

# The Fight Against Revisionism in the U. S. Communist Party

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## I.

### PREFACE

#### The Need for Marxist Discussion in the United States

During the past year there have been a large number of expulsions from the U.S. Communist Party. These expulsions have almost always been made on the grounds of "leftism." They included both national figures and rank and file members. These expulsions represent the attempt on the part of the national leadership of the Communist Party to continue the policy called "Browderism" that

was so universally rejected in the lower ranks of the Party. Those expelled, while differing on many fundamental questions, all opposed not only Browder personally but also the line of "Browderism." The leadership of the Communist Party by a ruthless program of expulsions, intimidation and threats managed to suppress all open opposition and prevent any discussion of their program or actions.



It is necessary, therefore, to deal not only with the revision of Marxism that took place on the most shameful basis in the last year, but also with the practical bankruptcy of this reformist policy. Never in the history of the Communist movement in the United States have so many defeats been registered in so short a time. Because of limited space, I will deal with only three of the fields in which the Communist movement has liquidated itself.

### **Trade Union Policy**

First, the leadership of the Communist Party has agreed to and furthered policies that have in effect outlawed the Communist Party in the trade union movement. At no time was the influence or the prestige of the Communist Party lower among the workers than today. The Communist Party agreed officially that neither the Communist Party nor the Communist ideology belongs in the trade union movement in general, nor even in the trade union movement that they were instrumental in organizing (the CIO). The unions which were under Communist influence are rapidly diminishing in numbers and even where they continue under the same leadership they are, in fact, completely independent of the Communist Party. The "new anti-Browderite" leadership of the Communist Party has liquidated the Communist Party in the basic working class organization even more effectively than the old maestro, Browder, himself.

In the liquidation of the Communist Party as a political party that appears before the workers, the new "revolutionists" also out-

did Browder. The unprincipled alliance with the Democratic Party became indefensible even from a reformist point of view. So much double talk and outright lying took place in the 1946 election campaign that it took either one who had lost his sense of smell or at least one with a very strong stomach to accept it.

### **1946 Election Campaign**

Let us review some of the outstanding "achievements" of the election campaign. The U.S. Communist Party declared that the Truman policy is leading the country to war and that it must be opposed and denied all support. Lehman and Mead were nominated to head the ticket for the N. Y. State elections on the Democratic Party line. The program on which they were nominated was: Full support for the Truman foreign policy. The "principled" answer of the Communist Party was to withdraw all but one of its own candidates in favor of the Democratic ones. In addition to the obvious opportunism of this action it deprived the Communist Party of a place on the ballot for at least four more years. This same policy was carried out in every state election campaign. Criticism was quieted by—in addition to the methods described above—the promise to the members that this step was necessary to form a "third" party movement for 1948. If we leave out of consideration the fact that the demand for a "third" party has no Marxist foundation, let us see how this promise is being kept. The December Plenum report of the General Secretary of the Communist Party states clearly that the central task of the Party for



the 1948 elections is to defeat the Republicans and, almost in so many words states, that the Democratic Party is the vehicle for doing this.

### Abandonment of Struggle

Finally, the entire approach of the Communist Party even to the reformist position they advocate is one of **no struggle**. Instead of calling for mass action and struggle, the call is for deals at the "top". I will cite a few examples and I am sure that each one of my readers can cite many more. In the housing crisis of fifteen years ago—the evictions and the Hoover-villes—the Communists then organized real mass struggles and mobilized the workers and the people into mass actions against the exploiters. They organized the defiance of court orders and police and relied on the strength of the masses. How is the housing crisis dealt with today? Clever "advertising" slogans, such as veterans in pup-tents appealing for petition signatures, demonstrations with slick slogans, appeals to "justice", etc. Cleverness, appeals to the "fairness" of the ruling class have replaced the militant mass struggle of fifteen years ago.

In the struggle against strike-breakers and provocateurs and for the protection of the Party against attacks, Communists used to understand that the police and the law represented the class of the oppressors and that the main defense and only reliable defense for the organizations of the workers was the mobilization of the workers. Today, we see police called in to defend the meetings of the Communist Party in New Orleans. (This is in New Orleans,

where the police are not only noted for their being part of the state apparatus but also as the enforcers of the Jim-Crow oppression of the Negro people!) In the trade unions, when the red-baiters threaten the continued leadership of the "progressives", the first answer of the Communists is **to the courts!** Emphasis in the Communist Party is not placed on leading mass struggles, but on skilful negotiations (preferably behind closed doors), on "clever" publicity and on persuading the bourgeoisie of the "justice of the demands" of the workers.

### Role of Daily Worker

The character of the Daily Worker also reveals this very clearly. The paper carries very little beside so-called straight news stories and almost no calls for any action on the part of the readers. It is significant, for example, that the Daily Worker advertises for new readers on the basis of a gossip column, "Broadway Beat", rather than on the basis of any struggles that have been conducted. The repeated statements that neither the Communist Party nor the individual Communists are responsible for the material in the Daily Worker is another indication of the character of both the Party and the Paper. (George Morris in an article entitled, "Does The Daily Worker Interfere In The NMU?" stated that the Daily Worker is not responsible for what individual Communists say **nor are Communists responsible for what the Daily Worker states.** Dennis, at the December 1946 Plenum, stated: "the editors of the Daily Worker are largely on their own.")



## Class Struggle Abandoned

The basic cause of the revisionism that so terribly infects the Communist movement today is the same as it has always been. It is the inability of the reformists to think in terms of "for what class." In short, the policy of the Communist Party is not due to the weakness of one or another of its leaders but to their abandonment of the very starting point is of Marxism itself, namely, the class struggle.

Every action of the Communist Party reflects this. The Party tails after Henry Wallace, Philip Murray, the late Sidney Hillman, Roosevelt, or any other spokesman of the liberal and petty bourgeoisie because it has no Marxist policy of its own and no orientation. The present leadership of the Communist Party, for this reason, fears nothing more than discussion based on any of the revolutionary classics of Marxism. Their attempt to hide the Marxist classics from the membership of the Party and the working class; their contempt for theory generally; the failure of the Daily Worker, in spite of repeated requests, to publish analyses based on Marxism; the most shameful political forgeries in which Lenin, the leader of the proletarian revolution, is portrayed as the "Russian Roosevelt"; the portrayal of the alliance between the proletariat and the poor peasantry of Russia as the same as the coalition with the bourgeoisie that took place under Roosevelt and Browder—all these are additional evidence that the renegade leaders of the Communist Party of the U.S. have forgotten what the simple Russian peasant-

soldier in, "The Ten Days That Shook The World", knew:

"The soldier scratched his head. 'I can't account for it at all,' he said, grimacing with the pain of his intellectual processes. 'To me it seems perfectly simple—but then, I'm not well educated. It seems like there are only two classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie . . .'

"There you go again with your silly formula!' cried the student.

" . . . only two classes,' went on the soldier, doggedly. 'And whoever isn't on one side is on the other . . .'"

This simple truth—"only two classes and whoever isn't on one side is on the other"—was too much for the clever reformists of the Second International and it is again today too much for the clever reformists of the U.S. Communist Party.

## History Has Proved Marxism

Many of us who were expelled were expelled because we believe that history rather than disproving—or, as the traitors who mislead the Party say, "out-dating"—the classic teachings of Marxism-Leninism has in fact proved the validity of the science of the socialist revolution. All other theories in the past thirty years have only proved their own bankruptcy and their ineffectiveness.

The struggle to rid the Communist Party of revisionism cannot be conceived of as an easy or simple struggle. On the contrary, it will be a very difficult one. The reformist ideas which for many years past have replaced Marxism in the Communist Party will have to be driven out of the revolutiona-



ry movement as a result of the sharpest ideological battles. The traitors, who are today wrecking the Communist Party, will not give up without the bitterest struggle. They will be aided, in every way, by their masters, the bourgeoisie, to whom they are invaluable. They will be aided both directly and indirectly. They cannot, however, win if we carry on a fearless struggle; a consistent struggle; a ruthless struggle. They cannot win because the line they are peddling to the American workers is a proved bankrupt lie. And with every passing day this lie is becoming more and more revealed. Marxism-Leninism is proving itself daily to represent the only answer that can solve the problems of the working class. Our victory is the victory of the proletarian revolution!

\* \* \*

A word now about the contents of this pamphlet.

There are published here four articles—two written while I was a member of the Communist Party and two after my expulsion. One article on trade union policy was written in January 1946. If you will remember, this was at the time that the Party developed its new “militant” policy of supporting strikes instead of opposing them. The entire Party leadership stated that the policy followed would lead to a regaining of the influence among the workers that was lost during the Browder regime. I wrote this article in which I pointed out that the policy being followed was tailist and revisionist and could only lead to the destruction of the Communist movement. Unfortunately, I was proved right

in less than a year. By the CIO Convention and the Merrill incident, it was made clear to even the blindest that the prestige of the Communist Party, to say the least, had not risen.

The second article deals with the struggle against war. I was expelled for daring to believe that the Marxist-Leninist classic position had more validity than the opinion of proved revisionists.

The two articles written after my expulsion consists of a letter written to two leading comrades which deals with my views on the question of war, of factional struggle against the present Party leadership, and the evaluation of the Roosevelt administration.

The final article deals with the liquidation of the Communist Party at the recent CIO Convention and afterwards. It may, in a sense, be considered a sequel to the first article on the trade union policy of the Communist Party.

### I Apologize

One final word: I owe an apology to all members of my section, to all the union members who knew me, and to all my friends. It was my duty not only to myself but to the Party and to them to have carried on this fight publicly and to have had sufficient confidence in their ability to separate Marxism from revisionism. The fact that I didn't only shows how much I was still infected with the old bureaucratic methods of work. I hope that in the publication of this material and in the fight for a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party capable of leading the working class to its own liberation, in this fight I will prove able to overcome these hangovers from revisionism.



## II.

### Spontaneity — The Root of Opportunism

As one studies the whole period through which the Party has just come, one question looms larger and larger. How did we, with the exception of Comrade Foster, accept Browder's notorious revisionism? How was it possible for the thousand of members who had read the Marxist classics to accept a theory which was in direct opposition to every Marxist-Leninist precept? How could a Party which only fifteen years ago had defeated and repudiated Lovestoneism accept its twin brother so easily? How did our National Committee, all of whom had studied Marxism deeply, all choose Browderism over Marxism when offered the choice by Foster at the January 1944 Plenum?

#### "Tailism" or Economism

Stalin gives the key to the answer in "Foundations of Leninism": "The theory of spontaneity is the theory of belittling the role of the class conscious element in the movement, the ideology of 'dragging at the tail,' of 'khovostism' the logical basis of all **opportunism**." (Leninism, Vol. I, p. 29.) Lenin in his famous and unfortunately little read work, "What is to Be Done," gives a full analysis of spontaneity or economism. The workers and the people generally are forced to enter into struggles with the capitalists to protect their immediate interests. These struggles are struggles of a trade union nature for wages, hours, conditions, etc. These struggles are spontaneous struggles because, in the words of Lenin, "the

workers were not, nor could they be conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system, i.e., it was not yet Social-Democratic consciousness . . . This consciousness could only be brought to them from without." (What is to Be Done—p. 32.) Further, "modern Socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. The vehicles of science are not the proletariat but the bourgeois intelligentsia . . . the task of Social-Democracy is to imbue the proletariat with the consciousness of its position and the consciousness of its tasks. There would be no need for this if consciousness source emerged from the class struggle." (Kautsky—quoted *ibid.*—p. 40) From this Lenin goes on to draw the conclusions. "Then the only choice is either bourgeois or socialist ideology. Hence to belittle socialist ideology in any way, to deviate from it the slightest degree means strengthening bourgeois ideology." (*ibid.*, p. 40) "Hence our task, the task of Social-Democracy is to **combat spontaneity**, to **divert** the labor movement within its spontaneous trade unionist striving from under the wing of the bourgeoisie and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy." (*ibid.*, p. 41)

In the balance of my thesis I will quote more extensively from "What is to Be Done." Now, however, I wish to include from History of the CPSU the estimate of this great work. "The historic



significance of this celebrated book lies in the fact that in it Lenin:

"1. For the first time in the history of Marxist thought laid bare the ideological roots of opportunism, showing that they principally consisted in worshipping the spontaneous working class-movement and belittling the role of Socialist consciousness in the working-class movement;

"2. Brought out the great importance of theory, of consciousness, and of the Party as a revolutionizing and guiding force of the spontaneous working-class movement;

"3. Brilliantly substantiated the fundamental Marxist theory that a Marxist Party is a union of the working-class movement with Socialism;

"4. Gave a brilliant exposition of the ideological foundations of a Marxist Party.

"The theoretical theses expounded in 'What is to Be Done', later became the foundation of the ideology of the Bolshevik Party." (CPSU—p. 38)

#### **American Trade Union History Confirms Lenin**

The history of the American working-class movement gives convincing proof of the principles outlined by Lenin. The spontaneous struggles of the American workers against the capitalists (trade union struggles) have been more bitter and bloody than in any country except Tsarist Russia. Haymarket, Molly McGuire, Homestead, Pullman, Ludlow, Memorial Day massacre, the Western Federation of Miners struggles, the Great Steel Strike, the Auto Sit-downs, are but a few of the many great struggles wage by the workers against their bosses and the government. The struggle for the

eight hour day, which was begun in America served as one of the main slogans upon which the Bolsheviks won Socialism in Russia. Yet with all this background of militant trade union struggle, the American working class is the least class conscious, the least socialist conscious in the world. If there were any doubt that the spontaneous struggles of the workers cannot lead them to Socialist consciousness, then the history of the American Labor movement should give a final answer.

#### **Tailism in CPUSA**

Is the thesis that spontaneity is logical basis of all opportunism confirmed by the facts in Browders revisionism? Let us examine our Party's role in the past.

The Communist Party of the United States has participated in many great struggles. Let us list some. We participated and played a leading role in the textile, maritime, garment, fur, electrical, auto, steel, coal, and many other union struggles. We led the great unemployed struggles in the 30's. We organized and pioneered the fight for Negro rights. We led the fight for collective security and against fascism. We can justly be proud of our role in defending the day-to-day interests of the working class and the people against capitalism. This is true. Did we, however, in these struggles make the workers conscious of the "irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system" or not? Did not these struggles become ends in themselves rather than levers to make the working class socialist conscious? Did we not participate in the workers



struggles as champions of trade unionism (economism) rather than as champions of socialism? A few examples will suffice. The lack of class consciousness of workers even in the Furrier's Union is a good illustration. The struggle for a new contract (which is important) became an end in itself. The secondary role of the Party branch whose members became, in Communist-led unions, simply actives for the leadership is another example. The promotion of the best forces of the Party to union work rather than the best union forces to Party work was another illustration of the economist role played by our Party. It was this absorption in the practical day-to-day trade unionist tasks which was the basis for the acceptance of Browderism in the Party. The ideology of trade-unionism, bourgeois ideology, conquered Socialist-Marxist ideology.

### **The Same Path**

Today, we have for the second time in fifteen years repudiated opportunism (both times only with the help of Communists of other lands). Have we really learned the lesson and rooted out "the logical basis of opportunism" in our Party? What is our role in the great spontaneous struggles taking place in the labor movement today? I wish to discuss the position of the Communist Party, both as it is reflected in the Daily Worker and in the statements of the leadership. I quote from the Daily Worker of Thursday, January 17th, from an editorial on page 3 entitled, "The Strike Tide Rises." The concluding sentences are: "The primary task of progressives today is to organize the

general public behind the wage and strike movement. Further progress for labor and the nation depends on this." This statement is a typical one on the strike situation, and is a perfect example of an economist non-Marxist approach to the situation. The "primary task of progressives (Communists)" is to "lead the struggle of the working class not only for better terms for the sale of labor power but also for the abolition of the social system which compels the propertyless class to sell itself to the rich." ("What is to Be Done" p. 56) The formulation of "organizing behind the wage and strike movement" is such obvious tailism that no further argument should be needed. In a class society future progress depends not upon temporary economic victories, but upon readying the working class to take power. A few more examples will suffice. The statement of the Communist Party secretariat and the speech of Philip Murray on Truman's "cooling-off" proposal could have been interchanged. Jack Stachel's speech to a meeting of Communist functionaries on January 8th at Webster Hall was good for any union meeting.

### **National Board Statement**

There was a good deal of discontent over the lack of any socialist education expressed at that time both in the Daily Worker's letter page and in the discussion of the members of the Party. I waited and hoped that changes would be made because of this. Finally in the Worker of January 27th the National Board of the Communist Party issued a statement on the strike situation. Let



us see: does this statement outline the task of the Communists in a Marxist way? The statement gives a complete picture of the confusion, improvisation, and bankruptcy of theory which passes as Marxism today. I quote:

"They are fighting the battle of all the people against the threat of mass unemployment, low wages and economic disaster and to ward off political reaction." (Statement)

### Capitalism Causes Crisis

Are they really? In the New Masses of January 29th, Eugene Varga, noted Soviet economist, has an article titled, "Toward a New Crash?" I quote: "summing up, we may say that after the conclusion of the war, countries whose productive apparatus has not been damaged, or has been improved, will pass through the ascending phase of a productive cycle in the course of two to four years. This phase will end with a crisis of overproduction which in all probability will be more prolonged than the crisis of 1920-1." Further, "after this post-war crisis has been overcome, and the stabilization of at least some European currencies has been achieved, a new full industrial cycle will begin. But this cycle will not be like the cycle of 1921-9 with its relatively strong ascending phase (especially in the United States and Germany), but will resemble rather the cycle of 1929-37 with its 'depression of a special kind,' and will not reach the full phase of prosperity. The factors which then prevented the full ascending phase from developing—the sharp contradiction between the unlimited drive of capital for its extension

and the restricted limits of the purchasing power of society and the consequent chronic underemployment of the productive apparatus together with chronic unemployment—will act with even greater force in the first 'normal' post-war cycle." It is capitalism (in its general crisis) which causes unemployment and crisis and not the losing of a purely commercial deal for a better price for a "commodity" labor power.

"The arrogant position of the trusts is as Philip Murray declared, a rebellion if not an actual revolution against the people of the United States." (Statement)

Wonderful! The position of the trusts is a revolution!!! It is our job as real revolutionaries to explain to Murray, the trade unionist, what revolution is and not to repeat his nonsense as Marxism.

### Who Controls the State?

"The issue is whether these powerful corporations, with the steel trust at their head shall get away with their attempt to emerge as a supergovernment controlling the economy and dictating the lives of every family in the land." (Statement)

Of course, now, the economy is in the hands of the workers and peasants! Let our National Board read Stalin's interview with Wells and see how Marxists approach this question. It is precisely the task of the Communist to point out to the workers that a handful of billionaires "dictate the lives of every family in the land."

The next two sections are a trade union report proving that the corporations can pay and that the state is partial to the trusts (imagine). I could deal in detail



with many obvious Marxist errors and omissions, but in the interests of time I will pass them to reach the summation.

### **"Steps" Theory**

"A victory in this strike struggle will greatly advance the security and future of all the people. It will open up new paths to progress and higher living standards. It will be a step toward the day when Fairless, Girdler, Grace and Wilson will no longer be able to conspire against a whole people." (Statement)

The question of security and higher living standards of the workers under capitalism has been dealt with above. By "a step toward the day" etc. I presume the National Board means a step toward Socialism. The "stages" or now with a new turn the "steps" theory was completely demolished a long time ago. In "What is to Be Done," on page 46, Lenin deals with this question as follows:

The "stages theory," or the theory of "timid zigzags" in the political struggle is expressed in this article in the following way:

"Political demands, which in their character are common to the whole of Russia should, however, at first" (this was written in August, 1900!) "correspond to the experience gained by the given stratum (sic!) of workers in the economic struggle. Only (!) on the basis of this experience can and should the political agitation be taken up" etc. (p. 11) On page 4, the author, protesting against what he regards as the absolutely unfounded charge of Economist heresy, pathetically exclaims: "what Social-Democrat does not know that according to the theo-

ries of Marx and Engels, the class interests is the decisive factor in history, and, **consequently**, that the proletarian struggle for the defense of its economic interests must be of first-rate importance in its class development and struggle for emancipation?" (our italics) The word "consequently" is absolutely out of place. The fact that economic interests are a decisive factor does not in the least imply that the economic (i.e., trade union) struggle must be the main factor, for the essential and 'decisive interest of classes can be satisfied only by radical political changes. In particular 'the fundamental economic interests of the proletariat can be satisfied only by a political revolution, that will substitute the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie."

"The people will learn more the need for a Socialist society." (Statement)

How? By divine providence? By their own experience? Lenin above quoted proves that this is impossible. By osmosis? They will learn only if we teach them and if we teach them during their struggles and not "after victory" etc.

### **Nationalization**

One more point, on nationalization: "the masses will learn that ... these giant industries must be taken out of the hands of the profit mad owners and made government property—nationalized. This will not be socialism but it will be a step toward curbing the monopolies." (Statement)

I wish to pass over the fact that an important question like nationalization has never been discussed or even explained to the membership of the Party. I will also pass



over the reasons why nationalization would at this time strengthen not weaken capitalism. What does nationalization now mean? It means the government manages the industries and the profit goes to the owners. Whether it goes indirectly through bonds and interest as in the New York subway or directly is not important. This article appeared in the Sunday Worker of January 27th, 1946 and reached its subscribers on Friday, January 25th. On Saturday at 12:01 a.m. the government seized (nationalized) the meat-packing industry. What was the opinion expressed? Joy, that our advice had been followed so quickly? Hardly! We condemned Truman as a strikebreaker (correctly) for following our own advice. What sort of theoretical improvisation is that?

### Role of Party

Finally this masterpiece: "Communists will be recognized everywhere in this struggle as steadfast and unselfish fighters for victory. Every state and local organization and every individual member of the Communist Party can be relied upon to enter this struggle and contribute his energy and activity. This is why a strong Communist Party is indispensable to the success of labor and the people. This is why we invite you to join the Communist Party and urge you to become a regular reader of the Daily Worker and the Worker." (Statement)

WOW !!! The role of the Party is **not** to be a tail to the unions. Communists go on the picket lines, organize soup kitchens and participate in all strike activities. But don't the Communists differ from

the CIO members? Doesn't the Communist Party stand for Socialism, for the dictatorship of the proletariat? Then why don't we tell the workers when we ask them to join?

So much for the official position of our Party. How does it work in practice? We mobilize our membership as auxiliaries of the unions on strike. We distribute their leaflets, man their picket lines, collect relief, just as any good union. When the Party appears in its own name, it functions as a union organization. The leaflets we give out, the approach we make, as an organization, to the strike is taken by any good union. Our Daily Worker sounds like a good issue of the CIO News. We don't raise the question of Socialism at all.

This leads to a secondary position of our Party. Since the trade unions and mass organizations, then these organizations are more important and should get priority. If we follow at the tail of the spontaneous movement of the workers, then we need no theory and the whole theoretical level is proof of this result.

### Lenin's Approach

How can we overcome this serious weakness in our Party today? The tactics will leave to be worked out by our experience but I think we can get our basic approach from Lenin. In "What is to Be Done," pages 77-8 he gives an outline of the role of a true fighter for Socialism. I quote:

"The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be a trade union secretary but a tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no



matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; he must be able to take advantage of every petty event in order to explain his Socialist convictions and his Social-Democratic demands to all, in order to explain to all and everyone the world historical significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

We must relearn to struggle for reforms, whether of an economic, political, educational, or national

nature. "In a word, it (Social-Democracy) subordinates the struggle for reforms to the revolutionary struggle for liberty and Socialism in the same way as the part is subordinate to the whole." (ibid p. 61) When we relearn these basic precepts we will find that most of the problems that are now plaguing us will disappear.

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(Submitted to the National Board CPUSA January 29, 1946.)

### III.

## The Fight for Peace

Today, as our whole Party is discussing Browder's expulsion and his open stand as a class enemy, it might be interesting to review the way in which he presented the Teheran perspective to our Party. After the Teheran conference, Browder said, "We are faced by a new and unprecedented situation. A long period of peace, lasting for many generations, is possible under imperialism." Upon this false premise that the greatest contradiction of capitalism, namely, the inevitability of war could be overcome, Browder logically liquidated all the other contradictions of capitalism.

### Still the Same

Today, the world is faced by the prospect of another world war. What is the position of our Party on the question of the inevitability of war under imperialism? I quote from an article in the Daily Worker of Friday, March 15th, by Joseph Starobin, titled, "How to Make the 'Inevitable' World War III Impossible": "Do the American people have to experience another

war just because they live in an imperialist country? It would be a fatal mistake to think so." Imagine, just because! The question of the inevitability of war under imperialism has been dealt with at such length by Lenin and Stalin that a few examples should serve to illustrate the scientific Marxist viewpoint on that subject.

### The Marxist Position

In "Foundations of Leninism," Stalin points out the three fundamental contradictions of capitalism. They are between the working class and the bourgeoisie; between the capitalist countries, which inevitably lead to war; and between the imperialist countries and the colonial people. In Stalin's speech to the electorate, he again points out that capitalist contradictions, which cannot be overcome cause crisis and war. Or again, our own National Committee drew up an outline for study. On the section dealing with imperialism there is a subheading, "The Inevitability of War Under Imperialism." Finally, from Lenin



I want to quote only one passage. This passage is from the resolution on conditions of affiliation to the Third (Communist) International.

"6. Every Party that wishes to affiliate to the Third International must not only expose avowed social patriotism but must also expose the falsehood and hypocrisy of social pacifism; it must systematically point out to the workers that without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no international courts of arbitration, no talk of reducing armaments, no democratic reorganization of the League of Nations, (and I might add parenthetically of the UNO) will save mankind from new imperialist wars."

Why, Lenin even titled the epoch of imperialism, the epoch of wars and revolutions. I do not have the time here to deal with the basic causes for this. The uneven development of capitalism, the division of the colonies among the great powers, the whole nature of imperialism which makes war inevitable are to be found fully analyzed in Lenin's "Imperialism."

#### **Position Pacifist**

I quoted at length the resolution of the CI because it indicated the path we must follow if we deny the inevitability of war under imperialism. One path is the path of Browder and Kautsky, the path of social-chauvinism, the path of defending "our own" imperialists. The other path is the path of social pacifism. This path leads the working class to illusions that reduction of armaments, reform under capitalism, etc. can prevent war. This path leads to the disarming of the working class and makes impossible any revolution-

ary struggle against imperialist war. Social pacifism has a long tradition in our Party. In the first Imperialist War, the Socialist Party while rejecting a position of chauvinism, took a social pacifist position. In the period of factions, the right faction took a social chauvinist position while the left faction took a social pacifist position (Slogan was "no more cruisers"). In the period of the Second Imperialist War our position was precisely a pacifist one. Today, we are once again following the same path. Demobilize, no conscription, release or scrap the atom bomb, no big airforce, etc. are proposed as the basis of peace.

It is the role of the Communist Party to reveal the contradictions of capitalism in their sharpest form and not to gloss over them. War is the sharpest contradiction of the imperialist stage of capitalism and is inevitable "just because we happen to live in an imperialist state."

#### **Capitalist Encirclement**

The second point I want to deal with is the contradiction between the Soviet Union and the imperialist states, particularly the U.S. Let us see how Marxists deal with the question. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." So starts the "Communist Manifesto". "The main feature of the capitalist system is a most acute struggle between the exploiters and the exploited." (Stalin, "CPSU" p 26) The basic fact of our society is the irreconcilable struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for state power. This is the single foundation on which all Marxism rests. The Soviet Union repre-



sents the dictatorship of the proletariat. The capitalist countries (including the U.S.) represent the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. To state that there is no fundamental antagonism between them is to state that there is no fundamental antagonism between the working class and the capitalist class.

As Marxists we test theory with practice. Let us examine the history of the world since 1917 to see which theory stands up. The history of the world from November 1917 to today gives ample proof of the irreconcilable antagonism between the capitalist states and the Soviet Union. Let us review.

### **Historical Enmity Proved**

From 1918 to 1922 intervention against the Soviet State. From 1922 to 1929, there was provocation, incitement, isolation, non-recognition, etc. From 1929 to the war, there was the building up of Germany and Japan as bases for aggression against the USSR. During this period, the capitalist states (U.S., Britain and France) ceded, without a struggle, one position after the other to their imperialist rivals in order to strengthen them against the Soviet Union. In the imperialist phase of the war, the great imperialist states were even prepared to sacrifice their chance of winning to turn the war against the Soviet Union. After June 22nd, the United States and Britain risked victory in the hope of crippling completely the Soviet Union. After the war, incitements to a new war against the Soviet Union have already reached a dangerous pitch. From even so brief review, it can be seen that the basic fact in world relations is

the bitter struggle between the Soviet Power and the capitalist states. Capitalist encirclement, spoken of by Lenin and Stalin, has not been an empty phrase.

We can defend the Soviet Union only as Lenin did by pointing out to the working class and toiling masses its real character and by preaching class war against the capitalists who inevitably move to war against the Soviet Union. It was in this way that Lenin was able to force the withdrawal of the forces of intervention from the Soviet Union after the revolution. It is only in this way and not by pacifist preaching of how difficult it would be to conquer the Soviet Union that we can fulfill our role as the vanguard of the working class.

### **Socialism: Only Answer**

The last point I want to deal with is also included in the Starobin article. I quote: "And to say that unless we replace imperialism with socialism immediately there is no hope of peace is exactly what Churchill is trying to get across—that the issue today is socialism vs capitalism." I don't know whether this is the point that Churchill is making or not, but "Unless we replace imperialism with socialism there is no hope of peace," is certainly true. I have dealt with that point above. I wish to deal with "the issue today is socialism vs. capitalism." The imperialist stage of capitalism holds forth to the workers only war, ever sharper crisis, racial oppression, fascism — misery and death. Only Socialism points the way out—only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment



of the dictatorship of the proletariat can give any future to the toiling masses. It is our job to make the issue socialism vs. capitalism. Any other action on our

part is betrayal of the working class.

(Submitted to the Queens County Committee, N. Y., March 18, 1946.)

#### IV.

### A Letter to Expelled Comrades

Dear Comrades:

The most important point you make in your letter is that you desire a strong Communist Party and for that reason have never and never will engage in any factional activities against the Party. For this reason, you do not wish to communicate with me or exchange experiences.

I, too, desire a strong Communist Party. If there is any reason why I am anxious to continue the struggle to rid the Communist Party of its revisionism, it is because I want a strong revolutionary Communist Party. I am convinced, however, that in order to do this, factions must be created.

#### Bureaucracy in Control

What is the present situation in the Party? It is impossible to raise even the slightest criticism of the revisionism that infects our Party, or even to question any of the policy without being expelled as an enemy of the Party and the working class. This can be shown both by your case and mine. In both these cases, we observed discipline and raised the questions of Party policy only in the proper channels. Our expulsions further strengthened this tendency in the Party (for while we were "blackmailed", our expulsion will be used to "blackmail" the rest of the Party). The bureaucracy continues

as strong as ever and the violations of the convention decisions are too numerous to mention. The case of Robert Minor, the one man most closely identified with the Browder position, is typical. Minor was not elected as a delegate to the New York State Convention, was denounced by the entire leadership, was booed off the floor (on the question of the South) and rejected as a delegate to the National Convention. He is now one of the top policy makers in the Communist Party. The same thing can be said about Bill Lawrence, Joseph Roberts and a host of similar people.

#### We Must Fight

Since any careful investigation of the facts will show that it is impossible to fight for a correct Marxist policy within the Party then the question becomes: how can we fight to bring such a policy forward? The workers cannot learn Marxism-Leninism from their own experiences. The Communist Party will not bring it to them today. Only if those who are convinced Marxists carry on a struggle for a correct policy will it be possible for the working class and the members of the Communist Party to see the correct path of struggle and to rid themselves of the revisionism that saturates the American working class move-



ment. Let us remember the impetus given the struggle against Browder by the Duclos letter. While you and a few other comrades were fighting revisionism before the letter, I doubt whether I or the majority of the Party would ever have been convinced without it. (My entire time in the Party was spent under the Browder leadership and the methods of work were the only ones I knew.)

### Factions Needed

There is nothing wrong with a factional struggle if it is conducted on a principled basis. Lenin and the Bolsheviks started out as a just such a faction in the Russian Social-Democratic Party. It was as a result of just such a factional struggle that the Bolsheviks became the steered Party capable of leading the great October Revolution. The Bolsheviks also served, during the first imperialist war as faction in the Second (Social-Democratic) International. This activity more than anything else paved the way both for the wave or proletarian revolutions which swept Europe after the war. It also laid the basis for the Third (Communist) International.

What is the alternative for us to factional activity? We no longer, even formally, have access to the Party or the Party literature. We are, so to speak, excommunicated from the Party membership. If we do not organize a factional struggle, we leave the working class unarmed and unprepared to fight at just this critical time. We guarantee the victory of fascism. We guarantee a victorious war against the Soviet Union. We

surrender completely to the revisionists who are the agents of the capitalist class in the ranks of the working class movement. I cannot choose this course. I do not believe that you can either.

\* \* \*

However, I can understand your position and sympathize with it. I was even more bound than you by the legalisms with which the Party prevents any real fight for the Marxist-Leninist principles. Although I was a section organizer and a union leader at the time that I had differences with the Party, I always fought for the line of the Party publicly. (I never allowed my differences to be discussed by the rank and file.) They were expressed only by letters to the National Board and in private conversations with the County leadership. When, finally, I could no longer stand the arrant revisionism and the Browderite policy that was followed, I participated in a discussion in the Queens County Committee with the results that I have mentioned previously. After my suspension, I was so anxious to avoid all charges of any kind of factional activity that for four or five months I spoke to no member of the Party on any political matters whatsoever. I defended myself before the State Review and Control Commission on the basis of democratic centralism (my right to express my views even though they were wrong) and stated that while I did not agree with the line, I would be bound by the Party's decision. It was only in the last few weeks and months when the bankruptcy of the Party



leadership became so evident that I resolved to fight the policy.

It is the hardest thing in the world to break old habits. It was very difficult for me whose whole adult life has been spent in the Party to make a break. It will not be easy for you comrades, either, but there is no alternative other than surrender to the revisionists and through them to the capitalist rulers of the country. I am sure that you will, in time, be able to understand this and to make a fight for a real revolutionary, Marxists-Leninist Party that is capable of leading the working class to Socialism.

### Inevitability of War

Now I would like to deal with some of the political points that you raise in your letter. There are two, in particular that I would like to discuss with you.

First, in your letter you state that you were misquoted by the Daily Worker on your stand on the inevitability of war under capitalism. It is your position, as I understand it, that war is not inevitable under capitalism. I cannot accept this position. The fight against war is the most important struggle facing the working class in its struggle for Socialism. Let us remember that it was the correct revolutionary position of the Bolshevik Party on the question of the struggle against the imperialist war that made possible the successful October revolution. This question is, therefore, of the greatest importance to the Party of the proletariat in its struggle for liberation from wage slavery and exploitation. What, then, is the Marxist-Leninist position on

the question of wars under imperialism?

The Marxist-Leninist position on the question of the inevitability of war under imperialism has always been the following: War is **objectively** inevitable under imperialism. That is, wars are caused not by the desires of individuals but by the basic economic conditions of society in this stage of development. These conditions can be changed only by the Socialist revolution. To prove this point I wish to make a few quotations.

### Lenin on War

"The uneven distribution of railways, their uneven development—sums up, as it were, modern monopolist capitalism. And this summing up proves that imperialist wars are absolutely inevitable under **such** an economic system, **as long as** private property in the means of production exists." (Lenin, Preface to the German and French ed. "Imperialism", Col. Works, vol. XIX p 86.)

Then his famous argument where he demolishes Kautsky:

"According to his (Kautsky's) argument, monopolies in economics are compatible with non-monopolistic, non-violent, non-annexationist methods in politics. According to his argument the territorial division of the world, which was completed precisely during the period of finance capital, and which constitutes the basis of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the biggest capitalist states (the first imperialist war), is compatible with non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capital-



ism, instead of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism." (Imperialism, ibid p 164, all notes mine.—B.S.)

Then, finally, I would like to quote a passage dealing with the struggle against war in our own country. With the exception of the names, dates and tenses the passage might be used today to characterize the present struggle against war carried out by the Communist Party.

### Spanish-American War

"In the United States, the imperialist war waged against Spain in 1898 stirs up the opposition of the 'anti-imperialists', the last of the Mohicans of bourgeois democracy. They declared this war to be 'criminal'; they denounced the annexation of foreign territories as being a violation of the Constitution, and denounce the 'Jingo treachery' by means of which Aguinaldo, leader to the native Filipinos, was deceived (the Americans promised him the independence of this country, but later they landed troops and annexed it). They quoted the words of Lincoln:

" 'When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is no longer self-government—that is despotism.'

"But while all this criticism shrank from recognizing the indissoluble bond between imperialism and the trusts, and therefore, between imperialism and the very foundations of capitalism; while it shrank from joining up with the forces engendered by large-scale capitalism [the proletariat—B.S.] and its development [the Socialist

revolution B.S.]—it remained a 'pious wish'." (ibid. Pgs 180-181)

I quoted so extensively because I wanted to show the Communist position on the question of the causes of war. From these quotations it should be clear that Marxists regard war as inherent in the capitalist system in just the same way as Marxists always regarded depressions which could not be prevented as long as capitalism existed. The same is true about war.

Why is it necessary to recognize this fact and what are the positions taken by the various classes on this issue? Without fully understanding the situation in relation to this, the most important of all immediate questions facing the working class, it is impossible to give leadership to the proletariat or to protect the Soviet Union. This can be seen more clearly when we examine the positions taken by all classes in relation to this.

### Three Class Positions

The three main class points of view in regard to the fight for peace are as follows:

1. The first position is the position of the bourgeoisie, the "jingo" position. This is expressed as follows: "War is inevitable, anyway. Now, we are stronger. So let's drop a few atom bombs and we'll be the rulers of the world."

2. The second position is the position of the petty-bourgeoisie, the pacifist position. "War is not inevitable, the action of the masses in forcing a return to the policies of Roosevelt can prevent war." This is the position of both the Communist Party and of Earl Browder.

3. The third position is the posi-



tion of the proletariat. This is expressed as follows: "Yes, war is inevitable under capitalism. It is caused by capitalism and we will fight against war by fighting for the overthrow of capitalism."

When the three positions of the various classes are examined, it is obvious that the pacifist position of the petty-bourgeoisie plays right into the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It creates illusions, disarms the working class, diverts them from the real struggle into a sham between the social patriots and the social pacifists and when the inevitable war does come the working class becomes demoralized and is unable to carry on a struggle. The inability of the German workers to mobilize in a revolutionary struggle against Hitler was due largely to such demoralization. How different is the path of revolutionary activity against the war. It exposes the real preparations for war that lie behind all the fine speeches of the capitalists and their politicians. When war comes the working class is ready to answer the bourgeoisie with civil war and proletarian revolution. This was the course that Lenin and the Bolsheviks followed in the First Imperialist war.

### C.I. Resolution

I would like to close my discussion here with one more quotation. This is from the conditions for affiliation to the Third International, the acceptance of which was mandatory to be considered a Communist.

"6. Every party that wishes to affiliate to the Third International must not only expose avowed social-patriotism, but must also ex-

pose the falsehood and hypocrisy of social pacifism; it must systematically point out to the workers that without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no international courts of arbitration, no talk about reducing armaments, no 'democratic' reorganization of the League of Nations will save mankind from new imperialist wars."

### Position on Wallace

The second theoretical point that you raised is the question of the role of Wallace. You criticize the Communist Party for failing to pay proper tribute to the Wallace speech in Madison Square Garden as "inexcusable leftism." The question of the attitude of the proletariat to the liberal bourgeoisie is one of the most important that faces it. The position of Marxism is the following: The liberal bourgeoisie, in fear of the rising proletariat, will always betray even their own—bourgeois democratic—revolution. The first task of the proletariat is to defeat and isolate the liberal bourgeoisie. The history of the two Russian and the German revolutions prove this. In order to win the proletarian revolution, it is necessary to isolate and defeat the petty-bourgeoisie also. Today, it is the proletarian revolution that is on the agenda for all the advanced countries of the world. In this situation nothing can be more dangerous than to place any reliance or to look for any leadership from the liberal bourgeoisie. Lenin points out that the "struggle" between the liberal and the reactionary bourgeoisie is a sham. The fine liberal speeches of the former are used to cloak the seizure of



power by the latter. I wish to quote a passage from "Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder".

"It has been necessary, not only for the uncultured, often illiterate masses of Russia, but for the highly cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany, to realize through their own painful experience the absolute impotence and characterlessness, the absolute helplessness and servility before the bourgeoisie, the utter vileness of the government of the knights of the Second International, the **absolute inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries** (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp and Co. in Germany) as the **only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat**, in order to turn them resolutely toward Communism." (Sel. Works, vol. X pg. 136, my italics)

### Roosevelt Bourgeois Agent

Wallace, like Roosevelt, represents the liberal bourgeoisie. Let us see whether the liberal bourgeois Wallace or Roosevelt administration really improved the conditions of the working class or whether the fine speeches about the right of the common man did not, in fact, conceal the further strengthening of the bourgeoisie. Let us see if all the fine speeches about hating war did not, in fact, actually mask preparations for war (and war against the Soviet Union). The role of the Roosevelt administration was precisely to divert the workers by means of fine speeches at the same time as, in every crucial situation, it revealed itself to be the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

I will deal with the Roosevelt

administration in regard to three fundamental problems facing the working class.

### War and Roosevelt

First, in relation to the struggle against war. The American state from the inception of the Roosevelt administration threw its whole weight towards war with the Soviet Union. The one nation which played a dominant role in the re-arming of Germany was the United States. It is too often forgotten that the Roosevelt administration and the Hitler regime co-existed at exactly the same time. It is unthinkable that the policy of building up Germany could have been carried out without the consent or even, as the defenders of Roosevelt say, with the opposition of so powerful a capitalist state as the United States. It was American capital which was exported to build up Hitler. In the political sphere the American State supported every step designed to make Hitler strong and to guarantee a war against the Soviet Union. The shameful record of the Roosevelt administration in regard to the Spanish war is a matter of record. The embargo, the policy of non-intervention, the prevention of the flow of volunteers to Spain, the fact that this country was the first to recognize the Franco government (only a few hours after the fall of Madrid) were decisive to Hitler there. This is generally admitted to be the weakest part of the Roosevelt fight for peace by his supporters. It is generally excused as a "slip". But what about the shipment of scrap iron to Japan, the supplying of the vital oil to help her in the rape of China? Another



"slip"? What about Roosevelt's endorsement of the Munich deal? Or the role played in inciting war against the Soviet Union during the Finnish war? All "slips"?

Let us examine the situation today. All the present leaders of American foreign policy were associated with the Roosevelt administration. Vandenberg was Roosevelt's appointee to the San Francisco Conference at which the United Nations was formed. Byrnes was Roosevelt's "assistant President", Harriman was a Roosevelt protege and his ambassador to the Soviet Union. Truman was a close associate of his also and was acceptable as his running mate. The very fact that the reactionary Truman administration is composed of men who had been near the President and who "inherited" from him is proof of the position of Lenin quoted above.

Against this record of fact, what is there to support the story that Roosevelt opposed the war and was a good friend of the Soviet Union? A few speeches, the recognition of the Soviet Union and that is all. In every way Roosevelt was the spokesman for monopoly capital in the inevitable drive toward imperialist war. The liberal bourgeoisie (Roosevelt and Wallace) differ from the reactionary bourgeoisie (Hoover and Churchill) in two respects. They feel that the latter are too crude and that in driving to war against the Soviet Union the rival imperialisms should not be overlooked.

### **New Deal and Workers**

Second, in regard to the economic conditions of the working class and the toiling masses. This is generally regarded as the

brightest side of the Roosevelt era. The Communist Party, liberals and progressives all point to the flow of social security legislation, to the organization of the trade unions, to the recovery from the depression and to the "New Bill of Rights" as proof that Roosevelt was indeed the workers' president. Nowhere are the illusions about Roosevelt more widespread than in this field. He is at the same time portrayed as a foe of monopoly and a "traitor to his class."

### **Roosevelt Strengthened Trusts**

In a letter it is impossible to give a full analysis for all the points mentioned above. However, an examination of the basic economic conditions in the United States during the Roosevelt administration will show that the conditions of the working class deteriorated instead of improving. This can be seen easily if we can keep in mind a few facts. First, the Roosevelt administration cannot be compared with the period of 1932. The year, 1932, represented the bottom of a cyclical crisis and the years 1933-1938 the rising cycle. To compare the Roosevelt period with a similar one it is necessary to go to the years 1922-1929. There were never, in the United States, in any period of recovery from a crisis so many workers unemployed. The bottom figure is close to ten million. The monopolies, far from being weakened, emerged as the dominating force of the country still more than before. The concentration of productive forces into fewer and fewer hands continued. The Roosevelt government not only did nothing to hinder this but helped



it. The distribution of war orders, the manipulation of the NRA to help the monopolies, the maneuverings of the RFC are only some of the ways in which the monopolies were helped. The concessions won by the workers were more than compensated by the increased portion of the products seized by the capitalists through increased productivity. Roosevelt did not refute Marx. He only proved once again the truth of Marxism.

"The greater the social wealth, the greater is the industrial reserve army . . . But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labor army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus population whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labor. Finally, the more extensive the Lazarus-layers of the working class and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. **This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.**" (Marx, Capital, Vol. I)

#### A Liberal's Estimate

As a final proof of the fact that the Roosevelt administration was not the economic salvation for the working class that the Daily Worker and the Communist Party proclaim, let me quote a passage from "America's Sixty Families" by Lundberg. Lundberg is not a Marxist; he is a liberal reformer and could best be characterized as the last of the muckrakers.

"Circumstances have contrived to lend some support to President Roosevelt's forensic assertion that this program is actuated by purely philanthropic motives; yet those among the economically disinherited who believe the 'New Deal' will lead them into a promised land of

social security and 'the Full life' are probably due for a rough awakening. It is safe to predict that when the 'New Deal' is over the poor will be no richer, and the rich no poorer.

#### Roosevelt's Supporters

"This observation could be buttressed by citation of many facts, of which the most salient one will be cited here. The NEW REPUBLIC (August 11, 1937) published, on the basis of figures obtained from reports of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Labor, a study of the yearly salaries of officials and the average wages of workers of 133 leading corporations in 1936. The wage averages, of course, did not prevail throughout the year. The salaries of corporation officials varied from \$25,000 to \$260,000, and were received in return for standardized, often perfunctory duties. Weekly wages of workers as of December, 1936, ranged from \$15.86 to \$38.25. The low of \$15.86 prevailed throughout the tobacco industry—American Tobacco Company, Consolidated Cigar Corporation, General Cigar Company, P. Lorillard, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and United States Tobacco Company—all sturdy 'New Dealers' and contributors to the Roosevelt campaign funds. George W. Hill, president of the American Tobacco Company, on the other hand, drew \$246,173, and two of his associates received \$125,000 each. Hill, a gusty innovator of advertising slogans, was rewarded at a rate twenty times greater than such epochal intellects as Professor Albert Einstein or Professor John Dewey.



"The 'New Deal' in brief, is not by any means a people's coalition directed against the vested interests that have seized everything of pecuniary value in the land. (my italics-BS) It is only in the remarks of the President and of his supporters that it is made to appear as such. In essence the 'New Deal' represents one faction of great wealth—the light goods industrialists—pitted in bitter political struggle against another faction—the capital-goods industrialists. Roosevelt, addicted as he is to verbal castigation of the wealthy, was supported in 1932 and again in 1936 by some of the richest families of the country. But because the juntas of the rich against which the presidential barbs were directly aimed were better publicized than those which stood behind him, the belief became prevalent that the 'New Deal' was hostile to great aggregates of wealth. Some of its tax policies lent color to this misconception, which will not be eradicated until it is generally realized that the 'New Deal' merely represents an unfamiliar though orthodox way of dealing with problems within a capitalistic context." (Pages 448-449)

### Class Consciousness

Third, in regard to class consciousness of the American working class. The most valuable service that Roosevelt performed for the bourgeoisie was in this field. By means of promises and reforms, he restored the confidence of the working class in capitalism. The value of this service cannot be estimated.

What was the situation prevailing at the time Roosevelt took of-

fice? Millions of workers were on the march against the government. The unemployment demonstrations, the hunger marches, the tremendous spontaneous strikes taking place in the great mass production industries for the first time, were all indications of the mood of the working class. The forced sales, in the farm areas, where the dispossessed farmers in defiance of the law would force a sale for one or two cents back to the original owner showed that a revolutionary crisis was maturing. The closing of the banks and the effects of the crisis were ruining millions of petty-bourgeoisie and sweeping them into the struggle. The ruling classes expected revolution. Respect for bourgeois legality and illusions about bourgeois democracy were being swept away. It was at this time and into this situation that Roosevelt brought reformism. What happened?

### Gave Workers Illusions

Not only did the workers fall under the illusion that the problems that faced them could be solved under capitalism, but the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, did too. The entire revolutionary mood of that period was lost. The working class became permeated with the idea that the important struggle was between the liberal bourgeoisie, led by Roosevelt, and the reactionary bourgeoisie. The rejection of bourgeois legality was replaced by the greatest respect for it. Even the Communist Party which is supposed to lead the working class in a revolution against the bourgeois state, fell prey to the illusions about bour-



geois legality and bourgeois democracy. To sum up the influence of Roosevelt on the working class, we can say, Roosevelt replaced Marx as the ideologist of the American working class.

### **Socialist Revolution Answer**

In the fight against discrimination or in the fight for any of the demands which are of importance to the working class, a similar critical Marxist appraisal will show that the fine mellow phrases concealed the steady worsening of the conditions of the working class and the toiling masses. This was so because the evils that beset the working class arise from the capitalist system. They can be remedied only by the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, by their expropriation and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This Roosevelt, the spokesman for the liberal bourgeoisie, could not do. It is left for the proletariat, led by a real Bolshevik vanguard, and guided by revolutionary theory of Marxism to do this. The entire

emphasis on the individual is not Marxist. It reflects bourgeois idealism instead of proletarian materialism.

In your letter, you correctly attack the neglect and contempt for theory displayed by the leadership of the Communist Party. That is correct and is one of the surest signs of revisionism. We cannot, however, conduct a struggle for revolutionary Marxist theory unless we master it ourselves. The great need for all of us and the whole revolutionary working class movement is to go back to the great classics of Marxism-Leninism. There we can master the principles and really conduct a struggle to bring this great liberating theory to the working class.

I feel confident that, in time, with the consideration of the need for a real Marxist Party of the working class you will take your place in the fight for just such a Party. You have already taken the first steps and I am sure that you will make a real contribution.

Yours for a Marxist-Leninist Party and Socialism,

## **V.**

### **U. S. Communist Policy in C. I. O.**

The policy of reformism and economism followed for many years by the American Communist Party reached its logical conclusion. The old policy of subordinating the "vanguard of the proletariat" to the reformist trade union movement reached the end of the road. The Communist Party no longer represents an open ideological trend in the working

class movement today. The action taken by three spokesmen of the Communist Party at the CIO Convention and endorsed by the Communist delegates unanimously and approved at the December Plenum of the National Committee of the Communist Party marked the end of this tendency in the labor movement. From now on the best that can be said for the Communist



Party is that it may linger along like its counterpart, the Socialist Party—as a sort of lodge with some members among the trade union bureaucracy, but without any platform to stand before the workers.

The resolution that can be called the tombstone of the Communist movement in the trade unions is worthy of considerable study. In it, we can see the entire reformist beliefs and the lack of principle which dominate the Communist Party. The document itself can only be termed as a “yellow-dog contract.” (A “yellow-dog contract” was one in which the worker in order to obtain employment had to promise the employer that he would never join the union. The Communist denounce their principles and their party in order to be promised that they may keep their jobs.) Let us examine the resolution and see if the facts are not as stated.

### Renounce Socialism

The most important factor giving the Communist prestige among the workers is the misconception that they stand for the Socialist Revolution. The first thing that the bourgeoisie demanded was the renunciation of the Socialist Revolution and the affirmation that all the problems of the workers could be solved under capitalism. I quote from the CIO Convention resolution.

“The Congress of Industrial Organizations is an American institution dedicated to the attainment of its well defined social and economic objectives within the framework of American political (read: “capitalist”-B.S.) democracy.”

Fifteen years ago, the Com-

munist Party denounced a similar statement by the Socialist Party in the following terms:

“This is, of course, nothing else but an attempt to sow illusions among the workers so that they may believe that they can get real relief from the . . . capitalist state government . . .” (the Heritage of Gene Debs, by Trachtenberg, pps 10-11-New York, 1931, Int)

Here the Communists, “the general staff of the proletarian revolution,” state, in so many words, to the American working class that it is not necessary to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism. Had the resolution contained nothing more than this one proposition, it would brand the Communist who supported or did not fight it to the end as at best a coward and at worst a renegade and a traitor.

The denial of the basic principle on which the Communist movement had been founded—the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Socialist revolution — removes from the doctrine of the Communist movement all that makes it unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. It represents the transformation of the doctrine of revolutionary Marxism to the “garden variety of liberalism.” The Communist movement which was born as champion of the socialist revolution as against the reformist Social-Democrats is dying with the denial of those very principles on its lips.

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For emphasis, the resolution repeats this central slogan three times.

“We reaffirm our faith that these goals can be achieved for the American people through the dem-



ocratic process and without sacrificing any of our basic human freedoms." (statement)

"We stand unswerving in our loyalty to these principles which America symbolizes and will resist with all our might every attempt by elements from within our country or from without to undermine or destroy our free institutions." (ibid.)

### The Jingo Position

This renunciation is enough to make the Communists lose the respect and the right to stand before the working class as anything other than a group of bureaucrats who want their jobs more than their principles. The bourgeoisie, spoken for by the Vatican spokesman, Murray, demanded more. I quote.

"In the words of our great President Philip Murray: 'We must devote our lives as trade unionists towards the upbuilding of a better life for Americans, and we must pledge only one national allegiance, and that allegiance is to our own country, the United States of America. There can be no difference in point of view regarding these phases of the situation. There should not be. There must not be' ". (Resolution)

This position may be characterized as complete abandonment of the principle of proletarian internationalism. The understanding of the international character of the working class movement is one of the main things which distinguished the Communist movement from the petty-bourgeois social-patriots. From the Communist Manifesto, with its battle cry: "Working men of all countries, Unite!!!" onward—this was

the central theme of the revolutionary Marxist movement. It was this internationalism that distinguished the Bolsheviks from the reformist Second International which stood for the "defence of the fatherland." In fact, Lenin and the Bolsheviks called themselves internationalists to distinguish themselves from the social patriots. In America, this tradition was very strong and it was from the internationalist section of the Socialist movement that the Communist Party was born. The great role of the Marxists has been to reveal that the working class has no interest in common with the rulers of their own country, but instead with the workers on a world scale. It has been the achievement of the Communist movement, in particular, to expose the falsehood and hypocrisy of patriotism and "jingoism." The fight of Lenin and the Bolsheviks against the first imperialist war laid the way for the great October Revolution and the subsequent wave of revolutions that guaranteed the failure of the intervention. The Communist Party of the United States enjoyed great prestige on the kinship which they pretended to have with Debs, Lenin and the whole host of internationalists who answered imperialist war with civil war and who stood for the proletarian revolution and not for the imperialist bourgeoisie. (Debs: "I am opposed to every war but one; I am for that war with heart and soul and that is the world-wide war of the social revolution. In that war, I am prepared to fight in any way the ruling class may make it necessary, even to barricades.")

To the great working class principle of international solidarity as



the answer to imperialist oppression and war, the modern "Communist" has this offer: "My country right or wrong . . ." The cowardly renunciation of all the principles of international solidarity would be bad enough, but that is not all. In this context, the passage has the meaning of a guarantee to the American bourgeoisie that the Communists and the trade union movement would support the impending war with the Soviet Union. How much lower is it impossible for men(?) to sink?

This statement is repeated also.

"The CIO as an American organization has no interest apart from the interest of our people and our country." (Statement)

### **"I Hate Me"**

Finally, after the Communists publicly renounced every principle that they were supposed to stand for, they denounced their own party and declare that it had no place either as a party nor did the individual members belong in the trade union movement.

"In pursuit of the principles set forth herein and adopted by the CIO Executive Board, we, the delegates to the Eighth Constitutional Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations resent and reject efforts of the Communist Party or other political parties and their adherents to interfere in the affairs of the CIO. This convention serves notice that we will not tolerate such interference." (Resolution)

This statement guarantees that no one can any longer consider the Communists as a serious factor in the trade union movement. The resolution was drawn up by three spokesmen for the Com-

munist Party in the trade union movement. They are Ben Gold (National Committee), Abe Flaxer and Mike Quill. The working class will give someone or some party another chance if they make a mistake but the workers cannot respect anyone who will not fight either for his beliefs nor his organization. The best characterization of the line of the Communist Party at the CIO Convention was made by the reactionary political commentators for the Herald Tribune, the Alsop brothers, who stated: "The new line of the Communist Party is, 'I hate me.'" The cleverness of the bourgeoisie in forcing the Communists to draw up the resolution made it impossible for the Communists to avoid responsibility as they did in the 1940 Convention when they voted for a statement identifying Communism with Fascism. It is now almost two months since the CIO Convention and the resolution effects are becoming clearer but to date not one word of criticism has been uttered by the Communist Party leadership.

### **Role of Party**

There are two very important theoretical considerations in the rejection of the Communist Party in the CIO.

The first question is that of the role of the Party in the trade union, the relationship of one to the other, etc. This is the question on which the American revolutionary movement has had the most trouble. In order to deal with this question it is necessary to go back to the fundamental Marxist theses on the subject.

"Social-Democracy is a combination of labour movement with so-



cialism. Its task is not passively to serve the labour movement at each of its separate stages, but to represent the interests of the movement as a whole, to point out to this movement its ultimate aims and its political tasks, and to protect its political ideological independence. Isolated from Social-Democracy, the labour movement becomes petty and inevitably becomes bourgeois; in conducting only the economic struggle, the working class loses its political independence; it becomes the tail of other parties and runs counter to the great slogan: 'The emancipation of the workers must be the task of the workers themselves.' In every country there has been a period in which the labour movement existed separately from the socialist movement, each going its own road; and in every country this state of isolation weakened both the socialist movement and the labour movement." (Lenin, *Urgent Tasks of Our Movement*, Sel. Works vol. II p. 11)

Stalin, in *Foundations of Leninism*, stated this same thing in the following way: "In the fight against this omnipotence (of the trusts and syndicates-BS) the customary methods of the working class—trade unions and co-operative organizations, parliamentary struggle — proved quite inadequate."

### For What Class

In a society that is divided into two hostile classes the question must be asked: "Will the trade union movement serve the bourgeoisie or the proletariat?" The only representatives of proletarian ideology are the Marxists. Therefore, the struggle of the Marxists

is to win the workers of the unions into accepting the leadership of the Marxist Party. It is the Communist Party which must lead the union and the union must, in the last analysis, be subordinate to the Party. That is the meaning of the term, "vanguard." The rotten theory of "neutrality," "non-interference," etc., is the theory of those who cannot realize the class nature of capitalist society. Let those who believe that it is impossible for organizations of the workers, like trade unions, to be on the side of the bourgeoisie examine history. The German Free Trade Unions were the main social prop of the bourgeoisie in the 1918 German revolution and were openly recognized as such by the bourgeoisie. In John Reed's famous work, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, we get a picture of the counter-revolutionary role played by the railway-men's union at the time of the October Revolution. No, the entire history of the trade union movement proves the historical validity of Lenin's statement:

"This shows . . . that subservience to the spontaneity of the labour movement, the belittling of the role of 'the conscious element,' of the role of Social-Democracy **means, whether one likes it or not growth of influence of bourgeois ideology among the workers.**" (What is to Be Done—p. 39, all italics in the original)

### Red Baiting

In this light we can see how lacking in any real basis is the standard defense against red-baiting adopted by the Communist Party. They attack red-baiting because: "it divides the workers



along ideological grounds and, therefore, diverts the workers from the main struggle against the bosses. It is therefore a weapon of the bosses to weaken the main weapon of the workers—unity.” On this basis the Communists praised their action at the CIO Convention as “avoiding the trap laid by the bosses.” This entire line is false and completely lacking any concept of class-struggle. Communists always try to introduce ideological considerations in the trade union movement, and they obviously strengthen, not weaken, the union. For example, does it strengthen the union to discredit and to drive from all positions of leadership those who believe in open class collaboration; or are open stooges of the employers; or open supporters of racial supremacy; or supporters of the most chauvinistic sections of the bourgeoisie; or as Marxists always have, to drive out and discredit the reformists and the compromisers, the open or concealed supporters of the bourgeoisie? To ask the question is to answer it. Red-baiting is to be opposed not because we stand for the right of all ideologies in the working class but because only Marxism is proletarian ideology; all others are the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Only Marxism-Leninism points the solution of any of the basic problems that face the working class. The bourgeoisie attacks the Communists not as the opening wedge in order to reach the liberals, but in order to behead the working class movement and to deprive it of the only leadership capable of freeing the working class.

## Socialist Consciousness

The second theoretical point contained in the paragraph quoted above is the following:

“The history of all countries shows that the working class exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e., it may itself realize the necessity of combining in unions, to fight against the employers and to strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc.\*

\*(Trade unionism does not exclude “politics” altogether as some imagine. Trade unions have always conducted political agitation and struggle—but not Social-Democratic ones. Note by Lenin.)

“The theory of Socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. The founders of scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia.” (What is to Be Done, pps. 32-33)

Since this is so, the agreement that the Communist Party will not interfere in the unions means to guarantee to the bourgeoisie that no Socialist ideology will be imported into the working class movement. This is a guarantee that, so far as it is in their power, the Communists will stand for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; for the continuation of exploitation of the working class.

## Class Collaboration

So much for a very brief examination of the CIO Convention resolution in which the Communist Party liquidated itself. Before we



examine the practical consequences of the action it is worth while to examine some of the other theoretical doctrines put forth by these renegades to the Socialist movement. The policy of revisionism has its own logic. In the "militant" fur workers union, led by the same traitor, Gold, a system of "co-operative piecework" was introduced into the shops of the Dressers and Dyers Joint Board. This system, which may be termed the most effective speed-up system yet devised, was forced on the protesting workers with the following excuse:

"We have to help our own bosses compete with the open shops and the monopolies who are doing the same work cheaper."

Similarly, in the NMU, a report was given by the Party forces proving that if the employers were forced to grant too high an increase, they would be unable to compete with either their foreign or non-union competitors.

This line which is undoubtedly being peddled in all the Communist led unions, is nothing but the most open class collaboration at the expense of the masses of the workers.

### Outlawing the Communists

The scope of this article does not permit an exhaustive examination of the trade union steps that flowed out of the Convention such as the subjugation of all the CIO wage campaigns to Philip Murray etc. Let us now turn to the organizational liquidation of the Communist Party in the CIO following the adoption of this resolution.

At the Convention itself, in spite of the promises of the bourgeoisie, through their spokesman, Philip

Murray, that there would be no "witch-hunt", the first steps were taken. No CIO Council, nor the officer of any council can donate money sponsor or solicit money or membership for any organization that was not approved by the National Office of CIO. (Recently the CIO listed thirty-six organization which were approved. All the Communist sponsored organizations were missing and in addition, Spanish Refugee Committee, Russia War Relief, Yugoslav War Relief, etc. The approved organizations were divided evenly between the Church and the Social-Democratic organizations.) The CIO vice-president most closely associated with the Communists, Reid Robinson, was removed. Ben Gold, however, was re-elected to the CIO Executive Board. (When we consider that in ten years on this body, this resolution is the only contribution of the renegade Gold to the CIO then it is questionable how great a victory was won.)

### After the Convention

After the Convention, the reformist "pure democrats" found to their horror and amazement that the bourgeoisie does not always keep its promises. (Imagine in a society which the bourgeoisie rules by a combination of force and deceit; terror and fraud; imagine they deceive our heroes!) In the Massachusetts State CIO Convention Communists were ruled ineligible to hold office. The New Jersey State CIO passed a similar resolution. The N. Y. State CIO Executive Board stated that no demonstrations to Albany could be called by the CIO Councils without the approval of the state organization. This policy will be



carried out all the way down the line in all the state and city CIO organizations.

The unkindest cut of all came in the United Office and Professional Workers Union. This Union in which the Communist leadership has been in full control since its organization took the resolution of the CIO seriously. The Communist Party praised the resolution so strongly that the leaders of the Office Workers believed that this policy recorded a victory. They put it into effect in their own union. The President, Lewis Merrill, resigned as a trustee of the Jefferson School and as editor of the New Masses. This in effect, outlawed these organizations in the union. This forced even the Communist Party leadership to take notice. The "Marxists" who can accept the renunciation of all the principles of Marxism blanch at the thought of a loss of revenue. They reasoned with Merrill, pleaded with him, used personal pressure and finally got a commitment that the union would not indulge in "witch-hunts".

### Boot Licking

In the National Maritime Union, the Communists revealed once again their inability to fight for their principles or their organization. After Curran attacked the Committee for Maritime Unity and resigned as co-chairman of it, the answer of the Communists was to offer him the sole chairmanship. Curran refused and after a violent attack upon the Communist Party, he defeated them before the membership on this question. The answer of the Communists was to nominate Curran again as President of the NYC CIO Council

which they control. They may be said here to resemble a dog who fawns upon his master the more after being kicked.

### Relationship to Murray

But the relationship with Philip Murray reveals, more than anything else, the depths to which the Communist Party has descended in self-abasement. In the early part of 1946, many members of the Party began to worry about Murray's increasingly open anti-Communist position, and began to raise questions concerning the relationship of the Party to Murray and the temporary nature of the alliance. After Murray's appointee, Van Bittner, red-baited and outlawed the Communists from the Campaign to organize the South, the questioning grew louder. When Murray's union, the Steel workers, passed the resolution upon which the CIO resolution was patterned, the questioning grew so strong that the National Committee of the Communist Party was forced to take a hand. At the July Plenum, Eugene Dennis stated: "Our relationship with Murray is not temporary or transitory, but is long term and permanent." Now, in the Daily Worker of January 29, 1947, in an article by A. Onda entitled, "Steelworkers' Wage Negotiations," the following is revealed:

"Red-baiting, carried on in every issue of Steel Labor since the May convention, only helps the companies and those forces in the union who wish to undermine the influence and prestige of the union and of President Philip Murray. Red-baiting weakens the union." (All italics mine-B.S.)



### **Murray Red-baits**

By such dishonest methods do the Communists strive to conceal from their membership that **Murray has been red-baiting in his own union, continuously, for almost a year.** To see this fully it is necessary to understand the set-up in the Steelworkers Union. Everything in the union goes through the President's hands. All the money collected and sent to the National Office, then expenses are granted to the locals. All paid officials are appointed by Murray etc. When the union journal follows out a policy, it is the policy of Murray just as the Mine Workers Journal speaks for Lewis. Only those who are afraid to reveal to the membership of the Party the consequences of their bankrupt policy or who have lost all sense of shame could pretend that the red-baiting carried on for almost one year was done against the interest and wishes of the "great President Philip Murray." This is bootlicking with a vengeance.

### **Re-examine Past**

The destruction of the influence of the Communists in the labor movement is one of the questions which requires the most complete and thorough analysis. It is necessary to critically re-evaluate not only the failures and the treachery that is now so obvious, but the apparent successes which led to these failures. We must remember that only ten to fifteen years ago, this same party led the organization of the CIO. The entire thesis on which the Communists worked within the labor movement must also be re-examined, especially the concept that the beginning and end of all trade union policy is the

unity of the reformist AFL and CIO. Only by applying the weapon of Marxist criticism to all the past experience of the revolutionary movement in the trade unions will it be possible for those who stand for the Socialist Revolution to reach the correct policy.

The first task of the revolutionists in the present situation is to make it clear even to the most backward worker that the Communists do not represent in any way the revolutionary forces in this country. Without clearly dissociating ourselves from the revisionist betrayers of the working class, without making it clear that they are "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class;" and that they represent cowardly compromisers who fear nothing more than the development of a really revolutionary, really Marxist movement of the proletariat; without making all these things clear to the working class, we will assume in the eyes of the working class political responsibility for their crimes. Without doing this the working class will become demoralized when all the class collaboration schemes of these traitors reveal their bankruptcy. The working class must learn that the Communists mean it when they renounce the Socialist Revolution. They must learn that we do stand for the Social Revolution. Without this distinction clearly and sharply learned the worker will not see any alternative to the demagoguery of the fascists.

### **Final Victory Ours**

Difficult as the fight may be, the final victory must be ours. The decayed and rotten ripe capitalist system holds forth to the prole-



tariat only unemployment and death; fascism and war; oppression and misery. The forthcoming crisis and the millions who will be permanently unemployed will sweep from the working class many of the illusions that still beset it. The increased political reaction and the speeding of plans for the Third (Atom-bomb) World War will sweep many workers into

the revolutionary movement, and will shatter the petty-bourgeois illusions that are now prevalent among the workers. All that is needed is a revolutionary party, guided by Marxism-Leninism and led by tried revolutionaries. The battle will be difficult but the stakes are the liberation of the human race from exploitation and war. We cannot lose!

## VI.

### A Negative Note

A story appeared on the front page of the Daily Worker of Monday, March 3, 1947 entitled, "Michigan Democrats Hit Red-Baiting." I quote:

"Senator Glen H. Taylor of Idaho, sparked the gathering by rapping national and local 'Communist-hunting which is the shield in 1947 to cover reaction's attack on the people's living standards and labor organizations.'

#### Liberal Speeches Reactionary Deeds

"Taylor warned that 'we must work with Russia and defeat the policy of disaster advocated by the GOP of quarreling with our great ally.' Sharp criticism was levelled at American newspapers by the Senator from Idaho, who charged that newspapers today are 'seeking to swing the people away from working with the Russian!'" . . .

"A negative note (sic!) in the convention was the election of John R. Franco, Royal Oak paper merchant and usher in Father Coughlin's Shrine of the Little Flower church, as state chairman of the Democratic Party." (my italics—B.S.)

Here we see more clearly than usually the role of the liberal bourgeoisie in our society. They make the fine speeches for the purpose of fooling the workers and under cover of these speeches the most reactionary elements take power. The Senator denounces red-baiting and the outstanding red-baiter in the country becomes chairman of the Democratic Party. The Senator and the Convention go on record for a state FEPC—and elect the spokesman for one of the most notorious progromists in the country to head the organization. The Senator calls for greater co-operation with the worker's state, the USSR—and a co-worker of Coughlin who supported the Nazis and whose paper was banned during the war because of its hostility to the Soviet Union, is elected to head the party.

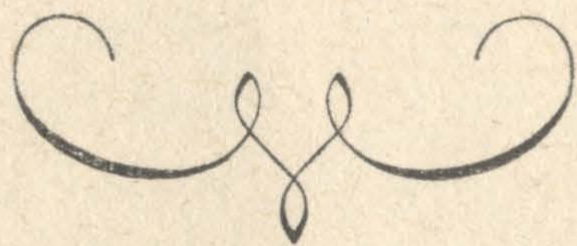
#### Marxists vs. Reformist Position

Marxists understand that the important question is not what this or that politician says, but what is done question is not what this or that politician says, but what they do that is important.



To the reformists and traitors who are destroying the Communist Party the important thing is what does this liberal or that liberal say. The deed which these sugary phrases serve to conceal is to them merely a negative note!

This convention once more gives proof to the common interest of the liberal and the reactionary bourgeoisie and to the fact that so long as the capitalists rule greater and greater reaction will triumph.









The five foregoing articles by Burt Sutta have been published by a group of comrades comprising the Queens County Committee for a Marxist - Leninist Party.

We would like to send copies of this pamphlet to others. For that reason, we would be glad to get from you, our readers, the names and addresses of others to whom this publication could be sent. We would appreciate contributions to help pay the costs of this and other publications planned for the future.



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