


# political affairs

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER; Associate Editor: HYMAN LUMER

## An Open Letter to the American People

By The National Committee, C.P., U.S.A.

*Immediately after the issuance by the U.S. Supreme Court of its 5-4 decisions upholding the membership clause of the Smith Act and the registration clause of the McCarran Act, the National Committee of the Communist Party of the United States issued the "Open Letter to the American People," which is reprinted below in full—The Editor.*

Fellow-Americans:

Your constitutional rights, your security and welfare, have been placed in mortal danger by decisions of a one-vote majority in the Supreme Court in two so-called anti-Communist cases on June 5, 1961.

By a 5 to 4 vote (including Justice Tom Clark, who should have disqualified himself as the Attorney General who first indicted Communist leaders in 1948 under the Smith Act) the Court has now imperilled the rights of *all* Americans.

For the first time in America's history, voluntary associations are made subject to licensing by the Federal government, and activity on behalf of a legal political party is to be treated as a crime. This is the meaning of the registration requirements of the McCarran Act of 1950 and the membership clause of the Smith Act of 1940, both of which

were upheld by the Supreme Court majority.

As a result:

- The Communist Party of the U.S.A. is ordered to register as an "action organization" described in the laws as an agent of a foreign power promoting a conspiracy based on espionage, sabotage, terrorism and other heinous crimes. As such it is required to list publicly its officers and members.

- Persons described as "active" Communists can be jailed on testimony it was their "intent" to bring about the forcible overthrow of the government.

Under the McCarran Act a body of appointed government officials, the Subversive Activities Control Board, is given the right to decide who may or may not voluntarily associate themselves in any organization. The Board may decide this,

moreover, purely on the basis of the legislative "findings" of guilt in the Act itself. The accused is denied the right to trial.

At the same time these laws make it possible to attach the false designation of "action organization" or "front" to political parties, peace groups, labor unions, Negro organizations and a wide variety of civic bodies. After that, their members are deprived of many rights. They become subject to criminal prosecution unless they accede to public self-denunciation as traitors to their country or join the anti-Communist witch hunt.

Failure to comply with the registration order carries the fantastic penalty of a five-year prison sentence and a \$10,000 fine for each day of such failure.

### AN ELASTIC LABEL

In Hitler Germany a special group, the Jews, were singled out and compelled to wear a yellow arm band with the Star of David. In the U.S. today—unless the McCarran and Smith Acts are nullified—organizations which refuse to conform to the views of the powers-that-be are likewise to be compelled to bear a government-designed brand.

Under the labelling provision of the McCarran Act even the Declaration of Independence or the Bible—if distributed by a group branded by the SACB as a "Communist action" organization—would be required to

bear on their covers a label designating them as Communist propaganda.

Any group can under the McCarran Act be designated as a "Communist front" organization and be forced to register and suffer similar sanctions if it merely took a position which the SACB regarded as paralleling a position of the Communist Party.

Nor is organized labor immune. More than once, unions have been branded by courts as conspiracies seeking illegal ends. Today they are shackled by the Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin Acts which subject them to close government control. From here it is not a long step to their inclusion in a "Communist front" dragnet.

Once labelled, an organization's members become liable by that very act to prosecution under the individual membership clause of the Smith Act—a built-in unconstitutional self-incrimination device. Clearly, the Communist Party cannot go along with such un-American practices, any more than can militant trade unions or the embattled Southern chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People when faced with like demands.

### THE BIG LIES

The Court majority's disregard of traditional constitutional rights rests basically on two stale fraudulent arguments: that the Communists are

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foreign agents and that they advocate the forceful overthrow of our government.

The "foreign agent" canard has been used by reaction throughout our history to divide popular movements and discredit dissenters. Thomas Jefferson and his followers were labelled "Jacobins," agents of the French Revolution. Sen. Robert LaFollette and other loyal Americans were assailed as "pro-German" because they opposed our entrance into World War I. And have not our Catholic fellow-Americans, in and out of public life, been slanderously hounded as loyal to a foreign power, the Vatican?

*Yet the truth is that in the entire 42-year history of the Communist Party not a single member has been convicted or even indicted as a foreign agent or for engaging in sabotage or treason. Nor has a single member ever been convicted of an act of force directed against our government.*

To disregard cherished democratic American rights in the name of "fighting communism" can only disgrace our nation. It places us in the company of fascist nations like Spain and Portugal and military dictatorships like the Dominican Republic and South Korea, and of the neo-Nazi dominated West Germany. Only such undemocratic countries resort to extraordinary laws banning the Communist Parties. Significantly, in those countries where Mc-

Carthyite type reaction does not rule—England, France, Holland, Sweden, Belgium, Italy, etc.—Communists have normal legal rights as part of the political community. Indeed, Communist Parties today exist as entirely legal organizations in scores of countries throughout the world.

#### TRUMAN'S VETO

The McCarran Act was jammed through Congress on September 30, 1950 in the Korea War hysteria, over the veto of President Truman. In his veto message President Truman warned: ". . . these (registration) provisions are not merely ineffective and unworkable. They represent a clear and present danger to our institutions."

These words were not heeded, and the Act, with its fantastic registration provisions which would require the Party's officers to be informers for a police dragnet, was passed. But this cannot and will not happen. There will be no betrayal of the confidence of a single member or supporter of the party or any organization or trade union.

The Communist Party will defend its right to a legal existence under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as a legitimate current in American political life, a movement that can trace its existence back a full century into our history, from the Communists who supported Lincoln and the Union through the old Socialist Party. The Communist

Party has taken legal steps to request a re-hearing by the Supreme Court and will exhaust every resource to halt the oppression of these iniquitous laws and their dire consequences for the liberties of all Americans.

At the same time the Communist Party will place its case before the highest court of all, the bar of public opinion. For we have profound confidence in the great democratic traditions of our land and are fully convinced that the Court's 5-4 decisions of June 5 will yet be reversed by a popular majority.

We recall that a Supreme Court majority once held in the Dred Scott case that a Negro had no rights that a white man was bound to respect—and that this decision was swept away and that the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments were added to our Constitution. We recall that another court in the infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision decreed the pernicious "separate but equal" doctrine of segregation—and that this, too, was later swept away. And we recall that in President Roosevelt's time a reactionary majority decreed against New Deal laws—only to be swept aside by the popular will.

#### ALL MUST ACT

We have a profound confidence in the American people. We are proud of those in the American tradition—Abolitionists, trade unionists, liberals, Negro leaders—who contributed so much to the democratic struggle

and never flinched before threats of prosecution, jail or terror. Today's Freedom Riders are in that great tradition.

Sharing that heritage, we Communists face the future calmly. Neither the Palmer Raids of the World War I period nor the persecutions of the McCarthy era succeeded in destroying the Communist movement. Nowhere in the world has fascism, terror or repression accomplished that aim. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. will survive and the struggle for peace, security, democracy and a socialist order ending the exploitation of man by man will survive—and grow.

It is not for ourselves alone that we speak. For we know full well that reactionary laws like the McCarran and Smith Acts have an evil purpose and a relentless logic and that in nation after nation the destruction of the democratic rights of *all* began with the attack "only" on the Communists. Inevitably the assault spread and sought to destroy *all* who stood for peace, economic security and democratic rights—the trade unions, the Socialists, the Jews the liberals.

That is why we say to all our fellow-Americans, irrespective of political faith: The bell tolls not for the Communists alone but for the hard-won rights of *all* Americans. All must act together to save American constitutional liberties.

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Let the President, the Attorney General and the Congress know that America wants an end to these fascist-like laws. America does not want to go down the road to concentra-

tion camps and a garrison state. Americans want to maintain their constitutional rights to proceed in their *own* way towards their *own* new frontiers through the political parties and voluntary organizations of their *own* free choice.

*As we went to press, news came that Justice Frankfurter had granted the Party's request for a stay of execution of the McCarran Act decision until the autumn. The Communist Party, through its General Secretary, Gus Hall, issued the following statement, on June 23, concerning this action:*

Justice Frankfurter has granted a stay of the McCarran Act registration order until fall, when the Communist Party's petition for a rehearing will be heard. This action, an important concession to the widespread sentiment already expressed against the 5-4 decision upholding the order, is particularly significant in the light of the reasons which prompted it.

The Party's petition for a re-hearing argues that the registration order violates the Fifth Amendment. The Government response in effect admits this by proposing to offer some devious form of registration in an effort to circumvent this inescapable flaunting of the Constitution.

Such a proposal clearly opens up new questions for the Supreme Court. But above all, it graphically exposes the utter unworkability of this legal monstrosity and its total incompatibility with the Bill of Rights. It brings to light only one of the innumerable contradictions and absurdities in which the law abounds from beginning to end.

The position of the bare majority which upheld the registration order is thus shown to be all the more untenable, and the need for reconsideration to be all the more urgent. Every American who cherishes democratic liberties should raise his voice in behalf of reconsideration and of the consignment of the McCarran Act to the grave it so richly deserves.

At the same time, the fight against this and other repressive laws is far from won. The Smith Act membership decision, making activity in behalf of a legal party a crime, still stands. The petition for a rehearing in the Scales case has been rejected, and the first victim of this piece of police-state registration is on his way to prison for six years. We intend to pursue with redoubled vigor the battle against all such laws and in defense of the Constitution, until victory is won. We reiterate our profound confidence that the highest court of all—the American people—will speak the last word and that they will not fail to uphold the great democratic traditions of our country.

# "A Fateful Moment;" The Supreme Court and the Communists

## An Editorial

The June 5 decisions of the United States Supreme Court upholding the constitutionality of the membership clause of the Smith Act and the registration clause of the McCarran Act constitute "a fateful moment," as Mr. Justice Black stated in his memorable dissent in the latter case. Each decision was rendered by a Court split 5 to 4; in each case the dissents were severe and substantial. Since the decisions had the slimmest possible majorities, and since the dissents were so vigorous and profound, it is clear that the gravest "reasonable doubt" persists as to the correctness of the decisions. Where an individual's freedom is involved, it is standard procedure to disallow conviction if a "reasonable doubt" remains; shall more precipitate action and contrary conduct be pursued where the nation's freedom is involved?

The Smith and the McCarran Acts deal with Marxism-Leninism, with political activities in the United States going back decades, with evaluations of the government of the Soviet Union, with estimates concerning international relations since before World War II. Just on the face of it, therefore, the matters

dealt with in these laws range over the widest philosophical and scientific and ethical questions, as well as much of the history of our own country and of a large part of the world for the past generation. From this point of view alone, the laws are anachronistic, and to bring prosecutions under them into courts of law is medieval—or fascistic.

Defendants under these laws stand charged with their whole outlook, all their moral values; defendants under these laws are defending their ideas, their dreams, their hopes, their most fervent commitments. Such matters do not belong in a courtroom. How shall one who has spent his life studying and thinking about the whole monumental sweep of Marxism-Leninism "explain" and "defend" this to an "Anti-Subversion" Board of political appointees? How shall one be "tried" for a million "mystic chords" that bind him to Bunker Hill and the Battle of the Bulge?

Well, impossible though it be the class enemy has made these things—and a million more infinitely precious things—triable in courts dependent upon the "recollections" of embittered and subsidized rene-

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grades and government-hired informers, subject to the snippings and cuttings of political illiterates who comb through books and pamphlets written twenty, forty, sixty, one hundred years ago, in some other land, under other conditions, for this or that purpose—and from these snippings and cuttings fall out, drop by drop, like one's heart-blood, the words and the phrases that are to make prison cells for men and women—and a whole nation.

What a fine thing to have to write about for an American magazine that is to appear in the month of July—in the month made sacred to mankind as the anniversary of our great manifesto of revolution—the Declaration of Independence! What a fine thing to have to explain and defend and make clear yet again, and again and again, on this 185th anniversary of our nation's birth-certificate, principles even then affirmed "to be self-evident truths"!

Having cried out in protest, let us turn to the task. For the purposes of this particular article—bearing in mind the necessary space limitations—we shall examine only the actual content of Justice Frankfurter's majority decision in the McCarran Act case, and of the dissents written by Chief Justice Warren and Justice Black.

#### THE FRANKFURTER DECISION

The Frankfurter decision is based upon accepting as fact—*not subject*

*to judicial review*—the characterization of Communism contained in the introductory matter of the McCarran Act. That characterization was concocted by the extreme Right in American life—such individuals as Senator McCarran himself, Senators McCarthy, Jenner, Eastland, Mundt, and Representatives Nixon, Walter, Smith, etc.—at the height of the hysteria accompanying the Korean War. That characterization places upon the law books of our country, one which in content, and in much of its language, is identical with the characterization of Communism offered by the late Adolph Hitler. That is to say, it finds Communism to be a criminal conspiracy, seeking through deceit, treachery, secretiveness, sabotage, and any and all means barring none, to overthrow forcibly the government of the United States; adherents of Communism are people who are engaged in this criminal conspiracy and enterprise because they are the agents of the Soviet Union, and wish to bring about in the United States a Soviet-type government which would itself be subservient to the USSR.

I repeat—and it is most important that this be understood—that this legislative finding is not subject to review by the Subversive Activities Control Board set up under the Act; and Justice Frankfurter in his opinion explicitly found that the Board was correct in resisting appeals by the plaintiff (the Communist

Party) that it review the validity of this "finding." Justice Frankfurter further explicitly said that the Supreme Court, in rendering its verdict also felt itself to be barred from examining the accuracy or validity of this "finding"; that finding had been arrived at by the Legislature and—in Frankfurter's theory of the severely limited role of the Court relative to the legislative process—was accepted as binding upon the Court and in no way subject to review by that Court.

With that understanding, said Frankfurter, the matter before the Board was only to discover whether or not the Attorney General was correct in declaring that the Communist Party was indeed a "Communist-action" organization within the meaning of the McCarran Act; if it were so, then the Board was correct in certifying that fact; if the Board did correctly certify that fact, the Court was obliged to order that registration, under the provisions of that Act.

Since the substance of the definition of Communism—i.e., a definition that was in every particular the same as Hitler's—was not a matter of adjudication, in this instance, but was held to be settled, what really remained was for the Supreme Court to uphold the finding by the Board that the Communist Party was a "Communist-action" group insofar as it "followed the dictates of the foreign power" (i.e., of the Soviet

Union). If this were not found, there was no case; if it were found, then—the nature of Communism as the incarnation of everything evil and treasonous being already placed beyond argument—conviction followed. At the same time the whole logic of the definition of Communism as being indeed an alien, treasonable conspiracy, required that the Communist Party be found to be subject to "following the dictates of a foreign power"; one could not—given the acceptance of the original lunacy—reject the validity of the consequence of that acceptance. If one did reject that consequence then the whole anti-Communist policy would be shown up for what it is—and always has been, whether conducted by Hitler or Mussolini or Franco or Rhee or Chiang Kai-shek or Trujillo—a gigantic fraud, *the Bie Lie*, in fact.

The majority decision recalls the following sequence of events in compiling the Board's record which, it is safe to say, not one out of ten thousand Americans knew or yet knows: The Communist Party was correct in insisting that of the Government's several witnesses, three demonstrably were perjurers on the basis of testimony offered before this Board. Frankfurter noted that the testimony of Manning Johnson, Paul Crouch, and Harvey Matusow was shown to be perjurious and that on this basis a lower Court had ordered the record to be remanded. Frankfurter notes that the Board re-exam-

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ined the record, tore from it the "voluminous" testimony of the three liars, and then insisted that the record still was sufficient to uphold the Attorney General's registration demand. He notes that a second time the lower Court ordered the record remanded because the Government had insisted, when challenged by the defense, that contemporaneous FBI records of Louis Budenz' testimony was not available, but upon persistence of the challenge, the FBI had admitted that it had erred in its original denial and that such contemporaneous evidence was available. Examination of this contemporaneous record showed at once that certain most important elements in Budenz' testimony before the Board—especially testimony relating to alleged financial transactions between the Party and the USSR—were contradicted by the original record of Budenz' own "confessions." The lower Court then ordered the Board to strike from the record all such testimony from Budenz; the Board did so, and still reported that it felt the original record was sufficient to uphold the Attorney General.

The Party's request to cross-examine Budenz on the basis of the now admitted existence of contemporaneous FBI records was found not to be practical because of the witness' illness; when the Party then demanded that his entire testimony be stricken since effective cross-examination was impossible through

no fault of the defense, the lower Court denied this appeal, and Frankfurter upheld the denial on the technical ground that the Party's request was not made in good time.

Among the criteria set up by the legislation to establish "foreign agency" were the receiving of financial support from the foreign power; the sending of reports to the power; and the sending of members of the criminal group to that power for training and instruction. The Board itself admitted that there was no evidence of this—certainly none, it stated, since 1940—which is a full ten years prior to the enactment of the McCarran Act—and the decision written by Justice Frankfurter admits that the Board made no such finding. This is especially important because Attorney General Kennedy in hastily announcing that he planned to implement the Court's decision referred particularly to the alleged proof of a financial tie between the Communist Party of the United States and the Soviet Union or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Apparently, the Attorney General was in such a hurry that he had not yet read the majority decision; certainly, the fact is that Justice Frankfurter admits that the Board itself reported that "there was no evidence" of such activities for the decade prior to the Act's passage (p. 54 of the Frankfurter decision). But the Board felt—and the Justice agreed with it—that this absence of



evidence for these particulars was not "fatal" to the government's case. One wonders, nevertheless, if as many as one percent of the American people know that the Board found *an absence of evidence* on these criteria of "foreign agency"—especially after the well-publicized, though quite inaccurate, remarks of the Attorney General.

Another criterion of foreign domination and criminal action set up by the McCarran Act itself for the guidance of the Board, is the extent to which "for the purpose of concealing foreign direction, domination, or control, or of expediting or promoting its objectives" an organization operates secretly. The Board in its original findings held that the Communist Party was guilty of secret practices for both these purposes; but the Court of Appeals, in its first opinion, held that the Board had not established, in its own record, that whatever secrecy might be present in Party affairs, had for its purposes either of the two mentioned in the Act. The Board, after remanding, while taking no new evidence, reported that while there was *no* evidence that secrecy, where it occurred, was practiced in order to conceal foreign control, it was practiced in order to further the Party's objectives (as defined by the Act, of course)! The Court of Appeals, on its second hearing, again rejected the Board's finding, not only as to foreign control but also as to advancing its own

"objectives." What this meant was that the lower Court was finding that if and when secrecy was employed by the Party—*so far as the Board's own evidence showed*—it seemed to be employed against harassment by the FBI and other police agencies. The Frankfurter decision states that though it must be admitted that the Board's record does not show the use of secrecy for the purposes mentioned in the Act itself, this, too, is not a fatal defect.

Well, if it is not financial connection; if it is not the dispatch of reports; if it is not the sending of "trainees"; if it is not the employment of secrecy for purposes of hiding foreign domination—if all these criteria, set up in the Act itself—are not established by the Board's record (*and Frankfurter's own decision admits all this*), then what does establish this foreign domination which justifies the order to register?

The answer is one thing and only one thing, according to the record and the majority decision itself. That one thing is the coincidence of views held by the Communist Party of the United States and the Soviet Union and/or the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This is enough to establish the accuracy of the central charge in the McCarran Act,—that the Party "follows the dictates of a foreign power." But to make enough takes some doing, and that is one of the reasons that Mr. Justice Frankfurter requires 112 pages be

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fore he feels able to write the ominous word: "affirmed."

First, one has the problem of the word "dictates." In normal usage this carries with it some connotation of compulsion—as in the relationship between a guard and his prisoner, or between an army officer and a private, or between an employer and a worker. No such relationship has been established—this is admitted by the Board and by the Court. Well, the way to answer that is that in this case "dictates" really means "agrees" or "acquiesces" and if there is some "dictation" it is of a rather extraordinary kind carrying with it at least as much volunteering as compelling.

Having re-defined "dictates" in accordance with the necessities of the case, one turns to the word "follows." Do you think, kind and naive reader, that "follows" means, as the dictionary says, "To go or come after"; "to result from"; "to copy after?" Well, for the purposes of the McCarran Act and the Board's finding, and the decision of five members of the United States Supreme Court, as conveyed through the pen of Mr. Justice Frankfurter, the word "follows" does not have such meanings. The difficulty, you see is this: The central witness, upon which the whole government's case finally rested—after the Board admitted failure after failure and after witness after witness were shown to be perjurers—was Professor Philip Mosely,

Director of the Russian Institute at Columbia University. The Professor brought forward forty-five major international issues in the history of the world during the past thirty years and affirmed that there had been "no substantial difference" between the announced positions of the Communist Party of the United States and the Soviet Union on these matters. Well, then, you may ask, what is the difficulty?

The difficulty appeared when it was demonstrated, by witnesses for the Party, that in more than half the cases picked by Professor Mosely himself—that is in 27 out of 45—the positions stated by the Communist Party of the United States *antedated* the positions affirmed by the Soviet Union! So that now, not only did dictation partake more of the voluntary than the compulsory, but he who was "accused" of following, was shown to have followed by being first, and he who was being followed, was not in front but was in the rear!

Mr. Frankfurter, in a footnote, observes (p. 56) that "The Government expressly disclaimed any attempt to establish chronological sequence between the announced positions of the two." Surely, what is involved cannot be spatial sequence; what then is involved in "follows?" Can it be anything other than temporal sequence which might—and might not—show some kind of ideological' subordination—assuming that this has now become a crime in the

United States.

Is there anything in *Alice in Wonderland* "queerer and queerer" than finding one guilty of "following the dictates" of someone else by bringing forth evidence that the accused has *voluntarily preceded* that other party?

Of course, the Party brought forward other arguments, including the reasonableness of the positions it took—as on the Italian elections of 1948, the War in Korea, the seating of China in the U.N., etc.—and insisted that this might logically explain to any unprejudiced mind why it held the views it did. But whether or not the positions might be reasonable was held to be irrelevant. And when the Party demonstrated that on many issues many groups and organs indubitably—up to this point at any rate—not Communist, took substantially similar views as did the Party, this also was held to be irrelevant. Only a substantial identity of views between the Party and the Soviet Union — no matter who announced such views first, no matter how reasonable the views themselves might be, no matter how many other groups and people might hold similar views—was held to be relevant and such substantial identity being demonstrated, the Party was "guilty" under the McCarran Act. After all the thousands of words of the 112 pages, this is what the Frankfurter decision says—so far as it says anything of substance upholding the Act.

Hence, the only tenable conclusion from the record is that the sole adequate defense from prosecution under the McCarran Act as a Communist action group (let alone a "Communist-supported" or "Communist-infiltrated" group) is never to take a position on anything that is or might be—in the future—substantially similar to a position taken by or to be taken by the USSR. Since both past and future are included and since no topic is excluded, the only thoroughly safe thing to do is not to take a position on anything at any time! On second thought, even this does not guarantee full safety; full safety would come if one could always take a position on everything which was contrary to the position that the USSR had taken or might take on any subject known or to become known. For final and full insurance, having accomplished this, one should then set out to watch everybody else, and at the slightest hint that someone is deviating from this path of absolute purity, denounce him at once to the authorities—if anyone at all could be trusted with authority under these "ideal" conditions.

This is the logic of "Americanism" à la McCarran and Eastland; how welcome in such an America would be Thomas Jefferson! In such an America what label would be suitable for the Declaration of Independence so that one could send it through the mails?

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## THE WARREN DISSENT

It is noteworthy that little publicity has been given to the dissents in the June 5th decisions. The *New York Times*, even, gave them the barest summary; the nearly complete silence is the more striking since the decisions were 5 to 4, and since in both cases the Chief Justice was with the minority.

Six years ago, Walter Lippmann, commenting on the then mounting resistance to McCarthyism, and having in mind specifically the McCarran legislation, wrote: ". . . the great majority of the leaders of American public opinion are no longer willing to stand for the theory that espionage, sabotage, and subversion can be dealt with only by ignoring the Constitution, and by conniving at what is nakedly and simply lynch law." Now that the June 5th decisions have been rendered, one hopes that such leaders of public opinion—including Mr. Lippmann himself—will speak out forcefully and dramatically. One of those who has done so is the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court; Mr. Warren's dissent in the McCarran Act case is, in fact, a scorching denunciation of the legal lynching of which the majority were guilty.

The Chief Justice states and elucidates six grounds for rejecting the Government's case. These are as follows:

1) The Government refused to produce the original memoranda recorded by the FBI from the informer Gitlow's reports. The Chief Justice pointed out that Gitlow was, at the very least, a "questionable" witness; but, quite apart from that, the fact that the plaintiff demanded the contemporaneous records of his "disclosures" and that this request was not granted represented a major infringement upon the legal rights of the Communist Party and alone required a reversal.

2) The Chief Justice pointed out that elementary rules of judicial procedure (and he proceeded to quote at length from such basic texts as Wigmore on evidence) required that all the testimony of the informer Budenz be stricken once the Government admitted that it had misinformed a lower Court when it had stated that the contemporaneous records of his "disclosures" were not available, when in fact they were. True, the lower Court had ordered stricken testimony by Budenz that was clearly shown to contain inconsistencies; but the failure to produce the original records, and the impossibility of cross-examining Budenz because of his illness—in the face of the fact that he was a key witness for the Government—made it necessary, if basic judicial procedures were to be followed, that all his testimony be stricken. This was the more urgent because the Chief Justice found, on reading the record, that there

existed "the not unlikely possibility that much of Budenz' testimony was unreliable."

3) The Chief Justice further found that the McCarran Board itself had not found the Communist Party to be engaged in illegal advocacy, but, rather, and at most, in the advocacy of the use of force sometime in the future under particular circumstances "if necessary." If there was any advocacy of force—as shown by the Board's own record—said the Chief Justice, it was in terms of an abstract doctrine and clearly not any kind of advocacy even remotely suggesting the incitement of any one to action.

4) The fact that the Board itself was unable to find the presence of secrecy on the part of the Party for the purposes of overthrowing the Government or for any other nefarious purpose spelled out in the McCarran Act itself, similarly appeared to the Chief Justice to be a fatal defect in the Government's case.

5) Most of what evidence the Government did present which might be construed as vindicating its case, was called "stale" by the Chief Justice since almost all of it referred to the period prior to 1940—i.e., to a period 21 years prior to this moment, and ten years prior to the enactment of the law the Court was considering. Not only was the evidence held to be "stale"; in addition, the Chief Justice noted that continuity between the evidence antedating 1940 and any activities or advocacy since 1940 had

not been demonstrated by the Government.

6) And, concluded Mr. Chief Justice Warren, in any case—particularly in view of the decision of the same day upholding the constitutionality of the membership clause of the Smith Act—the violation of the Fifth Amendment in the present case was absolutely patent and not subject to rational dispute. He went on to note that even the majority had not dared to deny (or to affirm) such a conflict but had simply dodged the question by asserting that it was "premature" to decide the matter. How would justice be served, asked the Chief Justice, by prolonging further this litigation, by putting individuals to the enormous expense of further court proceedings; the violation of the Fifth Amendment was absolutely clear—in one case a man is sentenced to jail because he is an active member of the Communist Party, and in another case members are ordered to register as members, with non-registration bringing very severe punishments!

On any one of these grounds, stated the Chief Justice, the Government's case should be reversed; in the face of the weight of the simultaneous existence of all six such grounds, the Chief Justice concluded that reversal was the "only disposition that would be consistent with the fastidious regard for the honor of the administration of justice" to be expected from the Supreme Court

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Never before in the history of the United States, has there been so unequivocal and smashing a dissent from a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

### JUSTICE BLACK'S DISSENT

Associate Justice Hugo L. Black of Alabama has assured for himself immortality with Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln as an unswerving and heroic defender of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. He has stood up under severe fire for a generation, unswerving in his dedication to these principles and to the sacred duty of the Supreme Court to guard those principles against all claims of "patriotism," of the alleged superior needs of the country's "security," and all theories of the inviolability of legislative will.

His ringing dissents in the Smith Act membership case and in the McCarran case will be read generations after the 170 pages of the majority decisions rendered in these cases by Justices Harlan and Frankfurter will be referred to only as marvelous examples of the tortured reasonings of first-class minds vindicating despicable causes.

Justice Black bases his McCarran Act dissent upon his conviction—the reasoning for which he demonstrates with great persuasiveness—that it violates the Bill of Rights in every

particular in both letter and spirit. He shows that the Act deals with opinions and seeks the outlawry of groups solely on the basis of opinions. So magnificent is the argumentation that one is tempted simply to quote from it *in extenso*. The relatively easy accessibility of the complete opinion, however,\* and limitations of space make this both unnecessary and impossible. I cannot resist, nevertheless, offering three brief extracts which may convey something of the flavor and the argumentation of this historic document.

After examining the structure of the McCarran Act itself and of the Board it establishes—and the unprecedented powers of that Board acting in conjunction with the Attorney General—Justice Black observes: "*The Act thus not only is a legislative bill of attainder but also violates due process by short-cutting practically all of the Bill of Rights, leaving no hope for anyone entangled in this legislative-administrative web except what has proved in this case to be one of the most truncated judicial reviews that the history of this Court can afford.*"

Following his demonstration of the gross violations of the rights of the instant defendants in the case, Justice Black warns: "*I realize that these laws are aimed only at the Communist Party. No one need console*

\* The Black dissent is published in full as a pamphlet by the Citizens' Committee for Constitutional Liberties, 22 East 17th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Copies are available for 15c.

himself, however, that the policy of using governmental force to crush dissident groups upon which they are based can or will be stopped at that point." And in his concluding section, he affirms: "In my judgment, this country's internal security can better be served by depending upon the affection of the people than by attempting to instill them with fear and dread of the power of Government."

Perhaps the most telling sentences, however, constitute the concluding paragraphs in the dissent in the Smith Act membership case by Justice Douglas. Having in mind the five to four vote by which the Court upheld the Government, he wrote:

"The most indifferent arguments," Bismarck said, "are good when one has a majority of bayonets." That is also true when one has the votes.

What we lose by majority vote today may be reclaimed at a future time when the fear of advocacy, dissent, and non-conformity no longer cast a shadow over us.

#### WHY NOT REGISTER?

The press, in commenting on the McCarran Act decision, have given their readers to understand that all it really does is demand that Communists register as Communists. This is even in Justice Frankfurter's decision, where he tries to justify his idea that it would be premature to evaluate the impact of the Court's decision

upon the Fifth Amendment: "There is no indication that in the past [the Party's] high-ranking officials have sought to conceal their identity, and no reason to believe that in the future they will decline to file a registration statement whose whole effect, in this regard, is further to evidence a fact which, traditionally, has been one of public notice."

So great is the sophistry here, that one can hardly believe his eyes. Note, first, what this does to the Government's insistence that secrecy and deceit characterize the conduct of the officers of the Party—the Court bases its affirmation of the Government's case, in part, upon the fact that secrecy and deceit have hitherto not been present! Secondly, of course, this is not a matter of mere registration, for the act of registration carries with it severe penalties—denial of tax benefits, denial of government employment or employment in any industry touched with a defense interest (and what isn't these days?), denial of the right to apply for or to use a passport. That is, registration carries with it, automatically, severe prohibitions upon earning a living inside the country and absolute prohibitions against leaving the country!

But, thirdly and most importantly, the Act does not require Communists to register as Communists; the act requires Communists to register, under oath, their agreement with the McCarran Act's definition of a "Communist," i.e., to register as

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There are saboteurs, deceivers, criminal conspirators, traitors, and then says that a Communist does not sign a sworn statement so defining himself he will be liable to imprisonment for five years for every day he fails to publicly label himself!

What do these neo-fascist concoctions of drag-nets think we Communists are? Do they think we will admit perjury, like Van Doren and then receive a "God bless you" from some two-bit politician? Do they think we will boast of being dupes and dopes like some whining and craven creature who wants to protect his \$1,000-a-week job? Do they think we will "confess" to having been "spies" like Whittaker Chambers so that we can make a million dollars writing "confessions" for *Life* magazine and religiously-flavored "inspirational" for Hearst? These neo-fascist falsifiers and would-be Hitlers must think we are what they are.

Yes, one who is a Communist only hopes he really is worthy of that magnificent title. One does not easily affirm that he belongs anywhere with such company as Sean O'Casey and Louis Aragon and Pablo Picasso and Maxim Gorky and Alfredo Siquieros and Theodore Dreiser and Bertolt Brecht and Gabriel Peri and Ernst Thaelmann. One who is a Communist does not easily affirm that he belongs among the great and millions-strong army of the known and the unknown

Communists who led the Resistance against Hitler, who were in the front-rank of the immortal Red Army's defeat of fascism, who have organized the poor and down-trodden, the oppressed and the despised, the hated and the vilified throughout the world for a century now, and who have led in the building of magnificent societies, infinitely better than those they replaced, in one-third the globe.

To count oneself part of this most noble and sacred company is no small thing. Surely it is not something to be ashamed of; it is rather something to aspire to and work towards. But to put oneself down as a spy and traitor; to inform on one's friends and comrades; to betray the freedom of one's country; to assist those who would bring fascism to our land and war to the world—all these "patriotic" duties are for the Gitlows and the Budenzes in the FBI stable.

*Political Affairs* has fought the Smiths and the McCarrans in the past; it fights them in the present; it will fight them in the future. We know our readers will join us in this; that all friends of decency and democracy will join us in this; that millions and millions throughout the world who treasure peace and justice will join us in this.

We will win because we are right. We will win and cast off from our land the shadow momentarily over us.



# American Farmers Today

By Richard F. Romano

The most profound and prophetic analysis ever made of U.S. agriculture was V. I. Lenin's *New Data on the Laws of Development of Capitalism in Agriculture* in 1914-15.\* In his opening sentence Lenin said, "The foremost country of modern capitalism is particularly interesting for the study of the social-economic structure and evolution of modern agriculture." Of his reasons for selecting the United States, he went on to add that here the "development of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century" was "unequaled in rapidity" and covered a "vastness of . . . territory—on which is employed the most up-to-date technical equipment." Another reason for his choice at the time was the availability of "copious material such as is not to be found in any other country." So, Lenin, busy as he was, undertook a rigorous, systematic analysis of the bulky 1900 and 1910 *Censuses of U.S. Agriculture* and the 1911 *U.S. Statistical Abstract*.

## LENIN ON U.S. AGRICULTURE

Lenin criticized "the theory of the non-capitalist evolution of agriculture in capitalist society" and noted that,

\* V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. XII, International Publishers.

at the time he was writing, it was "in essence the theory of the vast majority of bourgeois professors, bourgeois democrats and opportunists in the labor movement throughout the world." Here, in the U.S., that theory enjoyed wide currency, one of the best-known forms being the so-called "farm ladder theory" which came into wide vogue about the time of World War I but even today pops up in the most unexpected places. According to it, farmers-to-be start at the bottom rung of the ladder as hired workers or unpaid family workers, then work their way up to tenant status and finally to full ownership, with the family-type farmer representing the prototype or ideal for the nation. Exponents of this idyllic "theory" have seldom bothered to try to square it against the facts—they have generally ignored the plight of the Negro sharecroppers in the South and the agricultural workers as well, and of course they have refused to recognize that in a capitalist system there is a process of transformation from small-scale to large-scale agricultural production. Even though the ladder theory has been quietly buried in most centers of learning, the belief is widely held that family-type farming is nevertheless immutable or indestructible or, if not quite so, at least its form can somehow remain impervious against



the assaults of both the big food trusts and large-scale agriculture.

Lenin called the theory of the non-capitalist evolution of agriculture "an illusion, a dream, the self-deception of the whole of bourgeois society." He then proceeded to refute this theory on the basis of a thoroughgoing, scientific analysis of the statistical data then available on U.S. agriculture. He showed that much of what the bourgeois theorists pointed to as proof of the growth of small farming was premised on the false assumption that acreage alone can be taken as a measure of the size of farm, scale of operation or degree of capitalist development. Thus, the break-up of latifundia (large tracts of land, over 1,000 acres and only partially utilized) was often cited by these experts as evidence of the growth of small farming and the disintegration of capitalism in agriculture. The very opposite was, of course, the case, as later events clearly showed.

So incisive was Lenin's grasp of the agrarian question that, even though never in the U.S., he was able to encompass the unwieldy mass of heterogeneous data offered by the Census and, using a variety of ingenious statistical techniques, he was able to distill off the essence, clearly demonstrating the fundamental lines of development. He showed that capitalism in U.S. agriculture was increasing, not decreasing, that big agriculture was, even then, expro-

priating the smaller producers and that despite the lag in agriculture as compared to industry, the same laws of development apply to both. Lenin wrote: "In agriculture manual labor predominates over machinery infinitely more than in industry. But the machine is steadily advancing, raising the technique of farming, making it large-scale and capitalistic." From his comparison of the 1900 and 1910 Censuses, he concluded, "Small production is being rapidly eliminated by large-scale production in agriculture." "Class contradictions are becoming stronger and sharper," he observed, noting that the class struggle is by no means confined to urban or industrial areas.

Lenin's 1914-15 study has been ignored by bourgeois theorists in the U.S. Even today, when the smaller farms are being eliminated at breakneck speed, academic farm economists and Department of Agriculture experts make no mention of Lenin's analysis or his prescient forecasts. In their occasional, brief and hasty, "refutations" of Marxist-Leninist theory, they find it easier to set up crudely contrived straw men and knock these down. Since no one in their circle rises to object, the exercise is self-gratifying even though infantile.

#### THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In recent years, however, it has become increasingly difficult for

bourgeois theorists to perpetuate previous fictions, such as, to paraphrase Gertrude Stein, that "a farm is a farm" and that class contradictions are non-existent in agriculture. In keeping with these fictions, federal farm programs to "aid agriculture" or "balance production" have as a rule applied the same percentage cuts to the acreage tilled by small farmers as to the big producers. A sharp change in the attitude of big business and big agriculture began to emerge toward the close of World War II. In March 1945, the 24-man Agricultural Department Committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce issued a tract, *Variations in Farm Incomes and Their Relation to Agricultural Policies*, urging that federal programs be revised "to avoid fostering uneconomic agricultural units" and instead "to improve economic conditions of the larger farmers." The signers included corporate executives from General Electric, Armour, Pillsbury, Ralston Purina and other big firms as well as a leading officer of both the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Grange.

The purpose of this tract was to mobilize big business and big agriculture for the forthcoming offensive against the small and middle-size farms, to capture a larger share of the market for farm products and to step up the class war in agriculture. Of course, federal farm programs except for the New Deal's

Farm Security Administration, have been heavily loaded in favor of the big farms. But what the "agribusiness" spokesmen (those representing the fusion of big business and big agriculture) have been pressing for is an open disavowal of the long-proclaimed but almost never-practiced principle that federal farm programs have as their purpose the preservation of the family-type farm. Instead, they demand that agribusiness be recognized as the new prototype for the American way and that federal farm programs be geared to their special interests, accelerating their expansion and the removal of the smaller farms from agriculture.

In its 1945 tract, the Chamber of Commerce was somewhat vague about the number of farmers it would like to see eliminated but its minimum target seems to have been 1½ million or about one-fourth of the 6 million U.S. total reported by the 1939 Census. Part of the reason for its vagueness was, of course, the pretense that only small farms were being earmarked for expropriation and the authors were not sure what sort of reception their proposals would meet. That their attack was intended against the family-type farmers was, however, clearly revealed by passages such as this: "Although these farms are definitely of the *family type* (italics in original—Ed.) and apparently constitute a substantial portion of the type which is supposed to be the backbone of the

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nation, their limited incomes inevitably create conditions which fall short of being favorable for the development of a high type of worker or citizen." More recently, the Chamber of Commerce has become bolder and thrown off some of its former pretenses. It says that all except a million farms are expendable during the next decade. Of the 4.6 million farms in the U.S. (based on a U.S.D.A. estimate for 1960), the Chamber of Commerce's organ *Nation's Business* (May 1960) declared that over the next 10 years "one million . . . could supply a population of more than 200 million."

#### BENSON AND AGRIBUSINESS

During his eight years as Secretary of Agriculture in the Eisenhower Administration, Ezra Taft Benson undertook to apply the credo of agribusiness with an almost fanatical zeal. Benson's view of the farm problem was simple, though by no means consistent. His object was to reduce and, if possible, eliminate farm surpluses—and, as he saw it, the best way of doing this was by eliminating as many of what he termed the "small," "marginal," "inefficient" farmers as quickly as possible. Sometimes, he seemed to believe that agriculture could really be brought into a state of balance by such measures if only he were given a free enough hand to make free enterprise work but, at other times, he spoke of "balance" as something to be achieved

only in the "non-foreseeable future."

Benson tongue-lashed the farmers for producing too much, called on city consumers to rise up against them and encouraged a never-ending outpouring of newspaper editorials in which the farmers generally were characterized as greedy, grasping, subsidy-spoiled wards of the federal treasury. While directing the main lash of his fury against those farmers whom he called "inefficient" and "marginal," Benson seldom bothered to hid his hostility and contempt for the family-type farmers. His solution for all problems of the farmers was a return to free enterprise, but never did he advocate this doctrine for the food trusts. So intense was the grass-root hatred for Benson that the Republican congressmen tried to prevent him from speaking in their districts and Democrats boasted that a sure-fire formula for election was to "get Benson to make a speech for one's opponent." Yet, as he left office, Benson stoutly maintained that the majority of the farmers were in support of his programs—meaning perhaps the majority of the agribusiness entrepreneurs.

#### THE KENNEDY PROGRAM

As with so many other domestic issues, the Kennedy Administration has given no clear-cut indication where it stands on the farm question. To be sure, President Kennedy has assured farmers that, despite his earlier record in the Senate, he no

longer adheres to Benson's type of programs and that, instead of no-support or low-support price floors with moderate cutbacks in acreage, he now inclines toward high supports with sharper cutbacks in production, using acreage or physical units of output or even marketings. His Secretary of Agriculture, Orville L. Freeman of Minnesota, has pointedly re-affirmed the principle of helping to preserve and strengthen the family-type farm. But how is this to be done? After considerable study, the Administration finally came up with what has been variously called the "omnibus farm bill," "Freeman-Cochrane bill" or "do-it-yourself" measure. The bill as originally drafted would allow groups of commodity producers to draw up programs of their own devising under the guidance of the Secretary of Agriculture. Congress would then have 60 days in which to approve or disapprove a proposed commodity program but, if no action were taken by Congress during the 60-day waiting period, the farmers could ballot in a referendum to determine whether or not the program should be put into effect. Though devoid of working machinery, this "do-it-yourself" program has been well regarded by farmers generally who see it as offering an opportunity, long denied by Benson, of drawing up a commodity program and at least getting a hearing in the Department of Agriculture.

Innocuous as the program might

seem, the Republican Party, aided by the Farm Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce, have chosen to make it capital issue.

In reply to the frenzied attack of the Republicans, the Administration seems to be adhering strictly to the old adage that "a soft word turneth away wrath." Certainly, it has said little and that, softly. While denying that it wants to subvert the Constitution or take from Congress the right to legislate, the Administration has reiterated its willingness to rewrite any offensive sections of its omnibus farm bill and to compromise differences. All of this is in accordance with Kennedy's instructions to his aides that everything possible should be done to maintain good relations between the White House and Capitol Hill.\*

### FARM WORKERS

The Administration's recommendations for migrant farm labor legislation ran into similar opposition from the Southern Democrats. Here, the first major test came over the extension of Public Law 78, which embodies the agreement between the United States and Mexico governing the importation of farm workers from Mexico. In his testimony before Congress, Secretary of Labor Gold-

\* The Senate Committee on Agriculture announced on June 27 that it has rejected the Administration's farm bill, especially the proposed do-it-yourself commodity programs, and then spurning compromises, had endorsed by a 9 to 8 vote a substitute Aiken-Holland measure, authored by the Republicans and Southern Demo-

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berg said the new Administration was united in its determination to aid the agricultural workers, the lowest-paid group of workers in the nation, and to see that protective legislation was at long last enacted. "The time for study has passed—the time for action is now," he asserted. In addition to bold generalities, Goldberg did endorse specific pieces of farm labor legislation. All of these were concerned with migrant farm labor and related to health, child labor, education and the registration of crew leaders. But his chief interest, he made plain, was to oppose the extension of P.L. 78 unless it was amended to include safeguards that the Administration later set forth in the Coad Bill. Though the Administration threatened to veto P.L. 78 unless its amendments were included, Chairman Cooley (D-N.C.) of the House Committee on Agriculture had no difficulty getting his committee members to vote the extension of the labor program without amendments, 26 to 3. The House followed suit, voting down the Administration's proposed amendments, 231 to 137, as the Southern Democrats, Republicans and many Democrats from the areas of big agriculture in the Southwest and California carried the day.

While some of the Administration's proposed amendments to P.L. 78 were of dubious value and others were indeed weak, this was not the reason for their defeat; on the con-

trary, the House majority deemed them "too much." The Administration says that it is sure the Senate will be more receptive to its recommendations and will in all likelihood approve them. Even so, this would still leave the House to be hurdled and the Administration has shown no more concern over mobilizing public support on this issue than a host of others. In the meantime, farm labor scandals have continued to erupt but the Administration has displayed no alacrity to protect the workers.

"The national conscience is at last awakening," Senator Harrison A. Williams (D-N.J.) told Congress as he cited evidence of broad support for improved farm labor legislation. While some of this support has been coming from labor unions, most of it has come from church, civic, fraternal and even farm groups. Moreover, it should be noted that most of the pressure for farm labor legislation is limited to the migrants, usually to the total exclusion of the nonmigrants. Why this sharp differentiation? The problems of both groups are much the same; the wages paid to both are the lowest in the nation, though the annual earnings of the migrants are perhaps usually somewhat higher than those of the nonmigrants; and of the four million persons who worked on mainland U. S. farms last year, less than one-fourth were migrants. Surely, the other three-fourths

should not be ignored merely because they do not migrate. Also, on the question of farm labor legislation, it should be pointed out that neither Congress nor the Executive are pressing with any visible enthusiasm for passage of minimum wage bill, for either migrants or nonmigrants, and no hearings have been held on any such measure, primary as such legislation should be.

### THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND FARMERS

In recent decades the labor movement has shown little and only occasional interest in the task of organizing the agricultural workers, who therefore remain the largest unorganized body of workers in the U. S. The low wages, long hours of work and substandard living conditions inflicted upon these workers depress the status not only of the workers generally but also of the small-and-middle farmers, those who hire none or little farm labor. The long-standing reluctance of the labor movement to organize the masses of farm workers has shackled the development of farmer-labor unity in our country, weakened the struggle of the Negroes for their elementary democratic rights, especially in the Black Belt where big agriculture and terror go hand-in-hand, and given the most reactionary, anti-Negro, pro-fascist groups a vast hinterland from which they can

operate almost unchallenged.

Two years ago, the AFL-CIO Executive Council did vote to support the launching of an organizing campaign among the farm workers and selected the area near Stockton in California as the initial site for this drive. Some headway was made there, and the workers proved their eagerness to help build a union by their tireless picketing along dusty highways and by their united stand in the face of armed force. Instead of following through with additional aid and encouragement, the AFL-CIO Executive Council is, according to some reports, threatening to withdraw. To complete matters, the Teamsters' Union has begun offering contracts to big firms on easier terms, thereby undercutting the present union and setting up a rival organization. At a time when the California authorities are menacing the AFL-CIO unionists with fines and jail terms, the invasion by the Teamsters and withdrawal of official AFL-CIO support would play into the hands of the employers.

Lenin saw agricultural workers as "the link" between the city and the country, between the urban proletariat and semi-proletarian toilers in rural areas. He recognized that the organization of farm workers was a difficult task, that pure-and-simple trade unions would generally offer all sorts of opportunist reasons for not undertaking it, that the concerted support of organized labor

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was usually required to get it established and that the initiative must come from the most class-conscious vanguard — *i.e.*, the Communist Party. Here in the U. S., efforts to achieve farmer-labor unity have usually suffered from a lack of stability and have been short-lived. One reason for this, certainly a contributing one, has been the absence of a strong farm labor union — “the link” has either been missing or nearly so. In the past, some Left-wingers looked hopefully for the development of a farmer-labor alliance through joint political activities undertaken by organized labor and middle-farm groups, such as the National Farmers Union and National Grange. Whether possible or not, the fact is that no such alliance has yet appeared — certainly none of any grassroot or rank-and-file character — and, meanwhile, the agricultural workers, sharecroppers, part-time farmers and small farmers remain unorganized. Even the middle farmers are only partially organized.

Instead of sitting back and waiting for an alliance to develop between organized labor and organized groups of middle farmers, class-conscious urban workers can best help to win allies in the countryside by addressing their main attention to the problems of the most exploited and oppressed groups in the rural areas — the agricultural workers, sharecroppers, part-time

and small farmers. This does not mean that the middle farmers should be ignored or that any work now being done among the middle farmers should be halted. On the contrary, what little work is now being done should be broadened and strengthened by striving to include more participation from proletarian and semi-proletarian forces. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the largest group of agricultural workers in the U. S. are Negroes; the next largest, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; and that other major groups include American Indians, Filipinos, Jamaicans, Bahamians and Japanese. Whether in industry or agriculture, these groups usually suffer the most intensive exploitation and oppression. If the most class-conscious urban workers are to exercise their proper vanguard role, they cannot allow these groups to be forgotten by organized labor. This is a responsibility not just for a few class-conscious workers, those who happen to be in or near rural areas, but for *all* and as Lenin pointed out, the carrying out of this responsibility does not require the dispersion of all urban cadres into the countryside but a conscious, organized and continuous effort on the part of urban workers to win allies in the rural areas.

#### RECENT CHANGES IN AGRICULTURE

The latest Census of Agriculture



(1959) reports "greater changes in farms and agriculture during the last five years than for any other 5-year period recorded by a nationwide Census." Preliminary returns put the total number of farms at 3.7 million in 1959, "the smallest number of farms reported by any Census of Agriculture for the 48 States since 1870." This is one million fewer than in 1954, a drop of 23%. Part of this drop, but only a minor part, is due to a change in the Census definition of "farm" — the newer and more restrictive definition accounting for 232,000 of the 1,079,000 farms that disappeared between the 1954 and 1959 Censuses. Effect of the new definition of "farm" was to count out the smaller farms — the Census says that over 97% of the excluded "places" harvested less than 10 acres. The change in definition is, of course, a reflection of the agribusiness view which arrogantly maintains that small farmers are really not farmers and should no longer be counted as such.

Even after allowance is made for the drop in farm numbers due to the change in definition, the Census data show that 847,000 farms disappeared from agriculture between 1954 and 1959 because of other factors, chiefly the absorption of the smaller farms by the larger ones. During the decade 1950-59, nearly 1½ million farms have been swallowed up. The rate of elimination has become considerably faster in

recent years — from 11% in the 1950-54 intercensal period, it increased to 18% in the 1954-59 span. Thus, over the last five census years, farms have been disappearing at the almost incredible rate of one every three minutes.

As a result of mechanization and other factors, productivity in agriculture has increased markedly in recent years and the size of the total farm output increased 54% from 1940 to 1959 while total man-hours spent on agriculture were cut nearly in half. This is, however, somewhat exaggerated owing to the undercounting of hours put in by unpaid family workers, especially farm wives and children but also by hired farm workers. Unreliable as the government's figures are on agricultural workers, it is evident that the number employed on farms has been declining. The government estimates that over 3½ million residents of Continental U. S. worked on farms for wages at some time during 1959 and that another half million were imported for temporary farm work, chiefly from Mexico but also from Puerto Rico, the West Indies, Philippines, Japan, etc. While the shrinkage in the number of hired farm workers has been less rapid than for farmers, it amounts to over 25% since 1940. Taking farm workers as a whole, the government estimates their average annual earnings at \$829 in 1959.



Lenin's prediction that, as capitalism continued to develop in agriculture, large-scale production would displace small production, can no longer be denied by anyone in his right mind. The more refined methods used by Lenin to demonstrate his conclusion are no longer necessary. Now the conclusions are written large for all to see and though the data provided by recent Censuses are less adequate than those in 1900 or even 1910, even so they cannot conceal the major trends. If we look at the Census distribution of farms by "size" — meaning acreage, which is an unsatisfactory measure of size or scale — we find that only the largest, those of 500 acres and over, increased in numbers from 1954 to 1959. In every bracket under 500 acres, the Census reports a decrease in numbers. The same general picture emerges if we look at the Census distribution of farms by value of product sold, the only other distribution now available and given in only an abbreviated form. Notwithstanding its deficiencies, it clearly shows that only farms in the top income bracket, those with annual market sales of \$10,000 and over, increased in numbers from 1954 to 1959, while every one of the lower brackets suffered a decline.

Agriculture in the South has undergone greater changes than in any other section of the country. As usual, the Negroes have borne the brunt of this upheaval, their rate

of displacement from the land being nearly twice as great as that of the whites in recent years. Most significant and striking has been the swift decline of the sharecropping system, the form of land tenure contrived by the plantation owners after the Civil War to deny the Negroes their full freedom and to hold them in a semi-slave, semi-servile status on the land. From 716,000 in 1935, the total number of sharecroppers in the South was down to only 121,000 in 1959.

King Cotton has moved from the plantation areas of the Old South to the newer, irrigated fields of California and the Southwest where mechanization has been most profitable. Many of the former cotton fields in the South have been shifted to cattle-raising and dairying; many of the plantations have drastically transformed their operations, reducing the proportion of land in cotton and putting more into soybeans and grains, while at the same time driving large numbers of sharecroppers off the land and converting the more productive ones into wage workers. Even the plantations in the South that still raise cotton as their main cash crop have been forced to mechanize more and more of their operations, with the result that fewer workers are required and a minimum force of resident workers, sharecroppers or wage hands, are usually supplemented by day-haul or other workers.

From 3.0 million farms in 1940, the 16 Southern States that comprise the Census "South" reported only 1.6 million remaining in 1959, a drop of 45%. This compares with a 39% decline for the nation as a whole. For white-operated farms in the South, the rate of elimination between 1940 and 1959 was 41%, while for non-white or Negro-operated farms the rate was 60%.

The tremendous changes taking place in agriculture have altered the face of the countryside almost beyond recognition in many areas within the span of less than a generation. These changes have been accompanied by incalculable human misery as families have been forced to pull up stakes from places where they have spent off or most of their lives, sometimes splitting up and hoping to come together again later. Of the farmers still on the land, they, too, find the going tougher and, unable to support themselves and their families by work done on the farm, they are compelled to look for off-farm work. In 1959, 45 out of every 100 farm operators did some off-farm work and 30 out of every 100 worked off their farms 100 days or more. So did other members of the family — 36 out of every 100 farm households in 1959 reported that income received from off-farm work exceeded the total value of commodities marketed from the family farm. Thus, the farm operators and members of their family

are becoming increasingly proletarianized, many being pushed off the land completely and others partially. On all sides, the farm families, clinging to their farmsteads with their fingernails, hear the question, "Why don't you get out and look for a job in town?" The average age of farm operators was 50½ in 1959, according to the latest Census, and nearly 17% of them were 65 years or older. This is "the highest ever reported," says the Census, thus confirming the well-known fact that our farm population is aging. After 50 years on the farm, one does not find it easy to adjust to life in the city and few factories are willing to hire 50 to 65 year-old farmers. So, the young people leave and the oldsters try to hang on as long as they can.

Nowadays, the capitalist press blames "the Communist" for all the misery created by the capitalist system. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Communists are accused of favoring and even plotting to bring about the displacement of farmers from the land. As if the capitalists need our help for this end! The slander is, of course, an old one. Frederick Engels wrote in *The Peasant Question in France and Germany*: "The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win to our side while they are still peasants, the more quickly and easily the socialist

transformation will be accomplished." Today, the farmers here are being proletarianized in greater numbers and at a faster rate than at any time in the history of our country. The gap separating the countryside from the city is wider than ever before; farmer-labor political unity has waned; organized labor has shown little interest in helping the small farmers to avoid being swallowed up by big agriculture and has even been reluctant to undertake a full-scale organizing campaign among the agricultural workers. In the absence of any united and sustained working-class leadership in the countryside, the small and middle farmers have been left to the none-too-tender mercies of big agriculture and have had no alternative than to look to the capitalists for their leadership—*i.e.*, to the big farmers, representatives of the food trusts, newspapers, Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Even the farm organizations are for the most part dominated by business interests and their officers are often much more concerned about the profits of corporations and cooperatives than the well-being of the farm members—*e.g.*, the American Farm Bureau Federation, whose national officers try to run the organization as a rural subsidiary of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Here, in our country, many of the best and most heroic pages of our history were written in farmer-labor unison, aided and inspired by

the vision of courageous, self-sacrificing socialist-minded organizers. Positive as many of these achievements were, in the days of the Populist Movement to the Non-Partisan League and the Holiday Movement, their gains were limited by virtue of the instability and transient character of the alliances on which these movements were founded. They were handicapped by the absence or weakness of working-class leadership, by racial prejudices that barred the Negroes from participation on a basis of full equality with whites, by their failure to recognize the various class strata in the countryside and to rely upon the small farmers in their attempts to organize the farmers. Historically, farmer-labor alliances in the U.S. have, in the countryside, been based on the middle (usually, the upper middle) strata of farmers. This has, perhaps, been largely unavoidable and even inevitable since the middle farmers were not only better organized but also more experienced in the use of political tactics.

Today, the situation in the countryside is quite different from what it was in previous periods of grassroot unrest. The farmers realize full well that the old forms of populist protest are no longer adequate to meet present-day needs. They are keenly aware of their dwindling numbers, their minority status in an industrialized nation. So, many of them, especially the smaller ones, are looking to the

city workers for leadership and much of their antagonism toward the city workers stems from the complaint that the organized workers in the cities and towns have shown little or no interest in helping them to organize so that their economic bargaining power can be strengthened or to develop a political alliance of farmers and workers.

During the heyday of the Populist Movement in the 1890's, the DeLeonized Socialists spurned farmer overtures for unity by damning the farmers in toto as "exploiters" of labor. After the failure of the Populist Movement, the new Socialist Party led by Eugene V. Debs, whose influence in the Populist Party was so highly regarded that he might have been (but refused the proffer) its nominee for the presidency in 1896, was so fearful lest too many dissident farmers should come into the Socialist Party and thereby dilute its working-class character that the first convention voted against the adoption of any farm program whatever. The early Socialist groups advanced many strange, often contradictory views about the farmers, always in the name of Marxism. Many of the major mistakes they made were never adequately analyzed, discussed and corrected, with the result that quite a few of these erroneous ideas still pass as Marxist dogma in Left-wing circles. Certainly, one of the biggest mistakes of the early Socialists was their failure to identify the various

class strata in the countryside, their inability to overcome bourgeois prejudices and to recognize, for example, that a Negro sharecropper in Mississippi could prove a firmer ally of the urban workers than a well-to-do bonanza wheat rancher in the Dakotas.

Many reasons have been advanced by so-called "Marxists" for doing nothing to develop an alliance between the working class and the small and middle farmers of the United States. None of them has anything in common with Marxism. The newest, no more valid than its predecessors, is that, since the farm population is dwindling so fast, there is no point of bothering. Certainly the farm population is dwindling. From a total of 31 million in 1940 it was down to 20 million in April, 1960, on the basis of the 1950 definition of persons living on farms. Admittedly, this is a sharp decline. But can urban workers afford to ignore it? Can they say that the problem concerns only the farmers? No, the working class as a whole is vitally concerned; all are affected and the problem of drafting effective measures to help the farmers is of joint interest, to the workers as well as the farmers.

In order to win the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism, the working class in the U.S. must win the support of *all* potential allies; it cannot afford to by-pass *any*. It cannot afford to go along with those

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who say that the working farmers are now too small a group to be considered significant. At a time when farmers are being expropriated and displaced in such large numbers, the working class cannot sit idly by, least of all the most class-conscious or vanguard group. Admittedly, the problems are not easy and the relationship of class forces is complex. But the times are now crucial and the working class must face up to its responsibility in coming to the aid of its potential rural allies. This has been demonstrated in recent weeks, for example, by the struggles in Fayette and Hayward Counties, Tennessee, where Negro tenant families, evicted from their farms, have resolutely continued their fight for elementary democratic rights and have won the support of labor, Negro, civic and other groups in all parts of the country. Their struggle proves that the farm and Negro questions are inseparably intertwined and interrelated.

More than anything else in recent times, the Cuban Revolution has pushed the land question to the fore. Not only in this country but all over Latin America, Right-wing and Left-wing groups have been forced to review, and perhaps revise, preconceived ideas about the significance of land reform, the militancy of the peasantry and their willingness to fight for their just demands. Wash-

ington officials are greatly worried lest the peasants in many Latin American nations should decide to emulate the example of Cuba and a whole host of studies have been ordered to show how land reform can be promised or even projected in these other countries without disturbing existing relationships of ownership and control, especially those of U.S. imperialists. So far, the experts in Washington have come up with very little. They admit that, all over Latin America, the peasants are eagerly watching what is happening in Cuba and that, dissatisfied with the unfulfilled promises of land reform in their own countries, the peasants are strongly attracted to "the Cuban way."

Clearly, then, from many viewpoints the farm question in the United States is of decisive importance. This includes in the first place the fate of the twenty million farming folk themselves. It involves the Negro question, the problem of developing effective independent, labor-farmer political action, the strength of the trade-union movement, the efforts through a neo-colonialism to salvage the collapsing system of imperialism, and therefore, the whole struggle for peace. The neglect of this vital matter by Marxist-Leninists in the United States can no longer be tolerated.

# Unemployment and the Trade Unions

By George Morris

The outstanding labor negotiations of the 1961 round are now getting under way in the auto industry. A struggle between the United Automobile Workers and the monopolist auto manufacturers always takes the spotlight for its important influence on labor's struggles generally. But this year it holds extraordinary importance.

The principal issue in the auto negotiations is jobs. That is the dominant issue in all industries and for the working class generally. For that reason, in accordance with the sentiment emphatically expressed at the special bargaining convention of the UAW earlier this year, the union placed the shorter workweek high on its program.

The shorter workweek demand is beginning to figure in negotiations of an increasing number of unions, although, as yet, no major union has made it the *decisive* demand in negotiations. In the big East and Gulf coast maritime strike that began June 15, the National Maritime Union, the major union involved, listed the 30-hour week among its demands. The chronic unemployment among seamen due to new technology, especially larger and faster vessels, and the mass runaway of

American-owned ships to registry under foreign, more profitable flags, has made job security an acute issue on the waterfronts.

The new techniques in trucking, like "piggy back" and "fishy back" handling or fully-loaded vans on railroads and vessels, has caused a similar situation in other sectors of transport. There is also rapid elimination through new loading and unloading techniques in dock operation.

Automation and the high toll of jobs in the telephone communication field, has forced the job issue to the fore as the unions in that field prepare to face the American Telephone and Telegraph monopoly. The railroad unions face not only new techniques and "efficiency" in their field, but also a rash of mergers now in the making. Estimates of the possible loss of jobs if the mergers come through run as high as 200,000. And the industry is already down to fewer workers than had worked in it in 1890.

The steel workers are at the moment learning the costly lesson of sidetracking the shorter workweek demand which was part of their program prior to the big strike of 1959, and reliance on the present-day type of "recovery." Not only were

they hit by a crisis-level unemployment just four months after the steel strike was settled but after a year of mass unemployment and short weeks, there is barely a dent in the joblessness of the steel areas. New, more mechanized technology replaced many human hands since the 116-day strike. The steel workers read of "recovery" but few of them are called to work.

The big question, therefore, as the UAW meets the auto manufacturers, is whether this time there will be a serious effort to press for shorter hours and fight for the long needed historic breakthrough.

During the first five months of the Kennedy administration little more than some relief for the long-term unemployed and improvements proposals, will not create new employment. The enacted depressed campaign promises and post-inaugural areas program and the retraining in the surplus food allotments, have ployment of consequence. The big union messages on economic objectives faded with the much-publicized and exaggerated "recovery" statistics. The basic fact remains, however, that just as each of the earlier three post-war recessions were followed by a higher level of unemployment in the mids of "prosperity," so long with the new "recovery" we are stuck with an unemployment of nearly seven percent of the workforce, a new record.

An economic analysis by the AFL-

CIO, basing itself on the data of the Department of Labor, says that "roughly 7.7 million more jobs are needed just to reduce unemployment to a four percent rate by the end of this year" and adds "no prospect for job-creating economic activity of this magnitude are in sight" (*AFL-CIO News*, May 27, 1961). The AFL-CIO's economists strike an even more pessimistic note. They observe that with the expected "recovery" rise in production of four percent over 1960, no more is in sight than just enough additional employment to match the number of new entrants into the workforce.

"Expected production upturns for the rest of 1961 do not point to a change in this unemployment pattern," says the AFL-CIO analysis. "Present trends predict a jobless rate of 6.25 per cent to seven per cent by the end of the year." The Federation calls on the government to "act more quickly" to spur employment, and for more drastic measures. But its own "emergency" proposals in that same analysis, even if enacted, would be barely a drop in the bucket. The shorter workweek which the AFL-CIO itself has endorsed as a measure for more jobs, is not even mentioned.

The AFL-CIO's leadership has not even developed an effective pressure campaign for its own modest proposals. A decision of the AFL-CIO executive council last February to develop a "massive" "grassroots"



drive to "Put America Back to Work" culminating in a nationwide mass conference in Washington, was forgotten. Little wonder then that even the limited bill of Senator Joseph Clark for a federal fund to help states and localities get their stalled, but already blueprinted local projects under way, failed to get Administration support.

It is the United Automobile Workers that proposed the massive grassroots drive idea that the AFL-CIO council approved. But in the light of the AFL-CIO top council's inaction, the auto union, hardest hit by unemployment, certainly has no immediate alternative than to seek relief in collective bargaining. The employers in the auto industry are not talking peace. They are already preparing to rob the workers of advantages they have had for many years. One of them is the wage escalator that gives some protection against the steadily rising cost of living. The employers also seek to eliminate some rules that protect the workers against speedup, unjust discharges and in working conditions generally. The employers regard the stockpile of some million unsold cars as a weapon against the workers just as the tremendous stockpile was used against the steel workers in 1959.

It would be a tragedy if the auto workers were placed on the defensive—merely limited to an effort to hold what they have—for want of effective support. The struggle for the short-

er workweek, may be retarded very seriously if it is once more sidetracked. The steel workers are already beginning to give attention to next year's negotiations, with jobs clearly the big issue. Millions of workers in line for contract renewals in many important industries within a year, are vitally interested in what happens in auto. The general interest of the entire working class is affected because the basic issue at stake is the much needed general reduction in hours if the millions of chronically unemployed are to even have a chance to work again.

It should be apparent that a struggle of such basic importance to the immediate general interest of the working class and the future of the trade unions, cannot get far through a limited movement, with each union left to its own overall strategy of attack, notwithstanding the different tactics individual bosses may follow. The labor movement today is in serious crisis, now reflected in the developing struggle within the leadership, because it has neither come through with a fighting program to meet the key problems effecting the workers—notably jobs—nor shown an ability to unite its own ranks for such general aims.

Every past advance of the working class in the United States was the result of a fight within the labor movement for a program and action to meet the key issue of the day. It did not necessarily follow full unity

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for such program and action, or the "official" blessing for such movements. But the struggle and advance did come after a *substantial* section of the labor movement united for it. Such was the experience, for example, in the big upsurge of the 1930's; that came through the initiative of a group of unions that founded the CIO. The same is apparent in the trend today as substantial sections within the labor movement are beginning to acknowledge there is a crisis in trade-union ranks. These are beginning to press for a revitalization—for concentration on a shorter work-week, for new vigor and independence in labor's political action, for an end to the jim-crow pattern in much of the trade-union movement, and even a recognition that peace and economic progress are indivisible.

Thus, we have witnessed historically a continual struggle for unity in labor—but unity for policy and action that would advance the working class. While to a superficial observer, a struggle within trade-union ranks over the vital issues of the day may seem to contradict the urgency of unity for the basic objectives, *in reality those are struggles for the kind of unity that really counts*. Unity based on maintaining the status quo and traditional routineism, is not really unity. It is unity for inaction, for stagnation—actually it is retreat in terms of present-day conditions. Such has been the basis of the "unity" upon which the AFL-CIO leader-

ship has rested since the merger of 1955.

Opposition to this "unity" has been building up steadily and today it has broken out in the top leadership in full view of the public. It is essentially yielding to the pressure of widespread dissatisfaction among the workers, with jobs the underlying issue. The latest indicator of what is taking place was the opening convention address of Joseph Beirne, President of the Communications Workers of America, at Kansas City, Mo., on June 19. He noted that the Kennedy Administration and a "lot of liberals" are ready to accept a permanent unemployment of four percent, with millions condemned to a "permanent dole." Declaring labor should oppose such a defeatist perspective, Beirne—who, himself, has generally been among the more conservative labor leaders—said the AFL-CIO should provide the kind of leadership the workers need today. "But I must tell you with regret and sadness," he continued, "that the AFL-CIO seems ill-prepared for these challenging years ahead." Simply stated, the leadership of the AFL-CIO has become neutralized under the deadweight pressure of retrogression and bitter, conflicting jurisdictional interests."

This is from the leader of a union whose members have suffered relatively more from the consequences of automation than any other major group of workers. On the other side of its bargaining table is the biggest

monopoly of America—A.T.&T.

The entire former group of top AFL-CIO leaders who have been with the CIO group now speaks as Beirne does and they have some allies among the former AFL leaders. Many among them are openly critical of Meany in whom they placed much confidence at the time of the merger as the man who would unify labor's ranks for fresh vitality and action.

Significantly, Meany himself, in a recent letter to the *N. Y. Times* (May 4), acknowledged that the underlying "cause" of the developing conflict within the AFL-CIO's leadership is jobs—the growing rate of permanent unemployment and, closely related, the growing network of legal restrictions on the labor movement's ability to expand and act. Meany admitted the AFL-CIO is in a state of stagnation with certain unions even losing members. The substance of Meany's letter adds up to an alibi for this stagnation and for its internal conflicts. He cries that "it is all but impossible for workers to form unions today," because of the Taft-Hartley law and similar legal obstacles. The implication from Meany's letter is that unless jobs become plentiful, and anti-labor laws are eliminated, and employers stop attacking unions (i.e., stop acting like employers), labor cannot advance. All this is, of course, an excuse for permanent stagnation. The significance of the mounting tide of criticism of the Meany policy

in labor's ranks is that it is based on the view that the AFL-CIO needs a program and action for an advance to meet the situation *as it is now*, and not as Meany thinks it ought to be, before—according to him—labor can move.

The struggle for jobs is also at the base of the growing wave of opposition to the Meany leadership among the Negro trade unionists led by A. Philip Randolph, an AFL-CIO vice-president. Spurred by the "civil rights revolution" that has stirred the Negro people and the country generally, the struggle is spreading to the economic front for the desegregation of employment. It is for an end to the pattern that results in an unemployment rate that is more than twice as high for Negro workers as for white. The situation, moreover, is worsening, due to automation and changes in the composition of the labor force.

It is not an accident that the struggle against economic discrimination, too, developed along the path of sharpening conflict with Meany's group in the leadership. There, too, it is recognized that the labor movement must become the key fighting force for full economic equality and that an essential prerequisite for that is a struggle against those who resist a change. There, again, the struggle is for a new kind of unity—unity for a positive purpose.

Similarly, the rising number of persons in labor's leadership who today speak out against Meany's ex-

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trème pro-coldwar position, or simply ignore his policy, is an indication of the growing realization in trade-union ranks that mounting armament expenditure is not an insurance of "permanent prosperity." After four post-war recessions, each leaving us with more chronic unemployment, the view is spreading in trade-union ranks that there is a better chance for greater employment through disarmament and a shift to an expanding program of construction for peace-time needs. Beirne's demand that the AFL-CIO "concentrate on the big tasks at home," should be understood in the light of Meany's almost fanatical preoccupation with cold-war operations.

An announcement recently that the AFL-CIO plans to spend \$4,500,000 for its foreign affairs in the next three years—mostly on operations in Africa (to develop a cover-up for penetration of camouflaged U.S. imperialism)—does not sit well even with some in labor ranks who

generally support cold-war policy. This announcement came from an Executive Council that for years has cried there is no money for organizing the unorganized, or for any other major steps that could make the labor movement a more effective force for jobs, civil rights, and political action.

The cold-war policy, to which labor's program and action had been tied since the late '40's, many now sadly recognize, has created more chronic unemployment than jobs. Even more devastating within the cold-war package of by-products are the Taft-Hartleyization of labor's collective bargaining and internal life, government control of union activities in most essential respects, and its paralysis by the dead-hand of thought-control and restrictions over the most active workers in the unions. Hence, there is today a rising cry of a "New Deal" in the trade unions with a fresh upsurge of battle for jobs being the main moving force.

# The Coming New York City Elections\*

By Betty Gannett

Republican National Chairman Thruston Morton said months ago that the municipal election campaign in New York City is the most important in the nation.

Who will control the city administration in this, the richest city in the Western world? Who will determine its direction for the next four years? This is, indeed, being deliberated in the higher echelons of both major parties.

What else explains the pressure that Nixon, titular head of the Republican Party, put upon Senator Javits to subordinate his own political aspirations and agree to be candidate for Mayor? What else explains the frenzied conferences held by Governor Rockefeller, his eye toward 1962 and 1964, to patch together a winning combination in the mayoralty election, thus enhancing his own political ambitions?

## POLITICAL MANEUVERS

This feverish activity emphasizes, of course, the serious danger inherent in a Rockefeller-inspired fusion ticket which, dressed in a liberal facade to channelize the discontent of New Yorkers, is actually aimed at strength-

ening the grip of Rockefeller and his clique over the city government. At the same time, it should be said, that Javits' "No" to this pressure is evidence of the uncertainty that still exists as to whether the progressive and democratic-minded New York electorate is ready to swallow the bait held out by Nelson Rockefeller.

The Republicans, apparently with some encouragement from the heads of the Liberal Party, are nevertheless still fishing for a suitable candidate. They are still hopeful of disguising their true objective in a "non-partisan" mantle. They promise to come up with a slate by June first. (Since this was written they have agreed on Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz to head the G.O.P. slate.)

Nor has there been less activity in the Democratic Party camp. President Kennedy, despite his frantic efforts to rescue U.S. prestige after the Cuban fiasco, found time to meet with the Democratic bosses of Brooklyn and the Bronx, and with others as well, in an attempt to narrow the breach in the ranks of the Democratic Party; to find a scapegoat to pacify the growing insurgent movement; to grant patronage concessions only to "certain" regular Democrats—all with the purpose of keeping the ranks intact and main-

\* Report to State Committee, N. Y. Communist Party, May 19, 1961.

taining control of the city administration.

Ex-Senator Lehman, well aware of the disillusionment in the Wagner Administration among a substantial section of the rank and file of the insurgent movement, quickly stepped into the breach, promised to support Wagner for Mayor, but only on condition he continue to fight Tammany boss Carmine De Sapio and create a better democratic climate within the ranks of the Democratic Party. The oldguard bosses only yesterday said they could win without Wagner; now, too, they say they will support Wagner—if only he breaks with the insurgents and rejects Liberal Party support unless they endorse the whole ticket. Wagner himself, though still shyly holding back, cancelled a previous engagement to speak in Wichita, Kansas, so that he could address the fund-raising dinner organized by the powerful Brooklyn regulars after shunning the dinner called by the De Sapio forces.

What we are witnessing are all sorts of back-door maneuverings and deals by both major parties, with the Liberal Party leaders playing both sides against the middle, apparently in the hope of obtaining a better cut. The bulk of these forces want to make certain that no real progressive formation emerges in this election to rally the people in opposition to their schemes.

Clearly, in all these behind-the-scene negotiations and maneuverings,

cold-war interests and power politics are taking precedence over the social needs of the people. The aim is to maintain the status quo, to hold the city government firmly in the hands of proven servants of Big Business.

## THE REAL ISSUES

For the masses of New Yorkers, the 1961 election campaign is truly of great importance. The cold-war hysteria of the last decade, the economic depression, and the rise of racist trends, has played havoc with the social needs of the people. While billions continue to be spent for armaments, and the munition makers and Wall Street financiers reap fabulous profits, the living and working conditions of the mass of New York's working people have steadily deteriorated. The people year after year, have been promised a change, only to find no change in the offing. The deterioration of the conditions of New York's population proves that armaments and higher living standards are basically incompatible; that there can be no real solution of social needs without lifting the burden of armaments from the shoulders of the people through a persistent, vigilant and relentless fight for peace and disarmament. Even the Kennedy Administration, whose adventurist policies in Cuba, Laos and South Vietnam have aggravated world tensions, and whose defense budget calls for additional billions for mis-

siles and rockets, finds itself under constant pressure from the Right to drop all talk of domestic spending, miserably inadequate as this spending has been.

Conditions in our city bring into sharp relief how the people have sacrificed, far beyond their endurance, to support a thermo-nuclear stockpile sufficient to annihilate mankind and destroy the world. What is required is a halt to the sacrifice through a halt in the bloated armament spending.

Wagner, in his eighth annual message to the City Council, complacently declared that "New York is not becoming a community of the very rich and the very poor," but the stark contrast between the wealth of Wall Street and the people living in the rat-infested slums and ghettos, points to the widening gap between the very rich and the very poor.

Who can deny that New York City, once in the lead of the country's wage standards, is today a low wage city, so that even factory workers of Birmingham, Savannah and New Orleans are well ahead of our factory workers in average weekly earnings?

Who can deny that despite the signs of an upturn in the economy, unemployment is the lot of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers and that long-time unemployment has had disastrous consequences for countless Negro and Puerto Rican families? Behind the lush office buildings and towering luxury apartments,

there is hunger, abject poverty, and a gnawing hopelessness.

Despite the pious declarations about wiping out discrimination, the Negro and Puerto Rican workers of our city are daily denied equal opportunities, kept on the lowest rung of the ladder, on the worst jobs with the least pay. What comfort can be eked from the fact that in the first 16 days of the establishment of the complaint unit of the House Labor and Education Committee to investigate discriminatory practices, that office received 713 phone calls, 449 personal visits and 317 complaints by mail? And our City Administration might well examine its 4,500 contracts, covering everything from new school buildings to the planting of flowers and trees on Park Avenue, to disclose the countless violations of its pledge not to issue contracts to firms which practice discrimination. Unequal opportunities, unequal living conditions, unequal suffering—this is the lot of the Negro and Puerto Rican people in our city.

Mayor Wagner promises a "massive attack on the slums," but the fact remains that more than one million people continue to live with rats, broken windows, rotting floors, falling ceilings, heat turned off, water pipes broken, in dilapidated and over-crowded apartments for which they pay exorbitant rents. Without the clearance of slums, and erecting low-cost housing for the former slum dwellers, the slums continue to

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spread like a monstrous evil with housing conditions in the ghettos remaining the worst in the country.

After seven years, the Supreme Court decision on school desegregation remains unenforced in our city. A movement of parents, in all boroughs, has finally forced some token recognition of the serious crisis in our schools. But open enrollment, secured after long years of struggle, cannot eliminate segregation. As a result, the number of segregated schools continues to increase year after year. Overcrowding, antiquated buildings, low reading levels, inadequate teaching staffs, textbook shortages are depriving the city's children of adequate education. Not all parents, and surely none of our working class, Negro and Puerto Rican parents, can afford private schools to protect their children from illiteracy. Only a city-wide plan against re-segregation, fought for tenaciously by the city government, can overcome the scandalous situation in our city's public school system.

These only dramatize the issues which cry out for solution in our city. There is, of course, the intolerable and inhuman transportation conditions of our sardine-packed subway system; the lack of municipal parking to alleviate the congestion of city traffic; the miserably inadequate hospital facilities and the high cost of medical care; the limited recreational facilities for our youth; the gouging of the city by the big banks

and real estate interests; the corruption, shakedowns and pay-offs which permeate the various city departments—these, too, are unresolved problems that plague the city.

But these burning issues are not yet in the center of the electoral debate. They are being ignored by the higher-ups of both major political parties—and the people's organizations have not yet forced them into the forefront of all discussions for candidates, on a city-wide scale, in each borough and each councilmanic district.

### NEW DEVELOPMENTS

In approaching the municipal elections, we have to determine what are the forces at play, and how the popular forces can influence the selection of a city administration more responsive to the needs of the common people, and one in which the representatives of the people at least will have a bigger voice.

The most significant and far-reaching development of recent weeks is the establishment of the 15-man trade union committee, headed by Harry Van Arsdale, president of the City Central Trades and Labor Council, with the objective of determining forms through which labor can express its political independence in the municipal, state and national elections. This declared purpose is long overdue.

For several decades now, labor in



our country and city has tailed behind the Democratic Party to solve its problems; kept a hands-off policy in the determination of candidates; put forward no candidates of its own, and participated in the elections only after the die was cast. Recalling that only a short time ago the labor leadership of our city remained mum when its legislative representative, Corbett, publicly praised both DeSapio and Prendergast, this new step highlights the awakening in the ranks of labor that has begun to express itself in many areas. This development opens a new chapter of resurgent militancy to ward off and defeat the Big Business anti-labor offensive.

Many labor progressives have long advocated the need for independent political action and we Communists have been in the forefront advocating a party of labor and the people. The establishment of the Van Arsdale committee is one of the first major indications of a broad recognition in labor's ranks that its interests, and those of other sections of the common people, can be protected only if independent political formations are developed, distinct from the two major parties of monopoly capitalism, to project labor and people's candidates in opposition to the candidates of Big Business.

It is also important to underscore that the leadership of labor in this city, while working on a plan for independent political action, is at the

same time setting up a central apparatus to launch a city-wide organization drive of the unorganized. Once labor's plans to build a party of its own, a truly people's party, become a reality, and its organizing drive brings into the house of labor the hundreds of thousands of the most exploited in our city, a qualitative change in the relationship of forces will inevitably result.

It is unlikely, however, that labor will succeed in bringing into being a labor or people's party in time to play any significant role in the fall elections. But it is possible, if the labor leadership realizes the time of day, for labor nevertheless to play an important role in bringing together "like-minded people" from the Negro and Puerto Rican leadership, from the insurgent movement and even from the regular Democrats—to work out a common outlook on the city-wide elections. Common agreement on a program, on candidates, and particularly on advancing and jointly supporting candidates of labor, the Negro and Puerto Rican people, can have an important bearing on the outcome of the primaries and the final elections.

### THE INSURGENT MOVEMENT

The growing insurgent movement in the city, which first came into being after the debacle of the 1958 elections when Rockefeller won con-

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rol of the state, has become an important factor in city politics. While at first centered in Manhattan, where it still remains the strongest, the insurgent movement has now spread into all city boroughs, coordinated on a city-wide basis in the Committee for Democratic Voters. This movement is still primarily a movement against bossism, against Tammany domination. However, in many areas, the insurgent clubs have become grass roots movements, responding to many important social issues of the people, and have inspired active struggles on housing, schools and similar problems. But the strength of this movement is still uneven. The clubs primarily combine middle class and professional elements who dominate the leadership. In few instances have trade unionists, Negro and Puerto Rican citizens been attracted into the insurgent clubs. The ties of the insurgent movement with the Negro and Puerto Rican people's organizations or with labor, is for all intents and purposes non-existent. Here and there efforts have been made to win adherents in Negro and Puerto Rican communities. One or another insurgent leader may make approaches to the Negro leadership, as for instance the overtures to the independent club in the 17th AD of Brooklyn for its affiliation to the CDV, or the sporadic relations with Representative Adam Powell and other Negro leaders in Manhattan. But this is still the excep-

tion and not the rule. What stands out with particular force is that the insurgent movement generally does not see its identity with the rising Negro people's movement and labor and has almost completely failed to recognize the importance of fighting for Negro representation.

There is a process of differentiation evident in the insurgent movement—a striving for greater independence, for the expansion of its role beyond that of bossism. This is indicated in the opposition to Crotty as the replacement for Prendergast; in the militant leading role played by Assemblyman Lane in the city's tenants' movement; in the forthrightness of the stand on some national issues taken by Congressman Ryan.

The building and expansion of the insurgent movement is one of the most important developments of this period. Without widening the polarization process within the Democratic Party itself, whose voting strength rests upon the support of the common people, labor cannot create a firm foundation for an independent people's party in the city and nation.

The insurgent movement in the Negro community—in Harlem, in the first place—arose much earlier, in the struggle for Negro representation, against Tammany domination and especially against Carmine De Sapio (Powell's recent statement notwithstanding). The Harlem Leadership Team has great popularity in the community, among the

great majority of Negro voters, who pursue an independent course to achieve expanded Negro representation on all levels in the city, state and national legislative bodies. The fact that this movement is not connected with labor, with the developing insurgent movement, weakens the possibility of winning expanded Negro representation. But the main responsibility for this lack is the continued lag on the part of labor and the CDV insurgents to advance the fight for Negro equality, against discrimination and segregation, for Negro representation. In the present framework the failure to boldly advance the candidacy of a Negro for one of the top three posts in the city administration, hinders the establishment of this broader unity.

Independent forms of political organization in the Puerto Rican community are still absent, but in Manhattan, the Bronx and Brooklyn, independent forces do exist. The building of independent political leagues in many areas of the city, organizations which can more adequately express the interests of the 750,000 Puerto Ricans in our city, can end the complete vacuum of Puerto Rican representation in city bodies. Last year joint Negro and Puerto Rican leadership committees existed in Manhattan and the Bronx. Their re-constitution would undoubtedly facilitate this fight.

In addition, there is in New York a broad circle of Left-progressive

forces, many formerly identified with the American Labor Party, implemented by new Leftward moving forces that have arisen in the trade unions and in the peace, civil liberties and other community movements. The recent successful actions and meetings around Cuba, the House Un-American Activities Committee, May Day, the Easter peace marches and the Carnegie Hall peace rally—with notable participation in all these activities of large numbers of young people—shows the vitality of those forces—some socialist-minded—if united around a clear perspective. They can help influence the outcome of the city elections. They can help influence the issues which become the central focus of the election campaign; they can stimulate movements and actions around such issues; they can help contribute to the defeat of the most reactionary candidates, and help to nominate and elect in many areas new candidates from the ranks of the people. They can also be influential in encouraging independent candidates to run, especially in areas where the issues of the community movements have been rejected by the old-line candidates. They can thus play an independent, but at the same time a unifying role, throughout the city.

### THE PARTY'S TASKS

With these forces in the offing, how does the picture shape up in our

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city, and what should be the approach and tasks of our Party in this campaign?

An editorial of the New York *Times* of May 17th opens with the words: "The spring of 1961 is extraordinary in New York City politics for its uncertainties." This, unfortunately, is all too true despite the fact that the first day for circulating nominating petitions very near June 22. But, in some respects, this indicates that it is still possible to influence the selection of candidates, and surely to force a debate on the major issues of vital concern to our people. Under such circumstances, it is impossible to formulate, at this time, a fully-rounded tactical approach to the city elections, which will define our position in relation to all questions, issues, and candidates. Obviously, we face a highly complex situation. What is more, we remain isolated from many developments and important forces shaping the character of the election campaign. However, it is possible to determine general perspectives—to outline certain central objectives which will enable our members and many in the unions and community organizations, to bring into play the people's organizations to actively intervene in this campaign.

First and foremost, it should be a prime objective of all progressive forces to head off the realization of a coalition to the Right, *i.e.*, of a Rockefeller-instigated fusion ticket.

The attempt to exploit the La Guardia tradition by urging an anti-Tammany Republican-fusion ticket under the guise that it would be in the spirit of La Guardia, is an outright hoax. The attempted Rockefeller-fusion package, representing as it does the most reactionary pro-war and anti-democratic forces in our state, is the opposite of the La Guardia Fusion Administration.

It is necessary to help expose such a fusion ticket, and particularly it is necessary to urge the membership and followers of the Liberal Party to prevent it from pursuing such a suicidal course. It is necessary to point out that fusion under today's conditions can only be unity of the Negro, labor, reform and liberal forces around common objectives—and not unity with the Rockefellers.

Second, it is necessary to contribute toward the defeat of the old-line Democratic Party bosses, responsible for the corrupt machine entrenched in the city administration. The DeSapio and their cohorts are still strong, and play a reactionary role in city affairs, even though they are not as powerful as they were some years ago. The old-time politicians and bosses still have enough control in all boroughs to achieve many of their reactionary aims in this election.

In light of all this, it is difficult to see why Congressman Powell, who has further enhanced his fighting role by advocating a minimum wage law,

introducing a bill for the shorter work week and disassociating his investigatory committees from the odious McClellan-type committee, found himself impelled at this moment to praise De Sapio. It is clear that a De Sapio cannot help realize the objectives to which Powell is dedicated; nor is a De Sapio concerned with advancing the interests of the Negro people or the interests of labor. But it must be underscored that Congressman Powell's action has to be seen as a reflection of the indignation of the politically active Negro forces at the abysmal failure of the progressive, insurgent and labor movements, to initiate a fight for Negro representation, to conduct a relentless struggle to wipe out the discriminatory practices still rampant in all aspects of our city's life. The bold promotion of a Negro in the top three city-wide offices, together with a fight for Negro equality, would quickly disperse any ill-effects from Powell's statement.

### ON MAYOR WAGNER

Third, in connection with the candidacy of Wagner, it is clearly evident that there is a widespread and justified dissatisfaction with Wagner because of his failure to fight forcefully to resolve the many issues which plague our city; because he has failed to challenge the graft and corruption in his own administration; and because he is Johnny-come-lately

in dissociating himself from De Sapio. In the past elections, he was of course, elected with Tammany support. If he now moves toward the insurgents, and has spoken out against De Sapio, it is because he recognizes the weakened position of the De Sapios and Prendergasts and senses that the patronage policy of the Kennedy administration seems to indicate some preference for a modification of the Prendergast-De Sapio control of the Democratic Party.

Criticism of Wagner's uninspired and lumbering conduct of the city affairs is essential. Without such criticism, business-as-usual will prevail. Only constant pressure will help to expose the inadequacies of the Wagner Administration, and to make crystal clear that the people in large number, are disillusioned in Wagner's promises. In this connection, Amalgamated President Potolsky's unqualified endorsement of Wagner is no contribution to the proper conduct of the present election struggle. For it weakens the necessary pressures on Wagner to be more responsive to what the people want.

As for us, the question is not to debate for or against Wagner, but rather to center attention on the debate of issues—establishing the central issues so clearly that anybody who runs in the 1961 election must measure up to these issues. We should help to stimulate discussion everywhere on what the people want the next city administration to do

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—and on that basis help people to determine their attitude to projected candidates. Only in this way will it become clearer to Wagner, that only if he responds to what the people want, will he receive the support of the majority of the people. If we work in this manner, we will avoid alienating ourselves from the very forces who must become the social base for a new political realignment.

It is already becoming fairly certain that if Wagner is the candidate, he will undoubtedly get the support of the main sections of labor, the insurgent movement, the Negro and Puerto Rican people. We must help to create the understanding that in such support there can be no let-up of the need for incessant and constant pressure upon Wagner so that he cannot with impunity ignore, as he has up to now, the mounting problems that confront the people.

If a Gerosa remains on the ticket, and the old-line Democrats impose this blatant reactionary on the ticket, a well-prepared primary struggle is probably in the cards. Here again, it is regrettable that up to the present no one has actually taken up the cudgels for a Negro in one of the top posts—for no ticket can be satisfactory without the inclusion of a Negro representative. However, it is significant that the insurgent Paul O'Dwler, who has some labor and independent Democratic support, has already thrown his hat into the ring against Gerosa. It is hoped he will

recognize the urgency of widening his labor base and securing the support of the Negro and Puerto Rican people's movements, by advancing a program which can be recognized by these forces as their own.

Fourth, wide support for the objectives of the 15-man trade union committee in every local union, shop and community is in order. Discussions of the meaning of this step, resolutions in local unions or by groups of shop workers greeting the 15 man Committee and the need for independent political action, will speed up developments and help involve the rank and file of the trade-union movement in the campaign as a whole. Progressives should help in their own unions to organize the membership on an Assembly District basis such as was done by a number of unions last year, encouraging the setting up of trade-union committees in these districts, whose first job can be a registration campaign to increase the percentage of trade unionists able to vote in the primaries and on election day. Remember that there was a time when New York unionists had representation in the City Council. This can occur again—but only if the rank and file continue pressing for it.

Fifth, to influence the establishment of a coalition of labor, the Negro and Puerto Rican leadership, liberal elements in the insurgent movement and followers of the Liberal Party in every single community

where these forces exist—and to encourage such a coalition on the broadest possible basis on a city-wide scale—around a common program on issues and on endorsement of candidates. In this, of course, the initiative of labor is decisive. If the 15-man trade-union committee would make this a major objective it could help determine the direction and outcome of the elections. Such an alliance could balk the maneuver of Liberal Party leaders and prevent back-door deals with Rockefeller. At the very least, such an alliance could win the support of the Liberal Party followers. It could help to assure that representatives of labor and the Puerto Rican people would not be missing in the next City Council, and that the inadequate representation of the Negro people is ended. Such an alliance today could well be the cornerstone for realizing the 15-man committee's objective to bring into being a labor or people's party—representing labor and "like-minded" people—separate and apart from the two old parties of monopoly capitalism.

Sixth, to recognize that the community movements organized by people's organizations in all boroughs, around such issues as housing, schools, recreational facilities, street lighting, unemployment, etc.—and the movements around peace, civil rights and civil liberties—all of which have grown in scope and militancy in the recent months—have a sig-

nificant role to play in these elections. In fact, their intervention is of major importance. Organization of meetings to which candidates are invited; delegations from the organizations to discuss what is expected from the candidates; invitations to labor leaders to discuss the common aims of labor and the community—all such activity can help focus attention on the real issues of the people, compel prospective candidates to commit themselves on such issues, and provide the means by which the people can help determine the program of the new administration. And, if none of the candidates measure up to the needs of the community, such activities can help create possibilities for running independent candidates, men or women identified with these community movements, who will challenge the reactionary old-line candidates in many areas.

#### LOCAL ELECTIONS AND THE CHARTER

Seven, we can foresee primary struggles in many councilmanic districts to force a change in the present do-nothing City Council. In a number of councilmanic districts, the insurgent movement, with the help of other forces, is determined to oust the incumbents, and in several districts these perspectives are realizable if all forces work unitedly. In this connection, such situations require the involvement of labor, the Negro and

Puerto Rican community organizations to work for the election of such candidates; invitations to labor leaders to discuss the common aims of labor and the community—all such activity can help focus attention on the real issues of the people, compel prospective candidates to commit themselves on such issues, and provide the means by which the people can help determine the program of the new administration. And, if none of the candidates measure up to the needs of the community, such activities can help create possibilities for running independent candidates, men or women identified with these community movements, who will challenge the reactionary old-line candidates in many areas.

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Puerto Rican movements, the community organizations and independent forces. Concentration in the working class, Negro and Puerto Rican communities for the support of such candidates can be the margin of victory.

Progressive forces can influence the outcome of such elections if one or two councilmanic districts in each borough are concentrated upon where the existing conditions are most favorable for the election of progressive, and particularly labor, Negro and Puerto Rican candidates. By constantly remaining on top of the situation in such concentration areas, and striving to bring about the unification of all progressive forces, progressive can play no insignificant role in many key communities.

Eight, that we play a role, and influence others to do likewise, to assure the adoption of a democratic charter which can be presented to the people in this election. While, of course, charter reform is not the fundamental answer to the unrest among the people of our city, a revision of the structure of our city government, so that the people's interests can be more effectively projected and defended, is of considerable importance. The antiquated 1938 charter, which divides the legislative powers between the City Council and the Board of Estimate; the allocation of certain executive powers to all boroughs, which becomes a patronage plum Borough

Presidents jealously fight to preserve; the absence of proportional representation which denies representation to minority groups in our city—these and many other questions make the revision of the charter an important issue in this election campaign.

The open letter of our Party addressed to Mayor Wagner outlining why we consider charter revision important, was a first step on our part to intervene in the debates around the charter and help realize a democratic charter for our city. Because of the court battle, instigated to halt the charter from coming before the electorate, we did not follow up this good beginning with more specific proposals on what we consider a new charter must contain. A committee is now working on such a document, with particular emphasis on transforming the City Council into a body with real legislative powers and with special emphasis on proportional representation, as the most democratic form of elections under capitalism. It should be said also, that there are indications that broad forces support the re-institution of proportional representation in the city. Such a movement should be encouraged and supported.

Finally, it is necessary to set as an objective the further expansion of the ties of our Party, of every club and every member, with new sections of the most exploited and oppressed in our city, helping our clubs and members to secure a firmer base in

key working class, Negro and Puerto Rican communities during this period of heightened electoral activity. Without extending our ties in such communities, we cannot make a qualitative change in the ranks of our Party, attract new adherents, and extend the influence and circulation of our press.

In examining the work of our Party in the 1960 election campaign, we must conclude that while some splendid work was done, too few of our comrades were actively engaged through their organizations and unions, or as citizens living in a particular area, in the elections. There was much apathy and unclarity in our ranks on our Party's electoral policy. As a result a feeling was widespread that there was little for us to do that could make any difference. So we continued to work in the old way without engaging ourselves in electoral work, at a time when millions were politically activated, despite existing illusions.

If we are to play even a limited role in the municipal elections, it is first of all essential that all clubs discuss the 1961 campaign; that they examine the situation in their respective communities; that they try to determine what forces exist with whom ties can be revived or established; that they consider how to help influence unity of action on a community basis; and how the organizations to which they belong can be involved in the campaign.

Our trade-union comrades, particularly, cannot limit their political action work only to their shops or local unions, but should relate themselves to the communities in which they live. Wherever possible, trade-union committees should be established in the communities, encouraged to work with insurgents, Negro and Puerto Rican organizations and other community organizations active in the campaign. It is, therefore, important that our trade-union membership be broken down on a community basis, particularly in those areas selected for special concentration, so that the full weight of every member will be exerted in electoral activity.

Especially important, is the need to cooperate fully to help coalesce the forces of the Left for the purpose of achieving a common approach to the elections and help arrive at a minimum program of activity. This is necessary to avoid the disorientation which existed in the 1958 and 1960 elections. This is also vital in order to help prevent sincere socialist-minded and Leftward-moving forces from being influenced by the Trotskyites (who have already projected their mayoralty candidate) whose "socialism" has nothing in common with Marxism, and whose diversionary, disruptive tactics separate advanced forces from the very people who must be set into motion if any change, immediate or ultimate, is ever to be realized.

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Furthermore, such a coalescing of the Left can be instrumental in bringing into being in a whole number of communities, independent people's electoral committees that can perform vital day-to-day work to advance issues, expose reactionary candidates, and contribute to the election of more progressive candidates. Whether such Left forces will project a city-wide candidate will, of course, be determined by them in the course of the campaign when the alignment of forces will be more readily discernible. But surely, such a coalescing of the Left can help bring into being a movement that can advance Left-progressive candidates in selected areas of the city who can speak forthrightly on key national and city issues, help educate substantial sections of New Yorkers on how to advance the struggle for peace, democracy and economic security. The urgent need of today is to bring this movement into being and to reassert the influence of a united Left on what happens. This is especially true as far as Negro and Puerto Rican communities are concerned and a program geared to such activities should immediately be undertaken by our Negro and Puerto Rican commissions jointly.

### THE PARTY IN THE ELECTIONS

It is clear that our Party, armed with a correct policy, can play an important and indispensable role in

these elections. What we do now to help influence the movements around program and candidates can contribute to the unification of the popular forces. As part of this, we must give serious consideration to running several Communist candidates. We should immediately survey the situation thoroughly and determine where we believe our candidates should run. The final decision as to how many candidates and where should be made prior to the conclusion of the primaries, when the primary struggle has taken on a definite form and it is possible to foresee its probable outcome. A discussion of Party candidates in such context will be more specific and meaningful, arising out of a development movement and serving to advance the united actions of the people.

In the meantime, however, we should prepare to issue with the utmost speed, in as large numbers as we can handle, the Party's election platform—focusing the attention of the electorate on the central issues and against which candidates can be measured. The issuance of our platform should help to stimulate discussions and debates in the communities, in housing projects, in organizations to which our members belong and lead to the development of many actions which can compel candidates to speak out on the burning issues of the day. We should, of course, also consider a series of leaflets on specific issues, especially addressed to the

working class, Negro and Puerto Rican communities—and leaflets which will explain our position on the campaign as a whole—thus helping to elevate the understanding of those we reach on what is truly at stake in this campaign.

Particularly important is the need of taking all measures necessary to ensure that the issues of this campaign find constant reflection in the pages of *The Worker*, so that the paper becomes the most important ideological instrument in clarifying the issues, in outlining the tasks facing the people, in showing how the most effective unity can be achieved. The sale of *The Worker* at election rallies, in housing projects, at union meetings should be more extensively planned so that *The Worker* will play its role in this campaign.

If we work properly, actively involve ourselves in the various phases of electoral activity, actively speak out on issues through meetings, forums, leaflets, etc., new opportunities will open up for the building of our Party and the press. Building the Party and press is not an abstract question, but a concrete question, connected with specific individuals with whom we have established close relationship and whom we have to convince on why our Party is necessary if the interests of the working class and the people are to be safe-

guarded. To the extent that the building of our Party and press is considered an important objective in this campaign, to that extent will our clubs constantly review this question; discuss specifically to whom the paper is to be brought or sold; whom to invite to open meetings and forums; who can be sold this or that pamphlet; who can be asked to subscribe to the paper and who should be asked to join the Party. Our activity in this campaign will be measured by the extent to which our clubs come out more consolidated and strengthened—action centers of political life and initiators of mass activities.

In conclusion, the general political direction contained in this report, will of course have to be reviewed and implemented regularly as new developments unfold. There are obviously many things not included in this report; and there are also many problems we cannot now foresee. But within these limitations, I am sure we can make a modest but important contribution to the outcome of the 1961 elections. Above all, if we work properly, we can help advance the strategic objective for this period—to help realize a broad anti-monopoly people's coalition, whose electoral expression will be a party of labor, the farmers, the Negro and Puerto Rican people—the common people of our land.

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# On Socialism and Democracy\*

By Palmiro Togliatti

The question of the relationship between democracy and socialism has become by now a common matter of political debate. Both the active section of the working-class parties and wide strata of public opinion are interested in it. This is a sign of progress, for around this question are centered the fundamental problems of the political battle today.

It is regrettable that in dealing with this question, which is closely connected with the controversies existing among prolitical parties, vulgarity and cliché are often resorted to, in order to reject the Communists' views.

I would like to quote an example. I happened to mention that the domination by the bourgeoisie of the whole society (which we call its class dictatorship) can be exercised in various political forms. It can either entail the total suppression of democratic liberties and institutions, or it can retain these liberties and institutions to a greater or lesser extent.

I should never had said it! On the one hand, the Republicans replied that to talk of a class dictatorship exercised in democratic forms is madness. On the other, Rodolfo Bataglia asserted in *Il Mondo*\*\* that

my statement (which he distorts to a certain extent to suit his argument) is "utter nonsense."

If one adopts an insolent tone it means that he has no valid arguments to use. I re-affirm, anyway, that, in my opinion, we have in Italy today a class dictatorship by the monopoly bourgeoisie. It is a dictatorship, however, that has to be exercised in certain democratic forms owing to historical and political conditions and conquests.

I am expressing this simple observation in Marxist terms, but growing masses of students and young workers, for instance, are beginning to understand it. To argue that modern society is no longer divided into classes, is needed "utter nonsense." Here my opponents bring out again the question of the "degeneration" of the Soviet regime, about which I wrote in 1956 with reference to Stalin. I would like to point out that the essence of the very essay in which I used that term, tended to prove that the class substance of the regime had not been altered by the restrictions and violations of democracy, of which Stalin was indicted. I am not asking anyone to read what I write. But they should do so, if they want to quote correctly the things I said.

This episode is not very important, actually. It is useful, though, in

\* This essay is condensed from a two-part article that appeared in the April and May, 1961 issues of *Rinascita* (Rome).

\*\* A Radical paper.

order to underline the fundamental mistake usually vitiating debates such as this one. It is a mistake which springs from superficiality and formalism and, at bottom, from a refusal to consider seriously our positions. Our positions are the result of a political philosophy and principles for the analysis and interpretation of society; they cannot be scoffed at as if they were a lot of nonsense. When we say that the history of all societies up to now is the history of class struggle, it is no use shrugging one's shoulders. This does not prove anything. The only valid basis for a debate is the analysis of facts and the evaluation of situations as they really are.

My remark is all the more true when the object of the debate is the question of democracy, for cliché is prevalent in this sphere. Some of the current affirmations may sound very good but their meaning is not clear.

It has been said lately, for instance, that the fundamental issue for a workers' party struggling for socialism is to proclaim its faithfulness to democratic principles, both in "*method and in system*" and with regard to "*the end*" and "*the means*." It is a nice expression and could be very effective in a public meeting. If it was put in a resolution, it would satisfy everyone. But what is the meaning of this so-called faithfulness to democracy in "methods" and "means"?

There have been very violent and

bloody democratic and even liberal revolutions. All the bourgeois revolutions have been of this nature in their initial phase. Today, however, every one seems to have forgotten it. But, in those revolutions was democracy "method" or "system"? Or, rather, were those revolutions democratic or no? Was it democratic to guillotine summarily kings and aristocrats? There could be a long argument about it. Both views have been defended in an endless number of books and writings. In the end the conclusion is that no evaluation is possible without an analysis of the real economic and power aims of the various social and political groups at that time, of their mutual relationship, of the situation of their movement, and extent to which the masses were taking part in the political battle.

It is wrong, therefore, to encourage the belief that the problems of a democratic evolution, of the progress towards socialism and of a socialist revolution and above all the problem of the responsibility of a workers' party in correctly facing such issues, could be solved through a formula. No formula whatsoever can replace a thorough and practical search for and identification of democratic objectives and socialist objectives, of the relation between such aims and the behavior of the ruling classes, hence the definition of the more effective and correct struggle to reach them in given circumstances.

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CAPITALIST REALITY  
AND DEMOCRACY

Allow me to say that it is partly our fault (I mean the fault of the parties which are fighting or claim to be fighting for socialism), and also the consequence of the bitter polemic directed against us by a section of the Socialist party, if a part of public opinion and even the working class is convinced that democratic institutions are peculiar to the so-called Western world, to the countries under a capitalist regime in varying stages. This is tantamount to saying that democracy is a quality inherent in such a regime whilst it is not by definition a characteristic of socialist regimes. There is no end of printed matter directed to re-affirm this mistaken viewpoint. It starts from the banality and idiocy of ordinary anti-communism, up to so-called theoretical arguments to prove the allegedly necessary link between economic freedom of capitalistic enterprise and freedom in general. It is maintained that there is an inevitable contradiction between an economically just society and a society organized on the democratic bases. It is asserted that a regime envisaging state intervention in the economic life and planning is inevitably bound to entail the end of any form of democracy and so on.

I do not intend to discuss here, on the basis of doctrine, the alleged soundness of such affirmations. I shall

confine myself to making a few elementary historical and political remarks, which are decisive in every respect.

Let us take the map of the capitalist world and color in red the countries where a truly democratic regime exists, in black those under an open tyranny, and in grey those having a certain number of democratic institutions but where these forms of democracy are insecure and limited and totally incapable of ensuring a "government of the people, for the people, by the people."

The section marked in red will be very limited, both in the period before the first world war (think of the "democratic" regimes of William II in Germany, Francis Joseph in Austria, and those in Russia, the Balkans and Spain) and in the period between the two world wars (when fascist or philo-fascist regimes were prevalent) and also at present.

Let us consider now those countries, which, in any of these three periods, have been colored in red. To these countries we can apply first of all Lenin's radical criticism of all capitalist political regimes. Lenin affirmed, in fact, that in any such system the liberty and equality of citizens are inevitably curtailed by the fact that exploiters and exploited are never on an equal footing, either in civil and political life and often even before the law. I do not want, however, to dwell on this criticism, although still valid, because it could



be said that it presupposes Marxist basic concepts and terminology. Let us keep, then, on the ground of conceptions and evaluations, accepted by those who claim to be democrats.

We will find, first of all, that the countries most commonly quoted as *democratic* are usually capitalist metropolises which oppress and exploit enormous masses of people throughout the world. This, obviously, is not democracy. We find in various countries, for long periods, legislation limiting the freedom of organization and movement of the working class and of the working people. The use of police forces against the workers is considered normal in labor conflicts. The universal right to vote has been recognized at the beginning of this century and only as a result of bitter struggles and in spite of firm opposition. Women are denied equal rights. The rights of national minorities are violated and denied. There are some political organs left, such as the House of Lords in Great Britain, which do not fit in any scheme of democratic rule and still maintained inadmissible power until the beginning of this century. In a country such as France, where the right to vote is universal, the electoral system tends one way or the other to prevent the elected assemblies from corresponding to the will of the citizens. The latter is replaced by a pre-organized result corresponding to the interests and will of the ruling

groups, but by no means to democratic principles. Lastly, in more recent times we have the ban of the Communist Party, persecutions against it, discriminations and trials even against peace fighters (as in Adenauer's Germany), and so on.

What is the conclusion of all this? The conclusion is that it is absurd to spread or, worse still, to help spread in the working-class, Socialist and Communist movement a guilt complex vis a vis the problem of democracy, as if the classes against which we are fighting were democratic and we, on the contrary, could only justify ourselves, at best, by showing that socialism and democracy are not contradictory.

The reverse is the truth. Facts prove this. The bourgeois classes were liberal and democratic for a certain period and under certain circumstances (not everywhere), when liberal institutions and the extension of democratic rights were used to create the basis of bourgeois power, by broadening the front of the political struggle and allowing the popular masses to intervene. Once this result was achieved, the opposite process began. Compromises were sought with reactionary and conservative social groups, even of a pre-capitalist nature; the extension and consolidation of democratic liberties were prevented, these liberties curtailed, etc.

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tions there were and still are bourgeois groups (that is to say groups upholding the capitalist system of production), defending democratic institutions. Sometimes these groups are moved by direct economic interests in addition to their beliefs. We affirm, though, that the existence and progress of democracy have been linked for more than one century, and particularly now, to the presence and development of an organized strong popular movement and working-class movement conscious of their political aims and capable of reaching these objectives through united action and struggles.

The participation of the working class in the social and political conflicts, its immediate claims and ultimate aspirations for a new economic system has been the motive force of democratic progress, in the contemporary world. The future of democracy depends on the weight of the working class in the country's life, on the level of its political and class consciousness, on its unity and on the impact made by its struggles.

Whenever there is a weakening or a regression, democracy is threatened. I believe that a thorough historical analysis would show that even the liberal and democratic nature of the institutions in Great Britain is due much less to traditions—as is so often and superficially affirmed—than to the fact that the working class and its organizations have

gradually become a force that everyone has to reckon with.

### ECONOMICS AND DEMOCRACY

To what extent, then, in the so-called Western societies, are democratic principles and practice applied to economic life? To a very limited extent indeed, or rather not all. I do not believe that anyone could affirm that the share-holders' assemblies or the managing committees of banks, industrial monopolies etc. are democratic institutions. Democracy does not touch this sphere, which is decisive for the economic life and hence for the development of the whole civil society. State intervention in the sphere of economic life is generally independent from any democratic decision or control. If such control exists—albeit limited—it is an exception in the so-called Western world.

One of these exceptions should be Italy. It is as well to talk openly about the nature of our present regime. We have a democratic constitution. Moreover it is a constitution which expresses the general trend of capitalist Europe in the post-war period to extend democratic principles to the economic sphere, imposing some limits to the exclusive power of the capitalist ruling group and transforming, hence, the economic structures of society.

What happened in our country could be quoted as an example,

worthy of a political science essay, of how democratic principles are not implemented.

After the representatives of the progressive popular parties left the government, all the following rulers, no one excluded, could be brought to trail before a High Court for having ruled as if the Constitution did not exist. Bitter mass struggles, sacrifices and blood-shed were needed to obtain an agrarian reform which is a partial implementation only of the Constitution. Sacrifice and bloodshed were needed to demand the end of the barbarous use of police forces against the workers in labor conflicts (and this claim has not been satisfied yet).

A relentless action and bitter struggles were needed to compel the rulers to take some timid steps towards a democratic intervention in the economic life of the country, to adopt a certain policy of investments and so on.

All this has succeeded in showing the road to be followed and in keeping it open, but it has not brought about any radical change. Any temporary weakening in the action by the masses and in their vigilance is enough to bring out the constant and deep anti-democratic leanings of the bourgeois groups and rulers.

What about our parliamentary system? Let us talk about it. We agree that it is a great conquest. But more so for what it could do than for what it actually does. It is

vitiated at its very roots by the fact that elections are controlled, to a great extent, by the church hierarchies, that is to say by an anti-democratic force. In addition to this, traditional type electoral consultations, such as the ones taking place in the Western world, always tend to express more the passiveness of the Masses and their link with the present than their deep aspirations to a social renewal. The formation of majorities is paralyzed by discrimination against Socialists and Communists and by the theory of "the democratic area" (that is to say of the capitalist area), which alone is supposed to include the forces capable of ruling.

Our parliamentary system, therefore, owing to the consequence itself of the implementation of such a principle, assumes an unmistakable class nature. It is constantly menaced by the attempt to limit the effectiveness of its decisions, to rob any meaning out of its debates, to curtail its power of control.

As for the fundamental issues, concerning the structures of society and the need to transform them, our parliamentary system faces insurmountable barriers. There is a whole range of activities — labelled "sub-government" — totally escaping parliamentary control. These are the practical daily activities on which depend vital issues for all citizens and where the most blatant corruption is common occurrence.

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In the present Italian situation, the democratic impulse is not coming and never came from the ruling classes. It is coming from the popular masses, from the parties for Constitutional progressive principles, for their implementation and extension. It comes from the working class, from the Communists and Socialists and from those democrats who have not bowed to the domination of the bourgeois ruling classes and of their parties.

Parliament itself, its work and decisions become more effective thanks to the development of a strong mass movement on certain issues.

But these remarks are not sufficient. Our democratic pressure has been and will be effective in future, just because we are not satisfied with forms only, but we fight to advance towards socialism.

Our action lends a new content to the democratic liberties themselves. It enhances the rights to freedom for it unites them to the claims for welfare and economic progress. It improves the standard of the parliamentary system itself. It presses for far-reaching democratic transformations of the political system (development of local powers; regional governments, etc.); it raises the problem of the development of new forms of democracy in the factories and in the countryside, to ensure that economic transformations and progress serve the vital interests of the working people.

It is our action to lead society towards socialism that lends new content and effectiveness to our struggle for democracy and to the whole democratic life of the country.

We must make this point clear to all, not only by stressing the existence of an insuppressible link between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism, but proving by words and deeds that democracy is something quite new and real for us. We are not satisfied with forms only. It is not enough to hold an electoral consultation now and then to create the basis of a democratic regime. The plebiscites in favor of Hitler were episodes of a hateful tyranny and the plebiscites for De Gaulle prove — although there is no need for it — that his regime is not democratic. We want the people's will to determine political developments, to influence the whole economic life and hence the whole civil society, transforming it.

Here lies the great difference characterizing the "democracy" of those who fight for socialism.

#### WORKING CLASS POWER AND DEMOCRACY

This line is not doctrinarian but corresponds to a practical policy, which our Party has realized in Italy. It contains the implicit and explicit answer to the question of what the forces fighting for socialism to day, will do "*afterwards*", that is to say whether they will respect democracy

when they will exercise power and lead the society. The "future" will correspond to what is being done now; it will correspond to the democratic content of our present struggle.

The conquest of power by the working people is the beginning of a true democratic regime, in the economic and political field and in the whole society.

Why talk of dictatorship, then? First of all, we do not speak or think about dictatorship in the same way, for instance, as the Jesuits do. According to one of the most influential interpreters of their thought, "dictatorship is not in itself an evil, and is not an evil at all, if most of the people agree to it when it would be impossible otherwise to preserve the State and change its outdated political regime without a revolutionary violent transformation."\*

The intention of these words obviously is to justify a non-democratic regime, a tyranny of fascist brand, in fact, as long as it is established without too much noise and scandal.

The dictatorship we refer to, is something quite different. It is as a matter of principle, an extension of democracy. It means the advent to the leadership of the State of a new ruling class — the working class and the masses of working people — having the task to organize the exploitation of social wealth for the good of all instead of a handful of

privileged. It entails, therefore, the end of exploitation of man, and it will ensure to all a worthy life and the necessary development of human personality. Owing to its very nature, this advent to power of a new class is the beginning of a true democratic renewal of the whole society.

How to achieve it is an object of historical research and at the same time of political action. This research was an object of our study even before the end of fascism. The conclusion we reached was that definition of our own democratic road towards socialism, which is still valid in spite of the polemics tending to discredit it. But that search and elaboration were accompanied by a corresponding action, the value of which no one can deny without sacrificing the elementary rules of honesty in the political and ideological debate.

Unfortunately this has been done, in recent times, by a section of the Socialist comrades, for the sake of their internal controversies. These Socialist comrades want to prove, at all costs, that they are "independent." To do this, they have to criticize the Communists and the easiest way to do this, obviously, is to ascribe to them a heap of nonsense and to give them disparaging qualifications. All this—even if it has nothing to do with what the Communists are, think and do—is then denounced self-righteously and the "independence"

\* S. Lerner, S. J. in *Civiltà Cattolica*, August 4, 1956.

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Unfortunately even Comrade Francesco De Martino, [a leading Socialist—ed.] who could have been expected to take up a more responsible position, has followed this trend, particularly when he deals with the relationship between socialism and democracy.

He accuses us, in the first place, of identifying socialism in general with the Soviet regime and with the regimes of people's democracy existing at present in so wide a section of the world.

But if this were true, to what end and for what reason should we make efforts to find and fight for an Italian democratic road to socialism, so different from the one followed, in other historical situations, by Russia, China and by the People's Democracies in central Europe and in Asia?

I do not think comrade De Martino will deny that there is no other country, besides the ones I mentioned, where anything similar to a socialist regime can be found. In spite of this, we were the ones who showed and stressed the need (and not the possibility only) for a movement towards socialism arising from and corresponding to our particular situation, hence politically and historically original.

#### COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS

It is not true, though, as it is stated,

I believe, in one of the documents of the Socialist congress, that at the end of the Second World War there was the problem of making a synthesis of the Communist experience in building a new society and a similar socialist experience. The latter does not exist. There is not even a positive experience by the European Social Democratic movement in the defence of democratic institutions, for Social-Democracy, on the contrary, had most of the time contributed to safeguard the bourgeois classes' power.

The only new experiences were made by us, in the sphere of theoretical elaboration, in the VII Congress of the International and afterwards, and in the sphere of practical action, during the Spanish war (in what conditions!) and with the popular front in France.

The war had not ended yet and already in the largest Western Social-Democratic parties the tendency begun to prevail to prevent a new advance along that road. As for the Communists, Lenin had said repeatedly that the roads to conquer power and the forms of organization of working class power would be very different. If this teaching was partly forgotten, it is hard to blame the Communists parties, which found themselves between the inspiring example of the Soviet construction of socialism, on one side, and a brutal reactionary pressure, coming from the capitalist West, on the

other. This is why it is an outstanding merit of the Italian Communists to have sought first a new line of action, developing Gramsci's teachings. It is no use saying that our line has been rejected by the most recent resolutions of the international Communist movement (in the Conference and Resolution of the 81 Communist parties); this, in fact, is totally untrue. How can it be affirmed, for instance, that the Communist parties have decided that the advance towards socialism is not in relation to the development of the productive forces and to the existing social and political relations? Is it perhaps because we say that the progress in the economic and social construction in the socialist countries creates more favorable conditions for the struggle for socialism in the whole world? This is an elementary truth that has nothing to do with the heresy that is attributed to us. How is it possible to develop a serious debate, if our views are distorted to this extent?

### COMMUNIST SELF-CRITICISM

I am quite prepared to admit that the debate on the issue of the perspective of advance towards socialism and of the construction of a socialist society has been made more difficult by recent events and particularly by the strong criticism the Communists themselves made of their own actions, by the denunciations made by the 20th Congress and

so on. Those who base their arguments exclusively or almost exclusively on these criticisms and denunciations seem always to forget that they came from us, from the Communist parties and their leaders. This is a decisive point and has to be kept in mind.

A fresh proof of the close link between socialism and democracy in the Communists' action was given by their iron courage in facing under the eyes of the whole world, the need to get rid of the heavy burden which oppressed the democratic essence of the socialist society. This situation had been engendered by a series of historical, economic, political and personal circumstances, which is useless to recriminate but which must be analyzed and understood so as to learn from them.

Had not Lenin said that the advent of a Communist party to power does not prevent such a party from making mistakes? The whole movement cannot be held responsible, though, for such mistakes when they do occur, although the whole movement, to a greater or lesser extent, will bear the consequence of them.

I do admit without hesitation that the Communists who exercise power in different countries probably made the mistake of stressing, above all, the common aspects of their action, instead of pointing out the differences existing in it, even in important fields. I do understand and everyone can understand why the Communists

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in those countries behaved in this way. In the face of a capitalist world inspired by an aggressive anticommunist and antisocialist spirit, ready to exploit any contrast or alleged contrast in the socialist camp, in the interest of the reactionary and bourgeois classes, it is legitimate to endeavor to stress the unity of this camp. It is a legitimate endeavor also in the face of the blind position of Social Democracy, which refuses even to understand the new economic and social content of the People's Democracy regimes in Europe and Asia. But it is interesting for us, for our debate, to stress the diversity and richness of the economic and political forms of the action tending to solve the most serious problems of socialism, such as the relationship between industrial and agricultural development, the just equilibrium between the production of productive goods and the production of consumers' goods, the forms of collective agricultural production, the international division of tasks, on a socialist basis, etc. Lastly, the problems of the coexistence and cooperation of different political parties, of the work of Parliament (such as in Poland) as an effective organ for the leadership and control of the whole economic life, and so on.

A large amount of experience has been reaped in these various fields. It is an experience one cannot refuse to acknowledge; it has to be studied carefully and thoroughly because,

like it or not, it represents a precious contribution to the solution of the most difficult problems facing mankind in its advance towards new societies, free from capitalist exploitation and oppression.

This is all the more so if one believes, as I think one should, that both in the more advanced capitalist countries and in the more backward ones, the new forms and stages of development of democracy and advance toward socialism are bound to be different in some or many aspects, from what they have been up to now. It is useless to ask what these differences will be. It would be impossible to give anything but a vague answer now. In this sphere, in fact, decisive are the concrete circumstances of class struggle; the degree of development of the productive forces and the objective ripening, within the capitalist society itself, of the conditions for the transition to socialism; the capacity of the working class and working people to fight successfully for democracy and socialism; the forms and methods of the inevitable resistance by the bourgeois classes, the relationship between internal situation and international relations and so on. All these issues have to be analyzed concretely at the given time, for the most diverse conjectures could be made about future possibilities.

To admit and prove the need for different lines of development is quite different from what comrade Nenni

does when he deals, as in the recent Socialist congress, with the perspective of the Socialist and Communist working class movement in capitalist countries.

But this is not the most important nor the gravest point. The worst is that comrade Nenni creates a split between the working class and popular forces which are in power in so wide a part of the world and the working class and working people fighting in the capitalist countries for power and socialism.

Thus, whilst deploring the existence of two separate blocs and claiming that this split has to be overcome, he extends it to the working-class movement and makes it thus impossible to overcome.

The working-class movement of capitalist countries cannot be identified—he states—with the working-class movement where it has conquered power. This is obvious, of course! The use of the word "identify," though, seems to us to have been picked on purpose from the most banal anticommunist vocabulary (you Communists are all Russians) in order to create confusion.

Our Party is accused of identifying itself with the Soviet Communist Party or rather with the Soviet State. If this is what Nenni means, a debate is no longer possible. But if he means that the solidarity and common aims of the working class and democratic vanguard in the capitalist countries with the struggle of the

socialist countries for democracy, socialism and peace, means that this vanguard must be excluded in all countries from the action to reach those objectives, it is obvious that comrade Nenni makes a theory of the split, on an international scale, of the forces of human progress. This is an objective pursued only by the most enraged Right-wing Social Democrats.

An objective and serene analysis of facts, instead, leads us to believe that in the present stage this split must be overcome and this is already happening to some extent. This is one of the conditions to make the struggle for democracy and socialism advance towards new successes, by developing it in each country in the forms corresponding to the situation. Whoever wants to contribute to these successes must help to overcome that split, if it exists, and must not make a myth of it, to find an excuse for one's capitulations.

### THE NEED FOR UNITY

The struggle for democracy and socialism is the struggle for the unity of progressive forces in the whole world. This has been said very simply a century ago in our Manifesto, by the well known appeal "Proletarians of all countries, unite."

Comrade Nenni is still treading on false ground when he ends up by stating that no entente is possible with the communists in the struggle

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for power. It is true that he does not speak of "entente" only, but of a "general political alliance," to make his viewpoint more acceptable, perhaps, by introducing a much broader concept. We do not exclude this concept and the possibilities it entails. Indeed we maintain that we shall come to that, in the course of the development of the movement. But we would rather talk today of a reasonable political entente, because this perspective corresponds better to the conditions of the present moment and of the near future. We affirm, then, that to a greater or lesser extent all the large working class and popular movements contain elements of struggle for power. In order to develop them and to give them the necessary impulse and scope, it is essential for the economic and political organizations leading those movements to have a united policy. But this is not enough. Indispensable condition for a democratic and peaceful advance towards socialism is the contact and entente among the parties which do not want this political position to remain a "Congress thesis"

but want it to become effective action. To refuse such a contact and entente means, at least in our country, hindering any advance toward socialism, raising obstacles to it. This is why the policy the Socialist party has been trying to follow for some time, under comrade Nenni's leadership, is so full of contradictions and so ineffective. It is not a policy, in fact.

The fundamental contradiction lies in the fact that whilst they proclaim their determination to find and follow a democratic road to conquer power, they refuse to see all that has been done in this direction and is being done by the communists in particular. They cut off, therefore, the necessary bond not only with the only true socialist reality existing today in the world, but also with the greatest democratic and socialist force existing in Italy today, which, whether you like it or not, is the Communist party. It is unthinkable to envisage the conquest of power and socialism, refusing any entente and cooperation with this force, or, still worse, raising an impassable barrier against it.

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