

# CPA Discussion Page

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## Kautsky's Theories of Ultra-Imperialism

To show that the policy inaugurated by Comrade Browder represents a complete revisionism of the principles of Marx and Lenin, I wish to bring out some points of comparison which will clearly show the kinship of such revisionism to Social Democratic revisions, springing from the same roots and leading to the same results.

First of all, it is completely un-Marxian to draw the conclusion from the Teheran agreement—an agreement in which is expressed the desire and the possibility of peaceful collaboration between the socialist state and the capitalist states—that capitalism ceases to be subject to the laws of capitalist economy and development. It is still more un-Marxian, and even reactionary, to suppose that collaboration of the United States with the Soviet Union depends on the preservation of the same relationship of forces in the United States and on leaving the leadership in the hands of the same social strata; i.e. to monopoly capitalism which constitutes the economic basis of imperialism.

As a matter of fact, the Teheran agreement could only be carried through if the development in the United States (and other capitalist countries) advances in the direction of a people's democracy and the limitation of monopoly capitalism; which development, in turn, depends on the successful struggle of the progressive forces—the working class in alliance with the farmers, intellectuals and small business—against the reactionary forces which grow out of imperialist monopolies. In other words, it depends on the development of the class struggle.

It seems to me that Comrade Browder consciously took as his pattern the standpoint and "theoret-

ical explanation" of Karl Kautsky of "ultra-imperialism" which the latter developed during the first World War. Perhaps Comrade Browder considered that Kautsky's "theories" at that time were un-Marxian and revisionist, but that today a so-called period of "peaceful and progressive development of capitalism" is foreseen to which Kautsky's theories could readily be applied. The different character of the second World War and the existence and participation of the Soviet Union—and, consequently, a different role played by the working class in this war—made him believe that after the war capitalism will cease to be capitalism; namely, that it will, with the help of the Soviet Union, come into some sort of an ultra-imperialistic era.

To illustrate this I would like to quote some of Kautsky's "explanations" of his theories which Lenin refers to in his article "Collapse of the Second International," and at the same time bring out some of Lenin's answers from the same and from other articles. The identity will be evident to any one who has read and studied Browder's latest works. In some instances the statements are almost verbatim in identity.

In his article under the title "Zwei Schriften zum Umlernen" Kautsky says:

"Its (war's) lesson may hasten developments which would take a long time under peace conditions. Should it come to an agreement between nations, to disarmament, to a lasting peace, then the worst of the causes that led to a growing moral

decadence of capitalism before the war may disappear."

"... Ultra-imperialism may be in position to create an era of new hopes and expectations within the framework of capitalism..."

In his pamphlet "Nationalstaat," he writes:

"... the extreme Left wishes to 'promote' Socialism. . . . It seems very radical, but it is only capable of driving every one who does not believe in the immediate practical realization of Socialism into the camp of imperialism."

In the same pamphlet Kautsky further states:

"It is beyond doubt and it is not necessary to prove that there are strata of the population having the most urgent interest in universal peace and disarmament. Petty bourgeoisie and petty peasants, even many capitalists and intellectuals, have no interest in imperialism stronger than the damage caused to these strata by war and armaments."

"Every attempt of any industrial capitalist state to acquire for itself a colonial empire sufficient to make it independent from other countries in the acquisition of raw materials, must unite against it all the other capitalist states, must entangle it in endless exhausting wars without bringing it nearer to its aims. Such a policy would be the surest road toward the bankruptcy of the entire economic life of a state."

In reply to this Lenin said the following:

"Is not this a philistine attempt at persuading the financiers to relinquish imperialism? To frighten the capitalists by the prospect of bankruptcy is the same as to advise the stock exchange brokers against making stock transactions on the ground that 'there are many

who thus lose their fortunes."

"Kautsky applies Marxism in such a fashion that all its content evaporates. What remains is a little word 'interests' with some sort of a supernatural, spiritualist meaning, attention being turned not toward economic realities, but towards the innocent desires for general welfare. Marxism judges 'interests' by class antagonisms and class struggle manifested in millions of facts in everyday life. The petty bourgeoisie dreams and prattles of mitigating antagonisms, 'arguing' that their sharpening has 'harmful' consequences."

"Obviously, it would be better for capitalism if it could develop peacefully. Better still would be to develop capitalism and widen the home market by increasing wages; this is perfectly 'feasible' and it is very fitting topic for a clergyman to preach to the financiers."

Returning to Kautsky:

"The tendency of capitalism to expand can best be realized not by the violent methods of imperialism but by peaceful democracy. . . ."

"Neither free trade nor democracy can eliminate them (economic antagonisms generated by capitalism). What we are most interested in is that these antagonisms should be lived down in a struggle that assumes such forms as would impose on the laboring masses the least amount of suffering and sacrifices."

Compare this to a statement from Comrade Browder's "Teheran and America," pg. 21. ". . . we frankly declare that we are ready to cooperate in making this capitalism work effectively in the postwar period with the least possible burdens upon the people."

MAX P.  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

## Facts of Life On the Side Of Browder

Dear Editors:

Comrade Duclos' charges against the American Communists do not seem to me well taken. I think Duclos failed to make a sufficient study of our policy; his conclusions seem to me hasty and in part, unwarranted.

Take one example: The evaluation of Teheran. Duclos considers the Teheran agreement as just a diplomatic document, and accuses Browder of "deforming in a radical way the meaning of the Teheran declaration," etc.

But the facts are on Browder's side. His interpretation of the Teheran agreement as "a policy which corresponds to the national interest of all peoples, great and small"; his assertion that at Teheran "we have crossed the borderline from the past and have definitely entered the present," has been fully confirmed since—at Yalta, and now at San Francisco.

Browder's great merit was to have grasped the full importance of Teheran, to have applied Marxist analysis and vision to a situation new in the world, a situation which signaled the end of one era—that of capitalist encirclement, and the beginning of a new era in which "capitalism and socialism have begun to find the way to peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the same world."

This situation is not of Browder's invention. It is not only true as between the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, but also true on a national scale—in England, in Italy, in Yugoslavia, in Czechoslovakia and in France itself. French Communists take part in the bourgeois government of France.

Also as to Duclos' accusation about the dissolution of the party; I am sure if Duclos were here at the time he would have gone along with the National Committee and the rest of the party in this action. The step was unprecedented and bold, but it was necessary; it helped to avert a formidable danger which threatened this country and the world in 1944—the danger of a defeat of President Roosevelt. It took courage and boldness and a firm grasp of Marxist-Leninist teaching on the part of Browder to initiate this measure, and on the part of the National Committee to carry it through.

Comrade Duclos' accusations could have been met in debate, and errors, if any, corrected through the medium of self-criticism. This was the method proposed by Comrade Browder in his introduction to the statement. But the National Board of the CPA, with the exception of Browder, hastened to accept all the accusations at face value. The resolution adopted by the National Board is not in any sense an invitation to discuss and find a common solution. It has all the earmarks of a final document.

I cannot agree with the method, and more than that, I cannot agree with the substance. The Resolution, if adopted as the platform of the American Communists, will reverse a decade of fruitful labor, of clear-headed Leninist leadership, of grounding the science of Marxism in the soil of America.

As an old-time rank and file, I am greatly distressed at the immediate prospects facing our movement.

A. A. HELLER.

## Agrees With Wm. Z. Foster

Dear Editor:

I agree with Comrade Foster's evaluation of our past errors and future tasks.

In the past few years our party under the leadership of Earl Browder has taken many steps to overcome sectarianism and to strengthen our ties with the masses.

Our country has a unique history. It was not so long ago when a man might solve his economic problems by traveling to new territory and greener fields and opportunities were still unlimited. The "American Dream" of "rags to riches" was thus established.

This with venomous capitalist propaganda against economic change and reform created the "red bogey" with which we are still struggling.

But the workers and common people of America will better appreciate the Communist contribution to their problems not because we change our name or form but because of the way in which we fight with them in their struggle for a better life from day to day in the future.

This is only meant as a comment, of course, and not as basic analysis of past policy.

Sincerely,

D. P., New York

P. S. In the article of Comrade Browder's remarks of June 2 Resolution of the National Committee he states "I cannot imagine anything more demoralizing to our Association than to fail to give a clear answer; and even a wrong answer is better than no answer at all."

As a member, I strongly object to that statement. It indicates poor faith in our ranks.

## Raises Questions for CPA Board and Browder

When first Comrade Duclos' article appeared it fell like a bombshell on the members of the CPA. The effect on the American people is yet to be realized.

The second shock came after the publication in the Daily Worker of the very clear lineup on both sides of the "new" resolution of the Board.

To see everyone on the Board arrayed against Browder so soon after Duclos' article seemed rather automatic. The way they acted—even after a week's discussion of the situation—showed either they had these thoughts in mind all along or turned quickly from one path toward another with the prompting of the article.

If they felt this way all along they should have made known their position and perhaps, with the participation of the rank and file then in discussion, corrected the erroneous conclusions instead of letting it go for a year. This is a damaging admission of their own guilt.

However, the resolution they have adopted seems in no wise different from Browder's analysis. Take the section dealing with using the Labor-Management Charter for organizing the unorganized. Aren't they willing to work with any monopoly capitalist who agrees with Eric Johnston, who is president no less of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce? Don't they seem a little naive in believing the bourgeoisie will help organize the unorganized?

How about the Bretton Woods section: Won't they accept monopoly capitalists who are for it? Further, Bretton Woods success presupposes monopoly capitalist participation, doesn't it?

Won't they accept monopoly capitalist for a United Nations Charter for peace? Won't the Soviet Union accept them?

Now take Browder's statement in his pamphlet: "Monopoly capitalism is not a reactionary mass." "That part of the big bourgeoisie which supports Teheran can be the deci-

sive part provided it joins effectively with the whole democratic-progressive camp."

I fail to see the differences they have with Browder. I'll say Comrade Browder has effectively put forward his views and presented his own arguments on their behalf.

There's one aspect of the whole discussion that would condemn Browder's conclusions if such quotations as Comrade Foster seems to attribute to Comrade Browder were true. I mean the quotations enumerated by Comrade Foster as:

2. "The capitalists will double wages of workers in the postwar period" is rather over-optimistic and naive—a delusion.

2. Labor should not press for inclusion in cabinet position of FDR government.

3. That is refutation of Browder's belief of labor-capital harmony. To

us it makes labor lag behind the bourgeoisie and take leadership from them and them alone.

4. Labor should not press for participation in United Nations conferences—this also taking leadership only from the bourgeoisie rather depending too much on them. This is an error when applied especially to other nations who have had Communist and labor men as regular government delegates.

This names just a few of the "erroneous conclusions."

## Line Wrong, Tactics Right

Editors:

We would like to avail ourselves of the opportunity of expressing our position regarding the recent resolution of the National Board on the Duclos article. It is our understanding that such expressions are to be published in a forthcoming supplement devoted to that purpose.

We feel that in the light of existing conditions and events currently taking place, the analysis of Teheran which visualized the possibility of finance monopoly capitalism voluntarily cooperating in freeing the colonies, raising their economic status, ridding the world of fascism and voluntarily cooperating to provide jobs for all here in America at decent standards, was incorrect, and un-Marxian.

We feel nevertheless that for the most part our tactics during the war and up to the present were generally correct despite the basic incorrect analysis of Teheran, since they undoubtedly helped open the

second front and reelect Roosevelt at the most critical period of the war. Even though Roosevelt died, the American people gave notice in electing him that they were demanding the Roosevelt policies and all that implies when they elected Roosevelt to office.

We also feel that with the defeat of the Nazi military machine a new world situation has come into existence demanding a change of tactics and basic understanding to meet the changed condition. This reorientation must be based on a correct Marxian understanding of existing relations of forces and the correct interpretation of Teheran's place in these relations.

The important thing now is to hammer out clarity and unity among ourselves, so that we can quickly take our place in the leadership of the working class and our nation in this, the most dangerous and critical period in history.

George and Gertrude Glasser.