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# Problems

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PROBLEMS *of*  
ORGANIZED  
LABOR TODAY

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Z. Foster is one of the most revered and beloved figures in the American labor movement, carrying forward today the militant traditions of such working class leaders as William Sylvis, Eugene Debs, William D. ("Big Bill") Haywood, and Charles E. Ruthenburg. With more than fifty years of active service in the cause of labor behind him, he is today the National Chairman of the Communist Party. He led the great steel strike of 1919, a milestone in American labor history, which paved the way to the industrial unionization of the basic industries. He also led many other strikes and organizing campaigns in various basic industries, including meat packing, lumber, coal, railroad, textiles, etc.

In addition to his political and trade union activities, Foster has authored scores of books and pamphlets during the past three decades. His rich experiences in struggle, his leadership in innumerable strike battles, which have earned him a wide reputation as a master strategist of the class struggle, are embodied in such works as *The Great Steel Strike, From Bryan to Stalin*, and *Pages From a Worker's Life*. International Publishers is now preparing a volume of his selected writings, which is scheduled for publication later this year. His recent pamphlet, *The Menace of a New World War*, was published in editions totalling 700,000 copies.

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*W. Z. Foster*

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

# PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZED LABOR TODAY

By **WILLIAM Z. FOSTER**

## **Big Capital's Offensive Against Organized Labor**

All through the war the National Association of Manufacturers and others of the most reactionary employer groups, together with their journalistic, radio and political agents, were busily preparing for an attack against the workers and the trade unions, to begin once the war had finished. They spread propaganda calculated to poison the troops against the trade unions; they spent millions of dollars to give an anti-labor slant to public opinion; they constantly attacked O. P. A. price control; they high-pressured Congress to adopt anti-trade union legislation; their tools cultivated dangerous fascist trends, one of the worst of which was a vicious attack upon the politically awakening Negro people. Evidently, the fascist-minded capitalists hoped to repeat after this war the smashing blow that they delivered against organized labor following World War I, when the trade unions lost half their total membership in many disastrous strikes forced upon them by the aggressive employers, and when what was left of the labor movement was transformed into speed-up agencies of the employers by the A. F. of L. leaders.

Upon the end of World War II all the capitalists' wartime attacks upon the workers were stepped up. The entire publicity machinery of the employers was geared to destroy

price controls and bring about inflation, to shove up the living costs of the workers, to force through a 30 per cent cut in the "take-home-pay" by the abolition of wartime overtime rates—all of which was designed to increase hugely their own profits. The workers replied to these attacks upon their living standards by strikes. These the employers had expected and hoped to crush as they had after World War I. Labor leaders who might have wanted to counsel a timid policy in the face of the employers' provocations, would have been swept aside by the determined workers.

The strike wave turned out quite differently than the big capitalists had planned. Instead of retreating in the face of the employers' attacks, as happened following World War I, the unions replied with a powerful counter-offensive of their own in defense of the workers' living standards and labor organizations. The C.I.O. led this widespread fight, conducting big strike and wage movements in the steel, auto, oil, maritime, radio-electric, transport, meat-packing, farm-equipment, telegraph, lumber, rubber, metal-mining, textile, clothing and other industries. The A. F. of L. also led struggles in coal, metal; railroads, trucking, etc. The general result of these huge movements was the greatest victory in the history of the American labor movement, to the deep disappointment of the employers.

Numerous factors were responsible for this favorable outcome for the workers. For one thing, during the Roosevelt regime they had built their unions to the high total of 14,000,000 members and almost every basic industry was organized. Then, in the course of the strikes, the solidarity of the workers was so strong that scabs were not to be had and the employers could not employ their traditional strike-breaking tactics. Besides, the returned war veterans, despite all wartime anti-union propaganda, showed strong sympathies for the workers' demands. Vital, too, was the

powerful support given to the whole movement by the Negro workers. And, not the least important, the general public sentiment was more pro-union than ever before during a big labor struggle.

The victory of the workers on the industrial field constituted a real setback for the profit-hungry employers. But the latter have by no means been decisively defeated. Far from it. Although they have been taught a wholesome lesson of labor's great industrial strength, they are now sharply developing their attack on the political field, a sphere where organized labor is much weaker and far more vulnerable. Inasmuch as the workers have no broad mass political party of their own, and are generally poorly organized politically, this political attack by the employers confronts the labor movement with grave dangers.

The powerful and reactionary employers are pushing hard to have Congress wipe out the Wagner Act and other progressive laws, and to pass legislation that will cripple the trade unions. They particularly want to rob the unions of their strike right. Their first success in this direction was the notorious Smith-Connally Law, enacted during the war, which was designed to weaken the workers' right to strike. But it remained for President Truman to give a real impetus to the employers' drive for legislation against the labor movement when he arbitrarily smashed the railroad workers' strike.

President Truman, who has abandoned former President Roosevelt's friendly attitude towards the workers, could have readily settled the so-called crisis created by the national strike of the railroad engineers and trainmen if he had simply brought some pressure to bear upon the railroad kings to compel them to concede at least partially the workers' justified demands. Instead, the President brushed the railroad union leaders aside, had the Government take over the railroads, ordered the army to operate them, and called for legislation to draft into the armed forces all



workers on strike on the railroads and in other basic industries. The railroad workers were forced back to work.

This outrageous Government strike-breaking, which was condemned bitterly by all sections of organized labor, opened the flood-gates for a deluge of anti-labor legislation in Congress. Truman's strike-breaking bill, in somewhat modified form, was rushed through Congress. And the no less vicious Case and Hobbs Bills, the adoption of which were meant to be long steps towards destroying the labor movement, were also panicked through both Houses of Congress. Later the President, fearing a complete break of relations with organized labor, vetoed the ultra-reactionary Case Bill, but he nevertheless left the door wide open for the formulation six months hence of new legislation to "curb labor." The reactionaries in Congress, having tasted labor's blood, are now busier than ever to drive through laws aimed to cut the heart out of the labor movement.

In their fight against labor on the economic and political fields, the big employers are motivated by their never-ending greed for profits. Although now rolling in unheard-of wealth and making the most fabulous profits in all their history, they nevertheless want to squeeze still more out of the workers. In utter contempt of the American people, both houses of Congress are united to smash price controls and open the door to skyrocketing prices and runaway inflation.

Besides striving to put through anti-labor legislation in Congress, the reactionary employers, with their political offensive, are also seeking to tighten their hold upon the Government. They are now laying plans for a sweeping reactionary victory in the Congressional elections this Fall. And this victory they are counting upon to be only a prelude to the election of a Republican President in 1948. The main political instrument of the employers in this campaign against American labor and democracy is the Republican Party, which is working in close collaboration

with the Southern poll-tax Democrats. But the Truman administration is also proving itself to be a willing tool of the big employers, and its anti-labor policies are preparing the ground for a Republican victory.

In their drive against the trade union movement, the great monopolists have in mind even more sinister plans than to increase the workers' exploitation in the United States. They not only want to run this country more ruthlessly than ever before for their own personal enrichment, but they are determined to dominate the world as well.

The rich trusts of the United States are now pushing a campaign of imperialist expansion, designed to make them the masters of this whole war-wracked world. And President Truman is doing their bidding. The monopolists see the trade unions, which are the backbone of American democracy, as the principal domestic obstacles to their world imperialist expansionism and this realization gives them added determination to cripple the labor movement. For they know that the smashing of democratic resistance at home is a basic necessity for carrying out an aggressive imperialistic program abroad. They know well that Hitler, before embarking upon his criminal program of enslaving the world, first destroyed the German labor movement, and they would do likewise.

Organized labor, during the past year, has won important victories over the employers on the industrial field; but it must develop no complacency from this fact. On the contrary, it must face up with determination and clear policies to the grave dangers caused by the present big political offensive of the employers against the labor movement. Labor must understand that the heart of this offensive is the drive of American imperialism for world conquest. It must also realize that this imperialist expansionism bears within itself the most urgent threat to the American people of economic demoralization, fascism and another world war.

## **American Monopoly's Drive for World Conquest**

During the war President Roosevelt followed a course of active collaboration with the Soviet Union. This policy made possible the grand alliance of the United Nations and also its smashing victory over the Axis powers. Without U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. cooperation Hitler would today be the master of an enslaved fascist world. But now that the war is over and President Roosevelt is dead, the vital policy of friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. has been abandoned by President Truman. The big trust magnates have forced upon our Government a foreign policy designed to make themselves the imperialist masters of the world, and their main war slogan is to "Get tough with Russia." President Truman is going along with these Wall Street monopolists in their dangerous policies of imperialist expansion.

The United States today is a very powerful country. It lost very little manpower during the war and its cities and industries were undamaged. Its Navy and Airforce are stronger than those of all the rest of the world combined. It has possession of the deadly atomic bomb. Its industrial production is as large as that of all other capitalist countries put together. It has about three-fourths of the world's gold reserves. It occupies strategic bases throughout half of the world. Its military budget this year will reach the stupendous figure of \$16 billions. It is now rapidly militarizing our country by every possible means. The key to the present tense international situation is the fact that the big American capitalists, seeing that the rest of the world has been ravaged and weakened by the war, are taking advantage of the United States' great strength and favorable position by seeking to dictate economic and political policies to all other peoples. They want to run the whole world. Great Britain, although it has many conflicts with the United States in various parts of the world, is going

along, as a sort of junior partner, with the ambitious world schemes of American imperialism.

On February 17, 1941, in his magazine, *Life*, Henry R. Luce wrote an article called "The American Century," proposing that the United States seize world leadership on the basis of its vast power. This is precisely what is now being done by the economic royalists. It explains why reactionary Republicans like ex-President Hoover and Senator Vandenberg are playing such big parts in developing American foreign policy. Secretary of State Byrnes really meant that President Truman has adopted Hooverite foreign policies, when on his return recently from the Paris Conference of foreign ministers, he stated that the international policies of the Democratic and Republican parties are now in "full harmony." The imperialist character of this joint Republican-Democratic foreign policy was graphically indicated in a speech on February 4, 1946, by former Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, who said:

"Two paths are open to us: one, the path of moral leadership; this path leads to peace and prosperity for all peoples. The other is the path of commercial advantages—business as usual. This path leads to struggle for markets, imperialism and war. I submit that on the basis of our actions to date it looks as if we are following the second path."

American big business imperialists and their British junior partners, seeking world domination for themselves, are shouting that by their aggressive policies they are merely seeking to check Soviet expansionism. But this charge of militant Soviet imperialism is nonsense; it is a mere cover-up for Anglo-American aggression. The U.S.S.R. is a Socialist country and by its very nature it is completely dedicated to peace. Despite the wide

charges of expansionism against it, the U.S.S.R. has absorbed no land except that which was stolen from it after World War I. And as for its policy in the border states surrounding it, it is simply insisting that fascism be wiped out there and that the countries set up friendly democratic governments. With some 10,000,000 of its own people killed in the war, with 1710 of its cities and towns and 70,000 of its villages destroyed, with 679 billions of rubles lost in property damages, and with at least one-third of its industry wiped out, it is absurd to say that the Soviet Union wants war. Far from it, the Soviet people have the deepest need for a long period of peace and friendly relations with other powers, and this is precisely what their foreign policy is seeking to achieve.

The present-day world tension arises because our State Department's foreign policy is one of militant expansion. Our big Navy is now dominating both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and with our huge Airforce, which is based in 56 countries stretching half-way around the globe, we could atombomb any country in the world. In China we are virtually carrying through a military occupation for the benefit of Chinese reactionaries and ourselves. In Japan we have practically reduced that country to a dependency of the U.S.A., with the reactionaries still remaining in power. Likewise, in Indonesia, Western Europe, the Near East and throughout Latin America, the United States has enormously strengthened its influence and it is now actively engaged in reducing these countries and areas to its economic and political sway. By diplomatic pressure, military threats, political use of financial loans, and the political manipulation of its food surpluses, our Government is constantly seeking to increase its power everywhere. Never in the history of the world has any country so widely and swiftly expanded its imperialist power as the United States has done since the end of World War II.

American imperialism, to succeed in its drive for world domination must break down the opposition of the democratic forces everywhere, especially those in the United States. These world democratic forces include the international trade union movement, the vast women, youth and cooperative movements of the world, the new democratic governments in Europe, the great national liberation movements in China, India, Indonesia, Latin America, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and other areas. Especially the imperialists are seeking to shatter the resistance of the Soviet Union, which they realize is the biggest democratic barrier to their imperialist greed. This basically anti-democratic trend of the Anglo-American bloc explains why it is that all over the world the agents of the State Department and the British Foreign Office are working like beavers to save the cartels and the fascist organizations in the former Axis countries and to prevent fascist big business men from being expropriated and punished as war criminals. It explains further why there exists the wild, warlike, anti-Soviet campaign now raging in the American press and radio. It also makes clear why the Anglo-American bloc is seeking to transform the United Nations into a war alliance against the U.S.S.R. Wall Street imperialism, if unchecked, would lead us straight into a re-growth of fascism and the outbreak of a still more terrible world war.

The clamor in our press demanding that the United States must exercise "the moral leadership of the world" is just so much imperialist propaganda aimed to justify our Government's active expansionist program. And the Baruch plan, to the effect that the United Nations, which the U.S.A. dominates, must be transformed virtually into a world government in order to control the atomic bomb, is at bottom a demand that the rulership of the world be placed in American hands.

This imperialist war-mongering constitutes a grave danger to the American people. The workers have nothing to

gain and everything to lose by American capitalist attempts to dominate the world. If this goes on unchecked it can well plunge us into a fatal war, in which millions of our boys will lose their lives in reactionary, fruitless armed conflict. Those people who believe that the United States should use its atomic bomb without delay and knock out the Russians before they can make their own atomic bombs, would do well to pay heed to recent statements by prominent authorities on the matter. Thus, combatting the dangerous notion that the Russians would give up after a shower of atomic bombs on their cities, Walter Lippman said in the *N. Y. Herald-Tribune* of March 21:

“The atomic bomb could not guarantee a victory and does not even promise a victory. . . . No atomic bombardment could destroy the Red Army. . . . The Russian defense to atomic attack is, therefore, self-evident; it is to over-run Continental Europe with infantry and to defy us to drop atomic bombs on Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands and Sweden.”

General Eisenhower, speaking in a similar vein, was reported by Drew Pearson on March 14 as having stated:

“We saw what happened to the finest armies the world has ever seen [meaning Hitler’s]. If we tried to conquer Russia there is no telling when we could establish ourselves on her soil. But once we did we would face years of slogging through Siberia. We would have nothing to gain to start, and would have nothing left at the end.”

Mr. Lippman and General Eisenhower might also have added none the less realistically that in the event of a war with the U.S.S.R. our cities would also certainly be atom-

bombed. These deadly facts should make trade unionists think seriously when they hear their leaders so recklessly attacking the Soviet Union. Indeed, some "hate Russia" elements are cold-bloodedly trying to get the American people conditioned to accepting the horrible prospect of 40,000,000 or more of our citizens being destroyed in an anti-Soviet war. Fanatical warmongers are shouting that we must have an anti-Soviet war even if civilization, our nation, and the world itself is wiped out.

Three major facts should serve, therefore, in view of the foregoing realistic analysis of the world situation, as the basis of trade union policy regarding American foreign affairs. They are: (a) American big business has pushed our Government into a policy of aggressive imperialist expansion which President Truman is supporting, (b) this imperialism would head us and the world straight towards economic chaos, fascism and war, and (c) the only way this general catastrophe can be averted is by the resistance of the democratic forces of our country and the world.

Contrary to what the imperialist war-mongers are telling us, war against the U.S.S.R. is not inevitable. The great American and Soviet peoples can and must live in peace and harmony together. But the capitalist-inspired war danger can be averted only if the democratic masses of our people, with the trade unions at their head, curb our monopolists and imperialists and see to it that our country's Government follows a policy of peace and international collaboration.

The trade unions, therefore, have the imperative task to do all in their power to awaken the American people to the dangers in the present drive of American monopolists to dominate the world. They should join hands with the democratic forces throughout all nations, especially the World Federation of Trade Unions, that are striving to wipe out the remnants of fascism and to establish a peaceful, stable world. These things are necessary in order to



protect our own vital national interests. The people in the United States, no less than those in other countries, have the most basic need to check the expansionism of Anglo-American imperialism.

During the past year, since the end of the war, organized labor has been very busy with burning domestic economic and political problems and has paid little attention to foreign policy. The C.I.O., it is true, has spoken out progressively on some aspects of American foreign policy, notably regarding Franco Spain; but so far as the A. F. of L. is concerned the only activity it has shown has been by such men as Green, Woll, Lewis and Dubinsky who, with their support of the get-tough-with-Russia policy, are just about as rabid imperialists as the heads of the most reactionary trusts. In consequence of labor's passivity in foreign affairs, the economic royalists are having a field day and are running wild with their grandiose imperialist schemes.

The trade unions must shake themselves out of their present lethargy regarding international affairs. They must realize that their enemy, big business, is dictating foreign policies to our Government which are leading us along the road to national disaster. It is mad to believe that the peoples of the world, who have just defeated the fascist would-be conquerors, will submit tamely to dictation of American imperialism. Even Great Britain, our imperialist partner, will accept American leadership only reluctantly, and will do everything to further its own interests while going along with the United States.

The unions must put themselves at the head of the democratic, peace-loving masses of the American people and stop our Government's suicidal war-making imperialist aggression. They should insist upon our State Department working to re-establish Big Three unity, to build the United Nations as a real peace organization, to develop genuine collaboration with the Soviet Union and other countries, as expressed in the former joint conduct of the

war, and as it is incorporated in the Atlantic Charter, and the Moscow, Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam agreements. To help in thus shaping American foreign policy along peaceful, constructive lines, is now the supreme and most decisive task of the trade union movement. The fate of the labor movement, the welfare of our country and the world depend upon the success of this anti-imperialist policy. Only in this way can the peoples generally avoid catastrophe and realize the democratic, peaceful objectives for which the war was fought and won at such terrific cost in blood and struggle.

### **For a Mass Peoples' Party**

With the big capitalists pushing on to shove prices sky-high and to abolish all price controls, to undermine the labor movement, to subject the Negroes to new indignities and to cultivate reaction generally in the United States, and especially with the imperialists ruthlessly striving to establish Anglo-American imperialist world domination, the labor movement has to look forward to a period of tense industrial and political struggles in which the most basic interests of our people as a whole will be at stake. Organized labor, therefore, must tighten up its ranks and take all steps necessary to increase its strength. It must not listen to those conservative leaders who, mouthing the desires of the employers, agree that organized labor has become "too strong" and must accept curbs upon its right to organize and strike.

A firm attitude is especially necessary on the political field, where labor is the weakest. Until now organized labor's political action has not gone much further than lobbying and bringing pressure to bear upon city, state and national legislators and in cajoling slate-and-platform makers of the two old parties. The C.I.O.-PAC made big progress in the 1944 Presidential elections in broadening

labor's political activities, but not enough. The primitive trade union means of political action, although they get a certain small minimum of results and must still be used until better methods are devised, dissipate the workers' political strength, and have never been adequate to meet their pressing needs. Now these methods are more insufficient than ever. In order to cope with the heavy political responsibilities confronting them, the trade unions and the mass of progressives must begin to build a mass party of their own, a broad third party eventually separate and distinct from the Democratic and Republican parties.

The United States is the only major country where the workers have not yet built a mass political party based on the trade unions. This is because of a whole series of historical reasons too complex to analyze here. Suffice to say, however, that conditions are now rapidly ripening for the building of such a party in this country. The work must be gone at without delay, carefully as well as energetically, for the problems involved are immense.

First, a basic condition preparing the ground for the new party is the fact that whereas a number of years ago the workers' and people's demands were principally economic in character, today they are political. Thus, in the matter of jobs, for example, the workers must now look to the Federal Government to guarantee a measure of operation of the industries during economic crises, the day being gone when this vital matter could be left to the employers alone. And the same thing is true with regard to wages, hours, unemployment insurance, workers' health, strikes, prices, the union shop, etc., etc. They have all grown into national political questions. Thus, if the workers are to have a decisive voice in the solution of these matters, they must take a hand in the Government, both in the shaping of legislation and in the election of legislators and executives. Besides the workers' demands becoming political, a host of new and urgent political questions have arisen.

This politicalization of the workers' problems and of their general outlook makes political action by the workers on a new scale, as a party, indispensable.

Second, another elementary reason leading the workers in the direction of forming a new, third party is the tremendous recent growth of the trade unions. In former years the advocates of a party of labor were stilled by the argument of conservative union leaders to the effect that the labor movement, with only two or three million members, widely scattered, did not control enough votes to count effectively as a separate force in an election. So, the argument went, the workers would do better to confine themselves to picking and choosing among such candidates as the capitalist politicians put up on the two old party tickets. Today, however, such an argument is obsolete, because of the fact that organized labor has grown into a gigantic army of about 14,000,000 members, nearly all voters, not to mention the score of millions more voters in the families of trade unionists. Organized labor clearly has the mass strength to provide the basis for a new party of the people.

Third, still another important element making for a third party is the fact that the alliance between organized labor and the Democratic Party, built up especially during the long Roosevelt regime, is now collapsing. President Truman and the politicians closely associated with him have abandoned the liberal policies of former President Roosevelt, both in the domestic and foreign fields. This has been dramatically illustrated in domestic matters by the President's failure to fight for the program contained in Roosevelt's New Economic Bill of Rights and by his breaking of the railroad strike, and in foreign affairs by his support of the ruthless imperialist drive of the big American trusts and monopolies for world domination. All these things are disillusioning millions of workers regarding Truman's policies and are making them cast their eyes in

the direction of building a new political organization. Trade unionists are beginning to realize that it has now become a case either of independent political action for the workers or political impotency.

The combination of these factors, the politicalization of the workers' demands, the great growth of the voting strength of the labor movement, the breaking of labor's coalition with the Truman forces, as well as the pressure of many new political problems, are convincing hosts of workers that a new party has become both possible and indispensable. But in view of the complexities of our political situation, the formation of such a party constitutes a difficult job. Not only will it be hard to get this party on the ballot in many states, but the workers do not give up overnight the political habits and affiliations of generations. The building of the new party will require great skill, determination and flexibility of tactics.

The new party must have the trade unions as its decisive, leading force. At the same time, it must also have in close affiliation the Negro people, and as many as possible of the veterans, the farmers, the professionals, and other progressive forces. It must be a coalition of all the truly democratic elements in our country, and it must speak and act in the name of the whole American people. Narrow tendencies of Trotskyites, Reutherites and others to confine the movement simply to the trade unions have to be combated.

The program of the party must be based on the defense of the economic and political interests of the workers and the masses of our nation. The party must fight against inflation, against monopoly domination, against fascism, against imperialism. It must guard the workers' legal rights to organize and strike as the apple of its eye. It must fight for Roosevelt's New Economic Bill of Rights, for a full employment program, for the rights of the Negro people,

for an adequate system of social insurance, for effective price controls, for the nationalization of key industries, for international collaboration, for world peace.

The new party must be built in the daily economic and political struggles of the workers and the people in general. From the outset the new party must have a victory strategy. That is to say, every step towards building the party must have as its objective the strengthening of the political power of the democratic coalition here and now. The times are too urgent to embark upon a slow, many years long, brick-by-brick process of party building, such as was used to organize the British Labor Party. Fascist reaction would fasten itself upon our country long before such a slow building process could be carried out. Thus, imperatively, in forming the new party ways must be found to maintain the closest working together of all progressive forces in the old parties, including those not yet convinced of the necessity or possibility of building such a party. This means that progressive policies capable of uniting all these elements must be the present center of party building. All this will require real political generalship.

In building a great party of labor in this country two kinds of dangers have to be guarded against. The first, the right danger, is the tendency of conservative union leaders and also certain progressives to ignore the basic factors making towards the formation of a new party. They want to go along just as before, although the situation has radically changed. Some, like Matthew Woll, would play down the value of political action altogether. Others would shut their eyes to Truman's abandonment of the Roosevelt policies and have the workers continue to support him as though nothing had altered. They nourish the empty hope that the President will return to the Roosevelt progressive line. The great menace from this right tendency is that it disarms and paralyzes the workers politically. It would have them drag along in the tail of the reaction-

ary capitalists, powerless to defend their own interests. It is the path to political bankruptcy.

The second, or left danger, is the tendency to try to crystallize the new party too hastily. This is expressed by those who, like Walter Reuther and the Trotskyites, would try to form it organizationally before the masses of the workers and other progressives are fully ready for it. The results of such hasty actions are to split the progressive movement, to isolate the most advanced elements, and to facilitate the victory of reactionary candidates and legislation. In earlier attempts to establish labor parties in this country the workers have had much sad experience with this dangerous splitting tendency. Such disruptive mistakes must not be repeated. The whole body of progressives must move solidly towards the new party, even though their pace is slow.

The workers must avoid the foregoing dangers and make the new movement a source of strength from the very start. This is necessary in order to assure success in the political struggles ahead, and especially to win a people's victory in the election campaigns of 1946 and 1948. To this end, the following four new concepts should be added to the political methods used up till now. First, the customary lobbying, publicity, old party primaries and other political activity must be carried on, on a mass basis and far more intensively and extensively than ever before. Second, such organizations as C.I.O.-PAC, I.C.C., union legislative committees, etc., must be given more of a broad, mass character than they have ever had heretofore. Third, educational committees, both state and national, should be established to prepare the groundwork for the eventual party. Fourth, the whole political movement of the workers, even its most elementary phases, must be understood in the sense of the building of a great new party in which labor must be the decisive force. Such complex questions as the launching of local and national independent candi-

dates and the actual formation of sections of the new party, or the establishing of the party on a national scale, should be resolved in the sense indicated above—namely, that the course taken will definitely strengthen and unify the progressive forces in the given situation. There must be no schematic approach in building the new party.

Organized labor and its friends have gigantic potential political strength. They must begin seriously to organize and use this strength. Labor must cut the leading strings that bind it to the capitalist parties and branch out into independent political action. This great step by the workers is indispensable, not only to ward off the many threatening dangers of economic crisis, fascism and war, but also for the further advance of the democracy and well-being of the workers and the whole American people. The C.I.O. led in the historic accomplishment of organizing the workers in the basic, open-shop industries, and of winning the Negro workers for trade unionism; now it faces the no less vital responsibility of giving trade union leadership in the organization of the third party of labor and its allies.

Today the two parties of capitalism are, in the main, moving to the right. Their leaders are confronting the workers with candidates, the ones hardly better than the others. Labor cannot follow a policy of choosing the lesser evil among such candidates. That way leads to disaster. It was the course followed by the Social-Democrats of Germany and it led them finally to supporting candidates who were working to bring about Hitler's victory. Organized labor must build up a great independent progressive force of its own. Where the old parties put up reactionary candidates, and this is increasingly the case, the workers and their allies must be willing and able to put up independent candidates. In substance, the workers, avoiding splits in their own ranks over the question of tactics, must proceed flexibly but consciously to build a great third party.



## **Strengthen the Trade Union Movement**

In order to defeat the economic and political attacks of the big capitalists and to prepare for the difficult struggles ahead, the workers, while vastly strengthening their political organization and legislative activities, must also fortify the very base of American democracy itself, the trade unions. To do this they must have a fighting policy. They must turn their faces like flint against those officials who would retreat before the employers' attacks and who would sell labor down the river by such a class collaboration for increased production, as was done after World War I. Instead they must prepare for storms to come. Labor must reject the advice of those who want to have it adopt a policy of cooperation with the employers, based upon a supposed identity of interests of capital and labor. This would be the way to disaster. As in the 1920's, it would suck the very life out of the unions. Labor must stand its ground and be prepared to fight for its rights.

The trade unions must give weight to their necessarily militant policy by bringing the many millions of workers who are still unorganized into their ranks. As things now stand, there are still enough workers unorganized to at least double the present numerical strength of the unions, to raise it to some 30,000,000 members. The United States, to meet the many economic and political tasks confronting it as a nation, must be made into a truly trade-union country.

A very important field for active unionization work lies among the many still unorganized plants scattered about the country, typified by such concerns as the Eastman Kodak Company, the Donnelly & Sons Printing Company, Western Electric Co., the Wierton Steel Corporation, the Pennsylvania Railroad, and numerous other big plants, besides a host of smaller outfits. Organized labor is still far from having all the industrial workers in its ranks.

A further urgent task of organization is to unionize the millions of unorganized workers in the Southern states, in the steel, lumber, textile, and other industries. This work has been started by the C.I.O. and it should be given the heartiest support by every trade unionist and progressive. The unionization of the South, besides raising living standards in this depressed area, will also help deal a death blow to the infamous poll-tax system. It will also confront the Rankins and Bilbos with a solid progressive opposition, and it will bring about a decided betterment of the situation of the oppressed Negro people. The organization of the South will mark a long step forward for American democracy in general.

Another basic organizational task confronting organized labor is the unionization of the three millions or more of agricultural workers throughout the land. One of the main mass strongholds of the Republican Party, the chief party of reaction, is on the farms and in the rural small towns. The unionization of the workers in these areas, therefore, will strike a hard blow against a major fortress of reaction. These workers can be organized without great difficulty.

Still another pressing field for trade union organization lies among the millions of white-collar workers throughout the nation. Reactionaries are making strong efforts to control these low-paid workers, and we should be warned by their successes in many fascist countries. It is, therefore, of the most vital importance to organized labor and to the whole American people that the workers in clerical, technical, and similar vocations should be unionized and developed into a strong force for democracy.

The workers in all the fields mentioned above are ripe for trade union organization. They are low-paid, the cost of living is rapidly rising, and the recent great victories of organized labor make them look hopefully toward the labor movement for assistance. The present is a golden moment to organize them. The trade unions, therefore,

should undertake the organization of these unorganized millions as a most pressing task. It is necessary to accomplish this for the welfare of these unorganized workers themselves, to shield the living standards of the organized workers, and to protect American democracy from the fascist-breeding attacks now being made against it by the great trusts and monopolies.

In addition to organizing the unorganized, another sphere where the trade unions can be greatly strengthened is by improving their internal democracy. It is a disgrace and an injury to organized labor that such crass dictatorships as those of John L. Lewis, William Hutcheson, David Dubinsky and Joe Ryan are allowed to exist. It is also a scandal when the A. F. of L. is headed by such hard-boiled reactionaries as Green, Woll and Company, and when A. F. of L. conventions are a mockery of democracy. Such denials of democracy not only injure the workers directly concerned, but discredit the whole trade union movement in the eyes of the general public. They give plausible excuses to the reactionaries to secure legislation to "democratize" (i.e., hamstring) the trade unions, of which the recently enacted so-called Hobbs anti-racketeering bill is a case in point.

The A. F. of L. and railroad unions, and a few conservative C.I.O. unions need a new birth of democracy altogether. Their conventions must be democratized; excessive official salaries and expense accounts must be reduced; their members must be regularly consulted on wage movements and strikes; they must give far more consideration to Negroes, women, youth and veterans in the selection of the union leadership, and their fossilized officials must be replaced by young, progressive leaders. Remaining gangsters in A. F. of L. unions must be cleaned out.

In unions, further safeguards to democracy are broad, representative conventions. These should be held every two years—the once-a-year system of conventions is not

good, inasmuch as it helps keep the unions in a constant state of factional turmoil, and the practice of many other unions to hold conventions at intervals of three to ten years is even worse, as it stifles democracy in these unions. Generally, it is better to elect top officials at national conventions, if the latter are broad and representative. Referendum elections, while advisable in some cases, are by no means the democratic cure-all that they were once believed to be. John L. Lewis and William Hutcheson, two of the most autocratic figures in the labor movement, are both elected by referendum votes (such as they are) in their unions.

All forms of trade union shop organization must also be expanded and developed. They are the backbone of the modern trade union movement in the basic industries. Often, where huge local unions have only handfuls of workers present at their half-dead meetings, the shop and departmental meetings are heavily attended and full of life and vitality. The resistance of conservative union leaders to this democratic phase of trade unionism should be broken down. The shop organizations of the trade unions are still in their infancy, and when fully matured will play a far more important role industrially and politically than they are now doing.

Especially, the trade unions must eliminate all bars against the membership and leadership of Negro workers. The most shameful page in the history of the American labor movement is the disgraceful treatment accorded Negro workers by many unions, particularly in the A. F. of L. and the Railroad Brotherhoods. By the same token, one of the greatest achievements of the C.I.O. is to have struck a heavy blow at this outrageous Jim-Crowism and brought hundreds of thousands of Negroes into the labor movement. But the discrimination evil is still rampant and dangerous in various sections of the labor movement. The Negroes, in the face of great obstacles, have proved that

they make the very best of strikers and are first class trade unionists. Discrimination against them not only injures these doubly oppressed workers, but seriously hurts the trade unions that practice it.

The growth of the C.I.O. has wrought a far-reaching transformation in the internal regime of the whole trade union movement. It has produced a higher type of leadership in general; it has eliminated much of the gangsterism and racketeering that was for decades a curse to the A. F. of L.; it has lessened the bigotry and political oppression of progressive minorities in the unions; it has organized several hundred thousand Negroes, and it has introduced many other democratic advances into the unions generally. But there are still many undemocratic weaknesses in the A. F. of L., the Railroad Brotherhoods, and in C.I.O. unions dominated by Social-Democratic leaders. One of the major things necessary, therefore, to give new strength to the labor movement is to introduce a higher type of trade union democracy throughout its ranks.

The trade union press is one of the weakest spots in the labor movement, particularly the A. F. of L. During a long period many A. F. of L. papers, especially local journals, have been notorious for their corruption and reactionary spirit. The new and vigorous C.I.O. press has let some daylight into this weak sphere of labor unionism; but the need for improvement remains a crying one. Labor's neglect of the radio, both in utilizing programs and in securing control of stations, is also a serious source of weakness. In fact, there is need for a veritable revolution in labor's whole publicity and educational work. It needs modernizing, extension, intensification, clarification.

The trade union membership are now showing a fine spirit of militancy, solidarity and discipline. There is great room, however, for improvement among the leaders. During the Roosevelt regime widespread illusions took root among these elements to the effect that the class struggle

was over, that the employers had come to recognize the trade unions once and for all, and that henceforth the function of the unions was simply to carry on friendly relations with the employers; whereupon all would be well. Such moods of complacency placed excessive reliance upon closed shop, check-off, maintenance of membership, and similar protective clauses in agreements. But these devices, while valuable in themselves, are by no means substitutes for active trade unionism. And as for arbitration, which some leaders consider as a panacea, the workers should enter into it only as a last resort and after having secured every possible concession and safeguard.

The great strikes we are now passing through have given a big jolt to those complacent elements who had come to think that strikes and political struggles were a thing of the past, and that organized labor should go in for such class collaboration with the bosses as almost ruined the unions in the 1920's. But organized labor has by no means completely awakened to the stormy prospect that stands ahead of it. Nor is it yet fully prepared to counter the insatiable drive of the capitalists at home to inflate their profits, and their aggressive campaign abroad to satisfy their ruthless, imperialist ambitions. This is, therefore, a time when the trade unions must recruit and solidify their ranks, democratize themselves, improve their morale, and carefully study strike strategy and independent political activity.

## **National and International Labor Unity**

Faced with increasingly important problems—economic and political, domestic and foreign—the need for unity in labor's ranks is now more urgent than ever. As matters stand at present, there are many serious divisions in the unions, caused for the most part by the selfish, reactionary, and bureaucratic attitudes of entrenched conservative lead-

erships. These needless splits in labor's forces are directly contrary to the will and interests of the progressive rank-and-file, who are increasingly insistent upon unity of action and organization.

The most pressingly needed step toward national labor unity is for the A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods to form a joint action committee to handle the many problems now confronting the workers. A cooperative movement of this kind, with local committees in the various states and cities, would enormously increase labor's power during strikes and in fighting against inflation, against hostile labor legislation, in winning elections and in combatting reaction in general. It would greatly strengthen the fight for the whole economic and political program of the labor movement. If, for example, as the Communists proposed, there had been a coordinating national all-labor committee of this kind during the recent big strikes undoubtedly better wage settlements could have been secured all around. Such a unity committee would not only vastly strengthen labor in its daily struggles, but it would be real progress towards the eventual organizational unity of the whole labor movement. The rupture between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. is a danger to all of organized labor. There is no reason for it whatever, except the diehard reactionary spirit of the top leadership of the A. F. of L. If the rank-and-file of labor and the progressive officialdom will resolutely insist that this dangerous split be healed then even the hard-boiled bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. Executive Council will have to yield. A joint action committee of all the major sections of the labor movement would be most helpful to this end. It should be established without fail.

There is especially a burning need for greater labor unity in political action. It is criminal stupidity for organized labor to face up to the great current strike against the labor smashers and open shoppers in Congress divided

against itself. The vitally important elections this Fall and in 1948 must produce a much higher degree of united labor action than now exists, or the trade union movement will pay a high price for its lack of internal-solidarity. The workers should demand such unity from their leaders, in the developing political campaigns and in the building of a third party.

In the respective single industries, too, the need for economic labor unity is a pressing one. The C.I.O. has demonstrated in the basic industries the validity of the industrial form of organization. It is high time, therefore, that the reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L. be made to recognize this obvious fact. In every industry where the A. F. of L. is dominant the craft unions should be welded into closely knit industrial federations, as a preliminary to their actual amalgamation. Particularly necessary is a strong federation of all the railroad unions. A vital cause of the loss of the recent national railroad strike was the fact that 19 of the 21 railroad craft unions had signed up to remain at work while the other two unions, the Engineers and Trainmen, had to make the hard fight alone. And illustrating the same point, if the C.I.O. maritime workers recently won such a fine wages and hours victory a fundamental reason for this was the strong solidarity they showed among themselves, together with the pledges of strike support that they received from the A. F. of L. maritime unions. Labor should be done once and for all with the absurdity of autonomous craft unions in the major industries. The day of industrial solidarity, of industrial unionism, is here, and the A. F. of L. top leaders eventually will have to accept this fact, much as they dislike it. The recent successful general strike of combined A. F. of L. and C.I.O. workers in Rochester, N. Y., is a symbol of the new spirit of solidarity now developing among the workers.

The need for industrial solidarity makes it all the more



necessary to do away with idiotic jurisdictional strikes. Such strikes seriously weaken the structure of the labor movement and needlessly poison public opinion against trade unionism. In stubborn jurisdictional situations, where labor itself cannot settle the issue, it should not hesitate to call in friendly arbitrators. Especially in organization campaigns should the unions make every effort to avoid jurisdictional collisions. The present situation regarding the big C.I.O. drive to organize the South is both a disgrace and a danger, what with the A. F. of L. leaders declaring "war" on the C.I.O. organizing campaign. Both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. unions can grow in the South, but they should divide the field between them, with the basic industries going to the C.I.O., on the pattern of things in the rest of the country. Not the workers, but the employers, will profit by an A. F. of L.-C.I.O. feud in the South.

Looking abroad, one of the urgent needs for more labor unity is a better working arrangement between the trade unions of the United States and those of Latin America. During the past ten years the workers in the many countries south of the Rio Grande have built up vigorous trade union movements and linked them together in the Latin American Confederation of Labor (C.T.A.L.), which now has some 6,000,000 members. It is to the interest of American workers to support and cooperate with this great progressive organization. But the reactionary A. F. of L. top leadership have taken it upon themselves to try to break up the C.T.A.L. and to organize another general federation more to their ultra-conservative taste. This is an insolent and dangerous interference in the life of the Latin American unions. The employers in Latin America and the big imperialists of the United States, as well as various outright fascist elements in the countries concerned, are hailing this splitting tactic of the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L.'s disruptive policy in Latin America

can only be properly classified as part of the imperialist program of the American trusts for subjugating that whole area.

Then there is the tremendous task of extending world trade union unity. American labor unions have a vital stake in this. But, here again, the top A. F. of L. leadership is the main obstacle. During the past two years all the important labor movements of the world, with the exception of the A. F. of L., have come together and formed the World Federation of Trade Unions, which has 66,000,000 members. The W.F.T.U. has a tremendous role to play in advancing the living standards of the world's workers, in eliminating the roots of fascism in the former Axis countries, in preventing a regrowth of reaction generally, in preserving the world from being deluged by a new war bloodbath. But the A. F. of L. leaders, contrary to the interests of their membership, are trying to smash the W.F.T.U. Their ridiculous pretext for this outrageous splitting is that the Russian trade unions are not genuine labor organizations, an insulting conclusion with which the three score millions of workers in the W.F.T.U. disagree.

The A. F. of L. Executive Council's disruptive stand towards the World Federation of Trade Unions fits in perfectly with the program of imperialist expansion of the big American trusts to dominate the world. These monopolists recognize that a powerfully united world labor movement would be a tremendous obstacle in their imperialist path, hence their own policy and that of their reactionary friends in the Executive Council—the Greens, Wolls, Hutchesons and Dubinskys—is to break up the W.F.T.U. The top leaders of the A. F. of L. go along with such imperialist policies because they, themselves, are as imperialistic as the monopolists.

Another profound world movement making towards labor unity, and one that holds great importance for our

labor movement and for the American people, is the present tendency for the Communists and Socialists in many countries to unify their forces, either through joint political action, or by the actual amalgamation of their respective parties. Such a coming together of the Communist and Socialist movements throughout the world, paralleling the formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions (which is made up of workers of all labor political groups), would enormously strengthen the forces of the world's workers and of the democratic peoples in general. It should surprise nobody, therefore, that the government agents of the Anglo-American imperialist bloc, and their friends, the reactionary A. F. of L. leaders, Social-Democrats and Trotskyites in our country, are very actively fighting against the accomplishment of world Communist-Socialist unity. But this great movement of solidarity, in tune with the unity trend of the workers all over the world, will succeed in spite of every opposition. American workers should give it their fullest support.

### **The Peril of Red-Baiting**

A serious disease in the labor movement, and one that must be combatted, is the widespread practice of Red-baiting. Thus, in many A. F. of L. and some C.I.O. unions, various leaders are carrying on a violent campaign of denunciation against the Communists, accusing them of all sorts of vicious anti-union, anti-democratic, and anti-American practices. In many instances Communists are specifically prohibited from holding official union positions or even from being members of the union. Usually this Red-baiting is accompanied by reckless attacks upon the U.S.S.R. and often by ill-concealed anti-Semitism, anti-Negroism, anti-Catholicism, anti-foreignerism, and the like. It is employer poison in the ranks of the labor movement.

Red-baiting is not political criticism; it is political persecution, just as anti-Semitism and Jim-Crowism are persecution. It is a weapon of reaction, taken straight from the arsenal of the late, unlamented Adolph Hitler. Its purpose is to develop an ideological terrorism, first against the Communists, next against all the progressive forces and eventually against the unions themselves. Red-baiting opens the way for the most dangerous attacks by employers against the labor movement.

Although workers are not so easily deceived by Red-baiting as they used to be, since they have heard men like President Roosevelt, Philip Murray and Sidney Hillman denounced as "Reds" by Dewey in the 1944 election campaign, nevertheless it would be a big mistake to underestimate its destructive effects in the unions. Red-baiting seeks to weaken the effectiveness of the most clear-headed and devoted workers in the labor movement by singling them out for vicious attacks; it works to undermine the cooperative relations between that progressive combination of forces, the left wing and the center upon which all advances of the labor movement depend; and it also serves as an effective cover-up for the agents of the imperialists and the war-mongers in the labor movement. Red-baiting and reaction go hand in hand. The union that tolerates Red-baiting leaves itself wide open to the assaults of the worst forces of reaction.

Among the worst Red-baiters in the labor movement are Social-Democratic leaders like David Dubinsky and Walter Reuther. These people, who have nothing Socialist about them, cover up their alliances with the Wolls, Lewises, etc., and also their own reactionary policies, by delivering fierce tirades against the Communists. Their "hate Russia" campaign is no less virulent than that of the Hearst press. They are eager supporters of every move of reaction looking towards a war against the U.S.S.R. The Trotskyites, who, like the Dubinskys and the Reuth-

ers, presume to speak in the name of labor and Socialism, make attacks upon the Communists and the U.S.S.R. their chief stock in trade. Their whole line furnishes material to those reactionary elements who are seeking an anti-Soviet war. Typically, Norman Thomas, a so-called Socialist, all through the war saw not Hitler, but Stalin as the danger. Red-baiting has become a well-paid journalistic profession among such pseudo-left elements as the Social-Democrats and Trotskyites.

Although the charges made by the Red-baiters against the Communists are without foundation, they are nevertheless not without effect among the masses because of the Hitler "big-lie" technique that is used to put them across; their constant reiteration with every means at hand.

Communists are charged, for example, by reactionary A. F. of L. leaders as trying to "break up the labor movement." This, notwithstanding the patent fact that Communists attach the very greatest importance to the trade unions (more, in fact, by far than do the A. F. of L. leaders themselves) both in the defense of the workers' interests under capitalism and as the main force for bringing about Socialism. Such charges are made in spite of the facts, too, that the Communists have labored devotedly through the years to build up the American labor movement, and that Communists are the most decisive leaders in the present-day, rapidly-growing labor movements in many European countries. American Communists were ardent supporters of unemployment insurance, for example, when the leaders of the A. F. of L. were telling the workers that it would destroy the labor unions and American democracy. They have long been militant pioneers for industrial unionism, the organization of the unorganized, the improvement of trade union democracy, the trade union rights of Negroes, the elimination of gangsterism, for labor unity, and every other progressive trade union issue.

Another silly argument of Red-baiters charges that Communists are irresponsibly in favor of strikes and don't care whether they are won or lost. The absurdity of this is demonstrated by two basic facts: First, the Communists, being part of the working class, have the same need as all other workers to win the economic advantages that come from victorious strikes; and, second, only if the Communists prove themselves to be successful leaders of the workers' everyday struggles under capitalism can they hope to win the workers for the incomparably greater task of establishing Socialism. No element in the labor movement, therefore, has a more responsible attitude towards strikes than the Communists. None are more careful about launching strikes, and none are more determined to win them once they are called. The Communists are opposed to wildcat strikes and stand firmly for united, disciplined action. During the late war the Communists stood second to nobody in loyally carrying out organized labor's no-strike pledge.

Charges by Red-baiters that the Communists, supposedly directed by outside forces, seek to grab control of the unions, are equally contrary to the facts. Communists, unlike the Lewises, Dubinskys and others of their kind, have no great machines in the unions. Their role as Communists is to teach the workers the principles and policies of Marxism-Leninism. Once the decision of the union is made in a given problem, they follow out loyally the trade union discipline. As for trying to "grab" leadership in the unions, the Communists understand full well the folly of such a course. Communist policy everywhere, in the unions and on the political field, is to work jointly with progressive, non-Communist forces. Obviously such a cooperative policy cannot be successful on the basis of the Communists "grabbing" for control. The fact is that today in the trade union movement generally the Communists, instead of being over-represented in leading

committees and councils, are very much under-represented, considering the size of their following in the unions. But it is in line with the Hitlerian "big-lie" technique of Red-baiting to shout that any union or political organization that has even one Communist in its executive committee is "Communist-dominated," or is a "Communist-front" organization.

Red-baiters also assert that Communists are "totalitarians" and anti-democratic. John L. Lewis, Bill Hutcheson, David Dubinsky, Walter Reuther and other outstanding "democrats" in the labor movement love to hurl these charges of anti-democracy against the Communists. Contrary to what these labor dictators say, Communism is the most democratic movement in the world, both on the economic and political fields. Communist principles call for the ultimate establishment of the most democratic society yet conceived by man, one in which there will be no social classes, no exploitation, and no state, and where everyone will produce according to his ability and receive according to his needs. In line with this fundamental democracy, Communists all over the world, including those in the United States, are front-line fighters for every democratic reform under capitalism. They are also the most resolute fighters against fascism, and they are the mainspring in the new democratic governments of Western and Central Europe. In the Soviet Union, where Communists lead the nation, the greatest democratic advances in the history of mankind have been achieved. These include the conquest of political power by the workers and farmers, the socialization of industry and the collectivization of the land, the abolition of capitalist exploitation, the doing away with economic crises and mass unemployment, the adoption of the most elaborate system of social insurance in the world, the establishment of complete social and national equality of all the peoples within the U.S.S.R., the full emancipation of women,

the liquidation of illiteracy, etc., etc. To call Communists anti-democratic in the face of all these democratic achievements and struggles is a Hitler "big lie" of the first water.

Communists are also often accused by Red-baiters of persecuting Catholic workers. This is a monstrous falsehood, too. Communists recognize that Catholic workers have the same economic and political interests as all other workers—they want peace; they want democracy; they want prosperity. So the Communists hold out the hand of solidarity to Catholics for the joint accomplishment of these democratic objectives. The Communists spare no efforts in fighting against religious bigotry, holding that in these critical days it is especially disastrous to engage in religious quarrels, from which only reaction can profit. At the same time, the Communists consider it politically necessary to condemn the clerical-fascist policies now being followed by the Vatican and by the many powerful figures in the Catholic hierarchy in the United States.

Lastly (to reply to no more of such slanders), the Red-baiters never tire of shouting that the Communists, because of their friendly attitude toward the Soviet Union, are un-American and "agents of a foreign power." This is the greatest of all the Hitlerian "big lies" of the professional Red-baiters and reactionaries. In reply to it, the attitude of the Communists towards the U.S.S.R. may be stated under two heads:

First, the Communists are ardent supporters of friendship between the great American and Soviet peoples. They refuse to take "no" on this question, because collaboration between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. is the key to the progress of world democracy and the maintenance of world peace. Thus, if during the middle 1930's the United States had joined with the U.S.S.R. in its proposed international front of the democratic powers to maintain world peace, as the Communists urged, Hitler's fascism would have been choked in its cradle and World War II



could have been prevented. During the great war against Hitlerism, American-Soviet collaboration, supported by the far-sighted Roosevelt, was actually achieved, and victory in the war was the result. And now, if the peace is to be won and another world war avoided, there absolutely must be American-Soviet collaboration. In fighting for such collaboration the Communists, therefore, are defending our people's most profound national interest. This is Americanism of the highest order. Those Red-baiters and Soviet-haters who are now so busily sowing seeds of dissension between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are, on the contrary, betraying our country, even though they wrap themselves around with a million pseudo-patriotic phrases. Soviet-baiters are imperialist war mongers, and they would have millions of American soldier boys and hosts of civilians die in a fruitless war to advance Wall Street's profits at the expense of the American, Soviet and other peoples.

Second, the U.S.S.R. is a Socialist country. Socialism represents a vast democratic advance over the present social system of capitalism. It indicates the path by which the peoples of the world will finally emancipate themselves from the jungle of present day society, the breeder of fascism, imperialism and war. Naturally, Communists, who advocate Socialism, as the first stage of Communism, have a friendly attitude towards this new regime of the U.S.S.R., the harbinger of the glorious future of mankind. Their attitude in this respect is very much like that of democrats all over the world in the years when the American Republic was young. The democrats of those times understood that the new republic being so painfully reared in our country was a great step forward over the prevailing reactionary feudalistic monarchies. Regardless of the Red-baiters of those days, these democrats considered it no act of hostility to their own nation to recognize the advanced character of the very promising new

American Republic and to give it their blessing. The Communists today take the same position towards the world's most advanced republic of our times, the U.S.S.R.

The Red-baiters, for all their violent attacks, will not succeed in killing Communist influence in the trade unions. The message of the Communists is much too vital for that. The Communists, with their Marxist-Leninist analysis of capitalism, their practical everyday economic and political policies, their matchless loyalty to labor, their indomitable fighting spirit, their long record of support of progressive labor policies, and their ultimate goal of a Socialist America, will grow, not decline, in influence. All over the world the Communist Parties, responding to the burning needs of the peoples, are expanding rapidly, in spite of the frantic Red-baiters. The Communist Party of the United States, with the help of vast numbers of new trade union members, will travel the same victorious path. American labor and the American people need and must have a strong Communist Party.

Labor leaders who indulge in the dangerous, fascist-like practice of Red-baiting, are playing the game, whether they realize it or not, of the most reactionary big monopolists, the bitterest enemies of trade unionism and of every other phase of American democracy. It's about time, therefore, that Red-baiting be knocked on the head in the American labor movement. This Hitlerian slander campaign should be recognized for what it is, the spreading of employer-inspired, imperialist war-monger propaganda in the ranks of the workers, in order to destroy their fighting spirit and organization. Trade union progressives (including those who sometimes do a little Red-baiting themselves in the vain hope of warding off reactionary attacks) should take up the cudgels against the Red-baiting menace. Red-baiting must be eliminated from the trade unions. This is a major necessity for the further strengthening of the labor movement.

## The Trade Unions and Socialism

To meet the ever-more complex problems of the post-war period organized labor must, as we have pointed out, improve its domestic and foreign policies, build a broad new political party, organizationally strengthen the trade unions, unify its forces nationally and internationally, and cleanse its ranks of fascist-like Red-baiting. But above all, American labor needs to modernize its political conceptions. It must cease worshipping an outworn capitalism and turn its hopes and efforts to the building of a new system of society worthy of the understanding and resources of modern man, Socialism.

In its earlier competitive stage, capitalism was a progressive system. Under it modern industry was built, the working class was born, democracy developed, and science made great strides. But now capitalism has become monopolistic; it is in its imperialist period and has grown obsolete and reactionary. The capitalist system is full of incurable contradictions—between the social mode of production and the private ownership of industry, between the great producing power and weak purchasing capacity of the workers, between the antagonistic interests of the working class and the capitalist class, between rival imperialist powers, between the imperialist states and the colonial countries, between the capitalist and Socialist parts of the world, etc., etc. These contradictions are constantly sharpening and deepening. World capitalism is today in general crisis, and its continued operation produces one disaster after another for tortured humanity.

Capitalism, as Marx pointed out long ago, is causing a spreading mass pauperization. This is shown by the terrible poverty of China, India, Latin America, and war-torn Europe, and by the awful fact that today at least a billion people throughout the world are facing famine con-

ditions. All this misery (none of which is necessary) has been produced by the workings of capitalism in its period of decay.

Capitalism is causing an increasing economic chaos throughout the world. Before the war the periodic economic crises, which are an inevitable result of capitalism, were constantly growing sharper and more prolonged—the 1929-33 crisis being the most severe ever known. And now, particularly in the United States, the stage is being set for another world economic smash-up, once the war boom is over, that will make the terrible crisis of 16 years ago seem like prosperity in comparison.

Capitalism today also automatically generates fascism. The great trusts and monopolies find that, with ever sharpening problems, they cannot continue to rule at home and carry out their program of imperialist aggression abroad without weakening or destroying the democratic organizations and liberties of the people. That is why fascism came to Germany, Italy, Japan and other countries, and that is the great menace of fascism in the United States. Trusts are born enemies of democracy.

Capitalism today also systematically causes wars of unprecedented extent and devastation. The big imperialist states, intent upon world rule for themselves, collide with each other and the result is war. Twice in one generation world wars have resulted from this basic cause, and now preparations are being hurried for a third and even more terrible world war. Imperialist war is a fundamental expression of the general crisis of capitalism. The first world war lost capitalism one-sixth of the world, the U.S.S.R., to Socialism. The second world war will, in the long run, produce more Socialist lands than the first war did. And a third world war would just about shatter generally the world capitalist system. Nevertheless, the imperialists are recklessly heading straight for World War III. The big capitalist powers, those that were not

destroyed in World War II, are now out to smash the U.S.S.R., the greatest obstacle in their imperialist path. And this time it is the United States, nursing fatal delusions of world domination, that is taking the war lead.

The capitalist system in the United States is subject to the general economic and political laws that govern capitalism everywhere. It has within it the same basic, destructive contradictions that is undermining world capitalism in general. American capitalism, however, has been favored by history. The United States is a land of vast natural resources; the growth of capitalism here was not seriously hindered by hangovers of feudalistic institutions; the country had to be literally built from the ground up almost within the memory of living man, and instead of being seriously injured by the two world wars, which have wrought such havoc with capitalism elsewhere, this country actually fattened on them. For the past 30 years this country's "prosperity" has largely depended on furnishing war munitions, and in repairing the ravages of war. These, and other factors, have tended to prolong the life and vigor of American capitalism. But the structural weaknesses that have so enfeebled European capitalism will also eventually drag down the seemingly impregnable American capitalism, for both of them are cut from the same cloth. It is absurd to expect, as many do, that the capitalists of this country can breathe the breath of life again into the decadent capitalism of the various other nations. And it is equally idle to believe that American capitalism can prosper as a sort of island in a wide sea of sick world capitalism.

The world forces of democracy can, by close organization and determined struggle against the monopolists, somewhat lessen the disastrous effects upon the masses of the reactionary tendencies of capitalism. The workers and their allies can win some degree of protection against mass unemployment through social insurance; they can

lessen the severity of the inevitable economic crisis by "full employment" public works programs; they can check the menace of fascism by determined measures of democracy, and by united action they can postpone the outbreak of new wars. It is the task of the workers to fight for as many as possible of these ameliorations under capitalism, but at the same time they must realize that only under Socialism can the gross evils produced by capitalism be finally done away with.

The establishment of Socialism will eliminate these fast-growing evils by striking at their basic root: the private ownership of the social means of production. By the workers and other democratic forces winning political power, and by their socializing the industries and the land, abolishing capitalist exploitation, and carrying on production for use instead of for profit, the basis will be laid for a peaceful, democratic and prosperous world. The root cause of mass poverty is thereby eliminated, order is introduced into industry, economic crises and mass unemployment become things of the past, fascism is uprooted, once and for all, and the groundwork for imperialism and war disappears. Socialism supplies the sole answer to poverty, economic chaos, fascism and war. It is the next higher rung on the social ladder that man has been ascending for ages. And mankind must climb up to Socialism or sink into even greater calamities than those which for the past generation have plagued the world.

The discovery of atomic energy emphasizes afresh the obsolescence of capitalism. Already the monopolist capitalists, alarmed that this new great power will create havoc among their industries by increasing economic crises and by rendering huge amounts of investments useless, are already moving to stifle the development of atomic energy. About the sole use they are looking forward to for this tremendous source of power is to make it into atomic bombs. Only a Socialist system, based on production for

use and not for personal profit, can make full use of the revolutionary discovery of atomic energy.

The Soviet Union has proved the workability of Socialism. It has made an end of capitalist exploitation and laid the basis for the general democracy and prosperity of its peoples; it has done away completely with economic crises and mass unemployment that are such terrible scourges under capitalism; it has abolished the capitalist bankers, industrialists and landlords, who are the poison source of imperialism, famine and war. And these great democratic achievements were accomplished by the U.S.S.R. in spite of a hostile capitalist world, which tried by armed intervention, civil war, economic blockade, political isolation, and imperialist invasion to smash the Soviet system. The capitalists of the world hate and fear the U.S.S.R., not because they dread an attack by the Red Army upon their countries, but primarily because they are afraid of the effects the example of a successful Socialist system will have upon the oppressed millions of the earth.

The vast majority of the workers in Europe are now Socialist in outlook. They are drawing the needful elementary lesson that the recurring economic crises, fascism, and wars take place because capitalism is obsolete and reactionary, and they are looking forward to the abolition of that system altogether. Today, although often under untrustworthy Social-Democratic leaders, such as the Attlees and Bevins in Great Britain, they are carrying through far-reaching programs for the nationalization of basic industries, and tomorrow they will take up more definitely the building of Socialism itself.

The great body of American workers, unlike their European brothers and sisters, have not yet, however, adopted a Socialist perspective. This is, as we have seen, because of the relatively more favorable position of capitalism in

the United States. But the American workers are also on the march ideologically. The Hoover economic crisis and the reforms of the Roosevelt regime made them think deeply and caused them to lose much of their old-time faith in so-called free enterprise—a concept that means to leave the economic system to the tender care of the capitalists and all will be well. The workers now know that only if the Government intervenes with public works programs, farm subsidies, and the like, can industry be kept going. This is a big stride forward ideologically. It means that the American working class, with its faith in capitalism weakening, is taking its first hesitant steps on the road toward Socialism. Nor can there be any doubt but that the next big economic crisis will cause among the mass of American workers widespread demands for the nationalization of basic industries, and, on the part of the more advanced workers, for Socialism.

A Socialist perspective has now become an urgent necessity for the American working class. For only when the workers and their leaders begin to grasp the principles of Marxism-Leninism can they understand what is happening to world capitalism, and only then will they be in a position to take the necessary measures, now and in the future, to protect themselves and the world from the disasters of poverty, fascism and war caused by the decaying capitalist system. It is indeed time that the leaders of the trade unions stop parroting the stupid "free enterprise" slogans of the capitalists. The acquirement of a Socialist outlook by the labor movement will be the greatest step forward it has ever taken. It will register the maturity of the American trade unions.

Our country has before it a glorious future, but not under capitalism. The capitalist system can bring us only more and deeper tragedies, until finally the workers and their political allies see fit to put an end to it. Socialism



will come when the majority of our people demand it. The workers of the world are marching forward to Socialism. The American labor movement must take its proper place in their invincible ranks.

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