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## **The Road to Socialism, II\***

By William Z. Foster

The greatest of all examples, however, of the inborn and powerfully growing tendency of the workers to strangle and checkmate, in advance, the violence of the capitalists has been seen in the case of war. Imperialist war is incomparably the most gigantic and most terrible expression of employer violence. It was not so long ago that the warmakers had a pretty free hand in initiating their war violence, and although the workers protested against it, they could do but little to halt it. Now, however, with the new vast strength of international Socialism and with the tremendous growth of the workers' and general people's democratic organizations and governments all over the world, there is a very different story to be told.

The workers and other peace forces made a big fight to block the two world wars, especially the latter one. In neither case did they succeed.

Nevertheless, they made world capitalism pay very dearly for these murderous wars, by winning many countries for Socialism. However, in their fight against the danger of a third world war, which American imperialism, during the cold war period, has tried so hard to organize, the world peace forces, grown enormously more powerful in the meantime, have had much better success. That is, with a gigantic peace movement and a militant struggle, entirely without precedent in history, they have bankrupted the Wall Street war program, and for the time being at least, greatly eased the war danger. At the July, 1955, Big Four Conference in Geneva, the world's peoples let the monopoly capitalists understand that they would not permit the atomic war to take place that was being organized by American imperialism. This success in at least temporarily curbing

\* The first half of this article appeared in our April issue. As stated there, the article was written prior to Khrushchev's Report to the XX Congress of the CPSU.

But this is to look far ahead, to contemplate extremely hypothetical possibilities. As concerns the near future, there is no warrant for any such expectation.

This is an important contribution to the question of the road to Socialism during the decades in which we are living. What Stalin is saying here is that he foresees a time when, under favorable circumstances, it will be possible to make a relatively peaceful advance to Socialism. By his quotes on "peaceful," he obviously refers to "relatively peaceful"; by his quotes on the "unfavorable" international situation, he signalizes the pressure of the great forces of world democracy and Socialism against the capitalists; and by his quotes on "of their own accord," he clearly means that the employers would be restrained from violence by the curbing power of the workers at home and abroad.

During the thirty years that have elapsed since Stalin wrote the above significant words, the world's workers have indeed not achieved the advanced stage of progress, where, as he says, they have "triumphed in the chief countries that are now capitalist," and it would be absurd to allege that "the present capitalist encirclement has given place to a Socialist encirclement." But that the international democratic and Socialist movement, nevertheless, has made very substantial progress in this general direction is undeniable. With seventeen countries now either actu-

ally in Socialism or actively building it, and with unparalleled huge trade unions, workers' parties, and other democratic mass organizations in the capitalist countries—all operating in the midst of a decaying world capitalist system—the working class and its allies are now able to exert powerful curbing influences upon inherent capitalist violence, far and away beyond anything they could do when Stalin wrote the above stressed passages a generation ago. As world Socialism advances with giant strides and as capitalism goes deeper into general crisis, one of the most profound effects of this two-phased process is that the forces of labor and Socialism are becoming all the more able to curb and restrain the capitalist violence against the people, both on a national and an international scale.

#### THE STRUGGLE FOR A PEACEFUL ADVANCE TO SOCIALISM

Since the advent of the Russian Revolution in November 1917, the workers of the world have made a very considerable record, and not without marked success, in curbing the counter-revolutionary violence of the capitalists facing a working class marching towards, or building Socialism. They have thus clearly demonstrated that the formula that "in certain instances there exist the possibilities for a relatively peaceful advance to Socialism" is a correct one; one that has been proven in practice.

In the industrialized countries the Communist parties are all orientating upon the perspective of the workers and their allies, organized upon essentially a people's front basis, electing democratic governments on the basis of the existing democratic franchise; governments which can open the road to Socialism. The exceptions, of course, are in those countries where extreme imperialist reaction is dominant, where colonialism prevails, or where fascism may be in power; that is, where democratic freedoms do not exist. To carry through people's front elections in a legal and substantially peaceful manner in the bourgeois democratic countries, the Communists count upon several factors, including the critical political situation in which, normally, people's front governments come to power; the elementary character of the people's demands, which set the vast masses of the people into political motion; the coalition-form of the movement, with the workers in the lead; the enormous new democratic strength of the working class and its allies; and the ability of the aroused masses, under working class leadership, to maintain in force the popular voting franchise, in the face of violent efforts of the bourgeoisie to weaken or destroy it.

The people's front movements everywhere in the bourgeois-democratic countries aim at winning for their program a big majority of the people. Characteristic of this profoundly democratic basis of the

movement, the *Daily Worker* of Jan. 18, 1956, points out that, "An absolute majority of seats were won in the last (French) elections by the Left-of-center parties to whom the Communists appealed for a popular front." The people's front type of movement, however, does not definitely give a guarantee, in the people's fight for a democratic government which will represent their interests, that the masses will positively be able to stifle and suppress the counter-revolutionary violence of employer-organized reaction and to elect a government under the bourgeois constitution. As the workers have learned to their cost, there is always the danger of fascism. It is a significant fact, however, that in a number of countries—Spain, France, Chile, Guatemala, British Guiana, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, etc.—the people's front masses have been able to elect democratic governments in the face of very powerful and militarily reactionary forces.

Once in power, and with control of the government legally in their hands, the people's front forces are obviously much better able to maintain peace and order as their constructive program develops. As Marx pointed out in connection with the situation in the American Civil War, they are then able to put the reactionary forces at the disadvantage of being rebels against the legitimately elected government. A people's front government may or may not be the beginning of the masses' march to Socialism, depending upon the po-

litical circumstances and the masses' strength and consciousness. But in the event that it does move decisively towards the Left, it will still, speaking in the name of the nation, be able legally to make such constitutional changes as are necessary to carry out its program and, eventually, to build Socialism. All this is a policy of the people, by democratic means, determining the fate of the nation. As the movement goes ahead, it strives to reduce counter-revolutionary employer violence to a minimum. In view of this general course of action, it is a monstrous lie, the charge of monopolist spokesmen, that the Communists advocate a program of violently overthrowing the capitalist governments under which they may live.

In the colonial and semi-colonial lands, the people's fronts, or often more properly, national fronts, composed of workers, peasants, intellectuals, and sections of the national bourgeoisie, confront a basic absence of democracy in the fight for people's governments and the independence of their countries. Consequently, in these countries, being less industrialized, having fewer civil liberties, and with a much weaker proletariat, the workers and peasants have to fight with what means are available against the ruthless imperialists and big land-owners. Therefore, the colonial and semi-colonial world, in recent years, has been wracked with bitter national colonial liberation wars.

Generally, in the semi-colonial countries—Brazil being a striking ex-

ample of this—the Communist parties have programs of strengthening the national democracy and of preventing the reactionary governments, controlled by dictator-stooges of foreign imperialists, from organizing putsches to stifle the limited democracy, especially during national elections. It has been possible recently for people's front and national front combinations to win electoral victories in Guatemala and British Guiana, although the workers were not strong enough to maintain political power in the face of the attacks of militant American and British imperialism.

In the fight of the peoples under capitalism generally, to establish democratic governments and to maintain order and democracy in the doing of this, another factor of vast and increasing importance has been coming into play during recent years. This is the heightened international solidarity of the world democratic and Socialist forces. This has already produced a powerful curbing, restraining, and defeating effect upon capitalist counter-democratic, counter-revolutionary violence in both national and international spheres, and its power in this respect is rapidly growing. The working out of this factor, of course, has never involved the "export of revolution" or armed intervention by world Socialist forces.

The tendencies of the world's workers to seek to curb the anti-Socialist violence of the employers and their allies were already beginning to be manifest during the course

of the great Russian Revolution of 1917. This especially showed itself in their active restraining work after the new workers' government had been established, with particular regard to making futile the armed interventionist activities of world imperialism against the first Socialist state. This worker resistance was marked by strong protest agitation and strikes in Germany, France, Italy, England, and elsewhere. Among many such examples over the world, there was the refusal of the Pacific Coast longshoremen to load munitions for the imperialist counter-revolutionary regimes in Russia. The workers of Europe and this country were very radical at the time, and their opposition to their respective governments' attempts to overthrow the Soviet government was a decisive factor, as Lenin repeatedly stated, in weakening the armed interventionist attacks of the big powers, including the United States, against the young Socialist land. Thus, the workers of the world definitely eased the advance of the Soviets at this most crucial period.

Following World War II and the birth of the people's democracies in Eastern Europe, this tendency to curb the counter-revolutionary violence of the employers by the world's workers operated on a much higher level and with far greater effectiveness. That is, the nearby presence of the Soviet Union and its great Red Army definitely put a damper on the many attempts of the capitalist forces, both within and without

these countries, to overthrow the new and still weak people's governments of this area. What happened in Greece (which could not be so well protected)—its long civil war, with eventual disaster—gave a clear picture of the bitter struggles that Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and the other people's democracies otherwise would have had to face, had they not been shielded by the powerful Soviet Union. That in this case the advance to Socialism was rendered relatively more peaceful is so obvious as not to require further argument. The principle of the workers' forces curbing the counter-revolutionary violence of the employers and thus facilitating the advance to Socialism is also now being brilliantly demonstrated in People's China. The winning of that country for Socialism was a fundamental disaster for world capitalism, and the alarmed and enraged big capitalists of the world, particularly those in the United States, have wished nothing more devoutly than to deluge China with a great civil war, in order, they hope, to halt the advance of Socialism, or even to destroy it. This, notoriously, is still the policy of the U.S. government, with its wholesale arming of the "nationalist" counter-revolution, its plans to "unleash" Chiang Kai-shek, its arrogant occupation of Taiwan, and its desperate attempts to expand the Korean and Indo-China conflicts into a great atomic war against People's China. But the international solidarity of the forces of world So-

cialism, especially those of the Soviet Union, have prevented such a civil war, and even an effective economic blockade, from being launched against the young Chinese People's Republic. Thus, the tremendous advance of that huge country towards Socialism has most definitely been helped and rendered more peaceful.

Another of the main policies of the Eisenhower Administration is its so-called "liberation policy." The insolent and naked purpose of this counter-revolutionary activity is to cultivate and provoke civil wars in the countries of people's democracy and Socialism, including even the Soviet Union itself. The great danger in this policy was dramatized by the futile June 17, 1953 demonstration (an attempted insurrection) in East Germany, which could have set Europe afire. But this "liberation" civil war policy of Wall Street has been rendered inoperative by the curbing and defeating pressures used against it, principally by the Socialist group of nations. That this basic success tends to make relatively more peaceful the advance to Socialism in the countries directly concerned is also beyond question.

This same protective principle will apply, even more effectively in the future, with the rapid growth of the world Socialist and democratic forces. The workers' internationalism will rise to new victories, without in any sense attempting to force Socialism upon the world. The fundamentally peaceful and democratic masses will develop an even more immense power in preventing

the desperados of decaying monopoly capitalism from deluging the world with the blood of their national civil wars and international imperialist slaughters, in their frantic efforts to prolong the worse than useless existence of capitalism. The world labor and Communist movements have not yet reached the high stage of development, foreseen by Stalin in the quotation cited above, where they can stay the hands of the employers altogether, but their vast and increasing power is already a tremendous element in rendering relatively more peaceful and democratic the inevitable advance to Socialism in many countries.

#### PRESENT DAY PEOPLE'S FRONT MOVEMENTS

The people's front, in its several varieties, is the fundamental reaction of the workers, peasants, and other democratic masses, through the alliance of their powerful political parties, trade unions, and other organizations, against the intensified hardships, exploitation, oppression, and wars, brought about by the deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system. The people's front is the most effective means of combatting the immediate hardships of the masses, and it also opens up the path towards eventual Socialism.

The first form of the people's front, as we have seen, was born in the mid-1930's, in the historic united struggle to prevent fascism and the outbreak of World War II. The movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries at this time took

the shape of the national front, made up of workers, peasants, middle class elements, and sections of the bourgeoisie, with the fight for national independence at its center. The great international anti-fascist alliance, which fought through World War II, against fascist Germany, Italy, and Japan, was an extension of the people's front, which lay at its base. The movement of people's democracy, which developed at the end of World War II in many countries of Eastern Europe, was also a variety of the people's front. And so, too, was the tremendous post-war peace movement, which is blocking the war drive of American imperialism for world conquest and which came to dramatic fruition at the Geneva Big Four Conference in July 1955. In all these movements the Communist parties have played decisive roles.

The people's front has taken on these different forms in conformity with the specific mass tasks facing the people in their ever-increasing struggle against monopoly capital and the decaying capitalist system. At the present time, the people's front is reshaping itself, in accordance with the new situation brought about by the relaxing of war tensions at Geneva and by the new post-war problems facing the world's workers. The strongest developments in this direction are in such countries as France, Italy, Indonesia, and Brazil; but, undoubtedly, the worsening of the general economic situation, which surely stands ahead, will bring the people's front to broad expression in many other countries. The sharp

point of this mass movement is always directed against monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and their multiple evils. More and more, in capitalist countries, even in Great Britain, the question of national independence, against armed aggression, has also become a people's front issue.

The big obstacle in the workers' ranks against the people's front is the Right-wing Social Democracy. This fact has manifested itself in all the various forms and types of people's front movements listed above. But in these instances it was also a basic fact that the masses, set in political motion by the most urgent economic and political needs, eventually succeeded in breaking through the resistance of their opportunist Right-wing leaders. This has been all the more the case, because, as capitalism in general is weakening, so also are its tools, the Right Social Democrats, with the Left Social Democrats tending to unite with the Communists. The general crisis of capitalism is also, by the same token, the general crisis of Right Social Democracy.

All the major Communist parties in the capitalist countries, from Europe to Japan, have people's front programs, under different names and forms; in conformity with the specific national conditions under which they live and struggle. These all bear the characteristics, as analyzed above, of a joint electoral struggle around immediate demands by the toiling masses, supported by their mass organizations and aiming to

win political control of the state. Together with this, are the general implications of a Leftward orientation of the people's regime, the remodeling the state to fit the advancing needs of the movement, and the establishment of Socialism as the ultimate objective. The Communist parties are all aiming at the most peaceful and democratic advance possible to Socialism. Extended reviews of people's front programs and experiences in various countries are to be found in the Smith Act brief of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *et al.*, directed to the U.S. Court of Appeals in October 1953 (pages 98-147), from which a number of the quotations cited below are taken. They are typical examples of these present-day people's front programs.

The Italian Communist Party, the strongest in capitalist Europe, which stands in alliance with the Left-wing Socialist Party, has during the recent period repeatedly called for cooperation with other Left and progressive elements. Together, comprising a large majority of the Italian people, they would work jointly for the election of a progressive government, essentially along people's front lines. Palmiro Togliatti, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy, said on April 15, 1953:

What we demand, and for this we address ourselves to the Italian electorate, is to achieve through the medium of the election a situation which would permit the formation of a government capable of launching and of carrying through a great, incessant and

effective struggle against poverty, against the growing privations of the workers, office employees, handicraftsmen, peasants; against the economic degradation of Southern Italy and the islands, the mountain regions and other poorly developed areas. The economic measures envisaged by us go in the direction of social renovation, a direction which we unhesitatingly recognize as the road to Socialism.

In France, the Communist Party, the largest political party in the country, follows a similar people's front policy. It is now conducting a major struggle in that country, which is in deep crisis, to establish a Left-of-center people's front government, one that would begin to orientate the nation in a constructive direction. The major immediate aims of the French people's front movement are: a) freedom for Algeria and an end to the drain of French manpower in the colonial war; b) economic improvements in the conditions of the workers and greater social expenditures; c) policies leading to a further easing of international relations. Both the Italian and French Communist parties, as an elementary phase of their work, constantly struggle against the reactionary forces which would tear down the nation's democratic liberties in their efforts to make impossible an eventual electoral victory of the people's front within the present French Constitution.

In Great Britain, as in the various other capitalist countries, the Communist Party has an elaborate program along the lines of people's

front and people's democracy: *The British Road to Socialism*. This program calls upon the workers and all their allies to organize "decisive action to win a Parliamentary majority and form a People's Government." The program states that "every effort of the capitalist class to defy the People's Government and Parliament will be resisted and defeated." Characteristically, the British Dominions—Canada, Union of South Africa, and Australia—have similar programs. The C.P. of Australia declares (*Australian Communist Review*, July, 1951): "New paths to Socialism were revealed in the post-war period. The People's Democracies of Eastern Europe have shown that the rule of the democratic masses, led by the working class, can be established in various ways." And Tim Buck, the leader of the Labor-Progressive Party in Canada, states in his book, *Thirty Years, 1922-1952* (pp. 221-23), that "Canada can advance to Socialism utilizing the parliamentary form of government equally as the workers and farmers of Central and South-eastern Europe did. . . . The working class cannot establish Socialism by simple electoral victory, but the parliamentary victory of such a broad alliance of democratic forces can transform capitalist democracy into real people's democracy."

In the American, British, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Belgian colonies and semi-colonies, where there is hardly even a minimum of democratic freedoms, the

Communist parties, trade unions, and other people's mass organizations constantly face the most brutal repression from governments dominated by foreign imperialists, big landowners, bankers, and other reactionaries. Nevertheless, the Communist parties and their allies, as best they can under the severe circumstances, fight for the establishment of people's front and national front governments upon the basis of general elections. Such Left coalitions commonly include the non-imperialist sectors of the national bourgeoisie, and they are to be found widely in these countries.

For example, in Indonesia, which is the eighth most populous country in the world, the powerful Communist Party has been negotiating recently for the formation of a broad, anti-imperialist national front, to include the three major parties in the country—the Nationalists, Moslems, and Communists—to fight for complete national independence and for various urgent reform measures for the workers, peasants, and others—see *The Road to People's Democracy for Indonesia*, by D. N. Aidit, General Secretary of the Communist Party of that country.

In semi-colonial Brazil, in the Latin-American preserves of American imperialism, a similar situation prevails. The illegalized, semi-underground Brazilian Communist Party fights for a broad national democratic front. In *For a Lasting Peace* (September 16, 1955), General Secretary Carlos Prestes points out that

there is "a grave danger of a *coup d'état*, aimed at imposing upon the country a fascist military dictatorship of the lackeys of 'North American monopolies,' especially to balk the people's will in the approaching national elections." Prestes calls upon the masses to curb and defeat all such reactionary plans. Despite militant reaction, he adds that, "Under present conditions in Brazil, a united working class, in alliance with the other democratic and patriotic forces, could easily elect an honest patriot to the post of President of the Republic, one capable of carrying out a policy of peace and defense of national sovereignty." This is the general pattern of the movement throughout the wide expanse of Latin America.

#### THE AMERICAN ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The Communist Party of the United States, under the pressure of the big war-and-fascism drive of the Axis powers of the period, began its people's front orientation in 1935 and has continued, with variations, ever since. Already during the Spanish Civil War, the Party leaders, particularly Comrade Bittelman, discussed the possibility of the Spanish people's front government advancing on to Socialism. This idea is also expressed in the pamphlet, *Socialism* (1941) by Foster. This proposes (page 42) that, in addition to realizing the workers' immediate demands, "the government, once it is

firmly in the hands of the toiling people, with the working class in the lead, must strike the social evils at their roots by nationalizing all the important industries and the land, by abolishing capitalist exploitation, by developing planned production, by reorganizing society from the ground up on a Socialist basis."

The Party has called continuously for the crystallization of an American people's coalition of workers, farmers, intellectuals, and small business elements, led by the working class. In 1948 Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Party, stated thus the stage of the policy at that time: "We should bring forward a program that will give the working class and its popular allies a clear perspective and policy for drastically curbing the power of monopoly capital, and achieving governmental power for the people's coalition, and thus for effectively undermining the social and economic basis of fascism and extending democracy."

The first extended statement, however, definitely analyzing the people's front and people's democracy as the American road to Socialism, was contained in the pamphlet, *In Defense of the Communist Party and the Indicted Leaders* (Foster), published in July 1949, in connection with the current trial of the eleven C.P. National Board members. It was adopted as the official line of the trial on this specific question. The *History of the Communist Party* (1952) also outlines the matter extensively (pp. 549-557). The ques-

tion was elaborately presented in the *Brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals*, October 1953, in the case of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and others. It was also developed in the Party *Program* in the national election campaign of 1954. The *Program* states (p. 28):

The Communist Party declares that Socialism will come into existence in the United States only when the majority of the American people decide to establish it. The Communist Party affirms its deep and abiding faith in the American people and their ultimate decision to establish Socialism. . . . The Communist Party advocates a peaceful path to Socialism in the U.S. It brands as a lie the charge that it advocates the use of force and violence in the pursuit of any of its immediate or long-range objectives.

Eugene Dennis, C.P. General Secretary, in his first public speech, on January 20, 1956, after doing a five-year term in prison under the Smith Act, thus stated the policy of the Party regarding the American road to Socialism:

When, and how, Socialism will be brought about is up to the majority of the American people. We Communists believe that ultimately some form of workers' and farmers' government, based on a united and class-conscious working class and a militant alliance of labor, the Negro people, and the toiling farmers, will effect the transition from capitalism to Socialism. Likewise, we are sure that this will be a truly American government. It will be headed by an American President and act through an American Congress, which would be—for the first time in our nation's

history—genuinely of, for, and by the people. And as for us Communists, we desire and advocate that this people's democracy shall be established by constitutional and democratic processes. (*Political Affairs*, February, 1956, p. 10.)

The people's front policy, of a general alliance of the working class and other democratic elements against monopoly capital, has deep roots in American history. Among these predecessor movements were the Granger, Greenback, and Populist parties of the general period of 1875-1900. These movements, mostly led by the poorer white farmers, had heavy participation by trade unionists, Negro sharecroppers, and lower middle class elements in the cities. The cutting edge of these movements was directed against rising monopoly capital. The big La Follette movement of the 1918-1924 period also took on the traditional farm-labor party pattern. In the broad Roosevelt New Deal movement of the 1932-1945 period, there were also distinct elements of the great mass anti-fascist alliance of the times internationally, although the movement was not led directly by the workers. Significantly also, at the seventh congress of the Comintern in 1935, the traditional labor-farmer party movement in the United States was characterized by Dimitrov as an American form of the people's front.

In the United States, the Communist Party foresees and fights for the democratic establishment of a people's front government which, as we have seen, could, in the essential

political circumstances, be the first steps towards people's democracy and Socialism. This means that the Party urges, when the majority of the American people so decide, a people's front government, whatever its specific form, within the framework of the present U.S. Constitution; that is, it should be established by legal, democratic action. Under present conditions in the United States, as in various other capitalist countries, such an election, based upon the broad democratic masses, fighting for elementary demands, is possible, providing always that these masses, led by the working class and the Communist Party, are able to protect the democratic election processes in the meantime from destructive reactionary attacks. There is no blueprint-road to Socialism; the American people will find their own specific road to this great historic goal.

A people's front government in the United States would assume the traditional constitutional forms of Congress, state legislatures, and the like. Such a government could be elected under the present constitutional set-up. But it would be an error to conclude that it would be possible to establish full Socialism in the United States under the Constitution as it now stands. Obviously, important amendments to it would be required. It is now just as true as ever, what Marx said after the Paris Commune—that the workers cannot seize upon the ready-made capitalist state machinery and utilize it for the building of Socialism. Hence, in

America, a people's front government, as it would move on to the Left, would be compelled to initiate certain constitutional changes, which would also be done in a legal manner. This, too, would be acting in full tune with American tradition. The American people have never looked upon the Constitution as a rigid, unchangeable document, never to be amended.

The British and Canadian Communist parties, with Harry Pollitt and Tim Buck at their heads respectively, in their programs give a clear picture of the political process, which would also be generally applicable to the United States. Thus, *The British Road to Socialism* explains that "the people of Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real People's Democracy, transforming Parliament, the product of Britain's historic struggle for democracy, into the democratic instrument of the will of the vast majority of her people." Along the same line, the Canadian Labor-Progressive Party foresees that the people's front forces "can transform capitalist democracy into real people's democracy and make Parliament, which has developed as a result of the traditions and democratic struggle of the Canadian people, into an instrument of People's Democracy."

The central fact in this whole development would be that, with the people's front legally elected into control of the government, the entire process, from the original election, backed by the majority of the people, would be democratic and

constitutional. This would be true regarding such measures as the nationalization of industry, the democratization of the armed forces, etc., which would eventually become necessary. The capitalist opposition that should attempt to block this course by violence—if it did so—would be, as Marx pointed out about the United States in 1878, in the category of rebels against the legal existing order. This is the broad outline of political development foreseen and aimed at by the Communist Party of the United States, and it dovetails completely with the democratic traditions of the American people. To call it a program of the advocacy of the violent overthrow of the United States Government is nonsense.

Together with its aim of achieving the regular election of a people's government, whatever its specific form, by the majority of the American people, a government which would have the potentiality of moving Leftward towards people's democracy and Socialism, the Communist Party, in line with the workers' people's front movements all over the capitalist world, would seek to make this whole development as free of employer-organized violence as possible. Especially, the workers would undertake to prevent capitalist counter-revolutionary attacks from developing. The American people would adopt such safeguards to their democracy as they saw fit under the circumstances.

We have seen how the workers in

France, in the early phases of the Spanish movement, in Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere, were able to do this. There is every reason to suppose, too, that an awakened American proletariat, with its gigantic mass organizations, would similarly be able to maintain a democratic regime under any circumstances that might arise—that is, once these masses really understood that they have to take decisive steps forward. The recent curbing of the McCarthy pro-fascist menace by the American people augurs well for the future.

#### CONCLUSION

The Communist Party, as a Marxist-Leninist organization, realizes fully that American monopoly capital, the richest, strongest, most reactionary, and most ruthless in the world, would be certain to use every means within its power, legal and extra-legal, to try to beat back the advance of a militant movement of the working class and the masses of the people who were aiming at seriously curbing and ultimately breaking the political power of the monopolists. No other rational conclusion than this can be drawn from the big capitalists' long and lurid history of lawless repression of the workers during strikes, their cold-blooded slaughter of the toilers in needless industrial "accidents," their ruthless use of the courts against the people, their cynical corruption of the government, their prostitution of almost every institu-

tion in the country to their wolf-like profit-making, and their present leadership of world reaction. But the workers and other democratic elements, once in political motion, obviously would not give them a free hand to commit such violence against them, but would militantly undertake to curb them. Hence, the C.P. *Program*, speaking of an eventual, regularly elected "farmer-labor-anti-monopolist government," says realistically that, "Such a government would be called upon to take the most resolute measures to defend itself from the efforts of the monopolists to overthrow it." But Wall Street, facing Socialism as an immediate possibility, would be far less rich and powerful than it is now.

In their striving to achieve the most peaceful and orderly possible advance to inevitable Socialism, the workers and their allies in this country, as in other lands, would, in addition to their own efforts, have the advantage of the immense influence of ever-growing world Socialism and democracy. Obviously, while this influence is not yet so powerful as to cause the employers "of their own accord to make extensive concessions to the proletariat", as Stalin said would eventually take place, nevertheless the international democratic strength is already a tremendous force in the life of the world. We have seen above how it has only recently balked the imperialist warmakers and it is a most powerful barrier against fascism all over the world. Even U.S. imperialism, right

on its own home grounds, has to pay attention to this great new democratic influence in the world. This power it was, to a very large extent, that helped compel the Jim Crow government of this country recently to soften up a bit on Negro segregation in the schools, in the armed forces, and in passenger travel. And undoubtedly, the recent setback to McCarthyite fascism in the United States was very largely due to the tremendous hostility that developed against this reactionary demagogue all over the democratic and Socialist world. When the working class and their allies in this country finally come to elect a real people's government, undoubtedly one of the most decisive forces in protecting that government's safety will be the tremendous democratic spirit now inspiring the peoples of the world.

The Communist Party of the United States has never advocated force or violence. This was stated, at least in a general way, by the Supreme Court of the United States, in a rare burst of realism, in its decision in the Schneiderman case during World War II, in October 1942. After making an extended examination of Marxist-Leninist books, documents, and programs, the Court said:

A tenable conclusion from the foregoing is that the Party in 1927 desired to achieve its program by peaceful and democratic means, and as a theoretical matter, justified the use of force and violence only as a means of preventing an attempted forcible counter-overthrow once the Party had obtained control in

a peaceful manner, or as a method of last resort to enforce the majority will if at some indefinite future time, because of peculiar circumstances, constitutional or peaceful channels were no longer open.

On numerous occasions C.P. spokesmen have accepted this definition as broadly correct, at least so far as it goes.

The Communist Party advocates and fights for the most peaceful possible and the legal establishment of Socialism in the United States, by means of a people's front—people's democracy course of development. Knowing so well the lawlessness and brutality of American monopoly capital, the Party has, however, never undertaken, in any sense, to say that such a consummation can be guaranteed or taken for granted. On the contrary, the Party realizes that all such major steps forward by the workers of this country can be won only on the basis of serious class struggle. Therefore, with regard to the possible election of a people's front government in the United States, the pamphlet, *In Defense of the Communist Party and Its Indicted Leaders*, said (p. 92):

This people's coalition, at all stages of its development, will have to face violent opposition from the monopolists and their hangers-on. . . . One can imagine the frenzy and desperation of the capitalist forces if a broad, advanced coalition party were really strong enough to menace big business' control of the Presidency and its majority in Congress. Such a party could be

elected only in the face of violent capitalist attacks.

The Party maintains, nevertheless, that such a democratic election, within the scope of the present Constitution, is quite possible. It holds that the working class and its allies, with strong trade unions and other mass organizations, along with powerful allies in the Negro people, poorer farmers, and other democratic elements, constituting together a great majority of the American people and moving ahead in fitting political conditions, will be able, despite the violence of the employers' opposition, to maintain intact the democratic franchise and to elect a people's government on a program of elementary democratic demands. This would open the door of the road to Socialism.

Of course, there is always the danger of anti-democratic fascism coming to power as the agency of monopoly capital. Indeed, in the recent spectacular rise of McCarthyism the United States has had a frightening experience in this general respect and it tasted the grim reality of the fascist danger. Had McCarthyism prevailed it would have wiped out real democratic liberties in the United States and made the Bill of Rights into a mockery. But it did not prevail. After much hesitancy and confusion, the democratic masses finally cracked down on McCarthy, although, in the meantime, general civil liberties suffered seriously. Although the fascist danger is still present, the Communist

Party does not consider fascism to be inevitable in the United States. Just the reverse, it has confidence in the democratic strength of the people, and it orientates upon the basic assumption that they will be able to maintain and develop their democratic rights through an eventual people's front movement.

American working-class political action, because of specific national conditions needless here to recapitulate, has taken a somewhat different course, in that, instead of early launching a broad labor party, as in Great Britain, it has crystallized its forces and activities in various forms and trends. Generally these still express themselves within the two bourgeois political organizations, primarily the Democratic Party. Consequently, the framework has not yet broken the political leading strings of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, it is now relatively rapidly on the way to the formation of a great mass political party, which will almost certainly take the familiar historic American form of a labor-farmer or people's party; but this time with the workers in the lead. It would be absurd to think that the present situation of 16,000,000 organized workers dominated by bourgeois politicians can long continue. The recent merger of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. was, at the same time, a long stride towards independent working class political action. In all likelihood the next real economic or political crisis in this country will bring the new party, now aborning, to fruition,

probably through a large-scale split in the Democratic Party.

At the present time, the political movement of the workers expresses itself chiefly through the channels of the Democratic Party, and there it has to be cultivated. But this, although now an extremely important necessity, can be only a temporary situation. One way or another, as the United States feels more and more the pressures and strains of the general crisis of world capitalism, the workers and their political allies, the poorer farmers, Negro masses, intellectuals, small business elements, etc., will find the means to break the present bourgeois political tutelage over them and to win control over their own political organization and destiny.

This is why it is so necessary, particularly for the Communist Party, in this rapidly ripening political situation, to keep before the workers the ultimate aim of independent political action and a great labor-farmer party, comprising a majority of the American people. In a world where the influence of world Socialism is growing by leaps and bounds, the American working class also will eventually find it indispensable to take the path of the people's front, the final end of which is Socialism. By cutting off the vast army of parasites, profiteers, and economic blood-suckers, Socialism will open up the perspective for an enormous betterment in the living standards of the American working masses, and this fact the latter are historically bound eventually to grasp.