



Half the World

by Claudia Jones

WHEN A U. S. SECRETARY OF STATE takes time out to compare an average housewife's daily tasks to world politics, as did Dean Acheson, on receipt of his "Freedom House Award," it's really time to prick up one's ears.

This is so, not only because of this reference, but because this much-heralded Acheson speech, made over a national hookup, was previously announced as the speech to clarify American foreign policy, which is under fire all over the globe and increasingly here at home.



Of course, it must be stated that Mr. Acheson's reference to the average housewife, if not unique is original. Long, long ago, a famed and honored working class world leader, Lenin, by name, made this analogy, when he stated that "every housewife must learn to govern the state." While Mr. Acheson's analogy was made not at all in this wise, his emphasis, nonetheless, deserves some attention.

"Diplomacy," said Mr. Acheson, "in our world, is like a housewife's job. It is never finished. It is a process of life—of growth—and we must be prepared to work away, seeking improvements and adjustments where we can." (N. Y. Times, Oct. 9, 1950.)

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AMEN. OF COURSE, every housewife knows what budgeting, cleaning house and making improvements in family welfare means. She knows it means not only taking care of the trouble in one's house, she knows it means living with one's neighbors, not in jealous comparison, or hatred, but in good neighborliness. Working-class housewives especially know it means the ability to live in peace with one's own family and people, to clean up one's own backyard, to recognize the time-honored American working class slogan: an injury to one is an injury to all. To do this, housewives know this means that we must practice what we preach, else our example is not emulated, but isolated, condemned, and, as a last resort, fought against. And they know in their mature womanliness that diplomacy, like managing household tasks, is a process of life and growth.

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THESE HOUSEWIVES searched in vain for another sentence which would show them how to accomplish this—because assuredly Mr. Acheson wasn't proposing how the overwhelming majority of working class women could end this household drudgery which is the fabric of their existence under capitalism. But all they got out of the Acheson speech was a promise of "peace by strength"—reminiscent of Hitler's vainglorious slogan of "peace through strength"—a slogan which gradually placed millions of German democrats, including housewives, economically, ideologically and socially behind the Nazi program of world conquest, with its train of vile atrocities and fascism.

Mr. Acheson's "peace by strength" slogan is as phony as was the "Freedom House" award by its Wall Street sponsors. Translated this slogan means, guns not butter, bullets not classrooms, planes not child care centers, wage freezes for our husbands, not wage increases, jimcrow not equality, war not peace.

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HENCE, Mr. ACHESON'S homily to housewives notwithstanding only illustrates a new trend in the already growing efforts to win American women to the Wall Street program of atomic world war. Not least in this jingoism is the bid for the 1950 women's vote. These trends range from Xmas "atomic lab sets" for junior, to hasty "pumping for women's role in factories," etc. Defense Secretary Symington recently in an appeal to women accelerated their fears of atomic war. A recent Washington meeting of prominent national women's organizations set up what is termed a "crisis nucleus" to act as a "clearing house" for the drafting of women into top post national defense positions. in short, for the war program reputed to be a "top secret" high of 70 billions!

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BECAUSE OF these and other trends, the speech of another National Secretary, has so much meaning for American women and their families. I refer to the recent report at a National Plenary session of the Communist Party, of Gus Hall, national secretary. Now available for reading in the November issue of the magazine *Political Affairs*, this report is a vast contrast to Acheson's speech which would hitch the masses of women to the disastrous Truman GOP Wall Street death chariot of a third world war.

Keynoting the peace struggle, Hall declared: "The most sustained, most active force in the broadest peace movement, comes from the masses of women. There is need for a much greater effort and attention to the development of this movement among the masses of women." The report deals concretely with the fears of the masses of women who are "worried about atomic warfare." From his over-all premise of the need to broaden and win the fight for peace, to rescind the Wood-McCarran fascist statute, Hall stresses the necessity for overcoming difficulties to be learned "in leading masses, in united front actions."

Singling out as an example of these difficulties, concern by women for outlawing atomic warfare and who simultaneously want bomb shelters, he declared: "It would be just as fatal a mistake to just work for bomb shelters period, without using the movement to drive home the more basic understanding of the struggle for peace, or the character of the war."

Here is not only a well-worth reading guide for housewives and particularly working women, but it also represents courageous leadership in the real defense of freedom, which today means the fight for peace, equality and security, true source of the nation's strength.