

Bulletin

OF THE WORKERS PARTY

CONTENTS

A CRITIQUE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION
SUBMITTED BY THE PC- By Paul Newman..... 1

A REALISTIC PROPAGANDA APPROACH
By Dave Corbin..... 9

CAPITALISM, STALINISM AND WAR
By Susan Green..... 18

ON THE JEWISH QUESTION: RESOLUTIONS OF
THE BUND..... 26

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNATIONAL
RESOLUTION- By E. Garrett, H. Judd..... 30

15 cents

VOLUME III NO 9
CONVENTION BULLETIN NO 6

January 14, 1949

2000

A CRITIQUE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION
SUBMITTED BY THE PC

By Paul Newman

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The brochure on the international question is, in my opinion, an ideal example of the way in which a resolution should not be presented. True, this type of literary exercise is a hallowed tradition in left-wing, Marxian sects, but it is about time that this practice be curtailed in favor of concise, practical, to-the-point presentations. How anyone can vote intelligently on the hodge-podge of superficial analyses, generalizations, sloganizations, and re-affirmations contained in the "resolution" is beyond me. It is even difficult to hold a well ordered discussion on such a document, as it contains any number of "analyses" and generalizations embedded in the whole which can be picked out by any given individual according to his interest or speciality and tossed before the membership for theoretical discourse. Indeed, with the exception of two proposals dealing with concrete issues, the resolution itself is a discussion document, and to discuss it is to hold a discussion of a discussion.

One gets the impression that the mass of material presented in documents of this kind is designed to forestall controversial contributions by other people in the party. Everything, including the kitchen sink, is thrown into the pages in an effort to anticipate and refute all possible objections in advance. Perhaps the motivation (in this case) for such a long-winded dissertation is the desire to show that the PC members are well aware of the problems and trends of a new era, have "grappled" with them, come up with the answers; and have not succumbed to the disease of doubting or loss of faith characteristic of the "social democratic renegades." Or, maybe, it was felt that there was not much new that one could say, but that some pages must be filled with the sound currency of "revolutionary" phrases so that we may have, as always, a nice fat document to discuss at the convention. But no matter what the reasons, the result is the same: a dreary phraseological re-hash dished up to suit the occasion.

A great number of pages of the document are taken up with the reiteration of a generally accepted view in the party on the nature of Stalinism, and ends up, of course, with the re-affirmation that we're for working class struggle and the Third Camp in the Eastern European countries, as elsewhere. (Maybe this was an attempt to "set straight" the Erber-Garrett-Judd "deviation." Who knows?) I fail to see the necessity for this laborious repetition as far as concrete problems are concerned, unless re-affirmation is a good in itself. Similarly, the digression on "retrogression," where pains are taken to distinguish our concept of the "meaning" of the term from the IKD concept, is essentially useless as far as concrete problems go. (In my opinion, the concept itself is worthless, and has at best only a metaphorical value.)

Then there's the hackneyed attack (with a couple of new twists added) on the role of the Social Democracy. Where it has not been "absorbed" ("destroyed" would have been a better choice of terms) by the Stalinists as in Eastern Europe, it is the "vanguard" of the bureaucratic collectivization tendencies of capitalism. At the same time, it is dependent for its existence on a "...more or less free labor movement in a more or less bourgeois -democratic state structure. (Which is it, more or less?). Remarkable logic. Bureaucratic-collectivization of capitalism is, however, according to the document, anti-bourgeois-democratic. The inference to be drawn from this formulation is that the Social Democrats, after doing the "dirty work" of the capitalists, must give way to some brand of fascism or to the yet to be built revolutionary third camp.

Two other possible alternatives of the bureaucratization under Social Democratic auspices are not mentioned in this connection. They are (1) the possibility of the Social Democracy being a "vanguard" and part of a new anti-capitalist class, or (2) the possibility in a country like England of the working out of democratic workers' control without violent revolution. True, in the first part of the document it is pointed out that as the bureaucracy continues to grow it gains "relative independence" from the capitalists. But this is still only a "new stage" of capitalism, and nothing else.

However, there seems to be the very slightest hint on page four that there is the possibility of the development out of capitalism of a bureaucratic-collectivist class. There we read, "The limits of this tendency (toward "bureaucratic-collectivization" - P.N.) are set by the struggle of the working class for power and, even aside from this, by the fact that the complete negation of capitalism short of working class revolution requires the intervention of some other revolutionary force visible in western capitalist countries only in broad outline." (My emphasis). As to just what this other revolutionary social force...visible...in broad outline" is, the brochure fails to enlighten us further. Could this other social force be a new bureaucratic class? Do the sponsors of the document see the possibility of the development of a bureaucratic ruling class. It would seem so - we're not, of course, sure.

As long as this kind of speculation was dumped into the resolution, it would have been well if this "other" social force were elaborated upon. But no, the tendency toward bureaucratic collectivization has its limits set by the working class struggle for power, and that's what we're concerned with. We're not going to complicate matters of working class struggle, the document seems to imply, by examining a phenomenon which, after all, exists only in "broad outline." I'M certain, however, that the broad outline can be brought into sharper focus by the expedient of cleansing the eyes of the opaque film of Trotskyist traditionalism.

A discussion on the bureaucratic trends and the role of Social Democracy has interesting possibilities, and should by all means be aired in the party. But as far as presenting a resolution for our purposes on the two concrete issues, it is only of obscurantist value. (The advisory position of going into the Social Democratic parties could have been presented in a short, concise resolution, or a separate point in a more to-the-point international resolution).

In the talk on the "revival" of the struggle for democratic rights, the document seems to be trying to get across some point of profound significance, but I (and others) don't know exactly what it is. What are the "democratic" rights to be fought for in the United States and Western Europe in order to carry the struggle for them to the Socialist goal? Are they freedom of speech, assembly, press, and organization? But these things still exist in large measure in the western bourgeois-democratic countries and have not been greatly negated since the end of the war. (The statement that there are "less" democratic rights in the United States is such an oversimplification as to be for practical purposes false.)

This is a case of trends being substituted for actuality and is an example of the helpless, pessimistic negativism which permeates the document. The attitude is conveyed that significant democratic rights have been taken away, and that the fight for their re-instatement is the primary task of the day. Actually, to state the matter positively, the task is to utilize the amount of democracy which exists to educate and organize for socialism. The point that we must fight against infringement of democratic rights, such as the Taft-Hartley law, the star chambers, the subversive lists, etc. is not very novel and should be taken for granted. In this, of course, we are not very distinguishable from other leftists and even just plain liberals. I might note here that, in my opinion, the opportunistic position taken by the party on the question of the Taft-Hartley affidavits does not square very well with our stated intention of being in the "vanguard" of the struggle for democratic rights. I would not go so far as to say that this action is an example of the well-known phenomenon of opportunism being the obverse of phrase-mongering, but it's suggestive. A discussion of the problem of democratic rights can indeed be fruitful, but it is very difficult to do anything with it embedded as it is in a resolution which leads up to only two concrete resolves.

The discussion on a possible third world war is a re-affirmation of the fact that we're against it. There is nothing concrete as to just how we should take steps to prevent it. Instead, we are given another re-affirmation that we're for the Third Camp. Good. Everybody in the party has been, for these many years, for a Third Camp. As to not lending our support to either side it is not explained how, if war breaks out day after tomorrow, a position of a "plague on both your houses" can be translated into actual political struggle without becoming a bunch of C.O.'s, pacifists, or "revolutionary" jail-birds. It is a case of another sloganized re-affirmation in the future tense.

Finally, the resolution gets around to stating a position on two concrete issues of the day, which are disposed of in less than one page. These are (1) the Marshall Plan, and (2) the question of withdrawal of United States and allied troops from Germany. On the latter question a position is taken for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of US troops. True, the position is not stated in these bald terms (an oversight, perhaps) but is skirted around by mixing up the struggle for national independence, democratic rights, and Russian maneuvers. But the implication is painfully clear that we are for the position as stated in point #2.

On the Marshall Plan a clumsy piece of intellectual footwork is

performed in the last puny paragraph. In the next to last sentence, the resolution states that it endorses the analysis and conclusions adopted by the July Plenum. This position was one of intransigent opposition to the Plan. In the last sentence it is noted "... in particular the necessity for socialist opposition to any plans for the channellizing of Marshall Plan aid toward military supplies and arms instead of economic aid or for the setting up of a separate government program toward this end." (My emphasis). Now these two positions are absolute opposite approaches, if opposites can be said to truly exist in this world. They cannot be reconciled logically, pragmatically, dialectically, or by any other means. One is for complete opposition and one is for criticism and actions against aspects of the Plan's operation. If this is an attempt to slur over the differences in the PC on the Plan, it is a sad joke perpetrated by all parties concerned. However, it is pretty clear from what went before that we are "against" the Marshall Plan, and any other position is to be damned as capitulation to American imperialism and a loss of faith in the socialist perspective.

As I said, the above two points are the only meaningful resolves of the document. I should like to suggest here that the resolution could have been presented sensibly in something like the following manner to provide a decent basis for discussion:

The struggle for the world today is between Stalinist totalitarianism on the one hand, and US imperialism on the other. While differences do exist between them at present, they are not of sufficient importance for us to give any hint as to a preference between them either now or in the event of war. We reaffirm our positions for working class struggle, for the Third Camp, and for the slogan "Neither Washington nor Moscow!" Therefore, on the following two issues we resolve the following:

- 1) We are completely opposed to the Marshall Plan, and
- 2) We are for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of US and allied troops from Germany.

This is all, that I can see, that the document actually says. And indeed it's enough. These two problems along with the short motivation can be concretely grasped and intelligently discussed. They constitute a resolution and any number of people can furnish arguments pro or con, bringing requisite material to bear on the problem. And one is saved from the dilemma of agreeing or not with a conglomeration of analyses and arguments if he is favor of these propositions. Conversely, if one is opposed, he does not have to agree with all the arguments of the opponents. Further, these are the really important international issues before the convention, and a clear-cut position one way or the other can be taken.

At this point I should like to make known my views on these two issues. In discussing them there is no room for abstract concepts like capitalist retrogression, Third Camp, Neither Washington nor Moscow, etc. The facts must be recognized and the theory made to conform.

To make the demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal

of US and allied forces from Germany is shouting in vacuo; it is, in my opinion, meaningless and absurd. Worse than this, however, it implies that as far as we're concerned, it is a matter of indifference whether the German masses are subjected to Stalinist totalitarianism or kept from this fate by the presence of US power. The only answer (the usual one) I can think of that the sponsors of the document would probably give to deny this assertion is something like the following: Yes, we recognize that there exists more political freedom in the Allied zones of Germany, and this is better for the German workers; but the imperialist rivalry between the US and Russia is of no concern to revolutionaries, and we're for a mass movement directed against both oppressors. We do not show preference for either side, but condemn both equally. Besides, it is not necessarily true that the withdrawal of Allied forces will mean the Stalinists will take over, and the withdrawal would make easier the formation of a viable German working class movement.

We should like to know how this jibes with Judd's report on Germany and the orientation of the German people in which he states, among other significant things, that "There is no belief at the moment that a German state, arising out of an independent development of the people as a whole could step into the situation and successfully halt the march of Stalinism." (LA, October 11, 1948). Also, it would be interesting to see reasoning of this kind applied to the Berlin situation.

At any rate, the document does not advance one concrete reason for being against, or in favor of the presence of Allied forces in Germany. Instead, it talks scornfully about "...inculcating dependence upon the armies of American and British imperialism as the bulwark against Stalinist expansion...." Concretely, the problem is simply ignored. (It would have been very useful, perhaps, if-- in this document which discusses the meaning of retrogression, the nature of Stalinism, the revival of the struggle for democratic rights, and other "safe" topics--some of the useless verbiage were replaced by a discussion of the Berlin situation). Are we then for or against US troops remaining in Berlin? The document implies that we are against. I believe, however, that this position is politically untenable and indefensible.

On the Berlin question there appeared an article in the September 27 issue of LABOR ACTION by Eugene Keller stating that the precondition for an effective struggle by the German workers against Stalinism is the continued presence of the Allied occupation powers. He pointed out that the demand for the withdrawal of Allied troops is a tactical one which cannot be put forward without qualifications, and it would be foolish to raise it in the Berlin situation. Indeed, he contended that the Berlin workers and ourselves should demand that the Allied forces remain in the city. To my knowledge, this radical departure was neither discussed nor answered in the press by the leadership of the party.

The approach of not demanding withdrawal of Allied troops from Berlin, but demanding that they stay is a correct policy, in my opinion. It is perhaps not necessary to point out the consequences of Allied withdrawal becoming actual; but given the position of the PC resolution, the members of that body do not seem to govern their actions in the light of consequences. Instead of being able to

combat Stalinism and cast 64½% of their votes for the anti-Stalinist Social Democrats, the people of Berlin would be under Stalinist oppression; and the Social Democrat organization would be destroyed ("Absorbed," as some would say.)

Immediately the masses of Berlin are faced with the alternative of Stalinism or of carrying on a struggle against it with a degree of independence -- and under the leadership of a working class party. Which does the PC prefer? It is obvious that it cannot be a matter of indifference, and a choice must be made. Nor is it possible honestly to have a "private" position of hoping the Allies will remain in Berlin, while publicly shouting for the withdrawal of all troops from all Germany. Persons who have such a bifurcated view-- and there are some, I'm sure in the WP -- are suffering from what might be called political schizophrenia -- a characterization which is not an inaccurate one for the WP as a whole these days. Anyhow, we are judged by our small audience from our public pronouncements, and any fairly intelligent person would probably find the slogan "Immediate withdrawal of all troops from Germany," a hard bit of nonsense to swallow even if he were a master of the dialectic.

If the party were to adopt what I consider the correct policy for Berlin, what about the rest of Germany? Should we be for the immediate withdrawal of all troops from Germany except Berlin? But already the exception is a great qualification and makes the slogan somewhat meaningless. Again, in Western Germany as a whole this demand cannot be put forward without qualifications. It seems to me that the question should not be approached by means of slogan concepts into which the attempt is made to fit the realities of struggle. Rather the approach should be one of dealing with concrete issues in the given situation which, if resolved, will result in the withdrawal of the western occupation troops.*

Thus, for us in America, we should constantly point out and criticize all the reactionary actions resulting from US occupation policy. We should demand that the US keep hands off of German workers' strikes and demonstrations for better living conditions and political freedom. We should denounce the ill-concealed support of the American Military Government to the Christian Democratic Party -- the vehicle of reaction-- to the detriment of the Social Democrats. We should demand the restoration of foreign trade to Germany, the right for the German people to decide freely on socialization of industry, the raising of production levels to capacity, etc. It is in the struggle for these things that the German people will gain their national

*As a matter of fact, it is not stated in the resolution nor is it clear what conditions, if any, are to be attached to the slogan of withdrawal of US troops. It is merely pointed out that we do not condition this demand on the simultaneous withdrawal of Russian forces-- a safe formulation. Would the slogan be conditioned by the demand that the US guarantee the necessary economic aid to raise German industrial production to its capacity? Would it be conditioned by the demand that the US not support a reactionary western government? That the German working class be left in a strong enough position to defend itself against Stalinism? In a discussion held in the South Side Chicago branch on this section of the resolution, one of its supporters pointed out that the slogan of withdrawal of troops from Germany was a "propaganda" or "educational" slogan as distinct from an "agitational" one. He said that the slogan represented a culmination of such concrete demands and conditions as outlined in the

independence, that the working class organizations will grow and be strengthened, and that will enable the German masses to fight off Stalinist despotism without the necessity of Allied troops in their country; and not by our shouting slogans for unconditional withdrawal of Allied troops. Of course, this approach demands the abandonment of the sectarian attitude held these many years by the Trotskyist movement toward the bourgeois-democratic state.**

I should again like to point to an article by Eugene Keller in the November 15 issue of LABOR ACTION as an example of what appears to me to be an essentially correct approach to the problem of Germany. In this article he unstintingly criticized the policy of the US on denazification and the intervention in the Stuttgart riots. He pointed out what the US could and should do to aid the German workers and the German economy. He did not, however, end his articles with the absurd slogan of withdrawal of allied troops from Germany; as in the case of an article by Barton on the Berlin situation in the September 20th issue. I hope the convention rejects the formulation put forward by the PC resolution in favor of the approach outlined above.

As there has been so much previous discussion on the Marshall Plan I will not devote a great deal of space to it here. However, I urge the rejection by the party of the ridiculous position of opposition to it. We should be constantly critical of its operation, de-

body of this article, i.e., the withdrawal would result from the struggle for these "subsidiary" (not excluded by the slogan) demands. However, aside from the question of the fine line between a propaganda and agitational slogan, I interpret the resolution to call for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all troops from all Germany. No one who has read the document and with whom I have discussed has questioned or denied this interpretation. Another of the partisans of the resolution went so far-for a moment-as to say that he thought I was probably right on Berlin. But when he was pressed further, and it was pointed out to him that this was an important exception to the demand to the immediate withdrawal of all troops, that it rendered the slogan inoperative, for Berlin, at least, he backtracked and said the Berlin situation was in reality "minor" and "unimportant" and the validity of the slogan was not vitiated by the Berlin struggle. Berlin, he held was merely and primarily an epitomized example of the Russian-Allied power conflict. I'm sure the PC would do well to enlighten some of its confused supporters-who tend to read into the slogan all sorts of "conditions" (up to a point) in an attempt to maintain it intact in its supreme position - as to the actual meaning of the slogan for withdrawal of all troops from Germany.

**True, this attitude has become somewhat modified recently in an empirical and fumbling manner in favor of a more realistic approach. However the idea still prevails of not pressing the capitalist state to adopt or rescind measures which it is "bound" to carry out or not carry out and which automatically flow from its "nature" as being "solely" in the service of monopoly capitalists. Particularly does this hold true in the field of foreign policy where it is considered that the imperialist US state will inevitably follow the most reactionary policy. The fact that many measures of the state cannot fit precisely into the foreordained categories does not deter the holders of the simplistic state formula from continuously parroting the formula laid down by the great-but naturally limited-Lenin.

manding (as in the last sentence of the document) that it be used only for purposes of economic aid. We protest against any militarization of the plan. We protest against its use in any form to subdue colonial independence movements. We should denounce its use for interference in internal politics of a country-particularly in utilizing it to support reactionary parties and regimes. The position of opposition to the plan should be discarded. As I pointed out in an LA article last summer, to be categorically opposed to the plan without carrying the opposition to its logical conclusion as the Stalinists do (i.e., to urge that the workers and masses of Europe use every means to hamper and sabotage its operation) is meaningless. Worse than that; it is downright evasion of an important problem, and succeeds only in sowing confusion and adding to a growing tendency towards fence-straddling in the WP.

In conclusion, I cannot believe that the brochure on "The Struggle for the World Today" reflects the opinions of all members of the PC. From what I gather from reading articles by a couple of other people, I do not see how they can agree with the present formulations in the resolution. Perhaps there will be a minority resolution. If so, I hope that the resolution or resolutions are kept/clear, concise form, and that the discussion in support of any such resolutions is reserved for separate documents and for the convention floor. In any case, I hope to get a resolution before the convention on the German question and the Marshall Plan in consonance with the conclusions drawn in this article.

A REALISTIC PROPAGANDA APPROACH

By Dave Corbin

* * *

What the WP needs most is a practical perspective. Generalizations about the situation in the country and the world, however valid, must be followed by the most concrete statements on the tasks of the party and its members.

We must understand not only the world, but our place in it, our role and function, and only then will we know where to begin--which is the main problem of the WP today.

The main tasks of the Party in the coming period are: 1) to increase our membership 2) to spread our ideas among growing circles of politicalized people.

To succeed in these objectives we must bear clearly in mind the size and position of the party and the situation in the country.

GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION

While we have succeeded in making ourselves in certain limited circles, as far as the vast majority of even leftward moving people are concerned, we are not on the scene, either politically or physically.

During the war, and afterward until the definitive falling out of Russian and American imperialism, we could claim to be (almost) the only party espousing the elementary rights of the working class (against the no strike pledge) and oppressed minorities (against segregation in the armed forces). In spite of some limited success in the union movement, we were not able to lead mass actions, nor was the mere holding of our militant position a sufficient talking point to be the basis for considerable recruitment.

Starting with the "leftward" turn of the Stalinists, even the talking point vanished, and the Wallaceites and Stalinists, and reformists of assorted hues take the limelight on these issues.

The present cold war crisis has furthered the polarization toward the two imperialist camps, with the tendency to take sides another obstacle to be overcome in the making (and holding) of Revolutionists.

The failure of an effective leadership to arise to fight the government anti-labor drive has forced the majority to choose even a Truman against a Dewey, with the rebirth of a weak optimism in the Democratic Party.

In short, lesser evilism, in all its forms always deep rooted in American politics, is not due for an early demise.

This general situation clearly affects the possibilities of recruiting "average" workers or "average" people to a revolutionary party, especially to a party of our size.

In spite of the failure of large numbers of people to arrive at a genuinely revolutionary program "automatically", the situation in the country can be described as generally favorable to the steady growth of a revolutionary party. With the background of unsolved domestic problems, and the drive toward war, large numbers of youngish people are thinking about the problems of the world, and more or less consciously searching around for a solution. Emerging from their political hibernation during the war onto the confusing national and international scene, they see the need for social change, and have no ready-made philosophy to apply. While not accepting the ideas of revolutionary socialism, they feel no deep antagonism to "Trotskyism", and are intellectually curious about its ideas.

Other and larger numbers have started out similarly, but drift towards (at least ideologically) or even join political organizations, for example the Stalinist, Wallace or Zionist variety. However, even when they join opponent movements they tend to retain their curiosity and can be "spoken to". The internal difficulties of the Stalinists have contributed to preventing the establishment of a broad hard core similar to pre-war days.

ORIENTATION

It is toward these politicalized and leftward moving people, inside and outside the union movement, that we must orient. They are the ones who will be most interested in our ideas. They have, many of them, acquired the political education and experience that can be a valuable asset. They have acquired the "political habit". They are the ones we can hold if we do convince them.

We must not turn our backs upon them, even when they belong to opponent political organizations. Their having joined must be regarded as part of a selective process which separates out the more potentially revolutionary elements.

Our job is to substitute one set of ideas for another, to indoctrinate politically. There is no vacuum in the minds of politically interested people. Other, different, opposing political philosophies have got to them first. We fight a horde of political adversaries. True, they can be categorized into variations on a few themes. True, our ideas are better. True, some people are predisposed toward us as a result of their experience and education.

But our Party cannot offer them a place - now - in an important, meaningful, and perhaps imminently successful real struggle for a new society - or anything else on a large scale.

We can offer the key to a future successful struggle - our ideas - and the opportunity to join us to spread them further - and little else besides. These ideas must be accepted against the pressures of the hostile world, and well understood, to recruit and hold these people to the party.

Let us direct ourselves to our main practical task - propagandizing for the revolutionary Marxist ideology. We must give these ^{political-} people the party weltanschauung. Seldom can this be done quickly in

one or two sessions and seldom (today) around any one issue. It will start out with curiosity or interest; then with following our ideas for a period of time. Naturally, if they are not to turn their backs upon us immediately, we must show them we "have something". We will have to apply the party position to the problems of the day, and in such a way as to deal with those aspects with which the particular groups are concerned. Often it will take the knockdown-drag-out political discussion -which most of us seem to have thought passé. It can certainly be said that only to the extent that we are influencing the thinking of individual living people toward our concepts of revolutionary socialism are we making progress toward or laying the foundation for recruitment.*

We must relate our concrete activity closely to this work. This will mean, for the coming period the maximum of direct party work on a high political level, rather than fruitless campaigns, and time consuming work in which politics plays only a small part, in the so called "mass" organizations.

UNIONS AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

The trade unions can be a more fruitful field than the small "mass" organizations, which are usually afflicted with the same problem in relation to the masses of the people as the WP itself. Here the party program, even where it cannot be carried out, has a close and visible relationship, to the daily lives of the workers. Its execution can seem, more easily than elsewhere, to be something for which they can organize practically. Here it is possible to pose more of our fundamental ideas in terms of action slogans, in the sense of what the workers should do tomorrow if not today. We must participate actively in the struggles of the workers formulating and pushing forward their larger immediate interests by agitation for the appropriate demands in the trade unions themselves.

However, even in industry we are faced with the primary task of recruiting a larger nucleus of party members before we can make much of a dent. Again this will involve substituting our rounded conceptions for the reformist and Stalinist. While it is useful to make our initial propaganda approach through the medium of the aforementioned slogans (transitional program and immediate demands), in getting down to cases with the leftward moving workers we must concentrate on the same general ideological problems and in much the same way as with politicalized people anywhere. This will take us away from the general framework of these action slogans so quickly that it is playing with words to say that our main task today -is propaganda for these action slogans.

We are NOT saying that this is the approach for the coming "period" in the sense of the next stage of American capitalism. We are saying that this applies to the WP today, considering its general situation, small size, political isolation, and limited forces in industry. Even now, however, when we find ourselves in a particular plant or industry with a large fraction and in a favorable situation, we may organize if this criterion is applied to our functioning in the past, we see how much of our time has been spent in preparation for - or preparation for preparations for - actually getting around to talking politics to people. We go thru the most terrific windup- most extreme, a "campaign" - to meet a few political people - who are not impressed by the campaign itself - who could have been met elsewhere inside of thirty minutes if we had gone to the right place at the right time.

or participate in progressive groups or assume positions in the lower ranks of the union leadership. But it would be utopian to believe that we can overcome the general party situation (even leaving aside "demoralization") and recruit primarily by our leadership in or line on the immediate class struggles. Even in favorable situations in order to recruit we will have to look for leftward moving workers and concentrate on giving them a thorough rounded political understanding.

There is no real contradiction between concentrating on industrialization and the orientation we have been advocating, even if this means work on political elements in other than trade union arenas;

1- The gap between our industrialization goal and the present achievement is so great that we can count on a large number of comrades being available for the foreseeable future.

2- This work will be important to any live party, even a highly industrialized one,

3- Work in industry cannot be expected to not much in the way of recruits until some time after its start. If we do not have any grand schemes and illusions in the unions the time and energy can in the meantime be devoted to whatever work will bring results. Working in a factory is not in itself an excuse for inactivity after working hours.

4- The W.P. is so small that it is at the danger point. Working on political people, where-ever they may be, will get results in a much shorter time, increasing our size and making our work in the factories much more effective.

5- Among political people contacted thru other than trade union channels will be found a fair percentage of working class and union members.

6- If it should be found that to some extent there is a contradiction (for example, having the same individuals in NY and Detroit at the same time) then industrialization can be given priority. We can worry about the problem of going too far in this direction if and when we get to it.

A POLITICAL TENDENCY AS A FIELD OF WORK.

Work on a political tendency can constitute a field of work in itself. It provides a concentration of political people, a group we can approach knowing that the problem of one is the problem of all. Where the tendency has an organizational form, we have the advantage of being able to approach the same people again and again over a period of time.

Most important, is that any success immediately opens up the prospects of new successes, of working with the people we have influenced or recruited so that their contact with or position in the organization can be utilized to gain us still more influence or members. It gives not only us but the new member something to do, a place to begin to work for the party. By this method of operating, we can overcome the present difficulty of recruiting an isolated individual who shortly finds himself in the same isolated position as ourselves, and worse, hasn't our fully developed ideas to sustain him in the movement.

The party must gear itself for work among political groups by 1) providing literature directed towards them. The literature should be linked with current developments, even with those inside their own organizations. 2) Educating or assembling a competent group of members for this task. Trying to talk about an organization to a member of that organization will quickly convince anyone who needs convincing of this point. 3) Having a fraction form of organization consisting of those actually carrying out the work.

The Fraction Form

The advantages of the fraction form are organizational and political. While many of these advantages would be found in any basic textbook (if there are any on the subject) they have been foregone by the WP in favor of work-in-general (general contacting, campaigning and agitation). Where the fraction form has been applied of necessity, in the trade unions and "mass" organizations, it has led to self-continuing activity and responsible efficiency tied closely to the ups and downs of the situation in the respective organizations.

A return to real political work will of necessity mean a greater application of the fraction form. It will require a competence and intimate knowledge of each specific tendency which cannot be acquired by every member of the WP in every field. The work must be relegated to organized task forces of specialized people who pool not only their energies but their brains and experience, and who will devote themselves to study and research if need be to accomplish their task. Be competent or fail--no in-betweens in this sort of work. We mean, however, political competence, not the kind directed towards researching the exact number of toilets in a given area.

THE STALINISTS

The Stalinists are both a danger and an opportunity to us. It is an unfortunate fact that a high percentage of the best people still fall under Stalinist influence. Most of them have never met a Trotskyist. (A real curiosity as to what the devil must be like is an asset here). Without appropriate contact and literature these people too will absorb the ideology and lies and we can write them off our lists for a long time.

Making propaganda among these people can be fruitful, especially if it is related to real events, changes in line, etc. We had a golden opportunity at the time of the Browder-Foster affair, and for some time afterward. Thousands of rank and filers were shocked and confused and willing to listen attentively to anything shedding light on the developments. Except for publishing good articles little or nothing was done. Worse yet, we were so wrapped up on other things--or other conceptions--that we never became aware of the possibilities of the situations.

If we do try to convince political Stalinists, we immediately have to go beyond the generalities of our usual anti-Stalinism into the whole history of Russia and the communist and Stalinist parties, being able to give concrete and detailed proof at each point. Any well placed blow weakens the opponent for the next.

The sad fact is, however, that the overwhelming majority of us are unarmed with the literature, material, and even real knowledge to do the job. The usual results of our discussions with even doubtful Stalinists are that we brush elbows with them, exchange a few words, "vindicate" ourselves and move on saying that they can't be convinced, never having brought to bear fire from the really impressive arsenal available against them. The observations that these people have an emotional attachment to the Soviet Union is no real explanation for the virtual lack of success in this field. It is true, but the lack of any success even on a percentage basis, among those willing to listen, indicates something wrong with the method or lack of it in the convincer.

THE LABOR PARTY AND OUR TASKS

Above all, if we are to act effectively, we must realize that the propaganda approach, either inside or outside the labor movement, cannot be conveyed or summed up in the statement that our main task is campaigning, or agitation, or "propagandizing" for the labor party.* Using the term task in the concrete sense of what to do, what our activity consists of, to say that our main task is propaganda for a labor party is misleading and incorrect.

It is an especially bad formulation precisely because the main mistake of the WP has showed up most clearly on the labor party question. This mistake has been to act as though we were capable of raising large numbers of workers to political consciousness or stimulating mass actions by our agitation. Not only did we act as though we believed we were capable of these things but raising the political consciousness of the working class in general to the point where it crystallized into the elementary form of independent political action - the labor party - became an indispensable condition before we as a party could make any real progress. We concentrated on achieving this precondition with a desperation and exclusiveness and short-sightedness which made us neglect the real task--work among the politically advanced. The "real" progress which we could make only after the formation of a labor party came to mean, in practice, a dis-belief in any considerable growth even by our present modest standards, before the formation of a labor party.

Thus the impossible - actually forming a labor party in a given period of time as a result of our agitation and activity-became necessary. The demoralization in the party is primarily a result of the lack of any success inevitably attendant upon attempting to ^{obtain} the impossible. As a result of the mistaken idea of our role, time and again we have violated in spirit party decisions (latest at the convention) that we do not advocate a reformist labor party but our anti-reformist conception of one/

Separation of the labor party concept from the general frame-

* "The acceleration of this development, the work of agitation for such a (labor) party and of active, initiating participation in its up-building-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." Resolution - The Situation in the United States and our Next Tasks - By Nathan Gould, Max Shachtman

work of an anticapitalist program of a workers state, nationalization under workers control, anti-parliamentaryism and even anti-war: means in effect to advocate a reformist labor party. In the absence of such a clear linking of the labor party to an anti-reformist conception and program, we have too often left the workers to fill in the labor party with their own -- reformist-- ideas of a labor party. Remembering here our main task - the bringing of people to the ideas of revolutionary socialism, -this misplaced emphasis clearly cannot fulfill the function of bringing leftward moving people to accept our battered party and program.

Propaganda Approach Around Labor Party Slogan?

At this point the reader might be inclined to say "We agree with you that the main task of the party is to concentrate on politicalized people, to give them the party conception of revolutionary socialism. However why can't we apply the labor party slogan correctly, on a high political level as you suggest, and be able to say the main task of the party is propagandizing for a labor party? And hasn't this formulation the implication that we should concentrate on our industrial orientation, which you accept?"

We will not attempt to answer this question in the abstract and in general, but for the WP in the coming period. If we had a much larger membership - if the actual formation of the labor party were a few months away - the answers might be different.

First of all there is little we can do at present to form the labor party - even (especially) our kind.

Secondly, since the first point is no secret among informed people, we cannot offer the concrete alternative of joining the WP in order to fight effectively for the labor party.

Thirdly, the politicalized people whom we must influence to join and support the WP are mostly not antagonistic and even mostly in favor of what they conceive to be independent political action. To make Workers Party socialists of them, we will have to concentrate not on repeating a few (even correct, even revolutionary) slogans to them, but on justifying the ideas of revolutionary socialism, which they do not as yet accept. "Throwing the book" at them, giving them the whole party conception would be a far more apt characterization than "propagandizing for a labor party". To clarify, to justify revolutionary Marxism to fairly political people who do not as yet accept it, and primarily in the context and framework of the labor party slogan, is to assume of the slogan an elasticity which it does not possess, and of our members a subtlety and competence in applying it impossible to acquire.

It is to make such a fetish of functioning through a slogan which is correct but not of universal application, that we choose the long way around. (When we want to put over the "neither Washington nor Moscow" idea, can we do this most effectively around the labor party slogan - or directly? How would we really deal with the concept that socialism can be achieved by "revolutionary" means? How about the supposed superiority of the Russian system?)

This is our answer to those who agree with the propaganda approach and think they see it in the resolution of comrades Shachtman and Gould.

The real danger of their resolution is not merely one of lack of efficiency in putting over the propaganda approach. The insistence of the resolution on centering our ACTIVITY around the labor party slogan seems to indicate a new campaign. It certainly will be interpreted in that light by those who are looking for just that. Although the labor party campaign will remain on paper-as it must until just prior to the really immediate and crucial situation - neither will the propaganda approach be put into practice for want of a clear orientation and practical perspective in that direction.

Even a virtual guarantee that a labor party will be formed within, say, a year (and there can be no such guarantee) will not give us a concrete or genuine perspective of fruitful activity conducted primarily around propaganda for a labor party, in the interim period. When our labor party ship is really about to sail, the general sound and commotion will be unmistakable, and we are confident that the WP will be aboard not as a passenger, but as a member of the crew. (provided we have our papers - our union cards)

THE SOCIALIST LEFT

Possibilities of recruitment from the peripheries and membership of the various Socialist tendencies deserve separate consideration. While we do not consider concentration on these people the main activity of the Party, work among them is both an opportunity and a "must."

The "minority" status of the WP numerically in relation to the Socialist parties considered separately as well as collectively makes competition an important factor, especially for the WP. Unfortunately the majority making their first favorable contact with Revolutionary Socialist ideas do so through other movements. The SWP is the most important for us to consider, but under certain circumstances, even the SLP, for example, with its 1600 members could offer possibilities of recruiting a group of Socialists which though small would be an important gain in our membership.

While the number of these new radicals is small in relation to the total number of leftist elements, it is large compared to the size of the WP. They are the type we ourselves hope to attract.

We strongly believe that the WP ideas are not only superior but that, given reasonable consideration this superiority is demonstrable. Even among the present membership of the SWP there are a sufficient number who, under pressure of events, are bound to respond by accepting our ideas, or ideas more in harmony with ours. Ideas, to be considered, must be presented. For many who are susceptible but not running around seeking contamination, ideas must hit them on the head. Most of our material on the SWP makes interesting reading for us, but never reaches the overwhelming majority of SWP'ers or their sympathizers. We are convinced that worthwhile results can be obtained by bringing to light the more obvious and glaring failings of the SWP line in concise hard hitting literature (preferably leaflets) written for the purpose. Infrequent but regular well-chosen timely material actually placed in the hands of the SWP membership and their wider audience is bound to give us gains far out of proportions to the extremely small amount of necessary activity.

If it is argued that this may disorient the WP membership by tying its perspective to the SWP, we answer: Worry less about our psychology and give us work which can produce results more than commensurate with the small effort involved. For the WP this effort will mean not tail-ending the SWP, but coming out of our hole.

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The pressures of the outside world, the smallness of the party and its inability to offer leadership at present in the class struggle affect adversely the possibilities of recruiting and holding "average" workers or people to the party. At the same time the general political situation is such that large numbers of people look for a solution to the problems of the world outside the status quo, considering or following political philosophies or joining political movements of a leftward direction but opposed to the ideas of the Workers Party. These people can be brought to accept the ideas of revolutionary socialism only by consistent and competent work on a high political level. Our ideas must be closely related to what is going on in the world, and we must grapple with the ideas and stands of the various opposing political tendencies. The intensity and competence required in this task dictate a minimum involvement in time-consuming work and campaigns, a maximum of direct party work, and concentration on specific political movements by means of wide use of the fraction form of organization. Actually directing our activity in this way cannot be summarized by the misleading formulation that our main task is activity around/propaganda for the labor party at the present time. Getting the feel of doing an achievable task, coming into contact with and influencing living political people in a revolutionary direction, will be a long step in restoring the morale of the Workers Party, and lay the basis for more ambitious projects at a later date. Meanwhile this orientation will mean not a retreat, but a necessary and fruitful step in the building of a revolutionary socialist party.

By Susan Green

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Letters in "The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels" (International Publishers), from which the following quotations are taken, show two things:

In the first place, we see that Marx and Engels, never accused by anyone of social patriotism or of corruption by bourgeois ideology, took the side of Germany in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

In the second place, the following excerpts are invaluable because they reveal the motives behind the policy. How, Marx and Engels asked, will the working class movement fare under the brutal reality of a Bonapartist victory over Germany? Without approving or disapproving their conclusions, it has to be registered that Marx and Engels, having in mind the interests of the developing socialist movement, were for supporting the German military effort.

Marx-Engels Position in Franco-Prussian War

The first quotation is from a letter Marx wrote from London to Engels on July 20th, 1870: "The French need a thrashing. If the Prussians win, the centralization of the state power will be useful for the centralization of the German working class. German predominance would also transfer the centre of gravity of the workers' movement in Western Europe from France to Germany, and one has only to compare the movement in the two countries from 1866 till now to see that the German working class is superior to the French both theoretically and organizationally. Their predominance over the French on the world stage would also mean the predominance of our theory over Proudhon's, etc."

Engels replied from Manchester on August 15th, 1870: "The position seems to me to be this: Germany has been driven by Badinguet (Napoleon III) into a war for her national existence. If Badinguet defeats her, Bonapartism will be strengthened for years to come and Germany broken for years, perhaps generations. In that case there can be no more question of an independent German working-class movement ~~either~~, the struggle to restore the national existence will absorb everything, and at best the German workers will be dragged in the wake of the French. If Germany wins, French Bonapartism will at any rate be smashed, the endless row about the establishment of German unity will at last be got rid of, the German workers will be able to organize themselves on a national scale, quite different from that hitherto, and the French workers, whatever sort of government may succeed this one, are certain to have a freer field than under Bonapartism. The whole mass of the German people of every class have realized that this is first and foremost a question of national existence and have therefore at once flung themselves into it. That in these circumstances a German political party should preach total obstruction a la Wilhelm (Liebknecht) and place all sorts of secondary considerations before the main consideration, seems to me impossible."

What could be clearer? The defeat of Bonapartism would leave "a freer field" for both the German and the French working class and Marx and Engels were for a German victory. As the war progressed and involved the people of Paris in insurrection, these men of course changed their views (though it can be noted parenthetically that they did not particularly favor the insurrection). Their views on the Franco-Prussian War are important. Today, as we face World War III, some of us, considering that question of "a freer field" for the working class movement, conceive of the possibility of having a preference as to victors. Are we therefore victims of social patriotism?

In 1890's Marx-Engels Wanted German Victory If War Came With Russia

Twenty years later, discussing the position to be taken if a war broke out with Russia, Engels wrote from London to Bebel on October 25th, 1891: "If however the French bourgeoisie begin such a war nevertheless, and for this purpose place themselves in the service of the Russian czar, who is also the enemy of the bourgeoisie of the whole of Western Europe, this will be the renunciation of France's revolutionary mission. We German Socialists, on the other hand, who if peace is preserved will come to power in ten years, have the duty of maintaining the position won by us in the van of the workers' movement, not only against the internal but against the external foe. If Russia is victorious we shall be crushed. Therefore if Russia begins war - go for her! Go for the Russians and their allies, whoever they may be. Then we have to see to it that the war is conducted by every revolutionary method" and so on.

Engels saw the possibility of such a war with Russia, ending with the German Socialists taking power, but at least for the beginning of the war he would not have shunned the military establishment of the German state. In an earlier letter to Bebel he stated: "You are right, if it comes to war we must demand the general arming of the people. But in conjunction with the already existing organization or that specially prepared in case of war."

This anticipated war between Russia and Germany never occurred and the German Socialists never had to decide whether Engels' position should be the official party position. Obviously the German working class did not take power within ten years, even though there was continued peace. Engels' prediction was unfortunately wrong).

Some Bona Fide Questions

It is of course all too obvious that all these quotations relate to events of a historical period far different from today. But the fundamental is there, namely, that Marx and Engels, because they thought the free development of the revolution demanded it, were willing to fight on the side of the German government and with the German military establishment to defeat an external foe whose victory would setback the revolutionary movement.

In the case of the Franco-Prussian War Marx said that the Germans were fighting for national existence. Certainly, if and when World War III comes, the whole of Western Europe will be fighting for national existence against the Stalinist juggernaut. (It

cannot be said that American imperialism takes away national existence as does the Russian variety. Witness the Netherlands, freely following a unilateral colonial policy—a dastardly policy to be sure - which flies directly in the face of all American interests.)

Again, Marx and Engels argued that bourgeois German centralization would be beneficial to the development of the working class movement; that a Bonapartist conquest would, on the other hand, hamper that development. Today we must consider carefully that bourgeois democracy, even abridged as it will be during World War III, holds out a chance for the restoration of the working class movement, whereas a Stalinist conquest would mean the annihilation of all revolutionists and the end of all independent working class action for this period.

Concerning a possible war with Russia in the 1890's, Engels was for fighting for a German victory to maintain "the position won by us (the German Socialists) in the van of the workers' movement." The onrush of Russian tzarism into Western Europe would have thrown the working class movement back. So Engel took sides. Why is it not correct today to consider the necessity of supporting the military victory of the capitalist nations because they will afford the working class movement at least a chance of survival?

If World War III Were to Break Out Now

If World War III were to break out now - say within months - which everyone believes unlikely, consideration of whether or not to give support to the military efforts of the Western alliance would become compelling, it seems to me. This necessity would arise from the shattered state of world revolutionary socialism, and from the incontestable truth that a Stalinist victory would eliminate all possibility for the restoration of revolutionary socialism in this period. Unless we wish to deceive ourselves, we must admit that the revolutionary third camp is nowhere on the horizon. Where are the revolutionary cadres, where the revolutionary parties, needed for teaching this idea, for organizing and leading the masses to fight for it? Between World War I and today, the forces of revolutionary socialism have been decimated by war, by counterrevolution, by Stalinism, by Nazism. There is left in Europe only the sorriest trickle of a revolutionary movement, and that confused and ineffectual. Who can rally the masses into a third camp?

The European masses, to be sure, abhor war in the very marrow of their bones - and they have no use for capitalism. But if war breaks out now, there being no third alternative strong enough to afford the hope of success, the brutal realities of military attack will make military protection first in importance; sides will be taken for elemental self-protection. (Such a thing as self-protection seems impossible in atomic warfare. Perhaps the wizards of science, now at work on it, will develop a counter-weapon to the atom bomb. If so, the country that has such a weapon first will have all the chips on its side. We shall have to see). The point is that as things look now, with no third camp movement in existence, the first urge of Europeans will be for cover, either to the East or to the West. One, of course, does not have a static

approach to events, especially not to wars. New developments will take place. These will have to be awaited.

It is asked: Would you support the armament program now? Would you support the subjugation of the western European countries by the United States as part of the military program? These questions are foolish. We Socialists are not advocating war! We are not preparing for war. We do not cease acting as Socialists on a Socialist program. We have a program of domestic demands. We pursue the struggle for an independent labor party. We call for workers' government with workers' control of industry. We push for the utmost extension of democracy. We fight for full national independence for small nations. We support every independent action of the working class. We condemn the waste of wealth and life in war. We expose both imperialist camps. We propagate the world socialist revolution - the Third Camp - as the alternative for world war. This we continue to do, now as always.

If war breaks out in the immediate future and if we should decide that the interests of the working class, of the revolutionary movement and of humanity, would be served better by a victory of the bourgeois governments over the Stalinist police state, we still do not cease being Socialists. We do not surrender our political integrity. We distinguish ourselves from the western imperialist governments in every possible way. We explain how our position differs from theirs. We fight every effort to subjugate small nations. We oppose every attempt at home to regiment the people and to impose police measures. We ally ourselves with every insurrectionary effort of the peoples on both sides of the iron curtain. Above all, if the alignment of social forces changes during the war, so that a change of position by Socialists becomes the order of the day, we would make that change - even as Marx and Engels did in the Franco-Prussian War when the insurrection of the Paris communards altered the whole picture.

In the same letter of August 15th, 1870, quoted above, Engels gave a rough outline of how the Socialist movement was to conduct itself while supporting the Prussian side of the Franco-Prussian War: "I think our people can," he wrote, "join the national movement...in so far as and for so long as it is limited to the defence of Germany (which does not exclude an offensive, in certain circumstances, before peace is arrived at); at the same time emphasize the difference between German-national and dynastid Prussian interests; work against any annexation of Alsace and Lorraine,,,; as soon as a non-chauvinistic republican government is at the helm in Paris, work for an honorable peace with it; constantly stress the unity of interest between the German and the French workers, who did not approve the war and are also not making war on each other..."

Here, then, is some indication of how a Socialist party might support the military victory of one side in an imperialist war, and at the same time further the ends of the Socialist movement and fight for the Socialist program.

The argument is made that if Socialists should come out for the victory of the western powers, the workers of Europe would be driven into the arms of Stalinism. This argument holds no water. Such workers as have broken with Stalinism have been able to do so, up to now at any rate, because of the sense of reliance on the western power. But primarily this argument is not applicable be-

-23-

cause the military support of the Western nations by Socialists would go hand in hand with a political fight against capitalism and war.

Bourgeois Democracy - Would It Survive?

We are told that there will not be much if any difference between Stalinist totalitarianism and what will be left of bourgeois democracy after another war. As to such a prediction let us recall that our prediction regarding the end of bourgeois democracy with World War II, was far off the beam.

Confining ourselves to post-war America, there are many trends allowing of an interpretation that democracy has been deepened rather than lessened. This has happened because no war today can be fought without the ideological appeal to the people. In fighting the Nazi the agencies of the American government had to spread an understanding of dictatorship, to implant a horror of its methods, to stimulate a loyalty to democratic ways. This has made it harder to abrogate the civil rights of the population and to impinge on the accomplishments of labor.

The fate of the Taft-Hartley Law in the last election is an illustration. This was the great post-war effort of big business for the curtailment of labor's rights in preparation for World War III. However, not only labor but farmers, professional and middle class people voted it down. Now it will be difficult indeed for big business to prevent the abolition or drastic revision of the law. Again, when the Democratic Party convention this year adopted the Civil Rights plank against the old guard of the party, this reflected the general trend towards more democracy. One might say that the emergence of a liberal movement in the South since the war, is, with all its limitations, a reflection of the spread of more democratic concepts. The attempts to "democratize" the army are noteworthy. The current move to change court martial procedure, with all its flaws, is a measure of democratic pressure.

There are, of course, the activities of the Un-American Activities Committee, the spy hunts and the infringements on individual rights. Just because such actions are tolerated as they are believed by most people to be necessary for national security, they are very dangerous. But if one wishes to be comprehensive, other trends must be reckoned with, too.

We can see now how preparation for World War III has increased the propaganda exposing the conditions under totalitarianism and emphasizing the ways of democracy in contrast. As seen in World War II, some of this propaganda sticks so that it will not be so easy for the ruling class to fasten those very conditions of totalitarianism upon the people.

The indignant response of the entire press to the Dutch butchery in Indonesia also shows a marked change in public reaction to undemocratic actions. In condemning the Stalinist conquest of Russia's European empire, a concept has been implanted that operates in all directions. While formerly such brutal imperialism was blasted mainly by Socialists, today even the staunchest supporters of American capitalism, oppose the action of the Dutch. It is not merely a case of wanting to save "democratic face" or the face of the UN. Wider sections of the people feel such undemocratic actions are wrong.

Of course the new tasks thrust upon the government by World War III and the strain on the economic structure, will necessarily mean the projecting of more and more bureaucratic and autocratic devices. However, this does not happen in a vacuum, but against the background of the character of the people and the political-social customs. Even big business itself has enough virulent individualism and "private enterprise" left in its bones to resist the development of a police state. In a resolution at its convention just held, NAM went on record as opposed to all peacetime controls, and demanded the very speedy removal of government controls as soon as possible after a war, with constant review of all controls by Congress to see if they can be relaxed even before the end of the war. Though the NAM is not primarily motivated by democratic principles, the resistance to totalitarianism is there. Who can say now how much more American capitalism can stand before it has to start using the knout in good earnest?

At any rate, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that the totalitarianism of the West will be one of the outcomes of World War III. Even with considerable regimentation in this country, probabilities are that remaining civil liberties would far exceed the absolute lack of them behind the iron curtain. There can be the kind of suppression and persecution which makes life for the revolutionist and for the revolutionary movement more difficult; and there is the Stalinist variety that makes life for the revolutionist and for the movement impossible.

If War Comes in the Future.

But all prophets predict that the war is not to be fought immediately. Time brings great changes, as we all know. Five, ten or fifteen years will make a drastic difference in the revolutionary prospect. A new cadre of revolutionists will arise, new parties will be formed, a leftward movement of the masses will take on more definiteness. Revolutionary ideology will have had an opportunity again to penetrate to the masses and to be accepted by the most militant workers who are now Stalinists. Workers' revolution, the revolutionary third camp, may then have been taught widely enough and have made such an appeal that its success can be hoped for. There may then have arisen insurrectionary movements in the lands of Stalin to join hands with the Western workers, an absolute necessary development for a true third camp.

If then such developments will have taken place before the outbreak of World War III so that Socialists may realistically see a hope for the success of the revolutionary third camp, there will be no need for even considering giving the Western alliance critical military support in order to save Socialism from annihilation by Stalinism. In fact in five, ten or fifteen years, the Socialist aim could be, by revolutionary means, to stop war from breaking out.

The conclusion therefore is that a stand on World War III need not be taken by revolutionary socialists right now. Shall we say that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, or to be more concrete the actual world conditions at the outbreak of the war would have to be weighed carefully before taking a stand. Above all the most realistic appraisal of the forces for a revolutionary third camp would be to be made, as this seems to me to be the factor most decisive.

Although we are not called upon at this time to commit ourselves on World War III itself (it not being here), in certain countries it is incumbent upon Socialists to take positions on aspects of the cold war now raging. For instance, the question arises both for American and for German Socialists whether to put forward the slogan for the withdrawal of the occupation troops. A Socialist program must, of course, call for a workers' government, for the arming of the German people, for all democratic rights, for national independence, for workers' control of industry, and so on. In national independence is naturally implied the withdrawal of the occupying troops; however, it would be the height of folly to push that demand now.

Every sane being knows that the withdrawal of troops now would not be on an equal basis. The Russians could technically comply with the demand, and have made it, but in actuality would leave a Russian trained and officered German puppet army that would swallow up the whole of Berlin - and eventually of Germany - as soon as the western troops left. Therefore, for Socialists to emphasize today the slogan*which, if carried into life, would mean the annihilation of the Socialists and the suppression of the working class that is just beginning to wake up from the blows of the war and to feel its way towards independent action. Furthermore, all the incipient anti-Stalinist stirrings in Eastern Europe would be discouraged and delayed if the Western troops withdraw.

We often speak of what the masses learned during the war in their underground movements, but we never include that the masses may have learned that, with today's military techniques, military preponderance wins the final victory. Although the underground could harass and interfere with the occupying Nazi, open victory came only when the Allied forces arrived. Certainly the people behind the iron curtain also know the meaning of military might, taught them by the Russians. If there is anyone in Berlin today who is not a Stalinist and still wants the withdrawal of the Western troops at this time, he has certainly not been heard from and must be in an insane asylum. Judging by the Stalinist obstructive efforts in the recent Berlin election even with the Western troops on hand, it is easy to picture the type of election, if any, that would have taken place if the Western troops were not on hand.

Berlin today shows, dramatically and graphically, the difference between bourgeois democratic methods and Stalinist totalitarian methods. In the Russian zone there is in progress the terror, the purges, the general suppression, forerunners of the clamping down of the total police state. All vestiges of independent working class action are fast disappearing. Whereas in the Western zone, after all is said and should be said against both the policy and the methods of the occupying powers - and the German people are saying some of these things in actions - the life-size fact remains that the working people are beginning to find themselves, to organize industrially and politically in the exercise, though not full exercise, of democratic rights. From this start, they have the chance to go further.

It is imperative for revolutionists to know how not to commit suicide, as powerfully shown by Lenin in his arguments against Left Wing Communism (An Infantile Disorder). The underlying principle

* of withdrawal of the occupying troops is simply a silly leftist gesture

involved in Lenin's argument on recognizing the Versailles Treaty, is as applicable now as it was in the 1920's. The following quotation contains the main idea:

"But at present the position is obviously such that the German Communists should not bind themselves hand and foot and take upon themselves the irrevocable obligation of repudiating the Versailles Treaty in the case of the victory of Communism. That would be foolish.... The possibility of successfully repudiating the Treaty depends, not only upon the German, but also upon the international success of the Soviet movement.... The Soviet revolution in Germany will strengthen then the international Soviet movement. This is the strongest bulwark - against the Versailles Peace, against international imperialism in general...."

"The imperialists of France, England, etc., are provoking the German Communists, and laying a trap for them, "Say that you will not sign the Peace of Versailles," they say. And the Left Communists like children, fall into the trap laid for them, instead of manuevering skillfully against the treacherous and, for the moment, stronger enemy; instead of telling him "Today we shall adhere to the Versailles Treaty." To bind our hands beforehand, openly to tell the enemy, who is now better armed than we are, whether or not we shall fight him, is stupidity and not revolutionism. To accept battle when this is obviously profitable to the enemy, and not to oneself, is a crime; and those politicians of the revolutionary class who are unable to 'maneuver, temporize, compromise,' in order to evade an obviously unprofitable battle, are good for nothing."

Again, of course, the situations are vastly different. Then the revolutionary possibilities were still at their peak. Then there was one enemy, capitalism; not two, capitalism and Stalinism. But the emphasis Lenin made was on the need to save the skin of the movement until strength flowed into all the limbs of international socialism. Anything else was "a crime." Today the world revolutionary movement is at very low ebb; it needs to be restored. In Germany the working class shows signs of political revival. How stupid, then, in compliance with some compulsion of abstract leftist puritanism that must say everything at once and quickly, to make the demand for the withdrawal of occupying troops from Germany, which is asking to open the gates to Stalin and to cut off the small stem of working class development that has been projected. Have no fear, as the German workers move towards the realization of their other democratic and revolutionary demands, are confident of their own strength, are aware of the support by workers of other countries, they will throw out the occupying armies.

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If the Workers Party emerges from the convention as a pure and simple propaganda group, whose function is to "preach the revolutionary message" without regard to the compulsion of actual life, with the faith that eventually Socialism must come - even come an atom war and a Stalinist victory first - then consideration of various tactics has no place. If, however, we still consider ourselves as part and parcel of the working class and of life as it is and as it may become, we must weigh every aspect of this perplexing question of capitalism, Stalinism and war.

Editor's Note

Following are the majority and minority resolutions considered by the Second World Conference of the Jewish Labor Bund, held in N.Y. in October, representing Bund organizations in 18 countries.

These resolutions are published in this Bulletin at the initiative of Comrade Ed Findley. More exactly, Comrade Findley submitted the Minority resolution for such publication, but because of the shortness of both documents, we are including both. It should be understood that they are here considered only as discussion articles which may be of interest.

Comrade Findley's note follows:

"The following statement is submitted as a contribution to the pre-convention discussion of the Palestine and Jewish questions. It is felt that this "Minority Proposal", originally submitted to the Second World Conference of the Bund and Affiliated Jewish Socialist Organizations (NY, October 1948) is a lucid formulation of important aspects of the questions.

As my own views coincide fairly closely with the general lines of this proposal I feel justified in submitting it to the WP Bulletin for publication.

Ed Findley"

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ON THE JEWISH QUESTION: RESOLUTIONS OF THE BUND

The Jews in the World and the Tasks Ahead (statement adopted by the Second World Conference of the "BUND")

The Second World Conference of the BUND reaffirms its approval of the previous statements on Jewish problems, viz., the statement adopted by the Executive Session of the World Coordinating Committee in June, 1948.

The Conference considers, as before, the following as the basic principles of Bundist activities:

(a) The Jewish people is and will remain a people of the world, with nine-tenths of it dwelling outside Palestine;

(b) The State of Israel, being a result of an artificial partition of Palestine and being established by a bloody struggle among Jews and Arabs, is not only far from solving the Jewish problem all over the world; but also carries grave dangers for the great and important accomplishments of the Jewish community in Palestine, even for its very physical existence.

-27-

The Conference therefore re-states the belief that now, as before, the most important task and the most pressing duty of the Bundist organization is to carry on the struggle for the national and social deliverance of the Jewish popular masses in the countries where they dwell; this struggle should be waged together with the Socialist and democratic forces of the particular countries and by concentrating around the Bundist organizations all Jewish vitalizing forces truthfully striving to defend the existence and the free development of our people all over the world.

As formulated at the First World Conference of the BUND, the fight against fascism, reactionary and totalitarian forces, the danger of a new war, and for democracy, Socialism and international peace; the fight against anti-Semitism; the fight for the abolishment of the Displaced Person camps and for free immigration laws devoid of national and similar discriminatory clauses; the struggle for economic reconstruction and a decent standard of living for Jewish workers; the fight against assimilation and for the free development, strengthening, and popularization of Yiddish culture; the fight for the rights of the Yiddish language and for its use in public and private life; the struggle for the establishment of normal basic schools with Yiddish as the language of instruction; the fight for democratic Jewish community councils and other Jewish autonomous bodies; the fight for secularity in Jewish life, for social aid for the victims of totalitarian regimes of all forms, and similar issues - remain, as before, of vital importance to the masses of the Jewish people and their vanguard, the BUND. On these issues must be concentrated the efforts of our comrades and of our organizations all over the world.

The very same course of action applies to Palestine. Jewish Socialists and democrats, wherever they may be must not limit themselves to a negative attitude toward the State of Israel. They should strive to remove the dangers created by the Jewish state and work for peace with the surrounding Arab states and for collaboration with the Palestinian Arab population on the basis of free national development of both nationalities, insured by real United Nations guarantees and by the establishment of a common Jewish-Arab state constructed on the principles of democratic federalism.

At the same time it is important for the physical and spiritual existence of our people, both in Palestine and outside its boundaries, that the Palestinian community do not detach itself from the remainder of the Jewish people and do not become a tribe or a people of its own. The relationship of the various parts of our people all over the world should be kept up and strengthened as much as only possible. The Yiddish language should be taught in the State of Israel; that language should enjoy full rights and privileges in the Israel schools and in public life.

Thus concentrating all its energies upon the constructive struggle for satisfying the real needs of the Jewish working masses, the BUND shall continue to play the vital and leading part in Jewish life which it had played during its glorious past.

Minority Proposal

As a result of a thorough debate regarding the state of Jews in the world, the Second World Conference of the BUND maintains:

1. The Jews were and shall remain a people of the world; the Jewish problem always was, is now, and will remain a world problem, and as such it can be solved only in a world scale: it is possible to remove radically all injustices practiced against the Jews when and only when the world shall be reconstructed on a Socialist basis;

2. Owing to the war destruction and continual emigration, the Palestinian Jewish community grew both in numbers and in its relative importance in Jewish life; the 700,000 Jews, whose national consciousness and whose organization are strong, now represent a most important part of the Jewish people;

3. The British administrative authorities did not, unfortunately remain neutral throughout the last period of their rule in Palestine and, in flagrant reversal of promises given, supported the Arab faction against the Jews with funds, weapons, and military leaders; after the liquidation of British rule under the mandate, the Palestinian Jewish community had no choice - Jewish-Arab relations being in a state of considerable tension - but to organize itself into an independent state unit; under the circumstances only such action enabled the Jewish community in Palestine to fight off the attack of foreign Arab armies, which are led by and serve the interests of pro-Nazi feudal groups politically dominating the lives of the Arabs.

4. The Jewish masses all over the world should incessantly be warned not to fall prey to illusions that the establishment of the State of Israel solves the Jewish problem on a world scale.

5. The establishment of the State of Israel is but a palliative solution even as far as the Jewish population in Palestine is concerned. The peace, the security, the economic existence, and the political future of the Jewish population in Palestine can be permanently assured only as a result of a Jewish-Arab understanding in the country and of a Socialist victory in the world; the Jewish population in Palestine should strive to arrive at a direct understanding with the Arab as soon as only possible - and understanding which should lead to a future voluntary federation or to the establishment of a bi-national state; the Jewish community in the State of Israel cannot build its future upon the uncertain foundation of narrow-minded nationalism and chauvinism not only because such a course would be antidemocratic, but also because it would be in direct contradiction to the practical interests of the Jewish community, which is now and will at best remain a small island closely surrounded by Arab areas.

6. Regardless of the political status of the Jews in the State of Israel, the closest relations must be established between the Israel Jews and the Jews outside Palestine. Yet this rapprochement must never occur on the basis of the greatly harmful and wholly illusory view of the political Zionists who consider the so-called Diaspora merely as a reservoir of manpower and material aid for a future expansion of the State of Israel both at the expense of the surrounding Arab countries and in the sense of the eventual liquidation of the Jewish settlements outside Palestine;

7. A cultural rapprochement between the Jews the world over and the Jewish community in the State of Israel will be effectively achieved only after the Zionists will destroy the mental barriers which they have built up over a number of years between Palestinian Jews and those outside Palestine. The Yiddish language, spoken by great masses of Jews at the present time, should be granted full rights in the public life of the Palestinian community.

8. We deem it our duty to oppose the Zionist monopolistic tendency to mobilize all and everything for the State of Israel; this course must be opposed by us as harmful to the existence of the Jews in the countries where they dwell. Even the Jewish community in the State of Israel will feel secure only when world Socialism will emerge victorious over the forces of capitalism.

9. The great majority of the Jews dwell and will continue to dwell in the countries of their present domicile. Thus the BUND should dedicate its forces to the struggle of the Jewish masses for their national and social rights, for the existence of the Jews as a people, based upon modern Jewish culture and Jewish autonomous life. This was and remains the historic mission of our party.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION

Substitute for (70) - Germany

70. The cockpit of the "cold war" between American and Russian imperialism lies in Germany today where, simultaneously, the masses of western Germany - led by the Berlin working classes - are struggling to prevent the absorption of their section of Germany by Stalinism. The spectacularly successful struggle of the Berlin population against Russian imperialism and its puppet SED Party has not only administered the worst political defeat Stalinism has suffered since the war's end at the hands of a progressive and radical mass population, but has led to a new forward surge in the importance, mass popularity and potential power of the German Social Democracy, the revised Party of the German working class. This fact only reemphasizes the need for Germany's revolutionary socialists to immediately join this Party, with the perspective of developing a revolutionary wing. The tendency today is for western Germany to become the political center of action for Europe as a whole.

71. (Remain as is.)

72. In fighting for an Independent and United Germany, the chief political slogan must be for the convening of a Constituent Assembly, freely elected and in no way responsible to all or any of the occupying powers. Such an Assembly shall be a sovereign body within a united and independent Germany. It is false and misleading to pose the political problems of Germany (in particular Berlin) today, around the issue of "withdrawal of the American and Allied troops"; or to put unilateral withdrawal forward as a key slogan in the struggle for independence. To do so obscures the special and unique problems confronting the German independence movement - a truncated nation and above all the fact that a German working class, beaten down to unprecedented depths by the defeats it suffered under Nazism and war, faced - and still faces - the task of struggling back onto its feet and achieving the elementary needs of self-organization. As a part of this struggle, the German working class is absolutely correct in exploiting the conflict between Russian and American imperialism to its own advantage by accepting American material and economic aid, by demanding more and calling for such actions as "doubling of the air lift." Revolutionists inside the SDP should properly demand that the SD government proceed immediately to the organization of a national militia (an army) regardless of prohibitions imposed by the occupying powers (and, indeed, requesting military supplies from these powers.)

Despite its miserable and weak Social Democratic leadership, the Berlin proletariat in particular has shown the correct tactics and strategy by which all of Germany will ultimately be freed. In turning its major energies toward building a wall against what is for the moment its greatest danger, Stalinism, the Berlin proletariat has pursued the only possible policy, despite the absence of a revolutionary party in Germany. The historic example of the Saar, and the more recent position adopted by our Party on Trieste are precedents which affirm the correctness of this position. At the same time, the slogan and aim of an "Independent Germany" clearly indicates that the German revolutionists who advance it are opposed

to all the forces of occupation and are committed to ending the Allied occupation. It is precisely the success of the struggle against Stalinism in Berlin which has rallied the people of western Germany as nothing heretofore, instilled in them their first ounce of self-confidence and hope since the end of the war, and advanced the re-mobilization of the proletariat. In this connection, the party recalls its new historic position on the "national question" (adopted during the war), for the political needs of the struggle in Germany today are, properly seen, but a concretization of that position in peacetime. Today's problems in Germany must be approached in the spirit and tradition of that resolution.

Substitute for (73) - Marshall Plan

It is necessary to vigorously oppose efforts by American imperialism to convert ERP economic aid into shipment of military equipment and supplies for the direct aim of reviving the armies and military machines of the western European nations. Whether such concentration on the re-militarization and "marshallization" of Europe takes place within the framework of the Economic Air program itself, or a separate program formulated as part of a North Atlantic military pact is of little relevance.

The resolution adopted at the July 1948 Plenum on the Marshall Plan, however, precludes a meaningful propaganda and political struggle against such prospective action by American imperialism. This resolution has proved sterile and "negativistic" in practice, preventing the Party from developing an understandable and workable approach to ERP particularly during the latter's evolution and changes. Our present position closely resembles, in practice, the vulgar "down with the Marshall Plan" line of the Stalinist movement, regardless of the fact, of course, that the theoretical motivations behind both have nothing in common.

To overcome this deficiency and make it possible for the Party to consistently oppose the militarization of Europe by the Truman administration, while simultaneously demanding a continuation and extension of economic aid in all forms of reconstruction, the Party convention rejects the Plenum resolution of July, 1948 and adopts instead, the original proposals of the Political Committee, as elaborated in the original LABOR ACTION editorial, "A Socialist Attitude on the Marshall Plan". These proposals are as follows:

PROPOSITIONS ON THE MARSHALL PLAN

- 1) We are unequivocally for economic aid to Europe.
- 2) We are opposed to any manipulation of this economic aid by the United States, the only nation which can supply this aid, for its own imperialist purposes.
- 3) The United States, in offering economic aid to Europe, does so with a view to fixing the European nations in the US imperialist orbit.
- 4) The Marshall Plan as stated by its authors, offers economic aid within a specific political framework. The popularization of ERP as the Marshall Plan is in itself an indication that the economic aid program of the US is designed to serve US political and economic

purposes in Europe, both with respect to its political control of the governments receiving aid and the preservation of the capitalist system.

5) More specifically, the Marshall Plan is intended as a program through which US imperialism seeks to contest Stalinist imperialism in Europe. It proposes to free Europe from Stalinism by imposing its own domination over Europe. While an economically reconstituted Europe is essential to combatting Stalinism the intervention of US imperialism may work to the advance of Stalinism.

6) We must therefore state our opposition to the Marshall Plan by way of speaking our opposition to American imperialism. We do so, however, without in any way obscuring our support of economic aid. In other words, we oppose the Marshall Plan for its political connotations. Any other course obscures the objectives of US imperialism.

7) In unions, for example, where the matter arises, we make our position clear by introducing an amendment or a resolution of our own, as the case may be, which upholds the necessity of economic aid but states our opposition to imperialist strings on that aid. Such a simple approach is sufficient to establish our difference with the supporters of imperialism. We have no need to introduce elaborate counter program of our own.

8) We advocate the full utilization by the European people of whatever economic aid is given them, regardless of the purposes behind that aid. We say that it is up to the European people to defend themselves, with the aid of the US labor movement, against the political intentions of the Marshall Plan while availing themselves fully of the aid offered them.

E. Garrett
H. Judd