

Haywood:

None of the signers of this document consider it as preparation for opposition against the Central Committee. The purpose of the document is to point out the serious defects and shortcomings of the Party's work, to point out the necessity of the development of real self-criticism in the Party on the Negro question, something that has heretofore been neglected. Also to call attention of the Party to the serious situation with which it is confronted in Negro work. It is well-known to us all that the Party is on the eve of big class battles, that the Party is not at the present prepared for leadership in these struggles and this is particularly reflected in the Negro field. The Party policy on the question of organisation of Negroes has been wrong in the past, is wrong at the present time. This in spite of the CI's repeated decisions on this question. There has been a failure to develop Bolshevik self-criticism on this question and as a result of this the perpetuation of many mistakes.

The CI gives a clear and definite decision on this question of the LSNR, on the question of how to organise the Negro masses. This was first contained in the resolution of October. It is again restated in the document of the Political Secretariat. (Hathaway: Why do you oppose it, Comrade Haywood). I do not oppose it. I oppose your interpretation of it. I maintain that your interpretation is absolutely incorrect and contrary to the CI on this question of Negro organisation, of how to organise the Negro liberation movement. In spite of the fact that the CI found it necessary to restate its position, we find an attempt here to smuggle in all these old ideas under a correct decision of the CI, to cover up erroneous views by loud acclaims of acceptance of the CI line. This leads to a persistence of these mistakes, failure to develop self-criticism, hampers the work of the Party on the Negro question in general.

The comrades infer, Comrade Hathaway especially infers that the Negro comrades are being inspired by Comrade Safarov or the Negro comrades in Moscow. This is trying to avoid the issue. It arises out of the experience of the Negro comrades in the field, and the Negro comrades naturally see these questions quickly, and to state, to infer that they are being inspired by somebody in Moscow is absolutely incorrect. It is necessary for us to give a little bit of the history of this whole matter of the October Resolution. The American Commission of the CI made a minute analysis of the Party's work on all questions. Comrade Browder made a report on the work of the Party and in this report the work of the Party among Negroes was dealt with in a very general way. However, we comrades in the Negro Department of the Eastern Secretariat under whose supervision the Negro work is, brought this question up upon the basis of documental materials, and came to definite conclusions together with the Eastern Secretariat with regard to the position of the Party on Negro work. The fact was registered that the work had met with certain successes, that the VII Convention of the Party marked a great step forward from the point of view of theoretical clarity as well as concrete proposals adopted at this Convention. The discussion at this convention was of a higher level than at any time previous. These positive achievements must be viewed in the light of the previous shortcomings of the Party in this work. It is a matter of

fact that the slogan of self-determination had been almost dropped, and the CI found it necessary to send a letter to the Party calling attention to the necessity for this slogan. Therefore, it was not to be expected that at the VII Convention much progress would be made. It was from these considerations that the CI and the Eastern Secretariat approached this question.

Was the general line of the Party correct? Yes, it was correct. But were there mistakes? Yes, most certainly there were mistakes in the formulation of this line. No one could be so naive to think that the American comrades were absolutely clear on this question and free from all mistakes, especially when we consider the fact that the slogan of self-determination was only a few months previously almost completely dropped from the Party.

I, together with the Eastern Secretariat, made certain criticisms of the work of the Party on the Negro field. The first criticism was the question of the formulation of the slogan of self-determination as a propaganda slogan, which meant the abandonment of the struggle for self-determination. Until the resolution there was a tendency toward this. In the resolution of the Pol-Bureau in summing up the results of the VII Convention we see this tendency. In practice this would mean the ~~abandonment of the struggle~~ abandonment of the struggle. This idea was contained in the speech of Comrade Baker at the convention.

Second, we pointed out the failure to stress the right of separation, separation at all costs. Hathaway pointed this out in the VII Convention. Browder pointed out that we must encourage nationalism among the Negro masses. It is quite clear that the task of the Party is not to develop nationalism among the Negro workers, but by drawing white workers into the fight for the demands of the Negro workers for equality.

The third question was the ANLC. It is quite clear that the idea behind the ANLC is that the organization of the liberation movement necessitated a special organization of Negroes to lead the struggles of the Negro masses, and Comrade Hathaway has repeated this same opinion here again, and he speaks about this as the task of this organization which was inaugurated at St. Louis. This is his introduction to the whole line on the Negro question. It is quite clear that this idea of mass organization automatically shoves the work among the Negroes onto the Negro comrades and at best to those comrades actually engaged in the field of Negro work. Not only this, but a mass organization of this character also assumes the character of a political Party and of revolutionary trade unions in Negro work, and leads to an overlapping in Negro work and obscuring before the masses the leading role of the Party in Negro work.

Lang: It is necessary that you remember also your mistakes.

Haywood: I maintain here that in the discussion in Moscow in principle I was correct, only in connection with the first speech that I made before the Eastern Secretariat, there were some bad formulations.

Lang: May be you remember them?

Haywood: No, I do not remember. One of the questions was the question

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of a colony. I stated that the Negroes are not a colony in the US, and it was in my polemic against this idea that I identified the slogan of self-determination with separation at all costs. I wanted to point out the differences between the Negro question in the US in spite of the slogan of self-determination to the question of the Negro in the colonies, such as India and Africa. I wanted to point out that our position in this connection was not an independent Negro republic, but was the right of self-determination. We do not put up the slogan of a Negro republic at the present time because we cannot tell all of the developments of the struggle, and in this the CI resolution is quite correct. This is one of the bad formulations, and where I said that the Negroes are not a colony, this could be interpreted as a rejection of the national character of the Negro question. In my polemic against Houiswood I pointed out at that time that there was no difference in character between the Negro question in the United States and the Negro question in Africa. Both are national questions, and the masses suffer from national exploitation. I said then in a metaphoric manner that the Negroes in the United States are an internal colony of American imperialism. This is one of the bad formulations that I made in my speech in the Eastern Secretariat. The others I do not remember. There was the question of -- the others I am not quite clear upon at the present time.

Hathaway: What about the question of the slogans for economic and political equality? What about them?

Haywood: Do you mean to infer that I was against the slogan of equality? What I insisted upon was that equality did not mean a damn thing without self-determination and that the whole question of counterposing these slogans was incorrect. I do not understand you at all on this question.

Now, comrades, this resolution correctly praises the general line of the Party as correct. It pointed out that this line in many places was unclearly formulated, and in general it substantiated the criticisms of the Eastern Secretariat on this question. Manuisky in his speech before the commission stated that while in general agreement with these criticisms of Comrade Safarov of the Party's work in the Negro field, he rejected the tone in which these criticisms were made.

Lang: Comrade Manuisky spoke about Comrade Safarov's criticism of several articles, but not about the policy of the Party.

Haywood: Comrade Safarov did not put the question of the incorrect line of the Party, and none of us did. I did not put the question of incorrect line. We pointed out certain mistakes and this was put in the resolution.

I want to say, comrades, that ~~with~~ all through this discussion I am sorry that Comrade Browder is not here because this explains why, all this discussion especially with regard to the criticism of the Eastern Secretariat to which Comrade Browder reacted in a very subjective manner, not only in a subjective manner, but took a defensive attitude. Then at the meetings of the Pol-Bureau with the Negro comrades where reports were made, instead of a serious analysis and draw-



ing of lessons from these criticisms, we have loud acclaims, self-praise of the correctness of the Party line, that the CI affirmed the line of the Party and rejected the criticisms of Haywood, Wilson, etc., this was presented as though there were some sort of victory won. This is in my estimation absolutely incorrect, the way Comrade Browder presented this question.

Now, comrades, what does this non-critical attitude lead to? It led to a perpetuation of many of the mistakes that were mentioned in the CI resolution and the most important of these is the question of the LSNR. We have a continuation of these mistakes that were criticised by the CI in the St. Louis Convention. Since the Convention the major part of the Party work has been centered around the building of the LSNR. This has caused a certain abandonment of the basic task of drawing Negroes into the TUUL, unemployed councils and into the Party. Again the CI has found it necessary to restate this position. Again we have the same attitude on the part of certain comrades, an attempt to shift the responsibility for mistakes made at the St. Louis Convention off on to certain Negro comrades. The argument is that the Party line was correct at the St. Louis Convention, but leading Negro comrades destroyed this line. Just a word about this. Comrade Briggs was in charge of publicity at the St. Louis Convention. He wrote most of the articles and he interpreted the line laid down at the Convention. Comrade Browder, himself, stated that Comrade Briggs did more to popularise the decisions of the St. Louis Convention than any other comrade in the Party. (Hatnaway: This is correct). It has been almost three months since these articles appeared, and if they were a distortion of the line why was this not called to the attention of the comrades. Why was not a statement published putting forth a correct line on this question. Hatnaway is editor of the Daily Worker. If he was conscious that these articles distorted the line he would not have published them. The line put forth in these articles was laid down by the Party itself at the St. Louis Convention. The whole atmosphere at the St. Louis Convention rang with the idea of a mass organisation predominantly of Negroes who actively led the struggle for Negro rights. (How many white delegates were present? About 32 I am not certain).

Now, comrades, I say that this attempt to shove all these mistakes off on to Negro comrades reflects an unhealthy attitude. I think it is no accident that the CI resolution does not say anything about the confirmation of the line of the Party in the St. Louis Convention. This tendency of trying to cover up mistakes leads to a failure to develop self-criticism and to draw lessons from mistakes. This insistence on the correctness of the Party line in the St. Louis Convention is more serious than putting the failure to carry out the line on the Negro comrades. It is an attempt to continue the old incorrect policy of a Negro mass organisation under the cover of this restatement of the CI's position on this. This is becoming very dangerous because with the development of the class struggle all of these questions are becoming acute.

Now, comrades, a few remarks upon white chauvinism. There is no doubt about the fact that white chauvinism is the main obstacle to proletarian hegemony in the struggle. The existence of white chauvinism hampers the development of struggle in the Negro field. Now in the

district, but not only in the district, but all over the country, and particularly in this district, as the documents points out, there has been a whole series of chauvinist incidents taking place within our revolutionary movement, which are reflected in the Party itself. Comrade Bedaont raises the question that this is nothing new. This is a new phenomenon, such widespread, e- so many of these instances taking place -- this is something new in our movement and it is taking place on the basis of the sharpening class struggles, the sharpening opposition of the Negroes and the consequent strengthening of all chauvinistic propaganda. It is felt in the movement and it becomes a channel through which all these tendencies can creep into the movement.

The Negro Department in the New York District has been very energetic in bringing forth proposals for combating chauvinism, and there was a discussion in Section 4 of the District Bureau together with the Bureau of Section 4 upon the weaknesses of the work in the section. This struggle that the District has been carrying on has brought forth many proposals from the Negro Department to the District Bureau of methods through which to carry out these struggles. Now all of a sudden in the midst of all of these struggles against chauvinism a number of leading comrades in the Centre, for instance, Comrade Baker and also in the District, hinder the struggle against chauvinism. For instance, I want to bring forward this letter received from the Negro Department of the CC by the Negro Department of the District: (Quotes Letter) In other words, the comrade who wrote this letter drew a mechanical difference between the struggle among Negro workers and the struggle against white chauvinism. This letter comes to the Negro Department of the Party and it speaks and insinuates that this is not the task of the Negro Department, - the Negro Department is not to go forward in this struggle. It does not say this in this manner, but it is what it infers. Right in the midst of this struggle against chauvinism this sort of letter comes, and what is so significant about it is that it is addressed to the Negro Department. Nothing is said in this letter that the fight against white chauvinism is the task of the District. This letter should have been addressed to Comrade Amter here (Baker: It should have been). Hathaway: You certainly will admit the correctness of the letter to the extent that the object was to try to broaden out the whole work? Haywood: I am not so sure, I have my own opinions about that. As I say, this mechanical difference is placed right here in this letter. Instead of criticising the District Bureau for failure to take up leadership in this struggle against chauvinism, Comrade Amis criticises the District Negro Department for fighting chauvinism. Such an attitude at the present time amounts to a liquidation of any struggle against white chauvinism. These comrades themselves mechanically differentiate between the struggle against chauvinism and the struggle on the Negro field. It is very significant. It shows a total misunderstanding of our whole line in Negro work. The CI states that the Negro masses will be won for our movement only at such a time when they see that the conscious white workers are waging a struggle with them for their rights. The key to the struggle is the mobilisation of the white workers for the fight for the Negro workers. This can only be done by a relentless fight against chauvinism in and out of the Party. The struggle against chauvinism is a struggle for proletarian hegemony. It is a struggle for international solidarity of the working class. All this includes the struggle against chauvinism, so we cannot mechanically differentiate between the fight against chauvinism and the development of struggles.



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It is quite clear what I have said that the struggle against chauvinism is a struggle which must be both ideologically and organisationally. It must consist of demonstrations against Jim Crowism and discrimination, campaigns for the abolition of Jim Crow laws and then strikes and demonstrations. This is all in a broad sense the struggle against chauvinism. We cannot make this sort of mechanical difference. No struggle can be developed without a consistent fight against chauvinism. Now the comrades through their own absurd ideas on this subject, try to make it appear that we make these mechanical differences. I want to know if there are any instances in the districts that can be pointed out, to substantiate these accusations. For instance, the resolution, I make a draft of the resolution and I think it shows the correct line, and shows that I am not unclear on this question of chauvinism, because there we pointed out a whole series of concrete examples, including the development of struggles and the fight against white chauvinism. But we see that the National Negro Department has no line on this, but comrades in the districts - for instance, at a meeting of the District Bureau on this question of the work of Section 4, in Harlem, where the work is very weak, and chauvinism is rampant in the mass organisations there, even Party members, considerable numbers of Party members, are contaminated with chauvinistic tendencies. On the question of Unit 5, where in connection with the chauvinistic attitude, the section organiser comes there and is branded as a black chauvinist. Then there is the question of Comrade Yokinen, in the Finnish organisation. In the whole work, it is very clear, it is quite clear, that all the weaknesses of the Party leadership itself -- the Party work in general, is in a state of chaos. The Committees do not function. There is no coordination in the work. In addition, we have an anti-Party attitude on the part of Negro comrades there. The situation therefore is quite clear. I pointed out that the chief weakness was the failure to carry on a struggle against white chauvinism. This was rejected. Instead Baker and Amter and Peter characterised the present weakness as due to the weak leadership. This means absolutely nothing. It avoids the fundamental question. In what concrete way does this weak leadership reflect itself? How concretely is the weak leadership in Section 4 reflected? What does it mean?

It is quite clear that the weakness in leadership is reflected in failure to lead the struggle against white chauvinism. This emphasis on weak leadership takes the emphasis off of the struggle against white chauvinism. At the present time it becomes a cloak behind which all chauvinist actions hide to detract attention from the real struggle. Therefore the counterposing of the struggle against white chauvinism is dangerous. I maintain that all chauvinists will rally to this sort of formulation. The chauvinist elements come out and say that: "you Negro comrades must develop a struggle". "quit nattering so much about chauvinism among the white comrades". Well, I want to say that we know what this means. We will not be able to get the ear of the Negro workers unless we can point out to them that the white workers are fighting for their rights and the white workers must help to develop the struggle in support of the struggles of the Negro workers. So I think it is correctly pointed out in this document that this viewpoint hampers the fight against chauvinism and

is the most objective support to white chauvinism.

Clearly we must reject this position, which seek to explain weaknesses in Negro work by the general formula of weaknesses in the Negro Dept. of the Party. According to these comrades, the whole situation arises out of the weaknesses of our work on the Negro field. This is an explanation which does not explain anything, but on the contrary, avoids the issue. The present weaknesses of the Party can be explained by the failure of the Party to fight against chauvinism. Therefore comrades, we must remove these obstacles which stand in the way and one of the principal obstacles which stand in the way is this conception -- this mechanical differentiation between the fight against white chauvinism and the fight on the Negro field. Another chief obstacle is this conception of a mass organisation to lead the struggle on the Negro field. All the chauvinist elements within our Party welcome this.

This document could not be interpreted in any way as an opposition document to the CC. Its purpose is to point out those mistakes which are hampering our Party and obstacles to the development of our work. On the question of the interpretation of the CI statement on this question, I maintain that the attitude that is expressed by Comrade Hathaway on this question is absolutely incorrect. An auxiliary organisation does not necessarily mean a mass organisation predominantly of Negroes. It does not mean a mass Negro organisation and we put it down there in the document what we mean. It is quite clear that we speak of the functioning of the LSNR, is to build up support for the paper and at the same time assist the Party in the revolutionary trade unions in the struggle. This is an auxiliary organisation, but the comrades have the conception that a mass organisation is what is necessary. (Baker: What is the difference between an auxiliary organisation and a mass organisation?) I leave it to you to decide these questions. My conception of a mass organisation that if we build up these committees about the paper, we establish them as permanent bodies and build up the circulation of the paper and this becomes an auxiliary of the Party. It aids the Party in mobilising the masses. (This becomes a mass organisation). My conception is that these groups will not grow into a mass organisation. The Party and revolutionary trade unions, all of our organisations, must energetically put forth demands for Negro workers in their respective fields. There will be no need for any such sort of organisation as the LSNR. The present conception of a necessity of establishing a mass organisation of Negro rights and the abandonment of the work of the Party and our basic mass organisations on the Negro field, becomes an easy method of shifting over our responsibility for carrying out this work to the organisation which organisation must be a predominantly Negro organisation. Therefore I say that this conception of building up a mass organisation is absolutely incorrect. We do not need this sort of organisation. On the contrary, our revolutionary trade unions and our other mass organisations must take up the struggle for the Negro workers and draw them into these struggles, because after all, comrades, the Negro masses, -- the revolutionary elements of the Negro masses are made up of workers. Certain sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, if you put up a struggle for the demands of these masses, there is no way to keep these people out of these organisations and in many cases the conception is that the Negroes cannot be drawn into our organisations, or at least we must draw them into some other organisation first. And when we state that we must have a mass organisation, it makes it impossible to clarify this conception.

Lang: Not to polemize, but to clarify. Are you satisfied with that part of the speech of Hathaway in which he criticised the work of the Party or do you think it is not enough? Do you think it is necessary to say something more? Can you from your side have something more to say?

Haywood: That was not sufficient. The failure to develop self-criticism, -- my reason for this document, -- for instance, the St. Louis Convention, the line pursued was incorrect. There definitely was put the question of a mass organisation and when Comrade Briggs elaborates this Convention, -- and by the way the Negro comrades have done most of the interpreting of this Convention -- and when he interprets this line, well, it comes that Comrade Briggs has distorted the correct line of the OC, but that the line was correct. What is the reason, what is the necessity that we insist that the line of the Party was correct at the St. Louis Convention? (Lang: That means that only on the question of the LSNR, that you are not satisfied). Haywood: It is connected with all other questions. (Lang: You spoke about the mistakes of the Party and it is only on the question of the LSNR that you do not agree -- on the other questions, was he correct?) Haywood: He was more or less correct.

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#### Newton:

First let me say that none of the arguments presented so far have convinced me that any of the points put forward in this document are incorrect, and therefore I stand by this statement, and therefore I shall not reiterate them in my speech. I will speak about a few other things arising out of the discussion here.

I was accused at the last two meetings of the Pol-Bureau of being inspired from Moscow. Well, if I must be inspired, then I think Moscow is as good a place as anywhere. Comrade Hathaway refers to Comrade Safarov of whom he said his position is rejected, but in reading over the speech of Comrade Manuisky, speaking for the Political Secretariat, Comrade Manuisky stated that Comrade Safarov's position was correct, but that the tone was not what it should have been.

Now the question also arises as to why I go outside of the Pol-Bureau to draw up this document. I will explain this. Several weeks ago this same question arose in the National Negro Department and Comrade Haywood and I were instructed by the Department to draw up this document for discussion. But the document was not ready at the following meeting, and before another meeting took place the meeting of the Pol-Bureau took place. That is why the document was discussed first in the Pol-Bureau before it was discussed in the Negro Department.

How about the accusation that the document is a factional document drawn up along the line of the old factional fight. Well, I can say something which no other member of the Pol-Bureau can say, that through the years of the factional fight I did not align myself with any of the factional groups. I read the CI thesis in which it criticised both groups, and I took the position which I understood is the CI position by refusing to join either groups, and these facts I have stated in the American Commission hearings in Moscow just before Lovestone was expelled from the Party, so nobody can accuse --