

The Minton-McKenney 'Report': The Path of Renegacy

By Samuel Sillen

(First of a series of three articles)

WHEN Ruth McKenney and Bruce Minton were expelled from the Communist Party because of their anti-party activity, some people may have been inclined to say that "Perhaps these two writers did not know what they were doing." But the fact is that they knew perfectly well what they were doing when they became tied up with an organized faction and launched their unprincipled attacks on the leadership and policies of the Communist Party.

The best test of their intentions is their public activity today. For today they are openly leagued with other renegades in a public campaign to disrupt and destroy the party to which they hypocritically claimed loyalty.

This anti-Communist campaign does not take place in a political vacuum. It goes on at a moment when fascist forces are working furiously to smash the Communist Party as an indispensable part of their program to shackle the labor movement and every other progressive force in American life.

I have before me a document, dated Nov. 4, 1946, sent to me "at the request of Mr. Minton." It is a mimeographed bulletin of the so-called "New Committee for Publications" (NCP), an organization that openly avows its "revolutionary" purpose to break up the Communist Party as an enemy of the working class. The NCP is operated by a bloc of renegades smoked out into the open by their expulsion from the Communist Party, including Lyle Dowling, Carolyn Burkhart, Bill Dunne, Earl Price, Sam Darcy, Vern Smith, Minton and McKenney.

The NCP is circulating, with the expressly stated "permission" of the authors, the text of a "report" drawn up by Minton and McKenney last August. This "report" was ostensibly written for a branch discussion on the plenary meeting of the Communist Party's National Committee last July 16-18. But examination of the document reveals that it is not at all a report written in good faith, but a calculated platform of struggle against the Communist Party.

Note this revealing fact. The NCP announces that it was formed March 15, 1946, several months before Minton and McKenney delivered their "branch report," presumably with a "heavy heart," and in the interests of "honest criticism." In every principal feature Minton-McKenney last August followed the line of the anti-party clique set up secretly last March. They smuggled this line into a branch discussion. Only now, after their expulsion, do they publicly identify themselves with this group which publicly announces its aim to break up the Communist Party.



continue to circulate lies which they know are lies.

Here is one example. The Minton-McKenney "report" asserts that the National Committee has "forgotten" the war in China. An unsuspecting reader could hardly be blamed if he is shocked to learn that the Communist Party "finds neither time nor space" to mention the war in China in its plenary discussions.

But this is a brazen slander. The fact is, of course, that the gravity of the war in China and the crime of U. S. imperialist intervention in that country were strongly emphasized in Eugene Dennis' report to the July plenary meeting on behalf of the National Board. The fact is that in listing the "urgent, inter-related tasks," Comrade Dennis made this as the first point: "A powerful, nationwide campaign must be once again developed to frustrate the predatory designs of American imperialism upon the Chinese people. Toward this end, mass pressure must be exerted upon the State, War and Navy Departments to halt American intervention in China's internal affairs, to force the withdrawal of American troops, and to cease giving any form of aid to the Kuomintang military-fascist dictatorship." This point is stressed more than once in the same report by Comrade Dennis.

Does this sound as if China has been "forgotten," that the National Committee could find "neither time nor space" for China?

Minton-McKenney say they are referring to the National Committee's "published reports." Comrade Dennis' report was published in the September issue of *Political Affairs*.

It may be pointed out that this issue of *Political Affairs* was not available, that only excerpts from the Plenum discussions had been published in the press when Minton-McKenney made their "branch report." Correct. But note two facts:

1) These people claim to be devoted Communists, that they "have never had a heavier task," etc. Yet they arrogantly lecture the National Committee—at great length—on the importance of "remembering" China, make it a central point of their argument that the entire National Committee "has small concern for Marxist theory . . . shows no real concern for Marxist action." They do so without even inquiring about basic facts which a phone call would have produced.

2) That this was not merely arrogant but politically malicious is proven by a simple fact. This is that Minton and McKenney today mimeograph and circulate a document with this lie. There can no longer be any question of a "mistake" based on inadequate facts. They are circulating a vicious falsehood—designed to undermine people's confidence in the Communist Party—long after the report of the National Board which disproves this lie has been published. Like all demagogues, they make their appeal to ignorance.

And this is only one of many examples of such crude falsifications, some of which I shall cite in tomorrow's column.

THE fact that Minton-McKenney are not "innocents" is further proven by the fact that they

(Continued tomorrow)