

CHAPTER 4

Various Positions on the Black Belt Thesis After World War II

Introduction

Divided into three sections, chapter four seeks to analyze various positions on the Black Belt thesis after World War II. Section one of this chapter attempts to trace the national question in the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) from World War II until its seventeenth convention (December, 1959). At its seventeenth convention the CPUSA stated very precisely in its resolution the African-American people in the United States of America did not constitute a nation.¹ As a member of the Communist International, the Communist Party USA participated in the formation of the Black Belt thesis and accepted it as adopted at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928, as well as the 1930 resolution of the Communist International. By voting in 1959 that Negroes in the United States were not a nation, the Communist Party USA repudiated the 1928 and the 1930 resolution on the Black Belt Thesis. It rejected, moreover, the work of the Second Congress of the Communist International held in 1920 that also set forth the position that Negroes in the United States were a nation. V.I. Lenin was the author of that resolution. The 1959 position of the Communist Party USA that the African-American people did not constitute a nation in the Black Belt was clearly reflected in the 1979 Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party USA issued on April 7, 1979 and adopted at the twenty-second convention of the Communist Party USA held in Detroit, Michigan (August 23-26, 1979).² The 1979 draft resolution considered the African-American people a national minority. It stated: "Black Americans are a component people of the U.S. suffering the oppression of a national minority."³ Section

Self-Determination Prior to World War II

two of this chapter will seek to categorize various other position on self-determination that exist without specifically analyzing various parties, organizations, or groupings in the manner that the CPUSA was treated in this thesis. Section three of this chapter is the summation and conclusion.

I. The national question in the Communist Party USA from World War II until 1959.

Dissolved in 1944 in the midst of the anti-fascist war, the Communist Party USA became the Communist Political Association (CPA). All the property and records of the former were transferred to the latter.⁴ That there was no more a Communist Party in the United States of America was music to the ears of the top money circles of the world. In addition to liquidating the name of the Communist Party USA, the Communist Political Association and its leadership began to try to convince the world that in the United States of America an exceptional state of affairs existed. There was no need for a Communist Party in the United States since it was possible to work with and collaborate with factory owners, stockholders, police and other representative and exploitative forces. The line of American exceptionalism had its root in the work of Jay Lovestone, a former official of the Communist Party United States of America, and in his supporters.

Who's Who in the World, 1974-1975 describes Jay Lovestone as the Director of International Affairs of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization, (AFL-CIO); member of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Council and the Council on Foreign Relations; a member of the President's Labor Advisory Commission, and a member of the International Commission of the National Planning Association. Lovestone was decorated with the Grand Cross of Merit of the Republic of Germany, and he is a Commander of the Order of Merit, Republic of Italy.⁵

According to the profile of Jay Lovestone in Theodore Draper's book, *American Communism and Soviet Russia*, he was born in Lithuania when it was part of Tsarist Russia.⁶ A son of poor Russian-Jewish immigrants, he emigrated to the United States at the age of nine. His father worked as a sexton in a Synagogue. Lovestone and the other children of his family worked to donate money for the up-keep of their family. Attending City College in New York, C.C.N.Y., Lovestone became involved with the Socialist Study Club that was attached to the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (ISS). In

1917 Jay Lovestone was the President of the C.C.N.Y. chapter of the (ISS). Graduating in 1918 from C.C.N.Y., Lovestone worked on various jobs and spent six months studying accounting, one year studying law at the law school of New York University, and a period of time at Columbia University. In 1919 he was elected a delegate to the founding convention of the Communist Party USA. At that convention he was elected to the first Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party, its highest body, and to the Program Committee. In 1921 Jay Lovestone was paid by the Communist Party to work as the editor of its official underground newspaper, the *Communist*. In 1925 Charles Emil Ruthenberg chose him to work as the organizational secretary of the Communist Party. After the death of Charles Ruthenberg on March 2, 1927, Jay Lovestone emerged victorious in the power struggle between the various factions of the Communist Party, retaining his position until his expulsion in 1929.

In his book, *Black Bolshevik, Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist*, Haywood opens his account of Jay Lovestone with the comment that after Charles Ruthenberg's death Jay Lovestone made a bid for power.⁷ Haywood states that Lovestone had "pre-empted the Interim job of acting secretary."⁸ He further describes Lovestone as a hatchet man for the Ruthenberg group and a person with a reputation for being a factionalist par excellence, "involved in the dirty infighting that took place."⁹ In May 1927 Haywood and other Black members of the Communist Party met with Jay Lovestone in his room at the Lux Hotel in Moscow, the capital of the U.S.S.R. Though he did not drink himself, Lovestone had brought a "big bottle of vodka in his room for us students," Haywood stated.¹⁰ During this meeting, Lovestone sought to give the Black members of the Communist Party USA who were students in the U.S.S.R. an informal report on the work of the Party among Black people, to mollify some their general discontent with the progress of work among Black people and to prepare for the upcoming Sixth Congress of the Communist International where the question of Black people would be discussed. Among other matters, Lovestone stated that the Communist Party USA had selected Harry Haywood to attend the Lenin School that had been established in 1926 as "a select training school for the development of leading cadres of the parties in the Communist International."¹¹ Although he was delighted with the assignment, Haywood said that Lovestone's "cold eyes belied the warmth and modesty he tried to express. It seemed like a bid to buy me out . . ."¹²

American Exceptionalism

Describing American exceptionalism, Theodore Draper, in *American Communism and Soviet Russia*, states that after the triumph of Jay Lovestone as General Secretary of the Communist Party USA the party was faced with the stark reality of its power as compared to the power of the United States government: The Communist Party had less than ten thousand members, most of whom were foreign born.¹³ In an issue of the *Daily Worker* for September 13, 1927 Jay Lovestone reported that the average dues-paying membership was 9,367 in the last four months of 1925, 7,597 in 1926, and 9,642 at the Fifth Convention in September 1927.¹⁴

Under the leadership of Jay Lovestone, the Communist Party sought, therefore, to examine the nature of American capitalism and the theory of communism, attempting to answer why the Communist Party was relatively weak in relation to the United States government. One answer to this question came from the Communist International in 1927 under the leadership of Nikolai Bukharin who maintained that American capitalism was not on the down hill and in the process of revolutionizing the working class as opposed to European capitalism; in Europe capitalism had reached its very limits and radically revolutionized the working class.¹⁵ Jay Lovestone agreed with the views of Nikolai Bukharin and saw his political future associated with that of Bukharin.¹⁶ According to Draper, however, Joseph V. Stalin disagreed with the views of Bukharin and sought to change them, maintaining that capitalism in the United States was heading for a period of acute financial crisis.¹⁷ The stock market crash of 1929 and the depression of the nineteen thirties tended to prove the viewpoint of Joseph V. Stalin more correct than those of Jay Lovestone and Nikolai Bukharin.

Throughout the leadership of Jay Lovestone, however, various people in the CPUSA had differences over the line of American exceptionalism. Harry Haywood maintains that it was the Lovestone faction that had developed American exceptionalism into a well articulated theory. The fight against American exceptionalism was, therefore, directed against Jay Lovestone and his supporters. Ultimately, Jay Lovestone was removed for factionalism from all power positions in the CPUSA and the Communist International. The resolution expelling him from the Communist Party USA appeared in the *Daily Worker* of July 23, 1929.¹⁸ After his expulsion, Haywood says that Lovestone "placed himself in the service of the reactionary trade unionists, Matthew Woll and David Dubinsky,

with whom he helped sponsor the AFL-CIO anti-communist crusade . . .”¹⁹ Describing the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, of which Jay Lovestone was the Director from 1964 until 1974, Haywood says: it “had its own network of ambassadors, administrators and intelligence agents and collaborated closely with the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in reactionary subversion of trade union movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.”²⁰

Writing in the September, 1947 issue of *Political Affairs*, the theoretical journal of the Communist Party USA, William Z. Foster, then Chairman of the Communist Party, defined American exceptionalism as the theory that “the economic and political laws discovered by Marx . . . do not apply to the United States.”²¹ Consequently, any predictions that the United States would become a socialist country were not valid, nor would the economic system of the United States disintegrate. The predictions were that the United States would forever be a vital, strong, and dominant world power. Extending this analysis, the advocates of American exceptionalism concluded that the United States ought to extend its control throughout the universe, especially in wartorn Europe.²² Such action would bolster the economies of the declining capitalist countries of Europe, prolong their existence, and increase profits for the capitalists of the United States.

Foster stated the analysis of American exceptionalism by its proponents was based on the following four illusions: (1) Mass production in the United States was held to be something uniquely American. Other countries were not capable of developing the machinery to outproduce the United States in mass production; (2) The United States was not involved in the plunder of resources of other countries. Rather, it was engaged in peaceful and welfare activities as it attempted to control the economies of South Africa, France, England, and the rest of the nations of the world. (3) The working class in the United States was immune to socialist ideas and fought against them. It was a class of workers that not only was not interested in socialism as a goal but the working class of the United States was opposed to the nationalization of basic industries. It was a class of workers that would remain loyal to the capitalist system. (4) The illusion that American Democracy was not repressive at home and was the best form of government for any country abroad. Foster pointed out that none of the above four characteristics of so-called American exceptionalism were true. He developed counter arguments to them in some detail. This thesis will not attempt to

paraphrase Foster’s arguments to counter the views of those who uphold American exceptionalism. Yet, it is essential to point out that William Z. Foster tended not to stress in this article that it was the role of a political party to educate its members in its outlook. Rather, in his statements he leaned toward the viewpoint that political education and programmatic thrusts would spontaneously develop. Foster stated, for instance:

“American capitalism, despite its superficially prosperous condition, has fundamentally the same weaknesses as European and world capitalism. Hence, American workers, in their attitude toward capitalism, should draw basically the same conclusions regarding their system as the workers in other countries are doing . . .”²⁵

Concerning Jay Lovestone, Foster stated that Lovestone “contended that capitalism was fundamentally healthy in the United States although unhealthy in the rest of the world.”²⁴ The practical implications of this line would have disoriented the working class by throwing “the Communist Party under the political tutelage of the capitalists.”²⁵ Foster stated, moreover, that:

“ . . . The Communist Party exposed and condemned Lovestone’s opportunist line. Eventually he and his handful of followers were expelled from the Party. The expulsion resolution of the Central Committee, published in the *Daily Worker* of July 23, 1929, could be profitably re-read at the present . . .”²⁶

Earl Browder and American Exceptionalism

After his expulsion, the line and policies of Jay Lovestone were later carried out internally in the Communist Party USA under the leadership of Earl Browder, formerly the Secretary General of the Communist Party USA from 1930 until 1944. According to his obituary in *The New York Times*, Browder was born on May 20, 1891 in Wichita, Kansas.²⁷ He died on June 27, 1973 in Princeton, New Jersey where he lived with his son, William Browder, Chairman of the Princeton University Mathematics Department. Married twice, his last wife was named Raissa (Irene) Berkman. They were married on September 15, 1926 in Moscow, U.S.S.R. They had three children, two of them born in the U.S.S.R. William, their youngest, was born in New York City on January 6, 1934.

Browder served as the General Secretary of the Communist

Party USA from September, 1930 until the Communist Party was dissolved at its twelfth convention on May 20-22, 1944 in New York City.²⁸ At that time the Communist Political Association (CPA) was formed and Browder became its President.²⁹ Browder was removed from all positions of power in the (CPA) at a meeting of its National Committee on June 18-20, 1945. In February, 1946 at a later meeting of the reconstituted Communist Party Earl Browder was expelled from the Party.

The New York Times obituary of Earl Browder also stated that in later life Earl Browder had ceased to believe in Marxism.³⁰ At the age of eighty he expected that a completely automated factory system in the United States would replace existing work conditions. Calling this system the new industrial revolution, Browder said that it would require expanding, not contracting, areas of freedom and self-government. As reported in his *New York Times* obituary, Browder also maintained at the age of eighty that the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt and its trends had precluded any efforts toward solving the societal problems of the United States by revolutionary means.

The New York Times obituary hailed Earl Browder as the undisputed leader of the Communist Party from 1930 to 1946: During that time the Communist Party reached the zenith of its powers and exerted great influence on the politics of the United States through a "network of friendly organizations."³¹ The removal of Browder from leadership in the Communist Party was attributed to the so-called word from Moscow.

Browder's *Times* obituary also stated that when Browder became its General Secretary the Communist Party USA was composed to a large extent of nationality or ethnic groups. Under Browder's leadership it began the process of Americanization of the Communist Party, though this process is not defined in his obituary. In an interview on January 10, 1980 in New York, New York with a member of an ethnic group who was active in the Communist Party during the Browder years, this thesis learned that under Browder the Central Committee would request that the nationality groups liquidate their property and turn over the money from the sale of their property and their bank accounts to the Central Committee. If they failed to comply, Earl Browder would send organized enforcers to insure compliance.³²

Browder's *Times* obituary, moreover, cited as perhaps his greatest accomplishment his work with the trade unions of the thirties.³³ During that period there was a tremendous upsurge in trade union organizing, especially in the following industries: steel, rubber,

auto, textile, transportation, longshore and merchant marine. These industries formed the backbone of the Congress of Industrial Unions (CIO). An anticommunist, John L. Lewis gladly accepted help from Communists in organizing the (CIO), and "the Communists, for their part, were happy to trade off revolutionary politics for a chance to gain a wider working-class base."³⁴

Browder left school at the age of ten due to an illness of his father, a populist and a farmer. His family came from Great Britain more than a hundred years prior to the American Revolution, and his father, William Browder, raised his family "in an atmosphere conducive to political discussion."³⁵ Working with a wholesale drug concern, Earl Browder became an accountant. Moving to Kansas City in his twenties, he finished in 1914 a law school correspondence course. In 1912 he left the American Socialist Party which he had joined at the early age of seventeen. Later, he associated with William Z. Foster's Syndicalist League of North America, though he did not become a member. Foster's group believed in working inside of the American Federation of Labor. Before World War I, Browder was "elected president of his local of the Bookkeepers, Stenographers and Accountants Union. He also managed a farmers' cooperative store."³⁶

During his life, Earl Browder spent a considerable amount of time in jail for his political activity. He was first arrested in 1917 for opposing the entry of the United States into World War I. Charged with "conspiring to defeat operation of the draft law and for non-registration," Browder served one year in jail.³⁷ His former charge was appealed; he was re-arrested on the conspiracy to defeat the draft law, serving sixteen months in Leavenworth. This was a period of the formative years of the Communist Party of which Browder was a charter member.

In 1921 Browder began his active career with the Communist Party. He was chosen in 1921 to organize a delegation of "non-Communist trade unionists" to the first Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions in Moscow.³⁸ This organization was known as the Profintern. With William Z. Foster, who did not consider himself a Communist in 1921, Browder and other trade unionists met V.I. Lenin and had sessions with him.³⁹ In 1926 the Red International of Labor Unions sent Earl Browder to work in China where he worked for approximately two years. During that period in China, Browder helped to organize the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, serving as its secretary. He returned to the United States in 1929.

According to Harry Haywood's account, Earl Browder attended the Sixth Congress of the Communist International where the line that the African-American people were a nation in the Black Belt was approved and became a part of the program of the Communist International.⁴⁰ Describing Browder at the Sixth Congress, Haywood states that Browder was a part of the Foster-Cannon caucus, a faction opposed to the Lovestone caucus. The latter stayed at the Lux Hotel in Moscow, U.S.S.R. and the former stayed at the Bristol Hotel. Haywood related how he had an opportunity in his caucus meeting to better know leaders with whom he would work in the future. They were mostly from the midwest with a tremendous amount of trade union experience and competence in other forms of broad mass work. Haywood considered the opposing faction, the Lovestone group, as limited in experience, though based more in the "functionaries and propagandists of the Socialist Party."⁴¹ Having known Browder as the representative of the Red Labor International, Haywood and others had often visited him when he too stayed at the Lux Hotel. At that time Browder impressed Haywood as a "quiet, modest, unassuming man."⁴² However, during the Sixth Congress Earl Browder seemed to have transformed himself. Depicting Browder's transformation, Haywood said: "Though long associated with Foster, he now seemed bent on not only asserting his independence, but on establishing his own claim to leadership."⁴³ Haywood wrote that at one point Browder "exclaimed sarcastically: 'You expect to get the support of the Comintern, but you're all divided among yourselves! There's a Cannon group, a Bittelman group, a Foster — well, I'm for the Browder group!'" Browder became the Secretary of the party in less than a year.⁴⁴

As the General-Secretary of the Communist Party USA, Earl Browder participated in the formulation of plans that affected the concept of self-determination for the African-American oppressed nation. Upon his return from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in November, 1930, Harry Haywood first met with Earl Browder and others and helped to launch the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, an organization of the Communist Party USA that was designed to serve as a unifying force for other Black organizations dedicated to black liberation.⁴⁵ Browder also participated in the plans for the defense of the Scottsboro Boys and the organization of the National Negro Congress; he was prohibited from speaking at the closing session of the latter by the actions of the Eighth Illinois Regiment, its Commander, Colonel Warfield, and the Chicago Red Squad.⁴⁶ Red squads are outfits of various police departments that consider

themselves professional hunters of Communists and agitators for change.

Also believing that capitalism and imperialism in the United States took exceptional turns and would not continually oppress and exploit the working class, Earl Browder, as the General-Secretary of the CPUSA, embarked upon a policy of uniting the working class with the capitalist class. This line opposed the line of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International that called for the working class and its parties to take the leadership in forming a united front against fascism and war. This policy of Browder became known as the policy of the national will. One of the consequences of the national will policy rather than the united front against war and fascism led by the working class and its communist party was the liquidation of the Black Belt Thesis.

After its re-organization, in a resolution at an Emergency convention, the Communist Party USA stated:

"One of the worst elements in Browder's so-called national unity was his abandonment of the fight of the Negro people for self-determination. His theory was that the Negro people, by their attitude at the close of the Civil War, had exercised their right of self-determination and had given up all perspectives of being a distinct nation. This was a repudiation of the national character of the Negro question. The political substance of this was that the Negro masses, like workers, had no real need for further struggle against the supposedly benevolent ruling class, but would automatically achieve their rights. The ultimate results of this conception were a grave weakening of the Party's fight among the Negro people and a virtual liquidation of the Communist Party in the South."⁴⁷

In trying to analyze why Earl Browder's position was able to take root in the Communist Party USA, William Z. Foster stated in his book, *The History of the Communist Party*, that the social composition of the Communist Party was not very strong among the industrial workers.⁴⁸ Instead of developing strong shop units in the basic industries such as the electrical industry, the steel industry, the coal and iron industry, the automobile industry, and the rubber industry, the Communist Party USA under the leadership of Earl Browder liquidated shop units. Foster maintains there was a large influx of white collar and professional workers in the Communist Party

USA with whom Browder allied himself. This was a simultaneous process along with the liquidation of shop units and the failure to organize the basic industries. A very middle class social base for the Communist Party USA, therefore, resulted from this development.

During the fight with Earl Browder, at a National Committee Meeting of the CPUSA, November 18, 1945, William Z. Foster made the following remarks: The entire membership of the CPUSA had witnessed grave life and death problems in the party and in the nation.⁴⁹ To solve these problems it would be necessary to embark upon a massive educational program to convince the people of the United States of America that its government was pursuing an imperialist course of action. In addition, the Party had the responsibility to teach the people that the leadership of the American Federation of Labor was also pursuing an imperialist course. Moreover, Foster stressed the need to fight for full employment, the organization of unorganizaed workers, the fight for higher wages from the trusts, and the necessity not to rely upon the Truman government as the Party relied upon the Roosevelt government. Foster enumerates many other programs of actions, among which is the necessity to fight for and to defend the rights of the Negro people, severely weakened under the administration of Earl Browder.⁵⁰ By next describing the Jacques Duclos article, this thesis attempts to explain how the CPUSA emerged from the Browder period.

The Jacques Duclos Article

Jacques Duclos was the secretary of the French Communist Party during World War II. Participating in the French resistance to Adolph Hitler, under the leadership of Jacques Duclos, the French Communist Party earned the respect of many people throughout the world. Writing about the French resistance, Frida Knight stated at the beginning of her book, the *French Resistance*, she had been told Jacques Duclos and Maurice Thorez were in France organizing underground activity.⁵¹ They had issued an appeal that stated:

“ . . .the great hopes of national liberation lie in the people alone . . .It is only around the working class, with its confidence and courage, that a front can be built, for freedom, independence and national renaissance.”⁵²

Commenting on this, Frida Knight stated the appeal:

“ . . .was the first public sign of the continuing ex-

istence and struggle of the Communist Party. And it had an immediate effect on the morale of militant workers, especially those who were back on the shop floor in the big engineering factories now turned over to production for Germany . . .”⁵³

During the French resistance, the French Communist Party was also hit by similar tendencies expressed by Earl Browder. One of the reflections of this was the publication in *France Nouvelle* of an article favorable to Earl Browder and the line of collaboration and capitulation to fascism, racism, sexism, capitalism and imperialism.⁵⁴ To combat this developing world tendency and to aid the dissolved Communist Party in the United States, Jacques Duclos responded with an article entitled: “On the Dissolution of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.”

Appearing first in the April, 1945 issue of *Cahiers Du Communisme*, the theoretical organ of the Communist Party of France, the Duclos article was also published in the pamphlet, *Marxism-Leninism vs. Revisionism*.⁵⁵ Jacques Duclos stated his article was written primarily for the readers of *Cahiers Du Communisme* who had asked for clarification on the “dissolution of the Communist Party USA and the creation of the Communist Political Association.”⁵⁶ Pointing out that the reasons for the dissolution of the CPUSA were contained in official documents of the CPUSA and in speeches of Earl Browder, the Duclos article devoted special attention to the speech of Earl Browder delivered in Bridgeport, Connecticut on December 12, 1943 and published in the *Communist* magazine on January 12, 1944.⁵⁷ In that Bridgeport speech Browder mentioned for the first time the necessity to change the course of the Communist Party USA toward the Communist Political Association, the Duclos article stated. The Bridgeport speech mainly dealt with the wartime agreements made at Teheran between Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston S. Churchill, and Joseph V. Stalin. The Duclos article stated at the outset that, although the Teheran Conference was important for the victory of the Allied powers over the fascist, Earl Browder drew the wrong conclusions from the Teheran agreements regarding the social evolution of societies and the social evolution of the United States: Browder was in error to maintain that capitalism and socialism had started to find ways to co-exist and collaborate in the same world. Based on this assumption, the Duclos article stated that Browder concluded that the main problems of the United States had to be resolved through exclusive reform efforts. The Duclos arti-

cle stated that Browder also maintained, regardless of conditions and situations in other countries, in the United States the perspective immediately after World War II was for "expanded production and employment and the strengthening of democracy within the framework of the present system — and not a perspective of the transition to socialism."⁵⁸ Browder also called for the breaking with those who disagreed with this analysis and for cooperation with those who consented, including J.P. Morgan, the financier.⁵⁹

Describing the Communist Political Association, Duclos said the Communist Political Association was not to enter candidates in the elections, nor enter the Democratic or Republican Party. Rather it would attempt to "assemble a broad progressive and democratic movement within all parties."⁶⁰ The Duclos article cited William Z. Foster's objections to the liquidation of the Communist Party USA and the organization of the Communist Political Association: Foster maintained that Browder underestimated the deepening crisis of capitalism in the United States caused by World War II. Foster also argued that the Teheran conference had not changed the class nature of capitalism nor had it liquidated the class struggle in the United States or elsewhere. These conditions made it impossible to promote a policy of national will between the capitalist class and the working class, a program advocated by Earl Browder. Foster also rejected Browder's acceptance of the slogan of free enterprise advocated by the National Association of Manufacturers.⁶¹ The Duclos article stated that at the time of its dissolution the Communist Party had 80,000 members, not counting 10,000 members in the armed forces.⁶² The decisions of the Congress that liquidated the Communist Party USA stated that all its members belonged to the Communist Political Association, providing they registered before July 4, 1944. Only July 16, 1944, the *Daily Worker*, the voice of the former Communist Party, announced that "hardly 45,000 persons had been registered."⁶³

The Duclos article concluded with the analysis that Browder's course liquidated the independent party of the working class in the United States. The verbal agreements with the principles of Marxism were negated by the insistence on class peace between the workers and owners of the means of production; the transformation of the agreements at Teheran on methods to end the war to programs of class peace after the war would bring great harm to the working class of the United States unless they were changed; the Communist Parties of most countries had rejected Browder's thesis, although the Communist Parties of Cuba and Columbia regarded his thesis on

class collaboration after World War II as correct. Hence, the Duclos article called for a rejection of the dissolution of the Communist Party USA.⁶⁴

The essence of the Jacques Duclos article is that Earl Browder took the occasion of the wartime agreements made at Teheran, Iran between Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston S. Churchill, and Joseph V. Stalin and forced an unwise choice on the Communist Party USA. Browder and his supporters insisted that to carry out future collaboration between the governments of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union it was necessary to renounce the fight for a socialist government in the United States of America. Browder encouraged the Marxists in the United States to face reality and prepare for post World War II construction of the United States on the basis of capitalism and not socialism. In other words, the Communist party of the United States were not to prepare to take power, an objective for which the Communist Party had been organized as well as the liquidated Communist International.

Evaluating the Jacques Duclos article, William Z. Foster said the entire Communist Party began to reject Browder's thesis on the liquidation of the Party and collaboration with the capitalist class after receipt and study of the Duclos article.⁶⁵ Foster also said the Communist Party was eternally indebted to Jacques Duclos and the French Communist Party for saving them from the opportunism of Earl Browder.⁶⁶ Browder, however, stated for his obituary interview that the Duclos letter was written in Moscow.⁶⁷ Implying that the Duclos letter had a great impact on the Communist Party USA and other parties, Browder explained the Duclos letter with the following statement:

"To be a dictator Stalin required a respectable opponent. Hitler was gone and he had to be replaced. It had to be the United States, the leading capitalist country. Stalin picked a quarrel, and I was the victim of it. Of course, he had plenty of provocation . . ." ⁶⁸

Because of their anti-fascist record, Jacques Duclos and the French Communist Party were marked for decimation by the powerful right-wing French resistance movement. Writing in *The Long Night Will End*, Henri Frenay describes the objectives of the right-wing French resistance movement and its attitude in 1958 toward Jacques Duclos and the French Communist Party.

Concerning the objectives, Henri Frenay stated:

"The resistance movements were spurred not only by

the need to fight Nazism through propaganda, irregular warfare and subterfuge; they were also informed by a deep desire to overhaul the civic traditions and the political, economic and social structures of our nation . . . It was toward a strong and pure republic, une republique pure and dure, as we used to say, that we aspired . . .⁶⁹

In order to accomplish their objectives Henri Frenay and associates banded together and supported General DeGaulle in 1958 in the midst of the Algerian war:

"In 1958, despite my opposition to General DeGaulle, his return to power seemed to me *necessary* (author's emphasis) to quash the threat of civil war, to reform our decadent institutions and to resolve the Algerian problem. I also had a score to settle with the Communist Party. For these reasons I yielded to the friendly insistence of two old comrades and agreed to run for the legislature in Nontreuil, then the fief of the Communist bigwig Jacques Duclos . . .

. . . I was not, of course, elected, but the 10,400 ballots that bore my name ensured the defeat of Jacques Duclos. That goal, at least, had been achieved.

The years have flowed by, peaceful and serene. We have been troubled only once, by the word of DeGaulle's death . . .⁷⁰

The systematic destruction of the progressive forces has not disturbed Henri Frenay, only the death of General DeGaulle.

In attempting to answer why there seems to be constant failure on the part of the various Communist parties of the world, this thesis pointed out in the previous chapter that a study of the Communist Parties tended to indicate that political education was not mandatory; the raising of political consciousness and the education of members of Communist parties was at best a random process, often leaving members in the blind about historical occurrences and the reason for current events. Capitalist education, however, is a mandatory process. For many jobs and positions one cannot qualify without a certain level of education. Another variable that may cause the disintegration of many Communist parties is the intervention in the affairs of the various parties by those determined to insure that they will not accomplish their goals. In the case of the Communist Party USA and the Communist International Paul Jacobs, author of

the book, *Is Curly Jewish*, and other works related in an interview that he and other members of the 4th International and the Socialist Workers Party consciously went around the world during World War II destroying organizations and parties that were attached to the now liquidated Third International.⁷¹ *Is Curly Jewish*, provides further documentation of Jacobs' role in helping to destroy the Communist Party USA and other communist parties.

Paul Jacobs also stated in an interview with the author that he specifically took on the assignment of ridding the French working class of Communists.⁷² Unfortunately, at that time I was not aware of the role Henri Frenay played in the destruction of the French Communist movement. Otherwise I would have tried to ascertain if Paul Jacobs and Henri Frenay consciously worked together. That they objectively worked together is beyond dispute. That they and those with whom they collaborated helped to destroy the Black Belt Thesis is also beyond a doubt.

Thus far, this chapter has sought to trace the manner in which the Black Belt thesis was handled in the (CPUSA) immediately after World War II. An attempt has been made to show the ideological positions and practices of various alignment of forces that were for the existence of the Communist Party and the Black Belt thesis and to highlight the views of some outstanding leaders of the Communist Party in the United States who ultimately were opposed to the very existence of a Communist Party USA. Correct historiography faces the reality that events and social forces shape people and are shaped by the actions of people. Efforts to divorce the actors from the action or the actions from the actors lead to a blurred and false view of reality. Hence, this chapter, among other things, has attempted to describe aspects of the lives and actions of Jay Lovestone and Earl Browder, who were spokesmen of the viewpoint that there are exceptional features in the United States that permit deviations such as the suppression of the rights of oppressed nations and minorities. This chapter has sought, moreover, to explain how the views of the French Communist Party under the leadership of Jacques Duclos helped to restore the CPUSA, causing great harm to Jacques Duclos and the French Communist Party. Finally, this chapter has thus far presented the views of Paul Jacobs who maintained he and other members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Fourth International deliberately sought to destroy parties and organizations of the Third International, a formation earlier described in this work. The remainder of the chapter will discuss the liquidation in 1959 of self-determination

by the CPUSA and categories of various positions on the Black Belt question after World War II, closing with the summation and conclusion.

*The 17th National Convention
of the Communist Party USA*

On December 10, 1959 the Communist Party USA held its 17th National Convention. At this convention it finally repudiated the Black Belt Thesis adopted at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International held in 1928. Reporting the procedures of that convention, the February 1960 issue of *Political Affairs* carried an article entitled "On the Negro Question in the United States." That article contained the following statement:

"Though a specially oppressed part of the American nation, the Negroes in the United States are not constituted as a separate nation. They have the characteristics of a racially distinctive people or nationality. They are component parts of the whole American nation which is itself an historically derived national formation, an amalgam of more or less well differentiated nationalities."⁷³

With this resolution the Communist Party USA not only liquidated the national question for the African-American people but it liquidated it for the oppressed Jewish nationals, the Indian nations and all other oppressed nationalities, minorities or nations. It stated there was only one nation in the United States of America, a nation that was an amalgamation of many well differentiated nations.

*II. Categories of various post
World War II positions
On the Black Belt Thesis*

Essentially, there were six major positions on the Black Belt thesis after World War II. Following is a listing of those six positions. The first three positions assert the African-American people are not a nation, although one of those three maintains they are a nation if they ever will to be one. The last three positions advocate that the African-American people are a nation:

1. Since the African-American people were never and are not now a nation in the Black Belt, the Black Belt thesis is not valid. The African-American people are,

however, a minority people in the United States of America.

2. The African-American people are a nation only if they will to be a nation. since this has not been done, it is pointless to discuss the Black Belt nation thesis as a valid phenomenon.
3. Due to development of capitalism in the United States and the out-migration of large number of African-American people from the south, the Black Belt thesis is no longer valid. Once a nation, the African-American people are now a national minority in the United States.
4. The African-American people are still a nation in the Black Belt of the United States, but independence is the only viable alternative for the oppressed Black Belt nation.
5. Independence with the right to federate is the most desirable option for the oppressed Black Belt nation. Federation may assume some type of autonomous or bi-lateral relationship.
6. The African-American people are a nation in the south with definable territorial boundaries. As an oppressed nation it has many options: It can insist upon independence now. As an independent nation, it can exercise its right to separate from the United States without any forms of federation. It can also elect to federate with any other nation or nations in the world. The oppressed African-American nation may elect not to fight for any form of independence from the United States. It may seek an autonomous relation now under the existing socio-economic arrangement of the United States. It may also elect not to seek an autonomous relation now or independence but strive for a socialist revolution in the United States that guarantees autonomy for it and other oppressed nations.

III. Summation and Conclusion

Chapter Four has attempted to trace the concept of self-determination for the Black Belt nation from the end of World War II until the present. Since the end of World War II, the concept of self-determination for the Black Belt nation has been very much alive. Through their own efforts, with the assistance of many people

throughout the world, and through the efforts of the United Nations that attempted to implement the policy of self-determination of nations, many former colonies have achieved the status of independent nations, taking seats as sovereign nations in the halls of the United Nations.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, this is not true for the oppressed African-American nation. The thesis that the African-American people are a nation in the southern part of the United States was first set forth at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1922. Within the leadership of the Communist Party USA, however, there was disagreement on this decision of the Communist International, the world body of Communist Parties. In 1928 at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International the representatives of the various Communist Parties voted that the African-American people were a nation in the Black Belt of the Southern part of the United States. As an oppressed nation, the African-American nation had to have the unlimited support of the members of the Communist International, including every possible material support required for their struggle for national liberation. This chapter has attempted to show that through the work of Earl Browder the Communist Party USA liquidated itself, thereby muting the theory that the African-American people were a nation in the Black Belt. After its reconstruction in 1946, the Communist Party USA was never able to remain consistent to the theory that the African-American people were an oppressed nation in the Black Belt; in 1959 at its seventeenth convention it declared the African-American people were merely a national minority in the United States. This position was reflected in its 1979 resolution on the African-American nation.

As stated earlier, the United Nations through its work helped to keep alive the concept of self-determination. Harry Haywood who has been cited often in this thesis wrote a book in 1948 called *Negro Liberation* that advocated self-determination for the Black Belt oppressed nation, thereby aiding the theory of the Black Belt thesis after World War II.⁷⁵ Various parties and organizations, other than the Communist Party USA, emerged after World War II in the United States that had positions on the Black Belt thesis. These positions were outlined in six categories of section two of this chapter. They ranged from the viewpoint that the African-American people are not a nation unless they will to become a nation to the position that the African-American people are a nation of people in the southern part of the United States with definable territorial boundaries. This thesis maintains that the concept of self-determination of nations is very

deeply rooted in the affairs of the people of the world. It cannot, if at all, be easily eradicated or purged from reality and the collective historical experience of people, nor is that a desirable option. This thesis urges the reverse course of action, an acceptance of the concept of self-determination as set forth in this work and immediate implementation of the concept that the African-American people constitute a nation in the southern part of the United States with definable boundaries and national minorities outside of that nation. Chapter five will attempt to illuminate the correct path for the African-American oppressed nation, its national minority areas, and to assess the contributions of this thesis.

¹*Political Affairs, A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism* (New York: New Century Inc. February, 1960), p. 43.

²The 1979 draft resolution, "The Afro-American struggle, Against Racism and Discrimination and for Economic, Political and Social Equality," issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party USA is contained in *Political Affairs, Theoretical Journal of the Communist Party* (New York: Political Affairs Publishers, Inc., 235 West 23rd Street, June, 1979) p. 17-27. The report from the 1979 convention of the CPUSA is described in *Political Affairs*, November, 1979, pp. 2-5.

³*Political Affairs*, November, 1979, p. 21.

⁴William Z. Foster, *History of the Communist Party of the United States* (New York: International Publishers, 1952), pp. 430-431.*

⁵*Who's Who in the World, 1974-75* (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who 2nd Edition). In a telephone interview with Rosemary Ruane of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Relations on Friday, January 25, 1980 at approximately 11:30 A.M. James R. Forman obtained the following additional information about Jay Lovestone: He worked as the Director of International Affairs for the AFL-CIO from 1964 to 1974. Afterwards, he became a consultant with the AFL-CIO. Consultants with the AFL-CIO do not have specific functions.

⁶Theodore Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (New York: The Viking Press, 1960), pp. 248-252.

⁷Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik, Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago, Illinois: Liberator Press, 1978), pp. 187.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.* p. 188.

¹¹*Ibid.* p. 189.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia*, p. 268.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 494.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 272.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 281.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 429.

¹⁹Haywood, *Black Bolsheviks*, p. 306.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 307.

²¹Max Weiss, Editor. *Political Affairs*, (New York: New Century Publishers, September, 1947), p. 795.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 795-796.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 810.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 806.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷Alden Whitman, *Obituary of Earl Browder* (New York: *The New York Times*, June 28, 1973) pp. 1-6, cited in *The Earl Browder Papers, 1891-1975, A Guide to the Microfilm Edition*, Microfilming Corporation of America, A New York Times Company, 21 Harristown Road, Glen Rock New Jersey 07452. The original papers of Earl Browder are located at the George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University. The Olin Library of Cornell University has a copy of the guide "to the Microfilm Edition." Since Earl Browder consented to an interview for this obituary, this thesis places a great deal of importance to it, for it represents some of the latest, if not the last, expressed views of Browder, a very important person in World affairs. The following writings by Earl Browder, however, illuminate much of his earlier thought: *Communism in the United States* (New York: International Publishers, 1935), a 352 page book; *The Communist Party of the U.S.A., Its History, Role and Organization*, (New York: Workers Library Publisher, Inc., May, 1943), a 47 page pamphlet; *Moscow, Cairo, Teheran* (New York: Workers Library Publisher, January, 1944); this pamphlet is a summation of the Declaration at Teheran; *Teheran and America, Perspectives and Tasks* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, January, 1944); the note for this pamphlet states that it "contains the main report and concluding remarks of Earl Browder, General Secretary, at the plenary session of the Communist Party National Committee, held in New York, on January 7-9, 1944. The latter two works also served as the main theoretical justification by the National Committee for the dissolution of the CPUSA.

²⁸Foster, *History of The Communist Party of the United States*, p. 430.

²⁹Whitman, *Obituary of Earl Browder*, p. 6.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 1.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²An interview conducted by James R. Forman in New York City on January 10, 1980 with a member of an ethnic group who requested anonymity for security reasons.

³³Whitman, *The Obituary of Earl Browder*, p. 3.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Haywood, *Black Bolshevik*, pp. 245-280.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 249.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 343.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 461.

⁴⁷*Resolution, Emergency Convention, CPUSA*, July 28, 1945, cited in William Z. Foster, *History of the Communist Party*, p. 424.

⁴⁸Foster, *History of the Communist Party*, p. 427.

⁴⁹William Z. Foster, "For a Fighting Communist Party," Summary Remarks, National Committee Meeting, CPUSA, nov. 18, 1945, printed in: William Z. Foster et al, *Marxism-Leninism vs. Revisionism* (New York: New Century Publishers, February, 1946) p. 105 ff.

⁵⁰For a description of the American Federation of Labor, consult William Z. Foster, *Outline History of the World Trade Union Movement* (New York: International Publishers, 1956).

⁵¹Frida Knight, *The French Resistance, 1940 to 1945* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975) p. 62.

⁵²Tillon, Charles, *Les F.T.P.* (Paris: Jullard, 1962) p. 85, cited in Knight, *The French Resistance*, p. 62.

⁵³Knight, *The French Resistance*, p. 62.

⁵⁴Foster, *History of the Communist Party*, p. 434.

⁵⁵Foster et al, *Marxism-Leninism vs. Revisionism*, pp. 21-35.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶³*Ibid.*

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁶⁵Foster, *History of the Communist Party of the United States*, p. 434.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 435.

⁶⁷Whitman, *Obituary of Earl Browder*, p. 5.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*

⁶⁹Henry Frenay, *The Long Night Will End* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976), p. xiv.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 451-452.

⁷¹Interview with Paul Jacobs on March 2, 1968 in New York City by James R. Forman. Portions of this interview were printed in Forman's *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1972) pp. 357-358. Forman was referred by Paul Jacobs to his book, *Is Curly Jewish, A Political Self-Portrait, Illuminating Three Turbulent Decades of Social Revolt, 1935-1965* (New York: Atheneum, 1965) to illustrate his anti-communism.

⁷²Interview with Jacobs by Forman on March 2, 1968.

⁷³*Political Affairs*, February, 1960. p. 43.

⁷⁴A. Rigo Sureda, *The Evolution of the Right of Self-Determination, A Study of United Nations Practice* (Leiden: A.W. Sitjhoff, 1973).

⁷⁵Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation* (New York: International Publishers, 1948).