

Bulletin

OF THE WORKERS PARTY

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(The following resolution was submitted to the Political Committee for discussion and adoption. The Political Committee rejected the resolution. It is herewith being presented only in the names of its supporters, Comrades Max Shachtman and Nathan Gould. Comrade Hal Draper has announced that he is drafting a document of his own to submit to the Political Committee. - Editor)

THE SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND OUR NEXT TASKS

The United States has emerged from the second World War as the principal victor. Its economic condition is so powerful and vigorous relative to the economy of all other countries, and at the same time so vitally affected by the profound difficulties of the other countries, that it finds imposed upon it a tremendous problem. It has the task of resuscitating, maintaining and expanding the economy of the rest of the capitalist world in order to ward off or reduce to a minimum the violent social upheavals that threaten it and thereby to prepare it for its role in the coming war between the two imperialist blocs.

This task exercises a determining effect upon the evolution of the American economy. To fulfill it requires the maintenance and in some cases the expansion of the productive capacity, primarily of the United States and secondarily of the satellites dependent upon it, and a steady increase in the extent to which this capacity is devoted to the production of means of destruction, that is, production for war and for war preparation.

The United States decided the defeat of the Axis powers in the war by virtue of its crushing industrial and financial superiority. To accomplish this defeat, the United States expanded its productive forces, at the war-time peak, to twice the level of the last pre-war year (if the difference in commodity prices is ignored) and yet succeeded in maintaining an almost equal division between production for civilian purposes and production for war purposes. The expansion was thus largely accounted for by military production. The end of the war and the almost complete suspension of production for military purposes did not, however, result in a profound economic crisis with massive shutting down of industry and mass unemployment, but only in the comparatively brief dislocations of the reconversion period. A vast purchasing capacity was built up among the workers and especially among the farmers during the war. Although the income of the working class as a whole did not increase to the same degree as the faster growing national income, it did increase absolutely and, while somewhat lowered during the reconversion period and considerably lowered by price inflation, it constituted a tremendous market for post-war consumer goods. In addition, the first post-war period made possible the resumption of large-scale capital expansion, modernization of plant equipment and the production of industrial goods which was suspended during the war or which was made possible for the first time in more than a decade by the huge accumulation of financial reserves during the war. Finally, the end of the war reopened big export markets for American capital. American industry, its plants in-

tact, was the only one in a position to satisfy the requirements of this market which were extensive enough to eliminate the danger of an economic crisis in the United States immediately after the war. Except for isolated and specialized branches of industry (aircraft, for example), American economy, following the reconversion period, entered into production on a scale unprecedented in peace-time and now exceeding even the highest war-time peak, both from the standpoint of the number of workers employed and (again ignoring the difference in price levels) of the value of goods produced, both of which are now the highest in history.

However, the very expansion of the industrial plant has made it possible for the economy, in the two-three short years after the end of the war, to satisfy the previously parched consumer market in one field after another. In some branches of industry, particularly in the "soft" or non-durable goods, the tendency toward overproduction is already clearly manifest. In these branches, the "sellers' market" is turning or has already turned into a "buyers' market." This tendency is so marked that the textile industry, for example, has already resorted to deliberate underproduction, by means of partial shutdowns or the shorter work-week, in an effort to maintain the inflationary high prices. The same tendency will necessarily manifest itself in other branches of industry. A different picture is presented by heavy industry, by the producers of "hard" or durable goods. Steel, with an all-time high production capacity, is still in short supply and is available to many manufacturers only on the grey market, despite a war-time and post-war expansion and modernization program. Automobile production continues to be heavy, with a recorded backlog of orders to assure anywhere from one to two more years of top production. The same holds true for such vital branches of industry as those that supply railroad equipment, for replacement or modernization, and the continuing farm machinery and equipment market. The oil industry continues to operate under a heavy and almost insatiable demand. There are no signs of an early decline in the rate of production or in prices of the output of such basic industries as rubber, aluminum, non-ferrous metals (especially the more rare and strategic metals that are being stockpiled), industrial chemicals and rayon, coal, lumber and other building materials.

If it were possible to abstract the United States and its economy from the rest of the world, the undebatable conclusion could be drawn that in another year or two the country would be plunged into another of the classic capitalist crises of overproduction, probably the most severe and lasting on record. Such an abstraction is impossible; in any case, it renders impossible any concrete analysis. By its whole nature and its whole past, the United States has matured for its decisive part in the struggle for single world domination which is now going on and which must, given the imperialist character of the contestants, culminate in the most violent war in history. The United States is driven to subjugate but not to annihilate its satellites and junior partners. It is driven to invade their national sovereignty or to reduce its significance, but not to deprive them of all economic life. To prepare these countries for their part in the United States-Russian conflict, the United States must of necessity bolster up their economies, even if essentially within the limits of a war economy or potential war economy. The economic rehabilita-

tion of these countries is thus purchased at the price of enlistment or impressment into the American war bloc. The same economic rehabilitation, however, is one of the most important assurances against an early or precipitate economic crisis in the United States. Half or more of the Marshall Plan aid to the European countries is being allocated in the form of indirect orders upon American industry, providing it with an important sector of the market it requires for its relative equilibrium. Furthermore, the United States has at its disposal a considerable actual and potential market in the countries of Asia and Latin America.. The economic reconstruction or pacification of Europe is, however, only the preliminary to its increased fortification and militarization, which in turn imply increased governmental market for heavy industry in the United States.

The main arsenal of American imperialism must remain within the United States, which must be in a position not only to contest successfully with its principal enemy but to dominate successfully over its satellites. As the tendency to overproduction on the domestic market becomes marked, and even before, the whole international situation - not at any given conjuncture but taken in its broad and long-term development - increases the tempo and scope of the armaments program which operates as a counteracting tendency. Although the second World War ended only three years ago and the third World War appears to be still off in the distance; and although, on the other hand, there are still no serious signs of an economic crisis in the nerve centers of American industry today -- the United States has already launched a domestic armaments program so imposing as to have no parallel in the peace-time history of the country. The immediate armaments program already voted by the government calls for the expenditure of \$14,000,000,000, of which one-fourth has already been placed, mainly in aircraft orders. What this already authorized amount signifies may be judged by comparing it with almost exactly the same amount supervised by the Office of Production Management in the 20,000 supply contracts of \$10,000 or more placed as war orders in September, 1941, that is, at a time when the United States was but a few weeks away from full-scale and official participation in the war. Orders already placed under this program mean the revival of the huge aviation industry which was allowed to collapse at the end of the war; it means the sustainment of the weakened machine-tool and precision instruments industries; it means the re-allocation of steel and other products, already in short supply, to war instead of civilian production. There is little reason to believe that anything but an increase and extension of the American armaments program is to be looked for in the period ahead. This trend is recognized in all serious economic and political circles. It is the reason for the notable shift of traders and investors from consumer goods to capital goods. A heavy armaments program- to say nothing of war itself - gives the heavy or capital goods industries all the assurances of material supplies and gives no assurances of such supplies to the consumer goods industries. The shift to the capital goods industries is further stimulated by the consideration that continued inflation will produce far greater "buyers' resistance" from the individual consumer than from the corporate consumer whose market and income is far more extensive. The Shift is stimulated, finally and paradoxically, by the consideration that the boom usually declines first in the consumer goods industries, in the "soft lines" which feel the recession sooner than the heavier industries.

The principal factors in operation therefore dictate the conclusion that the United States may very well, in fact almost certainly will, experience radical dislocations, especially in the light and auxiliary industries, and even an economic recession, at the end of another year or two. However, there is no serious reason to look forward, within any such period, to the classical capitalist crisis of overproduction which, in the past, periodically and repeatedly maimed and prostrated the basic industries of the country, bringing in its train a multi-millioned army of unemployed. A crisis based upon a narrowing market in consumer goods at a time of a sustained or widening market in capital goods, is, if not inconceivable, then very improbable. At the same time, the very way in which the crisis is to be averted or "surmounted", constitutes the most crushing indictment of decadent capitalism. The traditional economic collapse can now be averted only by threatening all civilization with collapse. In reality, it is not averted at all. It is merely transformed into the most comprehensive, profound, convulsing and agonizing crisis the human race has ever known - modern total war. The change in the character and form of the crisis, corresponding to the change in the economic structure of capitalism and the social decay it entails, is a question of cardinal importance.

The continued shift from a "normal" economy to a war or war-preparation economy is becoming more and more the normal state of capitalism. It substitutes for the sufferings and contradictions of the traditional crisis a number of new and different sufferings and contradictions. It assures a high level of employment, but the steady income of the workers brings about not a real but a pseudo prosperity. Concentration on armaments and capital goods industries, which have priority of allocation of raw materials, machinery, labor forces and government subsidy, occurs at the expense of the consumer goods industries. Shortage of the latter's products in the face of widespread demand, maintains a steady inflationary pressure to raise prices, accompanied by the scourge of black market prices - the deadly combination against the standard of living of the masses. Government budgets, swollen by armament expenditures, require a tremendous tax burden which always weighs down disproportionately upon the living standards of the people; while the armaments makers and monopolists enjoy the special protection of the government which guarantees them a profitable market for their products, and are the principal profiteers from the protracted inflation.

Still early in the shift to the armaments economy, the United States now has a national budget of \$40,000,000,000. The bulk of this unparalleled budget is assigned to war costs, past, present and future. This budget represents a tax of about twenty percent upon the total present national production of the country -- and if the state and municipal budgets are added, the tax on the national income runs to about twenty-five percent. To run the governmental affairs of the wealthiest and most powerful of the decaying capitalist nations now requires two out of every eight hours of the work of every individual in the country. The national debt is now a good fifty times greater than it was before the first World War; the interest alone on the national debt today is larger than the national debt as a whole about thirty years ago; and the big bulk of the

present national debt was incurred during the four years of American participation in the second World War and as a direct result of this participation. The difference between the two capitalist parties over the size of the national budget is, at its extreme points, inconsequential; it is a matter at most of a very few billion out of the total of forty. The national budget, including the servicing of the fabulous national debt, which are respectively primarily a war budget and a war debt, constitutes by far the greatest single inflationary force in the economy of the country. On the basis of the present national budget, that is, even before it has assumed the much greater proportions which the growing war preparations will surely give it - for the capitalist politicians to speak of any serious check on inflation is at best a sign of ignorance or utopianism; as a rule it is sheer demagoguery. The harshest effects of inflation are always felt by the working masses. Only the mass production of consumer goods under conditions of a high wage level can put an end to inflation on a sound basis. The growing government bureaucracy and growing governmental expenditures necessitated by the growing complexity and antagonisms of capitalist economy, on the one hand, and the growing armaments economy that inevitable accompanies capitalist imperialism, on the other hand, are the most gigantic and principal obstacles to the mass production of consumer goods. Even in the wealthy United States, an armaments economy means a constant undermining of the prosperity and well-being of the people.

Parallel to the development of an armament economy runs the tendency toward a police state. It is important to judge correctly the speed of this tendency and the stage which it reaches at each point in its development. The failure to do this entails the danger of one of two extremes: succumbing to democratic illusions or confusing the partial unfolding of the tendency with its ultimate conclusion. The phenomenon, characteristic of all class states today, may be expressed almost mathematically in a broad formula: the greater the share of the armaments economy over against the civilian economy, minus the degree of resistance of the working classes, the stronger is the tendency toward converting the democratic state into the authoritarian or totalitarian police state.

The main tendency in American government for the past decade or more has been the gradual shift from rule by democratic legislative action to rule by executive decree promulgated all along the line from the presidential office down to the office of the smallest government commission or bureau. Democratic representative government is retained in all its traditional forms, but the substance is increasingly weakened. Popular control of government, even in its classic form and therefore in the form of bourgeois class rule, has become increasingly remote and ineffectual and is more and more subverted and evaded by a thousand bureaucratic devices. Given the still tremendous wealth of the United States ("democracy is a luxury of the rich states") and, what is more important, the immense size of the organized labor movement, the traditional democratic rights of the people have not yet been abolished. But these rights are continually hemmed in and restricted in one field after another. The people are less and less free to exercise their rights; the government is more and more free to exercise its power over the people

For the first time in its history, the United States has instituted a peace-time conscript army in the guise of universal military training. Military officials and military decisions exert an unprecedented weight upon the course of the country's economic organization. Government offices, at home and abroad, are staffed with military men to a greater extent than ever before in American history. On the pretext of combatting the Communists and promoting "industrial peace," the federal and numerous state legislatures have already imposed restrictive chains on the rights and movements of the labor unions (Taft-Hartley Law, etc.) that have not been known in this country for a hundred years, nullifying or undermining most of the legislative gains made by the labor movement in the past thirty years. On the same pretext, bills providing for the outlawing and suppression of revolutionary or nonconformist organizations are already well under way in the federal legislature. The same organizations are placed under unofficial but effective discriminatory handicaps by the unlegislated and arbitrary but simple device of executive public listing as "subversive." "Loyalty oaths" and witch hunts conducted jointly or separately by the executive or legislative branches are calculated to create an ideological reign of terror not only in the ranks of government officials and employees but also in the ranks of workers in private employ. Communist-baiting and Red-baiting are now official government doctrine and the two capitalist parties vie for prominence in espousing it and practising it. It is precisely because the democratic traditions are old, strong and deeprooted in the United States that strong pressure must be exerted to undermine and break them.

But for the organized and intransigent opposition of the working class, the development of the reactionary trend to its totalitarian conclusion is absolutely inevitable. Mobilization of the working class in a resolute struggle for democracy, against militarism, war and reaction, a struggle which demands for its successful prosecution the complete political independence of the working class, is the first and most urgent task of the day.

II

Political Realignments in the United States

The most significant political event in the United States is the radical party realignment that is taking place. This realignment, long delayed by a number of forces, is only at its beginning.

For almost a century, the political situation in the United States has been dominated by the two-party system. All during this period it remained unbroken except for the gradual but very slow rise of the old Socialist Party before the first World War, the shortlived Bull Moose Party of 1912, and the ephemeral trust-busting third party of LaFollette-Wheeler in 1924. For a long time the two capitalist parties have been indistinguishable from any fundamental standpoint. The disintegration of one of them - in this case the Democratic Party, the less homogeneous of the two - and its succession by a third party was therefore inevitable under the pressure of

conflicting social interests. The break-up of the Democratic Party was not only delayed but even seemed to be replaced by a tendency toward revivification and consolidation with the crisis of 1929 and the advent of the Rooseveltian New Deal. New Dealism, without losing any of the old components of the Democratic Party, succeeded in establishing and holding together a coalition between the "liberal" bourgeoisie and the labor movement, with the corrupt northern city machines and the reactionary southern wing as counterweight at the right. This coalition was achieved and maintained by proclaiming the party, or at least its foremost official spokesmen, as a party of bourgeois reformism. Thereby the two-party system was continued long after the objective basis for it had become obsolescent. The natural evolution of the working class toward an independent political movement was arrested. The labor movement was tied to the Democratic Party more than ever before, but primarily insofar as the Democratic Party was tied to the New Deal, that is, to bourgeois reformism.

The war brought a definite end to the New Deal. Further progress along the line of reforms through the agency of the Democratic Party proved to be impossible. The New Deal wing of the party found it necessary to fight to maintain even those reforms which it had originally instituted, and to fight for them less against the Republican Party than against the conservative wing of its own party which was gaining increasingly dominant and decisive positions both in the organization itself and in the houses of Congress. In one case after another the "fight" ended in a miserable compromise with the conservative wing or outright capitulation to it. Under these circumstances, the Democratic Party was unable to give full satisfaction to any of the classes and succeeded only in irritating all of them and stimulating their discontentment. The swing to the right in the latest elections was thereby guaranteed. The bulk of the farm vote and the vote of most of the urban upper middle classes shifted strongly to the Republican Party. In turn, this resulted in emboldening the right-wing elements in the Democratic Party, whose program for the reconstruction of the party was and remains to equal or outdo the Republicans in conservatism. Together with the Republican Party, with whom they jointly controlled Congress, they share equal responsibility for all the legislation adopted and all the legislation defeated.

In the hope of holding together the party and refurbishing it for victory in the 1948 elections, the imitation Roosevelt who succeeded the founder of the New Deal tried several times to make concessions to both wings of the party. Each concession to one side only further alienated the other side. The purely rhetorical championing of a civil rights program, a concession to the liberal-labor elements, infuriated the southern reactionary wing. The program of cold war against Russia, the witch-hunting and Red-baiting campaign, the monopoly-favoring armaments program, the retreat on price control, the strike-breaking actions - all acceptable to the southern reactionaries - plus the failure to halt inflation and to build houses, have driven away or cooled the ardor of the liberal-labor elements. This political headlessness of the former New Deal party only expresses the collapse of the program of bourgeois reformism. The hopelessness of any attempt to restore it was spectacularly dis-

closed by the pitiable efforts not only of the New Deal elements (Liberal Party, ADA, labor officialdom) but also of the corrupt Democratic city machines (Tammany, Arvey, Hague) to replace Truman with a new symbol, even if an unknown "neutral" one, and by their equally pitiable failure to achieve this trivial objective. The New Deal party triumphed over the Republicans because of its political strength and superiority. What is left of the Democratic Party today can hold together or win support from the people not because of any political strength or superiority it enjoys but only because of the political weakness and lack of a clear-cut alternative in the Republican Party. For if the Democrats are not distinguished in any significant political sense from the Republicans, neither are the Republicans distinguished from the Democrats. At all events, the disintegration of the Democratic Party is now clearly begun and remains only to develop further. On the right, it has lost the Dixiecrat Party, whose strength, while still to be determined, is obviously substantial. On the left, it has lost millions of the old New Deal mass support to the banner of the Wallace party. So far as the labor leaders are concerned, whose active support was decisive for the past Democratic Party victories, Truman can count on little more than their formal, reluctant and unenthusiastic endorsement.

The formation of the Wallace party is the most important political development to occur in the United States in years. It is clear that the most conscious and the only compactly organized force in the party are the Stalinists. The main drive to give the Wallace movement organized party form came from the Stalinists. Their aim is to establish the strongest and widest possible political front to serve as an instrument of Russian foreign policy in the United States. The Wallace party, dominated politically and organizationally by the Stalinists, is such an instrument. In this sense, it is the creation and the tool of Stalinism. However, there is another side to the Wallace movement, and it would be a grave error to ignore it. The broad mass support it has aroused is not confined to the Stalinists and their direct or conscious followers, but represents on the whole a healthy and progressive force. This force must be distinguished from the Stalinist leadership of the party. While the latter supports the party for its own reactionary reasons, the former supports it for progressive reasons. While the latter seeks merely to create difficulties for American capitalism in the interests of the Kremlin, the former is seeking to find a road out of the "difficulties" of American capitalism, in its own way and in its own interests.

In the face of a hysterical, vicious and reactionary attack conducted against it by the entire capitalist press, the new party has already attracted the support or sympathy of great numbers of workers, small farmers, members of the lower middle class, students, war veterans and Negroes. The heavy Stalinist taint of the party, in fact, the domination of the party machinery by the Stalinists and their control of the key programmatic declarations of the party, has undoubtedly militated against its enlistment of far wider support than it already enjoys. But the vast majority of those who do support the Wallace party do so not because of the Stalinist control but in spite of it; do so in courageous political defiance of the reactionary press campaign; do so either out of disbelief in the

reports of Stalinist domination or in the hope that once the party is well established, with the aid of the Stalinist organizers, it will be possible to "put them in their place" or dispense with them altogether. These hundreds of thousands and even millions are animated by essentially progressive considerations. They passionately desire peace, freedom and prosperity. They are convinced that there is no hope of attaining these through the agency of the old capitalist parties. They have not hesitated to launch or give support to a new party in order to attain them by their independent efforts.

The Wallace party is not a homogeneous body. It is dualistic both in its program and its leadership. Consequently it already contains the flourishing seed for its coming division into two separate parts. Its program and leadership distinguish it fundamentally from the traditional American third parties. In practically all cases, these parties were either based upon a very small and specific segment of the population (farmers or working-class socialist vanguard) or had an anachronistic utopian program (break-up of the trusts, money manipulation). The Wallace party, to a considerable extent under the influence of the Stalinists, to be sure, does not proclaim the utopian objective of breaking up the trusts but rather the taking over (nationalization) of the monopolies by a "people's government." The party makes its main appeal to the most oppressed social groups - workers, farmers, Negroes (its appeal to the small business man is of secondary importance) and seeks to base itself upon them. It is the only third party of any significance that has taken a position in support of the most oppressed section of the people, the Negroes. From this point of view, the Wallace party is by far the most advanced of the petty-bourgeois radical parties in the history of the country.

On the other hand, the decisive levers of the organizational machinery of the party are now firmly in the hands of the Stalinists. In addition, the point which the party leadership and candidates have laid the greatest emphasis upon, the point which they proclaim as their main distinction from the Democratic and Republican Parties and which dominates and colors all the others - the platform plank on foreign policy, the program for peace - is reactionary through and through. It provides alternately for appeasement and capitulation to the imperialist program of Stalinist totalitarianism, for which Wallace is today the outstanding non-Stalinist apologist. These two related considerations clearly outweigh what is progressive in the Wallace party. They rule out support of the party by the socialist movement. They undoubtedly constitute the main reasons for the non-support of the party by the organized labor movement and especially by its most advanced and conscious militants. These workers have already had considerable experience with the Stalinists in their own organizations and struggles and their suspicion and antagonism toward any movement dominated by the Stalinists is fully justified. The middle class or other isolated individuals who make up a large part of the Wallace movement have never or seldom had such experience with the Stalinists and their knowledge of them is indirect. Hence they are more amenable to the idea of collaborating with or tolerating the Stalinists and their political influence, especially when their

antagonism to any form of Red baiting is skillfully exploited by the Stalinists themselves.

The collaboration between the Stalinist and non-Stalinist elements cannot possibly endure, either in the ranks or in the leadership. The dualistic character of the party can be maintained only for a short period of time. The popular response to the Wallace movement is not a creation of the Stalinists; they are its alien and parasitic beneficiaries. The large mass of the support of the Wallace party wants a radical reform of American capitalism. The Stalinist group in the party wants the paralysis of American capitalism for the benefit of Russian imperialism. The collaboration of these two groups is based only upon a conjunctural or apparent similarity of aims; it is not solidly or durably founded. It must come to an end as each tendency finds it possible or necessary to express its real aims more clearly and therewith antagonistically. Because they are more conscious politically, the Stalinists have been acting from the very beginning on the basis of an awareness of the inherently dualistic character of the party. That is why they have been forced to risk even the most blatant maneuvers to assure themselves the maximum of organizational control against the potential organized anti-Stalinist force in the party. There are already indications of the rift which will in all likelihood break out into an irreparable schism at a later stage. The same fundamental antagonism has already been witnessed in any number of public organizations in which the same collaboration was attempted. In every case, the split with the Stalinists eventually occurred: Lewis, Murray, Curran, Quill, the Liberal group in the ALP, then the Amalgamated Clothing Workers group in the ALP, etc. There is no political or other reason for believing that the Wallace party will be an exception to this rule. As in the other cases, its two main components are politically irreconcilable.

While we cannot and do not support the Wallace party today, neither are we indifferent to the conflict that is immanent in it. It is a socialist duty to help free every popular movement of the cancer of Stalinism in order that its progressive tendencies may be allowed to develop fully and freely. This duty applies to the Wallace movement as well. It is quite possible that in the inevitable schism the Stalinists will succeed in maintaining organizational control of the shell of a Wallace party, as they have succeeded in maintaining control of the New York ALP. In such a case, many of the present supporters of the third party will very likely fall into political indifference and cease to be available for the genuinely independent class movement that is urgently required. Wherever possible and feasible, therefore, and without abandoning our own program and critical independence, we must stimulate and support every progressive opposition to the Stalinist program and Stalinist rule of the Wallace party, stressing at all times the need of rallying the maximum forces for the development of a genuine labor party in the United States, completely independent both from American and Russian imperialism.

We cannot and therefore we do not take a dogmatic position on whether or not the Wallace party will be transformed into an independent labor party; whether or not its main stream will enter as

an important component of a labor party to be formed outside of it and by other elements. The course of the struggle will decide these questions. The Wallace party already shows, in its limited and distorted way, that there is a wide base for an independent third party challenging the two old capitalist parties. Such a party would find its most solid, durable and progressive foundation in the most powerful, democratic and representative organizations in the country, the trade unions. The Wallace party already shows concretely that there are millions in the United States who want and are ready to work for a radical social change because they are thoroughly dissatisfied with what capitalism and the capitalist parties have brought them.

The more concrete the prospect of the formation of a labor party, the more necessary it becomes to clarify and concretize the general views we put forward on the labor party in the past and to eliminate all possible ambiguities and errors.

We retain in full our conception of the labor party, both in regard to its base, its program and its leadership. But we cannot deceive ourselves into the belief that when a labor party is formed it will correspond to our conception. There is, in fact, sufficient reason to believe otherwise. The establishment by the American working class, or by its organized sections, of an independent political party will be a revolutionary act because it will represent the declaration of political independence from the political parties of the bourgeoisie. The independence of such a party will be represented primarily by its organizational separation from the bourgeois parties, even though this organizational separation has profound political significance in that it signifies the recognition by the workers of the need of a class political movement separate and apart from those of the capitalist class. This is what we mean in the first place by an independent labor party.

However, the character of a party is not determined primarily or mainly by its class composition. It is determined by its program and its leadership. All the present indications are that a labor party, when formed, will have a program and a leadership that will stamp the movement as a "third capitalist party," or more accurately, a petty-bourgeois workers' party - proletarian in composition and petty-bourgeois in program and leadership. In this respect, the labor party will not, at first, differ in any important respect from the present Wallace party freed from its Stalinist perversion; indeed, in its domestic program it may not even be as advanced as the Wallace party. It is even possible that at the outset such a party will not be formally composed of and based upon the mass trade unions, but will merely rely primarily upon their strength and support. However, the natural tendency will be for these workers' organizations to become the base of such a party which cannot even think of becoming a serious political force without drawing its principal strength from the multimillioned labor unions. These initial characteristics will not deprive the party of its immense progressive significance and even more progressive possibilities. In any case, the Marxists must be prepared from the very beginning to support such a party and to participate outstandingly in its foundation and construction, even if it does not correspond to their con-

ception of what it "ideally" should be. It is precisely their task to spearhead the movement to assure working-class predominance in the party; to assure an increasingly militant, increasingly socialist and revolutionary program and leadership in the party; to help move it along the road to becoming a party of the class struggle instead of a pure-and-simple parliamentary reformist party.

There are many signs that we stand on the eve of decisive developments in the working-class movement, including most significantly the founding of a national labor party, which will radically alter the political relationships in the country. The workers of the United States have never been so conscious of the decisive importance of organized political action as they are today. The same holds true, in a different way, of the trade-union leadership as well. Practically every important union has a special political action committee of its own - the CIO, the AFL, the Railroad Brotherhoods, the Machinists' Union - all seeking to mobilize the voting power of the workers as a class bloc even if not as yet for their independent class party. Soon after the end of the war, the workers, conscious of their tremendous strength of organization, conducted a number of decisive strikes, the miners' general strike outstanding among them. The very fact that the workers responded so unanimously and disciplinedly to the strike calls of the unions, that no serious attempt was made to break the strikes by means of scabs, only emphasized the inherent limitations of pure-and-simple economic action, especially under the conditions of present-day capitalism. The fact that the miners' strike was so successful that it immediately threatened the economic structure of the country brought the workers face to face not so much with the operators as with the political machine of the capitalist class, the government, which forced the miners back to work. In the case of other strikes or strike threats, the experience of the workers has showed them that wage increases gained by economic strength are immediately cancelled out by new increases in the cost of living, by the inflation which the political power alone is capable of dealing with. The same political power, furthermore, is able to legislate a Taft-Hartley Law which places the heaviest restrictions upon the normal activity of the union movement.

Stimulating the movement toward a new party are a number of other factors. There is today the most widespread discontentment among the workers with both capitalist parties. Their confidence in these parties is at an extremely low ebb. Their disillusionment with the Democratic Party which they carried to victory in four presidential elections has not been so great in a quarter of a century. Even the labor leaders, who tried so desperately and miserably to replace the discredited Truman with a less vulnerable candidate, are sluggishly, unenthusiastically and with tongue in cheek giving more or less formal endorsements to the Truman campaign. Their attitude is motivated less by idealistic indignation than by practical bureaucratic considerations. Their power is based upon living mass movements. Their position is secured to the extent that they are able to gain concessions for these movements. The capitalist parties, the Democratic included, are less and less able to grant even the most modest concessions which the labor officialdom desires. In fact, the whole tendency is to withdraw or cancel out the concessions made in the past. Like their similars in the European countries, the labor bureaucracy

or sections of it are very slowly coming to the conclusion that their positions can best be secured by acquiring political bargaining power which is directly under their control and at their disposal. There is less and less reason every day for thinking that the reformist labor leadership of the United States will fail to take the political road of its similars in virtually all the other capitalist countries of the world. Another factor is the organization of the last remnants of the New Deal labor-liberal coalition into the Americans for Democratic Action. Its program for "boring from within" the Democratic Party for the purpose of reforming it back to early Rooseveltism is a preposterous utopia with no durability. It is not likely that the forces represented by the ADA will be able for long to resist the continuing pressure of the Wallace party by offering as an alternative the utter futility of Democratic-Party-reformism. It is much more likely that, just as the labor-liberal coalition in New York found itself obliged to counterpose the Liberal Party to the Stalinized ALP, so the Reuther-Dubinsky-Rieve-Henderson coalition will feel impelled to counterpose a national "Liberal Party" backed by powerful national unions to the Stalinized Wallace party. Should this occur, a coalescence between the Reuther-Henderson party and the non-Stalinist elements of the Wallace party would only be a matter of time since no serious political differences divide them.

In this way or in one similar to it, the formation of a national labor party is now on the horizon. Its founding will have extensive and intensive political repercussions in this country and throughout the world. Its importance would be hard to overestimate. The Marxist vanguard hails it with eagerness, enthusiasm and unbounded confidence in the political development of the working class in the new movement and in the role which the vanguard will play in its midst. The acceleration of this development, the work of agitation for such a party and of active, initiating participation in its upbuilding - now more than ever we regard this as our supreme political task of the day, to which all other activity is subordinated and to which all other activity must lead.

III

Position and Tasks of the Marxists

The task of the Marxists organized in the Workers Party is to use the next period for the purpose of best preparing themselves, their political sympathizers and all those militants who can be recruited to our movement, for the still greater, more imposing and more promising task which will confront them as the nucleus of the left wing of the coming Labor Party. Indispensable to the fulfillment of this task is a clear understanding of the present position and role of the Marxist movement, in which the Workers Party represents the most advanced, conscious and consistent section.

The main predecessor of our party, and the one with whose tradition and struggle it is most closely tied, is the Trotskyist movement, enriched and broadened by the inflow of streams with other political origins. In this country, the Trotskyist movement never succeeded in

developing beyond the stage of a faction of another political party or an independent propaganda group. On three different occasions, it attempted to organize a political party (W.P.U.S., S.W.P., W.P. of today). As in practically all other countries, the attempts made in the United States were not crowned with success. That numerous errors were made in the course of these attempts is now incontestable, but it is likewise clear that they were not the primary or principal cause for the failure to establish a genuine independent Marxian political party. The principal cause is to be found outside the Trotskyist movement itself.

The degeneration of the Russian revolution not only weakened and discredited Marxism but produced the most powerful and reactionary pseudo-Marxian movement ever known. To the extent that Stalinism appeared to be the continuation of the socialist content of the revolution, it diverted to itself and thereby subverted the revolutionary elements who would otherwise build up the genuine Marxian party. To the extent that Stalinism appeared and still appears to the masses as a totalitarian reaction that is associated or confounded with revolutionary socialism, it has likewise served as a potent barrier to the construction of a genuine Marxian party. The contemporary Marxian movement is inseparably bound up with the Bolshevik revolution and its outcome. The outcome of the revolution (that is, of its national isolation) was Stalinism. The Marxian movement today is therefore decisively bound up with Stalinism, that is, with the struggle against Stalinism and its outcome. It is the strength of Stalinism that has primarily determined the weakness of Marxism. The latter can be restored as a powerful force if Stalinism is decisively defeated. But this holds true only if Stalinism is defeated by a progressive or revolutionary force, that is, one based upon the working class and operating in its interests. This concept of the struggle against Stalinism is decisive for the Marxian movement.

In the United States, the slow growth and at times the standstill of the Marxian movement, determined on an international and historical scale by the rise of Stalinism, have been specifically influenced by the particular circumstances of the growth and power of American capitalism and the consequent political retardation of the American working class. The Marxian movement can and must be further advanced than the working class in whose midst it develops, but it cannot acquire a strength in arbitrary independence of the conditions and stage of development of the working class itself. These conditions have militated against the growth of a significant working-class political party in the United States, either reformist or revolutionary.

These are the two basic and interdependent causes for the isolation of the Marxian movement in this country, for its continued existence as an essentially propaganda group.

More than a decade ago, the tremendous potentialities of the American working class were revealed in the lightning-like and stormy creation of the CIO. Almost overnight, the most authentic and important sections of the American proletariat organized themselves into the most advanced union forms and adopted some of the most advanced forms of economic struggle in consolidating its positions.

The persistent and apparently fruitless agitation for organizing the unorganized into industrial unions, conducted for decades by the vanguard movement, was materialized and vindicated in a concentrated period of time by the spontaneous action of the masses themselves. The Trotskyist movement undoubtedly missed an unparalleled opportunity to root itself deeply and significantly in the most important new mass movement of the twentieth century in the United States. Its participation in the forming and building of the CIO was more incidental and accidental than anything else. Preoccupied with other problems, it failed to prepare itself and to mobilize its full strength for the task and opportunity that really faced it. The Stalinists consciously and concertedly did seize the opportunity and this accounted for their political power in the unions for years afterward; in fact, their development as a mass party really dates from the birth of the CIO.

Today, the Marxists are once again approaching an opportunity to root themselves deeply in a new working-class movement. It is not yet in actual existence, but the main indications show it to be on the near horizon. This new movement, the mass party of the American working class, will have much greater political and social significance even than the CIO itself, once it acquires body and sweep. The Wallace party, which is in a sense the forerunner of the workers' party to come, has created only a flurry in comparison with the storm which a broad labor party supported by the trade unions will undoubtedly create around itself in a short time. Third parties throughout the political past of the United States had nothing like the tremendous and organized social reservoir upon which to draw, namely, a multi-millioned union movement composed in its majority of the proletariat of the basic, mass-production industries, plus millions of awakened and increasingly conscious national minorities like the Negroes and the Jews.

The appearance of this party opens up vast possibilities for the growth of the Marxist movement, the most highly encouraging prospects it has faced in decades. We cannot entertain any illusions about the readiness of the politically-organized proletariat of the United States adopting a revolutionary program and leadership overnight.

But the character of the American working class and its militant sections, on the one side, and the sharp contradictions which mark the decay of American capitalism, on the other, indicate that the ranks of the new party will listen attentively to a bold and advanced program of immediate demands. In the second place, the party is in the process of appearing at a time when Stalinism not only seems to have passed the peak of its strength in Europe, but when it has reached a very low level of strength and influence in the working-class movement of this country. This not only creates more favorable conditions for the progressive development of the new party when it is formed, but also for its growth as a progressive and decisive force in the struggle against Stalinism, both here and abroad.

The fact that the labor party is already on the political horizon but not yet actually established, affords us invaluable time in which to prepare and orient our own movement for the imposing tasks ahead. We are essentially a propaganda group. If we have continued up to now to call our organization a party, it has been in full con-

sciousness of the reservations attached to this name. These reservations may have sufficed to justify the name "party" up to now. The name indicated our aim to become a party but not a claim that we already constituted a political party of the proletariat. Its use was justified as an emphasis on the need of a working-class political party in a period when the working class did not yet have such a party. The fact remains that we are only an advanced political part of the proletariat but not a party of the proletariat. The name "party" is justified only for such a political organization as can speak in the name of decisive sections of the working class and can mobilize them for political action; or at least if it faces the immediate prospect of becoming such an organization. We do not have any need to deceive ourselves into such a belief about our movement. Moreover, the indications are that the labor movement of this country is on the eve of forming an independent party of its own. The first step in preparing ourselves for the role we are called upon to play in helping to form and build this party is the public acknowledgment that we consider ourselves to be that which we really are: a Marxian socialist propaganda group which aims to be an integral part of the broad working-class movement. This means that we must relinquish the name "Workers Party" and adopt one that more clearly corresponds to our character and role in the coming period.

This change in name cannot and should not be construed as purely nominal or formal. It implies also a change, and at the least, a clarification of the role of the Marxists in the working class of this country. The establishment by Marxists of a political party is a call to the working class to enter and support it, to follow its program and leadership in the class struggle as against all other political parties. This implies a clear responsibility to the working class which we cannot discharge not because of any defects in our program but because of our present weakness and isolation. The establishment by Marxists of a propaganda group at a time when that is what they really represent and when the working class at the same time has or is about to create a political party of its own, implies or should imply a different role for us. We thereby proclaim that we are part and parcel of the broad political movement of the working class. That we are prepared to participate actively and loyally in all the construction work and all the struggles of its movement. That we are distinguished from other groups and tendencies only in that we have a broader and clearer grasp of the historical aims of the movement and of the way in which its immediate aim is connected with them. That we are prepared to carry out the adopted program of the movement as it is, while putting forward our own ideas for the movement to adopt. That our aim is not to impose our ideas arbitrarily or artificially and not to split the movement for the purpose of setting up a somewhat larger propaganda group tomorrow, but merely to win it, by propaganda and example, to an understanding that these ideas represent the best interests of the working class and the people. That, throughout our participation in its life, we are ready to defend it together with all other working-class elements against the attacks or sapping work of its capitalist or Stalinist enemies. That we maintain the right to propagate the ideas and aims of Marxian socialism not in any way for the purpose of undermining the movement but only in order to fortify it so that it can best realize its working-class aims.

Participation in a movement which is not Marxist in program or leadership, always bring with it the danger of an opportunistic adaptation by the Marxists. There is no absolute guarantee against this. As a propagandist group in the mass movement, the Marxists must, however, lay greater emphasis on the firmness of their adherence to the theories and program they have elaborated in the past, since it is these characteristics which distinguish them from all other political groups and tendencies. This applies to the propaganda group even before it has the opportunity to participate in the wider movement. From this point of view, the conception of an all-inclusive revolutionary party, adopted by us in the past under different circumstances, must obviously be modified. Such a conception was possible only if accompanied by the development of a strong cadre in the party. A propaganda group is itself a cadre organization. From this it does not and must not follow that our propaganda group is a "monolithic" organization which permits of only an official point of view on all questions. The intellectual and political vigor of any revolutionary organization can be maintained and stimulated only by the free interplay and exchange of opinions that democracy guarantees.

The disciplinary standards of a propaganda group, far more than in a broad party organization, are based upon agreement with the theoretical and political program of the group and confidence in its future. Our propaganda group will necessarily rely far more upon this basis for discipline than upon a stiff literal enforcement of the statutes and rules. In general, the greater the need to resort to the latter in order to establish discipline, the more clearly revealed is the extent of the disagreement with the program or leadership of the organization or of the lack of confidence in them. Only most exceptionally can such a problem be dealt with by the exercise of formal discipline. The best and, in the long run, the only way it can be dealt with is by the successful demonstration in discussion and in practise of the superiority of the program and leadership.

Our perspective also indicates the orientation in the coming period of our press, of our political activity and of the center of work of our membership. Our theoretical press must devote itself much more to the advocacy and defense of our theories and program as directly related to the American labor movement and the tendencies in its ranks, to political problems in the United States. Our popular press must devote itself more to the propagandistic presentation of our program and less to agitational material. Our general political activity must be centered more firmly than ever around the popularization of our Labor Party slogan, upon our program for the Labor Party. Our membership must be more systematically educated in the fundamental programmatic position of the movement so that it can most ably defend it against all others and against all critics in the ranks of the labor movement as a whole.

Our perspective, far from invalidating or diminishing the importance of our orientation toward the mass organizations - the trade unions first and foremost among them - must serve to give this orientation firmer, deeper and more urgent meaning. Its successful execution requires a greater emphasis on the importance of our trade-union department and our organizational department, and the closest

integration of the work carried on by each. We are not establishing an educational circle or a discussion club for dilettantes. We are building a militant propaganda group which aims at no less imposing a task than building the political movement of the American working class into an effective socialist party. Whether or not this political movement is formally based upon the mass organizations at the very outset of its existence, it is clear that it will depend upon them increasingly and that they will in turn dominate it increasingly. This is true above all of the decisive mass organizations, the trade unions. It is possible that conservative elements in the new party will seek to prevent a socialist propaganda group from becoming an integral part of the organization. If they are successful, this would hamper but not render impossible the fulfillment of our task. Whether formally part of the movement or not, we can exercise our influence in it only if the great majority of our members are active participants in the natural base of the movement, namely, the trade unions, and only if the great majority of those we recruit to our views are militants in these unions. It must be the aim of every able and serious member of our organization, of every one who understands our great task and who has confidence in its achievement, to become a political leader of ever larger groups of workers. This does not mean ignoring such movements and organizations as embrace the active student, Negro, tenant or veteran population. Active participation in these organizations, which will likewise be attracted to the labor political movement, is of great importance, and those of our members who are particularly indicated for work among them will be assigned accordingly. What our orientation does mean, however, is that our main and most important concentration remains more than ever before, more significantly than ever before, the mass working-class organizations, the trade unions. We can be strong and influential in the political movement, in politics in general, only to the extent that we are strong in the unions.

The Marxists are aware of the fact that their coming task will be neither smooth nor devoid of difficulties and even sharp struggles. Nevertheless, they face the entry of the American working class into the political field as an independent force with the greatest enthusiasm, zeal and confidence that the ideas of socialism, wedded to the working class, will constitute that power whose triumph will vindicate all the pioneers of socialism and usher freedom, peace and abundance into a brotherly world.

NATHAN GOULD
MAX SHACHTMAN

September 14, 1948.

A REVOLUTIONARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM

By J. Wallis (Los Angeles)

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During the bitter fight that led to the establishment of the Workers Party, Trotsky repeated again and again that the consistent application of the conception of "bureaucratic collectivism" would sooner or later lead those accepting it out of the revolutionary camp.

A not-too-analytical observer might well consider this prophesy to be justified leaving the SWP with what (including the YPSL) constituted about one half the membership, we have been in an almost constant state of decline.

We have taken in a considerable number of members, only to see an even greater number, both new and old, drift not only out of the movement but, in many cases beyond our visible periphery. Among those who have remained organizationally faithful many find themselves demoralized by diminishing faith in the very possibility of socialism itself. As for our periphery a considerable part of it is made up, not of people attracted by us to the revolutionary movement, but by "emigres" former revolutionists who, "disillusioned" regarding the possibilities of socialism, find in our more "rational" approach a pleasant anodyne for their revolutionary nostalgia. Finally, there is the virtual disappearance from our propaganda of any treatment of the struggle for power. "Raising union consciousness to political consciousness" is treated at great length. Once in awhile some indication is given of the type of society we are striving for. But the fundamental task of the proletariat, the organization for and the taking of power, is seldom more than whispered about. Apart from our consistent and well-conceived attack upon imperialism of any type there is little in our press, or even in our resolutions, to distinguish us from militant social-democrats.

We do not believe that the Workers Party has yet ceased to be a revolutionary party. The great majority of its membership consists of determined revolutionists, sincerely and persistently seeking the best road to the revolutionary victory of the American proletariat. We must, however, ask ourselves the question: why do revolutionists find their answer to current problems in the progressive elimination of any revolutionary message to the masses? That this question must be asked - and answered - seems obvious. If any lessons are to be learned from the Marxist movements of the past, one seems inescapable: no party can long continue to maintain two distinct theoretical lines, one for the masses and another for the initiate. Sooner or later the "public" line will infect the internal line. Not only does an (effective) nonrevolutionary propaganda dilute the internal line thru the attraction of reformist recruits, but the older members must themselves be affected by reiteration of reformist arguments. In the Workers Party such factors have operated to such an extent that we have almost achieved, paradoxical as it may seem, a non-revolutionary party of revolutionists.

- Despite all this, we regard Trotsky as having been completely wrong in his prophesy. Rather than the consistency, it was the inconsistency of our application of the concept of bureaucratic collectivism that led us to our present impasse! We contend that a thorough analysis of the implications of the twin conceptions, bureaucratic collectivism and bureaucratic conservatism, would indicate that the most direct approach to revolutionary problems is the most effective approach to the working class today.

It is not our contention that the proposed program is the only one that can lead to workers' power. There are undoubtedly a number of alternatives that will facilitate, more or less efficiently, the struggle for that goal. For that matter, it is not completely excluded that the proletariat may achieve power without the intervention of parties or programs. But, whether or not this is possible, a revolutionary party has a most important function. This function - the sole reason for existence of such a party - is the development and implementation of the program that will best facilitate and accelerate the workers' struggle for power and socialism.

The proposed program is based upon the simple proposition that one seeking to accomplish an end must start with an understanding of precisely what that end involves, judging all intermediate means by the degree to which they facilitate the accomplishment of the end.

In the formulation of a revolutionary program it is necessary to keep ever in view the revolutionary goal - the organization of the proletariat as ruling class.

The monstrous development of Stalinism forces us to emphasize (as only the Workers Party fully realizes) the necessarily democratic nature of this proletarian rule; i.e., our goal is not simply workers' power, but workers' democracy. However, the final victory of Socialism is not complete the day after the revolution, but only after a transition period of unpredictable duration. Clearly, the conquest of power is not in itself sufficient. Power must be so organized that, without the destruction of democracy, the natural tendency of the state is toward proletarian hegemony.

To many it may seem visionary to emphasize the analysis of the forms of workers' power. To such comrades are directed the following remarks.

According to the conception generally held by Leninists, among whom we count ourselves, a proletarian revolution is normally preceded by a period of "dual power". During the period the working-class organizations counterpose their power to that of the bourgeois state, the revolution being accomplished by the destruction of the bourgeois state and its replacement by these same workers' organizations. If, then, certain characteristics are necessary or desirable in a workers state, it is similarly necessary or desirable that those characteristics be present in the pre-revolutionary dual-power organizations.

At this point critics are certain to interject, "What reason have we to worry about the organs of dual power? Didn't the Russians ignorant and disorganized as they were, create soviets that were adequate to the problem of state power?"

An unqualified "yes" would be a misleading answer to this question. The first qualification depends upon what Lenin called the "dress rehearsal" - the defeated revolution of 1905. The soviets of that day were neither as widespread nor as purposeful as those of 1917. With this "dress-rehearsal" behind them, however, the Russian workers were prepared to form soviets rapidly, as a new revolutionary situation developed.

A second qualification depends upon what might be called a revolutionary "spring-board". The February revolution was primarily against feudalism and autocracy, the majority of the masses being as yet unprepared to challenge the bourgeoisie for power. During the disillusioning "honeymoon" of bourgeois rule the soviets were able to consolidate themselves and extend their activities, gaining thereby administrative experience and a sense of power.

The question then confronts us: can the American working class afford a "dress-rehearsal" in the form of a defeated revolution? We feel sure the answer must be a unanimous "No!" Then comes the other question: can we anticipate a "springboard", such as the February revolution afforded the Russian workers? This depended, in Russia, upon the proletariat being able to participate in two revolutions, within a short period of time, without having been defeated in the first.. This in turn, depended upon the involvement of a third class against whom, in the February revolution, the efforts of both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie were directed.

In the United States there exists no such third class. When the revolution comes it will be a direct clash between proletariat and bourgeoisie. Under these circumstances it is difficult to conceive of a revolution in which the workers fail to take power being followed by a period during which they can, without serious molestation, consolidate their forces for a second assault. It seems clear that the American proletariat, if it is to make a revolution at all, must stake all upon a single assault - the failure of which would mean decimation and prostration for many years to come.

These considerations might indicate the undesirability of an American revolution, were it not that failure to revolt entails results quite as disastrous as an unsuccessful revolution. Capitalism moves inevitably toward receivership; unless the workers are prepared to "take over", civilization must decline toward barbarism - provided that it is not bombed out of existence beforehand.

The task we face seems evident - we must discover a substitute for the "dress-rehearsal" and the "spring-board". Since we cannot depend upon unsuccessful revolutions, we must utilize the less spectacular day-to-day activities of the workers for teaching them to play their part. We must do all in our power to develop attitudes and organizational habits appropriate to dual-and workers power. How we are to do this depends upon our conception of dual power and, in turn, workers' power. Far from being idle speculation on the "kitchen recipes of the future", a party's conception of workers' power is an essential ingredient in the planning of every aspect of its activity.

There is general agreement among Marxists as to certain essential characteristics of a workers' state. Among those usually accepted are the following:

- a) functional, rather than territorial, representation;
- b) ready recall of representatives and officials by those who elected them; and
- c) complete democracy within the working class.

The workers Party, because of its study of bureaucratic tendencies should consider these criteria insufficient. The bureaucratic potentialities of hierarchical structures, with their separation of upper level hierarchs from rank-and-file control, are evident. Also, division of the population into enfranchised and disenfranchised (unnecessary in as proletarian a nation as the United States) not only prevents the workers knowing the power of their opposition, but also gives nascent bureaucrats a chance to manipulate the borderline cases. Finally, arrangements must be made to furnish facilities (press, etc.) to groups or individuals opposed to the large political parties. Therefore we change (c) and enlarge the list as follows:

- c) all citizens eligible as electors;
- d) all legislative representatives elected by rank-and-file organizations; and
- e) government facilities for political expression of minorities
- f) universal (rotational) police service, democratically controlled.

Some readers may think we are proposing a sort of "blueprint", a la the SWP; or that we intend dashing about organizing full-fledged soviets in a political vacuum, after the manner of the "left communists" criticized by Lenin. Nothing could be further from the truth. We believe that the future cannot be described in other than the most general terms. We do not believe, with the SLP, that it is enough to preach workers' power while "sitting out" the day-to-day struggles of capitalist society. And we certainly do not propose the ultra-leftist attempt to conjure up soviets out of our own desire and determination, without reference to the actual struggle that goes on continuously about us.

On the other hand we maintain that we must take an increasingly active part in the current working-class struggle. But the choice is not simply one of abstention or participation - after the decision to participate we remain faced by alternative forms of strategy and tactics. We merely propose the simple and, it seems to us, obvious procedure of choosing between these alternatives on the basis of their relative effectiveness in the preparation of the workers to play their part in the dual power that is to come.

In order to apply the principles of the proposed program it is necessary to establish some sort of important parallel between the problems facing the workers during and after the struggle for power and the problems facing the workers today. It is easy to demonstrate that such a parallel exists. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to consider the meaning of the term "bureaucratic conservatism."

It is unfortunate that, after the split from the SWP, the concept of "bureaucratic conservatism" has been so neglected that the term itself remains only as a sort of political "cuss-word." It is unfortunate because bureaucratic conservatism is a plague affecting almost every labor organization in the United States. This plague is not dependent upon the accession to power of "natural-born" bureaucrats. It is the apparatus itself that gives bureaucratic training even to those who have no desire to be bureaucrats. According to the PC minority of the SWP in 1940:

"Bureaucratic conservatism is, put bluntly and crudely, apparatus politics. Its chief base, in any organization, is the 'apparatus'. Objectively considered, the goal and purpose and aim of a bureaucratic conservative tendency is to preserve itself. It is for this reason that the policies adopted by the bureaucratic conservative tendency tend always toward being conservative. It is the defender of the status quo - until the point where its own preservation becomes incompatible with the preservation of the status quo. Normally a bold move, an abrupt change, a reorientation, the intrusion of something new, upset things as they are: that is, tend to undermine the established regime. We do not for a moment contend that Cannon has been engaged in any deliberate "plot;" that he, as an individual, has consciously conspired to impose on the party a bureaucratic-conservative stranglehold, with himself as leader. Not at all. Of all the victims, it is Cannon who is himself most painfully caught in the bureaucratic trap." (War and Bureaucratic Conservatism - original italics underlined)

Whether or not this indictment of the SWP was justified, it is certain that the description above fits the bureaucracies that rule most of the labor movement. These bureaucracies are not, as so often described, bourgeois; their fundamental aim is not the preservation of capitalism, but the maintenance of the status quo within their organization - a status quo which depends upon the maintenance of bourgeois-democratic forms.

Avoiding for the present the subject of Stalinism, the parallel between revolutionary and present-day problems is established as follows:

- 1) The maintenance of a workers' state depends upon:
 - a) struggle against possible bourgeois resurgence; and
 - b) struggle against bureaucratic developments that might lead to a new ruling class.

- 2) A properly developed dual power depends upon:
 - a) revolutionary struggle against the bourgeois state; and
 - b) organizational struggle against bureaucratic conservatism, which might abort the revolution.

- 3) Effective everyday working-class action depends upon:
 - a) economic and political struggle for the maintenance and/or improvement of conditions within capitalist society; and
 - b) organizational struggle against bureaucratic conservatism which, in order to keep the class struggle within "safe" limits, obstructs the full utilization of working-class ability and desire to fight.

Although realizing that analogy, as a form of reasoning, is properly regarded with suspicion, we believe the analogy presented above to be an essential ingredient of any party program. Assuming this to be the case, let us see where a consideration of the analogy leads us.

Though 1a, 2a and 3a refer to different fields of struggle, and therefore quite different forms of strategy and tactics, they are similar almost to the point of identity in regard to one important aspect - the struggle is effective in direct proportion to the degree of mobilization of the intellectual and material potentialities of the working class. This is the aspect that renders the analogy valid, for bureaucratic collectivism springs from bureaucratic conservatism within a workers' state, and the struggle against bureaucratic conservatism is precisely the struggle for full mobilization of the intellectual and material potentialities of the workers.

The potential degree of bureaucratism of any given organization is dependent upon three factors; the structure of the organization, the attitudes of members and the milieu within which the organization operates. Let us consider the three factors in turn in order to determine which is, from the revolutionary viewpoint, the most important factor.

The milieu (traditionally termed "the objective situation") sets an absolute limit to what an organization may achieve at a given time. The organizations in which we are primarily interested exist for the purpose of pressing their achievements as closely as possible to that limit. But such achievements affect the milieu itself, and consequently affect the limit in turn. In a sense we may say that such organizations exist for the purpose (conscious or otherwise) of changing the milieu in which they operate.

The bureaucracy of an organization, because of its conservatism, sets a different limit to achievement - a more stringent limit than that set by the milieu. As a result, it minimizes the possibility of changing the milieu. The stronger the bureaucracy, the less the rank and file can affect the milieu. Revolutionists, thinking programmatically, concern themselves primarily with things they can affect. In the formulation of an anti-bureaucratic program, the revolutionary member of an organization must relegate milieu to the class of relatively unimportant factors.

The attitude of the membership is more important. However, excepting those who are prepared to revolt against the structure itself, members cannot express their attitudes effectively except through "proper channels;" within those channels they are "processed" to suit the needs of the bureaucracy - or, if they prove refractory, "lost in the shuffle." The "channels" are characteristic of the structure

of the organization - so we arrive at the conclusion that, from the programmatic standpoint, the fight against bureaucracy must be primarily against organizational structures that favor bureaucracy. To paraphrase Engels, "A membership cannot simply take over a bureaucracy-prone structure and utilize it for its own purposes."

The best of structures cannot prevent bureaucracy if the membership is indifferent to the problem. The attitude that minimizes the danger of bureaucracy presents two aspects; hostility toward bureaucracy-prone structures, and hostility toward non-democratic tendencies. Considering that the Workers Party always has, and we feel assured always will, strive to develop hostility toward non-democratic tendencies in general, the problem of bureaucracy-prone structures is basic in the program we propose.

If we consider the analogy presented on pages 4 and 5, in the light of our analysis of bureaucracy, we see that the major organizational problem is the construction of effective organizational structures that are not bureaucracy-prone, and the major agitational solution to that problem lies in agitation, within the context of actual struggle, for the transformation of the bureaucracy-prone structures of the organizations involved - on the basis that the bureaucracy stands in the way of the actual struggle in which the organizations are engaged. Finally, the criteria by which we determine that a structure is not bureaucracy-prone will be equally those by which we judge a workers' state, a dual power organization and a workers' organization today.

The reader should note that two quite distinct lines of argument have been presented, both leading to the same conclusion. One based itself upon the necessity for a substitute for the "dress-rehearsal" and the "springboard" upon which the Russian (and other) revolutions depended. Another based itself upon analogous needs of three stages of revolutionary development. Either of these, if valid, proves our case! Whoever refutes us must refute both lines.

Up to this point we have disregarded the existence of Stalinism. We must now consider whether or not revision is called for by the fact that Stalinism does exist. As agreement is general among us as to the nature of Stalinism, we limit ourselves to the listing of a few pertinent Stalinist aspects within a bourgeois democracy.

1. Widespread resistance to bureaucratic leadership does not arise within CP because:
 - a) The leadership is sanctified by the "Socialist Fatherland;
 - b) The stable membership is thoroughly impregnated with a bureaucratic organizational theory; and,
 - c) The Stalinist concept of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" depends upon the maintenance and extension of the power of the bureaucracy;

2. Stalinist leadership in working-class organizations differs from the leadership of old-line bureaucrats in that:
 - a) Stalinist leadership does not constitute a bureaucracy of (or in) the organization, but rather a "pseudopodium" of an exterior, alien bureaucracy; therefore,
 - b) the difference between organizational and bureaucratic in-

terests are not based upon conservatism, but upon their completely alien natures; although,

- b) Burocratic maneuverability permits them to cover up their alien nature.

3. Stalinist burocracies may not be readily overturned by rapid revolutionary development among the masses, as they are themselves anti-bourgeois and therefore can capitalize upon such development. Therefore it is quite possible for a powerful Stalinist movement to manipulate burocratically a dual power development. (An example of this is the Stalinist seizure of Czechoslovakia.)

4. Stalinism is not the road to burocratic collectivism; it is the short-cut to it. If burocratic conservatism were the only tendency to fear, there would be little burocratic continuity, for at each decisive stage the workers would unseat the old burocracy in order to advance; the maintenance of burocracy-prone structure being the carry-over permitting burocratization in the new stage. With Stalinism, on the other hand, a burocracy is carried along which is prepared to set out immediately upon the consolidation of itself as a class.

It can readily be seen that all we have written about the fight against burocracy, and the necessity of educating workers to recognize burocracy-prone structures, is as pertinent to Stalinism as to burocratic-conservative tendencies. The problem of Stalinism, however, demands heavy emphasis upon the need for teaching the conception of the total revolutionary process "from now to then." It is understood that we must use the daily activities of Stalinists to prove that workers should neither follow nor trust them. But this is insufficient. Our propaganda answer to Stalinism lies precisely in a constant fight against burocracy in the context of the necessities of dual power and workers' power!

This is not intended to be an all-inclusive program. Many activities may be necessary or desirable, yet such that the principles presented here are irrelevant to their consideration. What we propose is that these principles should determine the fundamental orientation of the party, and that any proposals running counter to these principles be rejected out of hand.

Let no one think we intend to "sulk in our tent" if workers ignore or attack our proposals. Wherever workers fight against capitalists it is our fight, however obtuse or ill-considered the methods they use. It is the very weakness of their methods that gives us the opportunity to point out the way to strength. While in action together we can show how burocratic-conservatism limits the effectiveness of the fight in a thousand ways. Little by little we popularize our organizational criteria within ever-widening circles of workers. While demonstrating that burocracy hits the pocketbook we explain how undemocratic attitudes in the rank-and-file bolster the burocracy. Democracy ceases to be a "nice idea;" it becomes an economic category.

The road to political consciousness also depends upon the concept of burocratic conservatism. In the United States, for example, two huge ready-made burocracies are kept on hand, in order that one may be exchanged for the other when the electorate is dissatisfied.

Even more important, the structure of a bourgeois-democratic state, especially in the aspect involving territorial representation, is so bureaucracy-prone as to make bureaucratic conservatism inevitable; were this not so, the working-class would have "taken over" long ago. (Bribery, etc., explain particular acts of officials and states, but are insufficient for a Marxist interpretation of an historical tendency; the bureaucratic-conservative maintenance of the status-quo is the most persistent factor in the stabilization of bourgeois democracy.)

The bureaucratic-conservative aspect of bourgeois democracy gives us the clue to the politicalization of the masses. As workers begin to see more clearly the nature of bureaucracy, the bureaucratic form of the bourgeois state becomes evident. As they learn which organizational structures tend to minimize bureaucracy, the possibility of a truly democratic society presents itself to them. Attained in this manner, political and socialist consciousness occur simultaneously.

Face to face with the major fortress of the bourgeoisie, the bureaucratic state, such workers will realize that replacing the old bureaucrats by workers, within the old structural framework, would result only in a new set of bureaucrats. Following the pattern set by their resistance to bureaucratic stifling of their economic struggles, they will organize non-bureaucratic resistance groups to carry on the fight to establish dual power and a workers' state.

A word about Stalinism. Every act, speech or article involved in the carrying-out of this program will be a direct blow at Stalinism. No normally intelligent worker, having absorbed even a small part of the lessons implied in this program, will ever be susceptible to Stalinist propaganda. There may arise anti-Stalinist proposals not implied by this program - as long as they do not oppose it, they may be legitimate. Fundamentally, we present here a unified plan of activity which attacks all bureaucratic tendencies equally.

Some previous statements might be interpreted to mean that our members in mass organizations are to raise their voices only on organizational questions. Such an interpretation must be rejected. The misinterpretation would arise from the fact that we have chosen to emphasize activities that will be changed as a result of the programmatic change. Comrades will make proposals and fight for them; and criticize ill-advised proposals made by others. Comrades must be integral parts of their mass organizations and their activities, yet be at all times on the alert for opportunities to implement this program.

In situations calling for mass action, such that organs of struggle either do not exist or are in process of arising, it is the duty of comrades to strive to affect their structure from the first, at the same time stimulating their militancy to the greatest possible degree, and involving increasing numbers in the struggle.

In order to implement this program, it is necessary that the party develop a conception of what it means by "democratic" as applied to unions and other organizations of struggle. This conception must take account of the necessity for current effectiveness, yet conform in all respects to the criteria of a workers' state. Under the heading of "criteria of democracy," they should be formulated by means of

a number of simple, striking and readily quoted questions, the answers to which, in respect to any particular organization, would indicate how closely that organization exemplifies the conception "democratic." Some of the questions would involve the attitudes of the membership, some would involve the degree to which the structure is bureaucracy-prone or bureaucracy-resistant, and the rest would involve the actual degree of bureaucratization. Comrades will seek to popularize these criteria as a part of the organizational struggles in which they are engaged.

One fundamental fact must be remembered - the application of this program would make of the Workers party THE ONLY PARTY IN THE COUNTRY WITH A FUNDAMENTAL AND COMPLETE DEMOCRATIC PROGRAM. We would be battling under the aegis of democracy - the unchallenged spearhead of the agelong struggle of the masses for social equality. Can it be said that our democratic utterances, like those of the Stalinists, are only "bait for fools?" The perfect answer lies in our actively teaching workers to protect their democratic rights even against ourselves! Can it be said that we seek to gain control of unions for our own purposes? The answer lies in our active fight to transform unions so that no one, not even ourselves, can manipulate it against the will of the majority, or prevent that will being expressed! Can it be said that proletarian revolution necessarily leads to bureaucratic collectivism? The answer is that to the degree that the Workers Party has gained influence, there will exist workers trained by the Workers Party to anticipate, analyze and resist bureaucratic tendencies. Finally, if it is said that revolution against a constitutional republic is an undemocratic act, the answer is that the Workers Party's every act, proposal or statement up to the time of revolution itself is directed toward the extension of democracy, and that revolution is merely the removal of bureaucratic resistance to the extension of democracy. Not only may these answers be given, but they can be proved - at least to the satisfaction of the proletariat - if the proposed program is accepted and applied.

For a party to be known as the party of democracy, without the loss of its revolutionary character or reputation, would give it an overwhelming working-class appeal, as compared with Stalinists, Social Democrats or Cannonites.

The understanding and acceptance of the proposed program would lead to a fundamental transformation of our party, which would be apparent in our propaganda, agitation, activity and recruitment - with a consequent raising of the level of party morale and stimulation of creative theoretical discussion. Let us consider the forms this transformation would take in these various aspects of party life.

Propaganda

The material treated in party propaganda would not differ much from that which is traditional in the movement. The method of treatment, however, would be drastically changed. Instead of a standard anti-capitalist horror-tale, ending (somewhat after the manner of a radio broadcast) with a "plug" for a labor party or a vague sort of socialism, a propaganda article or speech would be organized, from

beginning to end, to develop the three conceptions:

- 1) the necessity and possibility of workers' power;
- 2) the role each worker must play in preparing the dual power;
and
- 3) the structure of dual power and/or workers' power.

Agitation

Speeches, articles and leaflets urging specific actions would be called forth, as a rule, by the same situations that call them forth today. The treatment, however, would show a different tactical approach, in that the action recommended should involve, to some degree, the "dress-rehearsal" as conceived in this program.

However, propaganda and agitation must not be conceived as two disparate fields, but rather as variations of emphasis within the general expression of the party. Sharp division between the two is analogous, in Marxist tradition, to the old separation of minimum and maximum demands. Just as the revolutionist has a generalized conception of demands, to be rendered specific according to concrete circumstances, so must we develop a generalized conception of party expression, to be rendered specific according to the needs of the current situation. Propaganda is fruitless without some admixture of proposed action; calls to action, similarly, should carry with them some motivation based upon the historical role of the proletariat. All agitation or propaganda must seek to instill in the workers a sense of power, based upon a developing realization of their role as members of the ruling class of the future.

There may arise situations such that we find no way to relate them to this historic role. We do not propose abstentionism under such circumstances. We wish only to point out that in the vast majority of cases the fault will not lie in the nature of the circumstances, but in our inability to find a sufficiently penetrating analysis.

Activity

GENERAL: An important transformation in the alertness of the membership is to be expected. As before, it is understood that comrades play a continuous and active part in class struggles, although their manner of participation will be changed by the new approach. There will be required a great increase in sensitivity to subjective as well as objective developments, and considerable individual initiative in analysing such developments, in order that readily overlooked nascent situations may be utilized. In our opinion the activity of the membership will be increased by greatly improved morale, for their activity will for the first time be actually directed toward Socialism.

IN ORGANIZATIONS: So far we have considered union work as though the rest of the membership were more or less homogeneous. In actual situations this is seldom the case. Revolutionists have always found it difficult to maintain their independence when forced to make a choice between one of the several caucuses in operation. The proposed program makes it easy to maintain independence. For any of a

number of reasons we may enter and support one caucus as against another, but within that caucus we will carry on the fight for caucus democracy, according to our definition of democracy - and we shall state our unwillingness to accept caucus discipline directly contradictory to our democratic principles. In addition, we shall fight within the caucus for the introduction of our democratic principles into the caucus program. All this, of course, does not prevent our participating in all other activities and deliberations of the caucus. If we have no principled preference as to caucus we may split our forces between them, in order to expose the bureaucratic essence of all of them.

On the floor of the union meeting we will not only strive to popularize our criteria of democracy, but whenever it is feasible we will develop the social implications of the criteria - seeking to develop among the members a consciousness of the transformation of society that is implicit in the criteria. We must strive, in the unions, to become known as the "party of workers' democracy".

Obviously a pro-labor-party line is contrary to the word and spirit of the proposed program. However, the rank-and-file acceptance of the labor party line has seldom depended upon theoretical considerations - its actual basis has been the apparent unanswerability of the question, "What are we to tell the workers when they ask what can be done now?" Now we have an answer to the question - the proposed program. All our propaganda is directed toward securing their conscious participation in promoting the principles of that program - which rules out any labor party proposals. If the labor party question comes up on the floor, with progressives in favor and conservatives against, we frankly state that if the workers of the United States are sufficiently conscious of their needs to prevent the labor party being a bureaucratic trap, the labor party is valueless because the workers are conceptually ready to take the revolutionary road which is the only real solution to their problems. We add, however, that in case a labor party is "on the books," we call upon all union brothers to join us in a struggle for a structure such as will give control to the rank-and-file, and to continue that fight when the labor party is formed.

Recruitment

The application of this program would create a fundamental change in the attitude of the workers toward our party. Today that attitude is a very confused one. Some view us as mainly a "labor-party party." Others consider us in terms of whatever transitional demands we happen to have emphasized in their midst. All who have been close to us realize, of course, that we should like to see Socialism come about some day, but the subsidiary nature of this in our propaganda gives it a minor place in their evaluation of us. The consequence of this program would be to clarify this situation, so that we would be commonly known as the party of workers rule.

For a short period of time this might cause a slackening of recruitment. Workers ripe for a revolutionary party might stand aside for a good look at this development. Certainly our recruitment among those still fundamentally bourgeois in outlook would fall off. But this situation would soon change. Remaining in close contact with

workers through participation in their struggles, we could soon convince the more advanced, by the consistency and determination of our program, that this is a party that takes seriously the task of solving the basic problems of present-day society. The attraction of advanced workers depends upon establishing the seriousness and integrity of the party - our program of activity and propoganda gives the best solution to this problem.

Another aspect that must attract advanced workers is the evident integration of present-day and revolutionary tasks. A union militant who believes in socialism is very apt to answer his would-be recruiter (as the party is at present) "Why should I join the party? Sure, I know you fellows do a lot of good in the union, but what's that got to do with Socialism? Lots of militants do the same things without belonging to the party, or even believing in Socialism!" Or he may say, "Sure, you fellows hold some good meetings, and sell some good books. I like what you say about Socialism. But that stuff doesn't have anything to do with my problems today. And the only time we'll know that it has done any good at all will be when Socialism is actually here. I guess I'll stick to jobs I can see work out as I go along." And, who can blame him? The proposed program, however, would not give him this "out", for it identifies the direct solution to union problems with the direct struggle for Socialism.

From the standpoint of recruitment the difference resolves itself into a choice of the section of the working class from which to recruit. At present we make our membership appeal to the more or less undifferentiated class of militant workers, on the basis of our militancy and transitional demands. The proposed program would cut down recruitment from among those who are merely militant, but would increase recruitment from among more conscious elements to the degree that they have become free from bourgeois ideology. The result would be recruits already prepared for membership, apart from some theoretical technicalities readily taught within the party classes.

We must not consider this question statically, in terms of the divisions among workers today. With minds somewhat opened by respect for our activity, the not-yet-ready workers would be impressed by propoganda and agitational material intelligently discussing urgent and apparent problems. The result would be a steady subjective stream from bourgeois to Marxist conceptions, and readiness for recruitment on a revolutionary basis.

We hope the reader is not misled by our use of such words as "stream," as in the previous paragraph. We do not believe that the application of this program would have such an immediate effect as to send shudders along the spines of union burocrats and captains of industry. The possibilities of influence are necessarily limited by the size of the party and the milieu within which it operates. The proposed program would at first merely turn the tide from contraction to gradual expansion, but the expansion would be an accelerating one until a significant part of the working-class would be to some degree affected by our activities.

One of the differences between the present and the proposed pro-

gram involves the conceptions of "necessity" and "possibility." Our present propaganda, in the NI and LA, is sufficient to convince the thoughtful worker that Socialism is necessary. It fails, however, to show that such a victory is possible. From the psychological standpoint this is very bad. The feeling of necessity does not, of itself, stimulate activity. Unaccompanied by a belief in possibility, it is more apt to lead to apathy than to struggle. Today's most striking example of this is the passive acceptance by most people of the prospect of atomic warfare. If we must choose between teaching the possibility or the necessity of Socialism, possibility is the better choice, as many would aid the struggle merely because of preference.

The advent of Stalinism emphasizes the need for teaching the possibility of democratic workers' rule. Not only among the workers, but even among the revolutionists themselves, many are confused and demoralized by the fact that the only successful proletarian revolution in history has led, without bourgeois counterrevolution, to totalitarianism. This demoralization can be combated only by popularizing the concept of real workers' rule, and giving conviction of its possibility.

But workers tend to be skeptical of those who have been longer on talk than on accomplishment - a characteristic we share with all other American Marxist groups. To overcome this skepticism we must show, both by propaganda and by action, the Socialist goal and the intervening road. Then neither Stalinism nor bourgeois influences can lure them from the necessary road. Our program is adapted to this purpose.

Marxist parties of the past have been generally divisible into two types. Sectarian parties have kept their eyes upon the Socialist goal, disregarding the need for positive present-day action to bring it about. Opportunists, in their zeal for present-day practicality, pushed aside all consideration of Socialism. Who can blame the worker who scorns both of them? But might not such a worker be attracted to a program which organizes day-to-day activities into a credible, positive road to the transformation of society with workers' rule?

Theoretical Creativeness

At present our party divides its theory into two disparate segments. In one segment resides "practical activity," in the other, problems of the revolution. In discussion and press we discuss both, but each maintains a sort of "restrictive covenant," so they are seldom seen together. "Practical" problems are treated seriously; the others are treated speculatively, as though they represented a sort of philosophical luxury. We recognize that it is they that give meaning to the movement; despite that recognition, we are apt to push them into a corner to collect dust until the revolution calls them forth, or someone with no important work to do takes time out to polish them up a bit.

In our opinion this is entirely wrong. Theory that is important anytime is important all the time. If it involves past occurrences, it is necessary for the understanding of the present. If it refers

to future possibilities, it is necessary for the intelligent planning of our activities. Certainly there is unimportant theory, but it is not its separation from us in time that makes it so.

The proposed program stresses the integration of our theory in terms of revolutionary practicality. It cannot be set down concretely in black and white, to be bequeathed to posterity. Actually, it is not so much a program as it is a guide to a developmental process. Instead of orienting itself upon a successive set of goals, with a predetermined set of slogans dependent upon the "stages" that seem to necessitate those partial goals, it maintains only a single, ultimate, goal, with flexible expression varying according to the relation of each specific struggle to that goal; i.e., the effect it has upon the developing basis of workers' rule.

Present-day conceptions call for theoretical reorientation only when some fundamental change in the situation becomes apparent. Between such times, we rest upon our theoretical laurels. The new conception would call for continuous theoretical adaptation - a dreary prospect for those who prefer their theory handed down either from the top or the past. To those, however, with a keen interest in the struggle about them, such adaptation would be a stimulating challenge - a challenge to implement the Workers Party's original slogan: "In place of conservative politics, we must put bold, flexible, critical and experimental politics - in a word, scientific politics!"

* * *

A PATH TO THE REVOLUTIONARY ROAD

By S. Robertson (San Francisco)

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The progress of the party in recruitment and in achieving a position of influence in the American working class is, to put it mildly and charitably, very much too slow. This is apparent to every comrade. And it is apparent that it is too slow not just in relation to the speed that we would wish for, but that it is too slow to promise reasonable chance of success as against the onrushing threat of social destruction -- of man's descent into the new barbarism.

Time and again in the history of our party and of our movement we have told ourselves that this or that new development in objective circumstances, or new turn in party line would at last result in our rapid growth. Great days were ahead when we left the Socialist Party and formed the SWP, when we enthusiastically adopted the transitional program, when we broke with Cannonism and Russian defensism and formed the Workers Party, and again when we raised the Party expansion fund to put out the eight page paper and to enlarge substantially our staff of functionaries. But still it remains true that while history rushes to the decisive battles that will determine the question: Socialism or Barbarism?, we continue to plod forward at one point, and to be pushed back at another.

In this fact of general failure to progress in tempo with historical necessity, the SWP is not to be distinguished from ourselves. If they have in recent years recruited a little more rapidly than we, and have achieved a little firmer foundation and greater reputation in the labor movement, this is at best a slight quantitative superiority. Qualitatively they remain unquestionably in our discouraging circumstance: that of lagging far behind the demands of history.

It is fashionable in the movement to refuse to use such words as "discouraging" in the sentence above, and indeed to refuse to look in the face the fact that we are failing to keep pace with the progress of history toward barbarism. Instead it is customary to proclaim ourselves "revolutionary optimists," and to assign an endless series of objective obstacles as reasons for our failure to develop. A key to the error of this method is contained in the fact that this series of objective obstacles is endless. Just as the road to hell is paved with good intentions, so with this method we may excuse ourselves right up to the day after society's descent into barbarism.

And so we here propose a different method of dealing with the failure of our party and movement to progress toward the realization of our revolutionary goal. We propose to assess and analyze our failure down to its roots, to seek to determine the roots in theory that allow these objective events to bar to us the way to progress, and on the basis of this analysis to propose the elements of a program that will make possible the development of the working class

movement to revolutionary socialist victory.

The failure with which we must deal is not just the failure of the WP or SWP to be able to recruit significantly in recent months or years. The Trotskyist movement has existed for roughly twenty years. These years, all but the first, have been characterized by depression, preparation for war, imperialist war and the aftermath of war. And, in America, especially, they have encompassed the rise of a powerful and generally militant trade union movement. Through this space of twenty years, general most favorable ones in terms of objective conditions needed for revolutionary development, the Trotskyist movement has failed to make significant progress in any industrial country of the world. These have been the years that have proved most baldly the Marxian analysis of capitalism, and have with the same certainty proved the correctness of Trotsky's denunciation of Stalinism. But while history has been busy proving correct the whole general analysis of the Trotskyists, we have failed altogether to achieve any organizational significance.

The history of the American movement is probably generally characteristic of the Trotskyist movement in all countries. Originally a small group expelled for its views from the Communist Party, the Trotskyists began as an opposition to the CP. As such the group strove to recruit from the CP membership and to win its way back into the CP. As it became apparent that the reforming and rejoining of the CP was impossible, the Trotskyists turned attention, in trying to assemble their cadres, to recruitment from all the socialist tendencies. Trotskyist propaganda became then (within the general framework of anti-capitalism) anti-stalinist, anti-reformist, anti-centrist. In this period the line was strictly anti-Labor Party.

With this general approach of seeking to recruit its cadres from other socialist groupings by attacking the false positions of those groups, the Trotskyists carried through their fusion with the Musteitcs, their entry into and exit from the Socialist Party, and set themselves up again as a separate party in the SWP. With this development the possibility of building its cadres by this method came to an end. The necessity of turning to the American working class was apparent.

This turn was accomplished through the adoption of the Transitional Program and the Labor Party line. With what enthusiasm this new program (except the Labor Party feature, which the present writer and some others never consented to swallow) was adopted by the party! The warmth of this response was due to the need, deeply felt in the ranks of the party, for a positive program and one dealing with American problems, in contrast to the old line of anti-everything -- and especially anti things in Spain, China, Russia, France, etc. Of course the wooden heads in the Party -- and there were not a few of them -- who never feel the need for any sort of change, ponderously proclaimed themselves chief prophets of the new line, and glibly parroted Trotsky's phrases.

The Transitional Program was a turn to the American working class on the basis of expressing positive ideas, but as has already been pointed out it was scarcely what could be characterized as

strikingly more successful in recruitment than the previous line. This was the program of the movement through the end years of the depression, the preparation for, participation in and aftermath of the war -- and yet it seems probable that there are few if any more members in the combined Trotskyist parties today than there were in the SWP as it emerged from the SP just before the Transitional Program. How could a program that was certainly not sectarian prove so singularly fruitless through such a fertile period? Because it was a program of pseudo-reformism and could not compete with many more or less flourishing varieties of more genuine reformism: Rooseveltism, SP, CP, trade unionism, etc. It was and is a pseudo-reformism in that while it is based on underlying revolutionary theory and is alleged to lead to revolutionary conclusions, it nowhere deals with revolutionary ideas or connects up with such conclusions. At some other time we will hope to analyze the false working out of this line throughout these years. And elsewhere in this article will make apparent the causes for the mistaken adoption of such a line and the program that should be adopted now and then.

But our intention in this first section is to outline completely and starkly the failure of the movement -- and that cannot be done by restricting ourselves to the failure of Trotskyism, which is only the revolutionary movement of the last twenty years.

Almost a century has passed since the teachings of Marx and Engels assumed well-rounded form in the Communist Manifesto. In later years these two developed a science of economics whose laws and predictions have been brilliantly confirmed in every basic respect. In accord with the Marxian analysis of capitalist dynamics, the economic basis for the socialist revolution has for many years been fully mature.

But Marxism is more than economic analysis. Marxism combines economic, historical, sociological and political theory to form, as a theoretical whole, the revolutionary "know-how" by means of which the working class can liberate itself and, by the same act, lead all mankind toward the free world of socialism. Still the course of a whole century has not seen, even in a single country, the lasting triumph of the revolution which Marx and Engels expected to occur within a few years after the publication of the Manifesto. It is unquestionable that the tremendous brain of Karl Marx made rich contributions in the fields of sociological, historical and political theory, as well as in the field of economics. But can one fail to admit that Marxism, as a theoretical whole -- as a revolutionary instrument -- has failed up to the present moment?

To this must be added two observations: (1) the "present moment" is very late in the calendar of the socialist revolution, as the economic basis was fully ripe for socialism some thirty years ago, and is now in an advanced stage of decay; and (2) not only has the revolution not materialized in any country, but at this late date there is not in any industrial country of the world a revolutionary Marxist party of any significance. These observations underline with heavy pencil the failure, up to date, of Marxism as a revolutionary instrument. That there is no revolutionary party of significance in the period of the "death agony of capitalism" is beyond

argument a failure that cannot be blamed on objective circumstances, or on betrayals, social democratic or stalinist. If there were not a failure in the body of the theory itself neither circumstances nor betrayals could have been so decisive -- they could never have been paralyzing. Honest and devoted revolutionaries would have overcome obstacles and built a party on the correct revolutionary line, aided by the daily demonstration of history that this is the correct line. The failure means that in some significant aspect there was no true line. We must find and correct this failure in theory.

II

Marxism is the theory of the socialist revolution. That is to say it is the guide to the building of the revolutionary party and to the carrying out by that party of its tasks of educating and organizing the masses and leading them to the establishment of working class power. As such it is obvious that Marxism must be a living theory, growing with the lessons of history.

Therefore Marxism was, and could only be, incompletely fashioned by Marx. And it is the task of his followers not simply to repeat faithfully or seek to apply meticulously his words. It is their task, at least as much, to carry on the development of the theory by means of which revolutionary working class power may be achieved. The great revolutionary socialists of history have masterfully defended Marxism from those revisionists who sought to subvert its revolutionary principles. But they have not done so well in keeping Marxism alive by enriching it with the theoretical lessons that can be derived from world history since the death of Marx. Far too often can these revolutionary Marxists justly be accused of allowing their "orthodoxy" to stifle their critical and independent thought. It is to this obvious failure of the followers of Marx to carry on in his spirit the development of Marxism that we trace the roots of the failure of the movement to date.

This failure of the movement is a political failure, not a failure of economic analysis. Marx's economic analysis of capitalism has been proven to the hilt. If not at the speed Marx had expected, still the economic basis has now fully matured for the socialist revolution. But there is no revolutionary ideology and organization on the part of the working class and the masses. Herein lies the failure of the movement.

As materialists we must answer this question: Why is it that the matured material conditions do not find their proper reflection in the revolutionary ideas and organization of the masses? It is the philosophic foundation of scientific socialism that such reflection in ideas could and would result. But the fact is that such generalized reflection is not direct, but is a process. The material conditions of capitalism find their direct reflection in the working class ideas in terms of militant trade union struggle. But the quality of these conditions described as "ripeness for socialist revolution" expresses a relationship. It is a generalization. The response appropriate to this generalization cannot be achieved directly by the masses of workers. The generalization must be expressed to them, for their acceptance and for them to act upon, by those in

the working class prepared by intellectual background in terms of acquaintance with social theory and with history, to achieve such generalization. Those so prepared are the Marxists, and the expression to the working class of this revolutionary generalization is the task of the party.

It is this task that our party and the other Marxist parties present and past have failed to carry out. This generalization is really nothing but the expression of the goal of the revolution, working class power, and a description of the revolutionary road to its achievement. While all of us, no doubt, regard these ideas as the very heart of the real party program, they are, unfortunately, never expressed. Instead of teaching the working class the real structure of workers' power and the road thereto via the dual power, we speak only of the Labor Party and the transitional program. By our failure to carry out this task a necessary link is omitted in the process by which the maturity of material conditions is reflected in proletarian revolutionary consciousness and organization.

Now we come to the question as to why the movement has failed in this important matter. While the failure is most obvious today when opportunities and necessities are so great and progress so lacking, and when the ineffectiveness of the labor party and transitional program is so patent, still the practical failure of the movement to carry out this fundamental task, and the theoretical lack on which this failure is based must be traced all the way back through the history of the movement. For never in the history of the movement has the problem of workers' power and the dual power road to it, been seriously and correctly posed to the workers of any industrial country. Only in the context of the permanent revolution, and therefore only for a partially feudal and pre-bourgeois country have these problems been raised and answered. Marx in his address to the Communist League of 1850 gave as advice to the German workers the program on which Lenin and Trotsky acted in Russia in 1917.

Certain problems of the road to power take very different form in an industrialized country from their shape in the context of the permanent revolution. In the course of the permanent revolution the earlier bourgeois revolution gives a certain impetus and direction to the development of the working class dual power. The bourgeois part of the revolution provides a sort of springboard from which the embryo working class power gets its start. And this embryo dual power has a period in which to develop and take shape in the milieu of the violent social flux of revolution. In this situation there is possible a sort of normal, natural development of the dual power, first as the organizational expression of the working class in alliance with the bourgeoisie against the remnants of feudal power, and then turning more and more against its erstwhile allies.

In the industrialized country the impetus of the bourgeois revolution has been spent generations ago. In quite the opposite way it seems at least quite possible that the outbreak of proletarian revolution may follow upon some fascist or other reactionary attack upon the working class. In any case there will not probably be a long period in which the state power is neutralized, as by the bourgeois revolution, in which the dual power can develop and shape it-

self, virtually without hindrance, and in the tropical climate of social revolution. While it may be hoped that factors of some sort may occur to provide something in the way of these springboard and time allowing advantages of the permanent revolution, reliance cannot be placed in hopes. It becomes necessary, then, to develop the theory and practice of Socialist revolution to provide our own spring board and to accomplish as far as possible in advance the correct shaping and the elementary organization of the dual power, for which time may not be allowed in the course of the revolution itself. The accomplishment of these things depends upon the revolutionary party, and depends upon the party accepting these as its tasks far in advance. Unfortunately, however, Marx did not deal with these questions.

The one occasion on which Marx wrote a political program for the winning of state power was his advice to the German workers previously referred to. In the case of England, where Marx lived, he wrote no such program. The reason was apparently in the mistaken opinion that he held that peaceful revolution was a possibility in England and the United States. There seem to be two reasons for this mistaken opinion. Marx's economic analysis and the predictions based upon it have proved generally true for the whole life time of capitalism, in spite of the fact that in the time in which he lived the development was only in its early stages. But economics is considerably more nearly an exact science than politics. Political development is based upon economic development; but is one degree removed, and subject to a complex of secondary forces which make long term prediction much more difficult.

The second reason is related to this. It is the fact that Marx never answered the question: what is the form of workers' power? He left open the possibility that the form of workers' power might be only an extension and purification of the bourgeois democratic structure. It is Martov's claim in "The State and the Socialist Revolution" that Marx was acquainted with and rejected certain schemes of government comparable to the soviet system. But this contention, if true, could only have the great importance Martov claims for it to people overwhelmed with reverence for authority. For to Marx, though he earnestly sought the answer, this was in a sense a utopian question. Lacking knowledge of the history of the eighty years following his death, and dealing in a science with so many variables as political science, Marx was too limited in the material on which he must base his answer.

The England in which Marx lived was that of the middle of the nineteenth century. In this classic land of capitalism, not only the capitalist economy, but also the bourgeois democratic structure resting upon it was still expanding. It was only late in Marx's life that the last reform act granting full manhood suffrage, passed the British parliament. And so it is not surprising that Marx could not foresee just what the future of the bourgeois democratic structure would be nor what was the necessary structure of workers' rule.

The historical setting of Marx's life, in which the basic factors were England and Germany in the middle 19th century, was a factor which even his genius could not surmount; and resulted in the

fact that he did not deal directly with what has become the central political problem of the revolutionary movement: what is the structure of workers' power and how is it to be established in an industrialized country. Lacking the answer to this question, which was never filled in definitively by later Marxists, the conscious working class revolutionary movement failed to contribute its link in the ideological response to maturing capitalism.

Marx sought for the answer as to the form of workers' power. And in the Paris Commune, the most advanced struggle in his life time, he thought he found it. While it would be foolish to maintain rigidly the impossibility of establishment or maintenance of workers' power on the basis of any given governmental structure, it is certain that the Commune does not provide an instance of the generalized form or structure of workers' rule. The Commune was a purified and extended form of the bourgeois democratic structure of elected area wide representation. In the context of the revolutionary situation in Paris and the flight of the bourgeoisie to Versailles, this form embodied a more or less proletarian content, but the form by no means guaranteed or even made probable such content separate from the specific conditions.

To Marx the counterposition of the Commune to bourgeois parliamentarism was established by the destruction of the bureaucracy and the standing army. Because of the limitations in his view that we have been discussing, Marx here overlooked the fact that it is the representational structure -- representation by area-wide election, that is the primary element in bourgeois democracy. The bureaucracy and the standing army are, from this formal point of view, superstructure -- albeit superstructure that is essential to the maintenance of bourgeois rule. The bureaucracy and standing army are necessary to bourgeois rule, and their destruction represents at least the temporary eclipse of that rule. But if the foundations of that rule remain in terms of economic power and in the bourgeois system of representation, it can only be expected that in time the superstructure will be recreated. If the economic foundations of capitalist power are destroyed -- as by nationalization of the means of production -- but if also a system of representation is established which does not place power directly in the hands of the working class, then it is to be expected that that group in whose hands state power does rest will -- given time -- develop itself into a new ruling class since its control of state power carries with it complete economic power.

The primary element in any governmental structure is the system by which the ruling bodies are related to the masses. In a military dictatorship this relation may be simply a centralized system of police repression. In any democratic system the relation is one of a structure of representation. Bourgeois parliamentarism is a democratic system in that all the people are allowed to vote in the selection of representatives. But it is a system peculiarly designed to accomplish the rule of the bourgeoisie. Area wide election is suited to easy manipulation by wealth and bourgeois economic power; and representatives so chosen are virtually impossible of control by their electors. The general structure of workers' power is a different democratic structure, a system of representation where again

all the people may participate in the selection of representatives, but which will by its structure facilitate working class rule, and will make possible the easy control of representatives by their constituents.

III

Workers' state power is the socialist answer to the crisis of capitalism. It is the only possible answer aside from social destruction. State power in the hands of the working class is not something which will occur accidentally, nor will the workers be swindled into taking power through some sleight of hand talk about innocuous sounding objectives. The overthrow of gigantic American capitalism is not so easy -- nor is the construction of workers' democracy, when rule by a superior ruling class has been the only situation known to man for thousands of years. Workers must learn the revolutionary answer from propaganda and experience and must learn to prepare organizationally for its consummation.

A workers' state is not just a natural political structure rising upon the foundation of nationalized economy. The Russian experience has taught that at least to us of the WP. In fact a truly socialized economy will exist only on the basis of a workers' state. In the revolutionary period the usual relative roles of politics and economics are reversed. While in the long run it is true to say that economics is the foundation determining the nature of the political superstructure, in the revolutionary period the opposite precedence obtains. It is the maturing of economic development that has brought the revolutionary situation into being. Economic development has reached a point where productive power has outrun the old relations of production. The economic foundation of society strains against its fetters. What holds back the revolution? The political power of the old ruling class -- maintaining by its political power the old relations of production. The act of revolution is a political not an economic act.* When political power rests in the hands of a new ruling class -- and not until then -- can steps be taken to solve the economic problem.

The workers' state, then, on the basis of the more than matured economic and technological conditions, brings into being the socialist relations of production. Politics is primary -- though only for a time. There is, of course, a circular effect, and the long run determinant is the economic base. If the workers' state, established by the successful revolution fails to bring into being the necessary socialist productive relations, then in a little time it will cease to stand as a workers' state. But the economic problems of the workers' state are beyond the scope of this paper. We are here dealing with the question of the nature of workers' power and how it can be achieved.

*We do not deny the part played by direct seizure of factories, etc., by the workers. It must be recognized, however, that such seizure cannot constitute a real transformation of property relations unless the protector of property relations, the state, is itself seized and transformed.

Workers' state power does not mean a political system in which all but workers are deprived of political rights. In capitalist democracy the vast majority are allowed to participate in the political process, but under forms and conditions that assure the rule of the capitalists. Similarly in a workers' democracy, all will be free to participate politically but the political form will facilitate the rule of the working class -- with these differences, that whereas the capitalists are a tiny minority, the workers and their close allies will be the great majority, and that while under capitalism the ruling minority tends to become even smaller, the socialist society will tend toward complete democracy and the classless society.

In a capitalist democracy it is suitable that the masses elect their governmental representatives, but that the choices are determined and those elected are controlled by and actually responsible to the capitalist minority. In the workers' democracy all governmental representatives must be strictly responsible to and immediately controlled by those whom they represent. This will be accomplished by the fact that all representatives will be delegates from organized bodies, representing the membership of the body and subject to immediate recall whenever the representative no longer properly represents the majority of the organization from which he comes. This is the method of really democratic rule. It is also the method of workers' rule, for the predominant organizations will be the economic organizations of the working class.

It is the system of representation, the structure by which the government is related to the masses, that is the basic political point in determining class rule. And it is as a system of representation that the embryo workers' state comes into being, as the new power develops within the shell of the old. The capitalist class developed its economic enterprises within the shell of feudalism until powerful enough to burst the shell and become the new ruling power. The working class can only develop its economic organizations of struggle, its unions, its consumers and tenants organizations, within the shell of the old society. But these organizations of struggle leagued together through representatives from the ranks -- from the bottom units of organization only, not from the superstructure (not from district councils, etc.) -- these thus become the new system of representation, the embryo dual power. First they develop as organizations leagued together to fight against specific capitalist oppressions: anti-labor acts, evictions, rising prices, racial discriminations. From leagues for working class defense of rights and conditions they become the expression of the dual power and finally of the state power.

These leagues -- this new system of representation, will not be formed according to some blue print. They will probably not call conventions and draw up constitutions. They will grow as the need becomes apparent, as the destructive pressure of capitalist decline increases, and when they have emerged as the dual power, or state power, they will not then either be easily changed by the pen of some blue printer. But all this does not mean that their growth is abstractly predetermined, inevitable. We who make up the working class will be those who shape this organizational response of the

working class to dying capitalism. And we who are the really conscious elements within the working class, conscious of what this development means, of where it is going, we bear a tremendous responsibility. Through our conscious efforts this unblueprintable development must be made adequate to its tasks. It is our job to make sure that as these organs of labor struggle develop, they develop in such a way that they can measure up to their tasks as the dual power -- the representation of all the masses in the seizure of power, and measure up to their tasks as the organs of state power, the development of the socialist society and the abolition of classes.

That is the program and the basic task of the revolutionary party. It is not a cut and dried program, but one that must live and grow and show itself more clearly in its details as the class struggle unfolds towards its climax. The program is for workers' state power constituted by the seizure of the state by a dual power, representative of the overwhelming majority of workers and of the masses generally, and grown out of their immediate struggle for rights and conditions.

We must take as our central task the carrying out of this program: of teaching workers on every occasion and by every means the goal of the workers' state, and the road thereto via the dual power. In pamphlet, lecture, and conversation these are the ideas to which all others are introduction or proof. In the newspaper articles these ideas are the conclusions -- or ideas leading to these.

We do not assume that the method must be one of lecture and theoretical articles only. We assume that workers -- and most or all people generally -- learn best through their own immediate experience. Workers learn revolutionary lessons from their experience in the class struggle -- if those who understand the revolutionary goal and road are on hand to point out the lessons. Our handling of all these current events in workers' lives: of strikes, struggles against high prices and evictions, against racial discrimination, for civil liberties -- our handling of all these issues must be from the point of view of drawing from them their revolutionary lessons, and of teaching workers so to organize their struggle on these immediate issues that they lay the foundations for the dual power. This should be the content of LABOR ACTION.

Must we say again: we do not present blue prints. We present as clearly as we can see the structure of the revolutionary goal -- the workers' state, and the revolutionary road of building the dual power. We build a movement -- our own party and increasing numbers of attracted workers -- for which these ideas are the center of the universe. As the class struggle unfolds and is unfolded by the revolutionary movement, the movement sees ever more clearly the details of the goal and of the road to it.

There must be consciousness in the working class revolution or there will be no such revolution -- and we are the starting point of that consciousness. We have been sitting back waiting for political consciousness to develop -- or making believe that we stimulate such

consciousness by penny ante fairy stories about labor parties that are revolutionary. The working class is made up of adults, and to make the revolution they will have to stand up and fight with the physical and intellectual capabilities of adults. They do not understand some of the most important facts of life -- but they will not be led to understand by being taught about Jack and the Beanstalk. To build a revolutionary movement we must teach the revolutionary goal and the revolutionary road.

We do not teach workers just so that they will know what to do when the time comes. The time has already come. The working class must start at once to lay the foundation for the dual power; by developing a consciousness of itself as the ruling class to be; by uniting from the bottom. But these things it will not do on its own. They depend upon us. We teach workers consciousness of themselves as members of the coming ruling class by explaining to them how they can and will rule in the workers' state. We prove the necessity of unity from the bottom by our description of the development of the dual power and we urge workers to the actions that are the first steps in that development. The proper conduct of union and mass struggles today lays the foundation for the dual power tomorrow. Unions must be made or kept democratic through stimulating the energy and initiative of the rank and file. Tenants organizations, committees on prices, organizations for racial equality, etc. must be built upon active membership participation. Union struggles, fights against evictions, for civil liberties must be generalized to involve wide sections of the community through committees of delegates of all these various groups. The memberships of the organizations must maintain active and direct control over the conduct of these struggles through the direct accountability of delegates to the rank and file -- their election for short terms and their always being subject to summary recall and replacement. By such practices the masses must become accustomed to united action from the bottom and to the organizational forms that make easy the direct control by the masses themselves.

The working class and the masses must as far as possible build and control their organizations in the consciousness of their role as elements of the dual power and of the state-to-be. Those who thoroughly understand will be the members of the revolutionary party -- and it is this understanding that makes the party the leadership of the class. Such a party teaching the workers how they shall rule and how they shall achieve the ruling power -- and organizing them for the achievement -- such a party will be quickly and mightily attractive to all the best elements in the working class.

But we have a long way to go to become such a party. We must start by teaching ourselves the revolutionary goal and revolutionary road. We never give them thought. We must give them very great thought -- until it is just natural in everything we say and write that these ideas are central. It is possible that at times a revolutionary party can present transitional -- or even strictly reformist demands. But certainly it cannot eat, sleep, breathe, and live such demands as our party does and remain revolutionary. The revolutionary party of the working class must eat, sleep, breathe, and live the program of workers' power -- and everything else is

subsidiary to that. Our anemic party must get the Red back into its blood -- or die to make way for a new party that will stand for the goal and the road of the working class revolution.

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Postscript:

A discussion of the views expressed in this article in the Los Angeles Branch brought out as the sharpest criticism the writer's failure to deal with the question of Stalinism. For the benefit of other readers who may experience a similar reaction, a few remarks are indicated.

A paper designed for reproduction in the BULLETIN cannot take up every question. This paper aims to deal fundamentally with the failure of the movement so to develop as to give hope of socialist victory; and with the writer's view as to the basic reason for and correction of that failure. In this view objective circumstances, including Stalinism, must not be held responsible for the failure. And a correct analysis of Stalinism would not in itself rectify that failure. Such analysis is of great importance, and in the writer's opinion is, in its finer points, still to be achieved. But that is not the task of this paper.

In point of fact the program here proposed is itself the definitive answer to Stalinism within the working class. In the Los Angeles discussion Comrade Gates pointed out that Stalinism itself is a dual power threat. This is certainly true. And it is met exactly by the proposed program: not that any dual power is good -- but that we must teach and organize the working class for a dual power development that will give state power to that class. This propaganda and organization for effective democratic workers power is the real answer to Stalinism. Such a program exposes the falseness of the Stalinist claim to represent the working class. At the same time it rearms those disillusioned by the Stalinist degeneration.

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