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DRAFT
RESOLUTION

for the

16th NATIONAL
CONVENTION *of*
the COMMUNIST
PARTY, U.S.A.

Adopted Sept. 13, 1956

A POLITICAL AFFAIRS PAMPHLET

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THIS PAMPHLET contains the authorized text of the Draft Resolution adopted by the National Committee of the Communist Party on September 13, 1956, and presented for discussion by the membership approaching the Party's 16th National Convention, February 9-12, 1957.

In releasing the Draft Resolution, Mr. Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, made public a "Letter to all Communist Party Members," which is also included in this pamphlet.

All suggestions, comment and criticism of the Draft Resolution should be addressed to Discussion Committee, P. O. Box 87, Cooper Station, New York 3, N. Y.

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Letter to Communist Party Members

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Dear Comrades:

On Lincoln's Birthday 1957 our Party will hold its National Convention. The National Committee in accordance with its responsibilities to the Party presents this Draft Resolution to serve as a basis for the pre-convention discussion.

In presenting this resolution, we feel that it indicates a sound approach for our Party towards overcoming its present isolation and strengthening its ties with the American working class and people; towards advancing the struggle for civil rights and security, and the cause of democracy and peace.

It should be borne in mind that this resolution is a *draft*. Everything in it is subject to discussion by the Party membership. Undoubtedly numerous amendments will result from the discussion. Final action on the Resolution can be taken only by the convention.

The Resolution is the result of several weeks of work by the Resolution Committee. The Committee had before it the numerous rich contributions made by comrades in the preceding discussion in the Central and District Discussion Bulletins, in the letters to the *Daily Worker*, in resolutions from Party clubs and sections and in Party meetings from club to district levels.

The successive drafts were discussed in general and in detail at two lengthy meetings of the National Committee, and the Draft Resolution represents the collective thinking of the National Committee.

All members of the N.C. present voted for the resolution. Comrades Foster and Ben Davis voted "Yes" with qualifications. Each comrade will make known the nature of his qualifications shortly in the form of articles.

This does not mean that there were no other differences in the Resolution Committee and in the National Committee. Minor differences were resolved in the give and take of discussion. Major differences on the resolution as a whole, or on important sections of the resolution will be brought before the Party as follows:

1. The National Committee has requested members of the

N.C. to give their views in forthcoming issues of *Political Affairs* or in the Party Discussion Bulletin which will be published every two weeks beginning November 1st.

2. The N.C. will request certain of its members to write articles explaining how the position in the Resolution on various key questions was arrived at.

3. The National Committee is making its members available to speak at membership meetings and meetings of Party committees at all levels throughout the country.

The National Committee acknowledges the widespread criticism in the ranks of the Party, of our failure to participate adequately in the discussion in the past few months. There have been three meetings of the National Committee since the April session. The last two meetings revolved around the preliminary drafts of this resolution. The N.C. decided that the most fruitful way to bring the thinking of its members to the Party was through the publication of the Draft Resolution and subsequent individual articles and discussions at Party meetings. In doing this, the N.C. now recognizes that it had made inadequate preparations for participation in the general discussion in the interim.

We are conscious of the fact that the Resolution has certain weaknesses. It is over-long. It does not deal with the specific problems in the field of work among the youth, the farmers, in the women's movements or in the field of cultural work, with the question of Social-Democracy, nor in sufficient detail with the situation and developments in the labor movement. Additional material on these questions and particularly on the Negro question and the right of self-determination will be issued in the course of the discussion. It does not deal adequately with the new questions in the field of economics arising from the new situation that we confront today. These questions require extended study of the facts and the National Committee is appointing a special commission to develop such studies.

The discussion of the Resolution in the districts and lower organizations of the Party should be combined with a discussion of the concrete developments and trends among the masses in the states and counties, as well as an examination of the work of the respective Party organizations.

While the Resolution is reaching the Party as promised in the middle of September, the formal pre-convention discussion will not

open until November 1st so as to enable all Party organizations to participate fully during the month of October in the national election campaign.

This Resolution proposes far-reaching changes in our program, practices and outlook. We believe these changes are necessary if we are to meet the new situation that confronts us. We feel it will provide a focus for the discussion through which the membership will be able to make their views effective. We hope that this Resolution, shaped and amended as it will be by the membership, by the clubs, counties and state and National organizations in the course of the discussion, will provide a basis for our Party to consolidate its ranks, strengthen its mass work and open a new chapter in its record of service to the American working class and people.

Our pre-convention discussion will be unfolding against the background of important struggles of the American people. It will be truly fruitful only if it strengthens our participation in these current struggles and draws renewed inspiration from them. The National Committee calls for an intensification of all mass activities of the Party as the discussion proceeds.

Comradely yours,
National Committee
EUGENE DENNIS,
General Secretary

FOREWORD

We open our pre-convention discussion against the background of profound change on the world scene and many favorable developments at home.

The pulse of our people is quickened with high hope that the world is entering an era that can bring lasting peace, freedom and equality and an end to poverty and oppression.

This hope is rooted in reality. Out of World War II and the peoples' strivings of the postwar period have come great transformations, and more are in the making.

The defeat of fascism, to which our own country contributed, opened the way to the liberation of hundreds of millions. The people of China, whose land had for so long been the prey of foreign exploiters, and the countries of Eastern Europe took the path of socialism, along which the Soviet Union had blazed the trail. Socialism emerged as a world system embracing a third of mankind—a system which based its relations with the capitalist states on the perspective of peaceful economic competition and coexistence.

Nearly another third of mankind, in former colonial lands such as India and Indonesia, won their freedom from imperialism. Increasingly they pursued a course of neutrality and non-alignment in the cold war. They joined with other Asian and African nations at the historic Bandung Conference and endorsed the principles of peaceful coexistence and national independence for all peoples and states.

A new world situation and a new relationship of forces have come into being. America is part of this vast process of change. A gigantic united labor movement has been born, a tower of growing strength in the whole democratic struggle. The Negro people are on the march as they have not been since Reconstruction days. Together with many white citizens they are writing new imperish-

able pages in the history of the fight for American freedom. Atomic energy and new technological developments are revealing unprecedented possibilities of peaceful progress and a life of abundance for all.

The American people stand on the threshold of great democratic advance. In crossing this threshold—and it can be crossed only by the most determined and united struggle—there is lost ground to be recovered as well as ground to be won. There are new vistas of peace; of a successful struggle against poverty and economic insecurity; of progress in housing, health and education; of securing full citizenship for the Negro people, undoing the evils of McCarthyism and Eastlandism, and achieving new gains for democracy.

As we look back to December 1950, when the last convention of the Communist Party was held, we can see how far our country and the world have moved.

At that time the war in Korea was at its height. The McCarran Act had just taken its place alongside the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act. A divided labor movement had suffered a new political defeat in the November Congressional elections. The Supreme Court was soon to uphold the Smith Act convictions of Comrades Dennis, Winston and the other National Board members. Reaction was pressing its assault upon the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Throughout the world, the men of Wall Street were prosecuting the cold war with mounting vigor.

Our Party at its 15th Convention nevertheless saw that there were forces at work in our country and abroad that could save America and the world from disaster. Asserting its confidence in those forces, it proclaimed: "Peace Can Be Won."

Today international tension has eased and the war danger, though still present, has been reduced. The Geneva summit conference registered the possibility of ending the cold war, sharply cutting armaments and achieving peaceful coexistence.

Rampant McCarthyism has been checked and the deep democratic sentiments of the American people are reasserting themselves. Though Smith Act prosecutions continue and the McCarran Act still threatens American liberties, the wave of repressions, fed by war hysteria, is becoming increasingly unpopular.

Any great new advance today, however, inevitably encounters the real enemy of peace, progress and democracy—the giant monopolies which have become ever more powerful during these same years.

These are the same corporations that in the thirties plunged our country into the worst economic disaster in our history. They aided and abetted the rise of Hitler and the axis and engaged in a profit orgy during World War II. They are the same corporations that during the past decade were responsible for the reactionary foreign policy whose symbol was the cold war. They are the corporations that today breed poverty and insecurity for millions of Americans, gouge the farmers and drive small and medium size business to the wall. They are the economic beneficiaries from the many-sided discrimination against and economic robbery of the Negro tenth of our population.

These monopolies are the real enemy of America. Only through united action against them can our people move forward toward realizing their aspirations.

We Communists in the future as in the past will seek to contribute our utmost to the realization of these aspirations. As advocates of socialism, we shall—in the course of the struggle against the trusts—help the American working-class and people in their great majority come to see that these aspirations can be completely and permanently fulfilled only by a basic change in the economic system. This will require the replacement of the system of profits for the few with a system of production owned by the people and operated for the use of all.

For a number of months we Communists have been re-examining our policies and our methods of work and organization. This reappraisal is necessary because we, like other forward-looking political forces in America, have begun to see that there is a new situation in our country and in the world today. We need to study this new situation, summoning the full measure of our collective understanding as Marxists. We need to determine what it means as regards certain theoretical propositions and past policies and forms of organization.

There is, however, a further compelling reason that adds urgency to this reappraisal. It lies in the fact that although we have made

many important contributions to the struggles of the American working class and people and have stood up honorably under intense political persecution, we have made a number of errors over the years. These errors need to be rectified and the necessary conclusions drawn therefrom if we are to measure up to the great responsibilities which confront our Party and the working class in the period ahead, a period that will be marked by big political and economic struggles on the home front.

I

THE SITUATION TODAY

For a Prosperous America; for an End to Poverty; for a New Program of Social Advance

Production, total employment and profits in 1956 are at boom levels. For the past decade, this country has enjoyed a postwar period of relative prosperity. Since 1947, despite temporary declines, industrial production has risen by 42%.

Corporate profits before taxes jumped from \$23.5 billion in 1946 to an annual rate of \$43.6 billion in the first half of 1956. And by mid-1956, employment reached a record level of 66½ million.

Underlying this high level of the economy is a high rate of investment in fixed capital throughout the postwar period, motivated by the need to replace obsolete and worn equipment, by the requirements of large-scale arms production, and by technological advances. Added to this is, in recent years, a large investment in inventory accumulation.

No small part has been played by arms expenditures, which during the Korean war hit a peak rate of \$55 billion a year, and are today running at an annual rate of some \$41 billion.

Another factor is the boom in housing construction. Since 1949, non-farm housing starts have averaged well over a million a year. Still another is the steady growth in consumer credit, which now stands at a peak of over \$36 billion.

For much of the postwar period, production was sparked chiefly by expanding arms budgets. Since 1954, however, a new upsurge has taken place, this time with no increase in military spending, but stimulated instead by tax rebates and giveaways, and by a huge credit inflation. The American economy today has taken on much of the aspect of a speculative peacetime boom, reminiscent in some respects of that of the twenties.

But the boom has by no means brought prosperity for all. The past several years have seen farm incomes falling by one-third between 1947 and the middle of 1956. The Department of Agricul-

ture reports that in terms of purchasing power the net income of farmers in 1955 was lower than in any year since 1940.

The number of small and family-size farms has declined while the biggest operators and corporation farms have grown. This agricultural depression is persistent and represents a heavy economic burden on the shoulders of the small marginal and family-size operators. The outbreak of a general economic crisis would have a catastrophic effect on the small farmers, for never in the nation's history was the agricultural economy so closely bound up with the industrial and financial life, and never was it under such sharp pressure from monopoly.

One-fifth of a nation suffers poverty in the midst of plenty; one family in five earns less than \$2,000 a year—that is, less than \$40 a week. Among Negro families, the proportion is more than two in five. Ten million American children live in slums. The country has a number of depressed areas suffering high unemployment.

During 1956 the cost of living, which appeared to have reached a plateau, resumed its upward movement and is now at its highest point in history.

Despite record levels of employment, the rise in production since 1954 has brought no corresponding rise in factory employment. And the past months have witnessed a growth of unemployment in the auto and farm equipment industries. With the further extension of automation, unemployment is likely to increase.

Nor has small business flourished in the recent period. In fact, bankruptcies of small business ventures have been on the rise.

The chief beneficiaries of the boom have been the giant trusts and monopolies. The year 1955, says *Fortune*, was "very definitely the best year ever for big business."

The monopolies have continued to grow and to become ever more powerful. Today, the 500 largest industrial corporations account for about half of all production and employment. These giants rake in the lion's share of the profits. In the first quarter of 1956, profits per dollar of sales for the biggest companies (those with assets of \$100,000,000 or more) were nearly five times those of the smaller companies (with assets under \$250,000). And under the Cadillac Cabinet, with its giveaways and its policies favoring big business, mergers are taking place at a higher rate than ever before.

The enormous profits of the trusts are obtained at the expense of the workers, the small farmers and small business. Their growing stranglehold on the economy increases further the imbalance between production and the market.

Such is the present-day prosperity.

How long will it last? The Eisenhower Administration and big business spokesmen maintain that prosperity has become a permanent feature of the American scene. "Adjustments" may occur, but crises, they say, are a thing of the past. They assert that the government, through its capacity to intervene and to "manage" the economy, can prevent any major disaster.

But this theory rests on a most shaky foundation. Thus, for the past six months, although industrial production has failed to rise, inventories have mounted. Nevertheless, in the face of this situation, capital investment continues to expand.

This does not mean that a crisis is around the corner. In fact, there may well be an upturn in production prior to the onset of the next recession. But it does indicate that the expansion of capital investment—the very factor on which the high level of the economy principally rests, is aggravating the imbalance between productive capacity and the market. The underlying instability of the economy is increased, and the factors making for a cyclical economic crisis continue to operate. The boom, with its growing credit inflation, only conceals the sharpening contradiction between the forces of production and the capitalist relations of production—a contradiction which can only be finally resolved in the people's interest through the establishment of a socialist society.

The economy may be given new shots in the arm. There may be new rises in production, especially if foreign trade is expanded by such measures as the removal of trade barriers between our country and the Socialist world.

There are also many new features in the economy which have an important bearing on the frequency and depth of the cyclical crisis which we need to examine.

The National Committee proposes that a special commission make a study of the total economic outlook in light of such new features.

But there is no foundation for Wall Street-inspired illusions of permanent prosperity.

In this day of automation and rapid technological change,

labor faces new and more acute problems. Though production today is at a higher point than a few years ago, factory employment has fallen off. Among industrial workers, there is a growing sense of job insecurity and mounting pressure for the thirty-hour week without reduction in take home pay. There are intensified problems of speedup and deterioration of working conditions. In many industries the runaway shop evil is reaching more and more serious proportions.

To meet these problems there is a new, strengthened labor movement, growing out of the merger of the AFL and CIO. This historic merger, proceeding in the first place from the growing unity demands among the members, was the outstanding positive labor development of the past decade. In ending twenty years of division, the AFL-CIO entered a new and higher stage in the process of unifying the American workers. The merger has strengthened labor's ability to defend its economic and political interests and thereby has increased its contribution to the life of the nation.

Within the labor movement the first fruits of unity are already becoming apparent in the lessening of jurisdictional disputes, the decline in raiding, a greater degree of solidarity and mutual aid in economic struggles, and the first tentative plans for undertaking the organization of the unorganized in the South.

There are, however, a number of important unresolved issues within the leadership of the AFL-CIO. These include such questions as new demands of the craft union leadership that would weaken the industrial unions; differences on political action, involving attitude toward the two major parties, as well as the degree of participation of the union membership in political and legislative struggles. The issues still to be fought out also encompass the question of a democratic foreign policy and peaceful coexistence as well as the whole field of the rights of Negro workers.

In the struggle around these issues alignments are still in process of developing and will undoubtedly continue to do so for a considerable time.

However, the merger has already strengthened the hand and multiplied the voice of the labor movement in the halls of Congress, within the political parties and among the people generally.

Organized labor has developed a comprehensive program to combat poverty, to improve social welfare, to aid the farmers and small business. In formulating this program it is recognizing its

responsibility to the nation in this age of atomic energy and automation.

We Communists endorse and support the forward looking domestic and legislative proposals of the labor movement and other democratic organizations for economic betterment and social welfare. It is through struggle for such a program and the forging of unity around it that the workers and the people generally can advance their own interests against the opposition of the monopolies and the administration which they dominate.

The age of automation and the atom stands in glaring contradiction to widespread poverty, to inadequate educational and health facilities, and to growing job insecurity and fear of the future. But to fulfill the promise of plenty which automation and atomic energy hold forth will require concerted struggle by labor and its allies against the trusts. In the course of such struggles, if Communists and other socialist-minded Americans work effectively, the working people of this country can achieve a fuller understanding of the need of a socialist economy as the only basic answer to their problems.

For Peaceful Co-Existence and an End to the Cold War

Having lived for a decade under the threat of atomic war, the American people, like peoples everywhere, deeply desire to enjoy in peace the great benefits which they rightfully demand of the coming atomic age.

Today, they are becoming ever more confident that this desire can be realized. The prospect has opened up of bringing the cold war to an end and ushering in a new era of peaceful coexistence and competition of different social systems.

Soon after World War II, the giant corporations which dominate American political and economic life set about trying to extend their domination to the rest of the world. They caused our government to scrap FDR's policy of American-Soviet friendship and Big Three unity for peace. They also brought about the scuttling of FDR's "good neighbor" policy in Latin America, which despite serious limitations, had curbed aggressive intervention and developed better relations with the peoples of that area. Acting

through the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations, the economic royalists replaced these policies with one of atom-bomb diplomacy, military alliances, war bases, and active intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. Under the pretext of "defense" against a mythical "Soviet menace" they built up a very profitable arms economy at home.

This policy had its domestic counterpart in the smog of intimidation and conformity that polluted American life, in the persecutions, repressions and witch-hunts that steadily eroded the Bill of Rights. The pall of McCarthyism grew until it threatened to blot out American liberties.

Over the years Wall Street's war-like, anti-American policy suffered one setback after another. Our country became isolated, its good name dishonored. Aggressive acts and threats of "massive retaliation" precipitated differences with our "allies." The newly independent nations of Asia refused to toe the State Department and Pentagon line. A great people's peace movement embracing hundreds of millions all over the world, insisted on an end to the cold war and the settlement of differences through negotiations. The Soviet Union refused to behave in accordance with the myth of "Soviet aggression," and instead the socialist countries directed all their efforts toward preventing war and achieving peaceful coexistence.

The growing crisis in American foreign policy finally reached the point where in July 1955 the Eisenhower Administration was compelled to drop its opposition to great power negotiations, meet with the Soviet Union at Geneva, and formally renounce the use of force to resolve differences.

The changed world situation, symbolized by Geneva, came about because the American people, no less firmly than other peoples, refused to accept the prospect of atomic annihilation. In 1952 they elected Eisenhower on the strength of his pledge to stop the war in Korea; in 1954 they vetoed Nixon's plan to use American troops in Indochina; in 1955 they quashed the Dulles-Radford provocations around Quemoy and Matsu.

And Geneva was also made possible because the American people refused to bow to McCarthyism, but instead, through their struggles in 1953 and 1954, administered serious defeats to the McCarthyites and began the still incomplete process of restoring the Bill of Rights.

Now there has come into being a vast "zone of peace," embracing socialist and non-socialist peace-seeking states populated by well over half the human race. And this "zone of peace" may also be said to include the peoples of all other countries irrespective of the policies of their governments.

The pressures that brought Eisenhower to the Summit meeting are today stronger than ever. They are producing an "agonizing reappraisal" on the part of big business and of various political circles.

It is widely recognized that the bankrupt and dangerous Dulles diplomacy of "massive retaliation" and "brink of war" has brought American prestige to a new low. Influential spokesmen are casting about for the means of restoring this prestige and counteracting the recurring Soviet and Chinese proposals for disarmament, trade, and cultural relations. The foreign policy debate continues amidst much confusion, shifting and partisan maneuvering. Among the trends reflected are in broad outline the following:

A. Certain of the most reactionary financial and political circles openly oppose Geneva and flatly reject peaceful negotiations, trade, and coexistence, especially with China. They want to heat up the cold war and compel the "allies," the neutrals and the UN to toe the line. Their ultimate aim is a fascist Fortress America, equipped with overwhelming superiority in air-atomic arms. In its crudest form this is the view of the McCarthy-Jenner-Eastland forces and in a more refined form, of Knowland and of Nixon. It influences some of the Dulles bluff-and-bluster policies. Its virulent anti-Sovietism finds an echo in the utterances of a number of leading Democrats.

B. The predominant Wall Street forces, whose policies are reflected in the Eisenhower wing of the GOP and most of the Democratic leadership, still favor a continuation in somewhat altered form of the main features of the cold war—especially the arms budgets, NATO and the like. But with varying emphasis they call for greater flexibility in relations with the "allies" and neutrals as the international struggle shifts more and more to the economic and ideological plane. Nor do they close the door altogether to negotiating some partial steps to disarmament.

C. Some spokesmen for Big Business (Lippmann, Eaton, Flanders, Bowles) appear to go farther. They put their main stress on the shift to economic competition and Point 4, while advocating

the retention of the arms budget. They favor increased trade and exchange, and continued efforts to achieve some progress towards disarmament.

Meanwhile, the American people at the grass-roots are making their own reappraisal. The result is a rising peace demand which insistently calls upon the United States to take further steps to reduce tensions, promote East-West trade and exchange, halt the arms race, suspend A- and H-bomb tests, and support the colonial peoples in their demand for liberation.

War is not inevitable, though the danger still exists. Imperialism breeds this danger, as shown again in the Suez crisis. Nor have the big trusts and corporations given up their aim of world domination. But the danger of war has considerably subsided. This is the main feature of the present situation.

This feature can be a powerful stimulant to the people's struggle to unfold the new era of peaceful co-existence and end the cold war altogether. This struggle will also be accelerated, and the myth of the "Soviet menace" further dissipated, as our people come to understand the profound changes and corrections of serious errors now taking place in the socialist countries. It will also be helped by the new initiative displayed in Soviet foreign policy, correcting past weaknesses and improving relations with other countries. This is already beginning to exert a favorable influence on the attitude toward peaceful negotiations and coexistence in labor and liberal ranks.

The immediate outlook is for the further growth of broad popular movements on specific peace issues. Influential groups in women's, church, Negro, farm, youth and other organizations are calling for concrete steps toward universal disarmament, especially for an immediate ban on A- and H-bomb tests. These and other United Nations supporters are asking that that body be strengthened by the admission of China.

The unprecedented rise of the Negro people's movement is closely linked with rising sympathy and support for the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples in Africa and elsewhere.

In the labor movement there has been growing differentiation on foreign policy and peace within the past few years. On the one hand certain national leaders have adopted an aggressive and rigid anti-coexistence, anti-Geneva position. On the other hand, the sentiment of the majority of the rank and file has found expression

in varying degree in the position of other leaders of important international unions, and in a number of trade union publications. These leaders and publications criticize the more aggressive aspects of Washington's foreign policy and urge negotiations, curbing the A- and H-bombs, support of anti-colonial struggles, expanded foreign economic aid and various forms of peaceful competition with the lands of socialism.

There is growing concern in the labor movement on the question of economic aid to underdeveloped countries. In contrast to Meany's anti-coexistence position, Reuther's 10-point program for aid envisages joint action through the UN by the USA and the USSR. Such proposals, along with a program for expansion of East-West trade and exchange of delegations, can win broad support in labor and liberal political circles.

Such movements as these will bring to bear the influence of labor and the other main sectors of the American people upon the foreign and domestic policies of the new Administration and Congress. They will help realize the new perspectives of peaceful coexistence.

For Full Economic, Political and Social Equality for the Negro People

The new level achieved by the Negro people's freedom movement during the past few years has made civil rights one of the most dynamic issues in American political life today. This freedom movement has stimulated a new political awakening among a majority of the American people, who are recognizing the inescapable, urgent, democratic and moral responsibility to remove from American national life the last remaining barriers to first-class citizenship for the 16,000,000 American Negroes.

The Negro freedom movement is today marked by such features of historic significance as: a) the increasingly active leadership role being exercised by the Negro urban population in general and the organized workers in particular; b) the focal point of the freedom struggle is shifting to the urban centers of the Deep South, the region whose agrarian relations and institutions have historically been the incubator of the whole odious system of oppression suf-

ferred by the Negro people, and c) the mounting anti-imperialist struggles of the colored colonial peoples all over the world have had a profound ideological impact on the Negro freedom movement, its program and tactics, which in turn more and more identifies itself with and contributes to the colonial liberation movements.

Note must be taken, not only of the shift of the center of Negro freedom struggle to the South, but of the important changes that have taken place in the South during the past twenty years.

Under the stimulus of industrialization and urbanization, the size of the working class in the South has more than doubled; and the number of white and Negro southern trade unionists now approaches two million. Southern workers have learned important lessons in Negro-white unity in the course of struggle for common economic advancement. The relations between the Negro people and the white intellectuals and professionals in the South have been strengthened, as well as between the South and the rest of the United States. The impact of the moral weight of the Negro question on the largely church-going population among white southerners has been positive. The struggle for the democratic right to vote spearheaded by the Negro people has stimulated an advance in political activity among all the working people in the South.

The situation in *every southern state* is today marked, politically, by a growing cleavage between the Dixiecrat rulers, on the one hand, and the Southern democratic majority who are compelled to struggle against Dixiecratism, on the other. The forms vary from state to state, but the *content* is everywhere the same.

The democratic gains won by the Negro people during the past two decades (including gains in literacy, union organization, limited exercise of political rights, and certain material improvements in living standards) provide the organizational, material and cultural basis for the enhanced political role being played in the life of our country by the Negro freedom movement and its principal organization, the NAACP.

Negro-white solidarity movements are achieving great breadth in various parts of the country. A number of big unions and leading church bodies are helping to organize concrete economic and moral support for the Montgomery boycotters. The AFL-CIO has announced a special committee to aid the South. Labor in general,

and the Textile Workers of America in particular, are taking a firmer stand against the activities of the White Citizens Councils.

Nevertheless, there has not been any radical change in the fundamental status of the Negro people as an oppressed people. At this late date the average American Negro family is forced to live on 44 percent less income than the average white family; the rate of unemployment among Negroes is double that of whites. This economic robbery produces the social consequences of higher death-rate, generally poorer health, less opportunity for securing wholesome food, decent housing, higher education and cultural fulfillment.

The absence or sharp restriction of political rights for Negroes in the South, including the elementary democratic right to vote and the right to representation on all levels of government; the overwhelming inequality in educational opportunity which continues more than two years after the Supreme Court decision; the disproportionate landlessness of the Negro rural population; and the humiliation and indignities which are the daily experiences of the Negro people, limiting participation in the normal streams of human activity (admission in restaurants, hotels, etc.)—these are the bitter facts of life that cannot be ignored.

Outside the South, although the oppression of the Negro does not constitute a system of punitively enforced Jim Crow law, there are no legislative safeguards to secure their rights as equal citizens. These conditions are marked by discrimination in employment, wages and working conditions, Jim Crow housing in slums, inequalities in educational and social facilities and opportunities, denial of political representation, police brutality and other indignities which all emphasize that the struggle for Negro freedom is nationwide.

The economic robbery, political subjugation, social ostracism and frustrated cultural development of the Negro people constitutes a special system of oppression maintained by monopoly capitalism. This system continues to be a more lucrative source of profit for Big Business than the latter's multi-billion investments in Latin America. The limited but important democratic gains scored in the struggle for Negro freedom open up new possibilities for further developing a fruitful alliance between the Negro people and the democratic majority of the American people, led by organized labor. It opens up the possibilities for realizing the full

citizenship of the Negro people, for the preservation of the Bill of Rights, for curbing the abuses and power of the monopolies and for improvements in the material well-being of the entire population.

The growing alliance between the Negro people and the labor movement is one of the positive features of American life, with great potentialities for the future. Labor needs to increase its participation in the struggle for Negro rights as part of the defense of its own interests. More attention is also required to the upgrading of Negroes in industry and the election and appointment of Negroes to leading positions in trade unions. We believe too that labor has the main responsibility for taking the initiative in overcoming the strains and further strengthening the bonds in the alliance with the Negro people.

A political crisis in Dixiecrat rule of historic significance is shaping up in the South. The Eastland-led Dixiecrat rebellion against the Constitution and the Supreme Court desegregation decision aims to maintain the poisonous political and ideological influence of racism and white supremacy in the national life of our country. The national positions of influence held by the Dixiecrats—who are the servitors of the most reactionary sector of monopoly capital—can only be maintained on the traditional basis of violating the Constitutional and human rights of the Negro people in particular and of the majority of the Southern population in general.

From this historically developed set of circumstances flows the Number One unfinished democratic task confronting the whole American people, namely to win the battle for equal rights for the Negro people and thereby open the way for a broad, new advance for American democracy.

The healthy, democratic response which millions are giving to the Negro people's demand for full freedom has generated a mood of desperation among the Dixiecrats. They are actively at work stirring up the most backward prejudices, inspiring acts of terrorism and murder, promoting racist ideas through the White Citizens Councils, attempting to split the labor movement in the South along racist lines, etc. The Dixiecrats aim to push back the frontiers of progress and wipe out the democratic gains won by the people in order to perpetuate their monopoly of political power in the South. In this un-American effort they have found

common cause with the pro-fascist McCarthyites outside the South.

Our Party must play its indispensable role in implementing a program of struggle for equal rights and democracy which includes:

a) Mobilizing national material, moral and financial support to the embattled Negro freedom forces in the South;

b) Helping to win universal suffrage for all in the South, without restrictions;

c) Advancing the struggle for Negro representation on all levels of government;

d) Helping to facilitate organized labor's drive to organize the unorganized in the South and to end the North-South wage differential;

e) Organizing the rural poor;

f) Winning governmental measures to secure land and land tenure for Negro sharecroppers, tenants and small owners.

On this basis, an effective national action program for Negro equality could be worked out in the spirit of the slogan "Free by '63." It would seek Federal and state executive and legislative action to guarantee the right to vote, equal job opportunities, security of person and property, an end to segregated schools, housing and all other forms of discrimination and oppression of the Negro people. It would prepare now to curb the Dixiecrat filibusterers through a successful fight to amend Senate Rule 22 on the opening day of the new 85th Congress. It would organize to guarantee a general break-through in Negro representation in local, state and national elections in 1957 and 1958. Our Party pledges its dedicated support to such a program.

For the Defense of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Looking back over the past ten years, the American people can well take pride in the fact that their profound attachment to democratic traditions remained basically intact throughout the storm and stress of the post-war period. However, this needs to be tempered with the realization that the vast damage done by reaction to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights is still to be re-

paired and that powerful enemies of freedom—the Brownells and Nixons, the Eastlands and McCarthys—are still at their subversive work.

The year 1954 marked a certain turning-point. McCarthyism, the most virulent expression of pro-fascist reaction, was checked. A new political climate began to be reflected in the election defeats of the McCarthyites and their Administration friends and in the Senate censure of McCarthy. This in turn facilitated the easing of world tensions at the Geneva Conference. It helped make possible a number of significant Supreme Court decisions favorable to democratic liberties. It led to curbing some of the worst excesses of Congressional, Administration and local witch-hunting. It created a favorable atmosphere for the American people to take the counter-offensive for civil liberties that the CIO called for late in 1954.

The basic responsibility for the rise of McCarthyism and other reactionary movements lay with the big trusts and their cold war policies. To the myth of a "Soviet menace" abroad they joined the myth of a "Communist conspiracy" at home. It was the Truman Administration, as Dean Acheson recently acknowledged in a frank admission of error, that first opened the flood-gates with its "loyalty" program. Eisenhower and the Cadillac Cabinet took up where Truman left off, continuing the Smith Act and McCarran Act prosecutions initiated by their predecessors. Chiefly through Nixon and Brownell, they exploited for political purposes McCarthy's main weapon, the "Communist conspiracy" hoax, directing it at Truman himself.

That the menace of pro-fascist reaction has receded is due primarily—in addition to the pressure of world democratic opinion—to the great resurgence of democratic expressions by the American people. A many-sided anti-McCarthy sentiment took shape in 1953 and 1954. A high point was the Joe-Must-Go movement in Wisconsin. McCarthy soon became a political liability to the Eisenhower Administration.

Since 1954, this resurgence has taken on a multitude of forms. Outstanding have been the energetic campaign of the AFL-CIO unions against the state "right-to-work" laws and the Taft-Hartley Act; the broad movements for the repeal or revision of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act; the rising opposition to "loyalty" and "security" programs in industry and government; the Ameri-

can Association of University Professors' defense of the right of Communists to teach; the resolutions of many influential labor, liberal and progressive organizations condemning the Smith Act and the McCarran Act; the petition to cease Smith Act prosecutions and grant amnesty to Smith Act prisoners, sponsored by Mrs. Roosevelt, Norman Thomas and A. J. Muste. But within this, a considerable gap still exists between the extent and level of the movement for defense of civil liberties in the broad sense, and the much more limited scope of the fight against the attacks on the Communist Party itself—attacks which are far from ended.

Moreover, the democratic resurgence confronts new challenges today, as the drive of reaction continues. The Dixiecrats have organized the White Citizens Councils to advocate and practice force and violence against the Negro people and the Constitution. They then proceeded to outlaw the NAACP in a number of Southern states. Dixiecratism allies itself with McCarthyism in the Eastland-McCarthy-Jenner conspiracy. Their immediate aim is to intimidate the Supreme Court (now preparing to review the Smith Act), block enforcement of the desegregation decision and demand of the next Congress legislation to nullify that historic finding as well as the vital verdict against state sedition laws. "Meanwhile, the big anti-labor corporations are seeking to spread the "right-to-work" laws from the South to such labor centers as the state of Washington.

Thus the defense of the Communists, whose Smith Act convictions are now on appeal in the Supreme Court or in lower courts, is an integral part of the defense of trade union rights. It is an integral part of the struggle to enforce the desegregation decision and break down the other barriers to full Negro equality. The defense of the constitutional liberties of Communists is inseparable from the whole movement to rout McCarthyism and Dixiecratism and restore the Bill of Rights for all Americans. All the more necessary is it for the trade unions to put an end to the red-baiting, witch-hunts and political discrimination that still continues in some sections of the labor movement.

In this connection it should be noted that the extension of Smith Act prosecutions to Puerto Rico has introduced new anti-democratic evils: crass violation of the national rights of an oppressed people that mocks the so-called commonwealth status granted to Puerto Rico.

Thus events point up the need and possibility for a new extension of the struggle to defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights against their reactionary enemies of all types. A closer relationship is emerging among the movements for equal rights for the Negro people, for labor's political and economic rights, and for freedom of political expression and association.

A major feature of a civil liberties program would be a series of legislative proposals for the next session of Congress. In addition to repeal of the Taft-Hartley and McCarran-Walter Acts and the enactment of effective civil rights legislation, these proposals would include a number of vital points advanced by labor and liberal spokesmen in recent months; curbing or abolishing the Congressional witch-hunt committees, revision or repeal of such "anti-subversive" laws as the Smith and McCarran Acts, and the like. Such a civil liberties program would likewise undertake to defend the Supreme Court against Dixiecrat-McCarthyite attacks, to combat state and local infringements of the Bill of Rights, and to press for an end to Smith Act prosecutions, for a new trial or freedom for Morton Sobell, freedom for all political prisoners, and amnesty for all political prisoners who are now in jail.

II

THE PATH AHEAD

The principal obstacle to all advance of the American people today, as in the past, is their traditional enemy: the Monopolies. Blocking the path to the new great advances possible today stands Big Business. The giant trusts which through their control of the overwhelming majority of American production, dominate the economic and political life of our country.

While Big Business has been increasing its domination of the economic system in the post-war years, it is by no means inevitable that it should continue having its way in the political life and direction of the country. The workers, farmers, Negro people, small businessmen and professionals, who suffer directly from the exploitation and depredations of Big Business compose the overwhelming majority of the American people. They have the potential political strength, if united in a great coalition, to curb the power of Big Business far more even than in the heyday of the New Deal.

The formation of an anti-monopoly coalition, led by labor, and the election of an anti-monopoly coalition government which would effectively curb the power of Big Business is our main strategic aim in the period ahead. The accomplishment of this aim will signify a new stage in the relation of class forces. It will open the path to realization of the American ideal of government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Labor, the farmers, the Negro people, and small business are already in actual struggle against the monopolies. Increasingly—though still inadequately—they have been seeking and giving one another mutual support. The idea long cultivated by monopoly propaganda that the interests of these natural allies are contradictory has been proved false.

Political cooperation based upon mutual economic interests and interdependence between labor and the farmers has registered

big gains in the past period. In a number of states, such as North Dakota, Iowa, Oregon, South Dakota and Montana, labor-farmer cooperation has been maturing rapidly. The main joint effort has been to defeat the right-to-work laws menacing labor and to support the farmers' demands for full parity. In such industries as farm equipment and meat-packing, labor and farmers have made common cause against the squeeze of the trusts.

The labor-Negro alliance, despite certain strains, remains a foundation stone of the people's strength. A million and a half Negro workers belong to the trade unions and the Negro people refuse to be moved from their support of trade unionism. On the other hand, labor gives a growing measure of support to the struggles of the Negro people and tens of thousands of trade unionists are members of the NAACP.

So far, however, the struggles of these great popular forces are not united. They remain only at the stage of limited mutual support. Yet labor, the farmers and the Negro people, together with the small business people and professionals, constitute the actual majority of the American people. The central task facing the American people in their struggle against the giant force of monopoly is to bring about great unity of action in the struggle for their common objectives.

In the course of the struggle for these objectives the forces of the people could develop their common action and move towards the formation of an anti-monopoly coalition strong enough to curb the power of the monopolies by effectively resisting their offensive and enacting measures:

a) To establish the sovereignty of the Nation over its most vital facilities;

b) To limit the economic concentration and power of the trusts;

c) To reduce their incredibly swollen share of the national wealth.

Common action could realize such demands already current in the labor and people's movements as:

a) Return the scandalous "give-aways" (Tidelands oil, etc.) to the government;

b) Plug up the notorious loopholes in the income and corporate tax structure through which the monopolies and their magnates evade the major portion of their taxes; raise the capital gains tax

and the income tax in the higher brackets;

c) Enforce the anti-trust laws so that instead of being merely a nuisance to the trusts and a bonanza for the legal firms, they function as actual deterrents to monopoly profiteering and concentration;

d) Expose and prohibit the functioning of Big Business lobbyists in buying and dictating legislation in Congress;

e) Nationalize the atomic energy industry, and all public utilities with full safeguards for the wages and conditions of the workers as well as the right to organize and strike.

The historic struggle of the American people for public power takes on wholly new dimensions today in the light of atomic energy. This vast new source of power was developed out of the public resources of the American people in wartime. It cannot be allowed to remain a private domain of the trusts, subject to their notorious greed and obstruction. The immense scope of this development, the inherent dangers, and the widespread economic effects all require that it be subjected to public control through the nationalization of the industry. In recent months the AFL-CIO has been demanding the partial restoration of public control over the peacetime use of atomic power.

Inevitably Labor, as the basic antagonist of Big Business in modern America, will prove to be the giant force around which all other anti-monopoly elements will gravitate and to which they will look for leadership. While such a perspective is not consciously recognized in most sections of labor's leadership, nevertheless, there is growing appreciation of this outlook within its ranks, as well as among other sections of the people. Over the past years labor has been playing an increasing role in the life of the nation. With the recent AFL-CIO merger it has placed itself in a position to play a still greater role.

The struggle to curb the monopolies cannot be properly developed unless the growing coalition also finds its way towards effective political expression. In the course of the campaign to organize the mass production industries, Labor became increasingly aware of the fact that the defense of the interests of the workers and of their unions requires the extension of the struggle to legislative and political action. This has become a permanent feature of the labor movement.

Independent political action of labor has been developing in

various forms. Such activity under the leadership of PAC, LLPE and more recently the united body, COPE (Committee on Political Education), as well as by unions directly, takes the form of national and state legislative conferences, delegations to Washington and state capitals, participation at important levels of the major political parties—in most cases the Democratic Party—and large scale electoral activity. The recent regional conferences of COPE have initiated a new campaign broader than ever before to secure registration by union members and their families and to distribute millions of copies of the voting records of Congressmen and Senators.

Most important, labor is taking steps in a number of places (notably in Detroit) to organize its own congressional district structure. If developed more broadly, this would represent a qualitatively new forward step on the road of independent political action.

Labor, the Negro people, the farmers and small business, as they confront the bi-partisan maneuvering with their most essential demands, are giving more and more thought to the problem of political realignment. This is taking the form at present of a new re-grouping of their forces to combat the most reactionary elements, in certain cases within the GOP, but especially within the Democratic Party.

In Michigan, labor joined with liberal Democrats to oust the reactionary old guard from control of the Democratic state machine. In Texas labor joined with other popular forces, as well as conservatives, to break the grip of the Shivers Dixiecrats on the state Democratic Party. In Louisiana, labor, in parallel action with the Negro people and other democratic forces, helped secure the defeat of the extreme Dixiecrats and the partial repeal of the state "right-to-work" law.

It is out of such experiences, developing in the states, that the heightened consciousness of the need for political realignment will grow. The situation varies greatly from state to state. The possibility of the labor and popular forces gaining decisive influence in a number of key Democratic Party state organizations in the future, coupled with a growing collaboration of independent and liberal Republican political movements, may determine the form in which a new anti-monopoly party emerges. For in the long run the working class and its allies will have to have their own anti-

monopoly coalition party capable of bringing about the eventual election of a people's anti-monopoly government.

Among those who are seeking a political realignment, some see the possibility of transforming the Democratic Party into such an anti-monopoly coalition party. They believe it possible to oust the Dixiecrats, break down the influence of Big Business, win over liberal Republicans and establish a coalition leadership of labor, farmers, Negro people and small business.

Some, on the contrary, see the Democratic Party nationally inevitably continuing under the control of Big Business, surrendering to or compromising with the Dixiecrats, vacillating or retreating on labor and other democratic issues. They believe this will make it necessary for labor and its allies to break away in order to form a new mass labor-farmer party.

It is wrong to assume that the *only* possible form of political realignment is a labor-farmer party. This rigid assumption can only serve to hamper the actual development of labor's independent political action. At the present moment the task of the progressives is not to prejudge the form of the eventual political realignment. The expansion of labor's independent political role and all serious efforts to transform the Democratic Party by ousting the Dixiecrats and undermining the influence of Big Business, help create the pre-conditions for a new political alignment under labor's leadership, whatever its form. At the same time, the widest and most extensive education for the formation of a new party led by labor facilitates labor's current struggle to influence the situation within the Democratic Party. For it demonstrates that labor is not forever committed to the Democratic Party and will eventually, in one way or another, build a new political home for itself and its allies.

But irrespective of these viewpoints, the struggle to build the people's anti-monopoly coalition and to achieve its effective independent political expression must be carried forward. It must be carried forward regardless of which major party controls the Administration and Congress.

If it is to advance, this struggle will also have to overcome a number of road blocks and bring about certain long overdue democratic reforms. These are necessary to correct abuses which have developed in our system of government and operate to thwart

even that degree of majority rule which is possible under the present political parties.

Outstanding among these reforms are:

a) Federal guarantee of the right to vote in all elections without discrimination;

b) Abolition of the seniority system in Congressional committees;

c) Amendment of Senate Rule 22 so as to make possible the ending of a filibuster;

d) Abolition of gerrymandering by state legislatures in laying out the size and boundaries of Congressional districts, as well as in representation to state legislatures, in order to correct inequities in representation as between urban and rural areas and to assure the right of the Negro people to full representation;

e) Abolition of the electoral college and election of the President by direct popular vote;

f) Elimination of legal obstacles to placing minority parties and independent candidates on the ballot; adoption of proportional representation;

g) Introduction in all states of initiative, referendum and recall.

The struggle to bring about a political realignment, based on the formation and election to power of an anti-monopoly coalition led by labor, is the great strategic task of the next stage in the democratic and social advance of the American people. It is the giant corporations which block the path to economic progress, civil rights, fuller democracy and durable peace. It is their challenge that must be met by the American people as they carry forward their struggle under the new conditions of today.

III

THE AMERICAN ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The people's anti-monopoly coalition would have as its central aim the improvement of the conditions of the American people and the defense and extension of their democratic rights. Its success in electing a people's anti-monopoly government would open the way to a vast and unprecedented expansion of democracy. Such a government could curb the repressive economic and political powers of the monopolies and deprive them of the ability to promote violence to frustrate the will of the people. Under such conditions, whenever the majority of the American people become convinced of the necessity of a socialist reorganization of society, they would be able to advance to their goal along peaceful and constitutional lines.

Ever since the rise of the struggle against fascism and the fascist danger in the '30's, our Party has been elaborating such a program for a peaceful and constitutional transition to socialism. In 1938 the 10th Party convention adopted the first written constitution of the Communist Party. It expressly stated that any advocate of force and violence would be excluded from the Party.

In the succeeding years many additional steps were taken. The leading spokesmen of the Party, Chairman Foster and General Secretary Dennis, expressed this position of the Party in 1947-48 in articles, statements and interviews with such leading newspapers as the *New York Times* and *Herald Tribune*. A high point in the presentation of this question was Comrade Foster's deposition "In Defense of the Communist Party and Its Indicted Leaders," at the first Smith Act trial in 1949. This statement of policy was endorsed by the National Committee of the Party. It was expressed in the Party Program, "The American Way," adopted in 1954. Comrades Dennis and Gates at the first meeting they addressed after their release from jail, at Carnegie Hall, January 20, 1956, reiterated our Party's advocacy of a *peaceful and constitutional road to socialism in our country*.

Some have challenged this view on the ground that the capitalist class of the U.S. is strong and the forces of repression at its disposal are powerful. They point to the character and sharpness of the class and people's struggle in the past and today. These points are unquestioned. The trusts will continue to try to promote demagoguery, division and force and violence to halt social progress and democratic advance.

Titanic economic and political struggles will intervene in our country before the majority of the people take the path to socialism. In the course of and as a consequence of such struggles of the working class, the Negro people and others, the power of the monopolies could be drastically curbed through the election of an anti-monopoly government. There would be a new strength, a new class consciousness and political maturity within the labor and people's movements which would also be reflected in the strength of the party or parties of socialism.

That is why we state that the possibility exists for the peaceful and constitutional transition to socialism. This transition will become possible when the majority of the American people so decide in the course of their struggles against the monopolies. Only the American people will make that decision.

The history of our country, the struggles of our people to fulfill the Bill of Rights, their attachment to the Constitution all point to the conclusion that socialism in the U.S. will provide full civil liberties to all, including the right to dissent, and, as long as the people so desire, a multi-party system. This is not an academic question for our Party. This stand by our party on civil liberties under socialism is of value in clarifying our perspective of socialism and also assists in strengthening the unity of the democratic forces of our land for common action today.

Socialism in America will be the realization of the dream of economic independence and political freedom, of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" under the conditions of today, in the age of atomic energy and automation. It will carry forward the best traditions of Jefferson, Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, and of the great American pioneer labor and socialist leaders, William Sylvis and Gene Debs.

Socialism is no more un-American than is capitalism particularly American. Capitalism and socialism are social systems growing out of the evolution of society and its struggle towards greater

progress. Capitalism in the U.S., because of the peculiar features and historical conditions of its development, has brought a relatively high standard of living to a large number of people. But it also has brought economic crisis, wars, colonial exploitation and oppression, unemployment, insecurity, crime, social degradation and discrimination. The people had to fight for their standard of living and for their democratic liberties against the forces of privilege and reaction at every stage in the history of our country. They fought for independence, for the Bill of Rights, for the right to vote, for the right to education, for the abolition of slavery, for the rights of women, for the abolition of child labor, for the right to build unions, for social insurance. And to this day the Negro people are denied equal rights, are discriminated against, and are doubly exploited.

Today socialism, embracing a third of the world's people, has grown to a world system. In the coming period the superiority of socialism over capitalism will become ever more apparent to all peoples.

Socialism in the U.S. from the beginning will be able to provide all our people with the highest standard of living, the fullest economic security. For ours is the most technically advanced country in the world. Our resources, our skills, our technology, our organizing capacity and experience, our workers, scientists, will assure a rapidly increasing standard of living for all. Socialism in our country will bring not only the fullest satisfaction of our material needs but also the fullest democratic liberty and cultural satisfaction.

The Communist Party from its inception has been the party of socialism. Because of this it has brought strength and understanding much greater than its numbers to the struggles in which it fought as part of the American working people. But our Party never fully mastered the task of successfully combining the immediate struggle and socialist education. In the early period policies and slogans were put forward as if socialism were around the corner. Later on, when the Party, making a more sober and realistic analysis of the situation, came to the conclusion that socialism was not on the immediate order of the day in the U.S., educational work for socialism was neglected.

This resulted from our narrow and sectarian conception of socialism, of what it would be like in the U.S. and of how it would

be achieved. We failed to see in the many struggles for greater economic security, in the strong anti-monopoly tendencies, the basis for reaching the people with fundamental discussions of issues and for promoting socialist education among them.

But the enemies of socialism have never ceased their attacks and are today carrying on widespread propaganda not only against the socialist lands and against the Communist Party of the United States, but also against the ideas of socialism.

This should make clear that the Communist Party cannot limit itself to a mere declaration that socialism is not on the immediate order of the day in our land. This is undoubtedly true. But socialism is nonetheless an issue: socialism in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and most of all, what socialism would be like in the U.S., and how the Communist Party hopes the American people will achieve socialism.

The historic conditions deriving from the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and the split in the socialist movement have now given way to new conditions. The emergence of socialism from the limits of one country to a world system embracing several states and one-third of mankind was described by the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as "the chief feature of the present era."

These conditions make possible a great new trend towards unity among socialist-minded people which has already begun to be felt not only abroad but in our own country. The new features of independence and mutual criticism in the relationships among Communist Parties also tend to remove barriers between Communists and other supporters of socialism.

For some months our Party has had under consideration the question presented in Eugene Dennis' report to the National Committee meeting last April, of our attitude towards the perspective of a united party of socialism in this country.

The new developments point to a certain revitalization and growth of socialist-oriented and pro-Marxist currents and groupings. In the past we tended to assume that all that was worth while in other socialist currents and groupings would inevitably flow into our own organization. This assumption was always incorrect and should be replaced by serious and painstaking efforts to assist in the eventual development of the broadest possible unity of all socialist-minded elements.

Such a development can by no means be expected as a quick and easy solution to the common problems of all socialist groupings, or to the specific problems of our own Party. Least of all could this objective be advanced by any tendency to weaken or dissolve the Communist Party. On the contrary, it is essential that the Communist Party strengthen in every way its organization, mass work and general influence.

The prospect we hold forth for our Party requires a reinvigoration of the Marxist press. A prerequisite for an effective hearing for Marxist ideas and for making their influence felt in respect to the course of our country's development is that we spare no effort in helping to finance and solve the distribution problems of *The Worker* and the *Daily Worker*. Stabilizing the financial base of the Marxist press and building its circulation will establish the practical foundation for a steady improvement in its political and journalistic quality.

The attainment of unity among socialist-minded forces lies along the path of common struggle on the broadest issues facing the American people, in the course of which ideological and tactical questions will become clarified and common bonds be forged.

It would be wrong to identify the extent of socialist traditions and thinking with the low level of socialist organization today. Among the trade unions, in the building of which Socialists and Communists played a major role, among the Negro people, the working farmers, the professionals and the youth who are pondering the significance of the growth of the socialist world system, as well as among the many thousands who at one time were members of our Party or who participated in mass struggles under our leadership, are to be found many who would welcome the perspective of a united party of socialism. The National Committee should be charged with fostering this perspective.

The historic objective of achieving unity of all honest socialist-minded forces to develop the American people's anti-monopoly coalition, as well as for the ultimate achievement of socialism, throws an added light on our re-appraisal of our Party's past and present functioning, its mass activity and its vast role in the period ahead.

IV

OUR PARTY

The Communist Party made a vital contribution to the welfare of our country since the end of World War II by its unflinching fight for peace, against the danger of fascism, for the civil rights of the Negro people, and for the economic needs of the working people. It continues to do so.

Communists fought consistently through the years of the cold war to help bring about the present improved political situation. In so doing, they served the best national interests of our country with patriotic selflessness.

At its Emergency Convention in 1945 the Communist Party warned the American people about the dangers inherent in the developing plans of Wall Street to dominate the world. As this aggressive drive for world domination unfolded, the Communist Party alerted the American people to the emergence of a serious danger of a new world war. It exposed and combatted every policy and action which jeopardized or broke the peace; the notorious "get tough with Russia" policy; the war-inciting Fulton, Missouri, speech of Winston Churchill; the Truman doctrine of "containment," atom-bomb diplomacy and military intervention in China and Greece; the Marshall Plan; the "positions of strength" policy embodied in the Atlantic Pact, NATO, SEATO and other military alliances, as well as the building of military bases all over the world. The Communist party fought consistently under difficult conditions for a negotiated peace to end the Korean War. It vigorously combatted the Big Lie of an alleged threat of Soviet aggression. It called for the negotiation of differences between the Big Powers, the ending of the cold war and its replacement by a policy of peaceful coexistence between our country and the Soviet Union.

Our Party's Achievements

During this period the Communist Party took the lead in combatting a host of repressive measures and policies designed to silence those fighting for peace and to intimidate the American people into

acceptance of unpopular military adventures. It exposed and fought against the Schwellenbach proposal for outlawing the Communist Party, the Mundt-Nixon Bill, the McCarran Act, the Taft-Hartley Act, the Attorney General's "subversive list," the thought-control "loyalty" order and civil service witch-hunts, the persecution by Congressional committees, the Smith Act prosecutions, the McCarthyite inquisition and the "atom-spy" hoax which resulted in the frame-up and execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, as well as the imprisonment of Morton Sobell. The Party exposed and fought against repressive measures and policies adopted in many states.

Throughout this period the Communist Party actively supported labor's struggles for improved economic and working conditions, particularly during the big strikes of the miners, the railway, packinghouse, steel, auto, electrical and farm equipment workers. Communists championed labor's united action in defense of its hard won gains. They contributed to labor's growing appreciation of its unique and decisive role in the life of the nation. They helped labor gain a better understanding of its relation to the struggle for Negro rights. They urged closer working relationships between labor and the farm population. They fought for democratic, militant trade unionism and against expulsions, raiding, secessions and the fragmentation of the labor movement. They popularized independent political action as the key to the future not only of the labor movement but of the entire nation.

The Communist Party energetically championed the struggles of the Negro people for full economic, social and political equality. It made notable contributions in defending Willie McGee, the Martinsville Seven, the Trenton Six, Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram and Wesley Wells; in combatting segregated housing in Stuyvesant Town, Levittown, and Parkchester in New York, in Park Manor, Peoria Street and Trumbull Park in Illinois, and in many other communities throughout the nation; in popularizing the battle for Negro representation in all elective and appointive government bodies; in promoting the struggle for inclusion of model FEPC clauses in union contracts; in fighting for election and appointment of Negro leaders to top positions in the lily-white leadership of many unions. These and similar activities of the Communist Party contributed substantially to the emergence of the current broad movement for civil rights.

The struggles waged by the Communist Party in the past decade constitute a notable chapter in the history of the American working class. As the tide continues to turn against McCarthyism and the cold war, sweeping away the frenzied insanity of a decade of red-baiting, lies and distortions, the justice and courage of the Communist Party's struggle will be increasingly vindicated in the eyes of all Americans who have the real welfare of our country at heart. Every member and friend of the Communist Party has reason to be proud of the contributions made to the great task of helping save America from the catastrophe of war and fascism.

The Communist Party and its supporters have reason to be proud of the staunchness with which they met the wave of persecution against them. Nonetheless, this persecution was not without effect. It took the form of an expanding pattern of repression including: Taft-Hartley Act affidavits and perjury prosecutions; Smith Act arrests, trials, convictions and jail sentences; Congressional committee inquisitions and contempt citations; the screening of whole industries and the entire civil service; firings from jobs, hounding from professions, establishment of industry-wide blacklists; McCarran Act persecutions; widespread deportations of foreign-born; deprivation of legal rights to halls, radio time, advertising space, etc. All this put the Communist Party in a position of de facto illegality.

This attack was designed to destroy the Communist Party. In this it did not succeed. It did succeed in weakening and isolating it. It is necessary for all members of the Communist Party to face up soberly to the fact that in this period the Party suffered heavy organizational losses, declined in political influence in many areas of work and fields of activity, became dangerously isolated from important sectors of the labor and people's movements; that the Marxist press is in jeopardy, and that generally the Party is confronted with a critical situation.

Was it inevitable, in view of these attacks and adverse objective conditions, that the Party should suffer such heavy organizational losses and become so severely isolated as it did? The answer must be NO.

The attacks on the Party occurred at a time when the overall economic situation, with the exception of the chronic postwar agricultural crisis was characterized by high levels of general employment and increased total earnings by workers' families. This

situation gave rise to two trends in the ranks of the working class. On the one hand, the absence of an army of unemployed who might be used as a club against them encouraged workers to fight militantly throughout this period for wage increases and important fringe benefits. On the other hand, the growth of class consciousness among the workers was inhibited by continued high levels of employment and rising earnings for almost 15 years, combined with the propaganda of views in the labor movement reflecting the influence of Keynesian theories about the ability of capitalism to solve permanently the problem of "boom and bust" through a "managed economy" of built-in stabilizers.

What is more, this factor has helped erode the class consciousness of many labor leaders who in past years considered themselves adherents of Socialism but who today have abandoned their socialist convictions, or even oppose socialist ideas in favor of an illusory "permanently expanding capitalism" as the ultimate solution for the problems of American workers.

Errors and Weaknesses of the Party

Against the background of this economic situation and its consequences, the errors and long standing weaknesses of our party had a particularly damaging effect.

The most important of these errors include:

A. In the Fight for Peace:

The Party's estimate that Wall Street's drive for world domination created a serious danger of a new world war was correct. With this analysis our Party made a significant contribution to the mobilization of American and world peace forces. At the same time some serious sectarian mistakes were made in analyzing important phases of the struggle between the forces of peace and war. While we repeatedly asserted that World War III was not inevitable, we tended to weaken this correct estimate by declaring that each new defeat for American imperialism increased its desperation and, hence, increased the danger of war. This was coupled with an analysis that the only major difference in the ranks of monopoly capital was between those who want war now and those who want war later.

This overlooked the fact that Wall Street's ability to achieve its predatory aims was diminishing and that the setbacks to the

imperialist drive sharpened all differences within the ranks of monopoly capital as well as between the imperialists of various countries. It overlooked the fact that the overall situation of American imperialism still gave it room to maneuver short of world war rather than reducing it to desperate alternatives.

In effect, such estimates excluded the possibility of the peaceful settlement of differences except through a major change in the relation of class forces in the United States. They made it difficult to convince the Party membership and the masses of the possibility of achieving under existing conditions a protracted period of peaceful coexistence.

Certainly, when Dulles three times took our country "to the brink of war," this represented on each occasion an acute sharpening of the danger of wars which might have had global repercussions. But Dulles' inability to take our country over the brink revealed the strength of the obstacles to war. It was precisely this strength that our Party underestimated.

That is why, despite our statements regarding the profound significance of the armistice in Korea and the negotiated peace in Indo-China, our Party did not draw full conclusions from the favorable changes in international relations which these events signaled. Because of a narrow concept of the division of the world into two camps we did not properly assess the growth of a neutralist bloc in the world, especially the newly liberated colonial countries, as well as like forces in our country. In fact, up to the very eve of the Geneva Summit meeting there were strong tendencies to underestimate the ability of the peace forces, within our country and internationally, to compel the Eisenhower Administration to enter into peaceful negotiations with the socialist world.

B. In the Fight Against the Fascist Danger.

The Party correctly assessed the connection between American imperialism's aggressive foreign policy and the host of reactionary and pro-fascist measures which began to be promulgated, adopted or enforced in the late 1940s. These measures were designed to intimidate and suppress all opposition to the aggressive foreign policies of Big Business. Contrary to opinions prevalent in some circles that this development was a temporary post-war aberration which would automatically subside in time, the Party emphasized the potential fascist danger if it was not checked by the active struggle of the American people.

However, the errors made by the Party in estimating various phases of the struggle against the war danger also influenced its judgment of the fascist menace, particularly in relation to attempts to outlaw the Party. This took the form of overestimating the scope, level and tempo of the process of fascization under way generally. Our evaluation also tended to equate the attempted outlawing of the Party with fascism.

This led to wrong organizational decisions in 1950, including conscious efforts to reduce the size of the Party membership. While this particular error was quickly recognized by the Districts and the National Committee and corrective steps were taken, it nevertheless resulted in serious damage to the Party organization.

Subsequently, in 1951, the National Committee statement on the Vinson decision upholding the first Smith Act conviction of Communist leaders estimated that we had entered a wholly "new situation"; in other words, that a qualitative change had taken place in the process of the fascization of our country. This led to the introduction of a system of leadership which virtually gave up the fight for legality, tended to accept a status of illegality and abandoned many possibilities for the public functioning of the Party.

While it was essential to safeguard the Party and enable it to function under the difficult conditions it faced, and while numerous Communists displayed great steadfastness in this task, nevertheless, as a result of a sectarian approach to this effort, the Party needlessly lost thousands of members. This facilitated the efforts of reaction to isolate us from the masses who, naturally, could not understand the Party's course in the given situation.

Contributing to these left-sectarian errors were:

a) the failure to recognize that the ruling class was not so hard pressed as to be unable to continue its established method of governmental rule even as it sharply curtailed the Bill of Rights by launching unprecedented attacks against the labor and people's movements, and in the first place, against the Communist Party;

b) underestimation of the strength of American democratic traditions among the people, their readiness to defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the latent power of the trade unions as a bulwark against fascism, the peculiarities of American governmental structure, as well as the struggles between and with-

in the two major parties which act as impediments to the repressive drive of the most reactionary circles.

C. *On Imminence of Economic Crisis.*

Repeatedly since 1945, the Party has erred in assessing economic developments in the United States. In 1945, in 1949 and in 1954, it predicted that the current declines would develop into crises of major proportions.

At certain moments the Party's analysis wrongly appraised effects of the continuing arms program. Even more important, it overlooked the extent of continuing investments in fixed capital to replace, expand and modernize equipment which had worn out or become obsolete since the last major cycle of fixed capital renewal in the thirties. Together with this it failed to size up adequately the level of commercial and residential construction as well as the scope of unsatisfied consumer demand and the possibilities of credit expansion. Also, it overlooked the temporary stimulating effect of the government's tax program which provided for rebates, attractive amortization terms, lower excess profits taxes.

The Party's judgment in each case was faulty because it never made an adequate analysis of the specific features of American capitalism. Instead, it based itself on a one-sided and incomplete study of economic data, applying the Marxian theory of economic crisis in a routine, formal and doctrinaire manner.

These repeated estimates of impending economic crisis had many harmful effects: projection of unrealistic economic programs, overestimation of the tempo of radicalization of the masses, with resultant mistakes in tactical approaches to united front relations, especially in the trade unions; and finally, encouragement of all tendencies to overestimate the imminence of war and fascism.

Relations with the Labor Movement

The foregoing mistaken estimates contributed to a series of sectarian errors in the Party's policies in the main areas of work.

Our policies and tactics in regard to the most important aspect of our work, our relations with the labor movement, did not escape the influence of sectarianism. This took the form of a sectarian attitude to the labor movement itself and to the relations that should exist between the Communist Party and the trade unions.

We did not view the labor movement realistically in the light of its actual level of development. Rather, our point of departure was our own concept of what the labor movement should be. We therefore projected standards of achievement for Communists and progressives in the labor movement, as well as for the labor movement as a whole, based on our estimate of what was urgently needed rather than on what was possible under existing conditions.

This led to cumulative strains in the relations between the Party and the most friendly sections of the labor movement. It was in great part responsible for isolating us from the membership and the leadership of the unions, towards whom we often adopted not only a sectarian but even a factional attitude. This was demonstrated not only in the failure to wage a skillful and consistent fight to prevent an irreconcilable rupture with the progressive and center forces in several C.I.O. unions, but also in the development of a policy of waging the sharpest struggle against those we characterized as the "center forces" in the C.I.O., and as "Social Democrats."

Within the conservative-led unions this sectarian approach also proved to be very costly. Communists and progressives were often faced with the alternative of either pursuing policies which led to their isolation, loss of positions of leadership and often loss of job in the shop as well; or taking a more flexible position and being branded as opportunists by the Party. The history of the past period is replete with examples of both consequences. In the vast majority of cases it led to the isolation of the most militant trade unionists from the masses of the workers. In many cases it caused militant and progressive workers and union leaders to break relations of long standing with our Party. These mistakes are in large part responsible for our failure to build the strength of the Left in the AFL and the conservative-led unions of the C.I.O.

A flagrant example of this leftism is to be found in the series of events that led up to the expulsion of the progressive-led unions from the CIO. These expulsions and the all-out effort to destroy the unions led by progressives were part of a well organized campaign to split the labor movement in every major country. This plan was not only the brainchild of certain labor leaders, but was supported, if not initiated, by the State Department and the other anti-labor forces. Nevertheless, we must recognize that their efforts were facilitated by our own errors in policy and tactics.

Our Party urged all progressives to fight for the unity of the CIO. We were sharply critical of tendencies to withdraw from the CIO at the 1949 Cleveland convention. In the main the progressive unions made great efforts to maintain a united CIO and were prepared to accept any formula for the settlement of the issues involved as long as their autonomous rights were respected. The expulsions were completely unjustified and those who pressed for them did irreparable harm to the CIO and to the whole labor movement.

But the numerous head-on collisions which took place at the Boston, Portland and Cleveland conventions and in between those conventions on questions of policy relating to political action, foreign affairs, economic outlook and trade union democracy, were not seen by our Party from the beginning as laying the groundwork for expulsion. Our sectarian policy and tactics prevented us from throwing our weight behind a policy calculated to ease these collisions, to avoid them where possible and generally to keep the two trends in the labor movement from becoming so sharply polarized as to lead to an organizational split. Our errors also contributed to making it more difficult for the Communists in the unions to advocate the adoption of steps after the expulsion, for re-entry of the progressive-led unions into the mainstream of the American labor movement, either through a fight for re-affiliation or through merger with other unions.

Sectarianism also led our Party at times into a position opposite to our traditional and true policy of fighting for the over-all unity of the labor movement. We have played a leading and positive role in advocating the reunification of the labor movement ever since the organization of the CIO. We have always been champions of the organic unity of the labor movement. But the growing sentiment for the merger of the CIO and AFL after the Republican victory of 1952 did not evoke from us the enthusiastic support that it deserved. Instead there was the tendency to a negative approach, counterposing united labor action to organic unity, and at times even a tendency to be influenced by opinions which some expressed that the merger was being consummated on the initiative of the State Department for ulterior purposes.

In fighting to rid the Party of sectarianism in policy and tactics, we must also clearly define what we consider to be the correct relations between the Party and the trade union movement, as well as

between Communists and their fellow-unionists, as follows:

The Communist Party recognizes and respects the complete political and organizational independence of the trade unions and other organizations of the working class and people. It rejects any policy of interference in their internal affairs. It repudiates any allegation that it seeks to capture or control these organizations or to "bore from within." Its attitude to them is the same as to the working class and the people generally whom it tries to influence publicly by political discussion, persuasion and example. Communists belonging to these organizations adhere to and abide by the discipline and democratic decisions of the organizations. They are guided only by their devotion to the best interests of the working class and people.

Communists will be found among those who work for democratic procedures in the unions, for the full involvement of the membership in the policy-making as well as the activities of the unions. They will endeavor to be among the foremost in carrying out the main task of the unions, the defense and improvement of the wages and working conditions of the membership, and in promoting the united action of all labor to achieve these objectives. As workers imbued with class consciousness, Communists have much to contribute in helping their fellow workers attain a greater understanding on such questions as:

The need for a firm alliance and brotherly relationship between Negro and white; the role that labor's independent political action can play in the workers' daily life and in advancing the cause of labor's future, as well as the importance of gaining allies among other sections of the population; the perspective of a great people's anti-monopoly coalition, headed by labor, leading the nation towards greater democracy, economic betterment and peace. In the tradition of Sylvis, Debs and Foster, Communists will bring the great ideas of socialism to the labor movement, seeking to help the trade unions achieve their full stature as representative organizations of the American working class.

The Party and the Struggles of the Negro People

The Party's work in relation to the Negro people's struggle for equality and freedom was also hobbled by sectarianism in policies and organizational measures. For many years our program and

practices in the struggle for Negro rights was conditioned by a narrow and sectarian conception of the character and class base of the Negro people's movement. In minimizing the fact that all the class strata of the Negro people suffered discrimination to one degree or another and therefore had a stake in the struggle for equality and freedom, we clung to negative attitudes toward non-Left-led organizations of the Negro people and their leaders. Oft-times, we supported organizational initiatives which had the effect of drawing off the militants from the major Negro organizations and isolating them into left-wing bodies.

In their turn, these Left-led Negro organizations were often (under the weight of our insistence) heavily burdened with "special pleadings" in behalf of the general program of the Left; as a result they departed from the specific program and method of struggle which masses of Negro people were prepared to support. Consequently, these organizations soon placed themselves outside the mainstream of the organized mass movement of the Negro people for democratic advancement and equal rights. Incorrectly identifying the militancy of the Negro masses in their battle for equal rights with anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist consciousness, we frequently put forward programs and slogans which corresponded poorly to the prevailing level and temper of the Negro people's movement.

Likewise the failure to make timely revisions in our theoretical position on the Negro question handicapped our comrades in developing their relationships with the living struggles of the Negro freedom movement.

In this connection, the validity of the slogan of "self-determination for the Negro nation of the Southern Black Belt" as a theoretical premise for our political estimate of the direction in which the Negro people's struggle in the South is developing, needs to be reappraised. This question will be the subject of a special pre-convention discussion resolution.

Also, in unfolding the struggle against racist ideologies, practices, and acts of white supremacy and chauvinism—a vitally necessary permanent and principled obligation of all Communists, progressives and humanists—there were widespread tendencies by some bodies on all levels to make unwarranted charges of white chauvinism. Likewise, in upholding the correct principle that white chauvinism is incompatible with membership in the Party, arbitrary

administrative excesses occurred which distorted and hampered the effectiveness of this struggle. This period is now behind us; all guarantees should be established against its recurrence.

One of the achievements of which our Party is justly proud has been its pioneering, militant struggle for the full equality of the Negro people. A feature which distinguished the Communist Party from all hitherto existing American political organizations has been its grasp of the cardinal importance of the Negro question in the fight to defend and extend American democracy. Based upon this understanding, the Communist Party blazed a new trail of struggle for Negro rights.

Our Party stimulated and helped forge Negro-white unity among the general population. It developed a bond of fraternal, comradely ties among Negro and white members which served as an indispensable factor in making the Party a potent force in American life. Our Party brought into being a quality of relationships among its Negro and white members which has been a treasured humanist achievement and a powerful exemplary influence among the working class and the masses of our country. This is among our richest traditions. The C.P. is proud and happy that these ideas have taken root among increasing sections of workers and progressive Americans. And even though some of these do not yet fully accept the high standards we seek, their advance is expressed in the ever widening support of the labor movement and other organizations of the people to the struggle for civil rights.

At the same time we must be fully aware that the fight on this ideological front is far from won. The Dixiecrats and their supporters in the North are endeavoring to poison the relationship between the Negro people and the white masses. The dissemination of white supremacy ideas continues not spontaneously or as a remnant of the past, but by conscious direction and persistent efforts of the enemies of democracy.

In this situation, the battle against left sectarianism can be meaningful only if it results in working out the broadest approaches to an effective struggle against white chauvinism in the labor and progressive movement. To weaken the fight against white supremacy ideas or practices within the mass movement or against any remnants of white chauvinist influence that may exist in the Party, on the plea of fighting left sectarian mistakes of the past, would constitute abandonment of principle, destruction of the

foundation for Negro-white unity and the lowering of the Party's proud banner of equality and comradeship.

Over the past few years, there have accumulated innumerable problems of personnel in the field of Negro work; an unsatisfactory deployment of Negro personnel in leading positions on a national and district scale; strong manifestations of bureaucratic methods in dealing with problems of Negro work and inner Party relationships between Negro and white; in some cases a pronounced tendency to give insufficient attention to the repeatedly-expressed views of Negro personnel.

The improvement of the level of the Party's fight for Negro rights and the enhancing of the quality of Negro-white unity within the Party require the maximum participation of and consultation with Negro comrades at all levels of Party work in the formulation of policy and the disposition of personnel. Special measures must be taken and guarantees provided to ensure such participation.

It should be borne in mind that the improvement of the Party's work in the struggle for Negro rights will have vitality and will succeed to the degree that it meets the needs of the Negro people and wins the support of the Negro membership in the first place, and of the membership as a whole.

* * *

The Party's previous electoral tactics contributed heavily to its isolation from the trade union movement and the broad masses of peace-loving and democratic-minded Americans. The support which the Party gave to the formation of the Progressive Party, for which no serious base existed in the trade union movement, was one of the most harmful sectarian mistakes of the past period. It flowed from and was conditioned by the sectarian estimates and policies which characterized the work of the Party in all other fields. The tenacious hold of sectarianism in our electoral policy was further demonstrated in the Party's continued support to the Progressive Party even after the 1948 elections had clearly shown that its formation had been a mistake and that it had no substantial mass following.

The first decisive step against sectarianism in the electoral field was the Draft Resolution of December 1952. Rejecting rigid third party attitudes, this resolution opened the way for a broad reexamination of our electoral policies. As a result, although serious sec-

tarian features persisted, our approach to the 1954 elections marked an advance toward re-entering the mainstream of independent political action by labor and the people. This has been further extended in our generally sound approach to the 1956 elections. However, the struggle against sectarianism and rigidity in the electoral field is far from won. We are still guilty too frequently of abstractness and inflexibility. This is true not only of specific electoral struggles but also of our approach to the question of perspectives on political realignment.

Our isolation from the labor and people's movements was increased during this period by a policy of indiscriminately supporting the establishment of Left-led organizations. This overlooked changes which had taken place from a previous situation in which the absence of initiatives in many fields by organized groups necessitated the formation of a wide array of Left-led organizations. With the new role played by important organizations of labor and the people during the past period on many important questions, Left-led organizations in many instances isolated their members and supporters from the main currents of political life in the country. In other cases, where initiatives by Left committees were justified, mistaken efforts were made to expand such committees into membership groups. Only in a few cases were such Left-led organizations justified in terms of political and organizational need.

Inevitably all these errors in estimate and policies were a basic obstacle to the development of our united front relations. Their impact was all the greater because of our rigid attitude that we alone had all the answers, an attitude which repelled actual and potential allies.

Nature of the Errors

The most important mistakes made in the period under review were left-sectarian in character. These left-sectarian mistakes are the main reason for the unprecedented degree to which it was possible for Big Business and its political representatives to isolate the Party.

To end its isolation and expand its mass work, the main task of the Party today is to overcome completely the influence of left-sectarian estimates, policies and tactics in all fields of work.

In the process of carrying out the main task, the Party must continue to maintain its vigilance against right opportunist tendencies, combating them at all times. This is especially necessary in view of the extremely sharp turn which the Party is now making in many of its basic policies. The necessary struggle against right opportunist errors must be carried on in such a way as not to weaken the main task.

This effort has been under way in the Party particularly since the end of 1952. Following the results of the 1952 elections, the National Committee began a serious struggle against left-sectarianism as the main danger in our mass work. This found expression: in the resolution on the results of the 1952 elections, which sharply criticized the sectarian direction of the Party's electoral tactics; in leading articles in 1953, which outlined the path for a sharp break with sectarianism in our mass work and for redirecting the Party toward the mainstream of the labor movement; in overcoming hesitation on the projection of our position on peaceful transition and an American path to socialism as initiated by Comrade Foster; in the opening of a concerted political struggle against sectarianism in many phases of our Negro work, including the issuance of "The Common Program for the South," as well as publication of various articles; in the initiation of new approaches to the Smith Act trials; in serious efforts to influence the Left-led unions to re-enter the mainstream of the labor movement; in the Party Program adopted in 1954 which, despite certain errors in estimate gave new and broad perspectives to the Party both in its immediate work and long range outlook; in the gradual abandonment and finally complete liquidation of unnecessary and extreme security measures.

However, this struggle was carried on in a piece-meal manner with considerable inconsistency and vacillation because it met with strong resistance in the Party. This resulted at times in conciliation with or continuation of sectarian policies and practices.

Nevertheless, as a result of these beginnings of the battle against sectarianism during 1953, 1954 and 1955 (taken together with favorable changes in the political situation), some advances have already been made in unfreezing relations with important center forces in the trade unions, the Negro people's organizations and the communities, as well as in beginning to overcome the Party's formerly extreme isolation in many fields. Basically we could not

correct our past mistakes as long as we had not yet recognized the sources of left-sectarianism.

* * *

The April 1956 meeting of the National Committee inaugurated a new phase in the struggle against sectarianism. The report of Comrade Dennis advanced the struggle against left-sectarianism by examining the basic estimates in which the sectarian tactical line of the Party has been rooted. The report established that the main task of the Party in the present period was to eliminate every vestige of left-sectarianism in policies and activities.

The roots of these errors are not to be found in the events of the past ten years alone.

The Marxist movement in our country has suffered historically from dogmatic application of Marxist theory to the American scene. The Communist Party inherited these weaknesses. Insufficient development of the independent theoretical work of our Party over the past decades has contributed towards our doctrinaire acceptance and mechanical application of many theoretical propositions.

Our Party has also suffered from an oversimplified approach to and an uncritical acceptance of many views of Marxists and Marxist parties in other countries.

Doctrinaire forms of party organization, bureaucratic methods of leadership, failure to develop inner party democracy and a frequent intolerant attitude to the people we worked with have been in large measure responsible for our inability to correct mistakes in time as well as for much of our sectarianism. All these factors are interrelated; each helped to reinforce the other.

To advance the struggle in the United States for peace, democracy, civil rights and socialism, the Communist Party must further develop its independent theoretical work. It must free itself from deeply ingrained habits of dogmatism and doctrinairism which breed sectarianism, and which in turn lend encouragement to right opportunism.

In order to succeed in this, the Party must study thoroughly the realities of American life today, the history and traditions of our working class and people, the special features of capitalist economy and bourgeois democracy in our country, the distinctive features of the American road to socialism.

The principles of scientific socialism were first put forward by Marx and Engels. They were further developed in the imperialist

era by Lenin. They were later enriched by contemporary Marxists in many countries. Basing ourselves on these Marxist-Leninist principles as interpreted by the Communist Party of our country, we must learn much better how to extract from the rich body of this theory that which is universally valid, combining it with the specific experiences of the American working class in the struggle for socialism in the United States. The Party must distinguish better between the additions to Marxist theory made by Lenin which are valid for all countries and those specific aspects of Lenin's writings which reflect exclusively certain unique features of the Russian revolution or of Soviet society.

Likewise, the Communist Party will have to be bolder in re-examining certain Marxist-Leninist theories which, while valid in a past period, may have become outdated and rendered obsolete by new historical developments. For entirely new and unprecedented problems are emerging today which were never treated by Marx, Engels or Lenin. They arise from the new world situation and its impact on all countries.

Already in response to these new developments, profoundly important and qualitatively new elements have been introduced into the body of Marxist theory by Marxists of many countries. For example, we as well as other Marxist parties have already discarded as obsolete Lenin's thesis that war is inevitable under imperialism. We have long since rejected as incorrect Stalin's thesis of the alleged law of inevitable violent proletarian revolution. Likewise, we are making important modifications in the theory of the state, as evidenced in our advocacy of the peaceful, constitutional path to socialism.

We must undertake to make our own independent contributions to the further development and enrichment of the theory of scientific socialism. Creative Marxism is impossible without the ceaseless reexamination and reappraisal of theory in the light of ever-changing reality.

The National Committee feels that it is incorrect to continue to function without a comprehensive and basic written program. The Program adopted in 1954 is inadequate for that purpose. Such a program is necessary in order to define clearly and unequivocally the viewpoint of American Communists on all fundamental problems of the struggle for socialism in the United States. The National Committee recommends that the coming Party convention

elect a program committee to begin drafting such a document, which will be submitted to the membership for general discussion.

The Communist Party – Independent Party of American Workers

The Communist Party is an independent party of American workers dedicated to socialism. Its primary concern is for the present and future welfare of the American people. Its only allegiance is to the working class and people of our country. Its consistent objective is to promote the national welfare and advance our country's true national interests.

The Communist Party formulates its policies independently. It is not subject to any external allegiance or discipline either of an organizational or political character.

The Communist Party works for friendship between all peoples so that our country may prosper in a world at peace. In this spirit it advocates friendship and cooperation between our country and the socialist countries. This has been one of its major contributions to the national welfare.

The Soviet Union, People's China and the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe are socialist countries. The system of capitalist exploitation has been abolished in these countries and, together with it, the cause of poverty, fascism, war, national oppression and race discrimination. From the beginning the Communist Party has greeted and supported the efforts of the working people of these countries to build a new life for themselves on socialist foundations.

Big Business tries to vilify these countries, to slander and defame them, to incite hostility against them. In the interest of the American people the Communist Party is concerned with nailing these lies and exposing these slanders.

The attitude of the Communist Party to these countries reflects its devotion to the great principle of working class internationalism which has deep roots in our country's history. This tradition of international solidarity is a proud one. The Communist Party continues it and considers it a badge of honor.

At the same time the Communist Party recognizes that over the years it held certain wrong and oversimplified concepts of what its relations should be to other Marxist parties. The Party tended

to accept uncritically many views of Marxists of other countries. Not all these views were correct; some did not correspond to American conditions.

The Party also viewed uncritically developments in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. It mistakenly thought that any public criticism of the views or policies of the Marxist parties of these countries would weaken the bonds of international working class solidarity or bring comfort to the enemies of peace and socialism.

The incorrectness of this view was highlighted by the revelations in Khrushchev's special report to the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Because it held this view, the Communist Party of our country was entirely unprepared for and deeply shocked by the admissions of crimes, violations of socialist justice, mistreatment of certain national minorities, and the basis for the rupture of relations with Yugoslavia—all at variance with the truly liberating character of socialism. The courage shown in making these disclosures and the profound process of self-correction, begun some years ago and sharply accelerated since the 20th Congress, are irrefutable evidence of the historic role and vitality of the socialist system.

Socialism is strengthened, not weakened, by the fraternal and constructive criticism of Marxists of many lands. Such criticism has nothing in common with those who deprecate the epic achievements of the USSR, People's China and the other socialist countries or those who seek to engender hostility to socialism at home and abroad.

Our attitude was used to refurbish the slanderous calumny which has been used historically against all radical movements in our country—the lie that the Communist Party is “the agent of a foreign power.”

This despicable charge is a lie cut from the whole cloth. We are American Communists, patriots. Our allegiance is to our own country, the United States. In representing and advancing the fundamental welfare of the working class we aim always to serve our country's true national interests.

The Communist Party must continue to correct the oversimplified relations which have existed between itself and other Marxist parties. These relations must be based on the principles of scientific socialism, on proletarian internationalism, they must be based on each Communist Party serving the best national interests

of its people and thereby the common interests of all progressive humanity. This requires the equality and independence of Marxist parties in the mutual discussion and resolution of common problems; the right and duty of the Communists of all countries to engage in comradely criticism of the policies and practices of the Communists of any country whenever they feel this necessary. This will strengthen, not weaken, international solidarity. It will advance the cause of socialism in all countries.

Bureaucratic Concepts of Party Organization

Bureaucratic concepts of Party organization, systems of leadership and relations between the Party and the masses have been a prime factor in contributing to our errors. They hindered the early and timely correction of these errors. Wrong concepts of leadership discouraged full and free participation of the membership in the discussion of policy and tactics. They stood as insurmountable obstacles to the efforts of comrades in mass organizations to challenge sectarian policies and tactics. They contributed to the weakening of inner party democracy. In many cases they resulted in departure from the very procedures established by our own constitution. They resulted in disciplinary actions which further inhibited expressions of disagreement. They made the life of the party largely routine, devoted, at least between pre-convention discussion periods, to the organization of a multitude of campaigns characterized by inadequate examination and testing of our policies and tactics in actual life by our members in the shops and mass organizations.

These bureaucratic methods of work, system of leadership and organization have been accentuated in part by the mechanical application of certain principles of organization adopted by other Communist parties which functioned under different historical conditions.

The history of factional struggle which almost destroyed our Party in its early years gave rise to a correct desire to defend party unity against the danger of factional splits. But this was distorted by efforts to achieve formal unity instead of uniting the party on the basis of principle, a full democratic inner life and free, open discussion of differences.

This convention must completely abolish these bureaucratic

methods of work, organization and leadership. It must clearly define the character of our Party and its proper method of organization and functioning.

The Communist Party is an American working class political party. It is a Party of white and Negro unity. It is devoted to the struggle for the constant advancement of the welfare of the working class, the Negro people, the farming population, small businessmen and professional people. Its ultimate aim is the socialist reorganization of society in a peaceful, constitutional manner by the majority choice of the American people.

The Communist Party is a democratic organization based on majority rule. It is a cohesive organization for the purpose of acting unitedly to carry out the policies and program decided by its members. The inner life of the Party shall be regulated by the provisions and rules of its constitution which will emerge from this convention, following prior discussion by the whole membership. The unfolding of a correct mass policy by the Party, as well as its ability to attract and hold masses of socialist-minded Americans, requires extensive changes in its structure and methods of work. Among these are the following:

Guarantees of real inner-party democracy through provision of channels for freedom of discussion, dissent and criticism within the framework of carrying out the majority will.

The National Committee should issue a special publication on a regular monthly basis devoted exclusively to articles or letters discussing, debating or differing with party policies, whether current or long-range. Such a publication is necessary to encourage the greatest possible participation by the membership in the formulation, correction or abandonment of policies or tactics.

The decisions of all Party bodies shall continue to be made by majority rule. Minorities or individuals opposed to such decisions shall be required to abide by them. But the right of such individuals or minorities to express their views shall be guaranteed in all cases. However, this does not mean that factions—groupings with their own platform, discipline, organization and publications set up in opposition to the regular program, discipline, organization and publications of the Party—can be tolerated. The whole history of the Communist Party shows that factionalism actually destroys inner-Party democracy and shatters Party unity.

Between pre-convention discussion periods the National Com-

mittee must take special steps to involve the membership in making basic changes in policy. Such methods may involve setting aside limited periods for Party-wide discussion on draft policy resolutions; or convening special delegated conferences with power to act on specific questions presented beforehand to the membership; or the organization of referendum votes on questions.

Establishment of closest ties between membership and leadership and creation of political and organizational guarantees against bureaucratic separation of leadership from membership by the following:

a) Proceedings of the National Committee shall be publicized, including digests of speeches or reports as well as votes of National Committee members on important questions. Where possible State Committees shall do likewise.

b) Minutes of National Board meetings shall be circulated among all members of the National Committee. Periodic summaries should be sent to State Committees.

c) The National Committee should be considerably enlarged.

d) The National Committee shall meet a minimum of three times per year, with agendas and draft documents to be discussed sent in advance to all members.

The National Committee feels that the important and deep-going changes on questions of program, policy and organization that it proposes for discussion will expand the opportunities of our members to work with ever larger sections of progressive Americans and their organizations. It will provide the basis for building our Party into an effective Marxist organization capable of coping with the challenging problems before the American working class and people. There are no valid grounds for any destructive attitude towards the Party's past contributions and the vital role the Party has to play in the future. Neither is there any justification for proposals to liquidate our Party so as to "clear the way" for a broader party of socialism at some future time.

Another view with which the National Committee disagrees is that the Communist Party should change its character by transforming itself into an educational league which would simply conduct propaganda for socialism and for the eventual formation of a united socialist party. This would be a harmful retrograde step. It flows from an abstract understanding of socialist education and separating it from political struggles and class organization.

The foregoing two proposals are liquidationist in character. However, others of an entirely different character have also been offered. One such proposal is that the Communist Party become a political action association. In the opinion of the National Committee, circumstances today do not justify such a change.

The People's Struggles Today

In the immediate period ahead, struggles will largely focus around the November elections and their consequences. It should be our concern to help the labor and people's movements bring the decisive issues to the forefront and win significant gains.

High among these issues is the people's standard of living: job security, farm income, the high cost of living, the crisis in schools, housing and health, the chronic poverty of one-fifth of the nation, segregation and discrimination.

The new outburst of struggles in the South at the opening of the school term again highlights the central importance of the civil rights struggle of the Negro people and their allies. Therefore we demand full equality in jobs, housing, education and political representation, and the abolition of all forms of segregation.

Vital questions affecting the civil liberties of all Americans will be at issue before the Supreme Court and the new Congress and Administration: the Taft-Hartley Act, the "loyalty" program, the Smith Act, the McCarran Act, the McCarran-Walter Act and the demand for amnesty for Smith Act prisoners. These require the rallying of the American people to regain their lost liberties and defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Above all, the people's profound desire for peace and an end to the cold war calls for concrete steps toward disarmament and a policy of peaceful coexistence: for an end to H-bomb tests, for drastic cuts in the arms budget and the like.

In the struggles around these issues in the shops and communities our concern at all times must be to help strengthen and unite the organizations of labor and the people. It must be to help build under labor's leadership an ever more effective people's coalition directed against the great monopolies and striving to elect a people's anti-monopoly government.

Our Party stretches out its hand to all workers and the whole American people in the fellowship of common struggle for the goal of peace, democracy and social progress.

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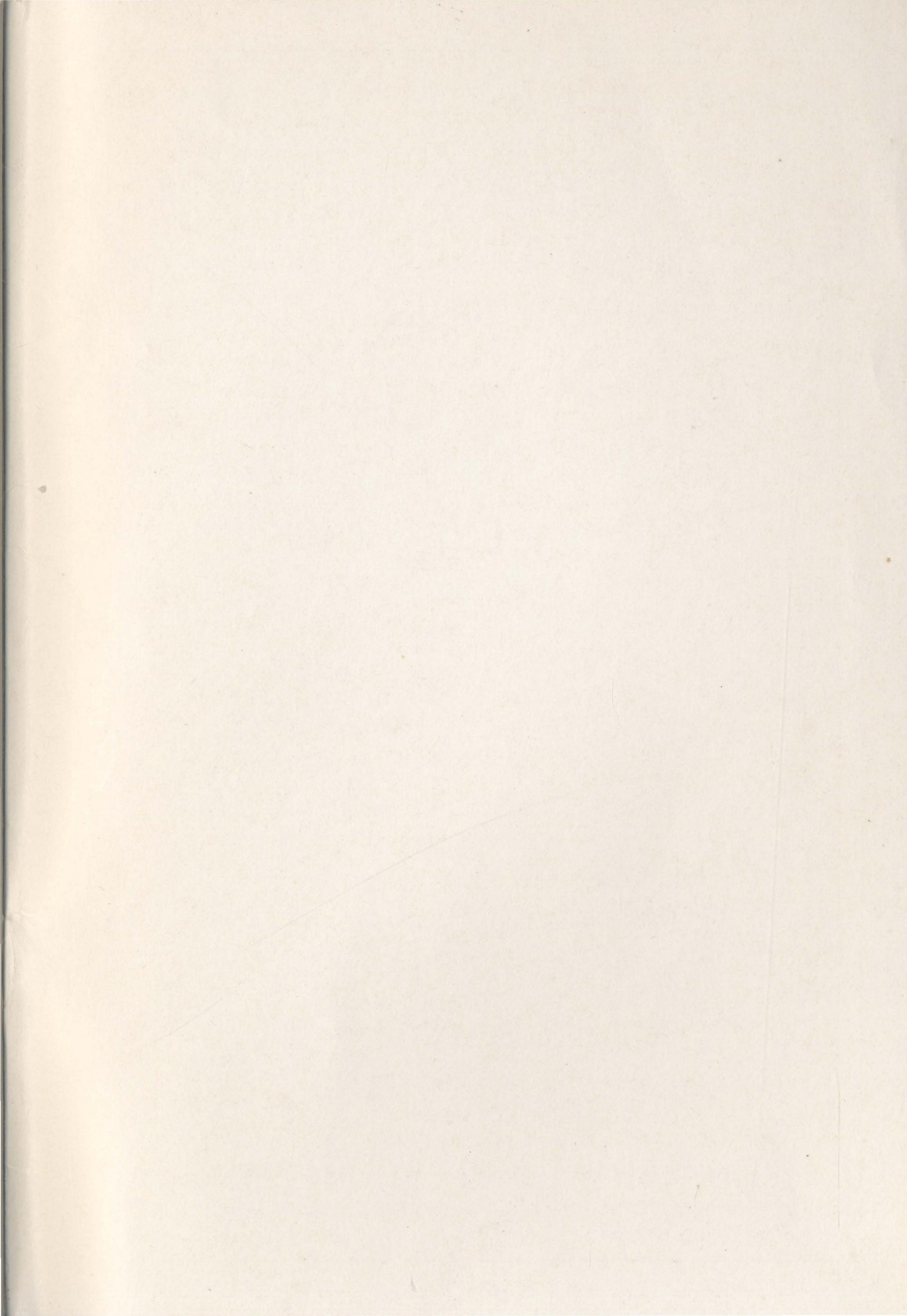
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