

# Foster Corrects the N. Y. Times on Draft Program of Communist Party

William Z. Foster yesterday made public a letter to the New York Times which we print below.

The letter, written on March 30, was sent in protest of an article in the Times by Will Lissner on the Communist Party's draft Program.

On April 12, Foster checked with the Letters to Editor Department and was informed they had not yet seen the letter. However, on the previous day, Lissner in a new article had referred to receipt of the letter and quoted a paragraph from it.

Foster yesterday sent another copy to the Letters to the Editor Department of the Times and released it to the press in general. Text of the letter follows:

Editor, the New York Times:

I wish to state that Mr. Lissner in his report of March 7 in the New York Times failed to present to your readers the true nature of the Draft Program of the Communist Party—The American Way to Jobs, Democracy and Peace, issued by its national committee.

In the interests of the rights of minority political opinions to be heard, in the interests of truthful reporting, it is but natural to expect that the issuance of a newsworthy program receive honest coverage in a newspaper of the eminence of the New York Times, notwithstanding opposing editorial judgments. This is all the more necessary in regard to a party which forms the center of national controversy. McCarthyism distorts the views and activities of the Communist Party as part of its vicious drive upon the democratic rights of the American people.

Unfortunately, this was not the case in the Lissner account. The Lissner article is a distortion from beginning to end. Literally not a single sentence in the article accorded with the truth. Moreover, in violation of the most elementary rules of journalistic ethics, under the

guise of summarizing the program, Lissner gave his own interpretation of the various proposals in a way which made them appear as the actual proposals of the program itself. In this manner, he denied the reader the slightest opportunity of forming his own judgment of what the program contained.

No one would know from that version that the document is a program offered to the people at a critical juncture in our national life to avert the disaster of a looming economic crisis, to halt McCarthyism and to prevent our country from being plunged into fascism and war by Big Business which dominates the Eisenhower Administration.

These dangers are upon us. Our country is at the crossroads. It can either take the path of defending and maintaining the hard-won democratic achievements of our people, it can either pursue the course leading to peaceful settlement of disputed international questions, or continue along the present disastrous road of forfeiting these achievements to McCarthyism, to a fascist police-state and war.

The Program seeks to point the way out of this developing crisis through the unity of all democratic-minded, peace-desir-

ing people cutting across party divisions and political and ideological differences. It should be axiomatic that this end can be promoted only by open-minded and democratic debate, to which indeed, the Draft Program contributes. I submit that to withhold from your readers the essence of this program in a report which presumes to present it, is a disservice both to the people and to honest journalism.

Since, as I have said, practically every paragraph of Lissner's rather lengthy report can be challenged from the standpoint of truth, it is not possible within the confines of a letter even to enumerate all of the untruths, let alone analyze them. I will do so, however, if adequate space were made available to me in your paper.

Here let me refer to one—a central big lie—which your headline writer emphasized by capping the report: "Kremlin Re-casts Party Line Here." True, this prejudicial headline accurately summarized Lissner's lead paragraph, but it had absolutely no relationship to the draft program with which Mr. Lissner was ostensibly dealing.

This is the Draft Program of the CPUSA. Nine-tenths of the Program is concerned with inter-



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national American matters, with questions which beset us as a nation, the solution of which can be found only in the thinking and experience of the American people themselves. It represents months of serious thinking of American Communists and it is a call by these Americans to their fellow-Americans to assist with their criticism and suggestions in improving this Draft so that the final program of the Communist Party will most effectively express the needs and aspirations of our people.

I write this letter to protest the misrepresentation of our Program by Mr. Lissner and to appeal to the readers of the New York Times in the name of decency and fair play as well as the vital issues involved to obtain for themselves a copy of this Draft Program by writing to the Communist Party at 268 Seventh Avenue, New York City.

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER