become the flag for mobilizing all counter-revolutionary forces for a struggle against the working class and the socialist revolution.

A different situation exists at present in those capitalist countries where reaction is attacking bourgeois democracy. There the laboring people have to choose not between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy, as was the case in Russia in 1917, but rather between bourgeois democracy and a dictatorship of the most reactionary and aggressive elements of monopoly capital. It is not difficult to understand the choice the laboring people are making.

LENIN ON THE NECESSITY OF STRUGGLE UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF CAPITALISM

V. I. Lenin, as none other, saw the limited and conditional nature of bourgeois democracy and was able mercifully to expose its pitfalls and defects. However, the fire of Leninist criticism was directed against *bourgeois*

democracy and not against democracy in general, as the enemies of Marxism-Leninism attempt to make it appear. Lenin fought against petty-bourgeois illusions to the effect that under conditions of capitalism it is possible to achieve genuine sovereignty of the people. He showed that behind the democratic facade of any bourgeois republic there is hidden the mechanism of class domination of capital, and that the bourgeoisie attempts to put all democratic institutions at the service of this domination.

But in criticizing those who were prisoners of petty-bourgeois democratic illusions, who for their sake were ready to renounce the great fundamental aims of the working class, Lenin clearly saw the benefit which the working class could derive even from those often scant freedoms which it had won at the cost of great sacrifice and blood and on which the bourgeoisie infringes. He believed that "democracy has enormous significance in the struggle of the working class against the capitalists and for their freedom." (*Works*, XXV, p. 443)

Lenin, therefore, was irreconcilable with the backward views and moods whose protagonists asserted that democracy is of no concern to the working class and that the struggle for democracy can only interfere with the struggle of the working class for its class interests.

Rejecting such Leftist fancies, Lenin pointed out the principled and practical importance of the struggle for democracy in the course of which the working-class movement matures and grows, improves the conditions for its activity. Without wresting *definite*

political rights from the bourgeoisie and without securing these rights, the working class cannot achieve the realization even of its economic demands. "No economic struggle," taught Lenin, "can bring to the worker any durable improvement, nor can such struggle even be conducted on a large scale if the workers do not have the right freely to organize meetings and trade unions, to have their own papers, to send their representatives to people's assemblies. . . ." (*Works*, IV, p. 193)

But the importance of democracy for the working class is determined not only by the fact that the conditions of struggle depend on it. Lenin emphasized more than once that the demand for democracy is in line with the ultimate aim of the **working-class** movement, with its historic mission consisting in the elimination of class domination in general. In calling on the working class to accomplish the economic revolution that is required for building a new socialist society, Lenin also pointed out that "a proletariat that is not being educated in the struggle for democracy, would be unable to accomplish such an economic revolution." (*Works*, XXIII, p. 13)

From all this it becomes easy to understand the deep conviction with which Lenin stated: "It would be a fundamental error to think that the struggle for democracy can deflect the proletariat from the socialist revolution or can obstruct it or place it in shadow, etc. On the contrary, just as the triumph of socialism is impossible without achieving full democracy, so the proletariat cannot prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie without carrying out an all-sided, con-

sistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy." (*Works*, XXII, p. 133)

Lenin, of course, took into account the fact that the struggle for democracy in bourgeois society, irrespective of the energy with which it is carried out and the successes which it might bring, can yield for the working class only partial results whose limitations are predetermined by the framework of the capitalist system. Under this system, there is not and cannot be complete and consistent democracy for the broad masses of the laboring people, since the class domination of the bourgeoisie remains unfringed whatever the structure of the capitalist state. It is utterly impossible to bring to life genuine people's sovereignty under capitalism, as the petty bourgeois dreamer hopes. But the struggle for democracy in Lenin's view, prepares the working class for a more successful realization of its mission, which consists in the liquidation of all forms of class oppression and the creation of a genuinely democratic society, that is, a socialist society.

Therefore, in taking up the cudgels of democracy, the working class proceeds both from the interests of its everyday struggle as well as from the interests of its tasks and plans for the future.

This is the principled basis which determines the attitude of Marxist-Leninist parties to the struggle for democracy in bourgeois countries.

THE OFFENSIVE OF THE CAPITALIST MONOPOLIES ON THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS OF THE WORKERS

In the epoch of imperialism the

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struggle for democracy acquires a special significance because monopoly capital seeks to maintain in all fields the most extreme reactionary policies which correspond to its drive for absolute domination and merciless exploitation of the working class; for the extraction of maximum profits by any means and methods. This drive originates primarily from the economic nature of monopoly capital; the maintenance of its domination signifies the replacement of free competition by monopoly and the struggle between monopolies for power and influence. But monopoly is the antithesis of freedom: monopoly triumphs by suppressing freedom in all fields of economic and political life. "The political superstructure over the new economy, over a monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism)," indicates Lenin, "is a turn from democracy to political reaction. Democracy corresponds to free competition. Political reaction corresponds to monopoly." (*Works*, XXIII, p. 31)

FINANCIAL OLIGARCHY—THE ENEMY OF DEMOCRACY

In analyzing the economic and political consequences of the establishment of monopoly power, Lenin underlined the fact that in the epoch of imperialism the offensive of reaction against democratic institutions, ways and traditions acquires the form of open violence directed against all classes and strata (with the exception of the big bourgeoisie) and extending to the widest fields of political and social life.

This offensive of the monopolies is spearheaded against democracy in gen-

eral, since monopoly and democracy are in sharp contradiction. Lenin wrote the following in this regard: "Both in foreign and domestic politics imperialism strives toward the violation of democracy, towards reaction. In this sense it is incontrovertible that imperialism is the 'negation' of *democracy in general, of all democracy*. . . ." (*Works*, XXIII, p. 31)

In the period of the general crisis of capitalism, the anti-democratic aspirations of the monopolistic bourgeoisie are intensified even more. The sharpening of the class struggle, the progressive weakening of the positions of capitalism and the fear of socialism whose forces are constantly growing—that is what pushes monopoly to extremes in the fields of both domestic and foreign policy.

After the First World War, fascism triumphed in several capitalist countries in which an open bloody dictatorship of the most reactionary and adventurous groups of the monopoly bourgeoisie and big landowners was established. *Fascism, as the experience of Germany and Italy showed, represents the complete liquidation of democracy.* The crushing of labor organizations, the merciless suppression of all opposition, including the bourgeois-liberal opposition, the violation of the elementary democratic rights of the workers and the complete subjugation of the people to the arbitrary will of the monopolies and their state machine, the extermination of the best forces of the nation in prisons and concentration camps, extreme racial fanaticism and mad preparation for war, and finally aggression that

launched a new world slaughter—that is what fascist dictatorship brought.

The Second World War which was conducted by the peoples for the sake of victory over fascism, temporarily disorganized the offensive of the reactionary forces in many capitalist countries. But the victory of the peace-loving peoples over the Hitlerite coalition by no means ended the danger of the fierce reaction which is inherent in imperialism. The drive of the imperialist bourgeoisie to political reaction within the country and to aggression outside of it revived soon after the war in the bourgeois countries and first of all in the main political citadel of capitalism—in the U.S.A. In the post-war period a new broad offensive of monopoly capital unfolded against the democratic rights and freedoms of the peoples in the capitalist countries. Under these conditions, the danger hanging over the democratic gains of the peoples is aggravated by the following two factors:

First, by the growth of state-monopoly capitalism which increases the subjugation of the bourgeois state to the capitalist monopolies. The direct participation of the monopolies in governing the state offers them the opportunity of abolishing any democratic norms which interfere with their absolute domination. The state apparatus under these conditions becomes a mere tool for the lording of monopoly capital.

Secondly, by the increased role of American imperialism. By enmeshing a series of capitalist countries in a web of economic dependence, American imperialism has begun openly to in-

terfere in their internal affairs. Everywhere American imperialism puts its stake on the most extreme reactionary elements; it encourages all possible anti-democratic measures by offering bourgeois governments financial and sometimes military means for putting these measures into life. The reactionary circles of the U.S.A. play the role of the main anti-democratic force in the international arena; this force exerts pressure on the entire capitalist world.

To this should be added the growing reactionary influence of international monopolistic combinations and aggressive blocs. Various "supra-national" organs created in Europe are actually outside of all control by the people themselves and these organs facilitate the task of the monopolists in their joint mass assault on the democratic rights and freedoms of the peoples.

REACTION VIOLATES THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS

The offensive of reaction against democracy is thus conducted from different directions and on a very broad front. It shows up, for example, in an open review of constitutional norms and electoral systems. In recent years a number of capitalist countries have introduced numerous amendments into their constitutions; these amendments have been dictated by a drive to increase the powers of the bourgeois governments and to weaken the control exercised over them by the parliamentary organs. Electoral laws are being subjected to deteriorating revisions and the principle of proportional representation is trampled upon and

as a result a re-distribution of electoral votes is taking place in favor of the bourgeois parties of the extreme Right, whereas the working class is being deprived of representation in parliaments. The legislative role of the parliaments is being limited more and more, and the right to issue laws is being transferred into the hands of the executive power which is subservient to the monopolies.

To varying degree, these tendencies have appeared in recent years in all bourgeois countries, including the U.S.A., England, the German Federal Republic, Italy, and particularly in France where the Democratic constitution adopted in 1946 was replaced in 1958 by a constitution which actually liquidated the parliamentary regime and replaced it with presidential rule.

Further, a process of continuous limitation of the democratic rights of the laboring people is taking place, and an intensification of police lawlessness and terror. In the U.S.A. already in 1950 the McCarran Act was passed; that law legalized police control over private correspondence and telephone conversations, which in essence is equivalent to the establishment of a system of thought control. In England secret telephone tapping is practiced. The extent to which police power can get out of hand in bourgeois countries was demonstrated by the history of McCarthyism in the United States, which in a brief time was able to place its imprint on the entire life of the American people.

No country in the world has had nor has such a far-flung network of political police as the U.S.A. today.

It is sufficient to refer to the testimony of an American industrial multi-millionaire and outstanding public figure, Cyrus Eaton. In a television interview given in May 1959 he stated: "If we take the police forces of the cities, counties, states and the government organs and combine them, it must be said that Hitler at his height, with his Gestapo, never had such a secret police organization as we have in our country today."

The working class and its organizations suffer the most from the raging of reaction. The post-war period was marked by the introduction of anti-labor legislation in the majority of the developed capitalist countries. It is thus that the bourgeoisie "thanked" the working class for its self-sacrificing work and deprivations during the war years. The model of anti-labor legislation became the Taft-Hartley Law passed by the American Congress in 1947. It sharply limited one of the most important constitutional rights of the American workers—the right to strike. In essence we are dealing with an attempt to place the bourgeois government in control of the working-class movement—an attempt to make the government the arbiter in controversies between the workers and the employers. If we take into account the fact that the state apparatus in capitalist countries is in the hands of the monopolies and their henchmen, it is easy to imagine what workers can expect from such arbitration.

As to which side the bourgeois state is on, particular proof is offered by the experiences of England where the most persevering strike struggles had to be carried on by the workers

in the nationalized branches of the economy, *i.e.*, in the industries which are directly in the hands of the government.

Anti-labor legislation in modern times has certain specific features which make it especially dangerous for the laboring people. This is one of the manifestations of the policy of state-monopoly capitalism in the field of inter-class relations. Monopoly capital attempts through the government to gain control over the working-class movement, to subjugate it so that nothing may interfere with the exploitation of the workers.

Finally, it should be noted that there is a general intensification of the methods of terroristic suppression of the workers in bourgeois countries. The upsurge of the Ku Klux Klan, the vigorous activity of the militaristic-fascist organizations, such as the "American Legion" (U.S.A.) and the "Stahlhelm" (steel helmet, German Federal Republic), the recruiting of various types of "industrial armed detachments" and groups "for maintaining order" at the factories and plants in the United States, West Germany, France and Italy—all of these are links of the same chain.

The offensive of reaction is encountering growing opposition from the popular masses. However, the danger has by no means been eliminated and it requires an unflinching vigilance by all progressive and democratic forces in bourgeois countries.

ANTI-COMMUNISM—THE CHERISHED TACTIC OF THE ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY

Among the various forms of the as-

sault of reaction on democracy, the attacks which are launched under the flag of "the struggle against communism" occupy a special place.

Communists become the first victims of reaction because they are the most resolute antagonists of capitalist slavery, the most consistent defenders of the democratic freedoms and rights of the workers. By dealing the Communist parties their heaviest blows, the imperialist bourgeoisie strive to deprive the working class of its vanguard and paralyze its struggle.

But, as the experience of many decades has shown, the persecution of communists has even broader aims. Such persecution invariably serves as the signal for the offensive of reaction against *all* democratic parties and organizations, against *all* trade unions, and against *all* opposition elements. Immediately after the persecution of the Communists, the Left socialists are persecuted, then all socialists; then it is the turn of the bourgeois liberals, and after that all who are even in the slightest degree in opposition to the dictatorship of monopoly capital.

Thus it was in fascist Italy and in Hitlerite Germany. The reactionary circles in a number of western European countries and in the United States are operating according to the same pattern. It is for this reason that the attempts of transatlantic reaction to illegalize American Communists, and the decision of the Bonn government to outlaw the Communist Party of Germany and analogous anti-democratic acts in a number of other countries have so greatly alarmed the

leading public figures of the West.

The fact that at the present time Communist parties are outlawed in more than 30 countries of the "free world" is once again proof of the raging of the reactionary forces and the dimensions of the threat hanging over the democratic gains of the working class. The threat is especially great in places where reaction succeeds in isolating the communists from the other democratic parties and organizations, where there is alienation and discord between communists and socialists. The situation of division which exists today aids the struggle of reaction against the communists; tomorrow it will make it possible for reaction to launch a full-scale assault against those who stand on the side lines as mere observers of violence directed against Communists.

In order to blunt the vigilance of the popular masses a vicious and harmful propaganda is spread which asserts that the persecution of communists does not affect anyone but the communist alone. Certain shortsighted socialists and liberal figures indulge in dangerous self-deception when they assume that if communists are left to their fate, if reaction "is not quarreled with," and if they behave "reasonably" themselves, then it will be possible to escape the blows and persecution. The entire historical experience of the labor movement, especially the bitter experience of the German workers during the raging of Hitlerite reaction, cries out against such cowardly tactics. *It is only possible to halt the offensive of reaction and to repel its attacks by the joint efforts of all the democratic forces.*

The entire history of the struggle of the workers in capitalist countries leads to the conclusion that democracy is indivisible. As soon as the exclusion of Communist parties from its sphere is acquiesced in, the rights, interests and at times the very existence of other progressive organizations will come under attack.

DEMOCRACY—THE BASE OF MASS POPULAR MOVEMENTS

The struggle of the working class in defense of democracy is of especially great significance because it is on its success that the success of other important modern general popular movements, such as the defense of peace, national independence and sovereignty depends to no small extent. All of these movements are closely interrelated and in practice are often intertwined with one another. For example, it is impossible to separate the struggle for democracy from the struggle for peace, since preparation for war inevitably is accompanied by wholesale violations of democracy, the intensification of political reaction and intensification of the exploitation of the working class. But it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that the capacity of the popular masses of the country to exert influence on the policies of the ruling class in one or another capitalist country depends on the level of development of democracy in the respective country.

In order to express their will for peace and their protest against military preparation, the workers must have the right to demonstrate, to assemble, to issue public statements in the press, etc. In order to bring their influence

to bear on the policies of the government they must have their representatives in parliament. In order to successfully defend national independence and sovereignty it is necessary to have a definite degree of democracy under which the masses should be able to express their will and insist on their demands.

Thus, the defense of democracy under modern conditions is the duty and responsibility of all progressive people and organizations, all friends of peace, all patriots who value the independence of their homeland. By defending democracy from the attacks of reaction, by upholding the rights and freedoms of the working masses, the working class in capitalist countries is laying the foundation for the victory of the cause of peace and national independence.

THE UNITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES — THE MOST IMPORTANT CONDITION FOR VICTORY OVER REACTION AND FASCISM

Contrary to all the desires and calculations of reaction, its attempts to curtail and liquidate democracy have brought to life powerful counteracting forces. It is precisely because the infringement of democracy affects the interests of the most diverse classes and strata of the population that the objective possibility emerges for the formation of a broad front in the struggle for democracy in the capitalist countries.

EXPANDING THE SOCIAL BASE OF THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

The most important reserve for the

growth of the democratic movement is the petty bourgeoisie. Noting the duality of the position of the petty bourgeoisie, V. I. Lenin wrote: "Marxism teaches us that the petty bourgeois masses inevitably, as long as capitalism exists, will suffer from anti-democratic privileges . . . will suffer from economic oppression." (*Works*, XVII, p. 368)

Monopoly capital strangles and impoverishes the petty bourgeoisie in country and town, generating in it a feeling of hatred and protest. But the indignation of the petty bourgeoisie, in view of its dualistic nature, can be used by reaction for its own purpose. Reaction strives to appeal to the base instincts of the small property owner, to sow illusions, hopes for a restoration of his prosperity as a property owner.

Fascism has shown that a monopoly clique under certain conditions can inveigle the small bourgeoisie and use it for trampling democracy. It was thus in both Italy and Germany. But fascism also served as a lesson for the petty bourgeoisie which was deceived by it.

In the present situation the objective conditions facilitate the struggle of the working class and the communist parties to attract the petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the democratic movement.

The attitude to democracy and to its future fate has been substantially changed even within the capitalist class itself. The monopoly circles and their accomplices see in democracy a survival of the past and a downright burden; they strive to finish off democracy which even in its bourgeois forms in-

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terfere with their drive for unlimited domination in society. However, another section of the bourgeoisie is not at all interested in establishing the absolute power of monopoly which promises them no good.

Monopoly capital flourishes not only owing to the merciless exploitation of the working class, the peasantry, and the urban petty-bourgeoisie, but also by the absorption and liquidation of an enormous number of small and middle capitalist enterprises.

Speaking of the position in which the small and medium owners find themselves in the epoch of monopoly capital, Lenin points out: "What we see now is no longer a competitive struggle between the small and the large, between the technically backward and the technically advanced enterprises. We are now witnessing the strangulation by the monopolists of those who do not bow to monopoly, to its oppression and its arbitrary rule." (*Works*, XXII, p. 194)

The offensive of the monopolists on the middle layers of the bourgeoisie is accompanied by an intensification of political oppression. Capitalist reality offers numerous examples of the violation of the rights and interests of the middle bourgeoisie, of the persecution of their organizations, parties and press, which are upholding their interests. To this we must add the fact that a section of the bourgeoisie objects to an excessively severe limitation of democratic rights and freedoms, since it is afraid of evoking a sharpening of the class struggle which is fraught with great social upheavals.

The ruling class is also forced to

take into account the experience of the fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy which showed that completely unbridled rule by the most extreme reactionary groups of the monopoly bourgeoisie threatens deep splits within the imperialist camp and causes a world-wide invincible upsurge of the anti-fascist movement. It is for this reason that the more sober bourgeois figures do call for "moderation" by demonstrating that from the point of view of the class interest of the bourgeoisie as a whole parliamentary democratic methods of government are more "reliable" than overt fascist methods.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS FOR UNIFICATION OF ALL THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES

The stratification in the camp of the bourgeoisie expands the opportunities for unifying broad strata of the people for the defense of democracy. Just as in other general democratic movements, the working class is called upon to play the leading vanguard role in the struggle for democracy. This follows from the fact that of all classes in bourgeois society the proletariat by its very nature is a class which strives toward the deepest and most consistent democracy, and at the same time is the most daring and organized class which is capable of leading the rebuff to the intrigues of reaction. Showing all other classes and strata an example of consistency and principledness in the struggle for democracy, the working class in this way assures for itself hegemony in this

struggle in which it is ready to go further than the others. "The hegemony of the working class," wrote Lenin, "is its (and that of its representative) political influence on other elements of the population in the sense of purifying their democratism (when there is democratism) from undemocratic impurities. . . ." (*Works*, XVII, p. 56)

Tireless work on uniting the broadest strata of the people for defense of democracy is carried on by the Communist parties of the capitalist countries.

Noting the fierceness of the offensive of the bourgeoisie on the democratic achievements of the Italian people, the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, pointed out in his report to the 8th Congress of the Italian Communist Party in December 1956 that, "We know how steadfastly the classes and parties which are now in power are resisting progress, and we do not exclude the possibility of attempts at counter revolutions on their part. But even taking such a possibility into account, we draw the conclusion that it is necessary to hold still more firmly in our hands the banner of democratic progress, of the defense of the freedoms not only in our own interests, but also in the interests of all strata of the people, of the entire Italian society."

An intense struggle in the defense of democracy under conditions of great activation of the reactionary forces is being conducted by the French Communist Party. It is resolutely exposing the hypocrisy and lies of bourgeois propaganda which asserts that

the adversities of France are allegedly due to "an excess of democracy." The Plenum of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party held in June 1958 after the formation of De Gaulle's Cabinet, announced that: "The reason for the calamities from which France is suffering is not democracy or the parliamentary system, but, on the contrary, the constant violation of the will of the electorate and the principles of parliamentary government by means of anti-communism. . . . The means of overcoming disorder and of the helplessness of the government is not to throw democracy overboard, but, on the contrary, to assure its normal functioning. . . ."

The Plenum called for the creation of a broad anti-fascist front of struggle against reaction. "The guarantees of victory in this struggle," said the resolution of the Plenum, "is the unity of the working class based on the unity between communists and socialists, on the uniting of all democratic and national forces around the working class."

The problem of uniting the democratic forces is posed sharply in all the capitalist countries—in the U.S.A. and England, in France and Belgium, in the German Federal Republic and Italy, and so on. In all these countries communists are in the first ranks of the fighters for democracy.

The representatives of the Communist Parties of Italy, France and other capitalist countries who spoke at the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union devoted a great deal of attention to the problems of the struggle for democracy, for the uniting of all the democratic forces.

They indicated that in Western Europe a new broad offensive of the forces of reaction is ripening. Numerous facts demonstrate that the ruling bourgeoisie is ever more frequently renouncing bourgeois-democratic methods of government and is turning to semi-fascist and even openly fascist methods.

In the report of N. S. Khrushchev to the 21st Congress of the C.P., S.U., he said: "In the minds of millions of people fascism is usually associated with the names Hitler and Mussolini. However, we cannot exclude the possibility that fascism can be revived in

other forms and not in the former ones, which have already been compromised in the eyes of the peoples.

"Now, when a powerful camp of socialism exists, when the labor movement has a great deal of experience in the struggle with reaction, when the extent of the organization of the working class has increased, the peoples have greater possibilities for blocking the road to fascism. Against fascism, it is possible and necessary to unite the broadest strata of the people, all democratic and genuinely national forces."

Two recent publications from the pens of distinguished American women will be of interest to many of our readers. Mrs. Charlotta A. Bass, for forty years the editor of *The California Eagle*, famous Los Angeles Negro newspaper, has published a fascinating history and autobiographical account called *Forty Years: Memories from the Pages of a Newspaper*. Those wanting a copy should write directly to Mrs. Bass at 4073 South Central Avenue, Los Angeles 11, Cal. The other work is a 63-page pamphlet from the indefatigable Maud Russell; it is called *China . . . And India? Indonesia? Burma?* and deals with the border disputes and other differences that have arisen among these countries. This sells for 50c and may be obtained from Miss Russell at P.O. Box 1536, New York 17, N.Y.—*The Editor*.

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