

# THE COMMUNISTS TAKE STOCK

By the EDITORS

LAST week we told our readers of the article by Jacques Duclos, one of the principal leaders of the French Communist Party, which criticized the policies of the American Communists and the dissolution last year of the Communist Party of the United States. The article appeared in translation in the *Daily Worker* of May 24, together with a foreword by Earl Browder, president of the Communist Political Association.

The June 4 issue of the *Daily Worker* publishes a resolution by the National Board of the CPA, which discusses the present national and international situation and makes a self-critical evaluation of American Communist policy. The resolution points out that sharp struggle will be required to complete the destruction of fascism "in Europe and throughout the world and to guarantee that the possibilities which now exist for creating an enduring peace shall be realized." It states that with the end of the war in Europe, "important groupings of American capital, which were opposed to German imperialist world domination," are now frightened by the democratic consequences of victory and "are joining hands with the most reactionary and pro-fascist circles of monopoly capital—with the pro-fascist du Pont clique in the NAM."

The resolution sees many of the recent actions of the State Department at the San Francisco Conference and on such issues as Poland, postwar Germany, Trieste, and Chinese unity as reflecting "this regrouping in the ranks of American capital." It also sees reaction on the home front as seeking to block an adequate government program "to meet the human needs of reconversion" and "to avoid the most acute consequences of future economic crisis." The resolution points out, however, that "the conditions and forces exist to defeat this reactionary threat" and urges that the united efforts of the majority of the American people, with labor in the forefront, be thrown into the fight "to influence the course of the nation in a consistently progressive direction." The resolution emphasizes the need to support "every effort of the Truman administration to carry forward Roosevelt's program for victory, peace, democracy and 60,000,000 jobs," while criticizing all hesitations and vigorously

opposing, "any concessions to the reactionaries." Toward this end it calls for consolidating "the broadest national coalition of all anti-fascist and democratic forces, including all supporters of Roosevelt's anti-Axis policies." The resolution also declares that the building of this democratic coalition and its effective functioning make it essential that "the working class—especially the progressive labor movement and the Communists—strengthen its independent role and activities and display far greater political and organizing initiative." The resolution urges that labor "vigorously champion a program of action that will promote the complete destruction of fascism, speed victory over Japanese imperialism, curb the powers of the trusts and monopolies—advance the economic welfare of the people and protect and extend American democracy." The resolution offers specific proposals for such a program of action. It then states: "This program represents the most urgent interests of the American people and the nation. It is not a program for socialism, which alone can completely abolish insecurity, exploitation, oppression and war. This is an immediate program of action around which all progressive Americans can unite today. It is a program of action which will advance the destruction of fascism, help realize a more stable peace, and greater economic security and democracy."

The second part of the resolution is largely concerned with a critical estimate of American Communist policy since January 1944. It points to the achievements of the American Communists in the battle against reaction and fascism over the years; it declares that "the future of the labor and progressive movements and therefore the role of the United States in world affairs will depend to no small extent upon the correctness of our Communist policy, our independent role and influence, our mass activities and organized strength." The resolution views the mistakes made by American Communists in the recent period as consisting in "drawing a number of erroneous conclusions from the historic significance of the Teheran accord. Among these false conclusions was the concept that after the military defeat of Germany, the decisive sections of big capital would participate

in the struggle to complete the destruction of fascism and would cooperate with the working people in the maintenance of postwar national unity. This illusion had no foundation in life, either in the class nature of finance capital, or in the postwar aims of the trusts and cartels which seek imperialist aggrandizement and huge profits at the expense of the people. This has been amply demonstrated by recent events." This conception led, according to the resolution, "to other erroneous conclusions, such as to utopian economic perspectives and the possibility of achieving the national liberation of the colonial and dependent countries through arrangements between the great powers. It also led to tendencies to obscure the class nature of bourgeois democracy, to false concepts of social evolution and to minimizing the independent and leading role of the working class."

Concerning the changes that were made in the Communist organization, the resolution states that "coming when they did and coupled with the above revisionist errors, [they] could not but strengthen certain dangerous tendencies toward liquidating the independent and vanguard role of the Communist movement." Even though these errors "did not dominate our wartime policies," the resolution nevertheless finds that "they adversely influenced our work during the war . . . and were tending to disorient the Communist and the progressive labor movement for the postwar period." The resolution pays tribute to "the important contributions" of William Z. Foster "in the struggle against opportunism" and to the article by Duclos. It goes on to say that the most essential pre-condition for enabling the Communist movement to carry out its tasks is "to quickly and decisively overcome our errors and mistakes, especially to eradicate all vestiges of opportunism in our policies and mass work." It calls for "a thorough and self-critical examination of our policies and leadership" by all members and CPA organizations. It warns against "all tendencies towards factionalism, towards distortions and towards weakening the basic unity of our Communist organization," as well as against all sectarian tendencies. The resolution concludes with a pledge "to do everything to destroy

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creasing pressure in order to prevent the enemy from resting, reorganizing and regrouping. This would necessarily mean that extensive operations of all types will develop this very summer, with Formosa, Shanghai and Kyushu the possible targets.

THE redeployment of enormous masses of men and material halfway around the globe (14,000 miles on the average) will put a tremendous strain on the Navy. Furthermore, it must be taken into consideration, as the President pointed out, that in amphibious operations it takes between two and three sailors to put one soldier or marine ashore. It takes half a million tons of shipping to put one division ashore in an amphibious assault. (Sixty-eight million tons of food and equipment were shipped to Europe by us in this war, or about eight times more than during the last war.) The Navy, at the collapse of Germany, did not have any surplus personnel. This is why "there cannot be even a partial demobilization" in the Navy until Japan is defeated.

Aside from assisting and supporting our amphibious operations, redeployment, etc., and in addition to direct strikes with gun and plane against enemy objectives, the Navy has done a tremendous job of destruction of enemy shipping. "The Japanese merchant marine," said the President, "in spite of a large program of building, has now been reduced to less than a quarter of its pre-war size. In fact, we have sunk more Japanese merchant tonnage than they had at the time of Pearl Harbor."

Of air action against Japan the President said this: "Our Army planes and our Navy ships and planes are now driving Japan out of the air, and when our strategic Air Force reaches the Pacific in full might it will demolish the enemy's resources of production. Our strategic bombardment of Japan is now well beyond its initial phase. . . . Substantial portions of Japan's key industrial centers have been leveled to the ground in a series of record incendiary raids. . . ."

It is nobody's secret that the strategic bombing of Germany did not produce the results which had been promised and even advertised as fact. Take for instance the alleged "ghost-city" of Hamburg, which was discovered to be operating its surface transportation at an eighty-five percent level after having been reported practically non-existent,

or the I. G. Farben mammoth plant in Frankfort-am-Main, which did not even suffer a broken window. The bombing of Japan is, however, likely to produce much better results because: (1) Our Superforts are much more powerful than those we had in Europe; (2) the Japanese terrain is not so conducive to going underground; (3) the Japanese have no slave labor in the numbers the Germans had for repair work; (4) Japan's area is much smaller and its industries are much less dispersed than were those of Germany, especially when Germany actually owned all of Europe. Therefore, one can say without fear of overoptimism that the effect of our strategic bombing of Japan will be incomparably greater than its effect on Germany.

To sum up, it may be said that the full redeployment of our forces in the Pacific will not be nearly complete before the end of the year. There is every reason to hope that the strategic bombing of Japan, the final severing of the Japanese lifelines (sea and land) between the northern and southern theaters of the Far Eastern war and the naval, air and possibly amphibious action of our forces in the Kyushu-Formosa-Shanghai triangle (*i.e.*, in the area of the East China Sea) will this very summer and fall create conditions under which by Christmas Japan will be reduced to a desperate stand, with its back to the wall and without the slightest hope of gaining anything at all except by an intricate "anti-Red" maneuver. This was the kind of maneuver Hitler attempted in order to prevent the landing of Allied forces in western Europe which took place exactly a year ago this week.

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fascism and reaction, to advance the cause of American and world democracy, the cause of national freedom and social progress."

This resolution will now be discussed by the membership of the CPA. The members of the National Board who voted for it were Morris Childs, Benjamin Davis, Jr., Eugene Dennis, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, James W. Ford, William Z. Foster, Gilbert Green, Robert Minor, Robert Thompson, and John Williamson. Earl Browder voted against the resolution, Roy Hudson abstained, but later issued a special statement of support, and William Schneiderman was absent.

## Marx, Duclos and NM

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power. Second, as far as the American domestic scene is concerned, the Communist program looking toward a possibility of revived capitalism hinges on several distinct preconditions. The hand of cooperation is offered to progressive capital. It must accept! The capitalist system must solve the unemployment problem by a greatly augmented foreign trade, raising the wage level, and developing public works and social security insurance. It must not fail!

To take another view, the capitalist system is to be *on trial*. Should it fail to act correctly the whole scheme of cooperation will fail, and, as Browder explained, the Communists and the working class will then have to resort to any necessary measures to protect the popular interests. At any rate, says Browder, no one will be able to say that the Communists tried to create chaos.

Therefore, the question of socialism was not raised now or immediately after the war. Every effort was directed toward demonstrating the good faith of the Communists in giving capital a chance to prove its ability—or, as the case may be, its incapacity—to build prosperity.

One of the measures adopted to establish the sincerity of the Communists was the dissolution of the Party. Duclos may be on safer ground in criticizing this move, yet the importance he gives to it seems out of proportion to the main programmatic thesis. The line now followed, it is true, could be followed to quite the same extent by maintaining the name as a "Party"—yet the desire to make nomenclature correlate with form is not open to excessive criticism. Through dissolution of the Party, as such, it does not follow that all has not been done "to intensify its activity in the sense of developing an ardent national and anti-fascist policy," and in consolidating and extending its political influence, as Duclos would believe.

In summation, given a mutual understanding of given facts and proposed strategy, it would seem quite possible to reconcile the views of Duclos and Foster with those of Browder, Minor, and others. The whole prospectus is based on the utilization of certain objective conditions in conjunction with transient elements. Quite naturally, then, the present American Communist policy in venturing new fields ahead cannot be finalized. When the war has been won it may be necessary to reevaluate policy in the light of new conditions. So far it seems too early to say that present conditions, disturbing though some are, portend a failure of coalition strategy and a final fling for power by imperialism.

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