

political affairs

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40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: HERBERT APTHEKER

Forty Years of the Communist Party

by Hyman Lumer

Forty years ago, on September 1, 1919, the Communist Party of the United States was born. The country had just emerged from the First World War. In Russia, the world's first socialist state had come into existence and was successfully fighting off the armed counter-revolutionary intervention of fourteen capitalist states. Germany and other European countries were seething with an upsurge of revolutionary spirit. In the United States, it was a period of intense labor struggles, and the eve of the great 1919 steel strike, led by William Z. Foster. It was the eve, too, of the infamous Palmer raids, which ushered in a counteroffensive launched by reactionary big business in its fright at these alarming developments.

The founders of the Communist Party, men like Charles E. Ruthenberg and Alfred Wagenknecht, had been leaders of the Left wing within the Socialist Party. The split within that party, culminating in the expulsion of the Left, arose

from a revolt against the opportunist policies of the Right wing—against its ill-concealed support of American imperialism in World War I, its hostility to the socialist revolution in Russia, its conciliatory attitude to class-collaborationist policies in the AFL, and its general reformism and desertion of militant struggle. In the period immediately following its formation, and as it became consolidated, the ranks of the Communist Party were swelled by an influx of trade unionists from the Trade Union Educational League, among them such figures as Jack Johnstone and William Z. Foster, of members and leaders of the International Workers of the World, notably William D. Haywood, and of youth, Negro and other groups.

The establishment of the Communist Party in this country was part of a world-wide process, following World War I, of formation of parties of a new type, of Marxist parties which would not function as reformist election machines but

would carry on a many-sided struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression in all its manifestations. In the past forty years, such parties of the working class have grown and become firmly rooted throughout the world. Today, Communist and Workers Parties exist in some eighty countries, and their combined membership exceeds thirty million. In one-third of the world, they have already led the way to socialism, and everywhere they are a firm, unshakeable force for peace and progress.

The Socialist and Social Democratic Parties, which still adhere to the decrepit Socialist International, have followed the path of reformism and anti-Communism to its natural end. They have openly abandoned Marxism and, only slightly less openly, the espousal of socialism. At the recent Congress of the Socialist International, William Henry Chamberlain reports in the *New Leader* (August 3-10, 1959) with undisguised admiration, "the name of Karl Marx was mentioned exactly once during the deliberations." The leaders of these parties have generally served as a bulwark of imperialist reaction and an instrument of its cold-war, anti-socialist policies.

It is with great pride that our Party celebrates forty years of activity and struggle. These have been eventful years, in the course of which the Party has made many significant contributions to the welfare of the American people. Moreover, in the

face of the heightened persecution of the cold war years, and in the face of the unparalleled ideological assaults from within its ranks during the past few years, it is particularly a matter of pride that the Party has emerged intact and with confidence in the future.

At the same time, the fortieth anniversary should be an occasion for taking stock of ourselves as a Marxist party, for reviewing both our accomplishments and our shortcomings, and for setting our faces ever more resolutely toward the future.

* * *

Basic among the features of the "party of a new type" originally defined by V. I. Lenin at the turn of the century is the concept of a vanguard party. Such a party is one which is armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, with a knowledge of the laws of social development which enables it to see beyond the immediate struggles of the working class and hence to point the way to the future—to socialism—in these struggles. Such a party is also one which maintains the closest possible ties with the working class as a whole, which is involved in the mainstream of day-to-day struggle and hence capable of giving leadership to the working class and its allies.

To be a vanguard in actuality, and not only in name, it is not enough merely to accept these principles and to proclaim ourselves "the vanguard of the working

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class." On the contrary, the fulfillment of such a role requires a constant and difficult struggle.

It is necessary, in the first place, to master Marxist theory, not in the abstract, not as a series of immutable dogmas to be gleaned from the Marxist classics, but as a living body of knowledge as it applies to American life. It is necessary to know our country and each state and locality thoroughly with respect to their economic, political and social features, to know the problems and attitudes of the people and especially of the working class. To be a Marxist-Leninist party, therefore, means above all to be an *American* party. There is nothing automatic about this; it comes only through a prolonged process of maturing in the course of struggles.

Secondly, it is essential, in the words of Lenin, that the Party should be able to "link itself with, keep in close touch with, to a certain degree, if you will, merge itself with the broadest masses of the toilers—primarily with the proletariat but also with the non-proletarian toiling masses." In view of the unending efforts of reaction to render the Communist Party impotent, to persecute and intimidate any who associate with it, and to discredit it in the eyes of the American people, this entails a ceaseless process of struggle. It requires the utmost skill and flexibility in tactics, and an ability to work with others on issues of mutual concern while pro-

jecting the Party's own position, regardless of all obstacles. About this, too, there is nothing automatic.

The test of the vanguard character of a Marxist party is not its size or the number of posts of leadership which its members hold in unions or other mass organizations (which may vary according to circumstances), but *the extent to which it strives to meet these requirements.*

In essence, the history of our Party has been a history of its struggle to fulfill its vanguard role. Our Party has always been small. It has never achieved the status of a mass party. Moreover, beginning with the Palmer raids in 1919, it has been subjected to repeated attacks, reaching a peak in the McCarthyite persecutions of the cold war years.

Nevertheless, it has left an indelible imprint on the life of our country—in the fight against war and fascism, in the organization of its basic industrial workers, in the advancement of the fight for Negro rights, in the winning of social security and unemployment compensation, and in other important advances of the American working people since the twenties. Our country would not have been the same without the Communist Party.

* * *

But at the same time, the Party has been plagued, throughout its history, by opportunist trends which have deterred it from fulfilling the role of a vanguard party.

On the one hand, it has suffered severely from the Right-opportunist evil of revisionism. This anti-Marxist trend, which has developed in successive waves threatening at various times to engulf the Party, is invariably advanced in the name of "American exceptionalism" in one form or another. In the twenties, it was Lovestoneism with its thesis that American capitalism had found the secret of eternal prosperity. In the World War II years, it was Browderism with its hallucinations of "progressive capitalism." And today the Party is barely recovering from the recent onslaught of Gates revisionism.

Under the guise of further developing Marxist theory in response to new conditions, revisionism in fact emasculates it, seeking to reduce it to petty-bourgeois reformism. Today, American revisionism paints a picture of a world in which peaceful coexistence and the preservation of bourgeois-democratic rights are assured, of a crisis-proof American economy, of the development of a "welfare state" which will then grow over into socialism through a process of reform, of steady improvement of the workers' lot under capitalism—a process in which the leading part is played by the trade union movement. It denies the need for a vanguard political party and seeks instead some sort of loose-knit organization of "socialist-minded people" which would serve as an adjunct to the labor movement.

Our Party has once again won the main ideological battle against conscious revisionism. But Right-opportunist, revisionist tendencies persist in various forms, principally that of reducing the Party's role to one of mere participation in mass struggles, of underestimating and failing to fight for the Party's independent role and program. Such tendencies lead to reducing the Party to the level of the mass movement, to making it a tail to the mass movement, and so negating its vanguard character. The Party must wage a relentless fight against all revisionist ideas and tendencies in its ranks. Indeed, in the present period this remains its chief ideological task.

At the same time, the Party has suffered habitually from the weaknesses of dogmatism and sectarianism. In fact, these have been chronic weaknesses of the Marxist movement in the United States, long antedating the birth of the Communist Party. And they persist today, making it more difficult to combat the isolation from the masses which the Party's enemies have succeeded in forcing upon it.

Dogmatism expresses itself in attempts to apply theory abstractly, without proper regard for or understanding of the concrete circumstances involved and the tactical considerations these impose. It leads into blind alleys, and ends in futile, empty phrasemongering. Sectarianism manifests itself in an underestimation of work among the masses,

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in an attempt to substitute the Party for the mass movement. In practice, the two are closely associated.

The earliest years of the Communist Party were marked by extreme sectarianism which effectively isolated it from the working class, and which it took years of struggle to overcome. A principle manifestation was dual unionism—an effort to build “progressive” unions as a substitute for working in the existing, “reactionary” unions. A successful fight against this Leftist error was led by William Z. Foster. At other times, sectarianism has expressed itself in premature third-party moves as a substitute for working within the existing two-party framework.

Today, sectarianism takes the form of an overemphasis on the independent role of the Party, which inflates the Party's independent actions in its own name into the *totality* of its activities. Party meetings and the distribution of Party literature become a substitute for the difficult task of working within the mass movement and striving to build united front relationships.

In relation to the labor movement it takes the form of wholesale condemnation of the present labor leadership as hopelessly reactionary, placing sole reliance on the rank and file, and in some cases calling for nothing short of removal of the present leadership as a condition for making any advance whatever. The corollary of this is the hopelessness of trying to work in established

trade union channels, and the consequent necessity of confining oneself to Party propaganda from the outside.

Such sectarian positions are generally advanced in the name of “defending Marxism-Leninism,” “fighting for the independent role of the Party” or “combatting revisionism.” In reality, however, these phrases are only being used to cloak a retreat, an abandonment of the fight to build the Party's mass ties—to play its vanguard role. And these positions lead in the direction of reducing the Party to an impotent sect devoid of mass influence but presuming, from its position on the sidelines, to “advise” and “instruct” the working class. Such a sect, in its most extreme form, is the Socialist Labor Party today.

Overcoming isolation, rebuilding the Party's mass ties—this is the key task today. It is a vital task if the Party is to make serious headway in the building of democratic unity for peace and progress in our country. This means a determined fight against all sectarian approaches, habits and tendencies.

The future of our Party thus lies in fighting *all* forms of opportunism, Right or “Left,” as anti-Marxist trends whose effect is to weaken the Party's effectiveness as a vanguard political organization capable of truly giving direction and guidance to the struggles of the working class, the Negro people and the democratic forces generally. Such

has been the experience of the Party in the forty years of its existence, and such is the task ahead of it today.

* * *

Ever since its inception, the Communist Party has been under incessant attack by big business reaction as a "foreign agent." This type of slander, as is well known, did not originate with its use against the Communist Party. It has served as a basis for attacking all democratic and progressive movements in American history, going back to the labelling of Thomas Jefferson and his supporters as "agents" of France by the reactionary elements of that day. And at one time it was applied with equal vigor to the Party's predecessor, the Socialist Party.

Because it has, from the first day of its existence, fought for support to the Soviet Union as the first land of socialism, because it has persistently advocated American-Soviet friendship, and because it has at all times fought to expose the fraudulence of the charge of "Soviet aggression" with which Wall Street cloaks its own aggressive schemes, the Communist Party has been attacked with special vehemence as a "Soviet agent." From the Palmer raids to the McCarran Act, which seeks today to compel the Party and its members to register as "foreign agents," the attack has been unrelenting.

These slanders, however much they may be disguised in high-flown

legal terminology and the pompous rulings of government boards, are of course without foundation. The Communist Party, here as elsewhere, exists because capitalist exploitation exists. It grows out of the American class struggle and has deep roots in American history.

American socialism goes back to the utopian socialists of the first half of the nineteenth century and the numerous cooperative colonies which they established. Marxism appeared as a factor on the American scene by midcentury. American Marxists were active in the anti-slavery struggle and in the Civil War. One of their leading figures, Joseph Weydemeyer, was made a colonel in the Union Army by Lincoln. Karl Marx himself played an important part in relation to the Civil War with his brilliant writings in the New York *Daily Tribune* and other publications. Marxists were instrumental in setting up the National Labor Union, the first effective national organization of labor. They were actively involved in labor struggles throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, with men like Eugene V. Debs playing a particularly prominent role.

The Communist Party, therefore, is the inheritor of a tradition going far back in American history, and long preceding the birth of the Soviet Union. American Communists, moreover, have repeatedly demonstrated their loyalty to this country and its democratic traditions. They

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sacrificed unstintingly in the war against Hitlerism. And they have consistently fought for the preservation and extension of democratic rights, including the right to organize and the establishment of full democracy in the South.

Our Party has supported the basic policies of the Soviet Union because, being the policies of a working-class, socialist state, these are in the interests of working people everywhere. And it has fought for American-Soviet cooperation and friendship because this is vital to the American people.

From the beginning, the Party fought along with other Americans for recognition of the Soviet Union, a battle which was finally won when Roosevelt extended recognition in 1933. In the thirties, the Party supported the Soviet policy of collective security as essential for curbing fascist aggression and defending democracy. Communists were most prominent among what the pro-fascist elements dubbed the "premature anti-fascists." They were in the forefront of the fight against Franco in Spain, and they fought unswervingly against the appeasement of Hitler.

In the depths of McCarthyism, the Communist Party held high the banner of peace in the face of persecution and attack. Today our Party fights without reservation for peaceful coexistence, for an end to the menace of nuclear war. We hail the impending exchange of visits be-

tween Eisenhower and Khrushchev as a tremendous step in this direction, and look to it as the forerunner of a fruitful summit conference for peace.

All these policies have been in the best interests of our own country. They have been, despite sectarian errors at times, the policies of an *American* political party. Nevertheless our history has been one of unending struggle against the "foreign agent" slander, which is designed to weaken and undermine the fight of the American working people against the oppression of the trusts. And this struggle continues.

If we are to make real headway in winning it, however, we must work to make our Party increasingly an American political party in the sense of becoming ever more deeply rooted among the American workers and integrated in their mass struggles, together with other sections of the people, against the trusts. In this, the Party has very considerable reserves of support among the American working people, reserves which can be tapped if it effectively combats sectarian isolation.

* * *

The Communist Party came into being as a party of socialism. Throughout its existence it has sought, though with many weaknesses, to popularize socialism in the eyes of the workers of our country, to convince them of its inherent superiority as a social system. Today these efforts of many years are be-

ing vindicated. With the advent of the first Sputnik, and now with the launching of the monumental Seven-Year Plan, as well as the achievement of the Great Leap in People's China, the great potential of socialism is being brought home to ever wider circles in this country.

In this sense, it is no longer correct to say, as we have so often done in the past, that "socialism is not on the order of the day" in the United States. There is now a keen, healthy interest in socialism on the part of millions of Americans. Today the popularization of socialism—as a system that works—is on the immediate agenda of our Party as never before.

The Communist Party has but

recently emerged from a deep-going crisis, much reduced in membership and influence. But the need for a Marxist vanguard party in our country remains unshaken. And the confidence that the Party can fill this need, which *was* shaken in the minds of many comrades during the crisis, is being restored. The fortieth anniversary of the Party comes on the eve of its Seventeenth Convention. It enters the period of convention preparations with full confidence that, profiting from the lessons of forty years of struggle, the coming convention will register its further consolidation and maturing as a political force in the United States.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF

Charles E. Ruthenberg

Note: On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Communist Party of the U. S. A., we present the following series of brief extracts from the writings of its founder, Charles E. Ruthenberg (1882-1927). These extracts, arranged chronologically from 1912 to 1926, are taken from a variety of sources, including speeches, editorials, magazine articles, pamphlets and records of court trials. They indicate the Marxist progress of an early Communist leader on the one hand, and on the other the consistently high quality of leadership he gave to the Socialist and Communist movements in his lifetime. They also show the unwavering courage of a great pioneer of American Socialism.

These items were selected and arranged by Oakley C. Johnson, author of The Day Is Coming: Life and Work of Charles E. Ruthenberg, International Publishers, New York, 1958.—The Editor.

OUR CONFIDENCE THAT SOCIALISM WILL COME

And here is the basis of our confidence in the coming of socialism.

The development of industry points to only one way in which industrial despotism can be avoided and all the benefits of trust production insured to the workers.

We cannot turn back the hand of time. We cannot go back to the days of hand production. To do so means to sacrifice the splendid achievements of the most wonderful era in the history of the world.

We must go forward.

The same process which has brought into existence the present situation has developed the intellectual powers of the working class. It has placed them in a position which makes future progress and the birth of a new society based upon new ideas of justice and equality dependent upon them, and given them the knowledge how to use their power.

We socialists have faith in the working class. We believe the workers have advanced too far to submit to industrial slavery, and therefore our confidence that they will assert their power to bring into existence the only

alternative to capitalist despotism, which is the social ownership of the already socialized means of production.

The working class has the power, and to save itself must establish socialism.

(From article in *Columbus Socialist*, June 22, 1912)

THE GROWTH OF COLLECTIVISM

Since August of 1914 the development of collectivism has gone forward at a tremendous rate. The necessities of war have compelled the governments engaged in it, and even the governments of neutral countries, to extend their control and management of industries. . . .

In this country the government went into the merchant marine business in 1914, shortly after the war started. It has since extended its control to many forms of industry. The food and fuel dictatorships are conspicuous examples of the development of this form of collectivism. Through the Emergency Fleet Corporation it is building ships and it has commandeered all available existing shipping.

The experience of the government of this country with the railroads is an illuminating example of the necessity of collective ownership and a justification of the Socialist principles. . . .

This collectivism, which is developing in the shape of municipal and state ownership, is not, however, Socialism.

With a powerful working class movement, strongly organized on the political and industrial field, developing with it, it may become the means of facilitating the establishment of Socialism. Without such a movement it may well become the basis for more extreme exploitation and oppression of the workers than that which existed in the days of capitalist competition.

(Extract from pp. 30-33 of Ruthenberg's pamphlet, *Are We Growing Toward Socialism?* published by Local Cleveland, Socialist Party, Cleveland, Ohio, in the late summer of 1917, while he was on trial with Charles Baker and Alfred Wagenknecht for opposition to World War I.)

WHO ARE THE DREAMERS?

Through all the ages the institutions of man have been changing, de-

veloping and evolving. Through the struggles of the ages and achievement of the genius of the race in all times we have perfected our productive powers, but an unjust economic system heaps the rewards of the achievements of the many into the laps of the few. And these few rise up, like modern Joshuas, and command the forces which have been working through all the ages, "Stand Still!"

Who are the dreamers—the Socialists who say that society will continue to evolve and that collective work will bring collective ownership and management, social production produce social distribution; or the capitalists who say: "We are reaping the rewards. Sun, stand still?"

Social evolution will continue. The goal toward which it is tending is plainly indicated in the form of modern production. The Socialist movement itself is the product of the economic forces in capitalism which makes Socialism the only road to freedom for the exploited and oppressed class in modern society.

Socialism will not destroy and break up what capitalism has produced.

It will build upon the economic foundation prepared by the development of capitalism.

(From pp. 47-48 of *Are We Growing Toward Socialism?*)

A VISION OF SOCIALISM

Socialism grows as the water lily grows.

At the bottom of the lakes and ponds in which the water lily grows there is deposited a muck of decaying vegetable matter. In this the water lily sets its roots. It finds the conditions which enable it to live and thrive. Out of this muck it sends up its stem through the waters which surround it, upward to the light and air and sunshine, and when it reaches the light and air and sunshine, it bursts forth into that beautiful blossom which gives us joy to behold.

The Socialist Movement sets its roots in the muck of capitalism. It finds in it the conditions which enable it to live and thrive. Today the Socialist Movement is fighting its way upward, upward against the lies, misrepresentation and the misunderstanding which surround it, upward to the light and air and sunshine. Soon it will reach the light and air and sunshine and then our civilization will burst forth into that new and beautiful blossom—Socialism.

(From the concluding paragraphs of *Are We Growing Toward Socialism?* Note that this was written some three months before the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.)

OPPOSITION TO WORLD WAR I

This is not a war for freedom. It is not a war for the liberties of mankind. It is a war to secure the investments and profits of the ruling class of this country. . . .

The only reason we are in this war now is because it is to the interests of the ruling class, the capitalist class of this country, to have us in the war, and I am going to show it to you.

We of the Socialist Party are carrying on this fight. We are here to carry on this fight. We are here to organize the workers of this country for this struggle. We are working towards this end, that out of the chaos of this war there may come a new society, a new world, a new organization of the people, which will end the cause of war by ending the private ownership of the industry which brings war into existence.

(This speech was originally delivered at Public Square, Cleveland, Ohio, May 27, 1917. The extract is from its re-delivery by Ruthenberg in the Cleveland Federal Court, July, 1917, when he, Charles Baker and Alfred Wagenknecht were tried and convicted for opposition to the war. After this trial the three Socialists were confined in the Canton, Ohio, Workhouse.)

IMPERIALISM AND WORLD WAR I

Imperialism is that stage of the development of capitalism when the state becomes the agent of the capitalist class in seeking avenues for investment, avenues of exploitation, raw materials and other forms of capitalist action. It is that period of capitalism when, through the development of the capitalist system, the perfection of the machinery of production, the surplus in a country has taken on a certain character, that of the exploitation of capital, of steel and iron, and making the requirement to secure markets for the use of this material, for the disposal of this surplus. In this effort to secure markets for the sale of this material unexploited territories are sought and the governments become the agents of the capitalist class in securing concessions, securing opportunities for investment, which, in turn, create the market for the sale of these products.

The tendency of capitalist production is that with the creation of greater and greater surplus, the returns of capital invested at home become less and less, and necessarily the capitalists seek other avenues of investment where the returns will be greater. They seek the unexploited territory. They seek the countries which have not as yet been developed, such as Mexico or China, or part of South America, and invest, seek concessions there and invest their capital for larger and quicker returns, and these investments take the form of the development of that territory through the building of railways, etc. . . .

We find at the beginning of the war in 1914 that there had developed during the preceding decades the imperialist policy in all the great capitalist nations, notably in England and in Germany. The struggle for concessions, the struggle for what we now might call 'mandatories,' or colonies, had been going on for a long term of years. We found repeatedly that the governments came into conflict with each other, as, for instance, France and Germany over Morocco. The questions at stake were questions of which country should have the right to exploit this unexploited, undeveloped territory. These conflicts in which the governments fought the battles, through diplomacy, of the capitalist class, reflected the imperialist process, the development of imperialism, the securing of these concessions for the benefit of the home capitalist. It was out of the process that the War developed. It is out of this process that other wars will develop in the future, from the standpoint of socialist analysis.

(From the testimony of C. E. Ruthenberg in his trial in New York, March, 1920. It was after this trial that Ruthenberg was sent to Sing Sing Prison.)

A CASE OF CLASS JUSTICE

I have merely this to say for myself, that I have in the past held certain ideals for a reorganization of society on a new basis. I have upheld those ideals and gone to prison for them when they were connected with the late war. I have stood by those principles in which I firmly believe, and I still stand for those principles irrespective of the result of this particular trial. I expect in the future, as in the past, to uphold and fight for those principles until the time comes that those principles triumph, and a new society is built in place of the present social organization. I realized from

the beginning of this trial, as I have in any other trial that I have taken part in as a defendant, that this court, and all the instruments of this court, are merely a part of that organization of force which we call the capitalist state; and I expected no other result from an organization of the capitalist class to protect the capitalist system, than the result that has been returned by this court in this particular case; and, of course, accepting this as a case of class justice, a case of the use of the organized force of the state in order to suppress the desires of those who today are suffering under the oppression of the present system, I will accept the sentence in that same spirit of defiance, realizing that I go to prison because of support of a great principle that will triumph in spite of all the courts, in spite of all the organizations of the capitalist class.

(Statement by Ruthenberg after being sentenced to from five to ten years' imprisonment in Sing Sing at the conclusion of the New York trial, March, 1920.)

ON THE NEGRO QUESTION

The Negroes are not only a part of the most bitterly exploited section of the working class, but they are, in addition, oppressed as a race.

The Workers' (Communist) Party supports the organization of the Negroes for their fight against exploitation as a part of the working class and against the special discrimination to which they are subjected. It demands complete social equality for the Negro.

(From *The Workers' (Communist) Party, What It Stands For and Why Workers Should Join It*, a pamphlet published in 1926.)

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Towards the 17th National Convention*

By Eugene Dennis

Comrades: It is now only a few months to our next national convention. I think most of us, and the Party as a whole, understand that in many respects our 17th Convention will take place under quite different conditions from those in which the 16th Convention was held.

During these years the crisis in the Administration's aggressive bipartisan foreign policy has sharpened. The crisis in housing, education, health care and juvenile delinquency has increased. The acute problems of automation and large scale unemployment, of farm surpluses and displaced family farmers, and of the colossal nuclear arms race and a mounting national debt, have all become more aggravated.

While the vested interests and wealthy corporations are responsible for this dilemma and impasse, and while the most reactionary sections of monopoly have unleashed a new and menacing offensive against the living standards and democratic rights of the people in order to

"solve" the crisis in their own greedy and predatory interests, other factors, trends and forces have been set in motion.

In fact, one of the new and special features of the political situation in our country today is the rising militancy, resistance and increased political consciousness of sections of the labor movement, the upsurge of the massive Negro freedom movement which exerts such a profound impact on every facet of political life and development in our country, and the emergence of a broad, though loose and diversified peace movement.

Some three years ago, as you will recall, the question of the very existence of our Party was uppermost. Integrally tied in with this was the question of the adherence to our Marxist principles. True, the 16th convention took a generally positive position on these cardinal questions.

* Concluding remarks at the meeting of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A., held July 25-26, in New York City.

It is also true, however, that it took a full year after the convention for these issues to be finally resolved.

As we approach the 17th Convention, we can now say that our Party is unifying and consolidating its ranks; that the Marxist-Leninist principles of our Party are being adhered to and developed by our leadership and our membership, and that our Party is beginning to make certain important advances in its mass work.

Today the solidarity and the unity of the socialist camp—momentarily threatened in the period prior to our 16th Convention by the imperialist-instigated counter-revolutionary uprising in Hungary and by the divisive role of the Yugoslav revisionists—is stronger and more unshakeable than ever. Today the Communist and Workers Parties of all lands are also more united and more firmly entrenched among their peoples. In these short two and one-half to three years there have been magnificent and world-shaking advances in socialist and communist construction, so graphically demonstrated in the Soviet 7 Year Plan and in the great leap forward in People's China. The camp of world peace halted the imperialist intervention in Lebanon, Jordan and Quemoy, and prevented these from sparking a global conflict.

In this brief space of time, too, the great upsurge of the powerful national liberation movement has

spread throughout the world, from Asia to Africa to Latin America. And Cuba, proudly asserting its dignity and national integrity, has brought the national independence struggles right to the very doorstep of the North American continent.

These are a few of the developments which indicate the differences between the situation at the time of the 16th and 17th Conventions.

* * *

A few words on the draft of the political resolution which you have been discussing. (This refers to the initial draft resolution submitted to the National Committee, the main political line of which was approved—Editor). I share the opinion of all the comrades that many of the proposals and criticisms made at this meeting will considerably improve the final draft. And as a result of the critique and contributions which our Party membership will make during the course of the coming pre-convention discussion, this guiding document will be further strengthened.

With all its present inadequacies, however, we can say that the draft resolution does contain a correct estimate of the political situation on the home front and internationally. It projects a realistic and a fighting perspective. It points in a sound direction and maps out a correct strategic and tactical line.

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discussion have recognized, the heart of the main political line advanced is the development of united working class action and the forging of a broad democratic front for peace, civil rights and liberties, and economic security. Together with this, and essential to its realization, we emphasize the imperative need and some of the ways to enable decisive sections of the working class to come forward as an independent class force, rallying and championing the vital demands and interests of all workers and of labor's popular allies and the nation. This, too, is why we stress the indispensable role of our Party, the vanguard party of the American working class, the party of socialism.

Why have we placed so sharply the question of the unity of action of labor, of the Negro people, and of all democratic forces?

First, because such unity is the only way to check and to defeat the offensive of reaction. It is the way to counteract and help change the "get tough," cold war foreign policy of our government. It is the way to enforce the Constitution, and to advance the struggles for equal rights for the Negro people. And it is the way to safeguard and promote the economic well-being of the masses of our people.

Second, because this perspective and course of action takes into account the actual level of struggle and the present relationship of forces

within our country. The projection of the policy of organizing a united and democratic front takes into account the realities of today and that which is new, developing and most promising in our country. It recognizes that the elements and component parts of a democratic alliance and of a people's anti-monopoly coalition exist or are emerging out of the current and unfolding labor, Negro people's and peace mass movements. It also takes into account the sharpening divisions within the ranks of capital and the insoluble contradictions and difficulties confronting Wall Street nationally and on a world scale. Moreover, it reckons with the fact that the American working class presently is not so united or class conscious, nor is its Marxist vanguard as yet as strong, as are the working class and the Marxist parties of, say, France or Italy.

Third, we advance and fight for the united and democratic front of struggle because the working class, the great Negro people's movement, and all popular forces, together with certain non-monopoly bourgeois-liberal elements in the country, are in fact confronted with a number of general, nation-wide democratic tasks. These include the struggle for peace; the struggle to restore the First Amendment, and to enforce desegregation and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments; and the struggle to defeat the growing anti-

labor offensive, as well as a number of other related and important questions.

Fourth, because it is a correct approach toward mapping out an effective tactical line for the enormously significant 1960 elections, and toward facilitating the development of a new political alignment in our country led by the working class.

Lastly, we project this policy and program of action because the fight for the united front in our mass work and for the building of the broadest democratic front is also essential to help our Party overcome its isolation from decisive sectors of the labor and people's movements, to expand its mass influence and its contributions, and to step up the pace of its mass activities.

* * *

In respect to the stress placed in the resolution on the role of our Party and on the vital problems of building and strengthening it—these, of course, are an integral part of the development and implementation of a correct mass political line and perspective. What we emphasize in this connection is the imperative necessity of enhancing the vanguard role of the Party (not to be confused with or measured solely in terms of expanding the Party's independent activity per se); the application of the united front; resolutely and boldly fighting for our

constitutional rights which are inseparable from defending the democratic liberties of all the people; raising organizational work to the necessary high political level; radically improving our work on the ideological front, including the struggle against revisionism, as well as against doctrinairism and sectarianism; and popularizing ever more widely our socialist aims, as well as our immediate program of action.

These are some of the big questions that must occupy a great part of the coming pre-convention discussion, as they undoubtedly will in the convention itself.

All of us should bear in mind that the problem of building and strengthening our Party, especially of multiplying our working class base, ties and united front relations, is a process that will proceed unevenly, faster in certain areas and fields of mass work, slower in others.

But in this process, which demands the best from all of us, even so small a party as ours is today in America can play a big and influential role in the struggles of our class and our people. And we don't have to refer only to ancient history for proof of this. One can examine the contributions made by our Party in the past year, and the vanguard role exercised by a number of our local and state organizations in defense of the unemployed, against the "right-to-work" laws, in the national Youth March, in the struggle for

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are in peace, and not least of all in the struggle for Negro representation, the development of non-partisan, independent political action of the Negro people. I think we can already see in these struggles the contribution our Party is capable of making, and which, as these are developed further, will not only strengthen the labor and people's movement as a whole, but also will facilitate and hasten the process of Party revitalization and growth.

* * *

There is another point I would like to stress. It is necessary for our National Committee, our N.E.C. and state committees, and the Party as a whole to come to the 17th Convention with more than sound resolutions, essential as this is. Starting with this meeting, we should begin to translate into action and put some flesh and blood on a number of the concepts, plans and proposals outlined for the 17th Convention.

Among these is the question of acting determinedly in support of the current strike of the 500,000 workers in the steel industry. This is a major struggle in which all of labor and its popular allies have a vital stake. Its outcome will seriously affect not only job and union conditions in steel, but also the wages and working conditions in all trades and industries. It will determine whether in the immediate period ahead the giant steel trusts,

backed by the Administration, are going to be allowed to gouge the public further, continue to inflate prices and amass unprecedented profits, and destroy elementary union work rules, or whether labor and its allies are going to check inflation, the rising cost of living and monopoly's union-busting drive, and safeguard the workers against intolerable speedup and automation carried out solely for the benefit of the trusts. The development of labor solidarity, Negro-white unity, the fight for the basic demands of the steel workers, the struggle for relief and unemployment compensation for the strikers, and the exposure of the sinister role of the steel corporations and the government in rigging corporate prices and profits at the expense of labor, small business and the middle classes—these are a must task.

Much can and should be done now also in the fight against the new anti-labor bill, the modified version of the Kennedy-Erwin-McClellan bill advanced by some of the most reactionary forces in Congress, with certain liberal support and with a few assists from Meany and Dubinsky. This must be vigorously challenged and opposed by labor as a whole, as well as by all democratic forces in our country. For if this anti-labor monstrosity, or any other variant of it, which provides for government regulation and control of the trade union movement, is

enacted, the labor movement will be further shackled and democratic liberties of all the people will be further curtailed.

No less important is the urgent need of mobilizing the broadest united front and an all-out struggle against the new anti-Communist and anti-democratic legislation introduced by Congressmen Smith and Walters and Senator Eastland. If enacted, these pro-fascist measures would whittle away further the constitutional liberties of Communists and non-Communists alike.

On the vital question of the struggle against the Dixiecrats, in a number of districts where I have been in the last few months we have had discussions, and some beginnings have been made with regard to unfolding this struggle. The fight in the North, involving the labor movement, certain forces in the Democratic Party, and, above all, the Negro people's movement, is growing and must be pressed forward, with very definite plans worked out for each state and every area and mass organization within it. This is a key part of the people's preparations for 1960, as well as an integral part of the over-all democratic struggle to democratize the South.

At the N.A.A.C.P. convention important proposals were projected for advancing the right to vote in the South, now and in 1960. Also there was the significant proposal, officially advanced by Randolph, for the

formation of a Negro Labor Council. While Randolph unfortunately advanced this idea with certain anti-Communist trimmings and concepts, nonetheless the essence of this proposal is of major importance and should gain the active support of and be influenced by all progressives.

I think, too, comrades, in the next days and months the question of "Hands Off Cuba" and the development of various forms of Cuban-American friendship and solidarity are very much in order. We know that, from the inception of the popular revolution in Cuba, there has been great pressure and interference on the part of the imperialist circles in the United States to subvert the July 26th movement and the victory of the democratic national revolutionary struggle. The State Department recently sent a note aimed at holding back the announced agrarian reforms. It is an open secret that certain elements in the United States are subsidizing and providing other aid for an army of pro-fascist mercenaries being trained in the Dominican Republic for intervention against Cuba. Most recently, we have witnessed the disgraceful spectacle of the former Air Chief in Cuba being brought in by the CIA and the Internal Security Department to testify against the Cuban revolution before the notorious Eastland Committee. The people of our country have a special responsibility to prevent U.S. interference in the

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internal affairs of Cuba, and the demand "Hands Off Cuba" should and can become the rallying slogan of broad sections of the population.

As to the Foreign Ministers Conference, we know that Washington was reluctant to attend, and was, in fact, almost literally dragged to Geneva. At the end of an eight-week period, Secretary Herter and others in the Western delegation still continue to repeat their proposals for the continued military occupation of Berlin and for the continued division of Germany. The President and the Secretary of State are determined on the nuclear rearmament of West Germany, and they have advanced as a condition for the holding of the summit meeting, guarantees for maintaining the outmoded and explosive "status quo" in West Berlin and Adenauer's Germany.

I also think that we should take note of the fact that precisely during these negotiations at Geneva, there took place the official rejection on the part of the State and Commerce Departments of the latest Soviet proposals for the expansion of trade with the U.S.S.R. There was renewed brandishing of the H-bomb by certain Administration leaders and there was the official rejection of sharing the know-how of the H-bomb with West Germany, as well as with Turkey. Latest of all was the adoption of "captive nations' week," just at the moment when Nixon was going to Moscow.

We should try to take hold of the crucial question of Germany generally. Specifically, we should help crystallize the broad sentiment existing in our country against the nuclear armament of Germany and for ending nuclear tests, coupling this with influencing the organization of public expressions on the widest scale in favor of a summit meeting—regardless of what happens at the Foreign Ministers meeting.

In relation to this, the visits of Mikoyan and Kozlov to this country and of Nixon to the USSR have contributed enormously to the thawing out of East-West-relations. Everything possible should be done to encourage the further development of such visits and exchanges of leaders in all fields, and not least of leaders of organized labor.

Finally, on this question of putting flesh and blood into the proposals of the draft political resolution, let us not forget the question of Party building, which is almost at a standstill today. Would it not be possible, in connection with the big celebrations planned on the historic occasion of the 40th anniversary of our Party, for New York with seaboard participation, for Chicago with midwest participation, and for the West Coast, to bring a substantial number of new members into the Party by that time, and to make a further, even if modest, increase by the time of our national

convention? This should be possible today.

Take the fight for the life of *The Worker*. In these next weeks and months before the celebrations, can't we really put our shoulders to the wheel and solve the financial question and so ensure the *Worker's* existence and make it possible to project at the Convention new perspectives for building the circulation and influence of the paper?

At the previous meeting of the National Committee, we decided on certain steps to support and to help stimulate the bringing into existence of a Marxist-oriented, socialist youth organization. I think the realization of this objective would be of extraordinary importance in the fight for democracy and peace, for the youth of our country, and for our party as well. This, too, is one of the things that should command our attention as we prepare for our national convention.

* * *

In conclusion, I would stress, as many comrades have already emphasized, the importance of doing everything possible to further strengthen and guard the unity of our Party, especially now and during the somewhat turbulent months of the pre-convention discussion.

However one would assess the responsibilities for the sharp inner-party struggle and divisions in the years from 1956 to the beginning of

1958, I venture the opinion that history will record that perhaps more than any other single thing, the existence of virulent factionalism and the destruction of Party unity—starting in the national leadership—held back and impeded the process of decisively defeating and routing revisionism and ultra-leftism.

At this National Committee meeting there are still many differences of opinion on this or that aspect of questions or tactics, and there are still many remaining criticisms. But comrades, we have arrived at something—a common general political line—and that is not a small thing. This is, in fact, a big thing, which makes it possible for our Party to move forward and more effectively discharge its responsibility, as we as to come to grips and cope with this or that difference, with subordinate matters, and to resolve all major questions collectively on a sound and principled Marxist basis.

We are united in the defense of our people, our class and our Party and united in the application and development of our Marxist, working class principles. We have come a long way, and we have learned a lot. I think if each of us, and all of us collectively, guard the unity of our Party in this pre-convention period and further strengthen it, then we will achieve one of the big things in the common task of realizing the great objectives projected here. Namely, we will create the

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conditions for a united convention and a united party. And this is one of the pre-requisites to enable our Communist Party—the American working class party of socialism—to

go forward, to make new and vital Marxist contributions to our working people and nation, to advance the great and invincible cause of peace, democracy and socialism.

Pre-Convention Discussion

Draft Political Resolution

The Communist Party of the U. S. A. will hold its Seventeenth Convention in New York on December 10-13, 1959. In this connection, the Party Constitution states: (Article V, Section 4):

Prior to regular National Conventions, at least 90 days shall be provided for discussion in all Party clubs and leading committees on the main resolutions and problems coming before the Convention. During this discussion all Party organizations have the right to adopt resolutions and propose amendments to the Constitution for consideration by the Convention.

In accordance with this provision, the National Committee has scheduled the preconvention discussion period to begin on September 10 and to continue to the opening date of the Convention.

We present here two draft resolutions, whose general line was approved by the National Committee as a basis for discussion. Further draft resolutions will be presented at later dates. Members of the Communist Party may submit to the National Committee discussion articles for publication in *Party Affairs* or in this magazine. All members are urged to participate.

I

INTRODUCTION

As we approach a new decade, the decade of the sixties, mankind stands at the threshold of a potential era of peace and plenty for all.

Today automation, atomic energy and other notable achievements of modern science and technology hold forth the promise of wiping poverty and its attendant ills from the face of the earth and providing a secure full life for every human being. Today the prospect of forever abolish-

ing the scourges of hunger, oppression and war is within reach.

Yet today the American people face profound threats to their livelihood, their liberties, and indeed to their very lives. In the face of the tremendous potentialities of a world at peace, the cold war persists, with its growing burden of armaments and the ever-present menace of a nuclear holocaust. In the face of the glowing prospects for vast improvements in economic well-being, there is growing insecurity and fear of the future. And in place of a growth of freedom, there is continued repression and denial of elementary liberties.

Our capitalist society is plagued by a mounting accumulation of unsolved problems. Its economy displays a growing shakiness. Automation and other technological advances create a growth of chronic unemployment. Unsaleable farm surpluses rise from year to year. The national debt, already huge, continues to mount, and the difficulty of financing the war economy increases. The burden of interest and taxes becomes ever more intolerable. There is a persistent problem of inflation.

Despite advances in the struggle for Negro rights, the system of Jim Crow oppression remains essentially unshaken. Our educational system is in a state of deepening crisis. Juvenile delinquency grows steadily worse. In every aspect of American

life, the problems and difficulties become not less but greater.

On a world scale, the leading position of the United States, long uncontested, is now being increasingly challenged on all sides by its capitalist competitors, by the expanding group of liberated countries, and not least by the socialist world, which now bids to surpass the achievements of American capitalism in every respect.

It is the all-powerful monopoly capitalist groups, with their striving to preserve their outworn system of "free enterprise," which stand as the central obstacle to progress. It is monopoly capital which blocks the fulfillment of the great promise which the future holds, and which breeds the never-ending menaces of war, insecurity and repression. And it is monopoly capital which must be opposed by the American people.

But the monopolists find it increasingly difficult to pursue their suicidal cold-war policies. The irrepressible popular sentiment for peace and friendship pushes them repeatedly toward steps in that direction. Such a step was the Geneva Conference in 1955. And such a step is the exchange of visits between President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev—a truly momentous advance in the fight for peaceful coexistence.

The decade ahead can be the decade in which the American people, united in a great national demo-

cratic coalition led by labor, can take major strides toward the attainment of a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

This can be the decade in which mankind is liberated from the peril of the cold war and the ever-present threat of catastrophic nuclear warfare.

It can be the decade in which fatal blows can be inflicted on the oppression of the Negro people which has defiled our land for more than three centuries.

The Communist Party faces this new decade with supreme confidence that these goals can be won, and to this end we American Communists pledge ourselves.

II

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE NEED OF A POLICY FOR PEACE

Maintenance of peace has become the primary issue of our time. Nuclear bombs, with their drizzle of poisonous fallout, and nuclear warfare threaten mankind's very existence.

Though there are diverse views among the American people on how peace may be achieved, the overwhelming majority are as one in their fear of nuclear preparations, their desire for peace, and their abhorrence of a world Hiroshima.

The outlook of the Administration is different. For it is the men of the trusts—those who exploit America's working people and who profit by armaments—that run the State Department, the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency. Their foreign policy is determined by their own greedy vested interests. Theirs is an imperialist policy aimed at world domination. They seek the subjection of other capitalist powers, the theft of the old colonial empires and the checking of colonial liberation movements, and the "containment" of socialism and destruction of the socialist states.

Although public opinion has compelled the spokesmen of Wall Street to go to Geneva, the dominant circles of monopoly have not altered their cold-war aims. Under the guise of strengthening "national defense," the cold warriors intensify the atomic arms buildup and expand U. S. military bases around the globe. Western Germany has become Wall Street's main arms base in Europe, and West Berlin has become NATO's forward base for espionage and provocation.

The State Department's China policy is based on retaining Taiwan as a missile-launching pad aimed at People's China, whose existence it still refuses to recognize. U. S. policy in Latin America and the Mideast is dominated by the oil trusts and other exploiters, who

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strive to crush or subvert the national liberation movements in these and other countries, and whose main immediate targets are the new popular governments of Cuba and Iraq.

These policies the men of the trusts seek to justify by inventing a "Soviet threat." But it is the Soviet Union, not the United States, which is surrounded by missile bases. It is not the Soviet Union but the United States which is rearming a renazified Western Germany. And it is Wall Street which becomes a scene of alarm with every easing of tensions and every "threat" of peace.

The threat of "Soviet aggression" is non-existent. For the Soviet Union and other socialist lands have no capitalist class, and there no one profits from war preparations and aggression. It is the Soviet Union which took the initiative in ending nuclear tests. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have pursued a consistent peace policy throughout. Indeed, such recent visitors to the U. S. S. R. as Adlai Stevenson, Averell Harriman and Vice-President Nixon were profoundly impressed by the spirit of peace which permeates that country.

And it is Wall Street which becomes a scene of alarm with every easing of tensions and every "threat" of peace.

The foreign policy of Wall Street and the Administration is not only aggressive, reactionary and warlike.

It is also bankrupt and doomed to failure. For the bipartisan cold-war program of Big Business runs counter to the genuine national interests of the American people, who are threatened with annihilation in the event of a new world war. Even now this adventurist imperialist policy is meeting increased opposition among the most varied sectors of our population, including some influential business circles.

In addition, the United States is becoming more isolated within the family of nations. Its relations with its allies are becoming more aggravated. The military alliance which it established at great cost in NATO is being undermined by the increasingly bitter economic conflicts between the United States and its junior partners and between Britain and Germany, as well as by the inability of the authoritarian De Gaulle regime to "solve" the crises which beset France.

Above all, the relationship of forces on a world scale has changed irrevocably in favor of the camp of peace, freedom and social progress. Socialism has emerged as an invincible world system. There has taken place a victorious upsurge of the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The peace movement in the capitalist world has acquired a new strength. With these developments, imperialism is declining, the imperialist aggressors are being checked

and war is no longer inevitable. And with the completion of the historic Soviet Seven-Year Plan and the new leap forward in People's China, there arises the possibility, within the next decade, of cementing peaceful coexistence and eliminating the scourge of world war forever.

Hence the gap between the objectives of U. S. imperialism and its ability to achieve them is steadily widening. During the past year alone, it suffered numerous setbacks. The armed forays of Wall Street in Lebanon and Quemoy were rebuffed. Its cruel musclemen in Cuba and Venezuela were ousted, and the ground under many of its other hirelings has been shaken. Heavy blows have been dealt to its efforts to prevent peaceful negotiations and scientific and cultural relations, as well as to embargo trade with the socialist countries. Under the pressure of its allies and the Soviet peace initiatives, plus the growing disillusionment of the American people in Wall Street's cold-war policies, its resistance to the foreign ministers' conference as a prelude to a summit meeting proved unavailing.

Despite these setbacks, despite the reluctance of Wall Street's "free world" allies, and despite the increasing unease and even hostility to its policies among sections of the American people, the Rockefellers, DuPonts and their associates are determined to continue along the

discredited and dangerous path of atomic threats and "brinkmanship."

Even as U. S. diplomats in Geneva are forced toward significant agreements on ending bomb testing, the missile maniacs in the Pentagon are stocking bases in West Germany, Italy and Turkey to the rafters with nuclear weapons. And as for Cuba, the State Department and the Pentagon, assisted by the FBI, are busily plotting the overthrow of the Castro regime and the imposition on the Cuban people of a new government subservient to the Wall Street sugar and utilities trusts.

If not combatted and checked, the actions of these, the most adventurist and aggressive monopolists and their agents, can ignite a world holocaust. The security and the very survival of the American people demand that they halt the present foreign policy and impose a new policy on the government. Such a policy will not arise automatically from the dangers and failures of the present one, but only through a broader, more determined and consistent struggle by the American people to end the cold war, to achieve peaceful coexistence.

It will emerge from the people's struggles to end nuclear testing and ban nuclear weapons, to achieve peaceful relations with the Soviet Union, and to end nuclear rearmament and military occupation of Germany and Berlin. It will grow out of the fight for recognition of

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People's China, and for non-intervention in Cuba or anywhere else in Latin America. It will develop through a determined movement to end the cold war and abolish the cold-war economy.

The issue of peace is the paramount issue in American political life. It is the central test of all parties, mass organizations and civic leaders. It is especially a test for labor, which is called on to lead in the fight for peace. On the resolution of this issue rests the future of our nation.

III

THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The present situation in the United States is marked mainly by growing economic instability, the mounting burdens imposed by the cold war and the intensified drive of Big Business for superprofits. It is marked also by more militant moods and rising struggles among the people, and by a new offensive of big-business reaction.

1. *The Economic Situation*

The American economy is once again on the upgrade. Production and employment are rising, and predictions of a new boom are wide-

spread. But the upsurge rests on a shaky foundation.

The most striking feature of the postwar American economy is its growing instability. Since World War II, there have been three slumps, of which the third was much the most severe. From each of these the economy has recovered at the cost of a higher level of public and private debt, a greater residue of unemployment and other features making for future crises of greater severity. And despite current high levels of production and employment, the outlook is that, within a year or two, the economy will again stagnate and decline and the privations visited on the working people in 1958 will reappear in aggravated degree.

In these slumps, especially the most recent one, the big corporations have used their economic power to maintain high monopoly prices and, through extension of automation and speedup, to increase their profits. The monopolies today are steadily extending their control over the economic life of our nation and the direction of government affairs. The growing rash of corporate mergers is increasing the concentration of economic and political power in their hands, and is accentuating the growth of state monopoly capitalism.

In response to the growing competition from other capitalist countries, American Big Business is stepping up its efforts to hold wages

down in this country. At the same time, it is increasingly resorting to establishing plants abroad, whose products are imported into the United States at the expense of jobs of American workers.

For the working class, the main consequences of all this have been mounting insecurity and the growth of chronic mass unemployment. The heaviest blows have been inflicted on the Negro, Puerto Rican and Mexican-American workers, as well as on youth and women.

This process is aggravated by the accelerated automation and relocation of industrial plants now under way, which confronts the American working class—skilled and unskilled, Negro and white—with new and mounting problems of joblessness and insecurity, and which is converting a growing number of major industrial centers into distressed areas marked by widespread chronic unemployment. Moreover, the costs of these developments are being largely borne by the working people through tax rebates to the big corporations by the federal, state and local governments.

Since the end of World War II, Big Business has utilized the federal government to impose a war economy, to foster anti-Soviet hysteria as a basis for sustaining the cold-war budget and the nuclear arms race, and to militarize industry, science and education. All this has served as a means of looting the federal treas-

ury for the enrichment of the missile manufacturers, the oil and chemical trusts, and other sections of monopoly.

The bipartisan cold-war economy has swollen government debt at all levels to mountainous proportions. It has placed a colossal burden of interest payments on the taxpayers, and has led to an intolerable tax load for the average American. Cold-war embargoes have disrupted foreign trade, with a considerable loss of sales for American manufacturers and a consequent loss of jobs for American workers.

The pouring of billions into a totally wasteful war economy has contributed greatly to inflationary price increases which victimize the working people, and especially those families (government employees, pensioners, veterans, welfare cases and others) with fixed incomes. And because of the economic burdens of the cold war, housing, health, education and other social welfare appropriations have been slashed; and many federal responsibilities have been shifted to states and localities, which are unable to meet them.

For millions of small farmers, long caught in a cost-price squeeze, rising monopoly prices and cold-war inflation have reduced the margin between costs and returns to the vanishing point. Tens of thousands of small owners, croppers and tenants have been swept off the land. In the rural South and elsewhere,

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acute privation and suffering is the lot of millions of Americans.

Of cardinal importance for the American working class is the fight for jobs—above all, the fight for the thirty-hour week, as well as for greatly improved unemployment compensation and other measures for the protection of jobless workers. These are directly related to the struggles against the efforts of the monopolies to hold wages down, to worsen working conditions, and to inflict ever higher prices on the workers and farmers. The basis of these struggles is unity of labor, the small farmers, the Negro people and small business in the battle against the economic gouging of the trusts.

2. *Militant Moods and Struggles*

The impact of the cold-war and "brinkmanship" policies of the Eisenhower Administration, the ravages of the economic crisis, the "get-tough-with-labor" drive of Big Business, the frenzied efforts of southern reaction to maintain its system of Jim Crow—all these have stimulated mounting resistance among the American people, in the first place among the workers and the Negro people.

Expressive of the growing militancy in the ranks of labor are a number of recent actions by the labor movement, undertaken largely under rank-and-file pressure and in some cases as a result of Left

initiative. Among these are the AFL-CIO national jobless conference and the statewide jobless marches in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois. Among them also are the strikes of the auto, farm equipment, airline, rubber, and New York hospital workers, and especially the strike of half a million steel workers, as well as the successful struggle against state "right-to-work" laws in the 1958 elections, with the accompanying defeat of a number of outstanding reactionaries at the polls.

Especially noteworthy are the advances made by the Negro liberation movement, which occupies a position of key importance in the American scene. The struggle to end Jim Crow oppression of the Negro people, which lies at the heart of the fight to destroy Dixiecratism and establish full democracy in the South, vitally affects the interests of the entire American working class and has served increasingly to spark struggles on issues of democratic import to the entire country.

In recent years, this struggle has taken on considerable added force and momentum. Popular participation has swelled and cooperation among the various sectors of the movement has increased, frequently inclusive of the Left-progressive forces. Outstanding among the actions undertaken by the Negro people, often with sizeable support of their white allies, are the Mont-

gomery bus strike, the heroic actions of Negro pupils in the South, the two great Youth Marches, and the widening movement in the North to elect Negroes to public office. These actions have had a major impact on the political life of the entire nation.

Among sections of the farmers, too, there has been growing dissatisfaction and resentment against their intolerable economic conditions. This was expressed particularly in the sweeping of Republicans out of office from numerous farm areas in the 1958 elections.

The recent past has witnessed also a growth of peace sentiment and extension of the peace movement. This has taken place on a broad though loose organizational basis, largely under the influence of church groups, educators and scientists, and with the Left also playing an active role. American intervention in Lebanon and Quemoy evoked widespread protests throughout the nation. The demand that the Administration end nuclear testing and ban the H-bomb has found a widening response in community meetings, peace "walks," petitions and sermons from the pulpit. There has been a warm response among all strata of the people to the artists, scientists and other visitors from the Soviet Union. In labor, business and church circles the demand is growing that the United States recognize People's China.

Opposition to loyalty oaths and governmental secrecy has grown, as have movements to abolish the Un-American Activities Committee, to implement the Supreme Court's desegregation order, and to demand that the Department of Justice halt its unconstitutional attacks under the Smith, McCarran and Taft-Hartley Acts.

3. *The Reactionary Offensive*

A new assault, directed against labor, the Negro people's movement and the advocates of peace and constitutional liberties, has been launched by the most aggressive and reactionary circles of monopoly capital. Its aims are to compel the people to bear the burdens of the cold war, to submit to the extraction of increased profits, to accept the policy of "brinkmanship" and interference in the affairs of other nations, and to stifle all opposition to its domestic and foreign programs.

It seeks to build on the considerable residue of the poison of McCarthyism with which our country is still afflicted, and to inflict on labor and the American people generally a series of repressive measures of a kind which could help pave the way to fascism. It would be a serious error, however, to equate these aims with fascism itself.

The onslaught against the trade unions, unmatched since the days of Hoover, embraces the decision of

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the big corporations to provoke strikes, as in steel, unless the unions capitulate, forego wage increases and agree to greater speedup. It embraces the McClellan anti-labor hearings, the Kennedy-Ervin-McClellan bill to regulate and license unions, and the imposition of dictatorial rule over some unions by the courts. And it includes the anti-union plan set forth by Nixon and the Cadillac Cabinet in the recent report of the President's Committee on Inflation.

In the South, a rebellion against the Constitution, inspired by the economic royalists, has been let loose by state and local officials and by southern senators and representatives in Congress. A fascist-type movement organized around the White Citizens' Councils has arisen and threatens to spread.

In the past year, some 250,000 Negroes have been wiped off the voter registration lists. Encouraged by the hands-off policy of the White House, state and local officials have condoned a new wave of lynching and terror. In all of the South, there has been no more than token school integration, and six southern states have refused to integrate even one Negro pupil. In several southern states, the NAACP has been outlawed and its members persecuted.

These menacing developments, whose brunt is borne by the Negro people, constitute a peril to constitutional democracy in the nation as a whole. Indeed, they are directed

against the democratic rights of all Americans, white as well as Negro.

The offensive of reaction is marked also by increasing manifestations of anti-Semitism, of which the most striking are the recent bombings and desecration of synagogues and cemeteries, in the South and elsewhere.

These offensives are accompanied by a renewed attack on the Bill of Rights. New thought-control legislation is being processed in Congress. The Congressional inquisitors have launched new witch-hunts. The Department of Justice plans to step up its persecutions of Communists and progressives. And in the Supreme Court, in the face of mounting reactionary attacks, a majority has developed in support of a retreat from some of its previous positions defending the Bill of Rights.

A new barrage has been launched on the ideological front, containing a mixture of old and new anti-communist slanders and demagoguery. The labor movement is labelled "monopolistic" and is charged with responsibility for inflation. Trade unions are smeared as "racketeer-controlled." Theories of "people's capitalism" and the "welfare state" are widely propagated, with attempts to discredit Marxist theory and socialism.

But the monopolists are not invincible. Their offensive can be stopped and thrust back. For 1959-60 is not 1949-50. A more militant

mood exists among the American people, and a leftward trend is discernable. Abroad, the world peace movement grows. The epic advance of socialist and communist construction and the influence of the peace policy and initiatives of the socialist world register ever greater impact on all peoples. The battle-cry of "freedom" grows stronger against imperialism on all continents. And the powerful actions undertaken by important sections of the popular forces have given them greater confidence in their ability to resist and defeat the offensive of monopoly capital.

IV

DEMOCRATIC UNITY OF THE PEOPLE VS. BIG BUSINESS

To defeat the reactionary offensive of corporate wealth, to advance the fight for peaceful coexistence, economic security and civil rights and liberties, it is necessary to achieve the broadest, most resolute *unity of action of the working class and its allies.*

It is essential to bring into existence an anti-monopoly people's coalition uniting labor, the Negro people, the small farmers, students, professionals, small businessmen and other democratic elements on a program of action for economic welfare, democratic rights and peace.

The component elements of this alliance are manifest in a variety of

forms—in the growing economic and political struggles of labor, in the upsurge of the Negro liberation movement, in the growth of peace sentiment and broadening peace movements, and in other movements and struggles. To be effective in achieving their objectives, as well as in building a popular democratic alliance, it is imperative to *unify and reinforce each of these at the grass roots.* It is necessary to draw in all who are prepared to engage in the fight, and to coordinate the separate but related and interacting mass activities in behalf of the people's needs and interests. It is essential to combat the divisive and corroding red-bating, class-collaborationist and cold-war policies pursued by the Right-wing labor and social democratic leaders, and by many liberal and Negro people's leaders as well.

Hence, most effectively to advance labor's fight for job and union security requires an extension of united economic and political action by *all* segments of organized labor and *all* workers, progressive or conservative. And the struggle for labor's rights and welfare will be enhanced to the degree that labor champions and leads the *general* fight for peace, democratic rights, and economic and social welfare.

Hence, to reinforce and advance the Negro people's movement for equality, dignity and security, it is necessary to build it on a foundation of all-inclusive unity. It is also

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necessary to bring forward in its leadership the Negro workers with their two million union members. It is likewise essential that white workers take the lead in strengthening the Negro-labor alliance in struggle against the infamous Jim Crow system and the reactionary GOP-Dixiecrat alliance. This is central to winning such vital objectives as FEP, both in legislation and union contracts, organization of the unorganized in the South, the right to vote, and adequate Negro representation. And these, in turn, are the necessary basis for the achievement of that broad democratic advance which is of such crucial importance not only to the Negro people, but to all American working people.

Hence, the further advance of the peace movement requires that substantial sections of the labor and Negro people's movements be drawn into it—particularly into the fights for East-West trade and for arms and tax reductions—and become its backbone and a driving force. It requires, too, the enlisting of other allies on issues of wide appeal, such as banning the H-bomb. And it requires the encouragement of all pro-peace individuals and currents, however limited, in both major parties, as a means of exerting ever greater pressure for peace on the Congress and the given administration in power.

It is incumbent on progressives, especially Communists, to support

these movements directed against the common enemy—monopoly. It is incumbent on them to show that these struggles are indivisible, that the merging of these streams into one mighty torrent will create a strength superior to that of monopoly and capable of winning gains far beyond the capacity of the separate organizations and movements. Progressive and Communist workers will, therefore, bend every effort to help reinforce these movements and help realize a common front.

The leadership of such a people's alliance against monopoly must come from the working class, the most progressive class in the nation. But for the working class to step forward into leadership, it must achieve a new status, that of political independence.

The resounding defeat of state "right-to-work" measures in 1958 shows what labor can do when it develops its independent political activity and unity, and joins forces with others in a common objective. At the same time, the failure of the 86th Congress to heed the mandate of labor and the people shows that it is one thing for labor to support and elect liberals, and another thing to rely on them or fail to build a year-round grass-roots movement to bring constant pressure on them and to influence their actions. It is one thing for labor to work within the two-party system, but quite another to depend on the two parties of big

business, to trail after them and neglect the building of its own political activity and organization.

To enable the working class to emerge as an independent political force in defense of its own interests and those of the great majority of the American people, to develop labor's class and political consciousness, the progressive and politically advanced workers must strive for a number of objectives:

1. It is necessary to fight for greater solidarity on the picket line and on the legislative and electoral fronts, for trade union democracy and militant, class-struggle policies, against business unionism and politics-as-usual, and against the employers' divisive weapon of red-baiting.

2. It is necessary to create in labor's ranks the understanding that the struggle against monopoly cannot stop at the water's edge. Support of monopoly's cold-war foreign policies cuts the ground from under the struggles against monopoly on the home front, and conversely, labor's full entry into the peace fight would strengthen immensely its battles for economic and social advance.

3. It is necessary to generate understanding in the labor movement that the fight for full equality of the Negro people is basic in the fight for human and democratic rights generally, and is essential to labor's fight for economic and social welfare.

4. It is necessary to stimulate

awareness of the need for the working class to develop its political action organizations (COPE, LLPE, PAC) and its joint activities with its natural allies, the Negro people and the small farmers, to influence the course of current political struggles and, in the process, to create the conditions for building a new mass party led by labor—a labor-farmer-Negro people's party.

To promote the achievement of this heightened, leading role of the working class, the Left and progressive forces need to be rallied and united to help spark the unity of all—especially the united action of the Left and the “center” or “middle-of-the-road” workers and labor leaders—in factory, union and neighborhood. Special efforts should be made to mobilize the Negro workers, the youth, and others of the most exploited workers, who are among the most militant, forward-looking sections of the working class.

In all this, a special responsibility falls on the Communists and others of the Left—the task of developing the class consciousness of the working class. They must explain over and over, in the course of these struggles, the issues and class forces involved, the nature of the monopolist enemy and the inter-relationship of the individual struggles. They must illuminate the path forward at every step, making clear both the immediate and ultimate perspectives.

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DRAFT POLITICAL RESOLUTION

They must open up to ever wider sections of the working class the great treasure of lessons from the democratic and progressive struggles of the American people, and from the rich experiences of working class movements throughout the world.

In this way the immediate needs and interests of the working people can be protected and advanced, and the road opened to the attainment of a new political alignment and a people's government resting on the strong foundation of a democratic anti-monopoly front, led by the working class.

V

THE 1960 ELECTIONS

The 1960 presidential elections can be an important stage in the struggle for peace and progress.

Will labor and the democratic forces be able to influence the outcome of these elections in a progressive direction?

Will they be able to weaken the stranglehold of the GOP-Dixiecrat alliance on Congress?

Will they be able to help elect an Administration responsive, in some respects at least, to the needs of the people and the supreme necessity of easing world tensions?

Will they be able to accomplish these tasks even though there is no breakaway from the two-party system of Big Business?

Will they be able to strengthen their own political organization and independence?

The answer is: Yes, all these things are possible.

There are, however, some formidable obstacles. Among them are the following:

The Republican Party of Rockefeller, Nixon, and the *Chicago Tribune*, which remains the favored party of the dominant circles of finance capital, has considerable electoral strength and unlimited funds. It is trying to don a liberal face and appear demagogically as the party of "peace and prosperity."

The Democratic Party, which has a mass base especially in the industrial areas, continues to be dominated nationally by Big Business interests. While advocating increased expenditures for social welfare, the Democratic high command and its congressional majority, supported by labor's top officialdom, champion the bi-partisan cold-war program and act to expand military appropriations. Indeed, they offer as a major indictment of the Eisenhower Administration the charge that it does not spend enough for "defense."

The Democratic Party still embraces within its ranks the Eastlands and Faubuses, as well as the Powells and Reuthers. And most of the

Democratic presidential aspirants as well as many of its pro-labor and liberal congressmen, are inclined to join hands with the "moderates" and effect a compromise with the Dixiecrats in the 1960 Democratic Party national convention and campaign.

Moreover, the strong oppositoin of labor, the Negro people and a growing number of small farmers to the GOP, and their mass dissatisfaction with the Democratic Party's wretched performance in the 86th Congress, has not yet reached the level where a new party alignment or a mass-based independent presidential peace ticket can emerge in 1960.

Nonetheless, the rising peace sentiment in our country, accompanied by the growing strength of the world peace camp, is having a marked impact on the electorate and on important circles in both major parties. This can facilitate the nomination and election of various candidates who favor modifying one or another aspect of America's foreign policy in the direction of promoting peace.

The conflict is sharpening between the advocates of Dixiecratism and the supporters of the Constitution, between "states rights" and civil rights, and between anti-labor and pro-labor legislation. This conflict is stimulating new political trends and regrouping of forces within the Democratic Party and among its supporters, in opposition to reaction and bossism. It is en-

couraging the development of non-partisan, independent political activity and organization among important sections of labor, liberals, and the Negro people who, in their great majority, still operate on the electorate arena primarily through the established machinery of the two old parties.

In these circumstances, the central political tasks confronting labor and the democratic forces are to organize mass movements and coalitions around key issues, to forge broad electoral coalitions to oppose the chief candidates of reaction, and to promote the nomination and election of pro-peace, pro-labor and pro-civil rights candidates for office at all levels, including trade unionists and Negro representatives. It is also essential to build independent electoral apparatus and organizations of labor and its allies, and at the same time to popularize the concept of a mass people's party led by labor.

Other tasks include making the voice of the supporters of peace heard in the election campaign, strengthening and multiplying the non-partisan Negro voters' associations both in the North and in the South, and augmenting the political cooperation of the trade unions and the Negro people.

It is necessary to support the struggle of the Negro people and disfranchised whites in the South to vote, and it is important to launch a nationwide campaign to ensure

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maximum registration, electoral activity and casting of votes.

In addition, a fight should be launched against the growing undemocratic restrictions which keep minority parties off the ballot and for proper reapportionment of representation and the abolition of gerrymandered districts.

Mass pressure should be exerted on county, state and national conventions of both major parties. Wherever possible, major party primaries should be contested, and where reactionary candidates have been nominated by both parties, democratic and peace candidates on independent tickets should be promoted.

By working along these lines, labor and the democratic forces can make headway in 1960 in ousting leading reactionaries from office. They can be in a stronger position to influence the next Administration and Congress, help prevent wavering and backsliding of the elected friends of labor, and hasten the trend toward a new political alignment and a mass people's party.

These goals cannot be achieved, however, through the formation of "independent socialist parties" such as have been attempted in some areas. These, supported by some liberals, progressives and socialist-minded radicals, and used as a base of operations by some Trotskyites, represent premature, sterile movements which can serve only to iso-

late the Left from the mainstream of labor and the Negro people.

The Communist Party will strive, in cooperation with the decisive sections of the working class and its allies, to help shape the outcome of the elections in a positive direction. The Party will cooperate with and help stimulate the independent political organization and activity of labor and all other democratic forces, and will support and participate in all united and democratic front alliances and movements. At the same time, it will develop its own independent activity, help clarify issues and popularize its basic program for an American road to socialism. And where conditions warrant and the opportunity exists, it will run its own candidates.

To advance the cause of peace and progress, the Communist Party will strive to enlist support for the following immediate program:

1. Guarantee America's national security by guaranteeing peace in the world. End the cold war and establish peaceful relations, trade and friendship with all nations.
2. Defend the Constitution and restore the Bill of Rights.
3. Secure equal rights for the Negro people, abolish Jim Crow segregation, demand federal action to enforce the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments.
4. Guarantee the right to a job and improved living standards. Obtain adequate compensation for all

unemployed for the entire period of unemployment. Establish a thirty-hour week with no reduction in pay.

5. Protect the rights of the small farmers to occupy the land and retain their chattels. Assure them adequate income through improved and broadened price supports. Limit acreage cuts for small farms. Provide cheap, readily accessible credit through government sources. Find markets for farm surpluses by developing trade with the socialist countries and using stocks of food to help feed the hungry, here and abroad.

6. Aid small business by reducing its tax burden as against that of the monopolies, and by providing through government channels a supply of cheap, dependable credit.

7. Enact an American Youth Act to provide tuition, training and jobs for the young generation.

8. Enact federal health, education and housing programs to meet the people's needs, also legislation to provide adequate support of the arts.

9. Curb monopoly profiteering. End cold-war subsidies and munitions profiteering. Place the main tax burden on corporate wealth. Establish public ownership and operation of all atomic energy facilities, railroads and public utilities.

VI

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The history of our country, in-

cluding the developments in the last two years, and the new opportunities and tasks facing the working class, confirm anew the indispensable need of the Communist Party, which is the Marxist-Leninist vanguard party of the American working class—the party of socialism.

In the recent period, the Party has successfully fought and defeated the anti-Marxist revisionists as well as a group of anti-Party dogmatists. Waging a determined struggle against factionalism and for the unity of the Party, defending and applying the principles of scientific socialism, of Marxism-Leninism, in accord with specific American conditions and the best interests of our working class and nation, our Party has begun again to unfold its mass policies, to bring its program to the people.

Despite the inadequacy and unevenness of its contributions, our Party is playing a constructive role in many of the unemployment, integration, peace, electoral and strike struggles of the people. In the process, the Party's influence, mass contacts and relationships are increasing in a number of areas and fields of work. And there the Party is being consolidated and revitalized.

But the cardinal problems of Party renewal, of building the Party and of establishing broader united front relations, remain largely unsolved. Therefore the chief task before the Party still is to overcome its isola-

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tion from decisive sections of the labor movement, to strengthen the Party's base, ties and influence among the basic industrial workers, Negro and white, and among the youth. Without this, the Party's capacity for helping transform its policy into living reality will remain seriously impaired.

Moreover, Party building and the further implementation of the Party's mass political line will proceed very slowly and unsatisfactorily unless the entire Party and its leadership seriously raises organizational work to the high level it requires.

Certain weaknesses in the Party's work today are in large measure attributable to shortcomings in the work of the national leadership. Among these are a failure decisively to end factionalism, a lag in tackling important ideological problems, an insufficiently vigorous fight for a united front policy, and inadequacies in collective work and the application of criticism and self-criticism.

In this connection, it is essential that the Party leadership at all levels improve its style of work, eradicate subjectivity and cultivate closer, and more comradely relationships, in which criticism and self-criticism will be constructive and mutually beneficial. And it is especially urgent that the leadership work at all times to reinforce the unity of the Party.

It is necessary to effect a marked improvement in the way in which

the Party fulfills its vanguard role, especially in its ideological work, in extending its independent mass activity, and in unfolding its united front policies. Also, the readership and study of *The Worker* and *Political Affairs*, and of Marxist literature of all kinds, must be greatly expanded.

The exercise of its vanguard role requires, among other things, expanding to the maximum the organizational and political initiatives of the Party on all levels. Taking into account the deprivation of legal rights imposed upon the Party by Big Business reaction in violation of the Constitution, especially in industrial centers and the South, the Party's vanguard role must be exercised in such a way as safeguards the ability of Communists to remain among the masses, strengthen their ties with them and win them for the Party's mass policies. At the same time, the Party must boldly utilize all public channels for expression and activity, and intensify the fight for re-establishment of its full constitutional rights as part of the general fight of the working people to restore and defend the Bill of Rights.

Effectively to carry out the Party's mass political line, to accelerate labor unity and the development of the democratic front for peace, democracy and security, it is necessary to master and apply concretely and flexibly the Party's united front

policy. *In many respects, this remains our biggest unwon battle.* Victory in this battle is the key to progress on all fronts, now and on the morrow. It is a battle which must be waged by every Party leader, and member, in shop and community, in the unions and other mass organizations.

The Party must search out what is new and promising in the current and unfolding mass struggles. It must find the ways and means of establishing more extensive personal contacts and friendships, and wider formal and informal organized political relationships with other progressive workers on key issues. It must work to revitalize the Left and promote the broadest unity of action of the Left with the progressive or center forces and, on certain issues, with the conservative forces as well.

The Party must give special consideration to the problems and mass struggles of American youth. It must give its support to the building of a Marxist-oriented youth organization in this country. Attention to work among the national groups must be restored. In this connection, it is necessary to combat the erroneous idea that these groups are disappearing as significant forces in the American scene.

The Party must also strive to strengthen international working-class solidarity. Above all, it must strive to build ever closer ties with

the working people of the Latin American countries, who labor under the oppression of American imperialism.

As never before, it is important that the Party, from top to bottom, grasp more deeply and develop further the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism, boldly grappling with the new problems confronting our working class and country, and learning from the experiences and views of the masses, as well as from world workingclass experience.

It is necessary to strengthen the ideological content of our mass work day in and day out. Anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism must be exposed as the chief weapon of the trusts to mask their robber plans of aggression and exploitation abroad and at home. Racism, anti-Semitism, bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism must be bared as a divisive hatchet dividing Negro and white, native and foreign born at home, and "justifying" U. S. imperialist domination abroad. The "people's capitalism" and "welfare state" panaceas must be unmasked as demagogic propaganda spread by the open apologists of Big Business as well as by the revisionists in their efforts to confuse and disorient the working people, to prevent them from struggling effectively against monopoly and to divert them from the path to socialism.

Within the ranks of the Party and among other progressive forces, it

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is necessary to wage the most uncompromising and consistent struggle against revisionism. This opportunist trend has its source in the ideology of the imperialist ruling class which, through a whole range of social reformist and "class partnership" ideas and illusions, exerts its pressure on labor and the middle classes and, in turn, within the Party. Exposing and combatting revisionist ideas and practices, which did great damage to our Party in the period from mid-1956 to 1958, as well as in earlier periods, is our main ideological task.

At the same time, the Party must vigorously combat doctrinairism and sectarianism. Equally with revisionism, these stem from ruling-class ideology. And they are equally a form of opportunism—in fact, they are but the other side of the coin of Right, revisionist opportunism. In addition to fighting relentlessly against ultra-Leftism, the Party must wage a persistent struggle against deeply ingrained concepts, practices and influences of "Left" sectarianism which today permeate a number of Party organizations and leaders, especially in regard to mass work and the problems of the united front.

Above all, the Party must conduct an uncompromising struggle to eradicate from its ranks every vestige of the destructive evil of factionalism.

In order to make our Marxist con-

tribution to the general welfare, to multiply our mass influence and build the party as a mass party, we Communists must expand our advocacy of socialism. We must explain how with the socialist reorganization of society our country, with its great working class, resources and technology, can bring forth an age of economic, cultural, social, intellectual and democratic well-being far beyond the boldest dreams of any generation of Americans. We must show that the Communist Party advocates and strives to help bring into existence this new social system by peaceful and democratic means, and we must show that in this new socialist society there will be only production for use and peace, not for profit and war; there will be life, liberty and happiness for all Americans—Negro and white; there will be public ownership under a government led by the working class.

Especially now when there is a widespread interest among millions of Americans as to how the third of mankind already under socialism lives, when the historic Soviet seven-year plan promises such epoch-making advances, and when the peace policy and initiatives of the Soviet Union exert an ever greater influence in world affairs, it is timely and essential to demonstrate anew the superiority of socialism over capitalism and the promise which socialism holds of a happy and

peaceful life for the people.

* * *

The decade of the sixties is a period in which the American people will take great strides forward. And it is a period in which our Party and its influence can grow

many times over, in which it can become a mass party of the American working class, in the vanguard of the struggles of the American people for peace and progress and throwing a beacon light toward an America of brotherhood and peaceful labor—a socialist America.

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Draft Resolution on the Negro Question in the United States

The decade of the sixties will mark the hundredth anniversary of the emancipation of the Negro people from chattel slavery in the United States. It will also register the hundredth anniversary of the enactment of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. These Amendments proclaimed that Negroes should enjoy equality of citizenship status and constitutional rights with all other Americans.

Yet today, almost a century after the enactment of the Civil War amendments, Negroes are not free and equal citizens. On the contrary, now numbering some 18 millions, 11 percent of the total population, they are the most severely oppressed and exploited of the national groups which compose the American nation. They are subjected to a systematic pattern of segregation, discrimination, and racist defamation in varying degrees, in all areas of the country and in all aspects of life.

The oppression of the Negro people manifests itself in three characteristic features: the denial of equal economic opportunities, political

rights and social advantages. All three are rooted deep in the historic development of the nation—in slavery and in the long period of oppression which has followed emancipation.

Their historically defined position of unequal citizenship is further reinforced by racist color prejudices and proscription. As a result of this unique historical experience, the Negro people occupy a specially disadvantaged place among the nation's nationalities. All of this testifies to the inescapable fact that notwithstanding partial victories and limited concessions won through struggle, *the fundamental condition of Negro Americans remains unchanged; the problem of Negro oppression has not been solved.*

I. MAIN NEW FEATURES OF THE NEGRO FREEDOM MOVEMENT

The Negro people's national effort to free themselves from all manner of oppression, so that they might live as "free and equal" citizens of the United States, is exercised

through a loosely co-ordinated system of varied types of organizations, which is developing into a National Negro Freedom Front of which the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is the pivotal center. These organizations in their totality embrace all social classes in Negro life.

The significant court victories scored under the leadership of the NAACP over the past fifty years, combined with the sustained ideological campaign against racism conducted by other organizational instruments of the Negro freedom movement (Negro press, cultural organizations, etc.) have rendered profound changes in the common psychological make-up of Negro Americans. These changes are marked by a growing pride in their racial identification and the corollary to this is a mass rejection of long-imposed "white supremacy" standards which disfigure the American way of life. A secondary feature of this change is a *growing impatience* with leaders of the two major political parties, who skilfully and demagogically use "civil rights" as a political football. Consequently, there is a growing demand by the Negro people for more *deeds* to match the deluge of words. These changes continue to develop in response to, and as an ever more conscious part of, the world-wide colonial liberation movements.

These changes in the common

psychological make-up of Negro Americans find *organizational expression* in the developing Negro Freedom Front along the following lines: 1) the authority which the NAACP enjoys to act as spokesman for the entire eighteen million Negro people, and this authority is supported by the Negro church and recognized by the main strategic ally of the Negro people, the organized labor movement; 2) the growth of organized, disciplined, mass actions, designed to implement victories won through court action and legislation in the areas of school and bus desegregation and equal job opportunities; 3) the rise of nationalist sects and currents which contribute to the growing racial pride among the Negro people but which advocate petty-bourgeois "solutions" to the oppression of the Negro people; 4) a marked growth in non-partisan, independent political initiatives designed to enhance the power of the Negro citizen-electorate in American political life, and; 5) the beginnings of sustained, organized class initiatives by the Negro workers designed to improve their role as a progressive power-center within the American labor movement.

The dynamic interaction of these features and movements is the process which is quantitatively and qualitatively molding the character and scope of the developing modern Negro Liberation Movement.

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positive and progressive in these new features, the Negro people's movement is confronted with the task of overcoming the major ideological deficiency which still blunts the effectiveness of its activities—namely, the need to know the enemy, to know the bitter opponents of Negro freedom, against whom the main blows for emancipation must be directed. Continued unclarity on this vital question distinguishes the Negro freedom movement (in a negative respect) from all other movements of the world's oppressed peoples. Further, it lies at the heart of the differences which arise within the freedom movement regarding emphasis on mass protest action as against emphasis on legal (court) action, in pursuit of civil rights goals.

There are of course many historically determined reasons for this situation. Nevertheless, it is a weakness which must be overcome if the civil rights cause is to triumph in our country and segregation is to be abolished.

The urgency of the need to overcome this weakness is highlighted by the fact that the Negro freedom front is today faced with new attacks from its enemies. This new offensive is marked by the revival of lynch terror and wholesale disfranchisement of Negro voters in the South, and the increased use of police brutality against Negro citizens in the North. The enemies of democracy in our country are de-

termined that victories won will be empty victories which never get implemented in life. These attacks are part of a general offensive against the organized labor movement and stem from the same source.

II. BIG BUSINESS MONOPOLY: ENEMY OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE

The chief oppressor of the Negro people and the primary beneficiary of their oppression, is the class of monopolists, the capitalist commanders of the economic and political heights of our present social system. It is into their finance centers that the superprofits flow as a consequence of the extra exploitation of the Negro workers of factory and farm. It is their system of reactionary ruling-class political control that is bolstered by the disfranchisement of Negroes in the South; by the perpetuation of lily-white state governments as instruments of oppression, dedicated to the maintenance of "white supremacy" and pliant submission to the demands of Northern industrialists; and by the assurance of a sizeable block of their Dixiecrat servants in the federal Congress who are generally prepared to block all programs for social welfare.

It is their domination and poisoning of the cultural life and social customs of the nation that is strengthened by the prevalence of a far-reaching system of social indig-

nity and abuse, ranging from the customary exclusion of Negroes from tax-supported public facilities to the barbarous crime of lynching. Negro freedom can and must be achieved therefore, in the main, at the expense of the superprofits and the political power position of Big Business. It can be secured only through struggle against the monopolists and those who serve their interests.

III. CONDITIONS OF THE NEGRO WORKERS AND RURAL TOILERS: BASIC ISSUES IN THE BATTLE FOR FREEDOM

The yoke of oppression rests with special weight on the back of the Negro worker. For it must never be forgotten that the cardinal aim of anti-Negro oppression is super-profits, and those profits are most readily and directly realized out of the poorly paid toil of Negro workers.

Therefore the Negro workers, and especially the two millions who are members of the organized labor movement, have a special and decisive part to play in the fight for Negro freedom. Segregated largely in the hard-labor, basic production functions of United States industry, they are denied promotion to highly skilled jobs, excluded from apprenticeship training programs, and often denied equal pay for equal work. They are still excluded from some unions and shamefully discrimi-

nated against in others. In the ranks of the unemployed they loom proportionately twice as large as white workers.

Therefore, the most immediate and pressing material needs of the Negro worker—food, clothing, and shelter for himself and his dependents, security for his loved ones, and education and cultural advancement for his children—depend upon an unrelenting fight against Jim-Crow. Under present circumstances the Negro worker is forced to satisfy these family needs with 48% less family income than his white fellow-citizens. *This circumstance alone dictates that the Negro worker take the lead in alerting the entire labor movement to a national crusade to organize the unorganized in the South, and create a new base of support for the labor movement in the process.* The Negro worker's concern and interest lies in eliminating every vestige of discrimination from his industry, his shop, and his union, first of all; but it also extends to every phase of American life, for he knows that his inferior status in the economic life of the nation is partly fixed by the subordination of Negroes in the nation's affairs generally.

Mass Action for Liberation

To the struggle for Negro freedom the Negro worker brings many indispensable contributions. Fore-

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most among these is mass action, in the best traditions of the labor movement of which he is a part. Without this element the battle for Negro equality cannot be fully effective. Never has there been a more apparent need for joining the legal campaigns and educational activities which constitute the bulk of the program of the main Negro people's organizations with well-conceived, militantly directed actions involving masses of Negro people and their allies.

As such actions take place, the Negro worker may be expected to support and initiate them, not only with his own considerable and strategic strength, but also with the cooperation of thousands and eventually millions of his white fellow-workers.

Fully one-third of the Negro population who live within the deep Southern areas of Negro majority are farmers and rural toilers. It is at once apparent, therefore, that the struggle of the Negro medium and small farmers, the share-croppers, the tenants, the land-poor and landless farm toilers to secure their ownership and tenure of the land and to improve their livelihood and social, cultural, and political conditions, represents one of the major factors entering into the solution of the Negro question in the United States. It is an important part of the immediate struggles for the economic well-being and democratic rights of

the Negro people as well as for the strategic solution of the Negro's aspiration to political equality.

The Fight for the Land in the South

Industrialization and the growth of cities in the South, accompanied by the advance of mechanization in Southern agriculture, have resulted in an absolute decrease in the numbers of Negro toilers on the Southern countryside, especially in those categories so closely identified with cotton agriculture—share-croppers and share-tenants. Nevertheless, there continues to be a land question of a special character in the South which has features distinctly different from the problems of agriculture in the nation as a whole. Over-all land reform legislation is needed which would abolish the semi-feudal share-cropping system, just as peonage has been outlawed. Needed is the distribution of the biggest landlord estates among the croppers and share-tenants, both white and Negro, with land parcels of sufficient size in acreage to create a class of self-sustaining, independent farmers. The struggle to abolish the remnants of the semi-feudal production relations and its institutions in Southern agriculture continues to be a vital part of our nation's democratic effort to extend the frontiers of capitalist democracy to the South, as a fulfillment of the task left unfinished since Reconstruction.

Today the Southern Negro farm-

ers are engaged in a struggle for schools, hospitals, the right to vote, and political representation, for cheap electric power, adequate roads, and a fair share of various other public services.

The Negro farmers conduct their struggle through organizations and in such forms as are common to farmers generally in the country and to the Negro people in the South particularly. They strive to express their will at the polls to the meager extent that they can vote and are much occupied with activity for the right to vote. They petition, send delegations and hold conferences to formulate and make known their demands to the authorities. Though represented to some extent in all of the major farm organizations, the Negro poor farmers, like Southern white poor farmers, are largely unorganized in terms of a "class" organization in behalf of common economic and political demands. Organizations of the unorganized working farmers, Negro and white, is an outstanding urgent task before the labor movement as well as the Negro people's movement. Such an organizational effort can be successfully unfolded around a program of moderate reforms which would include demands for a moratorium on debts and evictions, interest-free or low-interest, long-term government financed loans for the purchase of land, livestock, farm equipment, seed, fertilizer, house construction

and repair, and so forth.

While properly emphasizing the importance of the struggle of the Negro farmers for the land in the total struggle of the Negro people for economic, political and social equality and national liberation, we should not exaggerate. If in the past we were able to speak of the struggle of the poor farmers for the land as the "main thing" in securing the conditions for the solutions of the Negro question in the United States, it was because of two considerations which no longer obtain. *First*, decades ago, over two-thirds of the Negro people were rural folk bound to the land in one form or another and therefore any basic improvement in the conditions of life of the Negro masses pre-supposed an improvement of their economic status on the countryside. Today, fully 70% of the Negro population are city dwellers. *Secondly*, the oppressive, reactionary, Jim Crow political and social superstructure of the Southern states had as its primary economic base the feudal-capitalist cotton, tobacco and cane plantations. The economic base of Bourbon rule and Negro oppression was the semi-feudal plantation economy, the smashing of which would deprive the Bourbons of their primary material stake in the oppression of the Negro people.

Economic Base of Dixiecrat Rule

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zation in all branches of Southern agriculture, the decline of the importance of cotton in the total agricultural economy of the South, and the corresponding rise in the production of those types of crops requiring the efficient use of daily wage-labor, have all contributed to a radical change in the forms of exploitation in Southern agriculture. The *dominant* form of class relationships in production is now wage-labor, replacing the old semi-feudal forms (sharecropping, and so forth). The Bourbon landlords whose political rule once rested on the economic foundation of exploiting share-croppers and share-tenants through the exaction of exorbitant land-rent, today primarily exploits the labor of wage-earners on the countryside. The Dixiecrats are more anti-labor than ever today, because they are motivated by the basic economic law of the system: that is, the need to secure maximum profits from their investment in labor power and machinery. The development of capitalism in Southern agriculture has contributed significantly to the enlargement of the wage-earning class in the Southern population as a whole. Further, it has strengthened the position of absentee, Northern finance-capital (monopoly) in Southern agriculture.

Hence, we see that the struggle for the land, "for the breakup of the plantations," cannot be cast as the solitary axis upon which the en-

tire outcome of the struggle for Negro freedom pivots; rather it should be viewed as a major, but subsidiary part of the Negro people's movement for economic, political, and social equality, on the one hand, and an allied struggle of the working class against the monopolists and men of the trusts on the other.

The Negro (and white) workers have special bonds with the semi-proletarian, poor farmer masses of the countryside and they stand in a special, durable relationship with each other within the all-class Negro freedom front.

Hence, the decisive class force in the Negro people's freedom movement (which ultimately will ascend to the leadership of that movement) is revealed as the workers.

IV. NEGRO POLITICAL UNITY ADVANCES THE GOAL OF POLITICAL EQUALITY

A major barrier to the Negro's freedom aspirations is the political handicaps which all but exclude him from effective participation in government. In many areas of the South, disfranchisement, sustained by illegal trickery, intimidation, and terror, is still the rule. Roughly 1,250,000 Negro citizens have, by painstaking and brave effort, won the right to vote in the eleven ex-Confederate states. But this is only a fraction of the 6,000,000 Negro adults who are entitled to the franchise in this area. On the strength of this disfranchise-

ment, Negroes are denied public office and have no part in running the state, county, and municipal governments which oppress them with an iron hand.

Though Negroes are a fourth of the Southern population, not one of their number occupies a seat in the national Congress. The determination of issues of greatest concern to their welfare is invariably in the hands of racist politicians who through long tenure and seniority based squarely on Negro disfranchisement, rise to dominant positions in the Federal legislature.

In Northern communities, where the vote is more readily available to Negro citizens, they are nevertheless denied by entrenched political machines the influence which their numbers would warrant. This is ordinarily accomplished by gerrymandering of election districts to deny Negroes representation, by excluding Negroes from positions of real power in the two capitalist-controlled parties, and by various other maneuvers.

The fight for Negro freedom, therefore, requires a determined crusade to win the right to vote and to be voted for in the South. The flagrant disfranchisement of millions of Negro citizens in the middle of the Twentieth Century, and in the face of the monopolists' loud boasting about the quality of American democracy, is so shocking and repulsive that great masses of people

in all parts of the country can be rallied to force an end to it. This is especially true if these masses are helped to realize that the result of this battle will be the extension of political democracy, not for Negroes alone, but for the whole nation. This battle for political equality can provide the next big break-through in the continuing struggle of the American people to wrest the political machinery of government from the hands of those forces whom President Roosevelt called the "economic royalists."

To succeed, the fight for political equality requires, first of all, the non-partisan political unity of the Negro people. Regardless of party affiliation, all Negroes are called upon to win for themselves and their people the right to vote, to support Negro candidates for public office, to exert their united pressure for advanced social measures in the state and national legislatures. And such united efforts of Negroes, whatever form they take, will be strengthened to the degree that they form working alliances with other non-partisan forces dedicated to independent action in the political field.

In recent years, many of the most dramatic and effective struggles of the Negro people have centered around the demand for equal enjoyment of the social facilities available to all other citizens. There is no more striking example of this than the battle for integration in the

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schools which remains an historic hallmark in the Negro people's advance toward equality. Side by side with this struggle, Negroes have pressed to eliminate segregation in travel facilities, in housing, in playgrounds, parks, libraries, and in all other aspects of American life.

In the conduct of all these struggles—for economic, political, and social equality—there inevitably arises in the Negro movement different approaches and estimates of the task and the best means of accomplishing it. These differences rise largely out of differences in class orientation of the component economic classes which constitute the Negro movement.

Some would rely almost exclusively on appeals to the judiciary. Others see the winning of the franchise, not merely as a key objective, but as a cure-all. Still others place a preponderant emphasis on education, in the belief that real progress must wait upon a kind of intellectual conversion of a majority of white Americans. Still others would win gains through a skilful political game, pitting one political party against another and taking advantage of the need of both for the support of Northern Negro voters.

To a degree, all of these approaches have merit. What is decisive, however, is that no approach, no tactic, is likely to succeed unless based on the concept of *democratic mass struggle by the Negro people,*

in alliance with labor and all other anti-monopoly forces in the nation. This is the only way that the slogan "Free by Sixty-Three" has a chance of becoming a living reality. More immediately, this is the kind of political outlook which will serve to give new enthusiasm to the Negro people's nation-wide effort to radically increase the size of the Negro electorate, everywhere in the country, in readiness for the 1960 presidential elections. This is the biggest job facing the Negro freedom movement during the coming period.

V. NEGRO PROGRESS IS AMERICAN PEOPLE'S PROGRESS

Each advance of the Negro movement weakens the reactionary power of monopoly in American life. It therefore deserves to be hailed and supported by those who are the prime victims of monopoly greed—the workers of mine, mill, and factory.

Conversely, every victory of the working class in its battle for higher wages, better conditions of work and increased social security marks an inroad into the mammoth economic power of the capitalist spawners of Negro oppression. It therefore calls for the sympathy and aid of the organized Negro movement.

Sufferers at the hands of a common enemy, the Negro people's liberation movement and the forces

of organized labor must increasingly make common cause to find relief from the ills imposed upon both by their mutual foe.

Experiences over the years and today's serious situation are making this fact increasingly recognized by organized labor. Distinct bonds of co-operation have been developed, especially over the past two decades. These bonds should be strengthened as speedily as possible. Negro trade unionists have recently taken a history-making step towards cementing these bonds of labor-Negro people's unity. It is in the self-interest of white workers to respond to this initiative so that organized labor and the Negro people can move as one to meet the offensive which Big Business interests have launched against each.

Not labor alone, but all social classes and currents which are in any degree restricted in their democratic development by monopoly capital, have a stake in the cause of Negro freedom. Thus, the family-size farmer, the small businessman, the professional middle classes are called upon to champion the Negro's struggle to be free. And the Negro movement must see in these broad, democratic anti-monopoly forces actual and potential allies.

This way, the cause of Negro liberation will prosper. This way, the Negro movement will be able to hurl against the Big Business stronghold of American racism not only

its own proper and growing strength, but also the massed power of all groups in American life which are by the nature of our society, the Negro's most likely allies and monopoly's natural enemies.

VI. IMPACT AND SUPPORT ABROAD

The Negro movement's need and possibilities for sympathetic alliance do not end with the nation's borders. Few there are who will deny that, in recent years especially, the fight for equal citizenship has been enhanced by the sympathy and support which it has aroused abroad. The lessening of prestige which the imperialist class of our own country has suffered abroad because of the continuation of flagrant oppression of Negro Americans, their efforts to cajole colonial and recently liberated nations into the anti-Communist Western camp, and most particularly their acute embarrassment in face of the Soviet Union's, China's, and the socialist world's repeated examples of genuine solidarity with the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—all these have hastened the limited concessions which the ruling class has made to the demand for Negro freedom at home.

The Negro movement will be strengthened, then, to the degree that it forges bonds of conscious alliance with the rising colonial, semi-colonial and newly independent na-

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tions of the world. They have taken a glorious and irreversible path which leads to freedom from imperialist domination. Negro Americans have much to gain from their success and many lessons to learn from their struggles. Further, these nations have had first-hand experiences with Jim-Crow practices that have been imported into their respective countries along with other U. S. "commodities."

The emergence within the United Nations of a powerful Afro-Asian bloc, which carries a moral-political influence of world-wide impact, is of tremendous significance as a new, untapped source of strength favorable to Negro freedom.

Likewise, as the Negro people became better acquainted with world realities, they will undoubtedly come to look with increasing favor upon socialism, which in vast areas of the world and among more than a third of the world's peoples, has wiped out national oppression and eliminated the *source* of class domination, the capitalist profit system.

Negro Americans Hold a Vital Stake in World Peace

Ever since the colored people of Japan suffered the indescribable devastation resulting from the first atomic bombs, dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the world-wide movement for peace, for the banning of atomic weapons, has

been growing each year. The bridge that links the movement for world peace with the freedom movements of the world's oppressed peoples, is precisely the fact that life and freedom are inseparable. The continued testing of atomic weapons threatens mankind's existence on the planet earth. Further, such imperialist military blocs as NATO, organized early in the cold war, under the guise of "defense," have provided military weapons used in a desperate effort to defend and preserve colonialism, and with it racism, in Africa and Asia. These facts of life were fully recognized by the delegates who participated in the Bandung and Accra conferences, which placed the question of world peace at the very center of all their deliberations. The success of the struggle for freedom hinges in the last analysis on the success of the struggle for world peace, of humanity's noble effort to stay the hand of the atom-bomb wavers and eliminate the danger of war forever.

A central task of all dedicated leaders within the Negro people's movement is to aid in the promotion and recognition of the inseparability of the struggle for world peace from the realization of necessary objective circumstances favorable to the triumph of the cause of Negro freedom. The foes of world peace and the oppressors of the Negro people have a common class root—monopoly capital, imperialism.

VII. THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE NEGRO PEOPLE

Throughout its forty-year history, the Communist Party of the United States has been a proud participant in the struggles of Negro Americans for freedom, equality, and justice. While making the fullest possible contribution to the performance of the day-to-day tasks of the Negro freedom movement, the Communists also dedicate themselves to winning the movement's acceptance of the *concept of mass democratic struggle by the Negro people in alliance with labor and all other anti-monopoly forces in the nation*. The Negro people, like all oppressed peoples and classes, are burdened by the yoke of reaction, plundered by capitalists, or under the heel of imperialist domination. Increasingly they will become aware that their most cherished aspirations and needs are reflected in the program of the Communists, in their science of social emancipation called Marxism-Leninism, and in their noble goal of replacing the reign of the capitalists by a new social order. That social order—socialism—promises a truly just society without exploiting classes, a society of material abundance and cultural richness open to all. Socialism would enable the Negro people to overcome, *in the shortest possible time*, all of the handicaps imposed upon them as a result of three centuries of oppression under

capitalism.

During the forty years of its existence as an American working-class political party, the Communist Party has demonstrated by *deeds* as well as in words that it stands for the full economic, political, and social equality of Negro Americans. The role of the Communist Party in the great nation-wide crusade to free the innocent Scottsboro boys in Alabama; the contribution made by Communists towards implementing the "no-discrimination" policy when the CIO was being organized during the '30s and early '40s; and the sustained campaigns to secure model FEP clauses in union contracts since that time—these are among its proudest accomplishments. The Communist Party set a pioneering example for other political parties in running qualified Negro candidates for public office, and has made a special contribution in popularizing the science of emancipation as a guide to Negro freedom struggles. Today, Communists continue to play their role in the day-to-day struggles for equality for Negro Americans, around such issues as school and housing desegregation and they are active participants in the nation's effort to preserve and defend the U. S. Constitution from the assaults of the Dixiecrat-led rebellion in the South.

The Communist Party makes no claim to perfection; it does claim that its record is second to none a

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a devoted, reliable support to the Negro people's valiant struggle for equal rights and fully respected first-class citizenship. Many among the staunchest and most far-seeing sons and daughters of the Negro people join the Communist Party. There they find no color bar. They find unity and militant struggle for the rights of their people; they find Negro Americans occupying major posts of leadership. Indeed, the Communist Party has been in the forefront of the working class and the Negro people's freedom movements. It is the party of Negro and white Americans united in a common struggle for equality, social justice, and world peace.

During the past decade, anti-Communist prejudices have been systematically spread by all of the propaganda centers owned by Big Business in our country (the press, radio, etc.). This propaganda deluge, further implemented with Gestapo-like harrassment by the FBI, is designed to confuse the real issues facing the people of our country, create fear, suspicion and division, and thereby blunt the effectiveness of united struggle by all sections of the American people concerned with democracy, higher living standards, and peaceful relations with all countries. Despite the setbacks registered by the American people against McCarthyism, red-baiting has been developed to a poisonous national institution, reinforcing that of racism.

The Eastlands and Faubuses and their like have been quick to seize the weapon of redbaiting in their war against the Constitution and the rights of the Negro people. The basic fact that must be faced is that any acceptance of the Big Lie that there is a "Communist conspiracy" in our country, by its very nature and logic, gives birth to another Big Lie (used very often and very effectively in the South)—the charge that Negro organizations engaged in struggle for freedom, white liberal supporters of that freedom effort, and the Supreme Court's desegregation decision are all part of the so-called "Communist conspiracy." Basic progress of the working class, the Negro people, and the nation as a whole heavily depends upon the rejection of this whole fabric of lies, which has as its class source Big Business and its Dixiecrat servants.

On the Withdrawal of the Slogan of Self-Determination

Early in its formative years, the American Communist Party put forward a program for the full economic, political, and social equality of the Negro people. It was the first political party in America to do so. This demand sloganizes its program today. In 1930 the Communist Party adopted further programs on the Negro question in the United States in a pioneering effort to theorize and project a principled solution to

that special feature of Negro life—the oppression of the plantation-bound masses of Negroes in the so-called “Black Belt” area of the deep South. The long-continued land occupancy by a Negro majority population in this area (dating back to Civil War Times), and the brutal terrorist political rule to which that population was daily subjected, called for a bold, basic political-freedom program, designed to alter power relationships in what appeared at the time to be a permanently stable community. To serve this need, the Communist Party put forward the slogan and program known as “self-determination for the Black Belt.” This program did much to highlight before the nation and the world the dismal plight, the semi-slave status of the Negro majority under the brutal yoke of the plantation Southern states oligarchies. Also, it helped inspire leaders of the disfranchised Negro masses in the “radical years” of the Great Depression to numerous militant struggles for their rights.

Nevertheless, this particular program and slogan for the solution of the Negro question in the U.S. was revealed to be an incorrect orientation by the course of the developments in our country and within the Negro people’s movement. The area in question has undergone changes of sufficient significance over the past thirty years to warrant the conclusion that the separate national de-

velopment of this sub-region in the South ceases to be a correct outlook and program for this area. Life experience and greater knowledge of the question have exposed the deficiencies in the self-determination program and for this reason the “self-determination” projection and program for the solution of the Negro question in the U.S. is now discarded. Our party’s view and policy in respect to the solution of the Negro question in the U.S. is to *secure with all speed their fullest realization of genuinely equal economic, political and social status with all other nationalities and individual citizens of the U.S. nation, including their inalienable right to genuinely representative government, with proportional representation in the areas of Negro majority population in the South.*

This program more fully harmonizes with the historically shaped aspirations and developmental needs of Negro Americans and with a Marxist scientific definition of this particular variety of the national question: *the Negro people are a racially distinguishable ethnic group, which historically has been and is today the largest and most severely oppressed of all the minority peoples which compose the American nation of the United States.*

The achievement of the above stated programmatic objectives can only be realized through intensive struggle of a mass action character

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spearheaded by the united, mass action of the Negro people themselves and joined in by the labor movement and all democratic, progressive and anti-monopoly and anti-Dixiecrat forces in general.

The Communist Party does not advocate that the working class or the Negro people resort to violence as a means of achieving the desired goals. However, the right of any person to defend life and property by any means necessary when confronted with violent attacks is a right that is universally recognized in all civilized societies. We have always called attention to the fact that violence originates with ruling-class circles; for example, the winning of trade union rights in basic industry during the '30s would have been a much easier job had it not been for the violence of the employers carried out by hired thugs and club-swinging policemen. The oppression of the Negro people is maintained through violence. Racism and segregation as a "way of life" are sustained by the lynch system, police brutality, and so forth. It is the responsibility of the Federal government to protect all citizens everywhere in our country from such violence and to defend and uphold the Constitutional rights of all citizens. The failure of the executive and legislative branches of the Federal government, the Eisenhower Administration and the national Democratic Party, to uphold the

Constitution is indirectly responsible for the violence against the Negro people in the South that is spreading like wildfire today. This poses a threat to the very foundation of Constitutional government in our country and calls for widespread public pressures to be brought to bear on the Federal government to fulfill its responsibilities to the American people.

VIII. BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AND THE NEGRO PEOPLE

The Communist Party declares that the main unfulfilled task of capitalist democracy in the United States is revealed in the special oppression of the Negro people.

In this connection, there is no national task of greater moment for all the forces of social progress of our nation than that of joining the struggle for securing the full and equal economic, political, and social rights of the Negro people. The accomplishment of this objective in the coming decade would have the most favorable effect upon the development of the whole front of social progress in our country. Victory on this sector would open the way to rapid developments along the whole front for radical social advancement of the entire nation.

Basic successes in the struggle for the Negro's political, economic, and social equality and against racial segregation and discrimination are

indispensable prerequisites for the further rapid development of working class unity, working class consciousness, working class political initiative and advanced working class-led people's anti-monopoly political action.

The Negro people's freedom movement is objectively a major partner of the coalition of anti-Big Business forces. The logic of its struggle and the internal force of its preponderant working class composition can bring it to conscious partnership in the ultimate struggles for the replacement of the capitalist system itself by a socialist system.

An ideological, educational and demonstrative crusade against the pernicious and barbarian-like concepts, customs and practices of anti-Negro racism, "white supremacy" attitudes and white chauvinist deeds

must be the constant accompaniment of all practical activities in the struggle for Negro rights, on the part of democratic and progressive forces, and Communists in the first place.

The bonds of Negro oppression can and must be shattered! All signs point to an early and triumphant resolution of the centuries-old battle of the Negro people for full and equal citizenship. This in itself will represent a long-overdue American achievement of great historic significance. In addition, by providing the basis for a higher unity of the working class, it will help pave the way for a socialist transformation of the national economy. The Communist Party pledges it will work toward the attainment of this noble objective with unstinting effort and unwavering dedication.

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Communications

ON THE MEANING OF "IDEOLOGY"

Your July issue contained a stimulating and informative article by Sidney Finkelstein on "Art and Ideology." Certain statements by the author on "ideology" deserve comment.

Basing himself on a reference to Engels (p. 41), Finkelstein identifies (1) ideology with a false method of thinking: "An ideology is formed not as a depiction of reality . . ."; and (2) dialectical and historical materialism as "not an ideology but opposed to all ideologies."

This definition of the word "ideology" is long in disuse and is not warranted in contemporary Marxist literature. Lenin, in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (Selected Works, International Publishers, Vol. XI, p. 406) refers to "the struggle of parties in philosophy, a struggle which in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society." Similarly, in his article, "The Ideological Struggle in the Labor Movement," (ibid., p. 745), Lenin refers to the "ideological struggle between two trends in Marxism. . . ."

Further, Mao Tse-Tung in *Problems of Art and Literature* (International Publishers, p. 23), referring to literature and art for workers, peasants and soldiers, states: "What are we going to propagandize among them? A feudal ideology? A bourgeois ideology? Or perhaps a petty-bourgeois ideology? No. We must propagandize only the ideology of the workers, peasants, and soldiers." Mao and the other leaders of the Chinese Party continually use the expression "consolidating the Party ideologically, organizationally and politically."

Krushchev in his Report to the 21st Congress (British Edition, p. 89), refers to "Marxist-Leninist theory, the foundation of our ideology."

Finally, reference can be made to the *Short Philosophic Dictionary* published in the Soviet Union (translated here as *Handbook of Philosophy*, International Publishers, pp. 57-58), where ideology is defined as: "a term used during the past century to denote the whole complex of views, ideas, concepts, notions, functioning on a social level—a form of social consciousness. Political views, sciences, philosophies, ethical systems, arts and religions are forms of ideology, in this sense of the word, regardless as to whether they are true or false, progressive or reactionary. All ideologies are outgrowths or reflections of the existing social reality. . . ."

In the light of the accepted usage of the term "ideology," I think that Finkelstein's definition confuses the general reader. In fact, "ideology" is not necessarily identified with a false concept of the world, but is a generic term. Dialectical materialism is properly defined as an ideology, a correct scientific one, and the basis for the world outlook of the working class and of communist society. Dialectical materialism contrasts with the ideology of other classes, whose outlook is incorrect and unscientific, being idealist and metaphysical.

Finkelstein's definition of "ideology" leads him to write: "To Marxism, there is always a distinction between ideologies and 'real, positive knowledge of the world.'" (p. 42). For Marxists, this juxtaposition does not conform to the accepted usage of the term "ideologies" as comprising both those that are false and those that are Marxist, scientific.

Later, Finkelstein states: "Marxists *sometimes* will think of Marxism, of dialectical materialism as a 'true ideology.'" (p. 44) The fact is that Marxists not only "sometimes" but regularly think of dialectical materialism as a "true ideology."

One more point. Finkelstein writes (p. 47): "A weakness of the sociological approach is that it is not social enough." This implies that the weakness is a quantitative insufficiency. But the main weakness of the bourgeois sociological approach is qualitative. It mechanically equates various sociologic aspects as of equal significance, or stresses secondary or fanciful aspects as primary. It rejects historical materialism which posits economics as primary in the origin of ideology and as ultimately decisive.

H. N.

A REPLY

H. N. says that the distinction I make between ideologies and dialectical materialism is "long in disuse and is not warranted in contemporary Marxist literature." If this is true, then works like Engels' *Feuerbach* or other writings of Marx and Engels in which the same thought is expressed, should not be offered as basic treatises of Marxist philosophy. There is *The German Ideology*, for example, with the statement, "In all ideology, men and their circumstances appear upside down as in a *camera oscura*." At least, such books should be provided with prefaces saying that this approach to ideology is "long in disuse and not warranted." I do not think, however, that this will happen.

H. N. says that this distinction I offer "confuses the general reader." It may be that an approach differing from what is commonly accepted

will be temporarily confusing, in the sense of offering a problem over which to ponder. But if it has validity, then it may lead to a greater clarity. To me, there is far greater possibility of confusion in using one term, ideology, to denote two different and diametrically opposed methods of thought; on the one hand, the ideological systems of antagonistic class society, which offer themselves as eternal truth, unchanging, and which actually support the rule of one class over another; and on the other hand, dialectical materialism, which is not a body of thought alone, or a "system," but the essence of which is that it unites theory with practice, sums up and brings together the discoveries of the sciences, and lives only through constantly refreshing itself with new discoveries and the real life experiences of people.

To "simplify" this by saying that the working class and Marxist thought is "true ideology," as against the "false ideology" of other classes, is not a simplification. I believe it leads to great dangers. One of them is dogmatism, with its belief that by learning some general principles of dialectical materialism, one has become the possessor of "truth," and no longer need study or keep in touch with the actual facts, discoveries and changes that take place in reality. I would describe what happens by saying that dogmatism turns dialectical materialism, which is not an ideology, into an ideology.

H. N. writes, "Dialectical materialism contrasts with the ideology of other classes, whose outlook is incorrect and unscientific, being idealist and metaphysical." This exhibits, to me, the dangers of oversimplification. One would not know, from H. N.'s statement, that the "other classes" to which he refers, have at certain periods made great contributions to the truthful knowledge of reality, to materialism, to science, to dialectics, to everything he considers good. One would not understand, from H. N.'s statement, why it is that among the working class, and those who have studied and accepted dialectical materialism there have been great theoretical errors and continue to be theoretical controversies.

The difference is not between two opposing bodies of thought, but runs deeper. It is between two opposing methods of thought. A class can make great contributions to knowledge, when it is also developing and expanding the means of production. But so long as it lives by exploiting another class, it is menaced by change itself. It must embody its discoveries into a closed, static ideology, which does not admit change. The working class, on the other hand, challenges all exploitation of one class by another, and upholds the interests of all humanity as against those of any special segment of it. It establishes the means for eliminating all exploitation, and therefore the

existence of antagonistic classes. It lays the basis for thinking which is directly tied to the actual laws of movement and change in real life. Under the pressure of actual conditions, violent struggles, bitter attacks, temporary obstacles and setbacks, it can make errors. But basic to its method of thought is its acceptance of change and progress, the constant checking of its conclusions against the developments of real life, and therefore its consistent critical evaluation of its own concepts.

To lump these opposites together under one term of "ideology," calling one "false ideology" and the other "true ideology," is not helpful, in my opinion, but confusing. As for the array of quotations which H. N. presents, each would have to be discussed in terms of its own context, and that is not possible in this letter. I do consider the passage he quotes from *The Handbook of Philosophy* to be a bad formulation, and needing correction.

H. N. is, I think, somewhat dogmatic in the last paragraph of his letter, when he says that bourgeois sociology "rejects historical materialism which posits economics as primary. . . ." There are many forms of the sociological approach. One form of vulgar sociology is economic determinism, which does take much from historical materialism, and tries to make economics primary. In the arts, for example, vulgar sociology regards each artist as the spokesman for and defender of his own class interests, or of the ruling class. It would be at a loss to explain such a writer as Count Tolstoi, who was a member of the landed nobility, and yet in his writings presented so profound a critical analysis of his own class. What is true is that the problems which Tolstoi took up in his writings were those thrown up by the stage of economic development in the Russia of his time, and the accompanying social struggles. The weakness of vulgar sociology is not that it fails to make economics primary. It does not see the processes through which economics makes itself felt.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

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