

THE 80th CONGRESS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR 1948*

By JOHN GATES

THE RECORD OF THE FIRST SESSION OF the 80th Congress, which will draw to a close at the end of July, is one of the most reactionary in the history of our country. Continuing in the wake of the 79th Congress, which wrecked price control and the veterans emergency housing program, the present Congress, its reactionary character strengthened by the 1946 elections, is moving with giant strides to impoverish the American people and to destroy our democratic liberties.

A REACTIONARY RECORD

Bilbo of Mississippi, who was not seated by the Senate, would have acquiesced in every action taken by Congress. He can sit back and look with utmost satisfaction at its accomplishments. Bilbo may not sit in Congress but his imprint is on its every act. The 80th Congress is N.A.M.-ism and Bilboism in action.

The 80th Congress has given legal sanction to the imperialistic Truman Doctrine. It has thrown the enormous weight of American resources

and power behind the objective of Wall Street domination. It is pursuing a policy of military and economic support to reactionary governments and forces all over the world. It is supporting the Truman Administration in instigating civil wars against governments that will not knuckle down to Wall Street. All of this, if not checked, will lead to a war that is not in the interests of our people or any other people, a war that can only benefit the American trusts and monopolies.

The 80th Congress has done the bidding of the National Association of Manufacturers by enacting into law, first the so-called portal-to-portal bill, and then the infamous Taft-Hartley Bill. The aim of the slave-labor act is to destroy labor's gains, not merely of the past decade, but of the past half century, and to weaken the unions sufficiently to place them completely at the mercy of a capitalist class on the rampage.

The 80th Congress has acted as the agent of banking and real estate interests and the building construction industry by passing a so-called rent control law that in reality wipes out rent control and paves the way for a general 15 per cent rent increase. This was the same method used last year to destroy price control, and everyone can now see how little it resulted in the combination of "lower prices and higher production" promised by the N.A.M. At the same time, nothing has been done about enacting legislation to build homes, except the elimination of

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more of the government controls over construction. Fewer new homes will be started this year than last, and in some states more homes are being torn down than are being built.

What is more, despite the terrible wave of lynchings that has swept the country since the end of the war, and despite the mass firing of Negroes from industry in the growing unemployment, this Congress could not find time in six months to pass anti-lynching, anti-poll tax, and F.E.P.C. legislation.

One can anticipate, now that Congress has finished a major task for reaction, that some lip-service may be paid to housing. Veterans will not get any housing, but Taft may try to parade as a liberal on that issue.

Anti-Communism, the weapon by means of which Hitler almost enslaved the world, is no longer the sole property of the House Un-American Committee. It has become the pet instrument, not only of both parties in Congress, but also of the Truman Administration. It has become a standard procedure for anyone who wants to get anything out of Congress to shout that it is needed to stop the "Reds," and it is almost sure to be granted. President Truman outdid the Un-American Committee when he issued his decree setting up a "loyalty" test and thought control for government employees. Moreover, he designated the Un-American Committee as one of the bodies that would judge who was subversive or disloyal. This fascist committee now

has the sanction of Congress and the federal government for an authority and power that it never enjoyed under the Roosevelt Administration. It played a key role in paving the way for the Taft-Hartley Act and in the persecution of men like Marzani, Eisler, Josephson, the members of the Joint Anti-fascist Refugee Committee, and our own general secretary, Comrade Dennis.

Additional proof that Administration and Congressional policy is based on a war rather than a peace perspective, can be seen in the growing militarization of all phases of American life. Our military expenditures are enormous for peacetime, and generals and admirals are increasingly taking over key functions in government, industry, and even in universities. The plan to unify the armed services and to standardize armaments in the Western hemisphere; the report of the President's Commission on Universal Military Training, which recommended not only conscription of the nation's youth, but the militarization of the entire nation, its industries, resources, science, education, etc.—all are part of this ominous trend.

While military expenditures take up the lion's share of the budget, Congress has drastically slashed funds for the non-military departments, chiefly affecting vital services for farmers, workers, veterans, etc. Congress almost succeeded in handing a substantial gift on a silver platter to the large income group through the Knutson tax bill, but was unable

to pass it over the President's veto. However, according to the latest news, its proponents have not given up hope yet. And they are also trying to pass the Reed-Bulwinkle bill, which would exempt railroads from the anti-trust laws.

The record thus shows up the 80th Congress as an obedient servant and tool of Wall Street imperialists, banking and real estate interests, railroad barons, profiteers and warmakers, Negro haters, the N.A.M., and the Chamber of Commerce. This record is a product, in the main, of a bipartisan coalition of Republicans and Democrats.

While a bipartisan coalition rules the roost in Congress, important differences have expressed themselves. The Truman Doctrine was supported by a majority of both parties, but an important opposition took shape.

The opposition came from two opposite political groupings and for different reasons. One group was composed of so-called isolationist and economy bloc adherents—no less reactionary than the majority of the Representatives and Senators of both parties. The other group was composed of progressives of the Taylor-Pepper type. For example, the G.O.P. majority, with an eye to 1948, responded to popular pressure in the case of Bilbo. Although a majority of the Democrat and Republicans voted for the Taft-Hartley Bill, the veto, reluctant as it was, showed the weakness of the Truman Administration and its vulnerability to pressure. These differences reflect parti-

san interests, competitive business interests, sectional interests, tactical differences, etc., all of which are responsive to public pressure. While these differences are not of a fundamental or decisive character, they are nonetheless important. A powerful movement of the progressive forces can use these differences, and sharpen them, in their own interests.

THE 1946 ELECTIONS AND AFTER

Only 8 months have passed since the congressional elections of 1946, but they have been months of the greatest significance for the people of our country. Reaction won a great victory in 1946 with the election of a Republican Congress and the strengthening of the power of the Southern Bourbons and the Morgan interests in the leadership of the Democratic Party. Following the death of Roosevelt, and the desertion of his program by Truman under the hammer blows of the big monopolies, the progressive coalition that had grown up around Roosevelt fell to pieces. Red-baiting was one of the principal and most successful weapons of reaction in achieving this division of the progressive camp. The reactionary offensive last year reached its climax in the 1946 elections, while the labor and progressive movement reached its greatest disunity in many years.

The 1946 Republican victory was interpreted by many to mean that the United States was in for a long period of reaction. They saw the

elections as proof that the people had given a reactionary mandate to Congress and that the people were swinging to the Right. They took a dim and gloomy view of the possibility of the people reversing the trend. Our Party, while not blinking its eyes to the fact that the popular forces had suffered a very serious defeat, analyzed the reactionary victory as not signifying a trend of the people toward reaction. We attributed the defeat to the disgust of many people with Truman's betrayal of Roosevelt's program; to their war-weariness and desire for a change; to the lack of a suitable alternative to the Democrats because of the disunity of labor, the deals of some A. F. of L. top officials with the G.O.P., the consequent weakness and apathy of the labor and progressive camp, as well as the ability of the G.O.P. to sow confusion and demagogically capitalize on the situation.

The experience of the people with the 79th and 80th Congresses and the Truman Administration has brought about a growing and fundamental change in their moods and understanding. As a result, events have occurred that indicate that the tide is slowly but surely beginning to turn, despite the very serious setbacks for labor; that there is a revival of the people's progressive movement; and that the old Roosevelt coalition is beginning to develop again, but with the important difference that this realignment is developing on a new and higher level than under Roosevelt, though not

yet strong enough to be victorious.

I want to deal now with the major features of this people's resistance to the reactionary offensive.

THE PEOPLE'S DEVELOPING RESISTANCE

The bitter and disillusioning experiences of the A. F. of L., the C.I.O., and the Railroad Brotherhoods with the wave of anti-labor legislation, on a state and national scale, have resulted in a considerable expansion of labor activity and political action. (Since Comrade Williamson has dealt with this in detail, I shall only make some general observations on this point for my own purposes.) Following the relative apathy and demoralization of labor last year, this is a very welcome and heartening change. Most significant, because of its newness, is the activity of the A. F. of L.

These activities of the unions have resulted in the formation of united labor committees in many cities and states—though not yet nationally, unfortunately—and in city and statewide stoppages, demonstrations, parades, etc. These reached their highest point in the Cadillac Square demonstration and stoppage in Detroit, the A. F. of L. Madison Square Garden mass meeting, and the New York C.I.O. parade. The White House and Congress received an enormous amount of mail on the Taft-Hartley Bill, far greater than on any other occasion in history.

Many state chairmen of the Democratic Party were forced by the tre-

mendous pressure to come out in support of a veto. There was action by numerous City Councils, the A.V.C., the N.A.A.C.P., the National Farmers Union, church leaders, the California State Convention of the V.F.W., etc. The pressure was great enough to force Truman to veto a bill he really wanted to become law, but not powerful enough to make it more than a token veto for the record, or to have a decisive effect on the Senate. The main reason for this was the lack of national united labor action and the restraints placed on the militancy of the workers by top A. F. of L. and C.I.O. leaders. Nevertheless, labor put up its best fight in many years, and the workers have learned and will learn many important lessons from the fight against the bill and from the fight now to resist and nullify the legislation.

Without question the most important phase of the resurgence of the people's progressive movement is the Wallace movement—his tour abroad and at home, his campaign against the Truman Doctrine, his fight for progressivism within the Democratic Party, and his announced intention to leave the Democratic Party and help form a new party if the fight to reverse the trend in the Democratic Party fails.

When Wallace was excluded from Truman's Cabinet he was written off as "through" by leaders of both political parties and the reactionary press. Events have proved exactly the opposite. How can one explain the unprecedented and phenomenal

success of his European and American tours? He is certainly no brilliant orator or magic personality. Some say his success is because of curiosity aroused by publicity. But in the beginning there was a conspiracy of silence against Wallace's meetings and they were successful just the same. Others ascribe it to the organizing genius and zeal of organizations like the P.C.A. and those of the Left. While this is partially true, it attributes to the Left an extraordinary strength it unfortunately does not yet enjoy. The fundamental reason for Wallace's success is that he has identified himself with the deep American and world-wide longing for peace; he has exposed the Truman Doctrine as a war policy and led the fight against it. The columnist Marquis Childs quotes a Minnesota farmer to this effect on Wallace: "Well, he seems to want peace, and that fellow in the White House talks like he wants war." Wallace has also identified himself with the fear of an economic crisis and has projected a program for full employment.

The open break of Wallace and the forces around him with the Truman Administration, and the active campaign he is waging, have served to revitalize the progressive forces, to give them new hope and courage. Although most trade union leaders have not spoken out on the Truman Doctrine, the turnout of rank and file trade unionists to Wallace's meetings shows the opposition of the membership. The Democratic Party

of Minnesota, Los Angeles, and several counties of Washington, have gone on record against the Truman Doctrine. The response of farmers, Negroes, students, student-veterans, educators, churchmen and middle class groups to Wallace's meetings proves the true feelings of a majority of the American people, a fact which has been confirmed by all public opinion polls. Wallace's tour was so successful—between May 2 and June 16 more than 200,000 people attended the meetings—that the leadership of the Democratic Party has been forced to take heed.

The Democrats know that they must have the labor and liberal vote in order to win in 1948. Until recently, they felt they did not have to do much to win that vote, on the theory that labor had no place else to go. But the Wallace movement and the great campaign of labor against the slave labor bill have changed all that. A real alternative and choice for the people is beginning to shape up.

Some Democratic leaders are demanding that Wallace and Pepper be read out of the Democratic Party. Unquestionably, the Democratic high command would like nothing better, but they have not done so yet because they fear the threat of a third party. It is a sword of Damocles hanging over their heads. Consequently, the Truman Administration has begun to hedge and maneuver, to make a pretence of being pro-labor and liberal; but, fundamentally, its reactionary character has not changed

in the slightest. Truman's veto was such a maneuver.

Thus, the Wallace movement and the growing political action of labor, not only point to the perspective of victory in 1948 but constitute the chief weapons the people possess right now in the *everyday struggle* to influence the affairs of the nation in their own interest.

RECENT ELECTIONS

The beginning of a swing away from Republican reaction is to be seen in the results of various city and Congressional elections.

In Oakland, California, a united labor and progressive coalition won four out of five vacancies in the City Council. In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the organization of the tobacco workers into the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers, C.I.O., resulted in the election of Kenneth Williams, a young Negro minister and veteran, to the City Council. He is the first Negro to be elected to such office in that area in 50 years, but assuredly not the last.

In a special Congressional election in Wisconsin, the Republican majority of 29,000 last November was cut down to 832. In a similar election in Washington, former Congressman Savage lost by only 1700 votes as against 7000 last November. After defeating the Truman candidate in the Democratic primary by campaigning on a pro-Wallace program, Savage then tried to get the united support of his party by watering down his program. His narrow de-

feat is to be attributed, not to his pro-Wallace position, but rather to Savage's own failure to make the issues clear. As Wallace said: "Savage would have been elected and there would have been a bigger turnout of voters if he had campaigned strongly on the foreign policy issue . . . he didn't stress the issue and sought instead to keep the party together." This was a vain hope, because in one of the largest counties in the District the Democratic machine supported the Republican. The lesson of this important campaign is that progressives cannot win by compromising with the Truman Doctrine, nor by sole reliance upon the Democratic Party apparatus even when they win party nomination.

The old corrupt Democratic Party machines are fast losing popular support and are breaking up in many cities. Former Mayor Kelly of Chicago chose not to run because the opposition to him in the ranks of labor was such that his candidacy would have meant a certain victory for the G.O.P. Labor and the progressives were not strong enough in Chicago to force the Democratic Party to nominate a pro-labor candidate, or to put forward a mayoralty ticket of their own. They went along with the Democratic reform candidate, who has ties with Big Business interests, and who defeated the *Chicago-Tribune* candidate by a bigger majority than did Kelly four years earlier. The old machine mayor of Hoboken, New Jersey, was turned out and Mayor Hague of Jersey City

resigned—a sign of the times. Independent forces ran in the Chicago City Council elections and were able to influence the results. Both in the St. Louis and Chicago municipal elections, the Republican Party gained votes among Negro voters, while Democrats lost ground as compared with previous elections.

Probably the most significant of these elections were those in Oakland and Winston-Salem. In Oakland the key factors were a progressive coalition made up mainly of a united labor movement and the Negro community, and a ward and precinct organization. Winston-Salem shows what can happen in many parts of the South if the new strength of labor, resulting from the C.I.O. and A. F. of L. organizing drives, exerts itself politically. The results of all these elections show a definite trend away from the Republican high tide of last year, but one that is not strong enough to win victory for progressive candidates unless they put forward militant programs and receive the united support of labor and other forces. Nor can a real progressive rely upon the regular old party machinery; he must build up his own independent forces in precincts, wards, and districts. The old corrupt city machines are tending to disintegrate. Whether they will be replaced by good government administrations that serve honestly but serve Big Business, or by administrations that honestly serve labor and the people, depends on the strength of the progressive forces.

The gains, in some instances, of the G.O.P. among Negro voters are the result of the disgust of Negroes with the failure of the Truman Administration to do anything effective about lynch terror; of Republican demagoguery on the seating of Bilbo (there will be an increase of G.O.P. demagoguery in the last month of Congress); and, above all, of the lack of any alternative to the two capitalist parties.

If the gains of the G.O.P. among Negroes are to be no more than a temporary and passing phenomenon, then it is necessary to understand that the fight of labor and progressive forces for Negro rights has been extremely weak during the past six months, and that this situation must be overcome in order to reverse the trend. This must be done immediately, and it is especially necessary in the last remaining month of this session of Congress to develop the broadest possible campaign for F.E.P.C. and for the anti-lynching and anti-polltax bills. The weakness of the labor and progressive movement on this essential question not only endangers the whole coalition, but hinders the formation of a united Negro people's movement.

New sections of the nation are being drawn into the fight against reaction. White collar and professional workers and foremen have gone out on strike for higher wages and improved conditions. Workers who have never before been involved in struggle, such as the telephone

workers, have become active participants in the labor movement. The Congressional cuts in federal department appropriations are bringing large sections of farmers and government workers, as well as sectional interests—such as the Far West on the power question—into motion. The reactionary offensive is laying the basis for a far broader and stronger struggle against it.

One of the most outstanding examples of the progressive mood of the people is to be seen in the fact that reaction failed to legalize our Party and was forced to change its tactics. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the government planned to ban our Party. Reaction would have succeeded had it not been for widespread disagreement with this objective by important sections of the country, most of whom do not sympathize with our Party, but who understand and are alarmed about the danger to our democracy such a step would represent.

We can be proud of how our membership and leadership reacted to the danger, how we rose to the occasion and fought back, how we brought our case to the people and organized broader forces. We know, of course, that the fight has only begun. Reaction is still trying to accomplish by flank attacks what it could not achieve by direct assault, *i.e.*, through such blows as the Truman Executive Order, the Taft-Hartley Bill, the conviction of Eugene Dennis and others, and such state laws as the

Michigan Callahan Bill which aims to illegalize our Party as a "foreign agent."

But reaction is overreaching itself and is clarifying for millions of people whom our Party could not hope to reach that the attack against our Party is tied up with the attack against the rights, living standards, and desire for peace of the mass of the people. There is no doubt but that a powerful movement must and will develop against the setting up of an American system of thought-control, a movement that will involve unions, the Negro people, members of the arts, sciences and professions, and Communists.

In the nearly two years since the end of the war, and especially in the last six months, the people of our country have gone through a tremendous experience. Even a superficial examination of the situation underscores the fact that masses of workers, of members of the middle class, etc., are in ever larger numbers becoming dissatisfied with the policies of both major parties and are becoming ripe for a big step forward toward independent political action and a new Party. This is proved by labor's campaign against the Taft-Hartley Bill, the Wallace tour, the municipal and Congressional by-elections, the mass campaign in many states on state legislation, and other mass actions. While we must not exaggerate this development, we cannot afford to underestimate it. It is the vital new feature of the political situation that we must bear in

mind as we assess today the correctness of the policy we outlined at our December plenum.

Essentially, that policy was correct. That meeting put forward the slogan: Elect a pro-Roosevelt President and Congress in 1948. This slogan made possible cooperation and unity between those forces who felt that this objective could only be realized through the Democratic Party and those who were convinced it could only be accomplished through the building of a third party. We proposed to the people of America a 3-point program—no point of which could be separated from the other, and all of which had to be carried out together: 1) to build the broadest possible unity of the labor movement and its allies, irrespective of party affiliation, around the basic needs of the people; 2) to support and encourage the pro-Roosevelt Wallace-Pepper forces within the Democratic party; 3) to build and strengthen all organizations and movements for independent political action.

The new features that must be taken into account since December are: first, the rapidly maturing political consciousness and understanding of large numbers of people; and, second, the fact that the movement for a pro-Roosevelt president in 1948 is being transformed into a movement, both inside and outside the Democratic Party, for Henry Wallace for President; and, third, the united aim of labor to defeat those

Congressmen who voted for the Taft-Hartley Bill.

The 3-point program we outlined in December is still sound, but the new situation requires that we expand on it.

First let me deal with the problem of united action for the people's needs. The major issue before the labor movement will be the struggle in resistance to, and for the nullification and repeal of, the Taft-Hartley Bill. This fight will have the inevitable effect of drawing the various sections of labor closer together. It is essential, however, that the campaign of labor in defense of its rights, and the Wallace campaign against the Truman Doctrine, be merged.

We must work to get unions on record against the Truman Doctrine, on which they have spoken out very weakly. We must put forward a positive program of support of the U.N. based on Big Three cooperation and unity, as well as a program of American assistance to world reconstruction, but without political strings attached and without any intervention in the affairs of other nations. Since the policy of our government is one that leads to war, the militarization program is not for defense but for aggression and world domination. In that sense we must oppose increased armaments, militarization, and universal military training. Reduction in armaments will also make it possible to increase expenditures for the people's needs and to reduce taxes on the lower income groups.

Of key importance is our program to meet the approaching economic crisis, as well as the serious problem of unemployment, already upon us, and bound to grow more serious in 1948. This program must include the fight for jobs, the rights of the Negro people, a large scale housing program, and against rent increases.

Other sections of the population must be drawn into the fight against the Taft-Hartley Act besides the labor movement. But if this is to be done labor must understand not only that its own fight has been too defensive, but that it must simultaneously fight for the needs of other sections of the population and for its own needs and rights. This will win allies for labor and will immeasurably strengthen the fight against reaction in Congress which has benefited from the separate struggles carried on by separate sections of the people. The last month of this session of Congress is of key importance in this respect. After adjournment a fight should be put up for a special session to enact housing, rent, and Negro rights legislation.

Finally, the way should be prepared to confront Congress from the very beginning in 1948 with the demands of the people. Labor and the people were almost entirely on the defensive all through this session of Congress. We must prepare now to take the counter-offensive in January, 1948. This can be done by organizing committees and movements on the above nation-wide issues, as well as on state and city

issues. The excellent beginnings of the past six months in mass action on a state and city scale must be extended. These movements, while not necessarily directly connected to the movement for a third party, cannot but help facilitate it, objectively, because they will inevitably be directed against Big Business and the two parties in Congress.

With respect to the second point, the fight within the Democratic Party, newspaper reports state that a committee has been set up in the Democratic Party in California to run Henry Wallace for the Democratic presidential nomination in that state's preferential primaries. There are reports that similar moves are afoot in at least a dozen other states. While many progressive feel that there must be no illusions as to the ability of Wallace to capture the nomination at the Democratic National Convention, they are nevertheless convinced this movement should be developed to the maximum, that the fight to be victorious must be waged on the issues and a program, and that labor must give attention in time to the Democratic primaries, which means starting right now. The Democratic primaries, and in some cases the Republican, are important not only for the Presidential fight, but in the campaign to elect a progressive Congress through the defeat of those who voted "yes" on the Taft-Hartley Bill and through the election of real progressives.

The C.I.O. and the A. F. of L.

have adopted parallel positions on working to defeat those Congressmen who voted for the Taft-Hartley Bill. However, unless labor unites on this objective in each Congressional District the progressive camp may go down to defeat, just as it did in case of the slave labor bill. Furthermore, Congressional District conferences should be organized to fight on people's issues, to build ward and precinct machinery, and to prepare for the nomination of progressive candidates. Where united labor political action is achieved on a Congressional District basis, the Left-Progressive forces should strive to strengthen and to advance such action as far as possible, but to go along with it even though it does not go as far as necessity actually demands. It must be kept in mind that a narrow approach to the Congressional elections may help to throw Congress even more completely under the domination of reactionaries than at present.

We must be clear on one thing—that the only possibility whatever of influencing the Democratic National Convention to any important degree is through the development of a really powerful third party movement. Those progressives in the Democratic party who do not believe that a third party is practical should nevertheless assist the third party movement as a means of strengthening their own fight.

The third point is the most important of all, *i.e.*, the need for independent political action for a new

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party. Activity in this direction must be stepped up in every way possible to meet the new problems and the new opportunities. Millions of people are going through some very deep thinking and discussion as to the lessons of the 80th Congress and the passage of the Taft-Hartley Bill. We Communists should encourage and stimulate this discussion in the unions and everywhere else, so as to help the people to draw the right conclusions; to place the blame where it belongs, on both major parties; to show the need for a new party; and to draw organizational conclusions as well.

Existing political action organizations like the Progressive Citizens of America and the American Labor Party will undoubtedly have to expand their activities and, above all, build organization on a ward and precinct basis. It is to be hoped that the A. F. of L. will carry out its promise to campaign to defeat those who voted for the anti-labor bill and form a non-partisan political action league. The C.I.O. should repair its fundamental error in allowing C.I.O.-P.A.C. to go to seed, and it should revive, revitalize, and expand this essential instrument. The North Dakota Farmers Union has set up political action machinery, a far-reaching step which deserves the widest emulation. This is the time to bring into being every possible kind of independent political action and to strive to unite all these forces engaging in such activity around common objectives.

The unique feature of the Wallace movement is that while it is trying to win the Democratic Party, it is stimulating and creating sentiment for independent political action. More and more progressives agree that the key for building a third party is the development of a Wallace-for-President movement. They are in increasing agreement that the forces in favor of a third party must themselves begin to form Wallace-for-President committees, greatly expand their propaganda for a new party, issue literature, tell the history and draw the lessons of previous third party movements, answer all the arguments against a third party, and give information as to what technical machinery is needed to set up a third party, etc. Finally, those forces who favor a third party now must begin to take the necessary technical measures to get a third party on the ballot in the states. There is no time to be lost, for it is already late.

It is necessary to take into account certain retarding factors in the third party movement and the movement for Wallace. The record of the 80th Congress has just about killed any illusions some workers may have had last year about the G.O.P., although we should not underestimate the possibilities of the G.O.P. still influencing sections of the workers. The question before ever larger sections of the people now is: Can reaction be defeated through the Democratic Party or through a new party? Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley

Bill will hinder the breakaway of many workers from the Democratic Party. Many will hesitate to build a new party because they believe that it is not practical and that it will facilitate a G.O.P. victory. Many leaders of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. will consciously try to halt the organization of a new people's party by labor. Lastly, the Social-Democratic leaders of the A.D.A., the Liberal Party, and some unions will try to buttress illusions in Truman and the Democratic Party and obstruct the formation of a new party. If they find this impossible, they will join the new party movement to head it and steer it into pro-imperialist, anti-Communist channels.

Clearly, those who favor a new party must patiently and convincingly answer the arguments that are in the minds of many people. It will also be necessary to direct united front appeals on issues to organizations led by Social-Democrats as a means of exposing those who obstruct unity, and winning the rank and file for a correct policy.

It is not possible at this moment to make the final decision as to the presidential ticket, nor to state definitely whether a third presidential ticket or a third Congressional ticket will be formed in time for the 1948 elections. But regardless of whether or not a third ticket can be formed, the movement to build a third party must continue and be accelerated. The formation of a third party is possible even without a

presidential ticket. Such a party must be broadly based if it is to be effective. The decision to form such a party does not lie only in the will of the Communists, Left-wing forces, and all others who favor a third party at this moment. Much broader forces that are now committed to a new party will have to join the movement to make it possible for it to come into existence in 1948. Practically, this means that such unions as the United Auto Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers must favor it. It is not necessary that the entire top leadership of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. favor a third party before active steps are taken to form it, but certainly more substantial sections of labor must favor it than do so at present. Furthermore, there can be no third party without a significant breakaway from the Democratic Party, and the winning of the support of large sections of farmers. In any case, the present narrowness of the movement must not be allowed to paralyze all the necessary activities that must get under way now to stimulate the movement, to win new adherents to it, and to prepare it to take advantage of a developing situation. Moreover, there is increasing agreement among many progressives that the situation is ripe to develop the Wallace-for-President movement in many unions, people's organizations, etc., and that this is decisively important.

In all these activities, the G.O.P. must still be fought and exposed as

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the main party of reaction, particularly the attempt of a Stassen to pose as a liberal while favoring the Taft-Hartley Bill. The Democratic Party is the second party of reaction, and since the main illusions in the ranks of labor and the progressives are with regard to Truman and the Democrats, the more difficult task will be to rid the people of those illusions.

The key to defeating the G.O.P. and reaction is to direct greater and greater pressure on the Democratic Party, to make maximum use of rifts and differences within the Democratic Party. The greater the movement for independent political action, the more concessions will be forced out of the Democrats, and at the same time it will be possible to expose the Democratic Party to new masses of people because of its failure to meet their needs.

If we are faced with the situation in 1948 that there will be no choice between the two old party tickets (which is the picture at the present moment), and that a national third party or ticket is not possible and will not be formed, then in that event our Party may nominate its own ticket. Under such conditions it may also be possible that other Left forces will join with our Party in putting forward a broader ticket in which the Communists will be an accepted force. But such a ticket will obviously not be a major third party.

It is clear that, as regards 1948, our Party will have to play a key role, will have to exhibit greater

political and organizational initiative and activity, and will have to win greater support for our independent and coalition policy. While we are making headway in a few places, in others we are moving too slowly and in too many places not at all. Not all of our Party organizations and members understand how to apply our policy for 1948 concretely, in their organizations, cities, and states. The main thing is that we must not delay; we must move and move fast, and move broad sections of the progressive camp along with us.

In conclusion, decisive issues are at stake as we approach 1948. Although the progressive camp is on the upswing, reaction is not resting but is taking the fullest advantage of the decisive position it won in November, 1946. We are in a race with reaction, and as yet the progressive forces are not moving fast enough or well enough to win victory. To win the race requires on our part, that our Party contribute, first of all, to the building of the greatest possible unity and action for peace, for jobs, for a higher standard of living, and for the preservation and extension of our democratic liberties; secondly, to the struggle for progressivism within the Democratic Party; and, thirdly, to the greatest possible extension of independent political action. The main lever for progressives to advance this process is the development of the movement for Wallace for President and the building of a new people's party led by labor.