


*Marxism-*  
*Leninism*  
*vs*  
*Revisionism*



WILLIAM Z. FOSTER ✕ JAQUES DUCLOS  
EUGENE DENNIS ✕ JOHN WILLIAMSON

*Foreword by Max Weiss*



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# MARXISM- LENINISM

VS.

# REVISIONISM

By

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

JACQUES DUCLOS

EUGENE DENNIS

JOHN WILLIAMSON

*foreword by*

MAX WEISS

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## Foreword

The struggle against and repudiation of Browder's revision of Marxism-Leninism constitutes an historic stage in the development of the Communist Party of the United States.

A whole period has elapsed since the special National Convention, held on July 26-28, 1945, which decisively rejected Browder's policies and reconstituted the Communist Party. In this period life itself has added overwhelming evidence of the complete bankruptcy of Browder's revisionist policies at the same time that it has fully confirmed the correctness of the policies adopted by the National Convention and further developed by the meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party held on November 16-18, 1945.

This period has seen the development of big strike struggles instead of the era of class peace and harmony envisaged by Browder. It has seen the growth of unemployment and the maturing of all elements which, despite the possibility of a short-lived upturn in production, will lead inevitably to a new cyclical crisis instead of an era of uninterrupted flourishing of American

capitalist economy as forecast by Browder. It has seen armed intervention in China by American imperialism on the side of the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek, bloody armed suppression of the national liberation struggles of the Indonesian people by British and Dutch imperialism instead of the liberation of the colonies through arrangements between the imperialist powers as envisaged by Browder. It has shown that the Teheran agreement did not change the nature of American and British imperialism, and that Big Three unity as the cornerstone of enduring peace must be fought for if it is to be maintained and if departures from it, as at the London Conference, are to be checked and reversed.

If Browder's revisionist policies had not been rejected and if the Communist Party had not been reconstituted, it could not now be playing the vital role it is in the current economic and political struggles, in rallying the masses for the building of a broad coalition of all democratic forces for political action independent of the two major parties.

But the complete rejection of Brow-

derism by the Communist Party does not relegate the struggle against revisionism, or its profound lessons, to the category of an interesting phenomenon to be reviewed academically as a matter of past history.

The struggle to root out all remnants of Browder's revisionism, the struggle against all forms of opportunism, is a continuing one. It is part and parcel of the process by which our Party is making itself a mass, fighting Communist Party. It accompanies our fight today on all fronts and is a precondition for the successful waging of this fight.

The lessons of the struggle against revisionism are not dusty lessons about the past. They are, above all, lessons for today and for tomorrow.

The documents, articles and speeches collected in this booklet summarize the chief points of the enormously rich discussion carried on in the freest possible fashion by the membership of the Communist Party in the whole period prior to and culminating in the special National Convention in July, 1945, which, with the exception of the lone vote of Earl Browder, repudiated his revisionist theories and policies and reconstituted the Communist Party.

A careful study of the documents, articles and speeches collected in this booklet will reveal the nature and essence of the system of revisionist theories and policies rejected by the Communist Party. And these documents, articles and speeches must be so studied because they represent what is, from now on, an indispensable element in the education and development of all those who wish to master Marxism-Leninism.

Browder's revision of Marxism-Leninism was not confined to one or another individual question but represented a whole system of ideas the different aspects of which were put forth with a greater or lesser degree of theoretical elaboration.

This system of ideas comprised, in the main, the following elements:

1. Rejection of the Marxist theory of the class struggle and its replacement by the concept of a harmony of interests between the working class and the capitalist class; abandonment of the class struggle in favor of a policy of class collaboration and class peace.

2. Rejection of Lenin's analysis of imperialism as the final stage in the development of capitalism, as moribund capitalism, and advocacy of the theory of the ending of the epoch of imperialism; of the development of monopoly capitalism as a progressive force in society.

3. Rejection of the Marxist analysis of the laws of development of capitalist economy, in particular the inevitability of unemployment and crises under capitalism and the advocacy of the bourgeois political economy of the Keynesian school.

4. Rejection of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the state leading to the idealization of bourgeois democracy and falsification of the real relation of the trusts and monopolies to the development of fascism.

5. Rejection of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the national and colonial question as reflected in the abandonment of the principle of the right of self-determination for the Negro people; and in the advocacy of a theory of colonial liberation through arrange-

ments between imperialist powers.

6. Rejection of the Marxist-Leninist concept of the role of the working class as the most decisive and the leading force in modern society, subordinating it to the "liberal" bourgeoisie which is declared to be the most decisive force in modern society.

7. Rejection of the goal of Socialism as the ultimate aim of the working class and the substitution for it of a liberal bourgeois utopia.

8. Rejection of the Marxist-Leninist philosophical standpoint of dialectical materialism and the adoption in its place of a voluntarist, pragmatic standpoint; abandonment of the struggle on the theoretical front against hostile and alien ideological influences coupled with a gross distortion of the relationship between theory and practice.

9. Dissolution of the Communist Party representing a complete abandonment of all Marxist-Leninist teachings on the necessity for, the nature and role of, the vanguard party of the working class, the Communist Party; violation of the principles of democratic centralism and the establishment of bureaucracy as a system of work in the vanguard party of the working class.

It is clear from all this that, despite its specific features which bear the imprint of the special relation of forces existing internationally and within the United States on the basis of which this revisionist system arose and developed, Browder's revisionism is, in its fundamentals, a continuation and further development under new conditions of the revisionism of Bernstein, Kautsky, Bukharin and Lovestone.

The bourgeois influences and pres-

ures which generate tendencies to revisionism as typified by Browder are inherent in the situation in which the working class and its vanguard Communist Party in all capitalist countries lives and fights today. This is shown by the varying degrees of influence exerted by Browderite policies on a number of Communist Parties in certain countries outside of the United States. These influences and pressures manifested themselves with particular acuteness in the United States, first, because of the influence of the whole "Roosevelt decade" and, secondly, because American imperialism is the strongest imperialist power within a generally weakened world capitalist system.

But the fact that such a system of revisionism actually dominated the policies of the Communist Party of the United States for a period of time is a result of the fact that the Communists in the United States have not yet fully mastered and completely assimilated the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.

The struggle to master Marxist-Leninist theory in the course of the gigantic struggles in which the working class is now engaged, and in which the Communist Party is playing a vital and indispensable role, is therefore a supreme conclusion to be drawn from the struggle against Browder's revisionism.

The materials collected in this booklet must be studied on the basis of an intensified study and re-study of the teachings and writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, especially Lenin's articles on revisionism which are now being published by International Publishers in a special addition to its Little

Lenin Library series, Stalin's *Mastering Bolshevism*, Lenin's *Imperialism*, Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism* and the classic *History of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks)*.

Armed and equipped with that knowledge we can and will go for-

ward to the more rapid building of a mass, fighting Communist Party capable of successfully fulfilling all the heavy responsibilities which history places upon its shoulders.

MAX WEISS.



# FOSTER'S LETTER TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED JANUARY 20, 1944

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL  
COMMITTEE, C.P.U.S.A.,

Dear Comrades:

In Comrade Browder's report to the recent meeting of the National Committee, which was adopted as our Party's policy, there are, in my opinion, a number of serious errors which must be corrected. After listening to Comrade Browder's report, of which I had previously seen only some parts, I placed my name on the speakers' list to reply to the proposals that he had made. However, several Polburo members urged that I should not make the speech, arguing that it would cause confusion in the party and that further Polburo discussions would clarify the situation. So I refrained from voicing my objections at the time, proposing instead to take them up in the Polburo. As I consider Comrade Browder's errors to be of an important nature, I feel myself duty bound to express my opinions to the National Committee.

In his report Comrade Browder, in attempting to apply the Teheran decisions to the United States, drew a perspective of a smoothly working national unity, including the decisive sections of American finance capital, not only during the war but also in the postwar; a unity which (with him quoting approvingly from *Victory—And After*), would lead to "a rapid

healing of the terrible wounds of the war" and would extend on indefinitely, in an all-class peaceful collaboration, for a "long term of years." In this picture, American imperialism virtually disappears, there remains hardly a trace of the class struggle, and Socialism plays practically no role whatever.

In his Bridgeport speech, Comrade Browder said that "Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in the new world." But this must not cause us to lose sight of some of the most basic principles of Marxism-Leninism.

It seems to me that Comrade Browder's rather rosy outlook for capitalism is based upon two errors. The first of these is an underestimation of the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war. When questioned directly in Polburo discussion, Comrade Browder agreed that capitalism has been seriously weakened by the war, but his report would tend to give the opposite implication. The impression is left that capitalism has somehow been rejuvenated and is now entering into a new period of expansion and growth. Characteristically, he says that there is general agreement that there is "no valid reason why the same (American—W.Z.F.) economy, including agriculture, should not produce at approximately the same level

(as during the war—W.Z.F.), and that no plan is worth considering that proceeds from any other basis." Contrary to this picture of a flourishing, easily recovering capitalism, I would say, the reality is a badly weakened world capitalist system, whose weakness will also be felt in postwar United States. The problems of reconstruction, in this country and especially in devastated Europe, will be gigantic, and, in the long run, insoluble under capitalism. This is not to say, however, that there may not be a temporary postwar economic boom in some countries and possibly also an increase in the productive forces. It does assert, however, that the gravity of the postwar reconstruction will not admit of any such easy solution as Comrade Browder seems to imply.

The second basic error in Comrade Browder's report is the idea that the main body of American finance capital is now or can be incorporated into the national unity necessary to carry out the decisions of the Teheran Conference in a democratic and progressive spirit. It is true that Comrade Browder sometimes makes modest estimates of the extent of the sections of monopoly capital that he hopes will go along in the democratic camp in fulfilling the decisions of Teheran in their international and national implications. He says, for example, that "Such an approach is correct even if it should turn out that we find no allies there." But obviously he is making policy calling for new relations between two whole classes, the working class and the capitalist class. That he is calculating upon the bulk of finance capital being won for the proposals he outlined is clear from many indications, including the

great stress he lays upon the symbol of Browder shaking hands with Morgan and by the fact that he forces no serious opposition by big capital in "the long term of years" of peaceful collaboration which he sees ahead.

This great optimism as to the progressive stand of big business in backing the war and in working out the reconstruction problems is quite unfounded. The enforcement of the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international aspects, demands the broadest possible national unity, and in this national unity there must be workers, farmers, professionals, small businessmen and all of the capitalist elements who will loyally support the program. But to assume that such capitalists, even if we should include the Willkie supporters, constitute the decisive sections of finance capital, or can be extended to include them, is to harbor a dangerous illusion. The fact is, as I shall develop at length later, the great body of American finance capital is following a line contrary to a democratic and progressive interpretation of Teheran, and in all probability will continue to do so.

The only way a national unity could be made with the main forces of American finance capital, and this is most emphatically true of the postwar period, would be upon a basis incompatible with a democratic realization of Teheran. Such a national unity would be necessarily one under the hegemony of big capital, and in the long run it would fail in realizing the line laid down at the Teheran Conference. The plain fact, and we must never lose sight of it, is that American big capital cannot be depended upon to cooperate with the workers and

other classes in carrying out the decisions of Teheran, much less lead the nation in doing so.

The error of Comrade Browder is precisely the false assumption that they can be so depended upon. He thinks (Bridgeport speech) that the big capitalists fall within the scope of "the intelligent people of the world, the united moral forces of Britain, America and the Soviet Union," who are fighting for a new and better world. Contradicting his own correct statement in his report that the working people are the main base of the Teheran supporters, he makes various proposals that appear to go in the direction of expecting a progressive lead from the monopolists. This is indicated, for example, by his praise of the postwar program of the National Association of Manufacturers, and by his looking hopefully to the big capitalists to bring forward plans for doubling the workers' wages in the postwar period. It is also shown by his agreement with the N.A.M. that in the question of foreign trade "the government should go no further in this direction than the export-capitalists themselves demand," which would put the monopolists in full control of this vital matter. He says further that he would put no more curbs on the monopolists than they themselves see the need for, which would indeed be an ideal situation for the monopolists.

Comrade Browder's misconception as to the progressive role of monopoly capital in the postwar period is further indicated by his playing down the initiative of the workers in formulating proposed governmental economic policies and his looking for programs rather to the big employers, "who must

find the solution in order to keep their plants in operation." There are also his flat acceptance of the two-party system, his indefiniteness as to what forces constitute reaction in the United States, his understress on the national election struggle, and his curt dismissal of the whole question of Socialism. Characteristic of Comrade Browder's new conception of the progressive character, if not the actual leading role of monopoly capital, is the way he states the method of arriving at a national economic program, putting the capitalists first and the workers second. He says such a program must "rouse a minimum of opposition, from at least the two most decisive groups: first, the business men, industrial and finance capitalists and their managers, who have effective direction of the nation's economy; and second, the working class, organized labor and the farmers." This is putting the cart before the horse.

The danger in this whole point of view is that, in our eagerness to secure support for Teheran, we may walk into the trap of trying to cooperate with the enemies of Teheran, or even of falling under their influence. Trailing after the big bourgeoisie is the historic error of Social-Democracy, and we must be vigilantly on guard against it. Our task, instead of pursuing illusory plans of creating a national unity to include the body of monopoly capital, is, therefore, to understand that in order to realize the plans and hopes of Teheran, we have to rally the great popular masses of the peoples and to resist the forces of big capital now, during the war, and that, also, we will have to curb their power drastically in the postwar period. This policy is a

fundamental condition for success of Teheran and all it means to the world. When Roosevelt and Wallace single out the monopolists for attack, as they often do, they are sounding not only a popular, but also a correct note.

#### MONOPOLY CAPITAL AND THE TEHERAN DECISIONS

Among the major objectives established by the Teheran decisions are (a) the development of all-out coalition warfare for complete victory over the enemy; (b) an orientation toward an eventual democratic world organization of peoples to maintain international peace and order; (c) an implied unfoldment of an elementary economic program with which to meet the terrific problems of postwar reconstruction. In carrying out these objectives, ample experience and plain realism teach us that American finance capital is a very reluctant cooperator, indeed, with the bulk of the American people, not to speak of its being their progressive leader.

Take first the matter of an all-out military policy. In this respect American monopoly capital has indeed given anything but a patriotic lead thus far or a convincing promise for the future. The patriotic lead, on the contrary, has come, and will continue to come from the national unity elements grouped mainly around the Roosevelt forces. So far as the bulk of finance capital is concerned, starting out with a pre-war record of appeasement, it has, all through the war, followed a course of rank profiteering and often outright sabotage of both the domestic and foreign phases of the nation's war program, especially the former. While these elements obviously do not want

the United States to lose the war, they are certainly very poor defenders of the policy of unconditional surrender. In the main, their idea of a satisfactory outcome of the war would be some sort of a negotiated peace with German reactionary forces, and generally to achieve a situation that would put a wet blanket on all democratic developments in Europe. All this still remains a serious obstacle to full victory. A real victory policy, as laid down at Teheran, can be achieved only in opposition to these elements, certainly not in easy collaboration with them, and above all, not under their leadership.

As to the creation of a world organization to maintain the postwar peace, as outlined at the Moscow and Teheran meetings, American finance capitalists, in the main, are equally unreliable. All through the war they have been saturated with anti-British and anti-Soviet tendencies. They were literally shoved into their dubious endorsement of Teheran by heavy mass pressure. They probably would accept some sort of an after-war world organization to maintain peace, but certainly not one as contemplated by the signers of the Teheran and Moscow pacts. At best it would be a kind of a touch-and-go proposition calculated not to interfere with the active imperialist maneuverings they have in mind. So far, the real pressure and leadership in the United States for a democratic world organization of states has come, not from the main forces of finance capital, but from the broad masses of the people, and there is no reason to suppose that this situation will alter in the foreseeable future.

Regarding the development of a cooperative world economic program of

reconstruction after the war, as Teheran obviously foresees, American finance capital again would indeed be a shaky reed to lean upon. While the great capitalists of this country would probably accept some elementary program to encourage world trade and also would provide a niggardly program of emergency relief, their guiding principle would be to grab off whatever they could of the world market. That is about all the significance they would attach to epoch-making Teheran. It is idle to think that they would come forward with a broad economic plan based upon the true interest of our nation and the world. The United States is not Czechoslovakia or Greece. It is not even Great Britain. Despite its war injuries, which are much more serious than appears at first glance, it will nevertheless emerge from this war by far the most powerful capitalist nation in the world. And its great industrial rulers will not be inclined to make such concessions to the peoples' interests as is now being done by the capitalists of some occupied countries, who are even accepting Communists in the Cabinets. American finance capital has not been seriously chastened by the war. It does not consider this war as a world defeat for monopoly capital (which it doubtless is) after which its job will be to assume a responsible attitude toward the world capitalist system and to work out a progressive domestic program with democratic forces. It is strong, greedy and aggressive.

When American capitalism looks out upon the postwar world it will see mostly that its great capitalist rivals have been badly disabled by the war, and its imperialistic appetite will be

whetted. Germany, Japan, Italy, France and many other capitalist countries will be prostrate by the war's end, and Great Britain also will be much weakened. While American big capitalism acutely fears Socialism, it nevertheless considers that the U.S.S.R., facing a gigantic problem of internal reconstruction, will not be an insuperable obstacle to its plans of imperialistic expansion. Altogether, it seems principally an alluring opportunity to conquer markets and strategic positions, and we may trust the Wall Street moguls not to overlook this chance. The Teheran Conference by no means liquidated American imperialism. A postwar Roosevelt Administration would continue to be, at it is now, an imperialist government, but one with a certain amount of liberal checks upon it. An election victory of the Republican Party, the chosen party of monopoly capital, would mean, however, imperialism of a far more aggressive type. Comrade Browder goes too far when he says that world capitalism and world Socialism have learned to live peacefully together and (in his Bridgeport speech) that "Britain and the United States have closed the books finally and forever upon their old expectation that the Soviet Union as a Socialist country is going to disappear some day." The fruition of such an attitude on the part of these capitalist countries is dependent upon the extent to which democratic support is built up for Teheran and its perspective.

In my article in the *New Masses*, December 14, 1943, I gave a brief summary picture of about what we could expect from American finance capital in the postwar period, given the strong control that a Republican

victory would bring it. It would endanger the whole setup and program of Teheran:

A Republican Administration would encourage reaction all over the world. Rampant American imperialism again in the saddle would weaken the foundations of the United Nations and sow seeds for a World War III. Such an Administration would not insist upon unconditional surrender, it would not extinguish fascism in Europe or establish democracy; it would not collaborate loyally with the U.S.S.R. or Great Britain; it would degenerate our Good Neighbor policy in Latin America. . . . Nor could Willkie as President, even if he wanted to, substantially alter this basically reactionary course of the Republican Party.

The important sections of the capitalists who support Wendell Willkie incline somewhat more to a liberal application internationally of the Teheran policies, although Willkie's stand on Poland was not very promising. Their basic kinship with the bulk of finance capital and their willingness to follow its main international and domestic policies, however, are indicated by their common, all-out hatred of Roosevelt and by the practical certainty that they will, in the event that Willkie does not get the Republican nomination, support any other Republican candidate, unless possibly it should be some outright fascist or isolationist, such as Colonel McCormick. The weakness in our own attitude toward the Willkie forces has been to stress too much their more superficial liberal tendencies and not enough the more basic

fact that they are part of the camp of reaction and that they constantly tend to lure the workers away from the Roosevelt progressive line into the trap of the Republican Party. The Willkieites will accept the reactionary line of the Hoovers, Tafts and Deweys, rather than join with the masses of the people to fight these reactionaries.

All of which means that the bulk of monopoly capital cannot be relied upon either to cooperate loyally, or to lead in a progressive application of the Teheran decisions. It will yield in this direction only under democratic mass pressure. Instead, our reliance must be upon the great democratic people, the real backbone of national unity, now organized in the main in and around the Roosevelt camp. The basic flaw in Comrade Browder's report was that he failed to make clear this elementary situation, but instead tended to create illusions to the effect that these antagonistic forces, the bulk of big capital and the democratic sections of the nation, now locked together in one of the sharpest class battles in American history, can and should work harmoniously together both now and during the postwar period.

#### NATIONAL UNITY IN THE ELECTIONS

Following logically his argumentation to the effect that the decisive sections of monopoly capital are, or can be drawn, not only in "the democratic-progressive camp" for the realization of the Teheran decisions, but may also be the leaders of that camp, Comrade Browder gave little emphasis indeed to the bitter Presidential election struggle now developing. For, certainly, if

the decisive sections of American monopoly capital are behind the Teheran decisions loyally, and indeed may lead the national unity, there would be little to worry about regarding the outcome of the elections. It would make little difference which side won. Comrade Browder did not sound any note of alarm about the elections. He did not warn the American people militantly of the grave danger that would be involved in a Republican victory. Instead, in his National Committee report, he handled the two major parties almost in a tweedle-dee, tweedle-dum manner, and in his Madison Square Garden speech, where he presented the Party line to the public, he devoted only twelve lines to the vital subject of the elections. Logically following out his general position, he seemed rather to be more interested in bridging the gap between the two warring parties in the name of an all-inclusive national unity, than in stirring into victory action the great democratic forces of the country, the only ones who can be relied upon to make the hope of Teheran real.

Let us consider the elections a little more in detail. Briefly, the situation is this: during the eleven years of the Roosevelt Administration, monopoly capital has, of course, remained dominant; its profits have gone right on, and it has also very greatly increased its concentration and strength, particularly during the war period. Nevertheless, monopoly capital has found an obstacle in the Roosevelt Administration. This Administration is, in fact, if not formally, a coalition among the workers, middle class elements, and the more liberal sections of the bourgeoisie (with the special situation in

the Democratic South). The big monopolists, after the first few emergency months of 1933, have in overwhelming majority come to hate the Roosevelt Administration bitterly. They especially attack the domestic angles of his policies. What backing Roosevelt had from finance capital at the start has mostly leaked away from him. This is because of certain restrictions his Administration has placed upon big capital's drive for unlimited power. The monopolists hate the Roosevelt Government because it is not an instrument that will do their bidding fully and immediately; they hate it because of the social legislation it has written on the books and also for what it threatens to adopt during a fourth term; they hate it because it has facilitated the organization of ten million workers into trade unions, which weakened their great open shop fortress in the basic industries; they hate it because they think there is altogether too great a democratic content in its war and foreign policies.

The substance of the present election struggle, therefore, is an attempt of monopoly capital to break up the Roosevelt liberal-labor combination. It is an effort of the big financial tycoons to get rid of the governmental and trade union hindrances that have irked them so much under the New Deal, so they can branch out into the active imperialistic regime they have in mind. They are fighting Roosevelt viciously, trying to defeat him in his own party with their Farleys and Southern poll-taxers, and, if they fail in this, to beat him with a Republican candidate if he is nominated for a fourth term. The big capitalists are fighting Roosevelt with striking unity. Even though

they are having trouble to decide upon a candidate of their own, they are nevertheless united in opposing Roosevelt. The fact that 90 per cent of the daily press and all the leading employers' associations and conservative farmers' organizations are definitely opposed to Roosevelt, tells graphically where finance capital is standing in this crucial election struggle. Its victory would be understood all over the world as a victory for reaction. The fascists and every other enemy of Teheran in the United States and abroad would hail it as their triumph.

In this most crucial election since 1864 our duty as a Communist Party is plain. We must go all-out for a continuation of the Roosevelt policies, as the only way to support effectively the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international implications. We must tell the people precisely who the enemy is that they are fighting—organized big capital—and mobilize our every resource to help make their fight succeed. We must awaken them to the grave danger of a reactionary victory, pointing out the heavy mobilization of the capitalist elements, the systematic propaganda-poisoning of the armed forces against labor, and the serious inroads that have been made into Roosevelt's labor and working farmer support.

The mobilization of labor's forces politically and combining them with all other democratic, win-the-war forces supporting Teheran for an election victory over reaction, whose main fort is the Republican Party, should have been the all-pervading business of our National Committee. But it most emphatically was not. Instead, with Comrade Browder's new conceptions of na-

tional unity, there was a tendency for us to bridge the gap in the elections. This would, indeed, be a serious mistake for us to make, to try to convince the American people in the heat of this great and significant struggle, that there is a possibility for progressive unity with the very forces that they are fighting against and must defeat in this election, the monopolists.

Let us not make the serious error of slipping in between these fighting forces in the name of an all-inclusive but illusory national unity with big capital. We must understand clearly and definitely that the basic forces of a progressive national unity are those grouped, in the main, around Roosevelt's banners and we must fight to help them extend and solidify their ranks. Perhaps we can learn a lesson from the recent hotly-contested elections for the Auto Workers' conventions when we, in the name of trade union unity, took a neutral position and the dangerous Social-Democrat, Walter Reuther, almost won control of the convention out of the hands of the win-the-war forces. The influence of our Party in the national elections can be very great, especially in solidifying the, at present, confused ranks of labor, and it must not be frittered away in any middle, half-middle, or above-the-battle position.

#### NATIONAL UNITY IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

What kind of a postwar perspective may we look forward to in this country? In my judgment, it will be quite different from the long period of peaceful class collaboration and social advance, in which the monopolists are progressively collaborating, that Com-



rade Browder seems to envisage. The gravity of the world's postwar construction problems, which our country also will feel, and the sharp contradictions in class interests involved, will not permit such a harmonious progress.

It is true that at the present time many big capitalist leaders and organizations are talking glibly in generalizations about the fine economic conditions they will create after the war. But bearing in mind the glowing promises, all unfulfilled, that were made toward the conclusion of World War I, we can safely discount much of their rosy prophecies and look sharply at their real policies. After all, these men of big promises have a great prize at stake, the full control of the United States Government, and if they can fool the people with tricky demagoguery it will be a well-paying investment.

Actually, the great capitalists in this country are orientating in the main upon a long-time postwar industrial boom, based upon reconstruction work and the spontaneous development of new industries, as well as the capture of new international markets. Although in case of a crisis these elements would be quick to appeal to the state for aid, they are quite generally pooh-poohing and opposing any attempts to prepare in advance a Federal Governmental program to keep the industries operating and the masses employed. To them this is still all pretty much "boondoggling" and interference with the mystical operation of "free enterprise." That their true perspective is almost complete reliance upon privately owned industry along the accustomed paths of the past, is evidenced by the fact that they have

not introduced a single postwar economic measure into Congress or popularized it before the country. Every progressive proposal made so far, from the general slogan of the Four Freedoms, to the economic reconstruction program of the National Resources Planning Board, the Wagner-Murray social insurance bill, and the legislation to rehabilitate members of the armed forces, and now the President's recently announced 34,000 mile highway plan and his new Bill of Rights, have all originated in the camp of the Administration forces and are opposed by the main forces of monopoly capital.

And so it will continue to be. In the domestic, as in the international sphere, the progressive lead will not come from monopoly capital. The far-reaching economic programs, involving government intervention in industry on an unprecedented scale that will be necessary to guard our country from an economic collapse worse than that of 1929, will originate in a truly progressive camp, consisting of the masses of workers, farmers, middle classes and liberal sections of capitalists. And they will be brought to realization, not in easy agreement with the monopolists, as Comrade Browder would appear to believe, but in active pressure against them.

Let us consider, therefore, what is likely to confront us as a result of the elections? First, if President Roosevelt should be elected again and should try vigorously to put into effect a progressive program, including the international decisions of Teheran and the economic and political aims he enunciated in his recent "Report to the Nation," concretely, his new Bill of Rights, then he will certainly collide

heavily with the powerful forces of the bulk of American finance capital. Their present bitter opposition to all such measures would not suddenly melt away in sweetness and collaboration. Inasmuch as we now fall far short of national unity even under the severe pressure of war, may we expect more unity when this unifying pressure is released? The American big bourgeoisie show no signs of interpreting the Teheran Agreement in the sense that henceforth they must voluntarily adopt progressive programs in the United States. They still respond only to pressure of one kind or another, exerted nationally or internationally. The progressive democratic forces of national unity under a postwar Roosevelt Administration should, and no doubt would, seek to widen as far as possible the area of agreement around their necessary economic programs and also generally to work on an orderly development of our national progress, but this desire will not save them from coming into serious collisions with the forces of finance capital.

On the other hand, should a Dewey, Taft or Bricker, or even the liberal-speaking Mr. Willkie be elected, then we could expect definite attempts of the new Administration to give monopoly capital a much freer hand at the expense of the people. If successful, this could only result in strengthening reaction and imperilling our economic future. At best, the domestic economic program of such an Administration would be one based on boom expectation and upon extending government aid to the workers only in the most niggardly measure and under heavy pressure. American finance capital would soon demonstrate that it

had learned very little of a progressive economic nature through the war and the period of the New Deal. The big capitalists, if they did not make an open attack upon the unions, would probably try to paralyze organized labor by ensnaring it into a program of intensified class collaboration, designed in their own interests and not in those of labor and the nation. The capitalists have not forgotten the way they did this so disastrously to the labor movement and the people after World War I. With the added consideration that big business today, bitterly remembering the liberal-labor coalition that has backed the government for the past dozen years, would adopt any means to prevent a repetition of this hated experience. It could therefore be expected, what with the growing fascist spirit in its ranks and the tricks it has learned from Hitler, that the monopolists would adopt, if necessary, the most drastic means to clip the strength of labor and to prevent the return to power of any popular, progressive government.

At our National Committee meeting there were delegates who interpreted Comrade Browder's report, not illogically, as implying a no-strike policy for the trade unions in the post-war period. One, who went uncorrected, said: "We have the perspective of continued cooperation, a no-strike policy and no class clashes for a long time after the war." This is nonsense, of course. It would disarm the trade unions in the face of their enemies. The Teheran Conference did not abolish the class struggle in the United States. The workers would indeed be foolish if they were to orientate upon any such illusory perspective. The cue

to the trade unions, in facing the post-war period, is to unify their ranks, nationally and internationally, to organize the millions of still unorganized workers, to develop their united political action movement so that they may be a real force in the democratic coalition, to establish the broadest possible alliance with all other democratic groups and classes, to defeat reaction in the coming national elections, to prepare constructive economic proposals for the postwar period and work diligently for them, and generally to strengthen their ranks and be in readiness to defend their organizations and their living standards from any and all attacks by their powerful and inveterate enemy, monopoly capital. It would be disastrous if our Party were in any way to weaken labor's alertness to these necessities.

#### THE SLOGAN OF "FREE ENTERPRISE"

Comrade Browder was correct in saying that we should not take issue with the reactionaries' slogan of "free enterprise" in the sense that in the Presidential election the issue is for privately-owned industry or against it. But he is incorrect when he says, "The issue of 'free enterprise' is thus not in any way, shape or form the issue of the coming struggle for control of United States policy in the Congressional and Presidential elections." On the contrary, "free enterprise" is the main slogan of the monopolists and behind it stands the whole conception of their program. It cannot be dismissed by saying that "If anyone wishes to describe the existing system of capitalism in the United States as 'free enterprise,' that's all right with us."

In stressing their main slogan of "free enterprise" the monopolists are of course trying to make plausible their unfounded allegation of Socialism against the Roosevelt Administration. But they are also seeking to do much more than this. Within the purview of this slogan is comprised their whole determination to regain unrestricted control of the government, to weaken the power of organized labor, and generally to free the hands of monopoly.

The economic essence of this slogan is a main dependence upon a long-term industrial boom to solve our national economic problems, with improvised government work programs and aid for the workers and farmers considered merely as emergency programs. Thus, Senator Taft says in the *Saturday Evening Post*, December 11: "Substantially full employment must be restored and maintained through free enterprise, with only such assistance from government as is proved to be absolutely necessary." That is to say, only after the economic crisis bursts upon us we may look for fragmentary, skinflint programs of government work and relief. The "free enterprise" slogan represents a concrete program just as definitely as did that of the "New Deal." Hence, to accept or ignore this slogan means to imply, in the popular mind, to accept or ignore the program behind it.

It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot simply brush aside big business' main slogan of "free enterprise" as being merely demagogic and let it go at that. On the contrary, while thoroughly exposing the demagoguery of the slogan, we must also expose its reactionary economic and political content. This can only be done on the

basis of bringing forward the program of the progressive forces. In doing this, the question of social insurance and government stimulation of industry cannot be put forth merely as emergency stop-gap measures to apply in times of crises. They must be presented as essential steps if we are to cushion ourselves against plunging headlong into overwhelming economic crises; if we are to make even an approach to the full production and jobs for all that everybody is now talking about so glibly. The counter-program of the progressive, win-the-war, win-the-peace forces to the reactionary "free enterprise," or unrestrained monopoly program of the reactionaries, does not now contain demands for the nationalization of banks, railroads, or other industries, and it will not in the immediate postwar situation. But the grave difficulties that will confront capitalism all over the world after this war, not excluding American capitalism, will surely eventually raise the need and popularity of such demands.

\* \* \*

On the question of the two-party system, it is my opinion that Comrade Browder also dismisses that matter too easily, by speaking of "the stone wall of the two-party system." He subscribes to "the general national opinion that this 'two-party system' provides adequate channels for the basic preservation of democratic rights," and thus leaves the impression that the Communists no longer look beyond the present two-party line-up, even in the most eventual sense.

In such a presentation, it seems to me, there is contained an underestimation of the political initiative of the

democratic masses of the people and an overestimation of their acceptance of the bourgeois leadership of the two main parties. While the situation is very much not ripe for a new political party line-up in the United States, nevertheless this can by no means be excluded permanently. I prefer, instead, the formulation of Philip Murray in the current issue of the *American Magazine*, where he states that the political situation at this time in the United States does not justify the formation of a third party.

#### THE QUESTION OF SOCIALISM

In presenting such a basic change in line to our Party as he did, it seems to me that Comrade Browder should have made a more complete statement regarding our Party attitude to the question of Socialism. While it is correct to say, as Comrade Browder does, that Socialism is not the issue in the war, nor will it be the issue in the immediate postwar period in the United States, and that, therefore, to raise the issue now could only result in narrowing down the national unity necessary to win the war and to carry out generally the decisions of Teheran, nevertheless, merely to take this negative attitude toward Socialism is not enough. We must also develop our positive position.

We have to bear in mind that although Socialism will not be the political issue in the United States in the early postwar period, it will nevertheless be a question of great and growing mass interest and influence. This is true for a couple of major reasons, aside from the possibility that some countries of Europe may adopt Socialism at the close of the war: first, the

Soviet Union in this war has given a world-shaking demonstration of the power and success of Socialism. The democratic peoples of the world, who have been saved by the Red Army from Hitler tyranny, are looking upon this great demonstration with amazement, gratitude and a lively curiosity. For the first time they are beginning to see through the wall of prejudice that was so carefully built up against the U.S.S.R. over so many years. They are extremely interested, and in a more and more objective sense, to learn further about the great, new, socialist world power. The present new crop of books friendly to the U.S.S.R. is an early sign of the new mass interest in the Soviet Union and its Socialism. With the development of the postwar reconstruction period, we can expect the U.S.S.R. to perform as great "miracles" as it is now doing in a military way, hence this mass interest is bound to increase. The second basic reason for a great postwar mass interest in Socialism is that with the world capitalist system badly injured, there will be definite tendencies for the peoples in all countries to learn from the Soviet regime and to adapt to their own problems such features as they can from the obviously successful and flourishing Socialist Soviet Union. The whole question of the advance to Socialism will be in for a fresh discussion in the new world conditions.

In view of all this, obviously the Communist Party, as the party of

Socialism, cannot take merely a negative attitude toward Socialism. We must teach the workers the significance of the socialist developments of our time and their relation to the United States. While we point out that Socialism is not now the issue in our country, we must also show that it is nevertheless the only final solution for our nation's troubles. If we do not do this, then the Social-Democrats will be left a free hand to pose as the party of Socialism, with consequent detriment to our Party and to the whole struggle of the win-the-war, win-the-peace forces.

\* \* \*

Obviously, the questions raised by Comrade Browder in his report are of far-reaching significance and represent a radical departure from our past conceptions of national unity. They deserve the most profound consideration in the pre-convention discussion that is now beginning. In these days of world-shaking war and with postwar problems of enormous size and complexity looming before us, our Party must be doubly careful in the development of its political line. I for one am convinced that if we give this close attention to Comrade Browder's report, adopted by the National Committee, we will find it necessary to alter it in the general sense of the several points raised in this letter.

Comradely yours,

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER.

### NOTE BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

The above letter to the National Committee was rejected at an enlarged

meeting of the Political Bureau, held on February 8, 1944, with about 40

leading Party members in attendance and voting. Comrade Browder put as the main issue of the meeting, not a re-survey of the political policies, in the light of my letter, but the preservation of the unity of the Party. After a day's discussion, all present voted against my letter, except Darcy and myself.

As a result of this serious rebuff and in view of Comrade Browder's expressed determination to stamp out all open opposition, an attitude on his part which was strengthened by the heavy vote of the enlarged Political Bureau against my letter, I concluded that it would be folly for me to try to take the question to the Party membership at that time. For to do so would have weakened our general work in support of the war; ruined our current big recruiting drive, interfered seriously with the development of our vital national election campaign, and perhaps resulted in splitting our Party.

So I decided to confine my opposition to the ranks of the National Committee, a course which I followed during the next year and a half by means of innumerable criticisms, policy proposals, articles, etc., all going in the direction of eliminating Comrade Browder's opportunistic errors. I was convinced that the course of political events and the Communist train-

ing of our leadership would eventually cause our Party to return to a sound line of policy.

It will be noted that my letter to the National Committee does not discuss the matter of dissolution, or reorganization, of the Communist Party into the Communist Political Association.

When Comrade Browder proposed this liquidatory step several members of the National Board raised objections to it, and, of course, I opposed and voted against it. Nevertheless Comrade Browder was able to push it through in spite of this opposition. At the time of my sending the letter to the National Committee, things had proceeded so far that I considered the reorganization of the Party into the C.P.A. as virtually an accomplished fact. It had already been publicly announced and endorsed at the January meeting of the National Committee, and, in fact, the Party was already in the preliminary stages of reorganization. Consequently, I felt that further agitation of the matter was hopeless for the time being and could only cause useless strife and confusion in our ranks. So I left the whole question out of my letter to the National Committee. The immediate task, as I saw it, was for me to help to keep the C.P.A., in fact, if not in name, the Communist Party.

# ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE U.S.A.

By JACQUES DUCLOS

*Reprinted from the April, 1945, issue of CAHIERS DU COMMUNISME,  
theoretical organ of the Communist Party of France.*

Many readers of *Cahiers du Communisme* have asked us for clarification on the dissolution of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. and the creation of the Communist Political Association.

We have received some information on this very important political event, and thus we can in full freedom give our opinion on the political considerations which were advanced to justify the dissolution of the Communist Party.

The reasons for dissolution of the Communist Party in the U.S.A. and for the "new course" in the activity of American Communists are set forth in official documents of the Party and in a certain number of speeches of its former secretary, Earl Browder.

In his speech devoted to the results of the Teheran Conference and the political situation in the United States, delivered December 12, 1943, in Bridgeport and published in the Communist magazine in January, 1944, Earl Browder for the first time discussed the necessity of changing the course of the C.P.U.S.A.

The Teheran Conference served as Browder's point of departure from which to develop his conceptions favorable to a change of course of the American C.P. However, while justly stressing the importance of the Teheran Conference for victory in the war against fascist Germany, Earl Browder

drew from the Conference decisions erroneous conclusions in no wise flowing from a Marxist analysis of the situation. Earl Browder made himself the protagonist of a false concept of the ways of social evolution in general, and in the first place, the social evolution of the United States.

Earl Browder declared, in effect, that at Teheran capitalism and socialism had begun to find the means of peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the framework of one and the same world; he added that the Teheran accords regarding common policy similarly presupposed common efforts with a view to reducing to a minimum or completely suppressing methods of struggle and opposition of force to force in the solution of internal problems of each country.

That (the Teheran Declaration) is the only hope of a continuance of civilization in our time. That is why I can accept and support and believe in the Declaration at Teheran and make it the starting point for all my thinking about the problems of our country and the world. (Address at Bridgeport, Conn., Dec. 12, 1943.)

Starting from the decisions of the Teheran Conference, Earl Browder drew political conclusions regarding

the problems of the world, and above all the internal situation in the United States. Some of these conclusions claim that the principal problems of internal politics of the United States must in the future be solved exclusively by means of reforms, for the "expectation of unlimited inner conflict threatens also the perspective of international unity held forth at Teheran." (*Teheran and America*, pp. 16-17.)

The Teheran agreements mean to Earl Browder that the greatest part of Europe, west of the Soviet Union, will probably be reconstituted on a bourgeois-democratic basis and not on a fascist-capitalist or Soviet basis.

But it will be a capitalist basis which is conditioned by the principle of complete democratic self-determination for each nation, allowing full expression within each nation of all progressive and constructive forces and setting up no obstacles to the development of democracy and social progress in accordance with the varying desires of the peoples. It means a perspective for Europe minimizing, and to a great extent eliminating altogether, the threat of civil war after the international war. (Bridgeport speech, *The Communist*, January, 1944, p. 7.)

And Earl Browder adds:

Whatever may be the situation in other lands, in the United States this means a perspective in the immediate postwar period of expanded production and employment and the strengthening of democracy within the framework of the present system—and not a perspective of the transition to socialism.

We can set our goal as the realiza-

tion of the Teheran policy, or we can set ourselves the task of pushing the United States immediately into socialism. Clearly, however, we cannot choose both.

The first policy, with all its difficulties, is definitely within the realm of possible achievement. The second would be dubious, indeed, especially when we remember that even the most progressive section of the labor movement is committed to capitalism, is not even as vaguely socialistic as the British Labor Party.

Therefore, the policy for Marxists in the United States is to face with all its consequences the perspective of a capitalist postwar reconstruction in the United States, to evaluate all plans on that basis, and to collaborate actively with the most democratic and progressive *majority* in the country in a *national unity* sufficiently broad and effective to realize the policies of Teheran. (*Teheran and America*, p. 20.)

To put the Teheran policy into practice, Earl Browder considers that it is necessary to reconstruct the entire political and social life of the United States.

Every class, every group, every individual, every political party in America will have to readjust itself to this great issue embodied in the policy given to us by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill. The country is only beginning to face it so far. Everyone must begin to draw the conclusion from it and adjust himself to the new world that is created by it. Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in this new world. We are going to have



to draw together all men and all groups with the intelligence enough to see the overwhelming importance of this issue, to understand that upon its correct solution depends the fate of our country and the fate of civilization throughout the world.

We shall have to be prepared to break with anyone that refuses to support and fight for the realization of the Teheran Agreement and the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition. We must be prepared to give the hand of cooperation and fellowship to everyone who fights for the realization of this coalition. If J. P. Morgan supports this coalition and goes down the line for it, I as a Communist am prepared to clasp his hand on that and join with him to realize it. Class divisions or political groupings have no significance now except as they reflect one side or the other of this issue. (Bridgeport speech, January, 1944, *The Communist*, p. 8.)

Browder's remark regarding Morgan provoked quite violent objections from members of the American C. P. Explaining this idea to the plenary session of the central committee, Browder said:

... I was not making a verbal abolition of class differences, but that I was rejecting the political slogan of class against class" as our guide to political alignments in the next period. I spoke of Mr. Morgan symbolically as the representative of a class, and not as an individual—in which capacity I know him not at all. (*Teheran and America*, p. 24.)

As Browder indicates, creation of a vast national unity in the U. S. presupposes that the Communists would

be a part of this. Thus, the Communist organization must conclude a long-term alliance with far more important forces. From these considerations, Browder drew the conclusion that the Communist organization in the U. S. should change its name, reject the word "party" and take another name more exactly reflecting its role, a name more in conformity, according to him, with the political traditions of America.

Earl Browder proposed to name the new organization "Communist Political Association," which, in the traditional American two-party system, will not intervene as a "party," that is, it will not propose candidates in the elections, will neither enter the Democratic or Republican Party, but will work to assemble a broad progressive and democratic movement within all parties.

In his report to the plenary session of the central committee of the C.P., U.S.A., Browder spoke in detail of the economic problems of U. S. postwar national economy, and their solution on the basis of collaboration and unity of different classes. Browder indicated that American business men, industrialists, financiers and even reactionary organizations do not admit the possibility of a new economic crisis in the U. S. after the war. On the contrary, all think that U. S. national economy after the war can preserve and maintain the same level of production as during the war.

However, the problem is in the difficulties of transition from wartime economic activity to peacetime production, and in the absorption by home and foreign markets of \$90 billions in supplementary merchandise which the American government is now buying for war needs. In this regard, Earl Browder claims that the Teheran Conference

decisions make possible the overcoming of Anglo-American rivalry in the struggle for foreign outlets, and that the government of the United States, in agreement with its great Allies, and with the participation of governments of interested states, can create a series of giant economic associations for development of backward regions and war-devastated regions in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

As to extension of the home market, to permit absorption of a part of the \$90,000,000,000 worth of merchandise, Browder suggests doubling the purchasing power of the average consumer, notably by wage increases.

Marxists will not help the reactionaries, by opposing the slogan of "Free Enterprise" with any form of counter-slogan. If anyone wishes to describe the existing system of capitalism in the United States as "free enterprise," that is all right with us, and we frankly declare that we are ready to cooperate in making this capitalism work effectively in the postwar period with the least possible burdens upon the people. (*Ibid.*, p. 21.)

Further, Browder claims that national unity could no more be obtained by following a policy based on slogans aimed at the monopolies and big capital.

Today, to speak seriously of drastic curbs on monopoly capital, leading toward the breaking of its power, and imposed upon monopoly capital against its will, is merely another form of proposing the immediate transition to socialism. (*Ibid.*, p. 23.)

In his closing speech to the plenary session of the C.P. Central Committee in January, 1944, Browder tried

to base himself on "theoretical" arguments to justify the change of course of the American C.P. Also he expressed his concept of Marxism and its application under present conditions.

Browder thinks that by pronouncing the dissolution of the C. P. and creating the C.P.A., the American Communists are following a correct path, resolving problems which have no parallel in history and demonstrating how Marxist theory should be applied in practice.

Marxism never was a series of dogmas and formulas; it never was a catalogue of prohibitions listing the things we must not do irrespective of new developments and new situations; it does not tell us that things cannot be done; it tells us how *to do* the things that have to be done, the things that history has posed as necessary and indispensable tasks. Marxism is a theory of deeds, not of don't's. Marxism is therefore a positive, dynamic, creative force, and it is such a great social power precisely because, as a scientific outlook and method, it takes living realities as its starting point. It has always regarded the scientific knowledge of the past as a basis for meeting the new and unprecedented problems of the present and the future. And the largest problems today are new in a very basic sense.

We have more than ever the task to refresh ourselves in the great tradition of Marxism, completely freeing ourselves from the last remnants of the dogmatic and schematic approach. . . .

True, according to all of the textbooks of the past, we are departing from orthodoxy, because none of our

textbooks foresaw or predicted a long period of peaceful relations in the world before the general advent of socialism. (*Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.)

The new political course outlined by Browder found but few adversaries among the leading militants of the C.P.U.S.A. At the enlarged session of the political bureau of the Party, those who spoke up violently against Browder were William Foster, president of the C.P.U.S.A., and Darcy, member of the central committee and secretary of the Eastern Pennsylvania district.

Foster expounded his differences with Browder in two documents—in a letter to the national committee of the C.P.U.S.A. and in his introductory speech to the extraordinary session of the National Committee, Feb. 8, 1944.

In these two documents, Foster criticizes Browder's theoretical theses regarding the change in the character of monopoly capital in the U.S.A., the perspectives of postwar economic development as well as Browder's position on the question of the Presidential elections.

In his Feb. 8 speech Foster also attacks those who, on the basis of Browder's theses, suggested that strikes be renounced in the postwar period.

But in neither one of these documents did Foster openly take a stand against the dissolution of the Communist Party.

In his report Comrade Browder, in attempting to apply the Teheran decisions to the United States, drew a perspective of a smoothly working national unity, including the decisive sections of American finance capital, not only during the war but also in the postwar; a unity which (with him quoting approvingly from *Vic-*

*tory and After*), would lead to "a rapid healing of the terrible wounds of the war" and would extend on indefinitely, in an all-class peaceful collaboration, for a "long term of years." In this picture, American imperialism virtually disappears, there remains hardly a trace of the class struggle, and Socialism plays practically no role whatever. (*Foster Letter to Members of N. C.*)

Foster violently criticized Browder because the latter, while outlining a new course in the activity of the American C.P., had lost sight of several of the most fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism.

It seems to me that Comrade Browder's rather rosy outlook for capitalism is based upon two errors. The first of these is an underestimation of the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war. When questioned directly in Political Bureau discussion, Comrade Browder agreed that capitalism has been seriously weakened by the war, but his report would tend to give the opposite implication. The impression is left that capitalism has somehow been rejuvenated and is now entering into a new period of expansion and growth. (*Ibid.*)

According to Foster, world capitalism can surely count on a certain postwar boom, but it would be wrong to think that capitalism, even American capitalism, could maintain itself at the production level attained in wartime, and resolve, in a measure more or less satisfactory to the working class, the complex problems arising after the war.

Without diminishing the importance of the Teheran conference, Foster considered, nevertheless, that it would be

an extremely dangerous illusion to think that Teheran had in any way changed the class nature of capitalism, that the Teheran conference had liquidated the class struggle, as it appears from Browder's speech. The fact that capitalism has learned to live in peace and in alliance with socialism is far from meaning that American monopoly capitalism has become progressive and that it can henceforth be unreservedly included in national unity in the struggle for the realization of the Teheran conference decisions.

The class nature of imperialistic capitalism, Foster asserted, is reactionary. That is why national unity with it is impossible. The furious attack of these circles against the democratic Roosevelt government—does this not supply a convincing proof? Can one doubt, after that, that the monopolist sections in the U. S. are enemies and not friends of the Teheran decisions as Earl Browder thinks?

The danger in this whole point of view is that, in our eagerness to secure support for Teheran, we may walk into the trap of trying to cooperate with the enemies of Teheran, or even of falling under their influence. Trailing after the big bourgeoisie is the historic error of social-democracy, and we must be vigilantly on guard against it. (*Ibid.*)

Foster also criticized Browder for his attitude toward the National Association of Manufacturers, which is, in his opinion, one of the most reactionary organizations of monopoly capital in the U. S. However, Browder thought he had to approve a certain number of the economic measures of this association. He accepts its central slogan, that

of "free private enterprise," which is in reality basically reactionary and contrary to the Roosevelt policy. What is more, Browder, counting on seeing workers' wages increased 100 per cent after the war, invites U. S. monopolists to share his good intentions and says to them: "[You] must find the solution in order to keep their plants in operation."

Citing these words of Browder's, Foster declared:

In my opinion, it would be a catastrophe for the labor movement if it accepted such a plan or such an idea, even if only provisionally. Starting from a notoriously erroneous conception, that U. S. monopoly capitalism can play a progressive role Comrade Browder looks askance at all suggestions tending to subdue the monopolies, whereas the C.P. can accept only one policy, that of tending to master these big capitalists now and after the war. In calling for the collaboration of classes, Browder sows wrong illusions of tailism in the minds of trade union members. Whereas the job of the trade unions is to elaborate their policy and dictate it to the big employers.

As to the problems of postwar organizations, Foster repudiated all illusions regarding the self-styled progressive role of monopoly capital. America, Foster declared, will emerge from the war as a powerful state in the world, the industrial magnates will be rather inclined to dictatorial acts than to compromises, and it is hardly likely, he added, that we can expect a progressive program from them.

So far as the bulk of finance capital is concerned, starting out with a prewar record of appeasement, it has,

all through the war, followed a course of rank profiteering and often outright sabotage of both the domestic and foreign phases of the nation's war program, especially the former. While these elements obviously do not want the United States to lose the war, they are certainly very poor defenders of the policy of unconditional surrender. In the main, their idea of a satisfactory outcome of the war would be some sort of a negotiated peace with German reactionary forces, and generally to achieve a situation that would put a wet blanket on all democratic governments in Europe. (*Ibid.*)

Foster thinks that Browder is right when he says that the question of socialism is not the issue of the present war and that to pose this question would only result in restricting the framework of national unity. But considering the fact that the successes of the U.S.S.R. will increase the interest of the masses in socialism, the Communists must explain to the workers the importance of the socialist development of our epoch and the way in which it concerns the U. S., for otherwise the Social Democrats could represent themselves as a part of socialism.

The enforcement of the Teheran decisions, both in their national and international aspects, demands the broadest possible national unity, and in this national unity there must be workers, farmers, professionals, small businessmen and all of the capitalist elements who will loyally support the program. (*Ibid.*)

Foster's letter to the National Committee and his speech at the extraordinary session of the National Committee on Feb. 8, 1944, against Brow-

der's line, provoked violent criticism from those in attendance. Most speakers rejected Foster's arguments and supported the "new course" of the C.P.U.S.A. outlined by Browder.

Speaking during the meeting against Browder, Darcy said that in his opinion Foster's speech was not aimed at diminishing Browder's authority. Like Forster, Darcy violently criticized the interpretation given by Browder of the Teheran decisions and asserted that the political agreement of the big three powers who constitute the Teheran conference should not be considered as an agreement on the principal post-war economic problems.

Afterwards Darcy was expelled from the Party by the Congress on the proposal of a commission named by the Central Committee and headed by Foster, because, as the decision says, by sending to Party members a letter containing slanderous declarations on Party leaders, he attempted to create a fraction within the Party, and because he submitted the letter in question to the bourgeois press.

After the extraordinary session of the National Committee, a discussion on Browder's report to the plenary assembly of the Central Committee was opened in the basic organizations of the Party, in regional congresses and the Party press.

According to information published in the *Daily Worker*, after the discussion the organizations and regional congresses of the Party unanimously accepted Browder's proposals. As to Foster, he declared at the extraordinary session of the National Committee that he did not intend to make known his differences with Browder outside the Party Central Committee.

The Congress of the C.P.U.S.A.

(held May 20, 1944) heard Browder's report in which he expressed his opinions regarding the political situation in the U. S. and he proposed adoption of a new course in the policy of Communists of the U. S.

Proposing a resolution on the dissolution of the C.P.U.S.A., Browder declared:

On Jan. 11 the National Committee of the Communist Party in the interest of national unity and to enable the Communists to function most effectively in the changed political conditions and to make still greater contributions toward winning the war and securing a durable peace, recommended that the American Communists should renounce the aim of partisan advantage and the party form of organization. . . .

With that purpose, I propose in the name of the National Committee and in consultation with the most important delegations in this Convention, the adoption of the following motion:

I hereby move that the Communist Party of America be and hereby is dissolved. . . . (*Proceedings*, p. 11.)

After having accepted the resolution on dissolution of the C.P., the Congress of the C.P.U.S.A. proclaimed itself the Constituent Congress of the Communist Political Association of the United States and adopted a programmatic introduction to the Association's statutes. In this introduction it is said:

The Communist Political Association is a non-party organization of Americans which, basing itself upon the working class, carries forward the traditions of Washington, Jefferson,

Paine, Jackson and Lincoln, under the changed conditions of modern industrial society.

It seeks effective application of democratic principles to the solution of the problems of today, as an advanced sector of the democratic majority of the American people.

It upholds the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its Bill of Rights, and the achievements of American democracy against all the enemies of popular liberties.

It is shaped by the needs of the nation at war, being formed in the midst of the greatest struggle of all history; it recognizes that victory for the free peoples over fascism will open up new and more favorable conditions for progress; it looks to the family of free nations, led by the great coalition of democratic capitalist and socialist states, to inaugurate an era of world peace, expanding production and economic well-being, and the liberation and equality of all peoples regardless of race, creed or color.

It adheres to the principles of scientific socialism, Marxism, the heritage of the best thought of humanity and of a hundred years' experience of the labor movement, principles which have proved to be indispensable to the national existence and independence of every nation: it looks forward to a future in which, by democratic choice of the American people, our own country will solve the problems arising out of the contradiction between the social character of production and its private ownership, incorporating the lessons of the most fruitful achievements of all mankind in a form and manner

consistent with American traditions and character. . . . (Preamble, *Proceedings*, pp. 47-48.)

The Constituent Congress of the C.P.A. adopted a main political resolution, "National Unity for Victory, Security and a Durable Peace."

The resolution points out the exceptional importance of the Teheran conference decisions for victory over the aggressor and establishment of a lasting peace. It calls for reinforcement of national unity as the necessary conditions for their application.

By national unity is meant union of all patriotic forces from Communists, Laborites to adherents of the Democratic and Republican parties. All ideological, religious and political differences must be subordinated to this unity. The resolution stresses the exceptional importance of the 1944 elections on whose results depend the country's unity and destiny. It recognizes the increasingly important role of the working class in national unity, its growing activity and its political influence.

The resolution flays the reactionary policy of groups led by Du Pont, Hearst, McCormick, characterizing this policy as pro-fascist and treason, and calling on the American people to struggle against these groups.

The resolution then says that the majority of the American people are not yet convinced of the need for a more radical solution to social and economic problems with the aid of nationalization of big industry or by means of establishing socialism.

That is why, the immediate task consists in obtaining a higher level of production in the framework of the existing capitalist regime. With

this, private employers must receive all possibilities to solve the problem of production and employment of labor. Solution of these problems is likewise, in the first place, linked to the maximum increase in the American people's purchasing power and extension of foreign commerce. If private industry cannot solve these tasks, the government must assume the responsibility.

The resolution expresses itself against anti-Semitism, anti-Negro discrimination, calls for the outlawing of the "fifth column" and for the banning of calls by the latter for a negotiated peace with the aggressor.

The resolution concludes:

For the camp of national unity, which is composed of the patriotic forces of all classes, from the working people to the capitalists, rests and depends upon the working class, the backbone and driving force of the nation and its win-the-war coalition. . . . It requires the extension of labor's united action of the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods. It requires the most resolute development of labor's political initiative and influence, with labor's full and adequate participation in the government. . . .

. . . we Communists, as patriotic Americans, renew our sacred pledge to the nation to subordinate everything to win the war and to destroy fascism. . . . (*Resolutions*, p. 7.)

In addition to the resolution on "National Unity," the C.P.A. Congress passed a series of other decisions: on transition from war to peacetime production; on international trade union unity; on the C.P.A.'s wage policy; on political life as it regards demobilized veterans; on work among wo-

men; on farmers; on the situation in the southern states; on suppressing the poll tax; on the fight against anti-Semitism; on unity among countries of the western hemisphere and on the 25th anniversary of the Communist movement in the U. S.

The congress unanimously elected Browder president of the C.P.A.

The C.P.A. Congress addressed a message to Comrade Stalin and the Red Army saying especially:

In every American city and village, every factory and farm of our great land, men and women and children of all classes speak with wonder and deep gratitude of the heroic achievements of the Soviet Union and its valiant Red Army. Every day since the brutal and treacherous common Fascist enemy violated your borders on June 22, 1941, more of the American people have come to know and love your leaders and your people.

The political and military leadership of the U.S.S.R. and its mighty Red Army is applauded not only by our great political and military leaders, but by our workers, farmers, businessmen, professional people, artists, scientists and youth. The appeasers of the Hitlerites and the enemies of our common victory, who have been trying to frighten us with Hitler's "Soviet bogey," have not succeeded in blinding our people to the realities. Your deeds daily speak with an authority that drowns their poisonous words.

As the relentless offensives of your mighty forces drive the Nazis from your soil, bringing nearer the day of your common and final victory over the Fascist enemy, we grow ever more conscious of our enormous debt

to you, the leaders and fighters and peoples of the great Soviet land. The names of your liberated towns and villages are daily on our lips, the name of Stalin and the names of your countless heroes enshrined in our hearts.

Daily more and more of our people understand why it is that yours, the world's first Socialist state, has given the world such an unparalleled example of unity, heroism, individual initiative and a new discipline in the art and science of warfare.

All patriotic Americans are determined to strengthen still further the concerted action of the United Nations, and its leading coalition of our country, the Soviet Union and England on which our assurance of victory rests. They are determined to continue and deepen this coalition in the peace to come and to extend the friendship among our peoples which will cement the alliance of our two powerful nations as the mainstay of victory, national freedom and an enduring peace." (Message to Stalin, *Proceedings*, pp. 13-14.)

After the Constituent Congress, the leadership of the C.P.A. waged a campaign of explanation on the aims and tasks of the Association.

In one of his speeches Browder said:

... That is why we dissolved the Communist Party, renounced all aims of partisan advancement, and regrouped ourselves into the non-partisan Communist Political Association. That is why we are ready and willing to work with any and all Americans who place victory in the war as the first law, and who move toward such a minimum program as we have outlined for the solution of our postwar



problems. This is why we do not associate ourselves with any other political party, but rather with the most forward-looking men in all parties. ("The War and the Elections," *Daily Worker*, June 18, 1944.)

Explaining the functions of the C.P.A., its organizational secretary, Williamson, declared:

As regards the functioning of the Association, we emphasize that this means manifold increase and improvement in every aspect of political-educational activity, on a national, state and local club basis. We must become known as an organization whose grasp of Marxism provides us with correct answers to the complex political problems confronting the people. While the members belong to, and are active in, every type of mass organization—political, economic, cultural, fraternal, etc.—the Association in its own name will speak out boldly and with initiative on all issues and policies." (Williamson, *Proceedings*, pp. 55-56.)

The practical activity of the C.P.A. since the Congress was subordinated to the principal task of the hour: active participation of the C.P.A. in the 1944 election campaign.

The national C.P.A. Congress unambiguously backed Mr. Roosevelt's Presidential candidacy. In their speeches, Browder and the other leaders of the C.P.A. in the name of the C.P.A. supported Mr. Roosevelt's election to a fourth term. The regional-state organizations of the C.P.A. and local clubs carried on an active propaganda campaign in favor of Mr. Roosevelt and congressional candidates favorable to Mr. Roosevelt.

On Sept. 25, 1944, during a meeting called by the New York C.P.A. on the 25th anniversary of the Communist movement in the U. S., Browder said:

... every group, however small, just as every individual has the same supreme duty to make its complete and unconditional contribution to victory. We must give not only our lives, but we must be ready also to sacrifice our prejudices, our ideologies, and our special interests. We American Communists have applied this rule first of all to ourselves.

We know that Hitler and the Mikado calculated to split the United Nations on the issue of Communism and anti-Communism; we know that the enemy calculated to split America on this issue in the current elections, and thus prepare our country for withdrawal from the war and a compromise peace. We therefore set ourselves, as our special supreme task, to remove the Communists and Communism from this election campaign as in any way an issue, directly or indirectly.

To this end we unhesitatingly sacrificed our electoral rights in this campaign, by refraining from putting forward our own candidates; we went to the length of dissolving the Communist Party itself for an indefinite period in the future; we declared our readiness to loyally support the existing system of private enterprise which is accepted by the overwhelming majority of Americans, and to raise no proposals for any fundamental changes which could in any way endanger the national unity; we went out into the trade unions and the masses of the people, straightforwardly and frankly using all our

influence to firmly establish this policy of national unity; we helped with all our strength to restrain all impulses toward strike movements among the workers, and to prepare the workers for a continuation of national unity after the war. . . .

As spokesman for American Communists I can say for our small group that we completely identify ourselves with our nation, its interests and the majority of its people, in this support for Roosevelt and Truman for President and Vice-President.

We know quite well that the America that Roosevelt leads is a capitalist America, and that it is the mission of Roosevelt, among other things, to keep it so. We know that only great disasters for our country could change this perspective of our country from that of capitalism to that of socialism, in the foreseeable future. Only failure to carry through the war to victory or a botching of the peace and failure to organize it, or the plunging of our country into another economic catastrophe like that of the Hoover era, could turn the American people to socialism.

We do not want disaster for America, even though it results in socialism. If we did, we would support Dewey and Hoover and Bricker and their company. We want victory in the war, with the Axis powers and all their friends eliminated from the world. We want a world organized for generations of peace.

We want our country's economy fully at work, supplying a greatly multiplied world market to heal the wounds of the world, a greatly expanded home market reflecting rising standards of living here, and an orderly, cooperative and democratic

working out of our domestic and class relationships, within a continuing national unity that will reduce and eventually eliminate large domestic struggles. . . .

That is why American Communists, even as our great Communist forebears in 1860 and 1864 supported Abraham Lincoln, will in 1944 support Franklin Delano Roosevelt for President of the United States. . . .

As to Browder's attitude toward the Soviet Union, he highly appreciates the U.S.S.R.'s role in the United Nations system and in the work of finally crushing Hitlerite Germany and establishing a lasting peace after the war. Browder stressed more than once that the Soviet state built by Lenin and Stalin constitutes the irreplaceable force which saved the world from fascist slavery and he called for it to be made known to all Americans all the wisdom of Leninist-Stalinist theory that made the Soviet Union great and powerful.

From an organizational point of view, the C.P.A. structure is as follows: the basic organizational cell is the territorial club whose general meeting is called once a month. Between general membership meetings all the work planned by the club is carried out by its committee, made up of the most active members. The clubs are subordinated to regional C.P.A. councils. The leading organization of the C.P.A. is the National Committee elected for two years at the Association Congress. The Association's president and 11 vice-presidents elected by the Congress comprise the permanent leading organization of the Association.

The C.P.A. Congress set forth maintenance of the principle of democratic centralism as the structural basis of the

Association. Williamson, C.P.A. organizational secretary, explained to the Congress in these terms the application of the democratic centralism principle of the C.P.A.:

... While maintaining a structure and minimum organizational requirements compatible with the character of a Marxist political educational association, we must grant greater autonomy to the lower organizations, emphasize that democracy is a two-way street from top to bottom and bottom to top, and eliminate all rigidity of organization. (Williamson, *Proceedings*, p. 58.)

The National Congress of the Political Association adopted the C.P.A. constitution in which it said that everyone who wishes to belong to the C.P.A. accepts its program and its line.

Explaining who can belong to the Association, the *Daily Worker* wrote:

We can ask of new applicants to membership in the Party only loyalty to the principles that are already comprehensive to all workers, devotion to the most basic duties of action today; plus a willingness and eagerness to study the program and history and the theory, which will make them thorough Communists. And above all a willingness to fight, to sacrifice in the war of mankind against Nazi enslavement is the first requirement for entering the Communist Party. (Minor, *Daily Worker*, Feb., 1944.)

At the time of its dissolution the Communist Party of the United States, according to Browder's declaration, had 80,000 members without counting the 10,000 Party members in the army. According to the Congress decisions all

members of the C.P.U.S.A. are members of the C.P.A. and must register before July 4, 1944. As the *Daily Worker* announced up to July 16, 1944, hardly 45,000 persons had been registered.

Without analyzing in detail Browder's full position on the dissolution of the C.P.U.S.A. and creation of the Communist Political Association, and without making a developed critique of this position, one can nevertheless deduce from it the following conclusions:

1. The course applied under Browder's leadership ended in practice in liquidation of the independent political party of the working class in the U. S.

2. Despite declarations regarding recognition of the principles of Marxism, one is witnessing a notorious revision of Marxism on the part of Browder and his supporters, a revision which is expressed in the concept of a long-term class peace in the United States, of the possibility of the suppression of the class struggle in the postwar period and of establishment of harmony between labor and capital.

3. By transforming the Teheran declaration of the Allied governments, which is a document of a diplomatic character, into a political platform of class peace in the United States in the postwar period, the American Communists are deforming in a radical way the meaning of the Teheran declaration and are sowing dangerous opportunist illusions which will exercise a negative influence on the American labor movement if they are not met with the necessary reply.

4. According to what is known up to now, the Communist Parties of most countries have not approved Browder's position and several Communist Parties (for example that of the Union of South Africa and that of Australia) have come

out openly against this position, while the Communist Parties of several South American countries (Cuba, Colombia) regarded the position of the American Communists as correct and in general followed the same path.

Such are the facts. Such are the elements of understanding which permit passing judgment on the dissolution of the American Communist Party. French Communists will not fail to examine in the light of Marxist-Leninist critique the arguments developed to justify the dissolution of the American Communist Party. One can be sure that, like the Communists of the Union of South Africa and of Australia, the French Communists will not approve the policy followed by Browder for it has swerved dangerously from the victorious Marxist-Leninist doctrine whose rigorously scientific application could lead to but one conclusion, not to dissolve the American Communist Party but to work to strengthen it under the banner of stubborn struggle to defeat Hitler Germany and destroy everywhere the extensions of fascism.

The fact that all the members of the Communist Party of the United States did not sign up automatically in the Communist Political Association shows that the dissolution of the Party provoked anxieties, perfectly legitimate.

In the United States the omnipotent trusts have been the object of violent criticism. It is known, for instance, that the former Vice-President of the United States, Henry Wallace, has denounced their evil doings and their anti-national policy.

We too, in France, are resolute partisans of national unity, and we show that in our daily activity, but our anxiety for unity does not make us lose sight for a single moment of the neces-

sity of arraying ourselves against the men of the trusts.

Furthermore, one can observe a certain confusion in Browder's declarations regarding the problem of nationalization of monopolies and what he calls the transition from capitalism to socialism.

Nationalization of monopolies actually in no sense constitutes a socialist achievement, contrary to what certain people would be inclined to believe. No, in nationalization it is simply a matter of reforms of a democratic character, achievement of socialism being impossible to imagine without preliminary conquest of power.

Everyone understands that the Communists of the United States want to work to achieve unity in their country. But it is less understandable that they envisage the solution of the problem of national unity with the good will of the men of the trusts, and under quasi-idyllic conditions, as if the capitalist regime had been able to change its nature by some unknown miracle.

In truth, nothing justifies the dissolution of the American Communist Party, in our opinion. Browder's analysis of capitalism in the United States is not distinguished by a judicious application of Marxism-Leninism. The predictions regarding a sort of disappearance of class contradictions in the U. S. correspond in no wise to a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the situation.

As to the argument consisting of a justification of the Party's dissolution by the necessity of not taking direct part in the presidential elections, this does not withstand a serious examination. Nothing prevents a Communist Party from adapting its electoral tactics to the requirements of a given political situation. It is clear that American

Communists were right in supporting the candidacy of President Roosevelt in the last elections, but it was not at all necessary for this to dissolve the Communist Party.

It is beyond doubt that if, instead of dissolving the Communist Party of the United States all had been done to intensify its activity in the sense of developing an ardent national and anti-fascist policy, it could very greatly have consolidated its position and considerably extended its political influence. On the contrary, formation of the Communist Political Association could not but trouble the minds and obscure the perspectives in the eyes of the working masses.

In France, under cover of Resistance unity, certain suggestions for the liquidation of the party have been circulated, with more or less discretion, during the last months, but none among us has ever thought of taking such suggestions seriously. It is not by liquidating the Party that we would have served national unity. On the contrary we are serving it by strengthening our Party. And as far as the American Communists are concerned, it is clear that their desire to serve the unity of their country and the cause of human progress places before them tasks which pre-suppose the existence of a powerful Communist Party.

After the Teheran decisions came the Yalta decisions which expressed the will of the Big Three to liquidate fascism in Germany and to help the liberated peoples to liquidate the remnants of fascism in the different countries.

It is scarcely necessary to recall that the material bases for fascism reside in the trusts, and the great objective of this war, the annihilation of fascism, can only be obtained to the extent in

which the forces of democracy and progress do not shut their eyes to the economic and political circumstances which engender fascism.

The American Communists have an especially important role to play in the struggle taking place between the progressive forces of the earth and fascist barbarism.

Without any doubt they would have been in a better position to play this role in the interests of their country and human progress if, instead of proceeding to dissolve their Party, they had done everything to strengthen it and make of it one of the elements of the assembling of the broad democratic masses of the United States for the final crushing of fascism, that shame of the 20th century. It would be useless to hide the fact that fascism has more or less concealed sympathizers in the U. S., as it has in France and other countries.

The former Vice-President of the U. S., Henry Wallace, present Secretary of Commerce, said rightly that one cannot fight fascism abroad and tolerate at home the activity of powerful groups which intend to make peace "with a simple breathing spell between the death of an old tyranny and the birth of a new."

The Yalta decisions thwart these plans, but the enemies of liberty will not disarm of their free will. They will only retreat before the acting coalition of all the forces of democracy and progress.

And it is clear that if Comrade Earl Browder had seen, as a Marxist-Leninist, this important aspect of the problems facing liberty-loving peoples in this moment in their history, he would have arrived at a conclusion quite other than the dissolution of the Communist Party of the United States.

# ON THE QUESTION OF REVISIONISM

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

*Report to the National Committee meeting of the  
C.P.A., June 18-20, 1945.*

Comrade Browder's "notorious revisionism" (to use the words of Duclos) stems directly from the present aggressive program of American imperialism. In order to understand this, it is helpful to review briefly the Communist Party's struggle against right opportunism in its ranks during the 1920's. For the revisionism of that time was also a definite reflection in our party of American imperialism.

Following World War I, American imperialism experienced a big upswing. The United States became the most powerful capitalist country in the world. It passed from the status of debtor to a creditor nation, exporting capital from 1920 to 1929 to the then unheard-of total of 20 billion dollars. All over the world it conducted an active campaign to capture markets, as against other big countries which were weakened by the war. With its "Young" and "Dawes" plans, it practically dictated the economic terms to defeated Germany. Toward Latin America its attitude was one of arrogant domination and military oppression. Meanwhile, at home the capitalists, in an orgy of profit-making, went ahead developing their new methods of mass production, to the admiration and envy of the whole capitalist world.

As usual, in the optimistic atmosphere of the upward phase of the economic cycle, super-heated soothsayers

appeared to sing the glories of the American capitalist system. And this time to an extent never known before. The United States, they said, had finally overcome the contradictions of capitalism. There would be no more economic crises or mass unemployment. Mass production and high wages was the magic formula. Not Marx, but Ford, was their slogan. The "New Capitalism" was here, and engineers and economists came from all over Europe to study the American miracle.

Not strangely, this intoxicating capitalist propaganda had profound repercussions in the ranks of the workers, especially the trade unions. Labor officialdom, including the progressives, listened open-mouthed when Professor Carver explained how the workers through their savings were buying control of the great industries. And the labor "theoreticians" did a little utopia-building of their own. They declared that the path of progress for labor lay through cooperation with the employers to increase production. The class struggle was ended, strikes were a thing of the past, Socialism was an outworn dogma. The big thing was the "Higher Strategy of Labor" (no-strike, speed-up, policy), labor banks, and class collaboration on every front.

This capitalist nonsense became the official policy of the A. F. of L. and railroad unions, beginning in 1923. The

result was that these labor organizations, already weakened by serious strike defeats during the big postwar anti-union drive, became little better than speed-up agencies for the employers, grievously neglecting the interests of the workers. Consequently trade union morale sank to zero and for the first time in history the labor movement failed to increase its membership during a period of "prosperity."

It is one of the brightest pages in the history of our Party that we fought militantly (even though often on a too narrow basis) against this whole drunken orgy of class collaboration, many of our best fighters being expelled from the unions, deprived of their jobs, arrested, and otherwise persecuted for doing so. In spite of this policy of struggle, however, the poison of American imperialist propaganda managed to seep into our Party's ranks.

Its chief voice was Jay Lovestone, who later became a renegade. Reflecting the propaganda of the great trusts, Lovestone added his voice to the chorus of praise of American capitalists. In our Party he developed his theory of "American exceptionalism," the substance of which was that capitalism in this country had become so strong and progressive that it was no longer subject to the general economic laws governing the recurring capitalist crises. The practical effects of Lovestone's revisionism were to tend to disarm our Party's militancy, to sow false prosperity illusions among the masses, and to subordinate the workers to the capitalists' profit-making orgy in this country and their imperialist program abroad. After a bitter struggle Lovestone's revisionism was exposed and he was expelled from the Party, whereupon he

proceeded to develop into a Soviet-hater and a tool of the notorious Matthew Woll.

As for the American "New Capitalism," which was to regenerate the capitalist system of the world, it blew up with a loud report in October, 1929. And the United States, which was supposed to have overcome the economic contradictions of capitalism, according to Carver, Chase, Tugwell, Lovestone and many other bourgeois theorists, actually suffered more devastatingly from the unprecedented economic crisis during 1929-1934 than any other country in the world.

#### AMERICAN IMPERIALIST DRIVE FOR DOMINATION

Comrade Browder's revisionism has, like Lovestone's, also developed in a period of American imperialist illusions and upswing. Even before World War II began there were powerful voices among the big capitalists clamoring for American world domination, a notorious case in point being Henry Luce, with his "American Century" theories. And since the war has been under way, this striving for American imperialistic dominance has grown, until now it is manifestly the basic determination of American big capital.

In the main the great capitalists of this country have supported the war—in their own way. But it would be silly to think that in doing so they have had the same democratic aspirations as the American people, or even of the Roosevelt government. For the most part they have seen a good chance to knock out a couple of very dangerous imperialist rivals and thereby to lay the basis for American imperialist advancement. All through the war they would

have been happy to make a negotiated peace with Hitler to their own advantage and at the expense of the Soviet Union and the democratic forces of the world. And now that Hitler is smashed, their imperialist designs become all the more apparent, as witness their behavior at the San Francisco conference of the United Nations. Such elements see the weakened position of other capitalist states, as contrasted with the great strength of the United States, and they want to realize on this situation in such wise that they can dictate to the rest of the world, including the U.S.S.R.

As the National Committee's resolution points out, American finance capital, fearful of democratic developments in Europe and desirous of world control for itself, is now embarking upon a policy of imperialistic aggrandizement which, if it is not checked by the democratic forces of the world, can have the most disastrous consequences, not only to big capital itself, but also to the great objectives laid down in the conferences of Moscow, Teheran, and Yalta.

Although American finance capital strives to conceal its imperialistic ambitions under pretenses of the United States using its world power for altruistic ends, nevertheless these ambitions are clear, not only from big capital's practical policies, but also from the writings of many of its spokesmen—conservative, liberal and labor. Thus, Thomas E. Dewey's spectacular demand of the Mackinac Republican conference for a United States-Great Britain alliance was obviously an attempt to set up a domination over the U.S.S.R., and with it the rest of the world. Eric Johnston's book, *America Unlimited*, is an essay on how to capture the

trade of the world and to paralyze ideologically the American people in the face of the power drive of finance capital. Walter Lippmann's volume, *United States War Aims*, with its conception of a great "Atlantic Community," consisting of the allied American and British empires, plus all the countries of central and western Europe is manifestly a program for American world domination. The Soviet trade union journal, *The War and the Working Class*, March 1, 1945, correctly designates the imperialist character not only of Senator Vandenberg, but also of his associates, the Hoovers, Tafts, Deweys, Landons, McCormicks, Pattersons, Hearsts, and other spokesmen of big capital when it says:

The whole content of Vandenberg's speech . . . is a mask to conceal his pretentious claims for the establishment of the dictatorship of one Great Power over all the other powers, great, medium and small.

As in the 1920's but under different forms, the present actively expansionist policies of American imperialism evoke a response in the labor movement, as is evidenced by the attitude of such figures as Matthew Woll and by many policies of the A. F. of L. Executive Council. Also, the wild attacks of Norman Thomas, David Dubinsky and other Social-Democrats against the Soviet Union have their roots in the expansionist program of American imperialism.

#### BROWDER AND AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Our Party does not live in a political vacuum. It is exposed to all the illusions and pressures of capitalism;



hence it should surprise no Marxist that the present drive of American imperialism for world power should find certain echoes within the ranks of the Party. The tragedy of the situation is that it is precisely Comrade Browder who is giving voice to these imperialist illusions in our Party, especially with regard to the postwar situation. And he is doing this under elaborate pretenses of a discerning and flexible Marxism-Leninism.

In the postwar world, which will face gigantic problems of industrial reconstruction and development, the United States, with its tremendous economic resources, is bound to play a very important role. What Comrade Browder does not see, however, is that if the role of the United States is to help in the realization of the programs of Moscow, Teheran and Yalta, this can only be accomplished if the broad masses of this country, especially the trade union movement, are very much on the alert to see to it that imperialist trends upon the part of our Government and the great capitalists are curbed and democratic policies imposed. The great goals of victory over fascism and the achievement of a lasting peace, laid down at Moscow, Teheran and Yalta, can be realized, but only upon the basis of eternal vigilance by the combined democratic forces of the world. Browder, contrary to this, is quite willing to leave the whole matter to the "intelligence" and "enlightened" self-interest of the big capitalists.

The imperialists could hardly ask for anything better than the free hand that Browder would so readily grant them. It is hard to conceive of a situation more favorable to American imperialism than the belief, such as Brow-

der has expressed many times that we can rely upon these capitalists' "enlightenment" to follow a constructive and democratic world policy. The general result of such a reliance would be that American imperialism, without any popular checks upon it, would run hog-wild and would soon have the whole world in a worse mess than it now is. Of course, Comrade Browder does not want any such situation, but Lenin has long since taught us that the objective results of political policies bear no necessary relation to the subjective desires of their initiators.

That the practical effects of Comrade Browder's revisionist ideas are to facilitate the policies of American imperialism is beyond question. Let me show this by indicating briefly a few of his major proposals and their imperialistic implications:

1. When Comrade Browder proposes that the United States in the postwar period should set out to build up a \$40,000,000,000 yearly export trade, as he did in his book *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, he is in fact calling upon American imperialism to make a drive virtually to monopolize the markets of the world.

2. When Browder says (page 79 of his book *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*), "I am entirely willing to help the free enterprisers realize the \$40,000,000,000 foreign market that is required entirely and completely by their own chosen methods," he is tailing the workers after the bourgeoisie and surrendering the American people into the hands of the imperialists.

3. When Browder proposes that the great capitalists of the United States have a free hand to carry through a postwar program of "industrialization

of all the devastated and undeveloped areas of the world," he is in fact proposing American economic and political world hegemony.

4. When Browder says that "Britain and the United States have closed the books finally and forever upon their old expectation that the Soviet Union is going to disappear some day," he is blinding the people of this and other countries to the dangerous machinations of American and British imperialists against the U.S.S.R.—"a consummation devoutly to be wished" by these sharks.

5. When Browder fails to signalize the danger of American imperialism (and he denies, incredible though it may seem, that there is any such imperialist menace), he is hiding from the American people the greatest danger to future world peace and progress. The imperialists could hardly ask for anything more convenient to their schemes of exploitation and domination.

6. When Browder fights against the American people curbing the monopolies, as he does, actually he is freeing from restraint the worst enemies of democracy, the generators of economic chaos, imperialist aggression, fascism and war.

7. When Browder spreads illusions among the workers to the effect that there will be a long period of class peace after the war during which they can safely bind themselves with a no-strike pledge, and that the employers will voluntarily radically improve the workers' real wages, he is tending to paralyze the working class in the face of the provocative attacks of big capitalists upon the trade unions and the workers' living standards.

8. When Browder (*Daily Worker*, April 8, 1944) hails the Labor-Management Charter without a word of criticism and deplors only that it is "unfortunate" the NAM is not a partner to the Charter, and when (*Daily Worker*, April 14, 1944), he proposes that the incentive wage be adopted generally in American industry in the postwar period, he is opening wide the doors for the speeding up and more intensified exploitation of the workers of this country.

9. When Browder dissolves the C.P. into the C.P.A., he is weakening the most dynamic force that the workers possess to counteract the reactionary activities of the great trusts at home and abroad.

One would have to be blind politically not to recognize that all these revisionist theories and proposals of Browder's dovetail with the interests of the great capitalists and that they are, in fact, a reflection of the aggressive program of American imperialism. Contrary to Browder's faith in the big bourgeoisie, the democratic forces of the country and the world will have to use all their united political strength to achieve complete victory, to establish a democratic peace, to win full employment and a better life generally.

#### BROWDER'S REVISIONISM IN THEORY

Bedazzled by the United States' great power in this war, by its enormous industrial expansion and output, by its gigantic political prestige, by the many concessions the capitalists made (under compulsion) to the workers during the Roosevelt regime—Comrade Browder in his present writings and policies leaps to the revisionist conclusion, especially

after the Teheran agreement, that American capitalism and its capitalist class, including reactionary finance capital, has in some mysterious way become progressive.

Upon this false basis, Comrade Browder proceeds to build up a capitalist utopia in his book, *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, in which he sees the "enlightened" great capitalists of this country, acting in "their true class interest," leading our country and the world into an era of unprecedented democracy, industrial expansion and mass well-being. With this rosy picture in mind, he calls upon the workers to join hands harmoniously with the capitalist class in realizing it. He tries to stretch postwar national unity to include reactionary finance capital. All of which fantasy, of course, would boil down in reality to the workers in this country subordinating themselves to a more intensified exploitation at home, to the world being soon dragged into a fresh growth of fascism and a new world war.

Comrade Browder's revisionist ideas violate the most fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. They are more akin to the bourgeois notions of Eric Johnston than to the scientific principles of Marx and Lenin. As I said in my letter of January 20, 1944, to the National Committee, "In this (Browder's) picture, American imperialism virtually disappears, there remains hardly a trace of the class struggle, and Socialism plays practically no role whatever." Browder's revisionism, while it goes in the general Social-Democratic direction of subordinating the workers to capitalist domination, is actually not Social-Democratic, but bourgeois liberal.

Browder attempts to liquidate the class struggle by preaching an illusory harmony of interest between the workers and their class enemies, the big capitalists, in the postwar period. For, if what Browder says were true, that the capitalists would, of their own volition, radically improve the workers' real wages, there would remain little or no basis for the class struggle. Browder's idea, too, that the American big capitalists, in their "true class interests" virtually *must* make them not only raise the workers' living standards but live in friendly harmony with the U.S.S.R., has nothing in common with the Marxist conception of classes and their roles. There is no Marxian principle which holds that social classes "must" follow "their true class interests." Indeed, history is replete with examples of classes which, under immediate economic, political or ideological pressures, have violated their "true class interests," with disastrous consequences to themselves. A striking case in point was the way in which the British ruling class tended to follow the policy of appeasing Hitler to the point where its world position would have been irretrievably shattered had not the U.S.S.R. become involved in the war. To appease the big capitalists and thus to make sure that they would follow their "true class interests," Comrade Browder not only dissolved the Communist Party, but he was also prepared, if he could do so, to liquidate the Communist Political Association and to give up even our Communist ideology.

Browder also tries to by-pass American imperialism theoretically. In fact, his book, *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, is an attempt to prove that the epoch of imperialism has passed and

that we are now in a period of inevitable friendly collaboration between the capitalist and socialist sectors of the world; a collaboration, which Browder would not base upon the strength of the U.S.S.R., the colonial countries, the new war-born democracies, and the labor movement of the world (as it must be if it is to exist), but upon the good will of the great capitalists, particularly the Americans, whose "enlightenment," "high moral sense" and "true class interests" will dictate to them this collaborationist course. Browder, indeed, undertakes to wipe out American imperialism regarding its relations with the U.S.S.R., and he also draws idyllic pictures of how American big capital will, under our Government's auspices, inaugurate great campaigns of industrialization and democratization throughout the world. According to him, our capitalists would make the rest of the world free and prosperous whether it wanted to be so or not. For, says Browder (on page 79):

There is not a government in the capitalist or colonial world that would dare refuse or withdraw from such a partnership, once the United States made clear the benefits that would accrue to all concerned.

Browder also seeks to do away with Lenin's theory of the decay of capitalism in the imperialist stage, and therefore, he would even shelve the whole Marxian concept of the necessity for socialism. There can be no other conclusions from his argumentation; for if it is possible for world capitalism under the leadership of the United States and especially under the tutelage of "enlightened" American finance capital

to overcome its general crisis and to embark upon a new period of exuberant and long continued economic expansion, then there would be no possibility to establish socialism in any thinkable perspective. Thus, Marx and Lenin would be wrong and Browder right. There is serious reason to conclude that when Comrade Browder cast aside the slogan of socialism (as an educational issue) in January, 1944, he did not merely put it in mothballs, to be taken out again when its advocacy would be more convenient; but very probably he thought he was done with it for good. In his theory of a capitalist system capable of overcoming its basic contradictions there is no room for socialism, even in the most remote sense.

That Comrade Browder was attempting to have our Party discard basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and to adopt a bourgeois-liberal program is incontestable. In his Bridgeport speech eighteen months ago, he gave a clear indication of this when he said: "Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in the new world." What are the "old formulas and old prejudices" that Browder warns us are useless? These are none other than our Marxist-Leninist analysis of the class struggle, of imperialism, of socialism. All these Browder himself had already abandoned, and he was trying to get our Party to do likewise.

#### BROWDER'S REVISIONISM IN PRACTICE

Comrade Browder especially began to develop his opportunistic ideas shortly after his return from Atlanta (although roots of them can be found earlier). At that time the Party had

a sound war policy, worked out during his incarceration; including all-out support of the war, support of the Roosevelt Administration with criticism, national unity of all pro-war elements, including pro-Roosevelt capitalists, the achievements of maximum war production, the labor no-strike pledge, and an active defense of the masses' economic and political rights as a war necessity. Browder almost immediately started to project his opportunism into this essentially correct wartime policy. One of the first signs of this was his utopian handling of the question of a centralized war economy. He developed his opportunistic position further in his book, *Victory and After*. And his revisionist point of view finally came to full expression in his volume, *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*.

The revisionistic ideas contained in these works and in Comrade Browder's other writings and policies, not only introduced confusion into our political thinking, but also hindered our practical work in support of the war. In my article in the *Daily Worker* of June 10, I listed a number of the more important of our shortcomings and mistakes during the war, bred of Browder's opportunism, a list which, besides those noted above, included inadequate criticism of the Roosevelt Administration; failure to demand a coalition government with labor as a full partner; rejection of the demand that international labor should be represented in all wartime conferences of the great powers; proposals for a joint Republican-Democratic ticket in the national elections, which, if adopted, would have eliminated Roosevelt as a candidate, etc. To this list could be added many others, in almost all branches of our Party work. Such,

for example, as the tendency, in the earlier stages of the war, to neglect to press militantly for Negro rights; the underestimation, for a time, of the necessity for increased wage rates for the workers in our eagerness to have the incentive wage established; and the failure to make a major issue in the ranks of labor and among the public generally of the vital matter of the Government and the trade union movement giving our armed forces a thoroughly democratic education regarding the causes and purposes of the war.

Through all of Comrade Browder's theoretical and practical errors runs the ever-present thread of a tendency to rely upon the big bourgeoisie for national leadership, to appease reactionary finance capital, to underestimate the independent, democratic role of labor and other democratic forces, and especially of our Party, in the national anti-fascist front. It is true that the Communists stood second to none in their war effort and made a record of which the Party may well be proud. But we must admit that in the light of the existing opportunities and the responsibilities we fell short in many respects precisely because of these opportunist errors.

Harmful during the war, Comrade Browder's false policies would have been disastrous if they had been carried over into the postwar period. Once their German and Japanese imperialist rivals are both disposed of, the American finance capitalists will feel freer to maneuver, in all probability within the framework of the United Nations, against the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and the new democracies being born out of the war; they will also intensify their attacks upon the trade unions in this

country. This is obvious from the course of events since the end of the European phase of the war. In such a situation the democratic forces will have to unite firmly in order to put into reality the objectives of Teheran and Yalta. Browder's illusions about a long-term of class peace in the United States and of a smooth working together of American big capital with our wartime allies would be a brake upon this needful struggle of the democratic masses and peoples and would play right into the hands of American imperialism.

Very probably, even if Duclos' letter had never arrived, our Party, under the pressure of postwar tensions, would of itself have thrown off Browder's revisionism and found its way to a correct policy. Indeed, there were already many tendencies in this direction. This correction of our Party's policy, however, could have come only in a struggle against Browder, as is quite evident from his present resistance to such a change. One of the basic reasons why the Duclos letter was so quickly endorsed by our Party is precisely because the end of the European stage of the war threw into the spotlight the bankruptcy of Browder's opportunistic policies.

#### HOW DID WE DEVELOP OUR REVISIONISM?

How did it happen that Comrade Browder could have our Party adopt as policy his crude revisionism, his apology for American imperialism, which has confused our Party's thinking, weakened its practical work, checked its growth, and injured its prestige among the broad masses?

First, I should say, it was because of an inadequate Marxist-Leninist

training on the part of our leadership. Although in the Party many comrades opposed Browder's line and there was much uncertainty and uneasiness generally, the leadership was not able to penetrate his bourgeois sophistries and to expose their anti-Marxist character. The fact that our Party, throughout the war and even for some years earlier, had been in collaboration with the pro-Roosevelt minority section of the bourgeoisie, gave Comrade Browder a convenient jumping-off place for his attempt to have us cooperate with the whole bourgeoisie, including its decisive, reactionary sections. That our Party was not able to see through this opportunistic maneuver is proof positive that we are badly in need of strengthening our basic theoretical training, of refreshing our understanding from those "old (Marxist-Leninist) books" and "old formulas" that Browder wants us to discard as obsolete.

A second, and very decisive reason for our Party's falling victim to Comrade Browder's revisionism was the lack of political discussion and democracy in the Party. During the past several years we have allowed ourselves to depart widely from the principles of democratic centralism. Browder has been conceded altogether excessive authority—to such an extent, in fact, that his word virtually became law in the Party. He was in the habit of simply laying down the policy, and few ventured to dispute his arbitrary pronouncements. Under such conditions, democratic discussion, self-criticism and collective leadership became almost extinct in the top committees of our Party. Besides this, the Party leaders and members poured out upon Browder an impermissible deluge of adulation and super-praise

which placed him almost beyond the realm of our criticism.

In this situation there was no real political discussion of Comrade Browder's report on Teheran when he unexpectedly produced his whole opportunist line at the January, 1944, meeting of the National Committee. The fact that my letter at the time protesting to the National Committee against Browder's revisionism never reached the membership was due to the lack of democracy in the Party. If I had attempted to take my letter to the Party after it was rejected at the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau on February 8, 1944, it would have resulted in my immediate expulsion and probably a split in the Party. Comrade Browder made this perfectly clear at the meeting in question. Hence, for the sake of Party unity, I had to confine by opposition to Browder's revisionism to the National Committee.

In assessing the blame for the serious error our Party has made, the whole top leadership, especially the National Board, bears a heavy responsibility. For despite Browder's excessive authority, if the members of the Board, or even a substantial minority of them, had taken a stand against Browder's opportunism he could have been defeated. Unfortunately, however, no such development took place. Hence the responsibility of the Board is great.

But the overwhelming share of the responsibility of the error rests with Comrade Browder himself. He originated the opportunistic policies, he theoretically developed them, he used all his power and authority in the Party as a long-time international Communist leader to have them adopted. And now, refusing to admit his error, he has

voted and written against the National Committee's resolution which corrects his errors. It is not too much to say that had any other leader in the Party than Comrade Browder presented such a distortion of the Teheran Conference to our Party it would have been rejected as rank opportunism. But Browder was able to put it across because of his great prestige and his over-centralized authority.

All this goes to emphasize the basic need for the development of true democratic centralism in our Party. In the new leadership that will grow out of this situation there must be not one-man control, but a genuine collectivity of effort. There must also be a re-establishment of self-criticism and free political discussion. Only upon the basis of these correct Leninist principles can the all-important Communist clarity, unity and discipline be developed.

#### THE DANGER OF OVER-CORRECTION

When a Communist Party makes a drastic change of policy, either because of previous errors or a profound alteration in the objective situation, there is always the danger of an over-correction of policy—that is of flying from one extreme to another. Such over-corrections have occurred more than once in the life of our Party, as well as in those of other countries. This is the main danger that we confront now, and it must be most carefully avoided.

That our party will overwhelmingly endorse the National Committee's Resolution, in the branches and in the coming National Convention, is a practical certainty. The vote of the National Committee—53 to 1—is a clear signal as to how the Party as a whole

is reacting to the Resolution. Comrade Browder stands quite alone, defending his opportunism, in the National Board and the National Committee. And in the Party at large it is almost exclusively the newer and less developed members who are still giving him some small measure of support. As for the trained Marxist-Leninist members and leaders in our Party, they are almost unanimously backing the National Committee's Resolution.

However, there are serious ideological scars still in the party from our experience with Comrade Browder's revisionism. These must be eliminated by a process of Leninist education. But in liquidating such remnants of revisionism, we must be doubly on guard against falling into the pit of sectarian

practices. We must not make the deadly error of trying to cure Browder's opportunism with sectarian-leftism.

This means that our Party has to make the closest study and widest use of the National Committee's Resolution. This Resolution, if correctly understood and systematically applied, will provide us with the basis for the broadest mass contacts we have ever known in the history of our Party. Therefore, it will be the great task of our coming convention, after it has further strengthened our line and rebuilt our national leadership, to proceed to mobilize the entire Party for carrying out the broad mass tasks outlined by the National Committee's Resolution, in defeating fascist Japan and in building a free and prosperous postwar world.



# SOME ASPECTS OF OUR POLICIES AND TASKS

By EUGENE DENNIS

*Report to the National Committee, C.P.A., June 18-20, 1945.*

It is with deep humility that I submit this report on behalf of the National Board. For, despite the positive estimation of my position made by Comrade Foster, I realize that I bear a full share of the responsibility for the main errors and mistakes which the National Board of our Communist Political Association has made.

Generally speaking, I have not been among those who considered that the objectives of Teheran and Crimea would be fulfilled automatically and without the most active intervention of the masses. I have not been one of those who minimized the resolute struggle which must be waged against pro-fascist reaction, or who underestimated the independent role and activity of labor and the people.

Yet it is a fact that I have held and fostered certain opportunist illusions regarding the postwar role of the anti-Axis sections of monopoly capital. And in so doing I participated in, and contributed toward, the main errors which our national leadership has committed. Besides, on such specific questions as liquidating the C.P.A. in the South, as well as in incorrectly estimating the significance of the Labor-Management Charter, I bear a particular responsibility.

Moreover, while I have taken issue with and opposed a number of individual and separate mistakes which the collective leadership of our Association committed, it should be recognized that I did not draw the full conclusions

from these, nor did I fight as effectively and consistently as was required. Like most other comrades in our leadership I have always endeavored to preserve the unity of our Communist movement as the apple of our eye. But in this connection I have sometimes tended to overlook the essential fact that Communist unity must be forged without making any concessions on questions of principle, even "minor" or "temporary."

In view of this, I wish to re-emphasize that I submit this report with a profound sense of humility and with a deep realization of my own responsibility for the errors which our National Board has made.

With these introductory remarks, I shall now proceed with my report. And I am sure all comrades will appreciate the fact that this report embodies, not only my personal views and deep convictions, but likewise the general viewpoint of the majority of the National Board.

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The main reports and documents upon which our discussions are based are already before you. These are the draft resolution of the National Board adopted on June 2, the article of Comrade Duclos, Comrade Foster's report to this plenum, as well as the highly important political letter which Comrade Foster submitted to our National Convention in February, 1944.

From these the following facts are self-evident:

First, during the course of the anti-Hitler war, in which we Communists made sterling contributions, our Association made a number of basic opportunist errors and mistakes. We started to depart from and revise certain Marxist theories and principles. We tended to weaken and liquidate the vanguard role of our Communist movement as the independent Marxist political party of the working class.

The responsibility for this opportunism rests not only upon Comrade Browder, who bears the heaviest responsibility for our notorious revisionism. The responsibility for our errors and mistakes likewise rests upon our entire national leadership, and in the first place upon our National Board.

Those revisionist departures from Marxism which we were making up to recently, adversely affected the application of our correct policies for winning the war, and were disorienting our Communist organization and other anti-fascists as regards coping with the new and complex problems which now arise as we enter the postwar period.

Secondly, the reports and material before you indicate that the majority of the National Board now understands and is attempting to rectify its former errors and deviations. Aided by the wise and invaluable counsel of Comrade Duclos, learning from our own experiences and the latest international developments, and helped greatly by the essentially sound position of Comrade Foster, who warned us some 17 months ago of the dangerous opportunist path we were embarking upon, we have begun to overcome our mistakes and correctly to reorient ourselves and the Association. Already, most of the National Committee and the overwhelming majority of our membership

have expressed themselves decisively and enthusiastically in favor of the main viewpoint of Duclos' article and the main line of the resolution of the Board.

However, the fact also remains that Comrade Browder, as well as those relatively few comrades who continue to support his erroneous non-Marxist theories and policies, are resisting the rectification of our past mistakes. Comrade Browder stubbornly clings to a false postwar orientation. He is actively opposing the sound political line which is now being hammered out by our National Board in conjunction with our membership. In so doing, Comrade Browder is compounding his previous errors and embarking on an even more dangerous course—a peculiar kind of non-Marxian "isolationism" and American exceptionalism.

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Before analyzing the nature and basic source of Comrade Browder's errors and thus also the errors of our entire National leadership, as well as why these errors happened, it is worth while and enlightening to examine the present position of Comrade Browder in respect to a series of key questions.

Take the cardinal question of American-Soviet relations and cooperation, which every anti-fascist and most patriotic Americans understand is the cornerstone of national and world security: Together with the National Board, Comrade Browder recognizes the paramount need and the great possibilities for maintaining and extending American-Soviet friendship and peaceful collaboration after the war, as part of and as the heart of the anti-Hitlerite coalition. Browder also agrees with the Board that the position of the State De-

partment and the American delegation at San Francisco on a host of vital questions, as well as the slowness and inconsistency with which Washington and London move to realize the concords of Yalta, create strains and fissures in the coalition, endanger the unity of the Big Three.

But Comrade Browder differs fundamentally from the position of the National Board on how to prevent America from vacillating and departing from the agreement of Yalta in the future, on how to prevent divisions within the coalition, on how to consolidate and strengthen American-Soviet unity. Browder considers that the "coincidence of interests" of capitalist America and the Soviet Union—the joint interests of our nations arising from the common need of establishing a durable peace and prosperous and mutually beneficial trade—predetermines the future role and position of the decisive sections of American monopoly capital in respect to future American-Soviet relations. Browder counts first of all on the "intelligence" of the most "far-sighted" sections of the bourgeoisie as the main "guarantee" that the crucial necessity of American-Soviet amity and cooperation will more or less automatically overcome and surmount existing difficulties and differences and will suffice to curb the aggressive imperialist aims and policies, including the anti-Soviet hostility, of powerful sections of American finance capital.

The National Board believes that the common interests of the United States and the U.S.S.R. are real, and are strong and compelling factors, without which there could be no basis for long-term and friendly cooperation and peace. At the same time, the Board also believes that these interests in themselves, that

these favorable objective conditions, neither can nor will automatically determine America's policies. We cannot overlook the contradictions between the capitalist and socialist system. We cannot forget the lessons of the League of Nations, Munich, or World War II.

This is why we consider that American-Soviet friendship and cooperation, and the task of completing the destruction of fascism in Europe and everywhere, will not and cannot depend upon the "intelligence" of this or that section of monopoly capital. It will depend above all and to a large extent upon the welding of a firmer and more solid national democratic coalition within our country—a coalition resting upon the power and unity of labor and all other democratic forces especially upon the working farmer, the Negro people, small businessmen, professionals and intellectuals.

In this connection, we also take into account the fact that there still are certain influential capitalist groupings which, for one or another reason, support the Crimean decisions, and we consider that it is possible and necessary for labor and the popular forces to fight for these objectives together with such capitalists. But equally, we believe that labor and the people cannot rely on any capitalist group or elements to maintain a steadfast position or to struggle against fascism to the end. We believe, now more than ever, that within the camp of national unity, within the national democratic coalition, labor, together with other progressive forces, must not only be the backbone and the main driving force, but must play the leading role.

Further, in respect to the decisive question of American-Soviet relations, the National Board likewise differs

from Comrade Browder in two other important respects. Unlike Browder, we do not believe that the U.S.A. follows at the tailend or is the naive pawn of British imperialism. We consider, while world capitalism has emerged from this war weakened by the defeat of Hitler Germany and will be further weakened by the defeat of imperialist Japan, that the U.S.A. is emerging from the war as the strongest imperialist power—economically, militarily and politically.

The U.S. is not the servile and junior partner of the British Lion. Quite the contrary. Furthermore, in the postwar period, U.S. and British economic and political rivalries are bound to sharpen and become more acute. In fact, after the war, Anglo-American rivalry and contradictions will constitute a main source of conflicts endangering world peace and stability. And in the struggle against its chief imperialist rival, the U.S. will play an increasingly aggressive role.

However, we do not conclude from this that all is hopeless, that America inevitably and irrevocably will come forward only in a reactionary and pro-fascist role in the world of tomorrow. The relationships of international forces, and the strong progressive currents within our country are such that it is possible for labor and all democratic forces—if they are united on an anti-fascist program and wage a resolute struggle—to influence effectively the course of America, at home and abroad.

The point is, that neither American nor British imperialism will be weakened, nor their reactionary conflicts and aims thwarted, by Browder's appeal to their "intelligence" and "true" class interests; nor by his fantastic blueprints designed to soften their antagonisms,

to divide up peacefully the world market, or to arrive at arrangements whereby Downing Street would voluntarily liberate the British Empire. American, just as British imperialism, will be weakened and curbed, particularly when the American working class and people, by their unity and struggle, weaken and undermine the position of the most reactionary and aggressive forces of finance capital, and establish closer and firmer unity of action with the freedom-loving peoples of all lands.

Moreover, we of the National Board cannot agree with Browder's fatalistic position and his arbitrarily chosen alternatives of the future course of world development. For instance, we *do* believe that if the imperialist bourgeoisie of the U.S. and Britain reneged on Crimea and were to force a rupture in American-Soviet-British relations—that this would engender new aggressions, great suffering, damage and untold hardship for the world, and not least of all for the American people. This is why everything must be done to preserve and strengthen the unity of the Big Three.

Yet we cannot agree that the only alternative to Browder's concept of the Grand Alliance is chaos, anarchy and the end of civilization. Browder has not yet drawn all the necessary conclusions from this war of national liberation in which there has emerged a stronger and a more influential Soviet Union, a new and democratic Europe and a stronger world labor movement. These historic developments certainly are an indispensable part of the world of reality; they are an essential basis and an organic part of the anti-Hitlerite coalition—a part and basis which has already created an entirely new relationship of world forces, irrevocably strengthening the

cause of world democracy and national freedom.

In this connection, it should not be forgotten that out of this war there has also emerged a stronger and more influential American labor movement. The supreme task now is to forge labor's unity of action, locally and nationally, and to make American labor fully conscious of its vanguard role and its immediate historic task to complete the destruction of fascism, and toward this end to affect decisively, in alliance with all democratic forces, America's policies, both foreign and domestic. This, admittedly, is no easy task. For the labor movement is sharply divided, and the Greens, Wolls, Dubinskys, Hutchesons and Lewises still retain positions of great power. However, the conditions are ripe, and the need is so great, that it is now possible to make new advances in welding labor's anti-fascist unity. This can and must be done.

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Next, take the question of the slogans of action set forth in Part I of the Draft Resolution of the Board. With certain reservations and one basic difference, Browder alleges that he could agree with this immediate program of action.

Leaving aside the "reservations," what is Comrade Browder's stated and most basic disagreement with the slogans of action? Browder claims that the National Board has omitted what he terms, the decisive question of any national unity program for the postwar period, namely, the question of "markets." Browder still contends that the solution of postwar markets, especially of foreign markets, on a scale capable of absorbing the entire productive output of U.S. wartime industry and production levels, remains the key

and heart of any sound reconversion and postwar plan for securing economic prosperity.

Obviously, the question of markets, both foreign and domestic, is not unimportant, especially as these will have a pronounced effect upon the postwar levels of production and employment in the U.S.A.

What then, let us ask, are the prospects for expanding American postwar trade in the immediate postwar period?

For one thing, the defeat of German, and subsequently of Japanese imperialism, as well as the vast destruction of property, plant capacity and capital goods during the war, will enable both the U.S. and Great Britain to increase their share of the world market, in comparison with pre-war levels, particularly during the first period of rehabilitation and reconstruction—though it must be emphasized this will take place under conditions of sharpened Anglo-American rivalry, and sooner or later under circumstances of a "depression" and a cyclical crisis.

However, to realize the great possibilities which are now open for considerably extending American foreign trade—possibly from \$7,000,000,000 to \$10,000,000,000 annually—during the early postwar years, as well as to achieve a level of exports for a longer period of time considerably above the prewar level of 1939—it is necessary, as the Resolution of the Board proposes, to achieve the following conditions:

(a) To ensure a stable and longterm peace.

(b) To guarantee that liberated Europe develops further along democratic, anti-fascist lines.

(c) To promote a free and democratic Asia.

(d) To extend American long-term

and low-interest credits and loans to all democratic nations for purposes of economic reconstruction and industrialization—and on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of these nations.

Undoubtedly, the various proposals in the Resolution which are designed to promote international economic cooperation and world trade, can and should be implemented. Equally, it may be necessary to augment that section of the resolution dealing with reconversion and how to promote the fight for 60,000,000 jobs.

But, it is the firm opinion of the Board that on the question of markets we cannot adopt the "amendments" and alternative economic proposals and concepts which Comrade Browder now advances and which are essentially the cause Browder's postwar economic same as those he set forth in his book *Teheran*.

This is our considered opinion—views contain, among other things, two basic flaws:

Firstly, Browder remains obsessed with the idea that the way to improve the wage and living standards of the American people is to try and solve all the market and profit problems of monopoly capitalism, that is, to try and make capitalism work. This is why Browder puts forward an economic program for monopoly capital, for trying to overcome the anarchy and contradictions of capitalist production, for trying to bring about a super-organized capitalism "free" from crises.

Browder is also obsessed with the idea that in the postwar period the workers will not have to depend, first of all, upon their own organized strength and struggles; rather, he believes that they can advance their in-

terests by making one concession after another to the monopolists.

However, the National Board believes that the way to promote jobs and social security and to raise the purchasing power of the working people—which we consider vital for the expansion of the domestic market—depends, among other things, upon how we rally and unify labor and all anti-fascists to struggle vigorously against the efforts of most employers to utilize the reconversion period to lower wages and living standards, and to undermine the trade union movement. This is why we stress the need for mobilizing the masses today to fight for improved federal and state emergency unemployment insurance; to enact the Murray Full Employment Bill and the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill; to start a gigantic federal and state public works and housing program, etc.

This, too, is why we place such great emphasis upon the urgent need of protecting the trade unions, organizing the unorganized, and developing labor's unity and independent political action. But these key questions, which are organically connected with the problem of markets, are seldom mentioned or stressed by Browder.

Secondly, on the question of postwar markets and economic perspectives, Browder refuses to entertain any notion of the embryonic or forthcoming economic crises in the U.S., whose clouds are beginning even now to loom on the horizon. Browder is still hypnotized by his original opportunist illusions regarding the postwar possibility of a long-term period of expanding production and full employment taking place under present social conditions without conflicts, crises or mass unemployment.

But what are the facts?

Present internal conditions in the U.S.A. are now featured, in part, by the present transition and shift from wartime to a peacetime economy. This process, which is taking place in the midst of prosecuting the war against Japan and under circumstances of a greater concentration and centralization of big capital, is accompanied by vast dislocations in the economy and a marked increase of unemployment. This difficult period of reconversion may last one to two years. It probably will merge with, or be followed by a postwar economic "boom."

But this "boom," too, will be a boom of a special kind. Whatever its length, 2, 3 or 5 years, it will develop unevenly, advantageous primarily to the most powerful trusts, under conditions in which there will be large-scale and chronic unemployment and serious internal struggles. Further, this postwar economic "boom," due to the inherent contradictions of capitalism, will inevitably give rise to a cyclical crisis, to a severe economic crisis—and this will take place despite the prospective expansion of America's foreign trade in the immediate postwar period. And if we do not see this, and do not map out a program of action to protect the interests of the people along the lines set forth in the Board's Resolution, then the monopolies, headed by their most reactionary groups, may succeed in utilizing that crisis for their own reactionary ends, and along fascist lines.

There is also another aspect of the slogans of action embodied in Part I of the Resolution that Comrade Browder objects to. He considers that our proposals to curb the powers of the monopolies are sectarian, if not utopian. But the contrary is true. Only by re-

solutely mobilizing the people to curb the powers of the trusts and cartels will it be possible greatly to expand both the foreign and domestic markets under conditions more favorable to the peoples. Only by curbing the monopolies can we seriously check and defeat those American imperialists who advocate a soft or compromise peace with feudal-fascist Japan. Only by such measures can we best promote today the fullest rallying and unification of the national liberation forces in China, Indonesia, the Philippines, and elsewhere, thereby hastening victory over Japan and the free and democratic advance of the peoples and nations of Asia. Only by curbing the economic royalists now can we most effectively prevent the restoration or unbridled predatory activity of the Anglo-American-German cartels, the scuttling of the Crimean decisions and the coming peace settlement, and help put a halt to those who want to plunder, rob and oppress the liberated peoples.

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There is also, and not least of all, the question of the dissolution of the Communist Party. Browder still believes that there is nothing to worry about in regard to this action. He even has the audacity to state now—which he didn't do some 14 months ago—that he realized when the decision to establish the C.P.A. was taken that this might cause difficulties for a number of Communist Parties in other lands in the trying days of their national liberation struggle. At the same time, Browder insists that the dissolution of the C.P. was an indispensable act necessary to ensure victory in the 1944 elections and advisable from the viewpoint of the

future role of the American Communists.

However, what are the facts? The dissolution of the C.P. in May 1944, as Comrade Duclos indicates, caused serious difficulties for a number of Communist Parties in Europe. This in itself makes clear that we had no right to dissolve the C.P. For the interests of the world working class, and therefore of its vanguard parties, are basically identical, so that an injury to one can never by anything but an injury to the others.

Moreover, the dissolution of our Party, as we can see, accelerated previous and all tendencies to put an end to the independent role and position of the American Communist organization as an independent Marxist political movement and entity. The dissolution of the C.P. accentuated the tendency to weaken our base among the workers in the decisive sections of industry. It promoted all opportunist views, including the tendencies to limit and negate the independent role of the Communists in the elections, as well as in other progressive and broad united front political-legislative movements.

Insofar as the 1944 elections are concerned, the facts are: the dissolution of the C.P. aided the enemies of the camp of national unity. We Communists, as well as those who we supported in the elections, were charged or castigated with dissolving our independent party organization in order to "capture" or "dominate" the A.L.P. and the Democratic Party. And it must be admitted that this line of Red-baiting attack was used by the Hoover-Dewey Republicans and the Social-Democrats with marked and harmful effect. Furthermore, while the C.P.A. did play a key role in the elections, the dissolution of the C.P.

tended to reduce the power and activity of our Communist movement precisely during the course of the elections, and prevented us from exerting our full strength.

Clearly, we cannot perpetuate this state of affairs. Irrespective of what name or form we may now choose, we Communists now, from this day on, must augment and expand our independent, Communist vanguard role. Pending future changes in our name or formal electoral status, we can and must build our Communist Association among the basic industrial workers, expand our independent mass activities, including our own independent electoral tickets and campaigns. We will do this, of course, in conjunction with organizing the broadest unity of action together with all other anti-fascist and democratic forces. But now and in the future, whether we retain the status of the C.P.A., as a non-party organization in the accepted electoral sense, or reorganize into the C.P., we must develop our organization as the Marxist Party of the American working class.

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The final point I wish to mention regarding Browder's present position is his non-Marxist views concerning theory. When pressed to the wall, Browder admits that "perhaps" some of his theories were and are untenable, or at least, that they don't square with realities and with our practice. Further, Browder claims that even if we made mistakes on the theoretical front, these were not so serious because we American Communists performed virtual miracles in our mass work, such as during the 1944 elections. Also, Brow-



der contends that it doesn't matter if we erred as regards theory because, according to him, we have been reacting correctly, especially since V-E Day, to many of the current political developments, internationally and within the country.

This distortion of and contempt for Marxian theory is dangerous and has nothing in common with Marxism. Insofar as our National Board and membership are concerned, it is our deep conviction and determined purpose to insure that now, as never before, for us Communists, theory must serve as a guide to action. Our Marxist-Leninist theory and practice must be inseparable. They must confirm and reinforce each other.

Precisely because under Browder's leadership we were, until recently, revising Marxism, our "new theory" took us into strange pastures; we were tending to slide into the swamp of Bernsteinism and Kautskyism. And, naturally, our "new theory" failed to equip our Association and our friends to foresee and to meet in time the new changes in world and national affairs. We were not forearmed for the new tasks with which we are now confronted. We were reacting to certain events, such as at the San Francisco conference, etc., piecemeal, in an isolated and limited way, and without vision and all-round clarity, without displaying the required political initiative. Because of our erroneous theoretical conclusions, we did not adequately arm politically the American working class and all anti-fascists for the new tasks now arising.

Some say, however, that despite our opportunist errors, possibly we could meet and correctly adjust ourselves to

many aspects of the present changing situation, and that our practice would inevitably have led us to correct our theoretical mistakes. But, the fact remains, because of an incorrect theoretical position, we were lagging behind events, we were acting spontaneously and without that essential Communist compass: Marxist foresight and insight.

But to continue: What, we should ask, was the basis of the opportunist errors, not only of Comrade Browder but also of the entire national leadership?

The root of our revision of Marxism arose, essentially, from an erroneous estimate of and attitude towards monopoly capital, especially towards those sections of Big Business which supported the military defeat of Germany.

Did our mistakes consist in cooperating with the win-the-war sections of Big Capital to speed the military defeat of Nazi Germany and the Axis? Did they arise from collaborating in a broad national electoral coalition with those capitalists who wished to re-elect Roosevelt? Did our errors flow from our efforts to utilize and sharpen the divisions and contradictions within the ranks of capital, so as to try and isolate and defeat the pro-fascist cliques headed by duPont, Hearst and McCormick? Obviously the answer is—no!

Then, from what did our fundamental mistakes arise? Our errors arose, for one thing, because we tended to forget why the main sections of American finance capital entered the war. We forgot that the monopolists did not participate in the war against Hitler completely to destroy fascism, to eradicate its social and economic roots. Rather, they came into the war against the Nazis in order to prevent German

world domination, and also to eliminate or weaken an imperialist rival. Of course, their pro-war position coincided with the immediate interests of the American people, even though there was no reason to assume that these big capitalists would fight consistently against Hitler or to the end against Hitlerism.

Our opportunist errors arose because we lost sight of the fact *why* the Roosevelt and Churchill governments, and the bourgeoisie supporting them, entered into the agreements of Teheran and Crimea. We forgot that the U.S.A. and Britain became partners of these accords primarily because of the military necessity, because of the given relationship of world forces and because of the strong and powerful anti-fascist sentiments, objectives and determination of the American and British peoples.

Similarly, we did not take into account the fact that the concords of Teheran and Yalta were, as Comrade Duclos has pointed out, *diplomatic agreements*. Clearly, these diplomatic agreements were political events and acts of the first importance; they were of historic significance. Yet what we overlooked was the fact that while the U.S.S.R. would honor and fulfill its pledge to the letter, as well as in the spirit, the ruling circles of America and Britain would carry out these agreements only to the extent that labor and the people—the true democratic and anti-fascist forces—spoke out and waged a resolute and an effective struggle; as well as to the extent that the relationship of international forces compelled this.

Our revisionist mistakes consisted further in the fact that, even during

the wartime period, while correctly cooperating for victory with the win-the-war sections of capital, we often tended to rely upon these sections of capital; we did not adequately criticize or counteract their vacillations; we did not systematically and sharply enough oppose their concessions to pro-fascist reaction; we did not maintain at all times our own independent position. We were influenced negatively, by illusions regarding the "intelligence" and "far-sightedness" of the so-called pro-Roosevelt sections of capital. And, in retrospect we must admit that our recent opportunist mistakes have a long history and were influenced no little by the "Roosevelt decade," by the liberal-bourgeois influence which the Roosevelt "era" exerted upon the American labor and progressive movements.

Finally, and most important, because of illusions concerning the wartime and future role of the anti-Axis sections of monopoly capital, we tended to forget that American finance capital, American imperialism, itself breeds and engenders fascism and wars; and that after the war, American capitalism would seek and foster imperialist aggrandizement—that it would strive, either by force or by using the "dry" method, to attain world hegemony.

Because of this we Communists inadvertently tended to obscure and weaken the independent and leading role of the working class and consequently the vanguard role of our Communist organization. Because of this we did not sufficiently forewarn and prepare labor and the people to mobilize all their strength and force for the new and complex postwar problems. And this we must do now, at great speed and despite all difficulties, so as—for one

thing—to prevent, in time, the growth of fascism within our own country.

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The question inevitably arises as to why this basic opportunist error, as well as other rightist mistakes, was allowed to penetrate into our wartime work and influenced our main political line and approach for the postwar period.

Did this take place because the leading cadres of our Communist movement are organically inclined towards revisionism, or are incurable opportunists? Did this take place because our leadership is bankrupt and has made little or no contributions to the struggle against fascism and reaction, or because we are devoid of Bolshevik honesty, integrity and devotion?

To ask these questions is to answer them. And the answer is, No! The membership and the vast majority of our leadership are adherents of Marxism, are staunch proletarian anti-fascists, who champion the immediate, as well as the ultimate interests of the working class—socialism. We have made vital contributions to victory in the war, to advancing the cause of democracy, peace, freedom and social progress. We have proved ourselves capable, albeit in varying degrees, of defending and promoting the interests of the working class, of our people and nation.

Then why and how can we account for the disorienting and paralyzing opportunist influences and errors which adversely influenced our policies and mass work in the recent period? These can be explained by the following reasons and factors:

1. During and in the midst of mobilizing everything to defeat Hitler-Germany and the Axis, we tended to become careless and dizzy with success. We correctly devoted ourselves to achieving victory at all costs and in so doing we made signal contributions towards this end. Yet, in the process of doing this, we became one-sided. While correctly subordinating everything to the great objective of smashing Hitlerism, and working effectively to achieve this goal, we carried on a relentless struggle to root out all sectarianism in our work; but we completely neglected to combine this with an equally vigilant struggle against opportunism. We forgot the sound advice of Comrade George Dimitrov, who, in 1935, warned Communists of all lands that to apply successfully the policy of the united and people's anti-fascist front, we must:

“...eradicate from our ranks all *self-satisfied sectarianism*, which above all blocks our road to the masses and impedes the carrying out of a truly Bolshevik mass policy. We want to intensify in every way the struggle against all concrete manifestations of Right opportunism, realizing that the danger from this side will increase precisely in the practice of carrying out our mass policy and struggle.”

2. In the course of our win-the-war and general anti-fascist activity, while participating in the broad camp of national unity, we adopted, in practice, a non-vigilant attitude towards our non-labor allies. We unconsciously allowed ourselves to be influenced by the anti-Axis sections of the bourgeoisie. This was particularly true in respect to President Roosevelt and those sections of capital aligned with him. Thus, we frequently dragged at the tail-end of

Roosevelt, were slow in criticizing his mistakes, weaknesses and hesitations. Consequently, we did not develop a sufficiently independent position. We did not adequately maintain our own Communist identity and vanguard role. Moreover, because of this, we tended to gloss over many of the pressing grievances of the workers and the Negro people, and sometimes even put a damper on their struggles.

3. Then, too, our opportunism was abetted by the fact that our national leadership has not yet fully mastered Marxism, that in the midst of energetically supporting and waging this national liberation war, we often confused the woods for the trees, and tended to evaluate or raise short-term tactics and transitory phenomena to the level of strategy or a "new theory." And in this connection we should ponder over the penetrating remarks of Lenin in his article "Marxism and Revisionism":

To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the windings of political trivialities, to forget the basic interests of the proletariat and the main features of the entire capitalist system as well as the whole capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these basic interests for the sake of real or would-be advantages of the moment—such is the policy of revisionism. And it obviously follows from the very essence of such a policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms and will give rise to one or other variety of revisionism, each time when there is some "new" question, or when there is more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even

though this turn changed to the basic line of development to but an insignificant degree and for but the shortest period of time. (V. I. Lenin: *Marx, Engels, Marxism*, International Publishers, p. 77.)

4. Lastly, though not to exhaust the subject, our errors arose because in our leading committees and methods of work we have not yet established genuine democracy and collective work. We have tended to fall into the trap of formal democracy and self-adulation. We have confused the forging of firm, unbreakable Communist unity with the creation of a synthetic unity which curtailed criticism and self-criticism, which separated the leadership from the membership, and failed to draw most of our trade union cadres and the entire membership into the fullest formulating and executing policies. This has played no small role in feeding and prolonging opportunism and bureaucratic methods of leadership and work.

What must be done now to rectify our errors, most speedily, to help prevent the recurrence of such a situation within the leadership of our Communist movement and to enable our organization to fulfill its new tasks and responsibilities with dispatch and success?

Obviously, there are a number of steps and measures which must be undertaken now and in preparation for convening at the earliest moment a special national convention. Among these are the following:

1. It is necessary to deepen and extend the democratic discussion now taking place within our Association, and to combine continuous, searching and constructive criticism with the maxi-

mum self-criticism and correction. We must guard against excesses and distortions, whether of a rightist or leftist tendency. And, in so doing, we must resolutely preserve and strengthen the basic unity of our Communist organization.

2. It is essential to institute everywhere, full inner-party democracy, based upon the principle of democratic centralism. For one thing, it is necessary to put an end to that practice where new and major policies are suddenly, and without consultation, thrust upon our membership and often upon the National Committee and the Board, as the line and settled decisions of our Association. For another, it is necessary to convert the National Committee, as well as each State Committee, into a functioning and responsible policy-making and leading body.

3. It is essential to refresh and strengthen our national and state leadership with the most tested working-class cadres, with the most devoted and competent Marxists. This will require a bold policy of promotion, as well as the amalgamation of the healthiest Marxist core of the existing leadership with a new and large circle of loyal and able proletarian cadres. This will require the establishment of far closer ties between our entire leadership, the membership and the masses. This will also require that our entire membership and all leading committees exercise the greatest political vigilance and judge each and every leader and member not alone by his or her vote or political declaration, but by deeds, by performances.

4. It is imperative that we build and strengthen our CPA as a Marxist organization, as an independent work-

ing class party. Whatever final judgment our membership may render as to the name and form of our Communist organization, we must immediately fortify our organized working class base in the most decisive industries, and effect a new disposition of our leading cadres to help affect this; we must expand and improve our independent Communist mass work and political and organizational initiative on all fronts—on the industrial, electoral and legislative fronts, and particularly on the ideological and theoretical fronts.

5. It is also especially urgent now that we shall organize the most systematic study and mastery of Marxism-Leninism throughout our Association, from top to bottom. Starting with the planned study and application of the main line of the draft resolution of our National Board, with the Duclos article, as well as with Comrade Foster's letter of Jan. 20, 1944, we must encourage and develop the widest and most profound study of the Marxist-Leninist classics, especially the reports and writings of Comrade Dimitrov; the *History of the C.P.S.U.*; Lenin's *Imperialism and Left-Wing Communism*; *Marx, Engels—Marxism*; *The Proletarian Revolution and The Renegade Kautsky*, and the *Collapse of the Second International*; and not least of all *The Foundations of Leninism* and *Mastering Bolshevism*, by Stalin.

6. It is necessary that we immediately commence to examine, in the light of our discussion and Resolution, all fields of work, all press, publications and institutions led or influenced by the C.P.A.; that is, it is essential to examine our theory and practice, as well as our cadres, in all spheres of work and in all mass organizations.

7. It is urgently necessary that we raise the vigilance of our entire movement, root out and prevent factionalism, as well as smoke out and expel all Trotskyite and other enemy agents.

8. It is equally imperative, particularly now during our inner-discussion period, that we reach and clarify the broadest sections of the masses regarding our policy and tactics. We must react immediately to all slanders, distortions and misrepresentations of our position which appear in the press, such as have been recently expressed in the columns and editorials of the *New York World-Telegram* and the *New York Times*. We must utilize every avenue of public information to explain and popularize our position.

9. And, finally, it is essential that our C.P.A. resolutely combine our present discussions and deliberations with the maximum mobilization of all our resources and strength, with a broadening of our contacts and relations with all anti-fascists, and progressives, rapidly to implement the program of action outlined in our Resolution.

Every thing must be done without delay to rally and unify labor and all democratic forces to consistently support a progressive foreign policy, a sound reconversion program, and in preparation for the current municipal and the fateful 1946 Congressional elections. Everything must be done now, in time, to weld the broadest anti-fascist and democratic unity of the nation and to reinforce the friendship and concerted action of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition.

Everything should be done to help determine the course of the Truman

Administration, which despite its recent vacillations and inconsistencies in the sphere of foreign policy, is still subject to mass pressure and can be influenced in a progressive direction along the lines of Yalta, especially—if labor and the people are organized, united and active.

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I am confident, as is the National Board, that our discussions and deliberations will result in a great strengthening of our Communist movement, in the achievement of greater independent Marxist thinking, genuine democracy and collective work and a higher type of inner-Communist unity. This is already borne out by the first results of our discussions and by the fact that already, prior to any official decisions, we have, in a basic sense, begun to reconstitute and convert our C.P.A. into the Marxist Party of the American working class. This is all to the good. This augurs well for the future.

Insofar as the Resolution of the National Board is concerned, I would like to venture the following opinion: the main line and approach of the Resolution is correct. Yet there is much ground for additions, changes and improvement. Therefore, I should like to suggest that we approve the main line of the Resolution, accept it as a draft and elect a small committee to incorporate in the Resolution, all amendments advanced by the National Committee and our membership. Then, on this basis, we should submit the improved draft resolution for the consideration of our membership and final approval of a special national convention which should be convened at the earliest moment.

# FOR THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR MARXIST VANGUARD

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

*Extracts from Report to Meeting of C.P.A. National Committee,*

*June 18-20, 1945.*

In the main reports and discussion we established the approach—both politically and organizationally—to all the problems to be raised here. My effort will be to draw certain lessons from our recent experiences, to indicate the direction of solving some of the problems connected with the functioning of the C.P.A. as a Marxist political party of the working class. We do not come with finalized or “last word” proposals. It is up to this National Committee to discuss these problems seriously.

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Let us review briefly some expressions of this liquidationism:

Firstly, on the role of the C.P.A. in relation to the democratic coalition: While we conducted a struggle to achieve clarity and understanding as to the indispensability of the C.P.A., its role and effectiveness as an organized force in stimulating and leading mass movements, and strongly argued against those who wished to limit the organization only to educational activity, the fact remains that in both theory and practice we tended to minimize the independent Marxist vanguard role of our organization.

Predicating our thinking on the

premise of an identity of interests between ourselves and *all* class forces represented in the war coalition for a long time to come, we circumscribed the function of our organization to the limits of this coalition. We negated a basic Marxist concept, fundamental to the existence of a working class Marxist party, that we must at all times maintain an independent position aimed at influencing in the first place the most decisive force within the nation, the working class, while vigilantly criticizing and overcoming hesitations and vacillations within the camp of our allies. Too often our position was determined by the concept that “we must not and cannot do anything to endanger the coalition.” This was falsely interpreted to mean that criticism of errors and mistakes of the Roosevelt Administration and the sections of the bourgeoisie which supported the defeat of Hitler Germany, would “weaken the coalition.” We tended to submerge our identity in the general democratic movement, instead of firmly maintaining the independent position of the Communists and labor as a pre-condition for strengthening, not weakening, national unity. Thus we could not resolve the contradiction that constantly found expression in our organization—the con-

tradition between our collaboration with the democratic forces and the maintenance of our own political and organizational identity.

During the election campaign we called off a series of mass meetings and radio talks, stopped issuing leaflets in our own name, reached a new low in literature distribution and in our press circulation, etc. In some districts and in numerous clubs, not a single piece of literature had been prepared and issued, reacting to specific events and indicating the C.P.A. thinking and proposed line of action to the masses, for the past six to nine months. We could not effectively meet and eliminate a growing underestimation of our own independent role, the absence of adequate club initiative in organizing and developing independent activities while collaborating with the democratic forces in the community. We were unable to effectively combat the trend to transform our clubs into "discussion centers"—instead of centers for organizing mass struggle around the key issues of the day. And we could not give a satisfactory answer to the question raised persistently within our ranks and among many workers: "How does the C.P.A. differ from other win-the-war progressive organizations?"

What we didn't see, namely the intimate connection of these types of problems and their political roots, the workers instinctively understood better than we. They demonstrated this by staying out of our organization in large numbers, by not giving us sustained support in local union elections, and on many other occasions.

Secondly, we have seen a deterioration of the industrial and trade union composition of our membership since

the C.P.A. was organized. We know by definition that a Communist organization, to fulfill its vanguard role "must absorb all the best elements of the working class, their experience, their revolutionary spirit and their unbounded devotion to the cause of the working class." Can we honestly say, despite all our positive achievements (and we don't want to detract one iota from them) that our organization embraces all the advanced workers available and ready to join? I am not talking idealistically. The fact remains that today we only have 316 coal miners although ten years ago we had several times that many; or that we only have 1,427 steel workers and 840 marine workers. I could go on and on, with examples from other industries, states and towns.

Equally decisive as these figures, is the fact that our ability to convince the trade union movement, including the C.I.O., of the correctness of our policies is far from fully established. We do not have so deep-rooted an influence or organized strength that we can influence and continue to lead decisive sections of the labor movement, irrespective of what any leader inside or outside the trade union movement may do at a critical moment.

We know that workers, particularly workers in basic industries, should more readily understand our policies—our Marxist thinking. Yet, we see a weakening of our working class base in a number of key industries. During the past year we had a decline in industrial and trade union composition for the first time in six years. It is clear, that we should have attracted certain working class forces from key industries and industrial areas, but did not in this period.



Obviously, the C.P.A. did not have the recruiting capacity of the C.P. While we enrolled 63,000 C.P. members into the C.P.A.—or 82 per cent of our membership (not counting those in the armed forces) and showed a growth of 25 per cent, that was due primarily to the big recruiting campaign prior to the change of name. We had an average monthly recruiting during the first half of 1943 of 3,615 members; during 1944 of 4,275; but during the first half of 1945 it dropped to 1,185. It is only fair to add that we ourselves, in line with our general policy, decided against any large-scale recruiting this year.

Thirdly, another example was our attitude to the press. This is one mistake from which I must exclude myself and a few other members. For months we conducted a struggle to establish the editorial concept of the *Daily Worker*. To some the tabloid form was to be the cure-all answer. Then we were told we need a broad popular newspaper—a sort of Communist *PM*. We had similar expressions in the field of press circulation. First, was the liquidation of the Browder Brigades in New York. Then a folding up of the home delivery system. Then a theory that responsibility for the distribution of the *Daily Worker* and *The Worker* should not be placed on the membership and clubs. Let the newsstands and mail subs answer the problem. This sprang from the illusions we ourselves were creating. It resulted in negating the active role of Communist members and clubs with reference to the press. It further resulted in practically wiping out our bundle sales. It made us exclusively dependent upon bourgeois forms of distribution, such as distribution agencies and the U.S. mail, to

reach the masses with our message and leadership.

Fourthly, the concept of membership in a Communist organization. We developed concepts of Communist membership which said that attending club meetings was not important; that collecting dues was a routine and thankless job, consequently let us have yearly dues; that monthly Club meetings were sufficient. Thus, during the past period the C.P.A. has not had organized contact with at least 50 percent of its membership. Add to this, theories that we were harassing the members, that we were overburdening them and could not expect a new membership to come to meetings and fulfill so many activities. All these concepts were essentially incorrect. I do not want to infer here that there are no new methods of work that can and should be adopted, or that there are no new things we must all learn. Of course there are, but new methods of work must not weaken the Communist concept of membership in our organization, nor destroy that which distinguishes us from others. The central question is correct policy but, we need an organization with Communist characteristics to carry out such policy. This demands that we combat all attempts to transform our Clubs into Democratic or Republican Party types of clubs, or merely into neighborhood ping pong and forum centers. We must quickly overcome all organizational looseness—and reject all theories developed to justify it.

Fifthly, is the serious decline in dues payments. Years ago dues payments averaged 85 per cent for the entire country with some districts reaching a higher level. However, during the last six months of 1944 dues in the C.P.A.

averaged 71 per cent and for the first five months of 1945 they have further declined to 58 per cent. Even more alarming is the status for the first quarter of this year in such key industrial districts as Ohio—44 per cent; Michigan—32 per cent; Illinois—45 per cent and Pittsburg—58 per cent.

Sixthly, is the serious decline in the sale of theoretical literature by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. I only have figures for the country excluding New

York. These show that for the six years between 1938 to 1943 we sold a yearly average of 34,000 copies of Marxist-Leninist classics. However, for 1944 this had declined to 19,000 copies and this included 5,000 volumes of the Lenin Home Library. I do not have the figures for the New York District, but I am told that the decline is proportionately the same.

Given such conditions, a critical situation was inevitable.

# THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

*Report to the Special Convention of the Communist Political Association, held in New York City, July 26-28, 1945, which reconstituted the Communist Party of the U.S.A.*

During the past several weeks we have been engaged in the frankest, deepest, and most self-critical theoretical analysis and practical political discussion in the history of our Party. Now, therefore, in its overwhelming majority, our Party has become convinced that our policy for the past eighteen months was "a notorious revision of Marxism." The complete dissolution of the Party in the South shows where Comrade Browder was leading with his policy. . . .

## I.

### OUR PARTY'S REVISIONIST MISTAKE: ITS ORIGIN AND COURSE

Browder, with his revisionism, was trying to fasten a system of Right-wing bourgeois liberalism upon our Party; a liberalism so conservative that on many questions it put us far to the Right of Roosevelt, of the liberal press, and of the main sections of the labor movement. This revisionism has nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism, being a complete abandonment of its basic principles.

*A. Browder's line is a rejection of the Marxian economic doctrines.* Browder has developed bourgeois theories of the liquidation of the capitalist cyclical and general crises; he rejects Marx' theory of surplus value and of the exploitation of the workers. Thus, for the past two years our Party has made

no criticism whatever of capitalism as a system of human exploitation, nor has it challenged the blood-wrung profits of the employers. Instead, we have heard many comrades, without rebuke from Browder, talking about our alleged obligation to guarantee the employers, already the richest in the world, a so-called fair profit. That such shameful nonsense should be heard in a Communist organization! When Browder adopted so glibly the slogan of "free enterprise," he accepted in practice most of bourgeois economics along with it. With his great faith in capitalism he outdoes even such enthusiastic bourgeois economists as Chase, Hanson and Johnston.

*B. Browder's line is a rejection of the Marxian principles of the class struggle.* Comrade Browder denies the class struggle by sowing illusions among the workers of a long postwar period of harmonious class relations with generous-minded employers; by asserting that class relations no longer have any meaning except as they are expressed either for or against Teheran; by substituting for Marxian class principles such idealistic abstractions as the "moral sense," "enlightenment," "progressivism," and "true class interests" of the big monopolists, as determining factors in establishing their class relations with the workers. Browder's theories of class collaboration and the harmony of interest between capital and labor are cut from the same opportunistic cloth

as those of Bernstein, Legien and Gompers, except that his ideas are more shamelessly bourgeois than anything ever produced by these notorious revisionists of the past.

C. *Browder's line is a rejection of the Marxian concept of the progressive and revolutionary initiative of the working class, and with it, the vanguard role of the Communist Party.* The very foundation of Marxism-Leninism is that the working class, with the Communist Party at its head, leads the democratic masses of the people in the amelioration of their conditions under capitalism and also in the eventual establishment of Socialism. But Comrade Browder has thrown this whole conception overboard. His books *Victory—and After* and especially *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, present the thesis of a progressive capitalist class, particularly American finance capital, leading the peoples of this country and the world to the achievement of the great objectives of the Moscow, Teheran, Yalta and San Francisco Conferences, and the building of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous society. Browder sees labor and the democratic forces, including the Communist Party, playing only a secondary, non-decisive role in the present-day world.

D. *Browder's line is a rejection of the Leninist theory of imperialism as the final stage of capitalism.* Comrade Browder, in his books and speeches, paints a utopian picture of a world capitalist system, not moribund, but vigorous and progressive, especially in its American section—a world capitalist system about to enter into a period of unprecedented expansion. It is a denial of the general crisis of the capitalist system. Browder believes that under the leadership of his "enlightened"

American monopolists, the imperialist ruling classes in this and other capitalist countries will peacefully and spontaneously compose their differences with each other, with the U.S.S.R., with the liberated countries of Europe, and with the colonial and semi-colonial countries, without mass struggle. This is the bourgeois liberal notion that the epoch of imperialism is past. It conflicts fundamentally with the Leninist theory of imperialism as the last stage of a decadent capitalist system.

E. *Browder's line is a rejection of the Marxian-Leninist perspective of Socialism.* Obviously, if world capitalism, under the leadership of Comrade Browder's beneficent American monopolists, can overcome its inner contradictions and produce an era of well-being and capitalist progress such as Browder sees ahead, the whole question of Socialism is reduced to a mere abstraction. Browder accepts this logic and has abandoned the advocacy of Socialism, even in a purely educational sense. In his book on Teheran he casts aside our Party's ultimate goal of Socialism and expands our program of immediate demands into a fantastic capitalist utopia which leaves no room whatever for Socialism.

From all of this, it should be clear that Browder is preaching anti-Marxism; in fact "a notorious revision of Marxism," as Duclos said. He is fighting our Party and with it, what he has designated as "the Marxists of Europe." But like all other revisionists, he presents his opportunism under the false flag of a Marxism brought up to date. That he realizes he is making a head-on attack upon the whole body of Marxist-Leninist principles, however, is clear from his often-expressed scorn for the "old books" and "old formulas,"

by which, of course, he means Marxist-Leninist books and formulas. Browder would have us throw away the Marxist-Leninist classics and adopt instead his Right-wing bourgeois liberalism, which he misnames Marxism. His two latest books cannot be called Marxist works, they are more akin to the ideas of Eric Johnston than to those of Karl Marx.

Browder's amazing bourgeois revisionism is a surrender to the pressure of American imperialism upon our Party. The class beneficiaries of his whole program are the big capitalists of this country. His line dovetails with their plans of imperialist expansion and world domination when he sows illusions about their alleged progressivism, hides their imperialist aggressions, spins capitalist utopias that shut out all perspectives of Socialism, deludes the workers with prospects of their employers voluntarily doubling their wages in the postwar stage, and weakens the Communist Party by transforming it into the Communist Political Association, etc. Thus he plays into the hands of the most reactionary elements, American big capitalists, who in the postwar period will be the strongest world force making for economic chaos, fascist reaction, and a new world war.

One of the most dangerous aspects of Browder's revisionism is that it was penetrating into the Communist parties of other lands through the spread of his writings. Thus, a number of our brother parties in this hemisphere, especially in Latin America, became infected with it, thereby weakening their guard against advancing American imperialism. Various European and Asiatic parties also felt the liquidatory effects of Browderism. Indeed, Browder wrote a public letter to the Communist Party

of Australia, virtually telling it what it should and should not do—advice which that Party indignantly rejected. Before the Duclos article was published, Browder also contemplated sending a public letter to the British Communist Party urging it to orientate itself in the then approaching Parliamentary elections on the perspective of an election alliance between the British democratic forces and the Churchill group of Tories against the reactionaries (sic). How preposterous this sounds now in view of the Labor Party's victory—over Churchill. Browder's plan, apparently, was to develop some sort of a loosely integrated cooperation between such Communist parties as he could influence, with the C.P.A. as a new world center, with himself as its leader, and with his revisionist policies as its program. The Duclos article smashed this whole plan.

Browder's revisionism, although it burst into full expression following the Teheran conference, has roots reaching back several years earlier in his Party leadership. An examination of this earlier period will reveal the major reasons why the Communist movement has not made greater progress in the United States during the past several years. Browder's policies have been a detriment to our Party for years.

Our Party discussion has made it clear that Comrade Browder's revisionism has exerted a weakening effect upon our wartime policy. Many of our comrades still believe that Browder's policy was necessary during the war. It was not. It was definitely a detriment in our war work, as I have shown in detail in my article in *The Worker* of June 10. And not a few believe that Browder worked out our policy of all-out support of the war, of strengthening

the United Nations coalition, of the fight for the Second Front, of maximum war production, of the no-strike pledge, etc. But this is not true. Browder was in Atlanta when this correct general war policy was developed, and he had nothing whatever to do with its formulation. Almost as soon as he was released from prison, however, he began to undermine our correct policy with his enervating revisionism. He did not succeed, however, in completely destroying our otherwise correct wartime policy. Despite his revisionism, our Party may well be proud of its record during the war, its wholehearted and devoted struggle on every front to win the war. The full destructive force of Browder's revisionism would have been felt, however, if we had attempted to extend his policies over into the postwar period. This would have proved disastrous to our mass work and to our Party itself. The corrective Duclos article arrived at a most opportune time for us.

As it was, the corrosive effects of Browder's revisionism were fast bringing our Party into a major internal crisis. His pro-capitalist liberalism alienated our Party sympathizers and confused our Party members. So badly had he undermined our policy that it finally took an expert to explain to a member of a progressive trade union why he should join the C.P.A. or remain a member of it. Our members' morale fell rapidly. Fluctuation figures rose steeply and our power to recruit members declined accordingly. The percentage of trade unionists dropped off sharply in our Party. Our contacts with the Negro people were weakened, especially by the disastrous liquidation of our Party in the South. Attendance at branch meetings declined alarmingly,

and dues payment percentages fell to record low levels. This is what happens to a Communist Party when it gets poisoned with revisionism. It will take hard work upon our part to overcome this developing crisis and to start our Party off again on a course of healthy growth and development.

A peculiarly harmful effect of our Party's disease of Browder's revisionism was that by crippling the Party's militancy, it tended to throw the workers into the grip of the pseudo-left demagoguery of the Trotskyites, Reutherites, Thomasites, Dubinskyites and Lewisites.

The Party membership is mystified as to how our Party leadership, almost unanimously, came to make the serious mistake of adopting Browder's crudely revisionist line, especially during the past 18 months. Let me try to explain this:

First, for several years prior to the adoption of Browder's distorted policy on Teheran, our Party had, under Browder's leadership, slipped into the opportunist practice of supporting Roosevelt without serious self-criticism. It thereby began to adopt a wrong attitude toward the bourgeoisie. Our developing opportunist attitude toward the capitalists was further strengthened by the failure to recognize clearly that the big capitalists of this country were supporting the war for their own imperialistic purposes and not to advance the democratic objectives of the American people. Browder's opportunist line was to welcome the big capitalists more or less as loyal comrades in arms with the democratic forces. With all this opportunist confusion as a background in Party policy, it was not difficult for Browder, after the Teheran conference, to take his final plunge into revisionism

by contending that our so-called war-time cooperation with the big capitalists would be continued and intensified in the postwar period. This argumentation seemed reasonable to many; for if the Socialist sector of the world could arrive at an agreement on Teheran to cooperate in war and peace with the capitalist parts of the world, then why could not American workers and capitalists also work together in harmony in the war and in the postwar period? With this opportunistic reasoning as a basis, Browder then added his utopian theories of a progressive capitalist system, the liquidation of imperialism, the harmony of interests between capital and labor, etc. Unfortunately, the rest of our Party leadership was not able to demolish this complex utopian structure by exposing its grossly opportunistic core.

Secondly, a vital reason why Comrade Browder was able to foist his opportunism upon our Party was because of the super-centralism prevailing in our organization. With his great personal prestige and his excessive degree of authority, Browder's word had become practically the law in our Party. Consequently, he was able to suppress any analytical discussion whatever of his false thesis regarding Teheran. It is my opinion that if Browder's proposals could have been really discussed, they would have been finally rejected by our Party, but such a discussion was out of the question.

Now I come to another matter that is deeply troubling our Party and its friends; namely, how does it happen that a Party leadership that had been almost unanimously following Browder's opportunist line for eighteen months could suddenly switch over and take a stand flatly against Browder!

In answer to this general question, I think that the basic cause of the sudden, almost spectacular change of not only the leadership's, but of Party, opinion was that Browder's policy had been proved bankrupt by life itself as the war in Europe was coming to an end. Moreover, thousands of Party members had accepted the policy at its outset with grave doubts and hesitations and were ready for the change.

There were, indeed, many signs of an impending change of Party policy. The end of the war against Germany, the death of Roosevelt, the imperialist raid upon the San Francisco conference of the United Nations, the obvious preparations of the N.A.M. for a postwar drive against organized labor, the development of many strikes, etc., were awakening concern among our leaders in the National Board. Comrades Dennis, Green, Thompson, Williamson and other leading members were either beginning to express directly opposing views to Comrade Browder's, or were raising questions that he found it increasingly difficult, on the basis of his distortions of Teheran, to answer. Even Browder himself, under the pressure of events, had been forced to cast aside some of the cruder forms of his revisionism and recently had felt compelled to write several "radical" articles which apparently contradicted his line. Already, Dennis and Green had made proposals for a meeting of the National Committee, to review our postwar perspectives and policies. Such a review could not have been avoided, and when it had eventually taken place I am sure it would have produced important changes in the Party's line. As we can see from Comrade Browder's present opposition to the National Committee's Resolution, however, such changes

could have occurred only in the face of his stubborn resistance.

Had the Duclos article been published a few months earlier, its reception in our Party would have been much less unanimous. As things turned out, however, it appeared at just the right time. The objective situation was ripe for it, and so, increasingly, were our Party leaders and members. Hence, the stage was all set for the sudden switch in Party opinion that has perplexed so many people. Our Party has suddenly reverted to its basic Communist principles. . . .

## II.

### THE NEXT TASKS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST REVISIONISM

A. *An ideological campaign against Revisionism:* From the Party's overwhelming endorsement of the National Committee's Resolution, it is clear that this Convention will decisively reject Comrade Browder's bourgeois liberalism. This is vitally important; but the worst mistake we could now make would be to conclude therefrom that the fight against Browder's revisionism has been fully won and that we can now proceed unconcernedly with our daily tasks. On the contrary, we must continue and intensify the ideological struggle. While at the conclusion of this convention our formal general Party discussion will end and we will close our ranks and proceed in unity and discipline to the application of the line we have adopted, we must, however, conduct the broadest and deepest campaign of enlightenment we have ever led in our Party. As never before, we must train our Party in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism. To this

end we must check over the curricula, teaching personnel and textbooks of all our schools. We must re-examine all our recent literature. We must prepare new propaganda and agitation material in harmony with our new line. We must especially be alert to eliminate, not only Browder's wrong theories, but also all those opportunist ways of thinking and working that have developed during Browder's long regime as head of the Party. So prevalent are these opportunist moods and methods that many comrades in State and National leading posts are deeply afflicted with them, often without even realizing the fact.

The eradication of these insidious open and concealed forms of opportunism, the scars of Browderism, will need our close and earnest attention in the coming period. At the same time, we will have to be vigilantly on guard against a sharp growth of "Left"-sectarianism, which is a perennial danger in our Party and of which there are already manifestations. We must avoid doing what we have done several times before during sharp turns in Party policy; namely, to make the mistake of over-correction. We must avoid flying from the one extreme of open revisionism to the other extreme of a narrow sectarianism. One evil is as harmful as the other.

B. *Re-establish the Communist Party:* It is the National Board's opinion that this Convention should reconstitute the Communist Party. It was a grave error to form the Communist Political Association in the first place, a long step toward dissolving the Communist movement in the United States, as we now see so dramatically in the South. And it will be compounding that deadly mistake if we do not here and now re-



organize the C.P.A. into the C.P. Comrade Dennis, in his report to our National Committee, showed conclusively that the formation of the C.P.A. did not help our election campaign, as Comrade Browder avers, but seriously hampered it. Likewise, Comrade Williamson, in reporting to the National Committee, demonstrated beyond question that the continuation of the C.P.A. is having a liquidationist effect upon every branch of our Party work and organization. The clear lesson from all this is that the convention should re-establish the C.P. without delay, including especially the organization in the South.

There are no electoral complexities in this country that the C.P. cannot meet better than the C.P.A. To keep the present name is politically indefensible. We will have more standing among the people operating frankly as the Communist Party. Besides, every advanced worker knows the meaning of a "party," but does anyone, even Comrade Browder himself, really know what a political association is? Only with a party can we meet the great tasks confronting us. Failure to re-establish the Communist Party at this Convention would be a major political mistake. It would disappoint our membership; it would cripple our future work; it would stimulate the Browder opposition; it would be a sign that we are not clear-sighted and resolute enough to take the decisive steps necessary to eradicate Browder's revisionism. . . .

*C. Refresh and Strengthen the Party Leadership:* During my various reports and articles in this situation, I have taken Comrade Browder sharply to task for our Party's revisionist mistake. I have done this because Browder was the chief author of the revisionism; he

theorized it; he rammed it down our Party's throat without discussion; he now refuses to accept correction, and he has been busily trying to organize an opposition against the National Committee's Resolution. Some comrades believe, however, that I have been unduly severe in polemizing against Browder. But this is sentimentalism, when it is not political uncertainty. Comrade Browder has done and is still doing severe injury to our Party. He subjected it to ridicule when he introduced his absurd capitalist ideas into it a year and a half ago, and he is exposing it to a severe Red-baiting attack now that we have to change back from his false policies. He has seriously weakened our Party's daily work and confused its membership. He has also profoundly lowered our Party's prestige among other Communist Parties.

While it is necessary, therefore, to concentrate the main fire against Browder as the ideological leader of our revisionist error, this does not remove the heavy burden of responsibility borne by the rest of our national leadership, especially the members of the National Board. It was a great weakness that our leadership was not capable of theoretically unmasking Browder's opportunism and thus saving the Party from the ensuing ravages in its work, its prestige, and its membership.

Political mistakes are serious matters and cannot be lightly passed over. In these times of crucial struggle against fascism they involve the welfare, the liberties and possibly even the lives of large masses of people. Leaders who make such mistakes must, therefore, be held strictly responsible. Consequently, the proposal as stated in the National Committee's Resolution, to "refresh and strengthen the personnel of all re-

sponsible leading committees in the Association," is a pertinent one. The Party must provide the best guarantees it can in its leadership that such a disastrous mistake shall not take place again. This does not signify, however, as some comrades assert, that "the whole national leadership must be cleaned out." Such a Leftist course would be throwing the baby out with the bath water.

Communist parties are not infallible, and even the best Marxists sometimes make mistakes. The distinction between Communist parties and other parties of the people in this respect is that, armed with the science of Marxism-Leninism, the former make far fewer mistakes than any other group, and when they do commit errors, they frankly admit and correct them. Just a little while ago Stalin stated that many serious errors had been made in the U.S.S.R. during the prosecution of the war. And in his famous speech on *Mastering Bolshevism*, delivered on March 3, 1937, when pointing out that the leadership of the Party made the serious error of failing to recognize the danger of Trotskyism, he said:

How can it be explained that our leading comrades, who have a rich experience of struggle against every kind of anti-Party and anti-Soviet trend, proved to be so blind and naive in this case that they were unable to recognize the real face of the enemies of the people, were unable to discern the wolves in sheep's clothing, were unable to tear the mask from them?

They forgot Soviet power has conquered only one-sixth of the world, that five-sixths of the world is in possession of capitalist powers. They

forgot that the Soviet Union is in conditions of capitalist encirclement. . . .

This was a very serious error, as all will agree, and in the most advanced Communist Party in the world.

When errors are made by Communist leaders, and our error was a serious one, it calls for a check-over of the leading forces; but this must not be interpreted as a signal for a reckless decimation of the Party leadership. Such a decimation would be in order only if the Party should have fallen into the hands of a hard-boiled group of incurable revisionists, which is not the case in our Party. What is called for in our situation in order to refresh and strengthen the leadership, therefore, is to select our new National Committee and National Board on the basis of a careful review of the various members' qualifications, including their social background, their Marxist - Leninist training, their previous Party record, their degree of participation in the present error, their connections with trade unions and mass organizations, their present attitude toward Browder's revisionism, and their general prospects of doing effective future Party work. Obviously, there must be important changes in our leading committees, particularly the National Board. Trade unionists and war veterans especially must be brought into the leadership, both nationally and in the districts. The present Party situation must result in a very substantial improvement in our whole Party leadership.

*D. Re-establish Democratic Centralism:* A basic essential in our fight against Browder's revisionism is to reintroduce Leninist democratic centralism into the Party. During the tenure

of Comrade Browder's leadership the Party drifted far from these principles and allowed itself to become infected with a corroding bureaucratism in which Browder was the key figure and chief moving force.

Centralism we had, a super-centralism in fact, but very little democracy. Comrade Browder during the course of the years had managed, with the acquiescence of the leadership and of the Party in general, to develop among us a totally wrong conception of Communist leadership. He had grown almost into a dictator. His authority reached such a point that his word had become virtually unchallengeable in our Party. His policies and writings finally were accepted almost uncritically by the leaders and the general membership. Browder created around himself an atmosphere of infallibility and unchallengeable authority. All this was accentuated by the deluge of petty-bourgeois adulation, praise-mongering and hero-worship that was constantly poured upon him by our leadership and our members.

Comrade Browder was deeply intoxicated by this unseemly adulation and by his arbitrary power. He quite lost his political balance from it. He abandoned Communist modesty and Leninist self-criticism and fell into the most extravagant boasting. This boasting attitude has done Browder great personal damage and it has brought havoc to our Party.

Constantly grasping for more power, Comrade Browder had largely liquidated the political functions of the Party's leading bodies. He habitually by-passed the National Board in policy making. Characteristically, his notorious report on Teheran was never presented as a whole to the National Board.

All the Board saw of it beforehand were a few fragments. It was sprung suddenly and sensationally, in the true Browder manner, at a National Committee meeting attended by several hundred people. The National Committee, also, had gradually lost all real political power. It assembled; it listened to Browder's proposals; it affirmed them; and it dispersed to the districts to impress the policy upon the membership. Of genuine political discussion there was none whatever in the National Committee. Similarly, our recent National Conventions were hardly better than the National Committee meetings—with their formal endorsement of Browder's reports, no political discussions and no self-critical examination of the leadership.

In this stifling bureaucratic atmosphere, Leninist collective leadership could not and did not exist. Political thinking itself was hamstrung. Comrade Browder, basing himself upon the high prestige which he enjoyed among the Party membership, made policy pretty much as he saw fit, with the sad results that we now see. How far Browder was prepared to go to prevent political discussion was shown by the way he suppressed my letter of January, 1944, to the National Committee. The only way I could have gotten this letter to the membership was by facing expulsion and a sure split in the Party. Even then my letter would not have really come before the Party, for the issue would have been the unity of the Party, and anyone who attempted to discuss my letter would have been denounced as a Trotskyite by Browder.

The Party must insist that this whole bureaucratic system be swept away, in the districts and nationally, as a

basic condition for freeing itself from Browder's revisionism. There must be a genuine collective leadership built up. The Secretariat must report regularly to the National Board, which must discuss its reports freely. The National Committee must establish its political power and it must have the fullest freedom to discuss all reports coming from the National Board or members of the Secretariat. Important differences of opinion in the National Board must be reported to the National Committee. The National Convention must not be a mere rubber stamp, as it was under Browder's leadership, but must be, in fact as well as in name, the most authoritative body in our Party.

The Party must insist that the Party leaders be self-critical, and it must learn to be on guard against leaders who cover up their mistakes, instead of frankly admitting and analyzing them. Petty-bourgeois adulation of leaders must also be ended. We should respect our chosen leaders, but not make gods of them. We must insist that real political discussion take place at all levels of the Party, from the branches to the highest committees. However, our Party is not a debating society; we have to arrive at decisions and then resolutely carry them out. But we can neither formulate sound policies nor carry them out effectively without collective thinking, collective discussion, and collective leadership. Only by applying the sound principles of Leninist democratic-centralism can our Party keep its mistakes to a minimum and develop the clear-thinking unity of action and resolute discipline that are the great strength of Communist parties all over the world.

*E. Strengthen the Party's Independent Role:* Central to Comrade Brow-

der's revisionism was the constant playing down of the independent role of the Communist Party. This blunting of the political initiative of our Party expressed itself in various forms of tail-ending after the bourgeois. This deadly opportunism is to be found in Browder's leadership for at least the past ten years. It has had the effect of facilitating the demagogy of the Trotskyites and Dubinsky Social-Democrats.

Thus, under Browder's leadership, our Party habitually failed to criticize adequately the Roosevelt Administration for its shortcomings and to come forward boldly with its own proposals. In the same spirit of tailism, Browder refused to criticize sharply the reactionary policies of the A. F. of L. Executive Council, except in the most flagrant cases. But the worst instance of all was his attempt to set our Party to tail-ending shamelessly after American finance capital directly, by picturing the National Association of Manufacturers, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Bankers Association and other reactionary employers' associations as progressive bodies and as qualified therefore to lead the nation in various branches of its economic and political policy. This example of tailism, which is the very core of the distortion of the Teheran decisions, was the most disgraceful piece of misleadership in the history of our Party.

Another expression of Comrade Browder's settled policy of minimizing our Party's leading role was his systematic hiding of our light under a bushel. That is, instead of having our Party speaking out boldly under its own name on all political questions, Browder nearly always, in re-

cent years, sought to shove the Party into the background and to surrender the initiative to other organizations. This harmful practice has done much to weaken our prestige among the masses, to surround our Party with a false conspiratorial air, and to hamper the full legalization of our movement.

Still another, and a very deadly form of such playing down of the role of the Party, was Browder's long-continued practice of virtually limiting our Party's activities to mass agitation and of avoiding all mass organization and struggle. Browder has a magic reverence for the spoken word. He is a talker, not a mass fighter. He has had very little experience in, or understanding of, the need to back up the word with action. Especially of recent years has this trend become manifest, as Browder, poisoned by our sickly adulation, developed more and more of an inflated idea of the importance of his speeches. He eventually got to the point where he seemed to believe that all that was necessary in the case of a given issue was for him to make a speech, for the Party to scatter huge quantities of it throughout the country, and all would be well. Browder grossly underestimates the importance of mass organization and political struggle, so that it is several years since our Party has organized any real mass movements on its own, or by mobilizing its forces to support other organizations that were campaigning for the people's rights. This long-developing tendency of liquidating the mass organization work of the Party finally reached its climax in the dissolution of the Party and the formation of the C.P.A. as almost exclusively a political educational society.

The Party must break sharply with

Browder's chronic tailism, his hiding the Party's face, and his avoidance of mass struggle. The Party must recover its political initiative and Communist boldness—even though certain public officials, leaders of the A. F. of L. Executive Council and of the N.A.M. may not like it.

It is good, of course, that many mass organizations now speak out progressively on various questions, and we must do all we can to develop this trend. But this must not be done by pushing the Communist Party into the background, into the shadows, where the workers cannot see it in action. Our Party, if it is to be recognized by the masses as their political leader, must speak out quickly and boldly on every important question. Of course, in this sharpening up of the Party's political role we must not fall into the sectarian errors of the past. And, above all, our Party must regain its skill of backing up its spoken word with the most complete possible mobilization of our membership and of the organizations with which we cooperate.

At the present time we are facing a big task in this respect in the wage movements of the workers, where there is the most urgent need of our helping to organize a broad and active political campaign within the framework of the wartime no-strike pledge. We will face a still greater task in the Congressional elections of 1946, when the reactionaries will make a desperate attempt to capture control of Congress. We must employ all our skill to awaken and mobilize the workers and all democratic forces to beat back the political offensive of reaction.

*F. Improve the Party's Social Composition:* To eliminate Browder's op-

portunism and to build a strong dike against its future recurrence, the Party must radically improve the social composition of its membership and of its leadership. We must enlist more and more workers from the basic industries. We must, above all, recruit trade unionists and war veterans and bring them into our leadership. The winning of such members will be facilitated by the Party's present change of line.

The morale of our Party members and sympathizers is now being greatly raised by the Party's new line. They are happy to get from underneath the suffocating cloud of Browder's opportunism and bourgeois revisionism. We should be alert, therefore, to translate this new enthusiasm into a big Party building campaign that will bring many thousands of new members into our Party, particularly in our concentration districts, and that will vastly extend the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and the rest of our press. The best answer we can make to Comrade Browder and his revisionism will be to enroll many thousands of new members into our Party—workers from the steel mills, coal miners, automobile plants, railroads, and other key and basic industries.

#### IV.

#### SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The supreme measure of our new policy is its application in practice to the immediate demands and interests of the people. Only if we have successful practical mass policies and activities can we free ourselves from Browder's revisionism, on the one hand, and avoid the pitfalls of "Left"

sectarianism, on the other. . . . I want to direct my concluding remarks to the correction of some general misconceptions regarding the new political line of our Party.

The first of these misconceptions is voiced in the argument that Comrade Browder stands for a broad national unity, whereas the new line of the Party tends to narrow down our activities. The reverse is the case. Actually, Comrade Browder's policy, measured in the light of our Party's experience, was definitely cutting down our organization and its mass contacts. Proof of this is the fact that his liquidatory policy was fast taking the vitality out of our Party and throwing it into a serious internal crisis. Thus it was undermining the very foundations of all our work. Besides, Browder's line, with its nonsense about the so-called progressive capitalists voluntarily protecting the workers' interests, was destroying our Party's prestige among the workers and alienating them from us, as was shown in the defeat of Communists in more than one important trade union election in this period.

Many of our Party members found Browder's policy so absurd that they would not even try to apply it in the industries. But a comrade, Freda Werb, of Buffalo, in a discussion article showed what happened to comrades who did try to apply the policy in the shops.

Being faced with lay-offs as we were, the discussion in the plant naturally was around what was going to happen to us after we were laid off, and what sort of postwar world we were going to live in. For months I stood there and told every-

one who would listen that in the postwar world our purchasing power would be greatly increased, that the capitalists would voluntarily pay us more money because they wanted to have a prosperous postwar world. I may say in passing that many either wouldn't listen, or having listened, laughed.

If we had persisted in advancing Browder's no-strike pledge for the postwar period, it would have isolated us in the labor movement. In addition to all this, Browder succeeded in alienating whole sections of pro-war liberal forces of the country and turning them into a vitriolic opposition to our Party. There is nothing "broad" in a policy that cuts the heart out of our Party, ruins our prestige among the workers, and violently antagonizes the democratic forces generally.

In contrast to all this, the new Party line will build the Party and inspire its members with an incomparably better morale; it will restore our waning standing among the workers, it will lay the basis for real cooperation with all democratic forces, it will lay the basis for the broadest possible democratic coalition.

The second misconception that I want to deal with is now being spread by Browder. It is akin to the foregoing one, and it runs to the effect that Comrade Browder speaks for the whole nation, whereas the Party, with its new line, speaks only for the working class. This, too, is a falsification of realities. Browder is speaking for a nation which he wants to be led by reactionary finance capital. In doing this he is speaking in the interest, not of the nation, but of the big capitalists. Whereas, our Party is speaking for a nation

in which only the proletariat can and must be the decisively progressive force. It thereby indeed speaks for the whole nation. Thus, in the present fight to maintain their wage rates, our Party holds that the workers are in fact fighting to advance the economic prosperity of the nation by preventing the collapse of their purchasing power and with it a breakdown of the whole industrial machine. We maintain that in all their wage struggles, therefore, the workers should place in the very forefront of their propaganda the fact that by keeping up their wages they are defending most vital economic interests of the entire people. The same principle holds true of the other fields of struggle of the working class. By championing the interests of the proletariat in this broad sense, the Party is indeed speaking in the true interest of the whole nation. The same is true regarding the fight of the Party in behalf of the Negro people, the farmers and the middle classes.

A third erroneous idea now being circulated in the Party by Browder, would have the Party membership believe that whereas Comrade Browder is the champion of Teheran, the Party is now opposed to the Teheran decisions. Nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, Browder, by appeasing American finance capital, is surrendering to the worst enemies of Teheran; whereas our Party, by basing its present policy upon the combined struggle of the democratic forces of the world, is taking the only course by which the great objectives laid down at Teheran can be achieved. Complete victory over fascism can be won in this war; peace can be maintained for a long period of time, and joint

steps can be undertaken by the United Nations for world economic rehabilitation. However, the way to these ends is not, as Browder proposes, to turn world leadership over to American finance capital, but through alert struggle by the democratic elements throughout the world against monopoly, especially the most reactionary sections of American finance capital.

The fourth and last false conception that I wish to speak against is the idea being circulated by "Left" sectarian voices in our Party to the effect that the present program of the Party is only transitory, that we are on our way to a much more Left interpretation of the present national and world situation. According to these comrades, we are going to, or should, denounce the war against Japan as imperialist, condemn the decisions of Teheran as unachievable, drop the slogan of national unity, call for a farmer-labor government, give up our wartime no-strike pledge, abandon the fight for 60,000,000 jobs, bring forward the question of Socialism as an immediate issue, and generally adopt a class-against-class policy.

But these comrades are indulging in wishful thinking. Our Party, if I know it, is not going to take any such Leftist course. For the Party, in its overwhelming majority, understands that Leftist policies of this character would be no less disastrous to us than Browder's Right revisionism. The line of the National Committee's Resolution is the correct one: in its analysis, its formulation of immediate demands, and its placing of the question of Socialism. We must hew to the line of that Resolution, taking into account, of course, necessary amendments. We are not getting rid of

Browder's Right opportunism to fall into a swamp of "Left" sectarianism.

Now, in conclusion, let me say that our Party at the present time is passing through one of the most serious crises in all its history. There are those who hope that it will lose heavily in membership and will fall into a bitter and destructive factionalism. But such people, whether inside or outside of the Party, will be completely disappointed. The Party is making this crucial turn in decisive unity. There will be no factionalism, nor will our Party tolerate any, either from the Right or the "Left." Our Party will emerge from this situation healthy and growing, with its mass contacts broadened and strengthened and with its members and leaders refreshed and fortified by a deeper understanding of the great science of Marxism-Leninism.

With the economic conditions of the workers deteriorating and unemployment growing, with the N.A.M., the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and other employers' organizations out to weaken or smash the unions, with the combined reactionaries planning an all-out attempt to capture Congress in 1946, and with the Government lacking in adequate response to the workers' needs, obviously serious economic and political struggles loom in this country. The workers will have to defend actively their rights, economic standards, and unions. The people in general will have to fight for the objectives of Teheran, Yalta and San Francisco. This situation will place great responsibilities upon us Communists. But with our Party rejuvenated and re-invigorated, and playing the vanguard role, we will face these oncoming struggles with Communist confidence and resoluteness.



# THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

*Report to the Special Convention of the Communist Political Association, held in New York, July 26-28, 1945, which reconstituted the Communist Party of the United States of America.*

The aim of the Constitution Committee has been to make all the necessary changes to bring the Constitution into accord with the principles of a Marxist political party of the working class.

The proposed recommendations for changes in the Constitution are as follows: First, we propose to add 20 new sections that deal explicitly with many questions we consider necessary to insure the proper functioning of our Party and especially to guarantee the full participation of the membership in the work of the Party, clearly defining the rights and duties of the members. Secondly, we propose the deletion of three old sections which in our opinion are not in accord with the effective functioning of our organization. Thirdly, we have made additions to five existing sections. And, finally, we have strengthened eight and reformulated three of the existing sections. Each of these you will note as we go along. . . .

## NAME AND PURPOSES

The first two Articles dealing with the Name and Purposes are obviously of prime importance. Our Constitu-

tion must reflect in the proposed name and purposes the distinguishing character of our organization—namely, that it is the Marxist political party of the working class. As you will note, we definitely propose changing the name of the organization to *Communist Party*. We recognize that the change of name from *Communist Party* to *Communist Political Association* in May, 1944, was basically incorrect. We say this, not because a Marxist political party of the working class must at all times have the name "Party." In the circumstances of May, 1944, however, the change of name was fundamentally unsound and incorrect, because it had its origin and motivation in our revisionist policies. Here for instance, is what Earl Browder gave as the reasons for dissolution:

The Communists foresee that the practical political aims they hold will for a long time be in agreement on all essential points with the aims of a much larger body of non-Communists, and that therefore our political actions will be merged in such larger movements. The ex-

is in the interest of our nation;

c. That while carrying forward all the democratic traditions of our country and the fighting traditions of the working class of all nations, we always keep before the masses the aim of Socialism as the historic solution of the contradiction between the social character of production and the private ownership of economy by a small group of monopolists.

The effort to understand and master Marxism is not just a task for the leadership—but a necessary task of the entire membership. We must achieve the understanding that the higher the political level and the Marxist-Leninist knowledge of our members and cadres, irrespective of whether they be Party functionaries or active in trade unions, the more effective will be the result of their work and leadership. Let us never forget the emphasis of Lenin that “the role of the vanguard can be fulfilled only by a Party that is guided by an advanced theory.”

However, this is not the first time we have said this, and merely to repeat it, even under the circumstances of today, does not in itself give us the guarantee that our organization will meet this test. To fulfill this objective will require that we break with the historic underestimation of the real significance of Marxist theory within our ranks so crassly demonstrated in the recent past. It will mean, furthermore, that practical measures must be adopted of aiding our membership and leadership in their day-to-day activities to equip themselves with the science of Marxism-Leninism.

3. The third prerequisite is that the Communist Party must understand

that the *determining factor* in all our organizational and educational work is to help influence and lead the workers and the people in struggle. Organizational work is not some inner activity, but is directed essentially toward the strengthening of our ability to influence and lead the masses in their activities and struggles. Educational work is not mere study groups, established for the sake of study but is aimed at equipping our members with the knowledge and experience to know how, in the course of all struggles, to adopt the most effective strategy and tactics, helping the workers themselves to arrive at a correct understanding of the questions involved. Agitational work is the ability to speak, to write, to formulate demands that will rally masses in struggle. Training of cadres is to make available to the working class the most experienced, tested, trained and loyal leaders, so as to have the greatest possible assurance of victory over the enemies of the workers and the people.

4. The fourth prerequisite for a Communist Party is to have firm roots in the working class and to guarantee that industrial workers comprise the majority of its members. Successful leadership and ability to influence the course of our nation require above all that we maintain and greatly extend our ties with the working class, especially in the basic industries. I understand that some people have posed the question somewhat in this manner: under Browder's leadership we became a political force and influenced the life of our nation, but under Foster's leadership we will merely be a sounding board for the working-class sentiments. Obviously this is wrong.

Under Browder's leadership, as a result of our liquidationist practices, we became less an influence in the nation than before, precisely because we weakened our connections with the most important force within our nation—the working class. In actuality, we were influenced by other class forces in the nation. To influence successfully the political life of the nation, the center or gravity of the Communist organization should be in the main cities and especially in the centers of large industry. This means our strongest roots must be among the industrial workers—particularly in the steel, auto, coal, marine, electrical equipment, shipbuilding, and metal industries. This is not so today. Being slow in recognizing changes in the situation and failing to quickly adjust our slogans and tactical line to new problems and conditions, we many times, even if only temporarily, forfeited leadership to the Reuthers and other radical phrase-mongers. However, the Party has great reserves among the workers of basic industry, and if we work correctly we can win their confidence and re-establish our leadership.

#### MEMBERS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES

For all of these reasons, I urge you to act favorably upon Articles I and II of our Constitution. It is precisely by this action *now* that we will be acting upon the expressed will of our membership to change the name of the present organization, the *Communist Political Association* to the correct name, the *Communist Party of the United States of America*.

I propose now to comment on the next two Articles, III and IV. These deal with Membership and the Rights and Duties of Members of the Communist Party. We cannot be satisfied with the correction of our program and policies alone. An understanding of our errors also must reflect itself in a development of Communist consciousness expressed in greater activity, better attendance and larger participation at club meetings, with the membership everywhere helping to hammer out policy and fulfilling our new responsibilities.

Acceptance of program and policies is only the expression of the will to become a Communist. The first condition for carrying out the program is participation of all the members in the daily work of the Party. While recognizing that there can be no equality of service and activity, *the Communist Party must strive to have within its ranks only really active members*. Every member must find his or her place, however small the contribution, in the overall picture of activity. This of course should not be distorted to mean withdrawing members active in mass organizations for community mass work, important as that may be, or, far less, for some inner club activity. As far as is practical there should be a merging of such activities. Members active in mass organizations must attend their club meetings. Leadership of Party clubs shall be considered of equal importance with leadership in community mass organizations.

While all conditions of membership are equally important, we emphasize at this convention "activity" and the new clause "attendance at club meet-

ings," because in the past we incorrectly encouraged the idea of two categories of members—active and supporting members. This was both an expression of liquidationism, a distortion of the high and singular role of Communist leadership, as well as a distortion of democratic centralism.

Attendance at club meetings for all members, and not just 30 per cent as in the past, is indispensable if we are to have an active membership under organized political direction. This also requires that we correct the exclusive emphasis placed on the purely educational activity of the clubs. By developing independent Communist activities side by side with our participation in the broader mass movements of the communities or cities, we will demonstrate that the Communist Party has distinctive qualities which differentiate us from all other organizations with whom we cooperate in fulfilling one or another immediate perspective. We will make clear by what the club says, by what the club does, exactly how the Communist Party differs from other progressive organizations.

It is necessary to comment briefly on other conditions of membership. Take the question of reading our press. If all our members would read the *Daily Worker* each day, we would without exaggeration increase the political effectiveness of the Party in the mass movement several-fold. On the question of dues payments—instead of a 60 per cent dues payment, as we have had in the C.P.A., reflecting both looseness as well as dissatisfaction with our policies, we must again aim for a 100 per cent dues payment and

reach at least an over-all average of over 90 per cent.

I call your attention to two new sections—4 and 5. The first re-states, in accord with the principles of democratic centralism, the right of unrestricted discussion in the pre-convention period. Section 5 meets a need that we thought should be emphasized, that of involving the membership in the formulation of major policies between conventions, when we do not have the same unrestricted right of reviewing and discussing all our policies and work as in the 60 days prior to conventions.

This does not mean that our present discussion shall, as Comrade Earl Browder implied last evening, continue after the authoritative action of this convention. Our Constitution in later articles correctly restates a traditional Communist concept that the highest authority of the Party is the national convention and that its decisions are binding on every member. Browder's conception that after the participation of our membership in the most thorough-going discussion in our Party's history and after the deliberations of this Convention, that all this has little significance and that the decision will not be rendered here, is, firstly, a reflection on the capacity of our membership and of ourselves as delegates, and, secondly, a crass example of Browder's American exceptionalism—an exceptionalism in the face of the well-established organizational principles of the Communist movement everywhere.

Finally, as regards these two Articles. You will see we have a number of new sections. Some of these are to clarify more specifically certain obliga-

tions of Communist membership, but most of them are an effort to emphasize especially the rights of Party members.

### ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS

I will now comment on Articles VI, VII, and the new Article VIII.

The structure and functioning of the Communist Party must be considered in connection with the concept of membership which we have already established. The structure must provide the means by which to assure the most effective mobilization of the membership, guarantee adequate opportunity for full membership participation in formulating and hammering out the policies of the organization, develop the necessary membership responsibility for carrying through decisions and tasks, create the conditions for mastering the principles and the program of the organization, and thus enable the Party to fulfill its role as a vanguard organization.

In recognizing how the revisionist policies we pursued also expressed themselves in the character and functioning of the organization, we must now quickly overcome all Social-Democratic practices and methods that developed during this period and hindered the Communist organization from fulfilling its vanguard role. Our mistake was *not* in trying to "streamline" or Americanize our organizational form. The decisive thing is the political content of our organization, and that is precisely where our revisionist line had its foundations. But organizational forms are indissolubly bound up with content, and therefore decisive changes in organization must be made simultaneously as we correct

our revisionist policies. The proper combination of political content and form will enhance our influence and prestige as an organization of American Communists.

The Community Club shall remain a major and important form of the organization. However, since the size, the practices and the content of the existing clubs have greatly undermined the independent leading role of the Party, weakened the ties with the membership and distorted the Communist concept of the rights, responsibilities and duties which accompany membership in our organization, immediate steps shall be taken to adapt the organization of the Community Club to the main objective of re-establishing the vanguard role of the Party.

The size of the Community Club shall be greatly reduced to make possible the establishment of more homogeneous and clearly-defined Communist Club, clubs which can readily secure a knowledge of their membership and develop greater mobility in carrying through their decisions and tasks.

The establishment of smaller clubs shall not be regarded as a return to the units of years ago. The opening up of club headquarters, the development of more popular forms of bringing the position of the Communist Club to the people of the community, is today more essential than ever before. But there is no reason why Community headquarters cannot be maintained under these conditions with a number of clubs utilizing central headquarters, known to the community as the club-rooms of the Party in a given area or town. Furthermore, the public political character of the club must be

greatly expanded so as to win the acceptance of the club in the community mass movements. Only a club which speaks out regularly to the people in the community on the burning issues of the day, develops a many-sided activity program which will give leadership to the solution of these issues; strengthens as an organization its relationship with other leaders and organizations in the community; reaches the community regularly through forums, leaflets, literature and the *Daily Worker*—can hope to win the respect and confidence of the community and, become an accepted participant of the anti-fascist democratic community movement.

During the past period, the elimination of the shop form of organization has greatly weakened the ties of the C.P.A. with the workers in the basic industries, thereby actually hindering our working-class members from making their maximum contribution to our own organization and the labor movement, influencing negatively our ability to win the labor movement for correct policies. The trend, for the first time in many years, of a decline in the industrial composition of our membership, is due in no small measure to the fact that the shop form of organization was dissolved and the community club did not provide the trade unionists with the necessary guidance for the solution of the complex problems they faced daily. While we must not ignore the consideration which led to the dissolution of the shop form, namely, the strengthening and maintenance of our ties with the progressive forces within the labor movement, we must simultaneously strengthen our organization

among the decisive sections of the working class and provide a medium through which the shop workers can be involved in the development of policies that affect the labor movement and our nation. For this reason your committee is firmly convinced that the shop branch shall be reconstituted as a basic form of Communist organization.

In the opinion of your committee, emphasis shall be placed upon the shop and *not* the industrial form of organization. We say this because the shop form of organization has the advantage of enabling the Communists to influence and raise the working class understanding and consciousness of their fellow-workers with whom they are in constant contact. This is not so in the industrial branch. An industrial branch does not decisively facilitate these objectives. Its members are not able to be in closer and more effective daily contact with masses of workers. Of course, the industrial branch may serve the purpose of bringing the Communists of a given industry together to exchange opinions, but that is far from the full role and purposes of a Communist club. Furthermore, shop clubs are one of the keys to concentration in the basic industries. Shop clubs, as distinct from industrial clubs, will also prevent depleting the community club of all its trade union and shop workers, which could only lead to further weakening the effectiveness of the community club as an organization which must react to and defend the needs of the working class within the community. We shall consider establishing shop clubs especially in the large shops in the basic industries where such or-

ganization will strengthen the role and activity of the workers, guarantee more effective mobilization of our membership and more consistent growth of our organization, and in industries where the Communist organization is especially weak and must be rapidly strengthened.

With the establishment of smaller-sized community clubs, many of the main cities and regions will have a larger number of clubs than heretofore. To provide more direct leadership, state organizations shall take under consideration the re-establishment of organizations on a county, Congressional or Assembly district basis.

To provide a direct link with the membership and help to involve the active members from the clubs in the direct formulation of policies, the state organizations shall give serious consideration to the establishment in the counties, or other subdivisions, delegated bodies representative of the clubs—County Councils—as the key leading body within the subdivision. Such delegated Councils are not to be viewed as merely functionaries' meetings, which convene at given intervals to listen to a report, but shall become working bodies which have the opportunity of discussing and determining policies with the delegates drawn into committees, and regularly reporting back to their clubs the problems discussed and decided upon in the Council.

#### DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Because we erred so heavily in neglecting the time-tested Communist principle of democratic centralism, we must emphasize that these principles are embodied in Articles VI and VII.

Let me restate briefly our concept of democratic centralism.

Democratic centralism is the method of functioning of the Communist organization which combines the maximum democracy in the shaping of policy and the election of all leadership with sufficient centralization of committee authority to guarantee immediate reaction to problems and speedy mobilization of the entire membership and organization around the fulfillment of key tasks. Democratic centralism thus guarantees that all leading committees are elected by the membership and all basic problems are discussed and shaped by the membership. The elected leadership has the responsibility to report systematically to the membership on the actions and decisions taken by the higher committee. But once decisions are made in the higher committees, these decisions become the line of activity for the membership as a whole.

Centralization with formal democracy can never be successful. The fusion of democracy and centralism can only be achieved on the basis of constant common activity and struggle of the entire membership of the Party, operating through clubs where general policies are discussed and elaborated to meet the specific conditions and problems of that area.

We recognize the failure of our leadership to provide true democracy in the Party. Equally important, however, was our failure to help the membership equip itself theoretically in our Marxist-Leninist science so that it could most effectively exercise initiative and take part in formulating and executing policies.

We must be alert to distortions of democratic centralism, whether it be in the form of restating an old I.W.W. syndicalist theory that leaders should not hold office longer than one year, or the pure-and-simple trade union theory that everything must be submitted to a referendum vote before the Party leadership can institute or carry through a policy or campaign. On the other hand, it is not practicing democratic centralism for a State Committee to send out a series of questions to all Clubs on a very vital subject, and expect answers, without indicating the thinking of that leadership as to what the policy on the given subject should be.

Much has already been said about methods of leadership. Suffice it here to emphasize that in the Constitution we place before you we propose that the National Committee shall meet at least three times a year, instead of permitting a lapse of ten months as was the case between our 1944 Convention and the first meeting of the National Committee elected there. Policies shall be worked out in consultation with the key Communists concerned, even if they are not on the Committee. New major policies shall be brought to the membership for discussion. Efforts shall be systematically made to recheck the correctness of policies through the National Committee members having close contact with the members in key shops, basic industries and decisive areas. A committee system of work involving most of the members of the National Committee shall be established. The most important weapon in improving both the policies and the functioning of the membership and leadership of a Communist Party is

that of self-criticism. Only an organization of Communists can make skillful use of this important weapon and not injure itself. It is well to recall the experiences of the C.P.S.U. on this question as stated in the *History of the C.P.S.U.*:

A party is invincible if it does not fear criticism and self-criticism, if it does not gloss over the mistakes and defects in its work, if it teaches and educates its cadres by drawing the lessons from the mistakes in Party work, and if it knows how to correct its mistakes in time.

A party perishes if it conceals its mistakes, if it glosses over sore problems, if it covers up its shortcomings by pretending that all is well, if it is intolerant of criticism and self-criticism, if it gives way to self-complacency and vainglory and if it rests on its laurels.

Many of us, including myself, who used to know and use effectively the weapon of self-criticism, began to commit precisely the things warned against in this quotation. I think the entire Party will watch carefully every leader to see that his future actions square with his words.

Let me call your attention to a different concept of officers proposed in this amended Constitution. The old Constitution provided for the election of officers by the State and National Conventions. We propose that the State Committees and the National Committee shall elect not only their Executive Board but all the officers they deem necessary. The Constitution indicates by name only the post of Chairman, leaving the balance of of-



ficers to be decided upon by the National Committee and each State Committee, although it is clear that several secretaries and a treasurer will be needed in every case.

This concept of leadership emphasizes that the authority rests in committees and not in individuals. It builds upon the premise of the collective, rather than the individual officers. It makes the officers responsible to the committee, with the committee having authority to change officers without waiting for a convention. This works out for a greater democratic practice. It is the practice in all other Communist Parties.

Lastly, we have added a new Article entitled National Review Commission. Section I of that article thus explains its purpose:

In order to strengthen, as well as review, the integrity and resoluteness of our cadres, to guard against violations of Party principles, to maintain and strengthen discipline, to supervise the audits of the financial books and records of the National Committee of the Party, the National Convention shall elect a National Review Commission.

Suffice it to add that during this past period when there was great looseness in organizational concepts and functioning, there was also a complete dulling of all vigilance. Numerous problems exist or have arisen, that have never been followed through. With proper alertness, serious consequences could be averted by preventative methods. . . .

# THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE NEXT TASKS

*Resolution of the National Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A.,  
adopted July 28, 1945*

## PART I

### 1.

The military defeat of Nazi Germany is a great historic victory for world democracy, for all mankind. This epochal triumph was brought about by the concerted action of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition—by the decisive blows of the Red Army, by the American-British offensives, and by the heroic struggle of the resistance movements. This victory opens the way for the complete destruction of fascism in Europe and weakens the forces of reaction and fascism everywhere. It has already brought forth a new anti-fascist unity of the peoples in Europe marked by the formation in a number of countries of democratic governments representative of the will of the people and by the labor-progressive election victory in Great Britain.

The crushing of Hitler Germany has also created the conditions for the complete defeat and destruction of fascist Japanese imperialism. The winning of complete victory in this just war of national liberation is the first prerequisite for obtaining peace and security in the Far East, for the democratic unification of China as a free and independent nation, and for the attainment of national independence

by the peoples of Indonesia, Indo-China, Burma, Korea, Formosa, the Philippines and India. The smashing of fascist-militarist Japan is likewise essential to help guarantee the efforts of the United Nations to build a durable peace.

All these crucial objectives are of vital importance to the national interests of the American people, to the struggle for the complete destruction of fascism everywhere. Now with the defeat of Nazi Germany and the Axis, the possibility of realizing an enduring peace and of making new democratic advances and social progress has been opened up for the peoples by the weakening of reaction and fascism on a world scale and the consequent strengthening of the world-wide democratic forces.

### 2.

However, a sharp and sustained struggle must still be conducted to realize these possibilities. This is so because the economic and social roots of fascism in Europe have not yet been fully destroyed. This is so because the extremely powerful reactionary forces in the United States and England, which are centered in the trusts and cartels, are striving to reconstruct liberated Europe on a reactionary basis. Moreover, this is so because the most

aggressive circles of American imperialism are endeavoring to secure for themselves political and economic domination in the world.

The dominant sections of American finance capital supported the war against Nazi Germany, not because of hatred for fascism or a desire to liberate suffering Europe from the heel of Nazi despotism, but because it recognized in Hitler Germany a dangerous imperialist rival determined to rule the world. From the very inception of the struggle against fascism, American finance capital feared the democratic consequences of defeating Hitler Germany.

This explains why the monopolists opposed the concept of collective security in the days when the war still could have been prevented and instead chose the Munich policy which inevitably led to war. Later, even after the anti-Hitler coalition was forged, the forces of big capital who supported the war continued to hesitate and delay, to make vital concessions to the worst enemies of American and world democracy—to the sworn foes of the Soviet Union and to the bosom pals of Hitlerism. That is why American capitalism gave aid to Franco Spain; why it preferred to support the Petains and Darlans and the reactionary governments-in-exile as against the heroic resistance movements of the people. And that is also why it hoped that the Soviet Union would be bled on the battlefields of Europe and why it tried to hold off the opening of the Second Front until the last possible moment.

Only when these policies proved to be bankrupt, meeting growing opposition from the ranks of the people,

from the millions of patriotic Americans fighting in our heroic armed forces and working in war production; only when it became obvious that the Soviet Union was emerging from the war stronger and more influential than ever precisely because of its valiant and triumphant all-out war against Nazism, did American capital reluctantly and belatedly move toward the establishment of a concerted military strategy and closer unity among the Big Three.

Now that the war against Hitler Germany has been won, the American economic royalists, like their British Tory counterparts, are alarmed at the strengthened positions of world labor, at the democratic advances in Europe and at the upsurge of the national liberation movements in the colonial and dependent countries. Therefore, they seek to halt the march of democracy, to curb the strength of labor and the people. They want to save the remnants of fascism in Germany and the rest of Europe. They are trying to organize a new *cordon sanitaire* against the Soviet Union, which bore the main brunt of the war against the Nazis, and which is the staunchest champion of national freedom, democracy and world peace.

This growing reactionary opposition to a truly democratic and anti-fascist Europe, in which the people will have the right to choose freely their own forms of government and social system, has been reflected in many of the recent actions of the State Department. This explains why, at San Francisco, Stettinius and Connally joined hands with Vandenberg—the spokesman for Hoover and the most predatory sections of American finance capital. This

explains the seating of fascist Argentina as well as the aid given to the pro-fascist forces of Latin-American; the British-American reluctance to live up to the Yalta accord on Poland; the American delegation's refusal to join with the Soviet Union in pledging the right of national independence for mandated territories and colonies and to give official recognition to the representatives of the World Labor Congress.

These facts reflect the current shift of hitherto win-the-war sections of American capital to closer political collaboration with the most reactionary and aggressively imperialist groupings of monopoly capital.

It is this reactionary position of American big business which explains why powerful circles in Washington and also London are pursuing the dangerous policy of trying to prevent a strong, united and democratic China; why they bolster up the reactionary, incompetent Chiang Kai-shek regime and why they harbor the idea of a compromise peace with the Mikado in the hope of maintaining Japan as a reactionary bulwark in the Far East. It accounts, too, for the renewed campaign of anti-Soviet slander and incitement calculated to undermine American-Soviet friendship and cooperation.

On the home front the big trusts and monopolies are blocking the development of a satisfactory program to meet the human needs of reconversion, of the problems of economic dislocations and severe unemployment, which is beginning to take place and will become more acute after the defeat of Japan. Reactionary forces—especially the NAM and their representatives in government and Congress—are be-

ginning a new open-shop drive to smash the trade unions. They also endeavor to rob the Negro people of their wartime gains. They are trying to prevent the adoption of governmental measures which must be enacted at once if our country is to avoid the most acute consequences of the trying reconversion period and the cyclical economic crisis which is bound to arise after the war. Likewise, they are vigorously preparing to win a reactionary victory in the crucial 1946 elections.

Already the reactionaries are using the increased cutbacks to lower wages and living standards and to provoke strikes in war industry. They are obstructing the enactment of necessary emergency measures for federal and state unemployment insurance. They are sponsoring vicious anti-labor legislation, such as the new Ball-Burton-Hatch labor relations bill, and are blocking the passage of the FEPC and anti-polltax bills. They are trying to scuttle effective price and rent control and to exempt the wealthy and the big corporations from essential tax legislation. They are endeavoring to place the entire cost of the war and the difficulties of reconversion upon the shoulders of the working people.

If the reactionary policies and forces of monopoly capital are not checked and defeated, America and the world will be confronted with new aggressions and wars and the growth of reaction and fascism in the United States.

### 3.

However, the conditions and forces exist to defeat this reactionary threat and to enable our country to play a

more progressive role in world affairs in accord with the true national interests of the American people. For one thing, the military defeat of Nazi Germany has changed the relationship of world forces in favor of democracy. It has enhanced the role and influence of the Land of Socialism. It is bringing into being a new, democratic Europe. It has strengthened those forces in our country, and elsewhere which seek to maintain and consolidate the friendship and cooperation of the United States and the Soviet Union—a unity which must now be extended and reinforced if a durable peace is to be secured.

This is evidenced by the fact that the overwhelming majority of the American people, and in the first place the labor movement, which has grown in strength and maturity, is opposed to reaction and fascism, and supports the foreign and domestic policies of the late President Roosevelt as embodied in the decisions of Crimea and in the main features of the Second Bill of Rights.

This is demonstrated by the great mass support for the San Francisco Charter and by the determination of the American people to guarantee that the United Nations security organization shall fulfill its historic objectives—that the amity and unity of action of the American-Soviet-British coalition shall be consolidated in support of the agreements of Teheran, Crimea and Potsdam, shall be strengthened in the postwar period and made more solid and effective, in order to prevent or check the recurrence of new aggressions and wars.

This majority of the American people must now speak out and assert its

collective strength and will. The united power of labor and of all democratic forces, welded in a firm anti-fascist national unity, must express itself in a decisive fashion so as to influence the course of the nation in a progressive direction.

It is imperative that the American people insist that the Truman Administration carry forward the policies of the Roosevelt-labor-democratic coalition for American-Soviet friendship; for the vital social aims of the economic bill of rights; for civil liberties; for the rights of the Negro people; and for collective bargaining. It is equally necessary that labor and the people sharply criticize all hesitations to apply these policies and vigorously oppose any concessions to the reactionaries by the Truman Administration, which is tending to make certain concessions under the increasing pressure of the reactionary imperialist combination led by the monopolies.

The Truman Administration, like the Roosevelt government from which it is developing, continues to receive the support of the Roosevelt labor-democratic coalition, and responds to various class pressures. While it seeks to maintain contact and cooperative relations with labor and the more democratic forces of the coalition, its general orientation in both domestic and foreign policies tends, on some vital questions, to move away from the more consistent democratic forces in the coalition and tries to conciliate certain reactionaries. Hence, it is of central importance to build systematically the political strength and influence of labor, the Negro people, and all true democratic forces within the general coalition for the struggle

against imperialist reaction, for combatting and checking all tendencies and groupings in the coalition willing to make concessions to reaction. The camp of reaction must not be appeased. It must be isolated and routed.

Toward this end it is necessary, as never before, to strengthen decisively the democratic unity of the nation, to create that kind of national unity for the postwar period which will be able to facilitate the destruction of fascism abroad and to prevent fascism from coming to power in the United States. *Therefore, it is essential to weld together and consolidate the broadest coalition of all anti-fascist and democratic forces as well as all other supporters of Roosevelt's anti-Axis policies.*

To forge this democratic coalition most effectively and to enable it to exercise decisive influence upon the affairs of the nation, it is essential that the working class—especially the progressive labor movement and the Communists—strengthen its independent role and activities and display far greater political and organizing initiative. It is imperative that maximum unity of action be developed among the C.I.O., the A. F. of L. and the Railroad Brotherhoods and that their full participation in the New World Federation of Trade Unions be achieved. It is necessary to rally and imbue the membership and lower officials of the A. F. of L. with confidence in their ability to fight against and defeat the reactionary policies and leadership typified by the Greens, Wolls, Hutchesons and Dubinskys.

While cooperating with the patriotic and democratic forces from all walks of life, labor must, in the first place, strengthen its ties with the veterans,

the working farmers, the Negro people, youth, women, intellectuals and small business men, and with their democratic organizations. At the same time, while forging the progressive unity of the nation, labor should cooperate with those capitalist groupings and elements who, for one or another reason, objectively at times, promote democratic aims. But in so doing, labor must depend first of all upon its own strength and unity and upon its alliance with the true democratic and anti-fascist forces of the nation.

The current war and postwar needs of the working class and the nation, including the adoption of an effective reconversion program and the maintenance of workers' living standards, also demand the initiation of large scale mass campaigns to organize the millions of still unorganized workers. This is imperative if organized labor is to achieve its full strength and fulfill its role as the leading democratic force of the nation.

In the vital struggle to crush feudal-fascist-militaristic Japan it is necessary that American labor reaffirm its no-strike pledge and give the necessary leadership to mobilize the people for carrying the war through to final victory and for national liberation aims. In so doing labor must collaborate in the prosecution of the anti-Japanese war with all democratic forces who favor and support complete victory over Japanese imperialism.

However, labor and the other anti-fascist forces must take cognizance of the fact that amongst those big business circles who desire military victory over Japan, there are influential forces, including some in the State Department, who are seeking a com-

promise peace which will preserve the power of the Mikado after the war, at the expense of China and the other Far Eastern peoples, and directed against the Soviet Union. Similarly, there are powerful capitalist groupings including many in Administration circles, who plan to use the coming defeat of Japan for imperialist aims, for maintaining a reactionary puppet Kuomintang regime in China, for obtaining American imperialist domination in the Far East.

Labor and the people should and will continue to do all in their power to hasten complete victory over Japanese militarism and fascism. And to do this, labor and the popular forces must fight for and rally the people for a consistent anti-fascist and an anti-imperialist policy, and must rely, first of all, upon the people and their democratic organizations and aspirations.

## 4.

To achieve the widest democratic coalition and the most effective anti-fascist unity of the nation, it is vital that labor vigorously champion a program of action that will promote the complete destruction of fascism, speed victory over Japanese imperialism, curb the powers of the trusts and monopolies, and thereby advance the economic welfare of the people and protect and extend American democracy.

In the opinion of the Communist Party such a program should be based on the following slogans of action:

*I. Speed the defeat of fascist-militarist Japan!*

Prosecute the war against Japan resolutely to unconditional surrender.

Rout and defeat the advocates of a compromise peace with the Japanese imperialists and war lords. Curb those who seek American imperialist control in the Far East.

Strengthen United Nations cooperation to guarantee postwar peace in the Pacific and the world and to ensure a free democratic Asia with the right of national independence for all colonial and dependent peoples.

Press for a united and free China based upon the unity of the Communists and all other democratic and anti-Japanese forces so as to speed victory. Give full military aid to the Chinese guerillas led by the heroic Eight and Fourth armies.

Continue uninterrupted war production and uphold labor's no-strike pledge for the duration. Stop employer provocations.

*II. Complete the destruction of fascism and build a durable peace!*

Cement American-Soviet friendship and unity to promote an enduring peace and to carry through the destruction of fascism.

Carry out in full the decisions made by the Big Three at Teheran, Crimea and Potsdam.

Punish the war guilty without further delay including the German and Japanese staffs and monopolists. Death to all fascist war criminals. Make Germany and Japan pay full reparations.

Strengthen the World Labor Congress as the backbone of the unity of the peoples and the free nations. Admit the World Labor Congress to the Economic and Social Council of the World Security Organization.

Support the San Francisco Charter for an effective international security.

organization, based upon the unity of the Big Three.

Guarantee to all peoples the right to determine freely their own destiny and to establish their own democratic form of government. Put an end to Anglo-American political and military intervention against the peoples, such as in Greece, Belgium and Italy. Admit Italy to the ranks of the United Nations.

Grant the right of self-determination to Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Support the Puerto Rican and Filipino peoples in their demand for immediate and complete independence.

Break diplomatic relations with fascist Spain and Argentina. Full support to the democratic forces fighting to reestablish the Spanish Republic. Support the struggles of the Latin American peoples for national sovereignty and against the encroachments of American and British imperialism.

Remove from the State Department all pro-fascist and reactionary officials.

Help feed and reconstruct starving and war-torn Europe. Reject the Hoover program based on reactionary financial mortgages, and political interference.

Use the Bretton Woods Agreement in the interests of the United Nations to promote international economic co-operation and expanding world trade. Grant extensive long term loans and credits, at low interest rates, for purposes of reconstruction and industrialization. Expose and combat all efforts of monopoly capital to convert such financial aid into means of extending imperialist control in these countries.

*III. Push the Fight for Sixty Million Jobs—Meet the Human Needs of Reconversion!*

Make the right to work and the democratic aims of the Second Bill of Rights the law of the land. Support the Murray Full Employment Bill.

Increase purchasing power to promote maximum employment. No reduction in weekly take-home pay when overtime is eliminated.

Revise the Little Steel Formula to increase wages so as to meet the rise in the cost of living. Pass the Pepper 65-cent Minimum Hourly Wage Bill. Support the Seamen's Bill of Rights, H. R. 2346. Defend the wartime gains of the Negro workers in industry.

Establish the guaranteed annual wage in industry.

Establish a shorter work week except where this would hamper war production.

Enforce the right to work and to equality in job status for women. Guarantee the exercise of this right by adequate training, upgrading, seniority rights, as well as by providing day nurseries and child-care centers to aid all working mothers. Safeguard and extend existing social legislation for women, as workers and mothers, and abolish all discriminatory legislation against women.

Support President Truman's proposals for emergency federal legislation to extend and supplement present unemployment insurance benefits as a necessary first step to cope with the current large-scale cutbacks and layoffs. Start unemployment insurance payments promptly upon loss of job and continue until new employment is found. Provide adequate severance pay for laid-off workers.

Prevent growing unemployment during the reconversion and postwar period by starting large-scale federal,



state, municipal and local public works programs—(rural and urban)—slum clearance, low rental housing developments, rural electrification, waterway projects (such as the St. Lawrence and the Missouri Valley), the building of new schools, hospitals, roads, etc.

No scrapping of government-owned industrial plants. Guarantee the operation of these plants, at full capacity for peacetime purposes.

Establish public ownership of the munitions, power and utility industries to place them under democratic control.

Support all measures for full farm production. Defeat the advocates of scarcity. Extend and strengthen the farm price support program. Establish low-cost credit and adequate crop insurance. Safeguard the family-sized farms. Help tenant farmers to become owners. End the semi-feudal sharecropping system in the South.

Maintain and rigidly enforce rent and price control and rationing. Strengthen the law enforcement powers of the OPA. Smash the black market.

Prosecute the war profiteers. No reduction or refunds in corporate, excess profit and income taxes for the millionaires and big corporations. Lower taxes for those least able to pay.

Pass the Wagner-Murray-Dingell social security bill.

#### *IV. Keep Faith With the Men Who Fight for Victory!*

Raise substantially dependency allotments to families and relatives of men in the Armed Forces.

Extend and improve the system of democratic orientation and discussion in the Armed Forces. Draw more per-

sonnel from labor's ranks into orientation work. Eliminate all anti-labor and anti-democratic material and teachings from the education services conducted in the Armed Forces.

Guarantee jobs, opportunity and security for all returning veterans and war workers, regardless of race, creed or color.

Extend the scope and benefit of the GI Bill of Rights and eliminate all red tape from the Veterans' Administration. Guarantee adequate medical care to every veteran.

Press for the speedy enactment of legislation providing for substantial demobilization pay, based on length and character of service, and financed by taxes on higher personal and corporate incomes.

Insure full benefits of all veterans' legislation to Negro veterans.

#### *V. Safeguard and Extend Democracy!*

Enforce equal rights for every American citizen regardless of race, color, creed, sex, political affiliation or national origin.

End Jim Crow. Establish a permanent FEPC on State and National scales. Abolish the poll-tax and the white primary. End every form of discrimination in the Armed Forces. Protect the rights of the foreign-born.

Outlaw anti-Semitism, one of the most pernicious and damaging of fascism's ideological weapons. Support the just demands of the Jewish people for the immediate abrogation by the British government of the imperialist White Paper. Support the upbuilding of a Jewish National Home in a free and democratic Palestine in collaboration with the Arab people, on the basis

of the agreement of the Big Three in the Near East.

Protect and extend labor's rights, especially the right to organize, strike and bargain collectively. Repeal all anti-labor laws such as the Smith-Connally Act. Defeat the Ball-Burton-Hatch anti-labor bill.

Outlaw and prohibit all fascist organizations and activities and every form of racial and religious bigotry.

Rescind all anti-Communist legislation.

Curb the powers and policies of the monopolies and trusts which jeopardize the national welfare and world peace. Prosecute and punish all violations of the anti-trust laws. Demand government dissolution of all monopolies and trusts found guilty of attempting to restore the Anglo-German-American cartel system. Revoke their patent rights and prosecute their officials. Enact new legislation subjecting the monopolies to a greater measure of public control with labor, farm and small business representation on all government bodies exercising such supervision.

Protect and extend federal aid to small business.

#### *VI. Safeguard the Future of America's Youth!*

Guarantee full and equal opportunity for education and jobs for all youth.

Establish an adequate program of training and retraining in new and higher skills during the period of re-conversion.

Fix adequate minimum wage standards and guarantee equal pay for equal work to young men and women workers.

Reestablish and strengthen minimum

working standards for working minors which have been relaxed during the war. Abolish child labor.

Pass legislation for adequate federal aid to schools and students especially in the South. Establish full and equal opportunity for schooling, including college education. Guarantee full academic freedom.

Enact federal legislation to safeguard the health and well-being of the youth. Develop adequate recreational, cultural and social programs for democratic citizenship in schools and communities as a means to prevent juvenile delinquency.

Establish the right to vote at 18 by State legislation.

Establish a federal government agency, including representation of youth and labor, to develop and coordinate planning to meet the nation's responsibility to youth.

Adopt special safeguards for guaranteeing education, vocational training and job opportunities for Negro youth.

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This program meets the most urgent immediate interests of the American people and nation. It is a program of action around which all progressive Americans can unite today. It is a program of action which will advance the struggle for the moral and political defeat of fascism, leading to its final destruction and eradication. It will help create the conditions and guarantees for a stable peace and for a larger measure of economic security and democratic liberties for the masses of the people. The anti-fascist and democratic forces of our nation, being the overwhelming majority of our people, can become strong enough to check and

defeat imperialist reaction and to realize the great objectives of this program of action.

As class-conscious American workers, as Marxists, we Communists will do all in our power to help the American working class and its allies to fight for and realize this program. At the same time we will systematically explain to the people that substantial gains for the masses secured under capitalism are inevitably precarious, unstable and only partial and that Socialism alone can finally and completely abolish the social evils of capitalist society, including economic insecurity, unemployment and the danger of fascism and war.

However, this program of action will help the working class and the people as a whole to meet their urgent immediate practical needs, enhancing generally their strength and influence in the nation. In the struggle for the program for peace and democracy, jobs and security, favorable conditions are created for the masses of our people to recognize, on the basis of their own experiences, the need for the eventual reorganization of society along socialist lines.

We shall assist this process by every available educational means, taking full cognizance of the growing interest of the American people and its working class in the historic experiences of the Soviet people in the building of a new socialist society, which has played the decisive role in the defeat of Hitler Germany and the Axis. We shall aim to convince the broad masses that the eventual elimination of the profit system and the establishment of Socialism in the United States will usher in a new and higher type of democ-

racy and a free road to unlimited and stable social progress because it will end exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, through the establishment of a society without oppression and exploitation.

While not yet accepting Socialism as an ultimate goal, the American people today agree that fascism must be destroyed, wherever it exists or wherever it raise its head. The American people are ready to protect and extend the Bill of Rights and all democratic liberties. They are determined to fight for greater peace and democracy, for the right to work, greater job and social security.

Therefore, Communists and non-Communists, all progressives and anti-fascists can be rallied in support of the above program of immediate action. For this program meets the immediate desires of the American people upon which the majority can unite today to prevent the rise of fascism and to assure victory in the 1945 municipal elections and in the fateful 1946 congressional elections which must be organized and prepared for now. This is a program which must be championed in every factory and industry, in every community and state, through the medium of labor's political action; through labor's joint and parallel action locally, and through broad shop steward conferences and united community movements, as well as through other broad united peoples and democratic front activities.

## PART II

### 5.

The foregoing program demands a

resolute struggle. The reactionaries will seek desperately to divide the ranks of the people, to pit one group against the other—veterans and farmers against labor, Gentile against Jew, white against Negro, Protestant against Catholic, A. F. of L. against C.I.O. They will strive to break the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition and foment bitter class, racial, partisan and sectional strife. For these purposes they will use Hitler's secret weapon of "white supremacy" and anti-Communism, and make maximum use of the David Dubinsky and Norman Thomas Social-Democrats, the Trotskyites, as well as the John L. Lewises and Matthew Wolls.

To meet this situation the people need a great strengthening of every one of their progressive organizations and particularly the organizations of labor—the trade unions. They need loyal, courageous and honest leadership, men and women who combine clarity of vision with the qualities of firmness in principle and flexibility in tactics. Above all, they require a larger, stronger, more influential and more effective mass Communist Party.

The Communists have a greater responsibility to labor and the nation than at any other time in their history. And these greater responsibilities can be fulfilled by us with honor because of our long record of devotion and service to the cause of the working class and the people, and by our adherence to the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism.

The American Communist movement confidently faces the future. We are proud of our consistent and heroic struggle against reaction and fascism over the years. We draw strength

from and are particularly proud of our efforts to promote victory over Nazi barbarism and Japanese imperialism.

On the field of battle and on the home front, we Communists have been in the forefront of the fight to defend our country and our people. In the struggle for the establishment of the anti-Hitlerite coalition, for the opening of the Second Front, for defeating fascist-militarist Japan, for national unity, for the re-election of Roosevelt, for the rights of the Negro people, for building a strong and progressive labor movement, for uninterrupted war production and for the attainment of international trade union unity—the contributions of the Communist have been vital and second to none.

## 6.

We recognize that the future of the labor and progressive movements and therefore the role of the United States in world affairs will depend to no small extent upon the correctness of our Communist policy, our independent role and influence, our mass activities and organized strength.

That is why today we Communists must not only learn from our achievements in the struggle against fascism and reaction, but also from our weaknesses and errors. In the recent period, especially since January, 1944, these mistakes consisted in drawing a number of erroneous conclusions from the historic significance of the Teheran accord. Among these false conclusions was the concept that after the military defeat of Germany, the decisive sections of big capital would participate in the struggle to complete the des-

truction of fascism and would cooperate with the working people in the maintenance of postwar national unity. The reactionary class nature of finance capital makes these conclusions illusory. This has been amply demonstrated by recent events revealing the postwar aims of the trusts and cartels which seek imperialist aggrandizement and huge profits at the expense of the people .

This revision of Marxist-Leninist theory regarding the role of monopoly capital led to other erroneous conclusions, such as to utopian economic perspectives and the possibility of achieving the national liberation of the colonial and dependent countries through arrangements between the great powers. It also led to tendencies to obscure the class nature of bourgeois democracy, to false concepts of social evolution, to revision of the fundamental laws of the class struggle and to minimizing the independent and leading role of the working class.

In consequence, we Communists began to carry on the historic struggle against fascism, for democracy and national freedom, in a way that was not always clearly distinguishable from that of bourgeois democrats and bourgeois nationalists, forgetting the class character and limitations of bourgeois democracy and nationalism. Finally, this right-opportunist deviation also tended to ignore, revise or virtually discount the fundamental contradictions of capitalism, declaring wrongly that the changed and changing forms of their expression indicated that they had ceased to operate in the period of the general crisis of capitalism.

Furthermore, the dissolution of the Communist Party and the formation

of the Communist Political Association were part and parcel of our revisionist errors, and did in fact constitute the liquidation of the independent and vanguard role of the Communist movement. As a consequence, our base among the industrial workers was seriously weakened. This further resulted in a general weakening of Communist activities and in adversely affecting the role and policies of other Marxist parties in the Western Hemisphere. Far from aiding the carrying out of such correct policy as support for Roosevelt's re-election, the dissolution of the Communist Party weakened the democratic coalition because it weakened the initiative, strength and contributions of the Communist vanguard.

A flagrant expression of this liquidation was the abolition of the Communist organization in the South through its transformation into non-Communist, anti-fascist organizations. This action undermined the foundation for consistent and effective struggle for the needs and aspirations of the masses of the South, especially the Negro people. This glaring example of the logical outcome of our revisionist errors reveals the direction in which our policy was leading. The dissolution of the Communist Party of America and the formation of the C.P.A. was in fact the liquidation of the independent Marxist Party of the working class.

The correction of our revisionist errors demands the immediate reconstitution of the Communist Party and guaranteeing the re-establishment of the Marxist content of its program, policies and activities.

The source of our past revisionist

errors must be traced to the ever active pressure of bourgeois ideology and influences upon the working class. The failure on our part to be vigilant and to conduct a sustained struggle against these bourgeois and petty-bourgeois influences permitted their infiltration into our own ranks and sapped our proletarian vitality. One of the most harmful and far reaching consequences of this bourgeois influence upon our organization was the development over a period of years of a system of bureaucratic practices and methods of leadership.

This found expression in a failure to analyze and re-examine constantly our policies and methods of work in the spirit of Marxist self-criticism; to check our policies with the experiences of the masses in the class struggle; to develop a correct cadre policy; and to draw our full membership into the shaping and clarification of basic policy. The crassest example of this was the suppression of the Foster letter from the membership. Another example of this bureaucratic method of work was the manner in which the former National Board proceeded to liquidate the Communist organization in the South.

The growth of revisionism was helped by bureaucracy. While the main responsibility for the bureaucratic regime rests upon Browder in the first place, the former National Board and National Committee must assume a heavy responsibility for the bureaucratic system of work which prevailed in all Party organizations. The former National Board, in accepting the Browder system of leadership, set a bureaucratic example and did not carry on a struggle to establish

genuine democracy in the organization. This was also reflected by the former Board's inadequate self-criticism during the pre-convention period.

The incoming National Committee and Board, by example, and with the active assistance of the membership, must undertake an ideological and organizational struggle to root out all vestiges of bureaucracy, and be constantly on guard against relapses to old bureaucratic methods of work and opportunistic practices, which could only obstruct the most rapid and complete correction of our revisionist errors.

#### 7.

The opportunist errors of our former general policy limited the effectiveness of Communist work on the Negro question. This was especially expressed in our glossing over the national character of the Negro question; and in our unwarranted illusion that the big bourgeoisie themselves would carry forward after V-E Day the wartime gains of the Negro people.

It is true that we continued to proclaim our uncompromising demand for full Negro democratic rights, and in many instances fought hard and effectively against Jim Crow practices, especially in the interests of the war effort. However, the struggle for the national liberation of the Negro people as fundamentally related to the whole struggle of the working class against capitalist exploitation and oppression was often lost sight of.

Moreover, our revisionist policies narrowed the scope and weakened the vigor of such struggles, even causing us at times to soft-pedal the struggle to

eliminate Negro discrimination in the armed forces.

The results of this opportunist policy are all too apparent. We have not adequately prepared the labor movement and the Negro masses to combat current efforts of reaction to create sharp Negro-white conflicts within the ranks of labor and to wipe out the wartime democratic gains of the Negro people. Despite limited gains we have had serious weaknesses and inconsistencies in our work in the Negro communities and have been unable to consolidate our thousands of new Negro recruits into a stable membership. We completely liquidated the Communist organization in the South. We failed to develop a substantial corps of Marxist-trained Negro workers for leadership in the labor movement.

It is now incumbent upon us to give militant leadership to the struggle for Negro democratic rights on all fronts, especially intensifying our educational work among white trade unionists. We must rebuild the Communist organization in the South. We must develop and bring forward a strong corps of working class Negro Communist cadres in the great industrial centers of the nation.

Above all, we must deepen the theoretical understanding of all Communists, both Negro and white, on the fundamental nature and far-reaching implications of the Negro question and conduct a vigorous struggle to root out every manifestation of open or concealed white chauvinism in our own ranks. As one step toward this end, we should create a special commission to undertake a basic study of the conditions and trends of the Ne-

gro people in relation to the broad social, economic and political movements in America and the world today, and, in the light of Marxist-Leninist theory, to formulate a comprehensive definition of Communist policy and program on the Negro question.

#### 8.

The opportunist errors which we were committing adversely influenced our work during the war, limited the effectiveness of our anti-fascist activities, and were disorienting the Communist and the progressive labor movement for the postwar period.

Our Communist organization was moving toward a crisis, among other things, because of its inability to answer the growing complex problems arising out of the present world situation. This developing crisis could not be resolved without the full recognition and correction of our former revisionist policies.

In this connection, therefore, we must recognize the sterling leadership and the important contributions which Comrade Foster made in the struggle against opportunism. Likewise, we can appreciate the basic correctness of the sound fraternal, Marxist opinions expressed in the recent article of Jacques Duclos, one of the foremost leaders of the Communist Party of France.

Life itself, especially our recent experiences in the struggle against the forces of fascism and reaction on both the foreign and domestic fronts—in the trade unions, in the struggle for Negro rights, in the struggle against the trusts—has fully confirmed the

validity of Comrade Duclos' criticism and of Comrade Foster's repeated warnings, and has fully exposed the basic revisionist errors of American Communist policy since January, 1944.

In ascertaining the grave responsibility for the opportunist errors and mistakes committed in the recent period, it is necessary to state that while Comrade Browder, who was the foremost leader of the C.P.A., bears a proportionately greater share of responsibility than any other individual leader or member, the former national leadership, and in the first place, the former National Board, must and does assume a heavy responsibility for these errors.

9.

Clearly, the single, most essential pre-condition necessary to enable us to perform effectively our Communist duties in the postwar period as the vanguard and champion of the interests of the working class and the nation, is to overcome quickly and decisively our errors and mistakes, especially to eradicate all vestiges of opportunism in our policies and mass work.

Toward this end the entire Communist organization must immediately make a thorough and self-critical examination of all policies and leadership. We must establish genuine inner-democracy and self-criticism throughout

our organization. We must refresh and strengthen the personnel of all responsible leading committees in the organization, and establish real collective leadership in all Party committees. In doing this we must combat all tendencies toward factionalism, toward distortions and toward weakening the basic unity of our Communist organization.

At the same time, we Communists must avoid all sectarian tendencies and boldly and energetically expand our own Marxist working class and anti-fascist mass activities and our most active participation in the broad labor and democratic movements. We must resolutely strengthen our independent Communist role and mass activities. We must develop a consistent concentration policy and build our Communist organization especially amongst the industrial workers. We must wage a resolute ideological struggle on the theoretical front, enhancing the Marxist understanding of our entire organization and leadership.

We Communists renew our pledge to do everything to destroy fascism and reaction, to advance the cause of American and world democracy, the cause of national freedom and social progress. We are determined to cooperate with all anti-fascists and all democratic forces to achieve these great objectives.



# FOR A FIGHTING COMMUNIST PARTY!

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

*Summary Remarks, National Committee Meeting, C.P.U.S.A., Nov. 18, 1945.*

Comrades Dennis, Williamson and others have outlined to us the main line of policy. The National Committee has thoroughly agreed with this line. What I want to stress here in behalf of the Secretariat is the role of the Party in meeting the many tasks that confront us.

In the disturbed situation following the war, we have seen the Party and the nation face a host of complicated and urgent problems. Never in the history of our Party did we have so many great problems to meet. Many of these problems are literally of a life and death character, and through them all runs the common thread of necessity for struggle against reaction.

First, we face a tremendous educational problem in the sense that we have to help the masses of the American people understand that the United States has embarked on an imperialist policy aimed at domination of the world. The American people do not have this idea at all, and it is a very difficult one to give them. But it is very fundamental that this be done. We have to explain that the real policy of the Truman government is imperialist, and to show the dangers in this to our country and the world. We also have to explain to the masses that the essence of the foreign and domestic policy of the leadership of the A. F. of L. is also imperialist. If we had nothing else to do, this one task of

teaching the people the significance of American imperialism would be sufficient to tax the strength of our small Party.

But, of course, there are all sorts of other huge and urgent problems—the fight for full employment, for 60,000,000 jobs. There is no need for me to stress how vital this fight is, and what a tremendous struggle it involves. At other times, if we had nothing else to do, this one issue would be enough to occupy every particle of strength we have.

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Then, there may also be mentioned the problem of the organization of the unorganized. Some comrades here have pointed out that now is an extremely favorable opportunity to organize the unorganized workers, of whom there are many millions. This is correct. Once again I will say, if our Party had nothing else to do we could make this problem a central task of our Party.

There is further the tremendous wage campaign, which threatens to develop into a gigantic strike movement, arraying millions of workers in the basic industries against the greatest trusts in the United States. It is one of the most fundamental and far-reaching movements in the country. This movement, if handled correctly can result in a great victory for the

workers of this country, but on the other hand the workers can suffer if mistakes are made. We have lots of things in connection with this great struggle. In fact, the wage movement literally clamors for our leadership and support. There are many dangers that the workers face and must be organized against. The most serious of these is an underestimation of the seriousness of the situation, of the sharpness of the resistance the unions will have to face. There is also an underestimation of the dangerous attitude of the Truman government, marked by tendencies to rely on the Truman government as on the Roosevelt government in the past period. There is also not yet a realization of the extent to which the A. F. of L. leadership is knifing the wage movement. To educate the workers to all these dangers calls for great activities on our part. If our Party was ten times as big as it is at present, this task would be big enough to occupy our entire attention.

But I must add still other important problems to those I have already noted. There are the vital elections of 1946—the Congressional elections—in which not only the fate of our country, but to a very great extent that of the whole world is involved. If the reactionaries succeed in winning a victory in this election, it will bode ill for the rest of the world as much as for us. Consequently, preparations for carrying through the 1946 election campaign will call for the greatest mobilization on the part of labor in the history of the United States and this naturally throws upon the shoulders of our Party very heavy tasks which we cannot possibly ignore.

If I haven't already given you enough tasks, I can add a few more. There is also the great problem of the internationalization of the atomic bomb. We know the tremendous struggle going on in this country, in fact all over the world, over this question of the atomic bomb. Here I might say in the spirit of self-criticism that I do not think we have paid enough attention to the atomic bomb question either in our general report, or our discussion at this National Committee meeting.

Finally, to cite a problem of decisive world importance, there is the question of the intervention of the United States in the Chinese civil war, a crime which threatens the peace of the whole world, and one which calls for the utmost activity of our Party in every sphere of action.

There are also a whole series of other very urgent problems. Among these problems may be mentioned the campaigns for world trade union unity, activities to resist the imperialist maneuvers of our government in Germany and Japan and in the Balkans, to abrogate the White Paper in connection with Palestine, to organize great relief campaigns for the war-ravaged countries in Europe, to combat the government demands for universal military training, to defend the threatened interests of the Negro people, to fight against the rising cost of living, to fight the outrageous pro-fascist activities of the Rankin Committee, to bring about practical working relations between the workers and the veterans, and to tackle the fundamental problems of developing better relations between the workers and the farmers.

The mere listing of this formidable array of problems indicates at once the terrific struggles developing in this period we are now living through. It also emphasizes the tremendous tasks placed upon our Party as a vital part of the people's democratic forces. None of these tasks that I have cited can be neglected without our running the danger of suffering serious defeats, if not actual catastrophe.

This situation, with all these urgent problems, should teach us two fundamental lessons, both of which have been expressed in the reports of Comrades Dennis and Williamson.

The first of these fundamental lessons that we have got to grasp is the necessity for concentrating our efforts upon the most crucial of the many problems confronting us. We must, as Lenin taught us, seize the key links which will enable us to move the whole chain. On the domestic field, as the resolution we have just adopted indicates, the key problem that confronts us is the fight for wage increases. To this we must devote our major attention...

On the international scale, the key task, as emphasized in Comrade Dennis' report, is to stop American intervention in China. This war on China by the American forces is growing more menacing. In today's paper we note that Gen. Wedemeyer is quoted as saying that the United States is now prepared to fire on the Chinese Communists unless they abide by rules laid down by the American military leaders in China. The war in China is the key of all problems on the international front and it is here, above all else, where we have to deal the hardest blow to reaction.

There are millions of workers, millions of Americans in various classes, who are ready to go into action on these great issues. But we all know from past experience that to a large extent the struggle of the people will depend very largely upon the extent to which our Party is able to give leadership to these huge masses of the people. On the question of China, which is our key concentration, as Comrade Dennis pointed out, we want to hold 500 meetings all over the country to mobilize all the forces of the people that we can reach to put a stop to the intervention in China. Our Party must use every ounce of its strength and skill and organizational ability to make these 500 meetings a success.

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These struggles will be a supreme test of the ability of our Party to function effectively in such a complicated and difficult situation as we now confront. We must keep clearly in mind that if we concentrate on these two key problems of the wage movement and American intervention in China as the most burning and urgent of all the tasks confronting us, this does not mean that we can neglect the many other vital problems I have mentioned, that we can disregard them, or wait until we have first made a success of the two particular major concentration campaigns before we undertake anything else. To do this would be a fatal mistake on our part. For example, would it not be a big mistake to neglect the fight over the atom bomb? On the contrary, we must find the ways and means to participate to a much greater extent than we are now doing

precisely in the mobilization of the people over this vital issue. We must also, at all costs, prepare for an all-out participation in the 1946 elections. We must, while concentrating on these two key questions of domestic and foreign policy—the wage movement and intervention in China—learn how to link up all the other struggles we are carrying on.

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Never in all its history was our Party called upon to use such generalship. It must make the most effective use of its limited forces as never before. It must find more and more effective ways to ally itself with the broader masses in motion. This is a supreme masses of the people and to set these test of the maturity of our Party.

The second fundamental lesson we have to learn from this situation is the imperative need for a stronger and better functioning Communist Party. We are now at the stage of development in the United States where we must have a far more powerful Communist Party. History will not take "No" for answer in this matter, considering all the tremendous problems that the American people are now facing, and in the solution of which the activity of the Communist Party is indispensable.

Comrade Williamson in his report outlined many of the most important tasks in the building of the Party. I want to stress just a few of them. For one thing, and it appears to me this is the starting point, we must strengthen our democratic centralism. We must have more democracy in our Party. And we are building our Party democ-

racy. This was well illustrated by the discussion over the veterans questions which we have just concluded. I think that everybody who was present here must have sensed from the course of this discussion that we have a new spirit in the life of the Party.

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There is a new democracy, a new Communist democracy, developing in our Party. One of the manifestations of this, is that we are beginning to develop a really collective leadership. The report presented here was not prepared by someone who went off to the country and wrote in an ivory tower, and then rammed it down our throats. It was fully discussed and everyone on the National Board contributed to it. Dennis wrote most of the report and contributed, in my opinion, many of the principal points. We are, I repeat, developing a collective leadership. Our National Board is now a democratically functioning body.

We are also beginning to cultivate some new cadres, new leading cadres in the Party. I think that is pretty obvious from what's been happening here in this National Committee meeting. Under the general head of developing collective leadership, we in the center are setting up committees in all spheres of activity, and the districts are beginning to do this as well. This committee system, instead of the one-man system we had before, is fundamental to the development of real democracy in our Party.

Comrades, actually, we in the center who are well acquainted with the Party, have been astonished to note the

wreckage that was caused by the revisionist policies that the Party had been afflicted with in the recent past. Since the convention we have actually been reconstituting the Party from the ground up and we have had to carry on this reconstruction in the face of many political and organizational problems piling in on us from every direction.

Together with more Party democracy we must have an improved discipline in the Party. The two are not incompatible. Indeed, there can be no real Communist democracy without firm Communist discipline.

Here at this National Committee meeting we have had an example of the need to discipline a comrade. I refer to the Comrade Donchin case. I hope that the comrades will not interpret the penalty we have applied as some kind of punishment because Donchin had the temerity to rise up and criticize the National Board, or members of the Secretariat. Such is not the meaning of this case. Donchin, if he had merely criticized the National Board, would have met with no objection. If the District Committee in Philadelphia had spontaneously expressed a criticism of the National Board that would be a legitimate expression of democracy in the Party. But what Donchin did was something entirely different. His actions were a violation of both Party democracy and Party discipline. He accused the National Board, particularly some members, of deliberately falsifying the resolution of the Convention for the purpose of shielding themselves from responsibility for the revisionism and bureaucracy of the past. When the Board did not agree with this point of

view, Donchin instead of appealing to the National Committee, as was his right, went back to the District and undertook to mobilize the membership of Eastern Pennsylvania against the Board.

That is factionalism, not democracy. Donchin thought that the opportune moment had arrived for him to develop a factional fight. We all know how unsettled the Party was after its radical change in line and leadership. We know that the Party was going through one of the most critical periods in its life. It was just at that moment, when every Communist had the duty to rally the Party and put it on an even keel, that Donchin proceeded to strike. Consequently he had to be disciplined. Obviously such a comrade has no place on our National Committee.

We have got to have a more disciplined Party. We are going into a difficult period, and this will require a firm, united and disciplined Party.

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The second thing we have to do in order to strengthen our Party is to overcome the passivity in our ranks. It is a well-known fact that only a small percentage of our membership is active in carrying out our campaigns. This passivity is one of the special heritages that we have from the Browder period of revisionism. Of course, there was considerable passivity before that, but the revisionist period particularly, cultivated this passivity. We must make the most serious efforts to overcome it. We must raise the morale of our Party and put the whole Party to work. If we can do this, if we can really enthuse the Party

with a fighting and a working spirit the effectiveness of our Party will be increased manifold. This is no routine matter. We have got to mobilize our Party. We cannot stand for passivity in our ranks. We have got to bring this matter home to our comrades by an intensive ideological campaign, by a systematic mobilization of our membership for the big tasks confronting us. We must get our whole Party into action. Overcoming passivity in the Party is one of the most fundamental things that we have to do at the present time.

A third basic necessity for us is to recruit more members, especially basic workers, into the Party. We must take this job in hand as never before. We have said this many times before in the history of our Party, but we have got to do it in a new way now. All over the world the Communist Parties are growing, and we must grow too. Of course, the conditions are not as favorable for us to grow as they are in Europe, but we all know there are plenty of opportunities for our Party to grow in the United States, and we must see to it that the Party does grow. In our campaign to build the Party, the registration campaign must be taken up in a new and more urgent way in the light of the immense problems that confront us. We must also pay special attention to the returning Party veterans. We must not assume that all these comrades will automatically resume membership in the Party. Let me also say that we must find ways to broaden the financial base of the Party. This is a major question. There is too much underestimation of the financial side of our work. Neglect of Party finances was one of the

marked aspects of Browder's revisionism.

The fourth and last point I want to stress on the question of Party building is that we must transform the Party into a Party of struggle. Everything depends upon this. One of the worst manifestations of Browder's revisionism was to kill the fighting spirit of our Party and to tend to turn it merely into a propaganda or agitational organization. His general idea of Communist Party action seemed to be that he should make a big speech and that the Party should spread it over the country in huge quantities. We must, of course, not lessen our agitational activities, but we must at all costs throw our Party into struggle.

It was on this question of weakening the Party as a fighting organization that I first came into conflict with Browder, as much as ten years ago. Browder was not a fighting leader and he did not cultivate a fighting party. Perhaps the first roots of Browder's revisionism were precisely his weakening of the Party's fighting spirit. We must get over that and learn that we have got to have a fighting and working Party. Our Party now is beginning to become a fighting Party again. But there is still much passivity and hesitancy. At our Eastern Conference on the question of the wage movement and the fight for full employment, when we checked over what the Party had done in the preceding weeks, I was surprised at the tentativeness and the amateurish way that many sections of the Party approached the task of developing this struggle. This showed how much out of practice the Party was in actually conducting active mass

struggles jointly with our allies, and how badly Browder's revision had undermined the Communist militancy of our Party.

Now take the question of the intervention in China. I don't know what you comrades think about it, but I cannot for the life of me understand how the leaders of a district can see such a situation as this developing without immediately taking action and proceeding to call meetings, to get in touch with our allies, and try to get resolutions of protest adopted, etc. I think there was a fairly good lead on this matter given from the Center. We spoke out early, gave correct slogans, and here in New York a very substantial mass meeting of protest was held. Yet numerous districts seemed to pay no attention to the whole business and displayed no initiative. Such moods of inactivity must be radically overcome. We have got to re-awaken the Party and transform it quickly into a party of mass struggle.

I cannot stress too much the burning necessity of making our Party a party of struggle. By improving the activity of our Party we can enormously increase its strength and recruit large numbers of new members into it. This increased strength is imperative for our Party in view of the great problems we and the other forces in the democratic coalition now face.

In conclusion, let me say that we have had a good National Committee meeting. It shows that the Party is unified, that it is basically absorbing the new line adopted by our Convention, and that it is once more actively getting into the mass struggle. Now let us go back to our respective districts, and on the basis of the correct policies adopted here, mobilize our Party around the issues we have clarified, strengthen systematically our contacts with our mass allies, and really build our Party into the powerful mass Communist Party that it should and must be.

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