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**SPECIAL NUMBER**

# political affairs

JANUARY 1956 • 25 CENTS

## THE CHALLENGE OF 1956

Geneva • The Elections •  
Youth • Labor Merger •



**REPORTS TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY BY**

**Max Weiss • Albert E. Blumberg  
Martha Stone • Hal Simon**

*Fraternal salutations and best wishes, Comrade Claudia!*



**COMRADE CLAUDIA JONES**

Alternate Member, National Committee, C.P.U.S.A.  
Recently released Smith Act prisoner, McCarran-Walter Act Deportee

Vol. XX

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# political affairs

*A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism*

Editor: V. J. Jerome

## Geneva and '56

By Max Weiss

FIVE MONTHS have passed since the first Geneva conference, and its significance is still being discussed and debated, especially following the results of the Foreign Ministers Conference.

Enough has happened in these five months to confirm that Geneva registered the beginning of a turn in the post-World War II history of relations between our country and the Soviet Union, that it registered a turn of the tide in favor of peace and against war.

Geneva was a victory for peace. Therefore it was a victory for all peoples and all countries, including our own country, because the true national interests of all countries require peace.

The McCarthys and Knowlands, in their frantic campaign to cancel out Geneva, cry out that Geneva was a Communist victory and a defeat for America. They lie, of course. What

is true, though, is that they and their ilk received a crushing defeat—but they are not America. Both our own country and the Soviet Union gained from Geneva. Why did the Soviet Union want Geneva? Because its

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whole policy is based on the desire to negotiate differences, to establish conditions for peaceful coexistence. Why did our country need and therefore gain from the Geneva conference? Because it felt the necessity for restoring confidence in itself on the part of the peoples of all countries frightened by its bellicose military posture and threats of war.

#### NEW STAGE IN PEACE STRUGGLE

The Geneva conference registered the fact that we are entering a new stage in the struggle to eliminate the danger of atomic world war, to put an end to the cold war, to realize a peaceful coexistence between the two world systems. This is true even though, in the past five months, many negative as well as positive events have taken place—many zig-zags in the course of development—many high and low points ranging from the extraordinary success of the Geneva conference to the failure of the Foreign Ministers conference to come to specific agreements. Such variations in the course of development are inevitable and do not alter the salient characteristics of the period into which we entered following Geneva.

When we speak of a new stage of struggle, we do not imply that many of the features of the old, that many problems of the past, will no longer be with us in the days to come. Many of them will persist for a long time. But we will be able to deal with them in a new way because the

relation of forces is different today than in the past.

What was the essential significance of Geneva? Previously, the ruling circles of our country, in their drive for domination of the world, had a war policy and a war orientation. They attempted to impose their will on the Socialist world by threats of atomic war, and by actually organizing "little" wars (Korea) and trying to instigate civil war (Berlin). They used the threat of an inevitable war between the two systems as a pretext for blackmailing other countries into permitting penetration of their industries, markets and spheres of interest under the guise of military preparation. They rejected the policy of negotiating differences between our country and the Soviet Union, China and the Peoples Democracies, and entered into specific negotiations only when forced into them by military disaster (Korea, Indo-China).

What is the present situation?

The ruling circles of our country have been compelled to lay aside the threat of unleashing atomic war against the Socialist world. They have been compelled to enter into negotiation of differences between East and West.

This was forced on them by a series of developments: military defeats (Korea, Indo-China); increasing isolation from all countries and people in the capitalist world who feared the threat of world war; opposition of the "uncommitted" nations, especially those which partici-

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parted in the Bandung conference; loss of A- and H-bomb monopoly with the realization that atomic war would be a two-way street; pressure of the people of our country and all other countries for peace.

These defeats and setbacks took place against the background of an economic situation in which the monopolists, wallowing in gigantic profits, had considerable room for maneuver without resorting to the big gamble of a war against the Socialist world.

What has happened in the past five months since Geneva?

First, the danger of war has sharply receded.

Second, there has taken place a general easing of tensions.

Third, the cold war has abated in intensity and is beginning to break up.

These are changes of the most basic importance. They fully justify us in estimating that Geneva marked the beginning of a new stage in the fight for peace.

#### IMPACT OF GENEVA ON AMERICAN PEOPLE

"Great expectations" were aroused among the mass of people that Geneva would not only end the threat of atomic war but would also end the cold war, that it would lead to a settlement of differences, to a reduction of the armaments burden, to a new period of peaceful coexistence.

These "great expectations" of

masses are a potent political force in our country's life.

Furthermore, the Geneva Conference had a liberating effect on the masses because it helped to undermine the chief ideological barriers to the struggle for peace, for democratic rights, for economic advance, *i.e.*, the Big Lie of Soviet aggression and the fatalist concept of the inevitability of world war.

Hence Geneva opened up a perspective for an accelerated struggle by the masses on these issues as well as an accelerated unfreezing in the relations of forces in the people's movement, in the regroupment and realignment of these forces, in the development of new coalition and united front relationships.

The Geneva conference also had an important effect on *inter-imperialist relations*. It speeded up all centrifugal tendencies within the NATO alliance. It largely nullified the value of the world-wide system of State-Department imposed military alliances (NATO, SEATO, Northern Tier, etc.). It has brought the "position-of-strength" policy to a point of crisis with its bankruptcy clearly demonstrated on the German question, resulting in growing demands for a re-examination and a re-appraisal of the whole foreign policy of the State Department.

In the period since the Geneva Conference, there have been a number of wrong estimates and misconceptions which have developed as to its significance. We find most prominent among these, an underesti-

mation of Geneva. This underestimation is indicated by remarks to the effect that "nothing has changed except the temperature of the cold war;" "it was just an election manoeuvre," etc.

Such underestimation is the most serious danger because it will isolate us from the masses, because it will blind us to the new situation and the new stage of the struggle for peace. Such underestimation stems from a failure to comprehend the objective basis for Geneva, *i.e.*, the relation of forces internationally and in the United States in the fight for peace. It also plays into the hands of those forces whose main aim is to discredit and minimize the significance of Geneva in order more effectively to cancel it out.

On the other hand, there have been manifested certain tendencies to relax the fight for peace, to lull the people's vigilance in face of powerful efforts to force a retreat from Geneva. These tendencies arise from an oversimplification of the results of the Geneva conference. They are based on the illusion that the potentialities of Geneva will be automatically fulfilled without a constantly expanding struggle of the people. The danger in such an oversimplified approach to Geneva was made clear by the experience of the Foreign Ministers Conference.

#### THE FIGHT TO ADVANCE FROM GENEVA

Following Geneva, the people of our country had high hopes that the

Foreign Ministers Conference would record a further advance in the process of negotiating agreements which was set into motion at the Geneva Conference. The failure of the Foreign Ministers Conference to record any agreement whatsoever caused profound disappointment to them. The anti-Geneva forces, as well as other circles of Big Business joined forces in an effort to convert this disappointment into disillusionment, to dissipate the "great expectations" of the masses. Nor must we underestimate the effect of this campaign on considerable sections of the people of our country.

Did our people have a right to expect the Foreign Ministers Conference to register certain agreements? Of course they did! The discussions at the Conference indicated that on a series of issues there were already in existence common views, or at the very least a diminishing area of difference.

Why then were limited and minimum agreements not reached?

Because Dulles made agreement on any question—even the issuance of a final communique—contingent upon acceptance by the Soviet Union of our country's proposal for incorporating a united Germany in NATO. As Walter Lippmann observed, this was not a proposal to negotiate but an insistence that the Soviet Union should unconditionally surrender. This policy of the Administration is under heavy criticism because the failure to reach a Four-Power agreement on Germany con-

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fronts the Administration with the prospect that the German people themselves—in both East and West Germany—will reach a direct solution in bi-lateral negotiations with the Soviet Union. As a result there is a mounting demand, which arises not only from the ranks of the people but from important sections of Big Business, that our country's policy on Germany be re-appraised and abandoned in favor of a more realistic approach, an approach which will make this question a negotiable issue and not a platform for an impasse for the maintenance of the status quo.

The question still remains: How was it possible for Dulles to circumvent the will of the people for even such minimum agreements as were possible despite differences on Germany?

The answer is to be found in this fact: when the Geneva conference of the chiefs of state reached agreement on renunciation of atomic war, it settled the one burning issue around which a tidal wave of popular opinion and pressure had been generated in our country. The popular movement to put an end to the threat of atomic war reached its high point in the period prior to Geneva. With this central issue settled at Geneva the mass movement for negotiations subsided. No issue of comparable urgency replaced it among our people immediately following Geneva and prior to the Foreign Ministers Conference. As a result, the pressures from the Right against

further agreements multiplied while counterpressures from the people failed to emerge to any serious extent. The pre-Geneva fears of atomic war which led to action were replaced by the post-Geneva "great expectations," unaccompanied by movements of a scope capable of enforcing its will upon our government.

In our own ranks there was an inadequate sensitivity to this development among the masses, and hence an insufficient mobilization to mount the kind of struggle capable of influencing the mass movement.

This task now confronts us with the greatest urgency.

In order to grasp fully what must be done to advance from Geneva in the fight to end the cold war, we must first of all examine the alignment of forces in our country on this issue.

#### ANTI-GENEVA CAMP

This is based on the most reactionary, pro-war, pro-fascist circles of monopoly capital. It has spokesmen in both parties—Knowland, McCarthy in the GOP; Walter, Eastland, etc. in the Democratic Party.

These forces want to cancel out the Geneva agreement for renunciation of atomic world war. They want to repudiate the policy of negotiating differences, to heighten tensions, intensify the cold war, and to unleash atomic war against the Socialist world. As part of this program, to prepare for its consummation in war,

they want to impose a fascist dictatorship upon our country.

Since the failure of the Foreign Ministers Conference to produce specific agreements, they have stepped up their struggle. There is clearly visible a growing resurgence of these forces particularly as the all-decisive presidential election campaign opens.

They are still the main danger and the sharpest fire must still be directed against them.

#### POSITION OF THE DECISIVE SECTIONS OF MONOPOLY

These sit directly in the Cadillac Cabinet but have their spokesmen in the Democratic Party as well, for example, Harriman, Truman, etc., and in many respects, Stevenson.

These forces have renounced the threat of atomic war against the Socialist world. But this does not mean that they propose to *end the cold war* or to establish relations of *peaceful coexistence*.

Their orientation, rather, is toward a continuation of the main features of the cold war in the period ahead, toward a perspective of *armed truce* between the two world systems—what Lippmann calls "*a military stalemate*."

It is very important to have full clarity on this question.

What is the cold war? Is it just a synonym for the social, economic and political struggle of the capitalist world against the Socialist world? No, that struggle began in Novem-

ber 1917 and will continue until capitalism disappears from the face of the earth. If the cold war were merely a synonym for this struggle there could be no prospect for ending the cold war until the world victory of Socialism.

When we talk of the cold war we refer to the *form* of the struggle by the capitalist world against the Socialist world. As we know from the past, this struggle has taken different forms, at times peaceful, at times violent. The war of intervention against the Soviet Union in the early years of its existence was an example of the latter. The relations of peaceful coexistence between our country and the Soviet Union between the years 1932-39 was an example of the former, despite the fact that side by side with it powerful forces were at work within our country to egg Hitler Germany on to attack the Soviet Union.

The cold war is a form of this struggle which is neither a shooting war nor a peaceful relationship. To be more precise, the cold war is a special form of this struggle which has been developed in the period since World War II. Its main features are: Massive armaments including A- and H-bomb stockpiles, threat of atomic war, A- and H-bomb diplomacy, regional anti-Soviet military alliances, foreign military bases, military intervention against national liberation movements, trade embargo, prohibition of normal cultural and scientific interchange.

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be seen that the abandonment of the threat of atomic war against the Soviet Union, taken together with the increasing resumption of normal trade relations with the Soviet Union by Britain and France, as well as the growth of cultural and scientific interchange between the Soviet Union and many countries of Western Europe—all this adds up on a world scale to a process in which the cold war is beginning to break up.

But this is still not the end of the cold war. Such an estimate would be grossly inaccurate particularly in our own country where the process of break-up of the cold war has not even advanced as far as it has in Britain or France.

The ruling circles in our country have no intention, if they can help it, of voluntarily ending the cold war in the period ahead. For this cold war is a highly profitable affair for them, and not only in terms of armaments production. It is a double-edged weapon—one edge is directed against the Socialist world and the other presses against the throats of its imperialist rivals. For under cover of various aspects of the cold war, the Wall Street monopolies have been able to penetrate into the economies, markets and raw material sources of the other big capitalist powers, thereby subjugating them to the effective control of Wall Street. In addition, the cold war serves the monopolists as a pretext for massive inroads upon the living standards and democratic liberties of our people. With such great benefits to be

gained from it, the monopolists are not likely to end the cold war of their own accord in the period ahead. Their agreement to enter into negotiation of differences does not mean that they have any intention of resolving these differences unless compelled to do so by the alternative of political disaster such as now confronts them on the German question. Neither have they given up their policy of negotiating from "positions of strength" even though that policy is today in the throes of crisis with widespread demands for a reappraisal of this policy.

In brief their policy is:—

1. Armed truce—*i.e.*, maintain massive armaments including A- and H-bomb stockpiles.

2. Continue the main features of the cold war.

3. Negotiate but don't settle anything if it can be avoided.

4. Dissipate the "great expectations" of the masses.

5. Continue the reactionary drive against the masses at home without, however, moving toward the full-fledged establishment of fascism.

But there is a vast difference between what the ruling circles of our country want and what it is possible for them to accomplish. They may have no intention of voluntarily ending the cold war but the final decision does not lie with them. It lies with the people. The unfolding of a broad and energetic struggle of the people can, and must, put an end to the cold war and usher in a new

period, a period of peaceful coexistence.

### RIFTS AND DIFFERENCES

Within this basic over-all policy of the main sections of monopoly capital, there are many rifts and differences over important questions of policy and tactics.

The first major difference is over *the estimate of and tactics at Geneva and the Foreign Ministers Conference.*

At Geneva, the Administration was compelled to carry water on both shoulders. On the one hand, it was compelled by its growing isolation to make a public demonstration of its renunciation of war in order to re-cement its relations with its imperialist partners, with the "uncommitted" nations, and to re-establish its prestige among the peoples of Europe, Asia and Africa who have been frightened, alienated and repelled by the military stance and bellicose policies of the Administration. Also, it undertook to exploit the results of Geneva for demagogic electoral purposes at home by presenting Geneva as another proof that the GOP is "the party of peace."

On the other hand, it was compelled for class reasons to dissipate the "great expectations" of the American people who saw in Geneva for the first time in many years the possibility of embarking on the road to the actual settlement of differences, to ending the cold war, the actual realization of disarmament

and the establishment of a real peaceful coexistence.

Hence we had Eisenhower's speech at Geneva hastily followed by his speech in Philadelphia.

This two-faced tactic disturbs considerable sections of monopoly who support the over-all policy decision which led to the Geneva conference. They fear that the net result of this clever tactic will have only one impact in the long run—to stimulate the "great expectations" of the masses for a rapprochement with the Socialist world, and for big social advances on the home front.

The differences which these circles of monopoly capital have with the Administration's estimate of and tactics at Geneva were reflected in such organs of Big Business as the *New York Times* as well as other Big Business publications. Their claim is that Geneva has been "oversold" and its accomplishments exaggerated by the Administration.

This rift within monopoly capital has been seized upon and is being energetically exploited for its own partisan purposes by leading circles in the Democratic high command. Most aggressive are the Truman-Harriman forces, while Stevenson has retreated from his previous positive attitude to Geneva. In their attempt to counteract GOP demagoguery about peace, the leaders of the Democratic Party have adopted a negative and harmful attitude to Geneva, stressing its limitations, emphasizing the failure to reach specific agreements either there or at the Foreign

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Ministers Conference and ascribing to Geneva the mounting problems which Washington is confronted with in the Middle East and South Asia.

Their position is also a result of pressures within the Democratic Party from various sources for justification of Truman's policy, pressures from the Catholic hierarchy as well as the envenomed anti-Soviet Right Wing Meany-Dubinsky-Lovestone cabal within the AFL-CIO.

This partisan attack centers mainly on the assertion that our country has lost influence and become weaker since Geneva, that a false optimism was created about the prospects of reaching East-West agreement.

But the opposite is true. Washington regained some of its lost influence as a result of its declaration at Geneva that the U. S. wants peace. Up to that point, our country had steadily lost influence and forfeited the confidence of peoples and nations all over the world. We had become a country to be feared and mistrusted because of the bellicose attitude and war policy of our government.

As for the political defeats and setbacks in the Middle East and South Asia these were not the results of Geneva. On the contrary they occurred because, despite Geneva, our government continued to follow policies there which are oriented on a military solution of differences with the Soviet Union, as well as on ousting Britain from the Mediterranean area and halting the national liberation movements in these areas. If our

country is ever going to exert a positive influence in these areas it will only be to the extent that it follows up and implements Geneva. The under-developed countries there, as elsewhere, need economic and financial aid, without strings, to pull themselves up by the bootstraps. They want such help, not guns or military alliances. The press has lately raised a big hullabaloo about the alleged danger that the Soviet Union will help Egypt build a dam, that it will buy the surplus rice of Burma, that it will help India build a steel mill. But what is ominous about this? Instead of organizing military alliances against the Soviet Union, let our country compete with the Soviet Union on a peaceful basis to see who can extend the most economic assistance to these areas. Then perhaps the fear which the millions all over the world have of our country will begin to be dissipated.

#### THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND GENEVA

Even from the narrow viewpoint of partisan tactics, the position of the Democratic national leadership is based on a disastrous miscalculation. Instead of canceling out the GOP demagoguery of peace, it will simply play into the hands of the GOP and hand it the presidential elections on a silver platter. Since the GOP has made "peace" a partisan issue, the Democratic Party can expose the demagoguery of the Administration only by putting forward realistic give-and-take prop-

osals for the settlement of differences and demanding that the Administration effectuate such settlements.

The present negative and partisan criticism of the Geneva conference by the leadership of the Democratic Party is dangerous and must be rebuffed and rejected by the masses.

In this respect, we must take note of certain important currents within the Democratic Party which are pressing for a different orientation. Outstanding in this respect are the Chester Bowles—ADA—*New York Post* forces. These take a generally positive attitude to Geneva, favor disarmament, demand the scrapping of the "positions-of-strength" approach to negotiations, scoff at the crazy-quilt patchwork of military treaties which circle the globe, insist on an active struggle against colonialism, advocate a comprehensive program of economic aid to the underdeveloped countries, question the advisability of re-arming West Germany and favor a compromise solution of the German question based on abandonment of the demand for its inclusion in NATO.

A few words on certain tendencies within our own ranks as well as in some non-party Left circles. An estimate is being made, because of its partisan attack on Geneva, that the Democratic Party is to the Right of the Administration on the peace question. This is based on a very abstract and classless approach to the fight for peace. In order to prove that the Democratic Party is to the Right of the Administration on the

peace question, one would have to demonstrate that its policies are based on those sections of monopoly which are to the Right of the Administration—that is, on the most reactionary and "preventive war" sections of finance capital. That is the only possible class base for a position to the Right of the Administration. And who would dare to defend such a position?

In order to prove that the Democratic Party is to the Right of the Administration because of its negative attitude to a negotiated settlement of differences, one would have to prove that the Administration is animated by a contrary desire to really settle these differences. And who would dare maintain this in view of Dulles' actions at the Foreign Ministers Conference?

In order to prove that the Democratic Party is to the Right of the Administration because it champions continuation of the main features of the cold war, one would have to prove that the Administration is motivated by a policy of putting an end to the cold war. And who in his right mind would dare defend such a proposition?

It must be said frankly that such views have penetrated into the ranks of our own Party and hamper both the fight for peace and the fight for a correct coalition policy. In the first place such views would bring us into head-on collision with the labor movement which is more united than ever before in its history against the GOP and its Cadillac Cabinet

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against the complete domination of our government by Big Business. Whatever illusions there may be among the mass of workers as a result of Eisenhower's demagoguery on peace, they just don't want to entrust the affairs of our country to the tycoons of Wall Street who are trying to weaken, undermine and shackle the trade unions. They see very clearly—even if some of our comrades and certain forces on the Left do not—the interrelationship between foreign and domestic policy, between the fight for peace and the fight against Big Business.

A second area of sharp difference within the main sectors of monopoly is over *limitations of the "positions-of-strength" policy.*

The Administration's continuing reliance on military "positions of strength" (*i.e.*, the rearmament of Western Germany, the endless multiplication of foreign military bases, the formation of military groupings and alliances, etc.) has led to bankruptcy on the German question, to political defeat in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.

Important sectors of Big Business are increasingly demanding that the "positions of strength" policy be modified (although not entirely abandoned) because in the light of the Geneva renunciation of atomic war these purely military "positions of strength" have increasingly begun to lose their effectiveness. As against the Administration's complete and sole reliance on massive armaments plus military alliances, these forces

propose the simultaneous development of extensive economic programs along the lines of a Marshall Plan for Asia and Africa.

While this difference extends into both parties, the tendency is for the Democratic Party high command to make this question a programmatic point of differences with the Administration in relation to Point 4, *i.e.*, a Marshall Plan for Asia and Africa.

A third area of sharp differences concerns the *embargo against East-West trade.*

One of the pillars of the cold war is the embargo on trade with the Socialist world. Hence the great importance of serious breakaways in the ranks of monopoly on this question under the impact of economic necessities. This is how we must estimate the plea of Senator George, speaking for the Southern textile interests, to scrap the U. S. imposed boycott on trade between occupied Japan and China in order to relieve southern textile interests from pressure of Japanese competition in this industry. Likewise sections of the big farming interests in our country are pressing for trade with the Soviet Union as an important contribution to the problem of farm surpluses, especially cotton, wheat, pork, etc.

The bankruptcy of cold war policy in one sphere after another is bound to cause increasing differences among varying sectors of monopoly capital which see realistically the need for

reappraisals and readjustments of policy.

Without in any way relying upon these differences, but rather relying on its own strength, the people's movement must learn how to take these differences into account and utilize them in various forms in the fight to advance its own independent policy.

### THE PEACE CAMP

The main driving force in the peace camp is the mass of people, in the first place, the working class and its allies, the farmers and the Negro people. But this camp also includes certain elements of Big Business which are moving in the direction of a policy of peaceful coexistence.

The objectives of the peace camp are to defend and implement the Geneva conference, to advance from Geneva to the actual settlement of differences on disarmament, Germany, Far East trade and cultural exchanges. In brief, the objective of the peace camp is to advance from "armed truce" to peaceful coexistence.

Although these forces are decisive and powerful, they are not yet organized, united or crystallized. They have as yet no authoritative spokesmen in the public arena.

An examination of the level of the organized peace movement in our country is beyond the scope of this report.

In my remarks, I want to confine myself to certain aspects of the role

of the *labor movement and the Negro people in the fight for peace.*

### THE LABOR MOVEMENT

A proper estimate of the role of the labor movement in the fight for peace is often obscured by an abstract approach to what it is that constitutes the fight for peace.

The fight for peace is often one-sidedly identified with the fight on foreign policy issues.

But, for example, the fight against McCarthy was essentially a fight not *only* for civil liberties. It was a most decisive aspect of the fight for peace, because it was directed against the most rabid proponents of war and the bitter-end enemies of a policy of peaceful coexistence. To the degree that labor participated in this fight, it objectively contributed to the struggle for peace.

Likewise, for example, the stubborn struggle of the trade unions to defend and advance their economic interests through their fight for higher wages, for social security, for public works programs, tax cuts, etc., brings labor objectively into collision with those who advocate guns instead of butter, and even with those who demagogically advocate guns and butter.

Any approach to the involvement of the trade unions in the fight for peace at the present stage of development, which does not take as its starting point the proposition that the trade unions, in the first place, concern themselves with the defense

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and advancement of the economic conditions of the working class is doomed to failure. And that is one of the reasons why we have failed to register greater success in this—because in life we have not grasped this fact and made it at all times our starting point, working out the issues and forms of struggle through which the 16 million members of the trade-union movement and their families can be drawn into the struggle for peace and for peaceful co-existence.

There is often a tendency to clobber our trade-union forces who are pre-occupied with questions of the direct economic struggle. We dismiss their problems by the convenient characterization, "economist"—a much abused term used against much abused comrades. But whoever among them are "economists" will not be swayed by clobbering or characterization. As for the overwhelming majority, it is simply not true that they are "economist." They are militant, class conscious Communists—but they have problems! And, if the truth be told, they also have a lot of answers too! The fact of the matter is that there is very little "pure and simple" trade unionism in our country any more. The trade unions are in politics up to their necks and they concern themselves with all questions—foreign policy, civil liberties, civil rights, etc.

But if in the present period, we want to move millions of workers into the fight for peace, our starting point must not be some idealized

fantasy but the actual level at which we find the workers today. And apart from moments when the issue of peace or war erupts explosively and unmistakably, as on the occasion of the Quemoy-Matsu resolution in the Senate, or in the Indo-China crisis, the mass of workers, talking in terms of millions, will be moved most effectively when the starting point is the economic impact upon their lives of the present foreign policy of monopoly capital.

Take the fight for disarmament, one of the most crucial and decisive issues of foreign policy today. The policy of "armed truce" or "stalemate" rests upon the bedrock of a massive armaments program which is supported by all sectors of monopoly. The labor-endorsed Democrats are among the staunchest defenders of this armaments program. Their aggressive position is spurred by the pressure of aviation and munitions lobbies operating within the Democratic high command as well as by the widespread conception of millions of workers that their jobs depend on this armaments program, an illusion energetically fostered by the Right-wing labor reformists.

While general propaganda for disarmament is extremely necessary and important and will result in moving sections of the advanced workers, it will have little effect upon the millions at the present moment, taking all factors into consideration. When we talk in terms of millions, then we talk in terms of learning from experience and not from discussions

and propaganda. What is the experience which will lead them to an understanding of the need to fight for disarmament?

1) It is the experience of the struggle to cut taxes. The workers (as the people generally) want taxes cut. They are fighting and ready to fight even harder for big cuts in taxes. It is in the course of such a struggle that they will begin to understand that taxes cannot be substantially cut unless the arms appropriations are cut.

2) It is the experience of fighting for an extensive social welfare program to build schools, public housing, parks, highways, hospitals and systems of socialized medicine. They are fighting for this and ready to fight even harder. In such a struggle they will begin to understand that in spite of the demagoguery of the Meanys, it is impossible to have both guns and butter.

3) It is the experience of fighting for more jobs through opening trade with the Socialist world, and through the elaboration of vast programs for mutually beneficial economic aid to the colonies and undeveloped countries of Asia and Africa and Latin America without strings attached. In such a struggle they will learn that they do not have to build jet-bombers or tanks to have jobs at which to work, and that the armaments program is not essential in order to get work, that there can be jobs in a peace-time economy.

While the foregoing approach must be primary with the labor movement, we must at all times be con-

cerned with the problems of involving the trade unions directly in the nation-wide debate on the direct and specific questions of foreign policy—disarmament, Germany, negotiations, European security, China, etc. One of the less desirable features of the trade-union movement at the present moment is a tradition that such questions are acted on only in periods when conventions are being prepared and held. We must not let this tradition inhibit us in our work, confident in the knowledge that it will no doubt be eliminated in the period ahead on a general scale just as it has already been eliminated in a number of more advanced unions.

In any event, there is one important exception to this tradition—presidential election campaign periods like the one which has already begun. It is already clear that the next eleven months will be a period of the most intense labor-political action in a number of decades.

The trade unions will be up to their ears in political action—judging candidates, platforms, parties, mobilizing for registration, distributing literature, visiting candidates and inviting candidates, etc. It will be a period of great political activity, ferment and debate in the trade unions stimulated by the merger of CIO and AFL which is taking place simultaneously with our conference. Under these conditions, the workers expect and will insist on discussion of the direct questions of foreign policy which the nation as a whole is debating. The forms through which such discussion will take place

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will no doubt be legion—discussions on “yardsticks” by which to measure candidates; questionnaires to parties and candidates; political action conferences; congressional district conferences; debates, symposia, “Volunteers for Stevenson,” or “Kefauver clubs,” etc.

This must be a year then in which these unusual possibilities for reaching the ear of the masses are fully utilized.

In the struggle to move the trade unions into an effective fight for a policy of peaceful coexistence we must, of course, contend with the fact that, by and large, the official leadership of the AFL-CIO opposes such a policy, that most of this leadership is attempting to keep the trade union movement tied to the foreign policies of the monopolists.

While this is generally true, it would be wrong to lump the entire trade-union leadership into one category and make an undifferentiated characterization of its policy. From a tactical standpoint it is very important to grasp the distinctions which exist in the policies of various sectors of the top leadership of the unions. It will not help us to orient ourselves in the solution of our tactical problems if we undertake simply to separate sheep and goats, to assign forces, currents, trends, individuals to oversimplified positions in a Right wing, a Left wing and a center grouping on questions of foreign policy—although such general groupings are very important.

For example, without attempting

the detailed examination which we must make, it is possible to note at least the following distinctions in the policy of different sectors of the trade-union leadership on questions of foreign policy. In making these distinctions it must be borne in mind that they are based on attitude to foreign policy questions and not on many other considerations which also would be necessary if we were to make an exact and definitive analysis of the main currents and trends in the labor movement. For this, additional considerations would have to be weighed as, for example, policy on economic questions, civil liberties, attitude to the Left, etc.

#### THE MEANY POSITION

This articulates the position of the A.F.L. Executive Council—an amalgam of “business unionism,” Beck-Gray Republicanism, extreme Right-wing Social Democracy and Catholic clericalism. It is an open and brazen reflection in labor’s ranks of the policies of the dominant and controlling circles of Big Business—huge armaments, “armed truce,” cold war, negotiations only from “positions of strength,” no settlements, active struggle to refurbish the Big Lie, uncompromising hostility to peaceful coexistence. Since this policy is filtered through a trade-union prism, Meany wants all this and a little butter too.

#### THE REUTHER POSITION

Reuther reflects the main essentials of Big Business foreign policy.

But his policy must be differentiated from that of Meany. While Reuther carries on an aggressive anti-Soviet and anti-Communist struggle, he gives mild approval to negotiations, heavy emphasis on winning the cold war through raising living standards at home and Point 4 programs abroad, as well as opposition to colonialism.

#### THE RIEVE-POTOFSKY-GORMAN POSITION

This departs in many respects from the crassly reactionary Meany policy. It reflects the general position of ADA, *i.e.*, a positive attitude to disarmament; rejection of the policy of negotiation from positions of strength; support to negotiated settlement of certain differences, particularly unification of Germany and normalization of relations with China; opposition to colonialism; comprehensive Point 4 programs; ending the trade embargo; encouragement of exchange of delegations with the Soviet Union. Within this general grouping, of course, some forces take a more advanced position than others and even fight for their position, as in the case of Gorman's polemic with Meany.

#### THE LEFT WING

These base themselves squarely on the fight for peaceful coexistence between the two systems and the advocacy of friendship with the Socialist world.

I repeat again that these distinctions are not necessarily definitive. We need much more discussion and

analysis for that. Nor should such differentiations lead to a mechanical effort to fit this or that trade unionist into this or that category. My only purpose in advancing such tentative characterizations is to call attention to the very visible process of differentiation going on in the labor movement, to indicate the need for a very concrete approach to various currents in the trade-union movement as the basis for elaborating appropriate tactics for united front or parallel activities.

#### NEGRO PEOPLE AND FIGHT FOR PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

As with the labor movement, so with the Negro people we must guard against an abstract, mechanical and formal approach in the fight for peace.

The Negro people exerts considerable strength in the fight for peace, especially in the context of its most direct and immediate concern—the fight for civil rights.

Not since the Civil War and Reconstruction has the struggle of the Negro people for equal rights reverberated with the impact it has today. Not since that period has the fight for equal rights been placed so squarely as a means for making a qualitatively new democratic advance in our country.

The Negro people, allied with the labor movement as well as growing democratic white forces in the South, is locked in mortal combat with one of the most evil political forces in the life of our country today—the

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Southern Dixiecrats. In the early thirties, the struggle of the working people against unemployment and for organization of the mass production industries led to great victories achieved at a heavy price. We remember Steve Katovis, Harry Sims, Joe York, the martyrs of the embarcadero in San Francisco's general strike, the victims of the Memorial Day Massacre. The epic struggle of the Negro people today likewise costs dearly. It has already produced its victims, its martyrs, its heroes, like Emmett Till, Rev. Lee, Lamar Smith, Gus Courts, Rev. Delaine and innumerable others—members of the embattled NAACP in a hundred obscure villages and towns and counties in the deep south. It is time, Comrades, that we who remember as well the struggles we led in Camp Hill salute the heroic leadership which the NAACP is giving to this farflung struggle in the heart-land of Dixiecrat racism. The NAACP in the South is leading a struggle against an implacable and ruthless enemy which is in rebellion against the Constitution and which does not hesitate to kidnap, lynch, cripple and assassinate. We must support the NAACP in this struggle with every ounce of energy at our disposal.

The ferocity and cruelty with which the Dixiecrats are waging this struggle exhibits many new qualitative features. And it inadvertently testifies to the magnitude of the political consequences which hinge upon the outcome of this struggle. In its deepest sense, this struggle is for the completion of the major un-

finished task of the Civil War—the democratization of the South.

There can be no successful effort to involve great masses of the Negro people in the fight for peace which does not take this struggle as its starting point and which does not grasp the significance of this struggle for the fight for peace. Who can fail to appreciate what it would mean to the fight for peace if the Negro people in the South won the right to vote, and together with their white allies, began to put an end to the self-perpetuating Dixiecrat bloc in Congress? Who can fail to appreciate what must be the response among Negro people, bleeding and dying in the fight for free elections in Mississippi, to Dulles' call for free elections in Germany?

The second specific aspect of Negro peoples participation in the fight for peace is the special importance of the struggle against colonialism. The Bandung Conference echoed widely in all Negro communities. Every action of the U. S. delegation to the U.N. which helps prop up the tottering colonial empires of Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands calls forth deep indignation and angry protest from masses of Negro people. The struggle of the underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa to build up their economies, eliminate poverty, disease and illiteracy evokes widespread response among the Negro people. As a result vast possibilities exist to enlist the mass of Negro people in the mounting struggle to reverse the Dulles policy of military alliance in

the Middle East and South Asia and substitute for it a policy of national freedom and peaceful coexistence and a vast plan of economic assistance, without strings, to the underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa.

It is along this path that the Negro people are prepared to move actively and energetically. Around these issues, the broadest unity can be built in the Negro community. And it is against this background that the tremendous demonstrations of friendship for the Soviet Union in the course of the Bulganin-Krushchev tour in India will have a maximum influence among the Negro people.

### CONCLUSION

In advancing the fight to realize the promise of Geneva, to end the cold war, to bring about an era of peaceful coexistence, the people of our country will be called upon to face up to and resolve many issues of foreign policy. The most important of these have already been indicated in this report. From time to time, one or another of them may surge to the fore as the central issue of the moment. We must be alert at all times to such changing situations, to those great moments of history when the international situation, as well as the relation of forces at home, taken together with the mood of the masses, catapult a single great issue into the arena of struggle for solution and decision.

At the same time, the fight for peace calls for a determination at

this moment of the issues which constitute *now* the chief links which must be grasped in order to pull the whole chain of events forward. This requires that we single out for major attention and activity the following: the fight for disarmament; the fight to restore normal trade relations between our country and the Socialist world; the fight for a policy of large-scale economic aid, without strings, to the so-called "underdeveloped" countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America; the fight to get the trade unions of our country to send a labor delegation to the Soviet Union. Around these issues, wide movements of united and parallel action can be built and expanded until victory is won.

The Communist Party has a vital and decisive role to play in helping these movements unfold and reach their objectives. As we plunge into the epoch-making struggles ahead of us, let us never forget the important role our Party played over the past years in the fight for peace. From the very beginning our Party fought for an end to the cold war, for the negotiation of East-West differences, for peaceful coexistence. Because we did so, our Party was attacked, its leaders arrested, tried and imprisoned. But history has vindicated us. What we fought for has come to pass: a negotiated settlement of the Korean war, renunciation of the threat of atomic world war, Big Power negotiations. What we fight for now will also come to pass. For inscribed on our banners is the watchword of millions—Peace.

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# The '56 Elections

By Albert E. Blumberg

Presidential election years are usually periods of mass political ferment. This will especially be true of '56. For the coming elections will take place against the background of unprecedented new developments. These include the historic Geneva conference of heads of state and the mass desire for the fulfillment of the promise of Geneva; the AFL-CIO merger and the urgent need to throw united labor's new potential into battle against the Cadillac Cabinet's mounting drive on labor's rights and conditions; the rise of militant mass movements among labor's main natural allies—the Negro people and the farmers—against racist terror and against the ravages of the farm crisis.

The Left and progressive forces therefore see the '56 elections—with all their complications and peculiarities—as an exceptional and challenging opportunity to carry on mass political activity. Such political activity does not regard elections as ends in themselves. Rather, its aims are to help:

a) Win victories in the labor and people's struggle for their most pressing needs—peace, economic well-being, equal rights for the Negro people, and civil liberties.

b) Strengthen the independent political action of labor and its allies, with a view to a political realignment leading towards a labor-farmer, anti-monopoly party.

c) Increase the role and contributions of the Left, including the Marxists, as an essential factor in the further growth of the people's democratic coalition.

## THE KEY TO '56

The key to achieving these general aims in the specific conditions presented by the coming elections—the key to '56—is to be found in the two great political currents which today exist among the masses in our country. These are:

1) The broad popular sentiment and movement for Geneva, for an end to the cold war and for peaceful coexistence.

2) The movement of labor, the farmers, the Negro people, the small businessmen and professionals, and large sections of women and youth, against the Cadillac Cabinet and the GOP-Dixiecrat alliance in Congress—given new impetus by the powerful upsurge of the Negro people and their supporters against racist terror.

*The central problem posed by the*

'56 elections is how to strengthen both currents and more and more to relate and merge them in the course of the campaign. For clearly, no movement for Geneva can acquire the necessary vitality unless labor and its allies increasingly provide its mass base and leadership. Likewise, labor and its allies need to see that they cannot gain the necessary and possible measure of success in the fight against the Cadillac Cabinet unless the struggle for Geneva becomes a growing feature of their political action.

A sound electoral policy for progressives—a policy which seeks to strengthen, relate and merge the pro-Geneva and anti-Cadillac Cabinet mass currents—requires first that the objectives for '56 be clearly and properly determined. From the outset it is necessary to put the labor and people's fight to oust the Cadillac Cabinet in the context of the main movements on issues. Moreover, in view of the fact that Big Business controls both parties nationally, it is necessary to put this fight on a basis which rejects any position of support for the Democratic Party as such.

With this in mind, the '56 electoral objectives can be formulated as follows:

1) *To help organize a movement for democratic unity and varied electoral coalitions which express the popular majority's desires: For a peaceful coexistence and universal disarmament; for prosperity for the masses; for an end to racist terror, segregation and all forms of oppres-*

*sion of the Negro people; for the restoration of the Bill of Rights and the repeal of all thought-control legislation. To help build democratic-labor mass movements and electoral alliances capable of influencing the course of the elections and of exerting increasing pressure upon the Administration and Congress which will be elected in '56.*

2) *Within this context, to join with labor, the farmers, the Negro people, the small businessmen and the professionals, the women and the youth in their efforts to oust the reactionary Cadillac Cabinet and to make substantial inroads upon the GOP-Dixiecrat majority in Congress. In so doing, progressives should:*

a) Make clear that this formidable task cannot be fulfilled if the Democratic Party policies, platform and ticket are dominated by the Johnson-Rayburn line of "party unity" with the Dixiecrats and collaboration with the Cadillac Cabinet, or by the Harriman-Truman line of attacking Geneva—or for that matter by the vacillations and retreats of Adlai Stevenson.

b) Urge the labor and people's movement to intervene independently and unitedly at all levels of legislative and political struggle, acting in concert with and influencing the healthiest pro-peace, pro-labor, pro-civil rights elements and groupings in and around both parties, especially the Democratic Party.

c) Reject sectarian proposals for a third party or Presidential ticket in '56, while pressing the need for a

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political realignment and the eventual establishment of a broad anti-monopoly party, based on the labor movement and its allies.

3) *To help challenge the reactionary anti-labor GOP-Dixiecrat majority in Congress.* This means that labor and the people should:

a) Concentrate on the defeat of confirmed opponents of Geneva, especially the McCarthyites in both parties, thus carrying forward the process initiated in the '54 elections.

b) Couple this with an ever sharper fight against the representatives of the aggressively reactionary Dulles-Nixon-Brownell forces who dominate the GOP, and against their Dixiecrat and other reactionary Democratic allies.

c) Elect a substantial number of representatives drawn directly from the ranks of the unions.

d) Make major advances in the fight for Negro representation, corresponding to the new level of Negro-white struggle against lynching and racism, by ensuring breakthroughs in a number of selected Congressional districts.

e) Elect a bloc of liberal pro-labor, pro-civil rights spokesmen for peaceful negotiations and coexistence, including a number of resolute progressives—taking fully into account the new possibilities following Geneva.

#### THE ISSUES

The strengthening and merging of the two currents, and the attainment of the '56 objectives, require that the

issues and movements of struggle on the issues be kept to the fore at all times. If this is not done, disorientation will set in at every political twist and turn as '56 approaches. Labor and the people will be unable to cope with such developments as Nixon's attempt to move in on the presidency following Eisenhower's illness, the Harriman-Truman attacks on Geneva, or the evasion of the civil rights issue by the presidential contenders.

This emphasis on issues, however, in no way means that labor and the people should abstain from the struggles around candidates. On the contrary, such struggles are a major means of advancing the issues, provided they are conducted on the basis of issues and with a view to influencing the position of the candidates.

How then do the issues for '56 shape up?

The historic Geneva Conference ushered in the beginning of a *new stage* in the struggle for peaceful coexistence and for an end to the cold war. The new stage now unfolding inaugurates a whole period of major power negotiations. This will profoundly effect every aspect of the '56 elections. Ever wider sections of the American people will ask that the promise of Geneva in its broadest sense be fulfilled. They will call for an end to the cold war abroad and at home, for an end to war budgets and war hysteria. They will demand programs of social advance based on a Bill of Rights and constitutional guarantees for all.

*What will determine the outcome in '56 will be this struggle—how it develops, how it is reflected in the legislative and electoral arenas, how labor and its allies take hold of this new situation.*

#### FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

Between now and '56 major issues of foreign policy will come to the fore in a new way—German unification and European security, disarmament and the banning of nuclear weapons, East-West trade and exchange, the admission of China to the UN, colonial liberation and aid to undeveloped countries with no strings attached.

The people's fight to end the cold war and curb the war-mongers will have to cope with the increased open resistance of the Knowlands and McCarthys. But it will also have to expose and combat the policy of Dulles and his Democratic bi-partisan supporters.

At the summit conference, Dulles was forced to lay aside the threat of atomic war. He now seeks, as at the October Geneva meeting of Foreign Ministers, to frustrate peaceful settlements by keeping negotiations within the confines of Wall Street's present policy. This is a limited *modus vivendi*, a "cold peace" which retains most of the chief features of the cold war, and behind which monopoly capital presses its program of world domination.

*The Eisenhower-Dulles Administration thus pursues a two-faced*

*course. Even as it exploits Geneva for partisan purposes, it tries to dampen the spirit of Geneva. It conducts negotiations from rigid positions that preclude agreement. And the stand of most national Democratic spokesmen serves to cover up this double-dealing.*

But a determined popular struggle in the course of '56 can win new gains for peace. The conscious peace forces must utilize the differences between and within the major parties. Above all, they must help rally all pro-peace elements of the population, following the October Geneva meeting, to demand both that the Administration recede from its fixed position on the key foreign policy questions (Germany, disarmament, etc.) and undertake new negotiations in a spirit of give-and-take, and that the Democrats reject the anti-Geneva line of the Harrimans and Trumans.

#### WELFARE, NOT WARFARE

Regardless of the immediate development of the economic cycle, economic issues will be a major factor in the '56 campaign. With production now exceeding the '53 peak, the GOP will claim credit for "prosperity" as well as peace in the post-Geneva world. But this claim will be challenged and economic issues will take on a *new* urgency for several reasons.

a) The present economic picture is very uneven. Labor can well ask: Prosperity for whom? Corporate profits are breaking all records. But the farm crisis grows more acute,

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its effects on the farmers aggravated by the Cadillac Cabinet's action in cutting farm-income supports. Inflation is setting in, unemployment persists, a number of areas are in a chronic depression. Conditions worsen for farmers, unemployed, youth, certain sectors of labor, especially the Negro people and certain minority groups, and small business.

b) The crisis factors within the present "boom" (credit expansion, impact of automation, declining exports) are such that the likely early leveling-off of production—not to speak of a downturn—would quickly have serious effects on jobs and conditions. Job security continues to be a key issue.

c) *The post-Geneva situation demands a new peace-time economic program that will tackle the critical social needs—schools, homes, hospitals, roads, flood control—sacrificed to the cold war budgets of the past ten years.*

These pressing questions provide a new basis for labor-farmer-Negro unity against the Administration and the official Democratic Congressional leadership. They provide the means for winning broader support for peace through a peace-time economic program; for promoting a Democratic regrouping directed against the Dixiecrats and ultra-conservatives.

The vital need is for a labor and popular movement, deriving new strength from the AFL-CIO merger, which will develop and fight for a program of job, farm income and union security, human and social

welfare, equal rights for all, and East-West trade cooperation. Such a movement, however, will be built not alone by projecting the necessary programs for '56, but also by immediate attention to developing broad anti-monopoly coalitions on the key economic issues that will come before the new session of Congress (and the State legislatures), such as tax-cuts, farm income guarantees, education and housing.

### THE NEGRO PEOPLE

The powerful mass protest movement against the Till murder and the growing lynch terror in Mississippi raises the anti-segregation and national liberation struggles of the Negro people and their allies to a new level and projects the civil rights issue as a key factor in the '56 elections.

The Dixiecrat rebellion against the Constitution, symbolized in the barbarous killing of a Negro child, is a world scandal in this day of Bandung and Geneva. But the Eisenhower-Brownell Administration, which nationally bears the heaviest responsibility for the failure to enforce the Supreme Court de-segregation decision, refuses to lift a finger against the new Dixiecrat terror.

The urgent task, of profound significance for the course of the '56 elections, is to beat back this rebellion and make new advances toward full equality for the Negro people. This requires a *nation-wide non-partisan crusade, which will:*

a) compel Eisenhower and the Federal Government to intervene at once to stop the terror;

b) compel the new session of Congress, despite Eisenhower and the Democratic Congressional leadership, to enact a series of civil rights measures—an anti-lynching law; legislation to guarantee to the Negro people the right to vote; Rep. Diggs' widely-supported proposal to challenge the seating of Mississippi Congressmen on the basis of the XIV Amendment (Sec.2) to the Constitution; anti-segregation provisions in all social legislation; Federal FEPC; etc.

Labor's leading role in such a crusade is the key to winning civil rights victories and strengthening the working alliance between labor and the Negro people for '56. That such a role is possible today is indicated by the UAW endorsement of the NAACP call to a Civil Rights mobilization in Washington after Congress reconvenes in January.

This crusade is a key to defeating the GOP-Dixiecrat reactionary majority in Congress and stopping the Democratic Party policy of sacrificing the labor and people's economic and social program on the altar of "party unity" with the Dixiecrats. It is a key to organizing the unorganized workers in the South, and, in fraternal alliance with the farmers and the right-to-vote movement of the Negro people, to challenging the power of the Dixiecrats on their home ground.

#### RESTORATION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS FOR ALL

The easing of international tensions following Geneva gives a new dimension to the mass trend against McCarthyism expressed in '54. As the '56 elections approach, the blows dealt the big lies of "a Communist menace" and "inevitable war" create new conditions for going over to that counter-offensive on the civil liberties front which the CIO called for in December, 1954.

This counter-offensive is vitally necessary. True, the McCarthyite fog is slowly being rolled back as evidenced by certain partial civil liberties victories in the courts and by the hearings of the Henning Committee. But the Administration and the Eastlands and Walters are stepping up their anti-labor McCarthyite attacks in preparation for the elections. Witness the Taft-Hartley indictment of the UAW, the Communist Control Act proceeding against the Mine-Mill Union, the growing use of anti-labor injunctions, new Congressional witch hunts, continued Smith Act prosecutions.

Mass campaigns on a new broad level are needed to defeat the Business-GOP-Dixiecrat plot to cripple labor, McCarranize the unions and outlaw the Community Party. New possibilities do exist. This is shown by the action of the prominent citizens who filed an *amicus* brief against the McCarran Internal Security Act in the Court

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*The decisive factor is to link the key civil liberties struggles with united labor's growing need to defend its political and economic rights and with the mass movement of the Negro people and their white allies for civil rights.* This will lay the basis for making restoration of the Bill of Rights and the repeal of thought-control legislation a major issue in '56.

So much for the principal issues. What remains is to warn against a one-sided, mechanical posing and counter-posing of issues which can only impede the growth and merger of the pro-Geneva and anti-Cadillac Cabinet currents.

Thus, some interpret the position that peace is the decisive issue to mean that economic questions will fade into the background in '56. But the fact of the matter is that economic issues, far from being relegated, will arise in new important ways, as in the growing demands for a peace-time economy, tax-cuts, a welfare budget not a war budget. The same is true of civil liberties and civil rights.

Some take the position to mean that peace cancels out all considerations of tactical approach. But there can be no effective struggle for peace unless, along with the development of movements on the main questions of foreign policy, the relation of Geneva to the most immediate economic, civil rights and other issues is spelled out concretely in the

course of struggle on these issues.

Others, reacting against one-sided posing of the peace question, go to the other extreme. They subordinate this issue—whether under the illusion that Geneva settled all, or because they believe that Dulles and the bi-partisans can keep peace out of '56. This, of course, is not the case. When the Gallup Poll (Nov. 19) asked voters what they regarded as the main issue for '56, the result showed: 42%-foreign policy, peace; 8%-farm; 7%-taxes.

#### THE SITUATION IN THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES

An electoral policy for '56 requires, further, an approach to the struggles and groupings in the two old parties which takes into account labor's present political ties and political level. What is the situation in the two old parties? What are some of the tactical conclusions to be drawn so far as the political action of labor and its allies are concerned?

The illness of President Eisenhower, and the likelihood that he will not be a candidate in '56, has created a new fluidity in the political situation vitally affecting both parties as well as the labor and people's forces. The GOP had based its whole campaign outlook on the re-election of Eisenhower under the slogan of "peace and prosperity." So, for that matter, had the Lyndon Johnson-Southern bloc in the Democratic Party. The Democrats were given little chance of winning the presi-

gency. The labor and people's forces were up against very great odds in seeking the ouster of the Eisenhower Administration.

Even before Geneva, the Eisenhower wing of the GOP, representing the main sections of monopoly capital, had exploited the new peace and economic developments to consolidate their position vis-a-vis the McCarthy wing. Eisenhower retrieved his popularity loss, and, following Geneva, reached a new high.

The Democratic Party continued, as in '56, to have overwhelming support among labor and Negro voters and growing support among farmers. Yet even before Geneva, Eisenhower in Gallup polls, ran farther ahead of Stevenson, strongest Democratic contender, than in '52.

Alleging the "invulnerability" of Eisenhower, the Democratic Congressional leadership (Johnson-Rayburn) had written off the presidential elections. Their policy was to keep the status quo — with Eisenhower in the White House and a Democratic congress again led by anti-labor, anti-Negro Southern conservatives in alliance with the GOP and the Dixiecrats.

The various groupings of labor-supported Democrats (Harriman-Truman, Stevenson, Kefauver, Humphrey) having themselves contributed to the Johnson-Rayburn line of *bi-partisan support to Eisenhower and "party unity" with the Dixiecrats*, were face to face with its electoral consequences. They were paying the way for a repetition, Ameri-

can style, of the Tory victory in Britain.

Even before Eisenhower's illness some significant opposition to the Johnson-Rayburn line within the Democratic Party had become evident. On the peace issue there was the campaign against the Eisenhower-Dulles policy on Quemoy-Matsu (Morse, Lehman, Kefauver and, belatedly, Stevenson), the Stevenson Oberlin College speech of June 13 urging a give-and-take policy on negotiations, the eve of Geneva speeches of a group of 30-odd labor-endorsed Democratic Congressmen. Moreover, sharp criticism of the betrayal of the labor-people's legislative program had begun on specific issues early in June (ADA, AFL, IAM, NAACP.) With it had come the first signs of a revolt against the leadership (the Civil Rights bloc around Powell, now formally organized on a bi-partisan basis following the Till murder).

Nevertheless, labor and its allies, especially after Geneva, at best faced an uphill fight for their '56 objectives.

Eisenhower's illness has had diversified and contradictory political consequences.

1) *The labor and people's forces confront new dangers arising from the efforts of the most conservative and reactionary forces in both parties to use the new fluid situation to strengthen their positions.*

In the GOP, the fascist-minded Nixon is bidding for the mantle of Eisenhower, and the Knowlands and McCarthys have become more ag-

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gressive. The nomination of an "Eisenhowerized" Nixon, supported by the Dulles-Brownell forces, is a real threat. He leads Warren in polls for the Republican nomination. And he is of course party to the ghoulish plot to have the ailing Eisenhower run again with Nixon ready to take over.

With the Democratic prospects brighter, Lyndon Johnson is moving to consolidate a reactionary southern and border state bloc to dominate the party platform and campaign. Meanwhile, among the labor-endorsed Democrats, Truman and Harriman combine a "Fair Deal" domestic program with a dangerous anti-Geneva policy.

2) While many new possibilities are opened up for labor and the people to meet these dangers, the blow suffered by the GOP (and the Democratic gains in the November, 1955, elections) in no way assures victory for a labor-supported Democratic ticket. Thus, the latest Gallup polls show:

a) The first indications of a post-Geneva gain for the GOP, and this among working-class and union voters;

b) that even a Nixon runs ahead of Harriman (49%-47%), while Stevenson's lead over Nixon has declined from 21 percentage points (56%-35%) in the spring to 6 percentage points in mid-November (50%-44%).

c) That Justice Warren, who in the spring ran even with Stevenson, now beats him by a considerable

margin (52%-45%) and would have strong appeal to many labor, Negro and other voters deeply concerned with civil liberties and civil rights issues.

3) There can be little doubt that the rise in GOP showing in polls reflects the ability of the GOP to capitalize on Geneva in the face of the anti-Geneva line of Harriman and Truman, and the vacillations of Stevenson.

With Stevenson favored for the nomination (but Harriman strong with big city machine, clerical and Right-wing Social Democratic forces) prospects for ousting the Cadillac Cabinet and influencing the nomination of a pro-labor and pro-peace Democratic ticket still hinge on whether popular pressure can compel the labor-supported Democrats to do two things:

1) To take a positive stand on Geneva, for continued negotiations on a give-and-take basis, East-West trade, a peace-time program of economic and social gains;

2) to fight in the January session of Congress for anti-lynching and other civil rights legislation, tax-cuts, Taft-Hartley repeal, farm income guarantees and the like.

To help achieve such pressure, progressives need to adopt a concrete differentiated tactical approach, aimed at establishing the maximum of ties with labor's political activity. The chief features of such an approach include:

1) *To continue to direct the sharp-est fire against the most reactionary*

*GOP forces, the McCarthys and Knowlands, and against their Democratic counterparts, the Eastlands and Walters. These forces have become more aggressive since Eisenhower's illness. They are widely hated as anti-Geneva and anti-labor.*

2) *Simultaneously, to urge an all-out struggle against the reactionary anti-labor Dulles-Brownell-Cadillac Cabinet grouping in the GOP from whom the sinister Nixon seeks support either as presidential candidate or as vice-presidential running mate to an ailing Eisenhower.* In the Democratic Party such fire must be directed at the Lyndon Johnsons who, scenting new prospects of Democratic victory, are trying to consolidate a reactionary anti-labor, anti-Negro bloc of Southern and border states in order to dominate the Democratic Party platform and ticket in '56.

3) *Within the labor-endorsed sectors of the Democratic Party, and in the context of the above, to single out the anti-Geneva position of the Harriman-Truman group for sharpest criticism and opposition.*

This does not mean that they are McCarthys or Knowlands. But it does mean that unless they are rebuffed, the other leading labor-influenced presidential contenders, like Stevenson and Kefauver, will continue to retreat on the peace issue, thus further endangering labor's '56 objectives.

4) *To direct maximum pressure towards influencing the peace and other positions of both the Stevenson*

*and Kefauver forces.* This requires a differentiated approach in the various states. It must be borne in mind that in the absence of any substantial programmatic differences between them as of now, there is a certain danger of disunity among their labor supporters, which would play into the hands of a Harriman.

5) *To take full account of the developing critical trend in and around the Democratic Party, exemplified in the ADA and NY Post (and with ties to the UAW and other labor forces).* This trend not only is critical of the Lyndon Johnsons in Congress, but as in the recent ADA National Board meeting and several *Post* editorials, calls on the Democrats to support a generally positive attitude on Geneva. It outspokenly condemns the betrayal of the Democrats on civil rights.

The growth of this trend indicates that Left-progressives are not alone in pointing to the main requirements for winning labor's political objectives in '56. The growth of this trend can be a major element in influencing the labor movement itself.

#### LABOR'S INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION

The decisive factor in strengthening and merging the pro-Geneva and anti-Cadillac Cabinet trends is of course the labor movement itself. Labor, entering a new stage with the AFL-CIO merger, continues to be predominantly anti-GOP. As the sweeping Democratic victories in the November municipal elections in

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Indiana demonstrate, this is heightened by the mounting GOP attacks on the unions (the Perfect Circle strike-breaking, Senator Goldwater's demand for the virtual disenfranchisement of labor, The Wisconsin Catlin Act, the UAW indictment). Nor are these attacks offset by the "overtures" to labor of Secretary Mitchell and the GOP "liberals."

The unification of labor is bound to stimulate the anti-Cadillac Cabinet demands and actions of the rank and file. There is in prospect a further marked increase in state legislative activity on such issues as the "Right-to Work" laws, unemployment compensation, FEPC. The beginnings made last year in the minimum wage fight and the Building Trade mass lobby can be greatly extended in the next session of Congress. The merger will create many favorable conditions for big expansions in the work of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education, successor to LLPE and PAC.

But the plain lesson of Geneva is that labor, to avoid serious political setbacks in '56, must also actively enter the fight to end the cold war, restore the Bill of Rights and secure a comprehensive peacetime economy. How does the merger affect the decisive question of winning labor for a positive policy on Geneva?

No one should minimize the new obstacles presented by the anti-Geneva, rabidly anti-Soviet policies of the Meany-Lovestone cabal policies which link up with the Harriman-Truman position and with the clerical

and Right-wing Social Democratic forces. The merger convention resolution on foreign policy is a further warning as is Meany's disgraceful post-convention attacks on neutralism in India and liberalism in the U. S.

What has to be emphasized, however, is that Meany does not speak for the rank and file. They welcome Geneva as averting the immediate threat of atomic war and facilitating a more aggressive fight for increases in the new round of wage struggles in '56. Furthermore, major sections of the leadership have a less negative stand on Geneva (UAW) or, in some instances, a relatively positive attitude (Textile, Butchers, Packing, Clothing, Hotel and Restaurant).

Of prime importance moreover, is the fact that the '56 elections will present exceptional opportunities to raise political questions in the unions—including the key question of peace. For labor, in its campaign against the Cadillac Cabinet, will inevitably have to cope with the problem of GOP peace demagoguery.

With the new perspectives for labor political action, the main need is to strengthen labor's *distinct* political role, activity and organization. At the moment, united labor, with some pro-GOP exceptions, is likely simply to go along with the Democratic Presidential nominee if, as is probable, it is Stevenson or some other labor-endorsed figure. But labor's *independent* intervention, within the framework of broad electoral coalitions and working relationships

with the labor-influenced Democrats, can develop effectively along a number of lines which link up labor's anti-Cadillac Cabinet action with the struggle for Geneva:

1) *Non-partisan mass movements on the main national (and state) legislative issues in the January session.* Such movements must compel the Johnson-Rayburn Democratic leadership to end their sabotage of the labor-people's legislative program in connivance with the GOP and the Dixiecrats. *A central issue is tax-cuts, for this raises the whole question of peace perspectives, cuts in war budgets, welfare needs.* Other immediate issues include Taft-Hartley repeal and the state "Right-to-Work" laws; civil rights; restoration of farm income supports; McCarran-Walter repeal.

2) A non-partisan movement for a labor-people's 1956 peace-time economic program. This program can be pressed upon Presidential and Congressional candidates. *It may be further implemented by a fight for increased labor representation especially in the Democratic Conventions,* if the labor delegates press for labor's position on platforms and candidates.

3) A major concentration on developing coalitions which will guarantee Congressional candidates and programs, in the Southern primaries as well as the Northern, more responsive to the needs of labor and its allies.

4) A substantial increase in trade-union representation in Congress.

5) A national conference of labor, farm, Negro and other liberal forces to consider policy and issues for '56 (as proposed by the '53 and '55 UAW conventions), as well as similar conferences on a Congressional District, city and State scale.

Despite the reluctance of labor's top leaders, recent events make such a national gathering imperative. In addition to the central issue of peace, the new attacks on the unions, the racist terror against the Negro people, the plight of the farmers, and the devastation caused by floods, mean that a *majority* of the people, especially labor's natural allies, find themselves under attack. The most reactionary circles are moving to strengthen their grip on both parties. Labor must take the lead to guarantee that the people are not robbed of any real possibility to make their influence and their desires felt in '56.

6) A rapid build-up of labor's independent political organizations. New opportunities now exist in regard to C.O.P.E. (LLPE-PAC), as well as in regard to other forms, such as labor committees for specific candidates etc.

#### LABOR'S ALLIES

The political action of labor's allies takes on a uniquely important character this year. At one and the same time both of labor's chief allies—the Negro people and the farmers—are under the most savage attack. Their militant mass struggles, especially in the instance of the Negro

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This can be an enormous source of strength to labor's fight against the Cadillac Cabinet, *provided labor grasps the new situation and supports these struggles with a vigor and determination that correspond to the new level of these movements.*

Likewise, the movement for Geneva can achieve new heights if the civil rights and farm issues are properly related to the central issue of peace.

The Negro people in the main continue to work through the Democratic Party, largely due to local gains in representation, and growing ties with labor (Chicago, Philadelphia).

The great struggle against the Dixiecrat terror and segregation, already a major issue in Congress, has sharpened the criticism of the Democratic Party civil rights betrayals. It has also brought new condemnation of Eisenhower and the GOP who offer limited administrative concessions on segregation and discrimination, but openly oppose all civil rights legislation and continue to use the Department of Justice to block the fight for desegregation. It has brought a new understanding of the need for independent political action to such outstanding Negro people's organizations as the NAACP (June convention).

However, unless labor and the liberals can compel the pro-labor Democrats to support a full-fledged civil rights program, there may well be a sharp growth of "a plague on

both your houses" *abstentionism* in registration and voting among the Negro people.

To meet the critical situation confronting the Negro people and to strengthen labor-Negro unity for '56 requires that labor lead a popular crusade for

1) The immediate enactment of anti-lynching and other civil rights legislation, with support to the Powell-Diggs-Roosevelt civil rights bloc and to the Washington Civil Rights Mobilization initiated by the NAACP.

2) New, effective civil rights planks in Party state and national convention platforms.

3) Sharply increased Negro representation in conventions, Congressional and other posts.

As the farm crisis deepens, the revolt against the Cadillac Cabinet grows in the countryside. This is a major factor enhancing the possibility of labor and people's gains in '56. However, the failure of the Democrats to press the fight to restore farm-income supports in the Senate, despite increased labor support for this struggle, retards a more vigorous anti-Administration alignment of farm voters. It permits the GOP to pit farmer against farmer on a regional and crop basis.

A new initiative on the part of labor is needed in support of the main demands of the farmers.

The minimum need in the next session of Congress is to enact HR 12, with strengthening amendments to guarantee 100% parity for all

farm commodities up to the limits of family-type production. This should be supplemented by food stamp and school lunch programs, conservation and flood control measures, removal of barriers to East-West trade.

The '56 struggles on candidates and platforms require a strengthening and broadening of farmer-labor collaboration in every aspect of electoral activity.

Recognizing the important role of youth, the GOP keeps up a heavy demagogic stress on "new blood." At the same time it pushes through a UMT bill and other measures opposed by young people. As a result, the majority of young voters remain anti-GOP and especially anti-Nixon.

As '56 nears, non-partisan movements on youth and general issues are taking shape, and youth interest in political action is growing. But with few exceptions, labor and the pro-labor Democrats still lag in projecting youth programs (such as the 18-year-old vote, recreation and the like) and young candidates.

The stress placed on "family participation" political action programs at the AFL-CIO merger convention indicates a new appreciation of the importance of women voters as well as young people. Women voters and young voters, as the '52 elections showed, are especially sensitive to the peace issue. The urgent need to enlist them in labor's fight against the Cadillac Cabinet will provide special opportunities to bring the question

of Geneva into the mainstream of labor's political action.

### THE FIGHT FOR GREATER UNITY OF THE LEFT

The main tasks of '56 require that much more attention be given to the role of the Left and advanced workers, including the Marxists, and to promoting the unity of action of the various elements and groups of the Left. This urgent question takes on new dimensions as international developments, Geneva, and the partial lifting of the McCarthyite fog stimulate and facilitate the expression of growing Left and Socialist currents in our country.

A number of things are necessary:

- 1) Political unclarity must be overcome and a more effective fight waged against the paralyzing influence of Left-sectarianism, as well as opportunist passivity.

For example, the new factors operating in '56 may be expected to stimulate increased interest in independent political action. But here it is necessary to distinguish two positions:

- 2) There is the third-party-oriented thinking, reflected in some unions, which envisions not a third party in '56, but increased independent labor political organization and activity, including the exertion of greater pressure on the Democratic Party. The strengthening of this trend in the trade unions is vitally important for '56, as well as for the further maturing of labor-farmer party perspectives.

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On the other hand, there is the third-party-in-'56 position of some Left circles. This view, held by some advocates of independent political action, has gained little support. Generally, it is recognized as a sectarian diversion from the mainstream of labor's political action. It is fed, however, by

a) the failure of Left-progressives, at times, to maintain a sufficiently independent and critical attitude to the various groupings in the Democratic Party, including the labor-endorsed Democrats.

b) the absence of adequate independent forms through which advanced political action can make its influence felt today.

c) The failure to develop a more effective struggle for a labor-farmer party.

d) The failure of Marxists to extend their relations with honest Left and socialist-minded forces, leaving the field open to certain Trotskyite elements.

2) The confusions which make for disunity must be fully and patiently discussed. Thus there are some forces who, beginning with the correct premise that peace is decisive—and considering that Eisenhower is more pro-Geneva than the Democrats — wind up supporting Eisenhower and the Cadillac Cabinet. Others who take the same starting-point but consider that there is no essential difference between Eisenhower and the Democrats, call for a new party in '56. That failing,

they now see no alternative in '56 but to sit it out.

These forces must be shown that common to the two positions is a mechanical posing of the peace question; a writing-off of the struggle to influence the course of foreign policy and the position of the labor-supported Democrats during '56; and above all a total ignoring of the labor movement. They must be shown that no effective struggle for peace can be waged in '56 unless this issue is brought into proper relationship with labor's determination to oust the Cadillac Cabinet. And as for those "Lefts" who incline to Eisenhower, how can they expect to advance the cause of peace by supporting Nixon, Dulles and Brownell?

3) To achieve greater unity of the Left for '56, it is necessary to take special note of the broad areas of agreement that do exist. These include the principal issues, especially peace, civil rights, civil liberties; the perspective for an eventual labor-based third party; the need to increase the role of the Left and Socialist forces in American life. On this basis, it is not too much to expect that further discussion could produce at least limited agreement on certain matters of '56 electoral policy, such as the need to defeat ultra-reactionary Senatorial and Congressional candidates.

4) Further thought should be given to varied forms of independent political expression—not a party, but movements mobilizing people on the issues and able to develop indepen-

dent pressure within the two-party system as well as to educate for a basic political realignment, an eventual farmer-labor party.

### THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

It is not necessary here to go into the many specific mass tasks which the Party faces in the legislative and electoral field. Some of these have been indicated above in general terms. All should be concretized in further discussions and exchanges.

In this post-Geneva period of preparation for '56, the Party is moving into a new broad struggle to help end the cold war, restore the Bill of Rights *for all* and defeat reaction's drive to deny the Party legal existence (McCarran Act proceedings, Smith Act). This struggle will be very much aided by expanding the independent voice and electoral role of the Party, including timely attention to the forms of projecting selected Communist candidates.

A most urgent and essential task in preparing for '56 is a full mobilization to increase the circulation and use of the Marxist press, the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*.

A restudy should be made of certain questions on '56 posed in the Party program. The Party program made a basic contribution to the thinking and action of the Party and other Left forces. Of paramount importance for '56 is the emphasis which the Program places on the aim of crystallizing a new political majority — a front of democratic unity.

Subsequent developments, however, make it necessary to revise and modify the treatment of certain questions. Among these are the estimate of an early economic crisis, the outlook as to the character and course of the struggle against McCarthyism, the extent to which international and national developments could compel tactical shifts in foreign policy even by the reactionary GOP Administration and Wall Street. Monopoly capital has maneuvered not only because it retained a certain room to maneuver, but also because it was compelled to do so by popular pressure and world democratic opinion.

The result is that the American people in '56 will not confront the type of sharp alternatives projected in the Program. The Program tended to place the '56 elections as the *culmination* of the struggle to bar the road to war and fascism, rather than as a battle—a crucial battle—on the way. It tended to assume electoral alternatives so sharply defined that the victory of one (Eisenhower) would irretrievably open the way to war and fascism; the victory of the other (labor-supported Democrat) would effectively bar the road to extreme reaction and produce an Administration that would take up were the New Deal left off.

Under present circumstances, 1956 will not offer such a clear-cut choice. However, this in no way means (as some conclude after Geneva) that progressives should be indifferent to the election battle between the

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Eisenhower-Cadillac Cabinet ticket and a labor-supported Democratic alternative, or that a third ticket must be sought regardless of labor's present ties with the Democrats.

*Such views ignore the labor movement and its allies.* They ignore labor's basic and thoroughly justified orientation against the present reactionary Administration. They ignore labor's capacity—in the course of the struggle for independent political action — to exert increasing influence upon the policies and programs of the candidates whom it supports.

The exact character of the alternatives for '56—the degree of differentiation—is of course not yet fully determined. Two factors will be of particular importance. The first will be the make-up of the GOP ticket. Obviously a Nixon candidacy will present a major menace. A Warren-type ticket would present other serious problems. The second factor will be the extent to which labor and its allies will be able to compel the labor-endorsed Democratic candidate to support at least the elements of a peace policy—for continued negotiations on a give-and-take basis, for East-West trade and exchange

etc., as well as a civil liberties and civil rights program.

Thus, to further the cause of peace, economic welfare, equal rights and democracy in the '56 elections, all Left and progressive forces should unite:

1) To help build, first and foremost, broad mass movements on the issues able to influence the course of the elections and to exert increasing pressure on the Administration and Congress which takes office after '56.

2) Within this context, to join in the labor and people's fight to oust the Cadillac Cabinet and put a substantial dent in the GOP-Dixiecrat ruling coalition in Congress, directing the sharpest fire against the GOP and its McCarthyite wing (and their Democratic McCarthyite and Dixiecrat counterparts) and at the same time resolutely combatting the anti-Geneva policies of many "Fair Deal" Democrats.

The Party is small in size. But as it strengthens its ties with the masses of working people, Negro and white, pursues a correct united front policy and popularizes its views and aims, it will be able to play a vital role in helping to influence the course of events.

In the February issue of *Political Affairs*, we plan to publish an article by William Z. Foster, on "The March of Socialism to World Leadership." This will deal with the question raised by Comrade Foster, in the December number, of the present relationship of forces between world Socialism and capitalism.

# The Youth

By Martha Stone

IN RECENT YEARS, especially since the Korean war, the youth question has again become one of the most deep-going social problems in our country. Millions of working people are troubled and alarmed. They are searching for answers to a shameful situation in which our youth have not been afforded the opportunity to grow up in a wholesome atmosphere, to live normal lives, to prepare themselves for a decent, peaceful future.

There are growing demands in the labor movement, among the people generally, and on the part of youth itself, for action, especially action to meet the educational crisis and the many-sided issues posed by the "juvenile delinquency" scandal.

In the ranks of our Party, this concern for the welfare of America's youth is deeply felt. Yet our Party is not seriously engaged in this crucial aspect of the struggle for peace and democracy. Above all, it is largely unaware of developments among the youth that point to a great potential for democratic unity and action.

Last June, after several months of preliminary discussion, the National Administrative Committee undertook a review of our work in the youth field.

It is on the National Administrative Committee meeting, the work of a sub-committee, and the discussions in the various districts that the present report is based.

## GENEVA AND THE YOUTH

The most important new element which will influence the whole course of the battle for the youth is the perspective opened up by the Geneva Conference of the heads of state. The importance of Geneva in this respect is that it holds forth the prospect of a successful struggle to end the cold war, which is responsible for today's sharp youth problem. For the first time, a generation which has come of age under the spectre of the A- and H-bomb can dare to plan for a normal life in a peaceful world.

Of course, such a plan is no part of the design for youth of the Eisenhower Administration, of the men of the trusts. The architects of the cold war, who bitterly oppose any disarmament plan and every new step toward peaceful coexistence, are not ready to relax their drive for a generation in uniform. In their eyes, a normal life for America's youth re-

mains out of the picture for generations to come.

Nevertheless, the new hope and brighter expectation among the masses for curbing the cold war is a powerful influence affecting youth and the youth problem. For what is most characteristic about today's youth problem is the bitter crushing effect on the youth of the cold war, of the reactionary offensive of Big Business during the last decade.

The demands placed on young people by Big Business throughout this period were qualitatively more drastic than those placed on any other section of the population. For youth were called on not only to support the imperialist objectives of Big Business, but to be the instrument for carrying out these objectives—to be the cannon-fodder of Wall Street in its preparations for a Hydrogen bomb third world war. For the first time in peacetime America, conscription and galloping militarism became a dominant fact of life for young people. Youth became the focus of the jingoist campaign aimed at preparing the American people for the campaign of world conquest. Even more, the bourgeoisie had special objectives in its ideological campaign to brutalize the young generation. For it needed not only a youth prepared to accept the general line of Wall Street, but one specifically trained to be, as General Hershey said, "a generation of killers." It needed a generation prepared to set aside "the curtain of morality and civilization from men's souls to expose the brute beneath."

It is important to remember that young people were subjected to this campaign of chauvinism and brutalization not for a moment, but in most cases for their entire thinking lives.

The youth problem today is marked by a serious assault on the moral fiber of the young generation. Young people face wholesale neglect of economic, educational and social needs, while the suppression of youth's right to learn about the world they live in aggravates the disorientation brought on by the perspective of unlimited militarization.

Some expression of the depth of the problem can be gleaned from various bourgeois "experts" on the youth question. Thus Bernice Bridges, of the National Social Welfare Assembly, states:\*

Added to the fact that issues are complicated is the . . . fear which pervades our society today. Young people feel they must look to their future. To join with a group issuing a statement on desegregation, international relations, or everybody's hope for peace, is to invite inquiry. In fact merely holding a youth conference where such subjects are discussed is a fair assurance that investigation will follow.

James H. Bobo, General Counsel for the Kefauver Senate Subcommittee to investigate juvenile delinquency, highlights the problem as follows:\*\*

In 1952 . . . 37% of all persons

\* Published in *Adult Education* (a publication of the Adult Education Association) June, 1955.

\*\* Speech delivered June 2, 1955 at the Cook County, Illinois, Conference on Juvenile Delinquency.

arrested for robberies were under 21 years of age. This same group accounted for 47% of all arrests for larceny. . . . One of the most disheartening aspects of juvenile delinquency is the growing addiction to narcotics by teenagers. In Los Angeles 8% of all children brought before the court had contact with narcotics.

And at the recent White House Conference on Education, a nationwide tally showed 2,385,000 elementary and high school pupils in excess of normal capacities of buildings occupied (*N. Y. Times*, Dec. 1, 1955).

Another feature of the present youth problem, in addition to its aggravation by the cold war, is the extremely one-sided character of the battle for the youth, at least until the last year or so. This is demonstrated by the inadequate intervention by labor and other democratic sections of the population on behalf of the young generation.

Thus, for a whole period of time—long after the cold war had begun to disrupt the conditions of life of young people—the scandal that surrounded the youth question was suppressed. The main voices heard were not those calling for an end to the cold war and for vast development of services and facilities to meet the needs of youth, but rather voices which continued to attack youth and put forward further demands for their regimentation.

Geneva, and the powerful movements against McCarthyism and war antedating Geneva, make for new

and more favorable conditions for coming to grips with the youth problem. The promise of Geneva, if it is made real through struggle, is the promise of a young generation growing up with hope and in a spirit of battling for democratic rights and progress—not a youth filled with cynicism, despair, and the fear of impending doom. Based on negotiations to secure peace and to end the arms race, the pack and the gun must be lifted from the backs of America's youth.

The best years in the lives of our young men must not be wasted in UMT schemes and in military barracks and bases scattered over the globe. What is called for now is a vast program of federal responsibility and action to build, improve, and desegregate schools, for expanded job opportunity and recreation, for all-around health and welfare provisions for all young people.

Already the peace and democratic movements which played so big a part in respect to Geneva, and which before that set back McCarthy, have been expressed in important pro-democratic, pro-peace trends on the youth question. This is true on the part of labor and other democratic elements, and decidedly on the part of youth itself.

#### GROWING INTEREST IN THE YOUTH QUESTION

There is already much evidence of the new way in which wide sections

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of the people are being propelled into activity on the youth issue. Consider, for example, the forceful intervention of the labor movement on the whole question of education. Here we have in mind, not only the support given by the labor movement, particularly the CIO, to the fight for desegregation of education, but also the outspoken demand by the entire labor movement for a vast expansion of education, of physical facilities, for the raising of teachers' salaries, for federal aid to education, and for a federal scholarship program. The concern of labor with this issue was forcefully demonstrated at the recent White House conference where the hundred A. F. of L. and C.I.O. delegates strongly and bitterly criticized Administration preparations for the conference. The adoption of a program calling for Federal funds for education by a 2-1 vote was influenced considerably by labor.

#### MOVEMENTS AMONG THE YOUTH

But above all, what should not be underestimated are the rising currents of democratic expression, organized and unorganized, through which masses of youth are becoming a real factor for peace and democratic liberties.

In a whole series of gatherings by various youth organizations, preceding and following the Geneva Conference, their pro-peace sentiments were sharply expressed. In September, the Second U. S. Assembly of

Youth adopted in one of its commission reports the following resolution on co-existence:

The group supported the concept of peaceful co-existence by which they mean the recognition of the existence of basic differences and the attempt to build bridges toward normal relations. They stressed the need for competitive co-existence in all ears, ideological, cultural, and economic.

In particular, the movement for peace has been outstanding among the student youth. Thus, the vast movement for student exchange can be fully appreciated in light of the concentration of fire by the McCarthyites against the democratic-minded students in colleges and universities. It was in the education institutions that the McCarthyites spread their lies and threatened independent-minded young people with reprisals when they questioned weaknesses in U. S. foreign policy. It is on the campus that the peace movement among the youth has its greatest impact. Students have fought for exchange of youth of all nations.

Consider, for example, the letters sent by the staff of the Roosevelt High School paper in Chicago to the school staffs in Honolulu, Paris and Moscow, in which they said:

We feel this exchange of correspondence is a good opportunity to become acquainted with our world neighbors. Events during the past summer encourage us to look forward to a peaceful future.

As the threat of atomic war begins to recede, the prospect of spending two years in uniform has no appeal for America's youth. The disruption of young people's plans to acquire a skill, to study, to get married, to raise families is of great concern to them.

These movements among the young people are taking on a more organized character. They reflect not only the activity on the grass-roots level, but also the experiences of the many leaders and spokesmen of the youth movement. A large number of young people in these movements press for an identification with youth on an international scale. They reflect a desire to achieve a world outlook and work for an easing of international tensions.

Geneva raises new questions in the minds of young people as to the need of a large army. This places the disarmament question as an important issue in the '56 election campaign.

### CIVIL LIBERTIES

In the movements against McCarthyism, against the McCarran Act, for the desegregation program for the public schools, the pro-democratic trends of the youth have been very pronounced. Every major organization or conference of youth has acted in a positive manner in defense of civil liberties and against any efforts to encroach on the rights of the American people through repressive legislation.

The Tenth Annual Encampment

for Citizenship, the Fifteenth National Conference of Methodist Youth, the National Student Association, the United States Youth Assembly, and the Jewish Youth Conference, have all acted favorably on the questions of ending Congressional investigations, and protecting rights denied by loyalty oaths; they have all defended the rights of free association and academic freedom.

The Encampment, attended by 150 men and women, between the ages of 18 and 23, representing youth from all walks of life, as well as organizations, trade unions and church groups, seriously raised the matter of Comrade Lightfoot's conviction, questioning the right of the Court to determine what was going on in a man's mind.

The National Student Association convention, held in August, expressed a critical view of the McCarran Act and just recently, Wisconsin student leaders prepared a legal brief, challenging the constitutionality of the McCarran Act. The challenge is being made in connection with an Amicus Curiae brief in support of the LYL case.

The group supporting this action represents the editors of the *Daily Cardinal*, the student paper, the president of the campus chapter of the NAACP, Students for Democratic Action, and the Chairman of the Baptist Social Action group. Likewise, on the issues of desegregation, student organizations have invariably acted favorably, and have been pressing for the fullest applica-

tion of the Supreme Court's decisions.

In connection with the rights of the Negro people and the Till lynching, there have been expressions from Southern white youth that indicated a growing unity of Negro and white. The United States Youth Assembly, meeting in September, condemned the Till murder and demanded that public officials, including federal officials, intervene.

#### YOUTH AND THE COMING ELECTIONS

One of the things that this conference should do is to put to rest any ideas that insofar as '56 goes, youth will be an unimportant or side question. The fact is that in various forms such attitudes are rather widespread in the Party. Unfortunately this outlook ignores both the experiences of the 1952 elections and the new developments on the youth issue of which we have already spoken.

It should not be forgotten that a major element in Eisenhower's victory in '52 was his all-out demagogic appeal for the youth vote. *U. S. News*, in a post-election analysis, stated: "The shifts of young voters and independents gave Eisenhower an edge that nothing showed up to offset."

In '52, 49% of the youth were estimated to have voted GOP. Such a vote by the youth marked a dramatic shift from the alignment of the youth with the labor movement and the Negro people's movement

in and around the Democratic Party. For, unlike the past, when the GOP was able to garner only a minority of the youth vote (about 38%), '52 saw it capture almost a majority.

The question is: Will the GOP once again be able to capitalize by demagoguery on the youth issue, or will the forces of democracy seize the initiative on this question?

The youth question will find its way into the political arena in two main ways. First, it will appear as a general people's issue, and one which should focus not only around city and state governments, but increasingly on the responsibility for action by the Federal government. This is obvious in connection with the whole battle around education. It is also true in connection with the juvenile delinquency question, as witness the introduction of bills by Lehman, Kefauver and others calling for federal appropriations on this matter and for the establishment of new federal agencies to cope with it.

Secondly, the youth question will assert itself in connection with the political and electoral struggles of the young people themselves. We have already indicated something of the growing movements and struggles among the youth. Quite clearly these will have their impact on '56, both by merging with the general people's struggles for peace, jobs, equality and social welfare and by helping dramatize the plight and needs of the young generation. In this connection, we should combat

the idea that large sections of youth who are not old enough to vote will be unimportant in 1956. The fact is that some of the most dramatic activities which have served to call public attention to the needs of youth have been carried on by teen-agers.

One of the features among youth since the '54 elections has been the increasing concern of young people with political action. Thus, there is a widespread movement now under way in many areas for maximum youth registration in the 1956 elections, a movement initiated by the NAACP, which has found deep support throughout the entire youth movement. Notable, too, is the growth of the influence and activity of the Young Democrats in many areas, such as New York, California and Michigan. It is evident in the widespread development, for the first time in many years, of youth committees around particular candidates as well as in the large number of very young candidates who ran for election in different parts of the country. Youth political-action committees and movements among Democrats almost invariably assume a somewhat advanced, liberal character. Thus, for example, the State Convention of the Washington Young Democrats directed its delegation to the National Convention of the Young Democrats to recommend that the organization sponsor a delegation to visit the Soviet Union. Or, again, Young Democratic groups both in California and New York overwhelmingly supported na-

tional action to punish the lynchers of Emmett Till. In New York, one of the strongest and most influential Young Democratic groups specifically called on the leaders of the Democratic Party to end the coddling of the Dixiecrats which, they warned, was costing the Democrats heavily among large sections of the people.

Unlike 1952, the new developments hold forth the possibility of a more articulate youth in the '56 campaign, developing the main fire against the more openly aggressive and reactionary spokesmen of the capitalist class. An example of this is the preference young people give to Stevenson as against Nixon and the sharper struggle among Young Democrats against the Dixiecrats, such as the recent demonstrations against Georgia's Governor Griffin.

#### "JUVENILE DELINQUENCY"

The issue which most dramatically dramatizes the youth problem today and the need for a many-sided program to meet the needs of youth is the issue of "juvenile delinquency." Much confusion exists on this problem, not only among large sections of the people, but in the ranks of the Party as well. Unfortunately, too many have fallen victim to the line of reactionary elements that today's young generation is a delinquent one. The main significance of the delinquency issue lies not in the rapid rise in the rate of delinquency, alarming as that is. Nor is its main significance in the fact that one of the hallmarks of today's delinquency

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problems is a type of youthful violence that has shocked the consciousness of millions of Americans, young and old alike.

The main significance of the juvenile delinquency issue is that it is the most acute reflection of the impact of the war-drive, not just on the 3% of young people who are included in delinquency statistics, but upon the entire young generation. The delinquency issue reveals the entire network of problems which face the young generation, including unemployment, inadequate job training and job placement programs, slum housing, racial discrimination in housing, jobs and schools, inadequate recreational facilities, grossly overcrowded schools, and the impact of McCarthyite repression. What is required of the Party is a fight to transform the concern that exists on the delinquency issue into a broad movement for a bold youth program that would embody major new economic, education and social provisions for youth's needs.

For the Party to do this requires a fight on three levels. First, there is a need to equip the entire Party with an understanding of the real nature of the delinquency problem and prepare it to combat reactionary views on this issue which would make the delinquency problem an expression of inherently "bad" young people, the answer to which is the "nightstick," "harsher court sentences," "street curfews."

Second, the Party should enter more forcefully into the mass ide-

logical debate that surrounds this issue. In particular, we must come to grips with the widespread idea that in the final analysis, it is the individual family which is responsible. This approach transforms the delinquency question from a social problem into a problem of individual families. Women are thus sharply criticized for going to work and not standing guard the entire day over their children. Those who most often propound this viewpoint provide no answer to working mothers who are forced to go to work, as it takes more than one breadwinner to maintain the family under existing economic conditions. We should not deny the role played by the family in regard to influence upon teen-agers, but we must oppose an approach that places it as exclusively a family matter or an individual problem.

The role of the Party and the Left in the broad people's movements is to help get at the root of the problem and advance legislative programs that will improve the recreational facilities and educational opportunities for the young folks, and fight for a job training program that would raise the wage standards for young people. There is certainly room for the part that family-guidance services can play in helping families who are confronted with these problems. But without this whole program, these efforts will have little effect.

Third, the Party, in contributing to the development of a movement

around juvenile delinquency, should help to enhance labor's role within it.

The recent interest displayed by the trade-union movement, isolated as examples of this are, opens up tremendous possibilities for defeating the McCarthyite approach to America's youth problem and bringing about even greater intervention by the people. Some trade unions, trying to cope with the problem, have expanded union recreational programs to attract young people and the children of members. An outstanding example of this is Local 13 of the ILWU, where a large baseball field and a recreational center for the city's youth have been established by the union.

In Chicago, both the Packinghouse Union and a UAW local have advanced proposals for a community youth program. In New York, at a CIO Conference on youth needs, a broad program was formulated for constructive action by public officials and civic organizations. Many resolutions by the A. F. of L. in various centers of the country, as well as A. F. of L. testimony at Congressional hearings, also show the keen interest in this issue on the part of the trade-union movement.

The entrance of the trade unions into this fight is the most necessary guarantee of success in bringing forward a positive program aimed at alleviating hardships among America's youth and channelizing their healthy instincts and energy in a constructive and democratic direction.

No single step would have greater significance than the opening of union halls all over the country to organized programs and activity for the teen-aged sons and daughters of America's trade unionists.

The beginnings made by the trade-union movement in the fight against juvenile delinquency bring the labor movement face to face with the larger issues that embrace young workers in the A. F. of L. and CIO: namely, the questions of job security, higher wages and trade union organization.

#### YOUTH AND JOBS

It is anticipated, according to the Federal Reserve Board, that ten million new workers will be looking for jobs within the next decade. What program will the trade unions have to attract the young workers coming into industry for the first time with no trade-union background and experience? This requires a program for job training, greater rights for probationary workers, full enforcement of fair practices in every plant. It calls for educational programs by the trade unions in order to prepare these young people for entrance into the trade unions.

This kind of program is needed, not only to meet the needs of new recruits into industry, but to protect more adequately the conditions of young people presently at work. For example, at the Lincoln-Mercury plant in California, the unfair practices of the company, that has the

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right to fire probationary workers without giving the union an opportunity to take up the grievances, led to a young Negro worker picketing the plant on the grounds of discrimination. This brought the union into a struggle with the company demanding the right to take up grievances of probationary workers which particularly affect young Negro workers.

The growing problem of automation has focused attention on the effects of this on young people in industry. In some industries young workers who by and large are unskilled, are seriously hit by this new phenomenon.

Nor is unemployment and low wages only a concern of the future. Statistics from each of the post World War II economic declines (1949-50 and 1953-54) prove how much sharper the job problem becomes for young workers, particularly teen-agers, when there is a dip. Thus, in January, 1950, unemployment among 16-17 year olds reached almost 20% of the labor force. For the 20-24 year old category, it was 11% and for the 25-34 year category, it was 6.8%. Negro and Puerto Rican youth in the teen-age category suffer a disproportionately higher percentage of unemployment.

Moreover, even in this period of relatively high employment, the youth who make up the bulk of the unskilled section of the labor force earn the lowest wage. Twenty percent of the working force, "those with the least skill, receive only

three percent of the total wages and salaries," according to a Department of Commerce survey, dated September 10, 1955.

The trade-union consciousness of young people is not something that can be taken for granted. On the contrary, we must keep in mind that the younger generation does not have the experience of the youth in the depression days or in the CIO organizing drive that followed. There are examples today where youth in the National Guard were used to break strikes, as in the Perfect Circle strike in Indiana. Also, in the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph strike, students from the University of California crossed picket lines and took over strikers' jobs. The latter action did not pass without criticism from other students at the University and the student newspaper.

These illustrations certainly indicate that there must be, in the first place, a conscious program of our Party to win the young people, and an involvement of the trade-union movement in fighting for a youth program in industry and cementing its ties with the community and its youth. This would help the trade-union movement protect itself from the attacks of the employers.

#### "DISTORTED IDEAS"

In a survey conducted last summer among seniors in high school the press reported that a large number of students hold "distorted ideas" about the American economic sys-

tem. Two surveys showed that 60% of 5,000 high school seniors believe that business interests get too much and employees too little of take home proceeds, 75% hold the view that companies upon installing new machinery get most of the benefits from it, and 56% believe that the American standard of living can best be improved, not by producing more, but by giving workers more of the profits of business. Of the senior high school students, 40% think that the survival of the American economic system depends on the preservation of the profit motive.

These results were met in the press with the advice that the NAM help bring confidence among these students in the capitalist system and the profit motive. This reveals the extent of questioning and the critical approach taken by many young people to the capitalist system on the basis of their own experiences and the experiences of their families in these ten years of cold war.

The opinion poll points up two things. First, youth entering the trade-union movement can be a source of real strength and can enhance its militancy. Second, the answers show that many young people are critical of the capitalist system. The elements for developing a working class and socialist outlook among youth are greater than many of us have realized.

### THE PARTY'S TASKS

What should be the Party's re-

sponsibilities and objectives in the youth field?

Often this question has been boiled down to mean—what about the LYL? Here we are placing the question of the Party's responsibilities that go far beyond the LYL.

Our main tasks in the youth field are:

First, to influence the democratic forces, especially the labor movement, to seize the initiative on the youth issue.

Second, to help unite the young generation in order to gain their economic and social demands. It is because of the objective possibilities and the need to bring the Party's work into conformity with them that our emphasis in these discussions over the past months has correctly been shifted to the entire Party organization and its role.

It is our opinion that all districts need to single out one issue, namely, the movement around juvenile delinquency. We select this issue above all others because it is the most crucial at the moment. It is the issue around which the broadest people's movements with increased labor participation are developing.

The fight to eliminate the cause of juvenile delinquency involves the support of adult organizations for expanded education, recreation and a housing program. Within these movements there are growing criticisms of the militarization program for American youth. Some adults see more clearly than others the relationship between juvenile delin-

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quency and the cold war. By and large the majority of organizations joined in the struggle against juvenile delinquency find the most common unity in a program to develop a community and legislative fight for social benefits in order to alleviate some of its causes.

While differing on the causes of the cold war and the responsibility for it, they can be united to put forward a broad people's human welfare program. Such movements will exert pressure upon the Administration and Congress to return our country to policies on the home-front that truly represent the great social needs of the American people and its youth.

The work of the Party committees in the various districts proved that our neglect stems primarily from a political underestimation of the youth question, and not from lack of Party forces capable of developing a program of youth work.

The fact is that there are presently in all Party districts members in various people's organizations who have direct ties with youth work and young people. The problem has been that we have not met with these comrades and guided their work. This is in sharp contrast to our leadership to Party comrades linked to trade union, Negro work or adult mass organizations of all kinds.

The role of the Party is decisive now in making this change. In Philadelphia, where for a long time our youth work was at a very low ebb, the direct intervention of the Party

over an extended period of time (not as a one-shot affair) has helped make some important changes. The Party here brought together certain comrades who were close to developments in the teen-age field—most of whom had not had any Party contact on youth work. The Party Board in Eastern Pennsylvania has assigned certain leading forces from other fields of work to head up the Party's work on the youth question. It is in the process of building a new Youth Commission, and it has moved to integrate the leading youth cadre into various Party bodies.

#### THE LABOR YOUTH LEAGUE

While the Party can help create the conditions which make possible the building of the democratic unity of youth, it cannot build that unity itself. Such unity must flow directly from the activities and struggles of the young people. That is why our Party greeted and extended its fraternal support to the establishment of the Labor Youth League.

Throughout its six-year history, LYL has made many outstanding contributions to the fight for youth's needs and in the building of democratic unity of the young generation. This was done under the most difficult conditions. Never before in the history of our country has a youth organization been subjected to so much persecution and anti-democratic terror as has the LYL. Of course, these attacks have taken a certain toll of the League organization.

Despite the McCarthyite attacks, the League has maintained a relatively strong and vital organization. It has won a definite degree of respect for itself from among wide sections of youth, including those who may be hostile to its aims and principles. It has helped develop young working-class leaders both for the youth movement and for the general people's democratic movement.

Our discussions have revealed that by and large the Party appreciates the contributions of the LYL. Within this framework, however, much confusion has existed as to how, by what forms, with what tactics can LYL best accomplish its responsibilities. The biggest of these questions centers around the mass policy of the League.

What motivates the confusion is the feeling that such a policy of mass work undermines the ability of the Labor Youth League to build itself as a mass popular youth organization. The contention is that the main way for the League to influence the fight for youth unity is through the activities which it itself develops.

In our opinion, such a view is incorrect. It closes its eyes to the reality of the situation among young people today. There is no other section of the Left where we would put forward the idea that the main way to influence the struggle for unity is from outside the mainstream of people's organization. Quite the contrary, we reject any concept which

minimizes or takes our focus away from these organizations which must inevitably be a main source of united youth activity.

It is not a criticism, but a credit to the League that it recognizes the need to find different forms and methods and to have different emphasis in different periods in terms of influencing the course of struggle for youth unity.

The fact is that the outstanding feature of the League's growth and development over the past several years is that it has not stood on the sidelines and confined itself merely to observing the struggles of the young people and the unity movements which have begun to emerge. Many League members have developed strong ties with the established youth organizations. The League has had an effect on the struggles and movements of the youth, such as in the field of academic freedom and the defense of the democratic rights of all student.

Without a policy of work with young people in the established youth organizations, not only would the League have been unable to exercise the deep-going influence on youth developments which it did, but it is doubtful whether the League would have been able to survive the sharp attacks which were directed against it. The idea of limiting the League to a service organization in the strict sense of the word would have narrowed, not broadened the organization. The mass work of the LYL and its independent role are

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not at all contradictory. They are complementary and necessary for the fulfillment of its role.

Undoubtedly, the feeling which some comrades have on this question of mass work is a reflection of the doubts about the need for a Marxist youth organization. It is also the result of certain errors which the League made in carrying through its mass policy. It is true that for a period it tended to make willingness to participate in this kind of activity in fact, although not in theory, a condition for membership and thus limited its ability to grow. It is also true that it was too slow in recognizing the new possibilities for building the League organization, particularly among teen-agers, and in eliminating many sectarian practices and forms which had developed.

There have also been several examples of the LYL coming forward independently, advancing its point of view on issues like the McCarran Act and others in such a manner that the general aims of the coalition youth have been strengthened and a growing appreciation of the role of LYL has been achieved among many youth forces and leaders.

The LYL is preparing at this time to make an important change in one major aspect of its organization, its personnel and method of functioning, to more accurately reflect certain new trends and developments among the youth, especially teen-aged youth.

Of major consideration is the formation of a teen-age division of the LYL that will function with a high

degree of autonomy and through a variety of more flexible forms and activities. The most rapid growth of the LYL can take place today among teen-agers. This is a true reflection of the general experiences of other youth organizations.

Such forms of organization, varying with the local situation, will make it more possible to build and grow among teen-agers and put them in a better position to meet the problems that confront the organization as a result of the Red-baiting attacks. This section of the LYL must be provided with advisors and counselors who have direct ties with the LYL and the labor and progressive movement. It will be united with the LYL primarily by the circulation of *New Challenge* that will serve as the major instrument for educating teen-agers in the principles of the LYL and the working class movement.

While concentrating on the teen-agers, the LYL must fully reflect the problems of other sections of the young people and build its organization among student youth and especially among the industrial workers in large industries.

*A few concrete proposals which grow out of these discussions:*

1. This conference should serve to open the problem for the entire Party.
2. A main lesson of these discussions has been the indispensable role of certain organizational measures which made possible implementing even the very mo-

dest goals which were set by the NAC last June. These measures included establishing a sub-commission where the main forces and responsibility came from the Party—and the assignment of a Secretary, whose main time was devoted to the work.

It is encouraging to note that as a result of our discussions in the districts, at least half a dozen such commissions are in formation around the country.

3. Integration of Party youth into the Party. It is clear that integration is not a simple problem, but we have enough experience to see certain features clearly:
  - a. In some areas the Party leadership looks to youth sections and clubs as the solution. In essence, such forms deny the role of the LYL and tend to undermine its independence, and actually deny youth real integration into the Party where they can meet and exchange views—obtain leadership from comrades who are in like fields of work—be it community, mass movement or labor union. Such integration is one of the ways to insure that the Party plays its vanguard role on the youth question.
4. We urge fullest support to the

LYL Conference on Teen-Age work, being held in Chicago, February 11-13.

5. Support should be given to the very interesting and valuable publication, *New Challenge*, which makes a unique contribution as an organizer and mobilizer of teen-age youth and brings them closer to the Left and the LYL.

### CONCLUSION

During the cold war years the youth have been referred to as the "lost" or "silent" generation. This characterization is false.

The movements among young people for peace, for defense of the Bill of Rights, against jim crow, give the lie to this description. The youth movement has been active and fruitful in bringing forward pro-democratic ideas and in rejecting McCarthyism. The deep-rooted freedom-loving traditions of our country have a firm hold on the young people, and they have shown this in action in the past decade.

Our Party organization is called upon to correctly appraise and estimate these developments and to give daily attention to them in order to help forge the labor-youth alliance as an integral part of the democratic people's coalition we want to build in the '56 electoral campaign.

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# The Labor Merger

By Hal Simon

THE FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL convention of the AFL-CIO is a great historic event. This convention marks the end of a period of 20 years of division in the ranks of the labor movement. It is a new high-mark in the process of unifying the American workers. The convention demonstrated the enormous potential that resides in the labor movement for great steps forward in terms of economic struggles, organizing the unorganized, advancing the interests of the Negro people and striding ahead down the road to independent political action in the direction of a new party led by labor.

This potential was demonstrated at the convention in spite of the conservative nature of its leadership, and the inhibitions placed in the path of internal union democracy by its constitution. That progressive desires of the overwhelming majority of the rank and file broke through and were reflected in this convention can be demonstrated in many ways.

## ANTI-BIG BUSINESS

One of the important characteristics of this convention was its anti-Big Business atmosphere. George Meany, writing in the *N. Y. Times*

of December 4, outlined a complete class collaborationist policy for the trade-union movement. This article was undoubtedly written as part of the preparation for transforming its line into the adopted position of the convention. The article proposed a non-aggression pact between the trade-union movement and the biggest monopolies in the country. However, the atmosphere at this convention, the mood of the delegates, frustrated the plan of Meany. Even Adlai Stevenson, who was prepared to praise Meany for his position, was prevailed upon to withdraw this praise from his speech on delivery at the convention. While Meany will continue to pursue his aim, the mood and temper of the delegates made impossible an agreement with the monopolies. This was demonstrated around a series of specific questions. Outstanding among these were the questions of civil rights and Negro leadership.

## CIVIL RIGHTS

The action of the convention on these questions included the following: The resolution on civil rights, the speech by Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP, the

speech of Carey on the civil rights resolution, the added statement in the speech of Adlai Stevenson in his criticism of the violence directed against the Negro people in Mississippi. And last, but not least, the election of two Negro vice presidents to the Executive Committee of the AFL-CIO. The election of Randolph and Townsend as the first Negro vice presidents is an historic achievement. It is important to note that the elections plus the positions taken on the question of civil rights were adopted by this convention although among the 1,487 delegates, there were no more than about 20 Negro delegates and visitors combined representing over a million and a half Negro members. The elections of the two Negro vice presidents was thus not a product of overwhelming Negro representation nor was it something that was just handed to the convention by its leadership. It was a product of a rising struggle over the course of the last number of years. For neither the CIO nor the AFL has had a Negro in the leadership. The struggle for Negro leadership was a product in the first place of the consistent and sustained demands of the progressives and Communist forces in the labor movement for the last 20 years. It was a direct product of the struggles and demands of the Negro workers themselves, within the trade-union movement, as well as their heroic struggles to end segregation in the South. The murder of Emmett Till aroused the conscience of millions of white workers.

In the last months, prior to the convention, there was an organized movement for Negro leadership in which substantial progressive forces participated and which, by its actions, produced the decisions of this convention.

#### ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED

The second question in which the progressive desires of the membership were reflected at this convention was around the issue of the organization of the unorganized workers. For this the convention developed a high degree of enthusiasm. The speech of Walter Reuther, on the fourth day of the convention, actually fired the convention with enthusiasm. This question also reflects the pressure and demands of the workers. For in the past, not all sections of the leadership saw eye to eye on what should be done about the unorganized workers. Thus, George Meany, in an interview with *U. S. News and World Report* of February 25, 1955, had the following to say: "We will *not organize just for the sake of organizing.*" How different were the statements of Meany in favor of the organization of the unorganized at this convention! Undoubtedly the increase in runaway shops, the expansion of industry in open shop areas as well as the resistance of the open shop forces to new organization has made an impact within the trade union movement. But even the affirmative position of Meany at the convention did not begin to lay down the main direction for an or-

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organization of the unorganized. It was Walter Reuther, in his speech on this resolution, that called upon the convention to direct its main attention towards organizing the unorganized workers in the main monopoly sectors of industry, namely, chemical, textile, paper and lumber, as opposed to the emphasis which Meany placed on the organization of white-collar distributive and government workers. More than that, Reuther called for a crusade for organization in the South as the main geographical area for the organization of the unorganized. It was this emphasis of Reuther that aroused and stimulated the entire convention.

The question of the organization of the unorganized, and particularly the organization of the South, has been raised by progressive forces for a considerable period of time. However, it was this unity convention that demonstrated the possibilities of creating a new enthusiasm in the ranks of labor on this question. It showed the possibility for making a turn by moving labor away from the defensive, where it has been ever since the 1952 presidential elections, to a new offensive, particularly in terms of the South.

#### POLITICAL ACTION

The convention's resolution on political action was a routine one. It called for support for the Committee on Political Education, for making public the voting records of officials, for activity among the wives and daughters of the members, and for support of the political-action fund

campaign. It did not truly reflect the atmosphere that prevailed at the convention.

The very act of unification has created a qualitatively new importance for the labor movement in the political field. The very act of merger has commanded new attention to the powerful political potential of the labor movement. This was recognized and felt by the delegates. While it is clear that the overwhelming majority at the convention identified itself with the Democratic Party as its chosen electoral vehicle, there do exist various trends of thinking in the leadership on the question of political association. There is one group in the leadership that favors an endorsement of the Democratic Party candidates, whoever they may be, and have fully subordinated themselves to that Party. There is another group who differ on who the Democratic Party candidate should be. Some support Stevenson, others Harriman, and consequently they are for withholding at this time endorsement for any Democratic candidate. More than that, within this there are those who, recalling the experiences of '52 and the failure of Stevenson even with the unanimous support of the labor movement to win the election, are concerned about endorsing any candidate that does not have a guarantee of victory. Consequently, while this group generally aligns itself with the Democratic Party, it does not favor the endorsement of a Democratic candidate. The thinking of this group tends to coincide in terms of result

with the supporters of the Republican Party among the leadership. This latter group, recognizing that the majority of the workers see the Democratic Party as their chosen electoral vehicle, are pressing for a non-partisan position. The best hope, as they see it, is for a position of neutrality.

One of the interesting aspects of the discussion and speeches on political action at the convention was the great interest in the question of a third party. The speakers made a point of commending the labor movement because it has not identified itself with the desire for a new third party. George Meany, both at the convention and in his luncheon speech before the National Manufacturers Association, went so far as to threaten Big Business that the labor movement might adopt a position of support for a third party if the anti-labor attitude of the NAM was continued. It is clear that the more far-sighted spokesmen for labor, as well as the spokesmen of the two political parties, are extremely concerned with the almost inevitable logic that flows from the merger. This convention determined that it was going to pursue a more aggressive policy of independent political action in the course of the '56 elections. The unification of the workers in a single center of labor and the determination to pursue a more vigorous independent policy on the political field will undoubtedly strengthen spokesmen in the ranks of the labor movement—and add to their number—who have already placed before

the workers the fact that their political requirements cannot be fully solved within the framework of the two-party system. Consequently it is clear that the demand for a third party, led by labor, which would represent the next big historic step forward for the American labor movement, will be growing in intensity in the coming period of time.

The convention decided that intensified political activity would be developed in the course of the '56 election campaign around such questions as the defeat of the right-to-work laws, the cutting of high war-born taxes, the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, and additional anti-discrimination and anti-lynching legislation.

#### FOREIGN POLICY

The most important negative feature of this convention was its position on foreign policy. The foreign policy position of the convention is in direct conflict with the peace desires of the overwhelming majority of the workers. The rank and file workers do not equate their desires for peace with a challenge of the foreign policy of this Administration and consequently their peace desires found little, if any, expression in this convention. The main weight of the foreign policy resolution, as well as the majority of speeches at the convention devoted to questions of foreign policy, were fully in line with the imperialist foreign policies of this Administration and facilitate the efforts to refreeze the cold war.

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jection of the recent Geneva conference and then goes down the line in support of the policies of American imperialism on the question of Germany, disarmament, the Middle East, China, etc. It is shot through with vicious anti-Soviet lies and slanders. Nonetheless, the resolution is a peculiar patchwork of the former positions on foreign policy of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. Consequently, in many places, it is contradictory. For example, the resolution calls for increasing cultural exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union, but, on the other hand, opposes any exchange of trade-union delegates. It rejects the Geneva conference, but says we must never shut the door to negotiations; it endorses the whole program of the State Department and the Administration, but contains a strong attack on colonialism. The main point upon which the differing positions appear to revolve is the amount of weight that should be given to the question of Point IV and economic aid to the underdeveloped countries as opposed to the Administration's emphasis on military aid and the formation of military blocs. This question of non-military economic assistance would appear at this moment to be the main rallying ground on foreign policy of the relatively more progressive elements within the leadership. The foreign policy sub-committee that was established under the co-leadership of Matthew Woll and Jacob Potofsky, appears to represent these two differing emphases.

The fight for a progressive foreign policy and opposition to support for imperialist policies within the federation leadership undoubtedly represents the biggest tasks for the progressive forces in the future.

#### ON AUTONOMY

One question that received a considerable amount of attention prior to the convention was that of autonomy for international unions, as well as the concern of the smaller unions that they might be gobbled up by the larger organizations in the federation. This concern was voiced by such important forces as Woodruff Randolph, of the International Typographical Union, determined to guard his craft jurisdiction. It was also expressed by Mike Quill, of the Transport Workers Union, who, more than any other, reflected the fears of the smaller unions. It was also voiced by David Beck of the Teamsters' who demonstrated his independence of the Executive Committee. Whatever the motive of the various spokesmen and whatever their individual actions may have been, they all contributed to a challenge of the old "rubber-stamp" unionism of the former A.F. of L. break out in new forms following While this problem tended to be muted at the AFL-CIO convention, it nonetheless represents a continuing one which will undoubtedly the convention.

On the questions of farmer-labor unity and economic policy, the convention adopted routine positions and did not accord to either of these

questions the attention that they require.

### ON THE CONSTITUTION

One of the important controversies prior to the convention was around the character of the constitution. There was a movement on the part of some forces to eliminate many of the undemocratic features of the constitution, such as the overwhelming concentration of power in the hands of the Executive Committee, the lengthening of time between conventions, etc. However, the leadership of the A. F. of L. insisted on the adoption of the constitution as it was drafted as a prerequisite for merger. Consequently, the challenges that were developed were to no avail. The main question, now that the constitution has been adopted, is to rally in support of those forces who are concerned about its undemocratic features and to fight alongside them for an interpretation of its many vague clauses that will be in the best interests of the majority of the members. Such struggles will undoubtedly develop around questions involved in the rights of Negro workers within the federation, as well as against the resurgence of craft demands.

### THE INDUSTRIAL UNION DEPARTMENT

One of the important acts decided in the adoption of the constitution was the establishment of the industrial union department. This department (the IUD) will undoubtedly have a great deal of importance in

the new set-up. Although the objectives of this department are not clearly defined, it is apparent that the original purpose was to protect the industrial jurisdiction of the former CIO unions. However, at the first constitutional convention of this department a whole group of A. F. of L. unions with industrially organized workers joined. These A. F. of L. unions, while having substantial industrially organized membership, have craft leadership. These leaders are undoubtedly coming into the IUD to stake their craft claims. The joining of the A. F. of L. unions into the IUD will undoubtedly result in a sharpening conflict between the partisans of the industrial form of organization and those who vigorously support a craft outlook. The establishment of the joint sub-committee of the metal trades department and IUD to discuss conflicting jurisdictional claims means, in fact, that the former CIO unions are now prepared to recognize the validity of craft demands and may even be forced to make concessions along these lines.

On the opposite side of the coin, the new strength of the industrially organized workers within the AFL-CIO, and the legalization of the industrial form of organization in the constitution and in the establishment of the IUD may give fresh impetus to the industrially organized workers in many A. F. of L. unions. These workers have been struggling for years against being kept in a class B status by their craft leadership. The constitutional recognition

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of the industrial form will undoubtedly give new strength to their demand for equal treatment and equal rights.

In any event, the struggle will sharpen and new realignments may be forthcoming. In spite of the fact that Reuther has stated that the IUD will not be a union within a union, it does contain the unions of the former CIO. These unions, because of their basic industrial nature and consequent militancy, will continue for a considerable period to remain the strongest force for progress within the merged organization.

#### THE LEADERSHIP

There should be no illusions about the character of the leadership elected at this convention. It is a conservative leadership and, in many instances, quite reactionary. Any Marxist estimate would have to state that they, as a group, have been the chief supporters of imperialist policies in the ranks of the workers. However, to let it go at that would not tell the entire story. There are differentiations within this group that flow primarily from their differing base in their respective unions. Further, the thinking of the rank and file around major questions and the degree of pressure that they have placed upon the leadership on one or another question have forced these leaders to modify in some instances their crass support for imperialist policies.

The only apparent difference among the leadership at this convention was between those who came

from the A. F. of L. and those who came from the C.I.O. The C.I.O. forces were younger in years, more aggressive, took a more definitive position on questions and participated in what little discussion there was on resolutions. It is the opinion of many that the leadership of the new organizations, which is dominated by pro-imperialist, clerical, anti-Soviet forces, will not be able to solidify itself like the old A. F. of L. leadership. There are forces at work that have the potential for developing important differences within their ranks. Among them are the following:

A. The rank and file members of the AFL-CIO who expect big things to come out of this convention. They expect a real improvement in their economic conditions. They expect a continuation and an increase in the struggle for the rights of the Negro workers. They feel that this convention will result in greatly intensified political action. Below the top level of the leadership, there are also sections of the officialdom that are prepared to do battle on many of the key issues facing the workers.

B. There will be a continuing conflict within the organization on internal questions, such as jurisdiction, organization of the unorganized, craft unionism versus industrial unionism. These, too, can contribute to new realignments.

C. The new representation of Negro workers in the top leadership is an important development. Undoubtedly the two Negro vice presidents will be called upon to reflect

and speak for the Negro workers in the top councils of the organization.

D. Some sections of this leadership have ties to organizations, such as the ADA, and the NAACP. The influence of these groups can also be brought to bear on the problems facing the trade-union movement.

#### NEW GROUPINGS

It is felt that these various factors will contribute in the future to the shaping up of new realignments in the leadership of this merged organization. The progressive forces in the merged federation can contribute to and facilitate the development of these realignments. However, it will be necessary to re-examine certain rigid Left-Right concepts that have been used in the past to tag and compartmentalize individuals. What should be seen is that new groupings are developing around single issues of struggle. These groupings are developing informally, reflecting the fluidity in the present situation. The various participants in these groupings do not take progressive positions on all questions, but usually on single issues. The differences that are beginning to develop are not the traditional Left-Right divisions.

Differences are developing in what we have called the Center and even among the broad Left forces. These differences are developing without resulting in these forces moving from one camp to another. For example, Dave Beck demonstrated at this convention, as we stated earlier, a chal-

lenge of the domination of the Executive Committee. During the convention, he announced a mutual assistance pact with the independent Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers against the wishes of the leadership of the federation. This then represents a division in the camp of the Right, but it does not mean that Dave Beck has suddenly moved over into support of Left policies. Or take the position of Walter Reuther and the emphasis that he placed on organizing the unorganized within the main monopolized industries. The emphasis placed by Reuther as opposed to the main direction of George Meany's thinking does not mean that Reuther has suddenly become a partisan of the Left-wing. It does represent important differences with which progressive forces cannot be unconcerned. The same can be said about the role of Carey on the civil rights issue. Among the forces generally in the camp of the Left, there also exist differences in outlook on such questions as how to pursue a policy of uniting the independent unions with the main stream of the labor movement. The differences that exist on this question should not imply that those who incorrectly feel that the Left should pursue a go-it-alone policy have moved over to the camp of the Right.

This indicates that major shifting and realignments will be taking place in the next period. Progressives should therefore estimate individuals on the basis of their position on issues of struggle rather than rigid characterizations of Left and Right

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as in the past. Progressives should base themselves primarily on rallying the workers around the major issues of struggle as the best contribution to forcing new relations on top. Within this framework the grouping of unions that can help to make the most decisive impact on the leadership are those organized in the most basic industries, namely, the former CIO grouping.

The Left forces hold no positions of leadership in the merged organization. They exist among the rank and file in many unions with varying degrees of influence. However, in all cases their influence is very limited. The Left has no organized form, no spokesman, nor any voice in the labor movement beyond that of the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker*, the *People's World*, etc. However, the number of forces, including organized caucuses and local unions that take a consistently progressive position on all questions and will undoubtedly be the heart of the future new Left in the merged organization are already broader than those who agree with the program of our Party. Consequently, the fight for a broad coalition policy in the course of struggles around single issues and the uniting of all those forces that tend to take a consistently progressive position will be a prerequisite for the formation of the new Left in the united labor organization.

A convention is essentially a summing-up period. It is a reflection of the relationship of forces that exist in the organization prior to the con-

vention. While a convention can have some effect on the relation of forces, they cannot there be essentially changed. It will require a fundamental struggle, involving the rank and file, on the chief issues facing the labor movement in order to bring about with greater clarity the differentiations in the leadership at the next convention.

#### FORCES PRODUCING THE MERGER

What forces and factors were responsible for the historic agreement which resulted in this great merger convention? It is our feeling that there were a combination of factors which have objective and subjective features, as well as a number of compromises embodied in the constitution which helped to bring this about. Among them are the following:

A. The victory of the Eisenhower Administration in the '52 presidential election and the consequent increase in attacks upon the labor movement and democratic rights in general evoked deep fears as to the future among large sections of the workers, as well as sections of the trade-union leadership. In particular, the demand for unity began to grow within the ranks of the workers as a result of the mounting attacks of the employers, the long protracted strikes and the increased intervention by government committees. Side by side with this there were increasing economic problems. There was also a growing appreciation in the ranks of the trade-union leadership

for the need to take steps through the process of unity to defend themselves against these increased attacks.

B. There were in the recent past no basic policy differences that separated the top leadership of the A. F. of L. from the C.I.O. In the past, the C.I.O. was looked upon essentially as the Left-wing of the labor movement; the A. F. of L. was characterized as the Right-wing. While it is true that many of these features still remain, the full acceptance by the C.I.O. leadership of the war policies of the Truman Administration, the split with and expulsion of the Left- and progressive-led unions, the agreement to withdraw from the WFTU and to split it, left no major questions that divided it from the leadership of the A. F. of L.

C. The weakening of the C.I.O. numerically as a consequence of the shifting of its attitude towards the former Left-Center coalition, the increase in Red-baiting, the subduing of its former militancy, plus the impact of the decline of the economy in 1948 and 1953, particularly in the basic industries, had made it more receptive to the possibility of returning to the A. F. of L.

D. The deaths of Philip Murray and William Green eliminated many of the subjective factors that kept the two centers apart. More than that, the death of Murray, in particular, removed from the C.I.O. the single force that was able to keep contending and factional elements from moving against each other. Since his death the various

rivalries and, in the first place, those between McDonald and Reuther, had come to the fore and tended to weaken the C.I.O. internally and hence give a further impetus in the direction of merger.

Thus it is clear that there were a variety of factors that impelled further steps to unity at this time. Some were positive and progressive. Others were reactionary and retrogressive, even though unity itself is a positive step forward. However, even these factors, by themselves, were not sufficient to consummate this unity. It was also necessary to work out certain compromises within the constitution. Among the more important of these were the following:

A. The principle of the preservation of the integrity of each of the affiliated national and international unions was constitutionally guaranteed. As part of this principle, it was determined that the various unions would retain their existing bargaining relations and organizing jurisdiction. It was also stated that where duplication of unions existed, the unions would be "encouraged" to eliminate duplication by merger or by other means on a voluntary basis.

Essentially, this is a recognition that there are many conflicts which will not be easily solved. However, what is agreed upon is that the resolution of these conflicts will take place within the merged federation and not as a precondition for merger. Hence, we should recognize, as the signers of the agreement recognized, that there is a considerable road to

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travel before full unity will be achieved. There are many forces that will affect both the scope and the tempo of the further developments towards unity. These include powerful forces that up till now have refused to sign the no-raid pact. The constitution contains no additional injunction or prohibition of raiding. Conflicts will also include the smaller and less powerful unions that will be struggling against being placed at the mercy of their bigger and stronger brothers. The important conclusion to be drawn from this first principle is that the process of complete unification is still before us.

B. The recognition that both craft and industrial unions are appropriate, equal and necessary as a method of trade-union organization. This second principle is directed towards coping with the basic difference that resulted in the expulsion of the Committee for Industrial Organization from the A. F. of L. almost 20 years ago. It does represent a concession from the A. F. of L. However, it is not as big a concession as it would seem. Today, there are more workers organized industrially in the A. F. of L. than there are in the C.I.O. Life has been a great teacher in this instance. Nonetheless there should be no illusions that there are no dangers in this formulation. There are many and we should take note of them. The major craft unions will fight bitterly for their jurisdiction. In fact, as we have stated earlier, the convention reflected a resurgence of craft demands.

It was the combination of all these

factors that helped guarantee the AFL-CIO convention.

#### THE MERGER AND LABOR UNITY

Our Party greets and hails these steps taken towards unifying the American labor movement. Since its inception our Party has been the firmest exponent of unity of the working class and its trade unions. There are, however, powerful forces at work in industry, in government and, unfortunately, in the leadership of the AFL-CIO as well, that will attempt to distort and convert the deep, profoundly progressive desires for unity within the ranks of the workers into channels in the service of reaction. Hence it will require the most determined struggle on the part of the rank and file, Negro and while, and, in the first place, of the progressive and Left forces to guarantee that through the fight for a broad coalition, the positive possibilities inherent in this merger become the objective basis for further developments towards unifying the American workers. *The merger is a qualitative step forward in the process of reunifying the American labor movement. It does not end that process.* There is still the problem of merging existing international unions in a given industry, the uniting of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. State and city councils, as well as the unification of the political arms of the labor movement. Hundreds of additional merger agreements will have to be negotiated. This creates the possibility for strengthening and improving the character of the subse-

quent agreements as they take place. The A. F. of L.-C.I.O. agreement does not necessarily have to remain the basis for all future agreements. Many of the future agreements can be more advanced and progressive than the agreement which resulted in the merger convention.

Since the agreement to merge the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. was first made public last February, various spokesmen for both business and government have expressed their opinions and attitudes.

#### SOME ATTITUDES TOWARD THE MERGER

The Eisenhower Administration, after its election in 1952, attempted to embrace the A. F. of L. in its reactionary grasp by the appointment of Martin Durkin to the position of Secretary of Labor. However, the open anti-labor bias of the Administration inevitably led to a split and the resignation of Durkin. Since that time two main tactical approaches have developed within the ranks of the Republican Party and within the framework of its general anti-labor bias. One tactical approach is demonstrated by the Goldwater-Knowland grouping. Their vicious and violent attack upon the leadership of the trade-union movement is obviously directed towards attempting to separate the membership from the leadership. Side by side with this, they actually proposed to disfranchise the workers and bar them from organized participation in the field of political action. The second tactical line is demonstrated

by the Mitchell-Case grouping that generally speaks favorably of the merger. They hope, by their identification with the merger, to bring about at least a policy of neutrality on the part of the labor movement, in order to give them the greatest possibilities for winning rank-and-file worker support for the policies of the Cadillac Cabinet.

In the ranks of the Democratic Party, the main leadership identifies itself with the merger and the main domestic demands of labor. This is the position of all three potential Democratic candidates. The dissension within the Democratic Party comes primarily from the Dixiecrat grouping. It reflects the main dominant open shop, anti-labor, anti-Negro forces of the South.

A number of statements have come from industry. Some praise the agreement, saying that it would help eliminate jurisdictional disputes. Others say that in relation to major policy questions it might have certain advantages. They hope that the more conservative leaders of the A. F. of L. would have a dominant effect on holding back the radical leadership of the C.I.O. However, the predominant opinion held by the representatives of Big Business was somewhat different. They are opposed to the merger and much concerned over this development. They fear that the merger will result in a new major drive directed towards organizing the unorganized workers throughout the country. They are concerned that it will result in more aggressive and

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possibly more successful struggles by the workers for wage increase and other economic demands. They are worried and fearful about the increased political strength that will be derived from the new federation. They do not propose, however, to stand idly by, but have decided to combat the possible consequences of this merger in Congress and in the States. The fight, as they have planned it, will be carried on under the slogan of preventing trade—union "monopoly." It will have as its objective the passage of laws to prevent industry-wide bargaining, to bring the unions under the anti-monopoly laws and to increase the number of "Right-to-work" laws in the States.

### TASKS OF PROGRESSIVES

The main question, following this convention, is what is the new organization going to do? For it is the actions that the organization undertakes and the momentum generated that will determine the degree to which changes will take place in the relation of forces in this new organization. Secondly, what are the chief tasks for the progressive forces? They include the following:

1. *The continuing struggle for the rights of Negro workers and the Negro people.* This will require an interpretation of the constitution to help end all bars to Negro workers in affiliated international unions; to put an end to Jim Crow locals. It includes the need to rally support for the civil rights mobilization announced by the UAW and the

NAACP, which is scheduled with the opening of the new Congress.

2. *The organization of the unorganized.* Progressives can contribute to an understanding among the workers of the main direction for the organizing campaign as described by Walter Reuther—that is directed against the monopolies and towards the South in particular. Support should be gathered now for this organizing campaign which will undoubtedly be prepared at the time of the next executive board meeting of the federation, scheduled to take place February 6. As part of the preparations for this organizing campaign, fresh support should be developed for current and important strike struggles such as the Westinghouse strike and the Kohler strike.

3. *Political Action.* The determination of this convention to participate more intensively in the field of political action in 1956 can best be gotten under way by the preparations that are developed now for participation in the coming legislative struggles. The beginning of the year will witness the convening of Congress and a large number of State legislatures. The degree to which the labor movement will energetically move on the field of the legislative struggle will determine the extent to which it will be able to make an impact on the program and the choice of candidates in the coming presidential elections.

4. *Economic Program.* While the convention dealt in an inadequate fashion with the overall economic demands of the workers, the spirit

of the convention can help stimulate specific programs in the various international unions. However, to capture the full effect of this convention, the labor movement should set for itself a series of economic proposals that can be supported by the entire labor movement. Outstanding among these proposals would undoubtedly be the growing demand for a 30-hour week with 40 hours pay. This demand, which is rising in the ranks of the labor movement as a consequence of intensified speed-up and the introduction of automation, is clearly the next big unifying economic demand before the workers.

5. *Peace and foreign policy.* The fight for peace is certainly the biggest political question facing the labor movement. It is also the question on which the workers will meet the firmest resistance of the federation leadership. Some may ask, will not the merger tie the workers more firmly to the foreign policies of Meany? Of course this is not true. The anti-Geneva imperialist ranting of a Meany does not reflect the thinking of the majority of the American workers. The trade unions are first and foremost economic organizations, although we must hasten to add, that they are not *just* economic organizations. Starting from this point of view, it is clear that the merger will result in even greater conflicts with the Eisenhower Administration. Into these conflicts will undoubtedly flow the inherent peace desires of the workers. As a consequence of this merger the im-

perialist policies of the Meany's will meet with increasing rebuff. Therefore, as one aspect of this question, the unfolding struggles of the workers in the next period will offer a new arena for transforming their peace desires into opposition to the imperialist policies of the Administration supported by the Meany leadership. In addition, as stated earlier, there is differing emphasis within the ranks on the importance of economic aid. The question can be posed, why not send butter instead of guns? This will not only help to relieve international tensions, but will also aid in guaranteeing that the products of American industry find greater markets through the process of unrestricted international trade.

The contradictory features of the convention's foreign policy resolution should also be examined from the viewpoint of pressing for action on those aspects that are in the interests of the peaceful desires of the American workers. Outstanding among these questions is the opposition on the part of the leadership to permitting an exchange of trade-union delegations. It is inconceivable that the federation leadership will for long be able to prevent the natural desires of the American workers to see for themselves what is going on in the Soviet Union, China, and the People's Democracies.

6. There is another group of questions around which forces in the organization will be taking a position and with which the progressives are not unconcerned. The most im-

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portant will be the conflict of craft versus industrial unionism. It is clear from the conclusions of this convention that there will be need for a renewed struggle for the principle of industrial unionism. Craft ideology will not easily die.

There is also the problem of the further process of unity between international unions, State and city councils, as well as C.I.O.-PAC and A. F. of L.-LLPE. The process of further unification should include the various independent unions that are still outside the federation. These unions encompass more than two million workers. They are divided into two main groups. The first group includes such unions as the railroad workers and the United Mine workers and various independent one-shop organizations. The second group includes the indepen-

dent progressive-led unions expelled by the C.I.O. in 1948. It is clear that the merger convention will bring about new pressures for uniting all these unions within the main stream of labor as represented by the AFL-CIO.

\* \* \*

This merger convention was a result of the growing demand for unity that proceeded from among the ranks of the workers. The merger convention, in turn, will have an important impact in stimulating even greater activity and momentum on the part of the rank and file. We are entering a new historic phase in the development of the American labor movement, one which strengthens the hand of the organized workers in their ability to give leadership to the next big forward movement of the American people.

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