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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE
SWP ON "THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTION AND TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY"

Preface

To the readers of my contribution to a criticism of the draft resolution of the National Committee of the SWP, entitled "On the European Situation and our Tasks," dated October 1, 1944 (Internal Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 8), it must be clear that there is, between the writers of the draft resolution and me, no fundamental disagreement about the strategic perspectives for Europe. Here and there the attempt has been made to proclaim the existence of such disagreements. Whatever may be the motives for such attempts, they are bound to crumble before a simple examination of what I wrote.

True enough, the future may show that the present differences cover deeper and more fundamental differences. But, at the present stage, my aim is to straighten up and correct the draft resolution, not to supersede it by a new draft. Undoubtedly, if I had had to write the draft resolution, I would have written many parts of it very differently, but I will limit my amendments to the most indispensable changes.

We are only at the very beginning of the greatest revolutionary crisis in history. We will follow its development from month to month, from week to week. Soon our European comrades will help us more and more in this work. We will develop, refine and, if necessary, correct our forecasts. This work will most probably necessitate the use of the internal bulletin, as a means of discussion and clarification. That is why, now, at the beginning of such a period, I have no intention of excessively sharpening the political differences with the writers of the draft resolution. Events will bring their verification. I have no doubt that they will disprove -- as they have already done in the recent past -- many an affirmation of the writers of the draft resolution and those in political solidarity with them. We will see if these comrades are capable of learning from events, or if they will systematize their present mistakes into a more and more diverging political line.

October 18, 1944.

Daniel Logan

Paragraph:

1. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"Europe is now entering its sixth year of war, a war that has brought to the peoples untold misery and sufferings. But war has also brought revolt to Europe. Throughout the continent, the masses have moved far to the left; they are crying for freedom, sensitive to any oppression.

"Europe is now going toward the greatest revolutionary crisis in history. Revolution has begun to raise its head in Italy, and now in France. It has to deal with powerful enemies, but tomorrow no country will be left untouched by its ardent breath."

2. Delete the last sentence;

(In view of the quicker tempo of development in France, Italy no longer provides a key to the understanding of events in France, but rather the contrary).

4. Replace the last sentence by the following;

"The objective of the Allies was, on the one hand, to destroy the Nazi armies, and on the other, to save Italy from revolution."

5. Replace the paragraph by the following;

"In pursuit of their program the Allies systematically employed their prestige and power to impose on the Italian people the dictatorship of Badoglio and the House of Savoy. While systematically disarming the fighters of the anti-fascist militias by deceit or the threat of force, they supported Badoglio in his attempt to reconstitute an army under the leadership of monarchist and ex-fascist generals. The Allies shielded the black-shirt cutthroats from the wrath of the people and returned to office many of the self-same rascals, crooks and tyrants who had lorded it over the Italian masses under the Mussolini regime. The Church was helped in many ways to exercise its reactionary role. The attempt was made to stifle every manifestation of political life."

6. Replace the paragraph by the following;

"The awakening masses were not inclined to remain passive, and the attempted naked military dictatorship proved unworkable. In June the Badoglio government simply melted away under the hostility of the masses. The Allies had to supplement their power with some other tools. The six-party coalition, with the Stalinists in the van, stepped in to break the deadlock for reaction."

Finish with the balance of paragraph 20, which begins: "For a brief period. . . ."

7. Replace the paragraph by the following;

"The Bonomi government rests on a larger basis than the first Badoglio cabinet, having the support of the two official workers' parties, but it remains a shadow government."

Finish with the balance of paragraph 21, which begins: "It is a miserable caricature. . . ."

8. Replace by paragraph 22.

9. Replace the paragraph by the following;

"In the economic field, the Allies are dispelling the illusions that under their rule living conditions would improve. With Italy a battleground, its cities destroyed and fields devastated,

with the systematic destruction of key parts of the economy by the Germans, and now the Allied occupation, the economic situation of Allied-occupied Italy has not improved, but rather worsened."

10. Replace by paragraph 7.
11. Replace by paragraph 8.
12. Replace by paragraph 9.
13. Replace by paragraph 10
14. Replace by paragraph 11.
15. Replace paragraph 12 by the following:

"The Allies have not stopped talking about the sending of food to Italy. They try by that to save the remnants of hope in their benevolence. No doubt, when the Italian masses return their offensive, this talk may materialize in a precipitated sending of food. Food will become, as it has often been in the past, a counter-revolutionary weapon, a means of blackmail against revolution and a tool to try to revive confidence in the bourgeois system."

16. Replace by paragraph 13, deleting the sentence which begins:

"Today the masses of Allied-occupied Italy understand. . . "

17. Replace by paragraph 14.
18. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"The Italian masses are today ready for another great step forward on the road toward their political and social emancipation. What, then, accounts for the present very slow tempo of development of the Italian revolution? This can be explained in great part by the absence of large proletarian centers in the Allied-occupied part of Italy. This slows down the fight against the treachery of the so-called working class parties and retards the formation of independent working-class organizations and the rapid growth of the revolutionary party."

19. Replace by paragraph 16.
20. Replace by paragraph 17.
21. Replace by paragraph 18.
22. Replace by paragraph 19.
23. Replace by paragraph 23, etc.

30. (If this vaguely written paragraph has any precise meaning, it can only mean that Fourth Internationalist parties in Europe will grow exclusively through the recruitment of raw workers who have not passed through any political organization. This conception has been disproved by the way our present Italian section has formed and grown. I think it would be best to strike out this paragraph.)
32. Retain paragraph 32 of the draft until, ". . . to extend their revolution on a continental scale." Finish the paragraph with the following:

"The Socialist United States of Europe is the revolutionary answer, the only alternative to the imperialist schemes of balkanizing Europe and enslaving its peoples. Through a socialist federation of states Europe will march toward economic, political and cultural unification. Only by entering upon such a road can recurrent devastating wars be abolished, and freedom and economic security be assured."

33. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"To rally the masses for the revolutionary struggle, the revolutionary party will elaborate a bold program of democratic and transitional demands corresponding to the consciousness of the masses and the tempo of development.

"A revolutionary period is characterized precisely by the fact that the solution of the smallest problem involves the fate of the whole society. The revolutionary party must appear ready to fight for all democratic rights, the right of assembly, freedom of speech, of the press, the freedom of association, especially regarding trade unions. It must appear ready to clear the country of all reactionary filth (the King, the Upper House, the privileges of the Church). In Italy the slogan of the immediate arrest of the royal family and the proclamation of the Republic should be in the arsenal of the revolutionary party.

"The slogan of the election of all officials in the villages, towns and cities by the people should be raised in opposition to the "purge" of fascists from the administration, falsely promised by the Allies. If the bourgeoisie delays elections for a national assembly, the revolutionary party will call for immediate elections. If, when committees have appeared, the bourgeoisie precipitates elections in order to undermine the power of such committees, the revolutionary party must denounce such reactionary plans and call upon the committees to take power in order to organize real free elections.

"When the revolutionary tide is high enough, the revolutionary party will call for the expulsion from the government of the representatives of bourgeois parties. It will call upon the opportunist leaders to take power if they enjoy the confidence of the majority of the workers.

"Thousands, tens of thousands, can learn through direct propaganda. They constitute the vanguard; they come to the revolutionary party on the basis of its socialist program. But millions, tens of millions -- and revolution is impossible without the participation of tens of millions -- have to come to socialism through their own experience. They have to discard, one after the other, regimes about which they have had illusions. They have to discard false leaders in whom they have put their confidence. The task of the revolutionary party is to speed up and facilitate that process as much as possible, but it cannot jump over it. This is precisely what programs of democratic and transitional demands are designed for. This is precisely the Bolshevik method of winning the masses, by going together with them through action, as opposed to the propagandistic enlightenment about the virtues of socialism, in the spirit of the Second International.

"The development of the revolutionary crisis will give the greatest reality to our program of transitional demands, so often in the past considered utopian by "realists", that is to say, opportunists blind to the dynamics of revolution. The demands of the armament of the workers, of the workers' control of production, of the nationalization of key industries will impose their necessity into the consciousness of millions and thus prepare them for power.

"The revolutionary party will become the leader of the masses in all their partial struggles, strikes, demonstrations, protests. It is in the tumultuous revolutionary battles that the proletariat will gather experience, cohesion and strength, that the revolutionary party will win the masses to its program and establish its right to revolutionary leadership."

34. In the third sentence delete "united front."

42. Replace the sentence beginning, "The Stalinists have betrayed. . ." by:

"The Stalinists have betrayed the aspirations of the masses; they have already united with the hated regime of King Peter, set up a class-collaborationist government, and have proclaimed their intention of preserving the capitalist set-up dominated by the same old crew of monarchists, landlords and capitalists."

44. Delete the sentence beginning, "The Stalinist military authority.."

47. Replace the last sentence by:

"Far from having increased its independent strength, under Stalin, the Soviet Union has been debilitated and is today more dependent than ever on the capitalist world."

49. Replace the last part of the last sentence by:

". . . and propping up subservient regimes."

56. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The advanced workers of Europe must sound the alarm! They have the clear duty of warning the working class of the counter-revolutionary schemes of Stalin and his native henchmen. The revolutionary party can spare no effort to destroy the treacherous influence of the Stalinist organizations in the labor movement. This is an indispensable prerequisite for healthy growth and all future successes."

64. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"Today, the Allies, under the hegemony of the Wall Street plutocracy, enter Europe as the new imperialist overlords. For their part, they aim not to unify Europe, but to keep it balkanized or even further balkanize it. The Allied imperialists do not desire the revival of European economy to a competitive level. Even if they wanted, they could not give back to European capitalism its strength of yesterday. On a continent that has no future, except through socialist revolution, they will do all they can to prevent the socialist revolution from lifting its head. Thus, they condemn Europe to decline."

65. Replace the last sentence by:

"Stalin has joined with the imperialists in their attempt to close the only road of salvation for Europe, socialist reconstruction."

70. Delete the last sentence.

73. Delete the last three sentences.

75. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"Bourgeois democracy can now have in Europe only a more transitory and more unstable existence than it had between the two World Wars. It will appear during a relative equilibrium of forces, when classes have not definitely settled their accounts, either in the unfoldment of a revolutionary crisis, or as the by-product of a temporarily defeated revolutionary attempt. In many cases bourgeois democracy will take on some reality only when elements of dual power have appeared."

76. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"However unstable and brief such periods may be, the proletariat will have most often, if not always, to go through such periods in the march to power. It is precisely such periods that will provide the class with the best opportunity to close its ranks, to try the programs of the opportunist parties, to discard them and their leaders, and to prepare for power."

77. Replace the paragraph by the following:

"Such democratic interludes will be especially valuable and important for young parties of the Fourth International, provided they have correct tactics. The opportunist parties, Stalinist and Socialist, will expose, much better than under illegality, their true treacherous face to the masses. Their program of class collaboration will reveal its emptiness. The deeds of the opportunist parties will give the large masses of toilers a chance to convince themselves of the utter incapacity of these parties to solve the crisis. The revolutionary party, with intransigent principles and tactical flexibility, can in such periods make great gains in short time."

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LETTER FROM MARTIN

(Cannon)

Our tendency is the only one in the labor movement that analyzes the role of Stalinism in the capitalist countries correctly, that is, as an agency of capitalist imperialism in the labor movement seeking to buy concessions for the nationalist bureaucracy of the USSR at the expense of the world proletariat and the colonial peoples. In this they are like any other group of privileged bureaucrats and aristocrats of labor who ally themselves with the exploiters against the deprived and oppressed masses -- only magnified a thousand times. This is the little secret which explains the phenomenon which mystifies and baffles the professional "democrats" -- the "hearty", if temporary, accord between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Anglo-American imperialists. Those who do not understand that Stalinism, as represented by the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union as well as by its foreign agencies, is a tendency, a section, of the world labor movement, cannot begin to understand it, or the reason it wields such a great influence, and consequently cannot fight it effectively. On the contrary, the opportunists of all shades, all those who look for some way of compromise with capitalism, are at bottom no different from the Stalinists and sooner or later co-operate with them in one form or another when the vital interests of the capitalist order imperiously require it.

It is the degree of acuteness of the class struggle, not the "ideology" of the different varieties of imperialist agencies in the labor movement, that decides whether they quarrel among themselves or work together against the revolutionary masses. Witness the Anarchists and Socialists in Spain, the French people's front, the Socialist-Stalinist co-operation in Italy. Here at home we have already seen the Hillman-Browder amity in the PAC, the no-strike pledge bloc at the auto convention and the Stalinist-Tobin combination against us.

When the masses really take the road of resolute struggle in their own interests they are compelled to turn against Stalinism because they come up against its malign policy at every step. They can wage this struggle only under our leadership, and no other. We, however, can lead this struggle only if we insist upon irreconcilable programmatic clarity on the question of the Soviet Union, and hence of Stalinism; sternly reject any kind of unity with other groups who bring confusion into this question; and tolerate no taint of conciliationism in this respect.

We firmly believe that the cadres of the Fourth International which are again emerging in Europe can grow and prosper, and come to the leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the workers against imperialism and its Stalinist agents, only insofar as they follow this line. We believe that the tendencies in our own ranks in the U.S. toward conciliation with the petty-bourgeois opposition, represented by the present opposition to the party leadership, is an anti-Trotskyist tendency.

The incident of the New York membership meeting (where several members were censured for conducting political discussions with WP members without the knowledge of the party) appears to have touched off a debate in which some fundamental questions, on which the party has more than once spoken decisively, are again called up for review. That is strange, for even at a distance, without knowing the details of the affair, it is difficult for one to misunderstand the simple issue involved. The New York organization wants to control and direct all the political activity of its members, and took this method of asserting its will in this respect. A Leninist can only applaud this attitude. Of course, one may hold the opinion, since it is our traditional practice to go very slow with organizational measures, that a pedagogical explanation of this elementary principle, without a formal censure, would have been sufficient. If the protests were limited to this secondary, organizational side of the affair, redress of the grievance could undoubtedly be obtained. A big discussion over such a small matter would not be worth while. The article of Comrade Morrison, however, raises larger issues. This was the case also, as I am informed, in the discussion at the New York membership meeting. These issues require discussion and clarification.

In appealing to the party against the procedure of Local New York, Morrison resorts to arguments which are far-reaching in their implications. A discussion of these arguments is decidedly in order and necessary, since, whether so intended or not, they represent an assault against the traditions of Bolshevism all along the line, in the name of -- the traditions of Bolshevism. This anomaly can be explained on only one of two hypotheses; either Morrison has neglected to inform himself of the traditional practices of Bolshevik organization; or, he is again indulging his well-known penchant for underestimating the intelligence of other people -- this time, of people who know something about the tradition which he invokes, the tradition of Bolshevism. Morrison's arguments have a tradition, but it is not the tradition of Bolshevism.

What does Morrison mean when he refers to the history of Bolshevism? Doesn't he know that it is our own history? What have we been doing for the past sixteen years but writing the continuing history of Bolshevism in life? Bolshevism is not a mummy preserved in a Russian museum, but a living movement which long ago crossed the borders of the Soviet Union and became world-wide in its scope. The Russian part of the history of Bolshevism was never definitively written; and although its main outlines are well known, there is a sad lack of documentation in the English language available to the modern student. Our part of this history, however -- the history of the Fourth International in general and our party in particular -- has been written and documented. The history of our party is a chapter of the history of living Bolshevism. And not the poorest chapter, either, for it was written in sixteen years of reaction, defeats and uphill struggle all the way from the beginning up to the present day.

We have waged an unceasing and irreconcilable theoretical and political fight against the Stalinist degeneration. But not only that. Our record is also a record of struggle against all other anti-Marxist tendencies as well. Our fight against sectarianism was conducted on classic lines. Our fight on all fronts -- theoretical, political and organizational -- against the petty-bourgeois revisionists recapitulated the whole historical struggle of Bolshevism and Menshevism. In building our party we employed, from the beginning, the organizational methods of Lenin, and successfully fought off every attempt -- and there were many -- to replace them by anarcho-Menshevik substitutes.

The older members of our party know its history as a part of the authentic history of Bolshevism. They do not need to be told that Morrison's arguments are not drawn from this arsenal. The younger party members who want to know what the traditional practice of Bolshevism are have not far to seek. They need only study the history of their own party. There is no lack of material.

The contentions of Morrison can find no support in this history, but on the contrary are directed against it. In a published letter, written while at work on the pamphlet which forms the first section of "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party", I remarked that the pamphlet was not designed to influence the course of the inner-party struggle then drawing to its end, but was, rather, being "written for the future." The arguments of Morrison transform this "future" into the present. The answer to these arguments, written in advance, appears in polemics directed against the organizational conceptions of the petty-bourgeois opposition.

When it comes to organization we follow Lenin, and nobody is going to talk us out of it. Lenin always paid far more attention to the "organization question", was far stricter, firmer, more definite about it, precisely because he really aimed to build a party to lead a revolution. The Mensheviks only dabbled with the idea, but Lenin was in earnest; he had it in his blood. This difference -- and what a difference! -- manifested itself even before any political differences were formulated. So it has always been. "Hard" and "soft" approaches to the organization question have marked every conflict of the two opposing tendencies from the very first preliminary skirmishes at the Russian party congress of 1903, up to the present time. The

documents of our party history testify to the role this question played in the last great party fight against the petty-bourgeois faction of Burnham and Shachtman. It is a historic fact that the 1903 split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks -- a premature split, to be sure, -- took place over the formulation of the first paragraph of the party constitution defining party membership. Even there, says Trotsky in his autobiography, "the two divergent tendencies were unmistakable. Lenin wanted clear-cut perfectly defined relationships within the party. Martov tended toward diffuse forms." The debate which has arisen over the affair of the New York membership meeting in the year 1944 sounds like an echo of these words.

Insisting on "perfectly definite relationships within the party", Bolshevism -- all the outraged howling of its opponents to the contrary notwithstanding -- has nevertheless always been, and is now, completely free from any trace of dogmatic rigidity, fixity or finality in its organizational forms and procedures. Our organizational methods are designed to serve political ends, are always subordinated to them, and are readily amended, changed or even turned upside down to suit them. Democratic centralism, for example, is not a dogma to be understood statically as a formula containing the unchanging quantities of 50% democracy and 50% centralism. Democratic centralism is a dialectical concept in which the emphasis is continually being shifted in consonance with the changing needs of the party in its process of development. A period of virtually unrestricted internal democracy, which is normally the rule during the discussion of disputed questions under legal conditions, can be replaced by a regime of military centralism for party action under conditions of external persecution and danger, and vice versa; and all conceivable gradations between these two extremes can be resorted to without doing violence to the principle of democratic centralism. What is essential is that the right emphasis be placed at the right time. Bolshevism, far from any dogmatic rigidity ascribed to it by superficial critics, is distinguished by the great flexibility of its organizational forms and methods. This does not signify, however, that there are no definite rules, no basic principles. These principles, in fact, are unchanging in their essence no matter how flexibly the party may see fit to apply them in different situations. Two of these basic principles, which are recognized by every Bolshevik but which appear to need reassertion in the light of the dispute over the New York incident, may be set down as follows:

(1) The party is conceived as a combat organization destined to lead a revolution. It is not a free-thinkers' discussion club, not a mere forum for self-expression and self-improvement imposing no personal obligations on its members. The party is not an anarchist madhouse where everyone does as he pleases, but an army which faces the outside world as a unit.

(2) Following from this, it is an unchanging party law that the party has the right to control and direct the political activity of each and every member; to be informed about and regulate and supervise the relations, if any, of each and every member with political opponents of the party; and to demand of each and every member disciplined compliance with party decisions and instructions, and 100% -- not 99% -- loyalty to the party.

Anyone who disputes these principles does not talk our language. Anyone who disputes these principles must seek support for his arguments from some other source than the history of our party. He will not find it there.

Here are some notes on the Danger of Stalinism -- and other Dangers.

Morrison discerns evidence of "Stalinism" in the procedure of the New York organization, and other incidents, and is greatly disturbed by symptoms of "degeneration" which he sees, or thinks he sees, on every side. He says: "Since the terrible Stalinist degeneration, every serious person in the Marxist movement fears and thinks of possible degeneration". Again; "Let not one single Stalinist germ penetrate into our ranks." And so on and so forth.

Such warnings have a familiar ring. We have heard them many times before. But up till now our party has successfully resisted all dangers of Stalinist degeneration, with or without benefit from the numerous warnings, which their authors, unfortunately, were not always equally successful in resisting other forms of degeneration no better than the Stalinist variety. The history of our party contains some instructive lessons on this point also.

The danger of degeneration in a revolutionary party comes from the pressure of its environment. The founding cadres of our party came exclusively from the Communist Party; and for the first five years of our existence we maintained the position of a faction, seeking to reform the parent organization and disclaiming any desire to form an independent party. Our most immediate environment, therefore, was the Communist Party in which the process of Stalinist degeneration was in full swing. Moreover, the successes of the Soviet industrialization at that time -- the period of the first Five Year Plan -- contrasted to the destructive crisis in the capitalist world, were lending great prestige to the Stalinists. The C.P. was rapidly expanding in membership and influence; its domination of the progressive labor movement and of the radical intellectual circles was complete. The pressure upon our small dissident group was very strong at that time. It is a historic fact worth noting that the great majority of the original cadres of the Left Opposition throughout the world succumbed to this pressure. "Capitulation" to the Stalinist regime decimated the ranks of the Opposition like a plague in one country after another.

How did the young Trotskyist organization in America fare under these hard conditions? Nothing of the kind happened here. A few casual individuals of no special influence who had joined us on "democratic" grounds -- perhaps half a dozen all told -- gave up the fight and went back to the Stalinist camp as capitulators; "democracy" alone is not an adequate platform for a serious and protracted political fight. But not a single leader, not a single American Trotskyist of influence, nationally or locally, then or ever made peace with Stalinism.

From this fact, which speaks louder than anybody's words, one is entitled to infer that the American section of the International Left Opposition, the predecessor of the Fourth International, was

pretty well inoculated against the Stalinist degeneration from the start. And that inference would be 100% correct. We educated our cadres (and ourselves) to fight the theoretical and political positions of Stalinism, not only its organizational methods and techniques.

Yes, it may be said once again, you thoroughly exposed Stalinism and taught the advanced workers to despise it. But in waging this fight you yourselves, adopted the "methods" of Stalinism. Of course, of course. We know all about that. We have heard all about that before. And we answered them as we answer now; Stalinism is not a system of "methods", as its superficial critics imagine, but a political tendency with a definite social basis -- the social basis of a privileged bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and its hired agents throughout the world. The "methods" are the result, not the cause. These methods -- bureaucratic violence, lying, falsifying, double-dealing, betraying -- are needed by a bureaucracy serving special interests in forcing through a policy which violates the doctrines and traditions of Bolshevism.

But what need have we of these methods? What special interests do we serve which conflict with the interests of the rank and file of the party and the working class? What false policy do we have to impose on them by violence and fraud? Burnham and Shachtman are still trying to find a plausible answer to these questions. Morrison will have no better success.

It is not much of an answer to say that this or that individual is by nature a Stalinist who perversely employs methods in a small party dedicated to the struggle against Stalinism. Why has the party, which is anti-Stalinist to the core, tolerated such individuals and even placed them in central positions of leadership? Better yet, why have such Stalinists by nature, if they have any sense at all, and if they are not simply Stalinist agents in our ranks -- why have they wasted their time in a small persecuted party whose internal democracy has always been a model for the whole world? Why haven't they gone back to the Stalinist party where they would feel more at home? Such questions have never seriously arisen for the simple reason that Stalinist influence in our party has existed only in the imagination of people who have exaggerated its dangers and overlooked other and far greater ones to which they themselves were yielding.

The danger of degeneration in a revolutionary party comes from the pressure of its environment. The environment which our party has operated in, especially since our definitive break with the Comintern in 1933, is the bourgeois society in the strongest and richest of all bourgeois countries.

This pressure has been real, not imaginary; it has claimed not a few victims in the past; and today, with the reaction engendered by the war, it presses against us more heavily than ever. If one is seriously looking for signs of "degeneration" he should turn his attention in the direction of the real danger. He should quit babbling about Stalinism for a while and become more sensitive to evidences of weak-willed yielding to the powerful influences of the class enemy. Stalinism itself, properly understood, is not at all an independent force, but one of the forms of adaptation to the material and moral

terror of the bourgeoisie; and, thereby, it is one of its agencies in the labor movement. There are other forms of adaptation and capitulation. We have had enough experience with them already to be able to identify them at first sight. In their finished form they all seek to oppose a petty-bourgeois program to the program of Bolshevism, but they almost invariably begin by revolting against its irreconcilable spirit and its organizational methods. Such tendencies, wherever they appear in the party, reveal the real danger of degeneration as unfaillingly as the holes where water seeps through show the weak spots in a dike. Since the earliest days of our movement in the United States nobody has gone over to Stalinism. But deserters to the camp of "democratic" capitalism have been rather numerous. What is to be guarded against, on the basis of this experience, is any tendency of conciliationism toward these deserters in any stage of their degeneration. Such conciliationist tendencies are the real, not imaginary, "danger of degeneration in our ranks."

Morrison rejects the idea that the party has the right and duty to be informed about, and to regulate and control, any and all relations which party members may have with political opponents. This idea, concretely demonstrated by the ruling in the case of the four New York comrades, impresses him as "having a resemblance to Stalinist procedure."

When the party leadership insists on strict rules in this regard, it indicates, to Morrison, only that "the leadership thinks it is impermissible to discuss questions with members of the WP"; that they lack pride and confidence in their ideas. In contrast to the party leadership's attitude toward opponent organizations, Morrison proceeds to lay down some rules of his own. Relating what his own practices have been, he recommends them to the party members as a guide. Morrison sees nothing abnormal in a member of our organization shopping around at the meetings and affairs of other political organizations, fraternizing with their members and discussing political questions with them, formally or informally, on their own responsibility. Whether such activity should be reported to the party or not -- that, says Morrison, is up to the individual member to decide. On this point, he again refers to Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

It would have been better to leave Lenin out of it. Morrison's view of this matter is not new, to be sure, but it has no right to represent itself as Leninist conception of normal relations between rival political organizations and their members. This question also has a history, which apparently has made no impression on Morrison.

The formulas he offers would take us back to the primitive conceptions of party organization which dominated American labor radicalism before the First World War; that is, before the movement grew up and learned the meaning of a program and a party. It was precisely what we learned from Lenin that enabled us to discard these outmoded and entirely inadequate conceptions a full quarter of a century ago. And in this, as in so many other fields, experience corroborated Lenin's theory and, in turn, supplied its own instructive lessons along the same line. Morrison's formulas contradict the theory and disregard the experience.

Before the First World War the dominating sentiment among the various social protest organizations and groups, despite all their differences and quarrels, was that of fraternity -- the feeling of one-ness, the opinion that all the groups were part of one and the same movement, and that all would, sooner or later, "get together." As a rule, a definite distinction was made between the terms "organization" and "the movement". One's own particular organization, be it the Socialist Party, the IWW, any one of the numerous anarchist groups, local forums, or even a club of Single Taxers or an independent socialist educational society, -- was thought of as a party; the "movement" was the whole. It was common practice for the "radicals" of different affiliations to patronize each other's meetings and affairs, to participate in common forums, reading clubs and purely social organizations. In Kansas City and San Francisco, to my knowledge, "Radical Clubs" were deliberately organized to promote fraternization at monthly dinners. Radicals of all tendencies mingled socially and inter-married without thought of personal incompatibility arising from a conflict of ideas.

Nor did the separate organizations draw sharp lines in their admittance of members. With the exception of De Leon's Socialist Labor Party, which stood aloof and was with some justice regarded as intolerant and sectarian, they were all rather catholic in their composition. Reformists and revolutionists "ballot boxers" and "direct actionists", belonged to one and the same Socialist Party. Christian socialists and professional Christ-killers, prohibitionists and partisans of the open saloon, kept them company. The propaganda branches of the syndicalist IWW extended their hospitality alike to socialists and anarchists. Anarchism was thought by many to be more radical, more revolutionary, than socialism; and anyone who was against "authority" was free to call himself an anarchist. Free-lance radicals, whose name was legion, were regarded as part of "the movement" on even terms with all the others.

In Europe, the pre-war social democracy was an "all inclusive party". Unity was fetishized; the left wing shrank from the thought of split. Luxemburg and Liebknecht were party comrades with Kautsky, Noske and Scheideman. In Russia Lenin resolutely carried through the split, but Trotsky insisted on the unification of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

The state of affairs in American labor radicalism prior to the First World War is related here without intention either to praise or to blame. It was due to circumstances of the time; the organizations, in their membership composition and in their relations with each other, could not rise above the level of their own understanding. This was the period of the infancy of the American revolutionary movement. Neither theory nor experience had yet taught us any better. The differences between the theories and tendencies, and their respective organizations, had not been fully thought out. None of the tendencies had yet been put to great historic tests.

Great events shattered this idyl. The war, and then the Russian revolution, put all theories and tendencies to the test and drew them out to their ultimate conclusions. Reformist socialism was revealed as class treachery. Anarchism and syndicalism, with their

"denial" of the state, revealed their theoretical inadequacy, their bankruptcy, despite their grandiloquent revolutionary pretensions. Revolutionary Marxism -- Bolshevism -- alone stood up under the test of war and revolution. The Russian Bolsheviks taught us this in word and deed. The American militants learned from them, for the first time, the full meaning of the program, and simultaneously, the significance, the role, of the vanguard party.

The revolutionary workers of the whole world went to the same school. A world-wide realignment of forces began to take place under the impact of the war and the revolution. Lines were sharply drawn. Sentimental unification gave way to ruthless splits, and the splits became definitive, irreconcilable. The revolutionary militants, instructed by the war and the revolution, learned to counterpose the Marxist program to all other programs. Instructed by the precise teachings of Lenin, they learned the necessity of organizing their own party, separate and apart from all others, and to build it, not in fraternal tolerance of other parties, but in ruthless struggle against them.

Once these ABC lessons were assimilated -- and, I repeat, we learned them 25 years ago -- the revolutionary vanguard broke decisively with the old tradition of mish-mash parties and loose coalitions, with free-lance radicalism and bohemian irresponsibility. In place of all that the organizational principles laid down by Lenin were adopted: unity on the basis of a principled program; all devotion, all loyalty, to one party and only one party; strict responsibility and accountability of every member to the party; professional leadership; democratic centralism. The pioneer American Communists, and we, their heirs and continuators, have worked on these lines consistently and unswervingly since 1919. If our party stands today on far higher ground than that occupied by the amorphous rebel workers' movement prior to the First World War -- and that is indubitably the case -- it is not due solely to the superiority of our program, but also to the consistent application in practice of the principles and methods of Bolshevik organization. The experience of a quarter of a century has convinced us over and over again that this is the right way, the only way, to build a revolutionary party.

It is absurd to think that we can unwind the film of this experience and go back to where we started. But if Morrison's criticism and formulas mean anything seriously, that is what they mean. We cannot entertain any such propositions for a moment. In politics, nothing is more stupid, more infantile, than to retrace ground that has already been covered, to go back and start all over again as if nothing had happened and nothing had been learned. Serious revolutionists must learn from every experience and apply what they have learned in new experiences. We insist on that. The new generation must not begin from the beginning. The fruit of the experience of the past, all that has been acquired and learned by others, is their heritage. They begin with that. Translated into terms of the "organizational question", this means that they begin not from the pre-historic confusion of pre-war days -- where Morrison's conceptions would take them -- but from the most recent experiences in which our organizational principles and methods were tested in life: the great struggle against the petty-bourgeois opposition, in 1939-40.

All the 40-years experience of Bolshevism -- in organization, as well as in theory and politics -- was recapitulated in that historic struggle. The new party recruits can learn about Bolshevism and Menshevism on the organization question by a study of the documents of this fight. It is not without interest to note that the party leadership, in the dispute over the incident of the New York membership meeting, shows its unqualified hostility to any sign of looseness or irresponsibility -- to say nothing of disloyalty -- in relations with the Menshevik traitor clique of Shachtman & Co.; while Morrison, in his plea for unsupervised fraternization, manifests a more conciliatory attitude. On both sides, here as always, the organizational method serves the political line.

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ON THE SITUATION IN EUROPE

By a group of European comrades

(The following theses are an answer to the resolution of the 15th Anniversary Plenum of the Socialist Workers Party on the "Perspectives and Tasks of the Coming European Revolution." Although they do not undertake to criticize the individual sentences in the resolution -- which would be a task remunerative in detail, but not easily accomplished in scope -- the theses represent an attempt to concretize questions plainly and to formulate the essence of the differences of opinion.)

The war in Europe is nearing its end. The question, how long the Hitler regime will be able to postpone its decisive defeat in order to secure favorable peace conditions for German imperialism through military and political diversions, is of secondary importance compared to the question of what the objective conditions will be that will dictate the course to be followed by the revolutionary workers' movement in Europe after the collapse of fascism in Germany.

The coming imperialist peace will be the continuation of the imperialist war by a partial use of new means. The war aims of England and America, which are identical neither in the big questions nor in details of lesser importance, coincide in the main point: the capitalist system in Europe must be preserved; i.e., revolutionary uprisings must be prevented with all means.

A clear formulation of the Russian war aims has yet to be made. Stalin, who is not accustomed to having only one iron in the fire, will know how to make diplomatic use of the military successes of the Red Army. As temporary banker of the Teheran pool, he will put his cards on the table only at the last moment. His decision will fall between (1) the Stalinization of some of the important industrial countries of Europe, which in the long run will lead to an attempt to Stalinize all Europe, (2) a continuation of his policy of alliances with the Western powers during the period of necessary reconstruction in Russia with a simultaneous strategic strengthening of the Russian borders, which would amount to a Stalinization of large East-European territories. If the conditions remain "favorable", he could try to effect a clever combination of both variants. And at the point where Stalin's war aims meet those of his great Allies stand the gallows from which the European revolution is to be hanged.

The Myth of the Red Army

Decisive factors for the realization of Stalin's plans in Europe are the growing prestige of the Soviet Union, which wide layers of Europe's population look upon as a Socialist State and the growing prestige of the Red Army which is pictured as its revolutionary peoples' army. The Red Army will be greeted as a liberator wherever it appears. All the more imperative is the task of destroying illusions concerning the character of this army.

Of all institutions of the Soviet Union after Lenin, the Army has been most thoroughly Stalinized. Since Trotsky was the organizer of the Red Army, the purge of the cadres was executed with minute and stubborn thoroughness and extended to the last divisional command.

Without hesitation Stalin even paid the price of a considerable weakening of the military striking power of the army. The purges went hand in hand with the social differentiation inside the Russian Army, and even the last remains of formal equality have since been abolished. And in the ideological sphere this picture is completed by a nationalism of the most repulsive kind and a glorification of Czarist war-exploits.

The fact that this army can nevertheless point to outstanding military achievements is significant of the defensive will of the Russian people. But neither the heroism of the Red Army nor the mass rising of the Leningrad and Moscow workers when the Wehrmacht stood before the cities is decisive for a determination of the present political role of the Russian army. Both manifestations are no more symptomatic of the political function of the Red Army than the defense of Warsaw by Polish and Jewish workers in September 1939 was symptomatic of the political function of the army of General Rydz Smigly.

The thesis that the Red Army will play a progressive role in Europe is arbitrary and cannot be substantiated. It is a companion piece to the illusions of neo-Stalinist fellow travellers, senile Mensheviks and exhausted former oppositionists, who promise themselves a miraculous rejuvenation of the bureaucratic apparatus through Stalin's military victory, an automatic democratization of Russia through some mysterious interplay, which only they are able to understand.

Never yet did a dictatorial regime emerge weakened from military victories. And should the armies of the Vatutins, the Konevs and the Govorovs be pregnant with overthrow of the regime, at most can one expect a military coup d'etat of an unscrupulous officers' camarilla. In the past Stalin intervened in Europe through the Comintern and the GPU. In the coming period he will also use picked troops of the Red occupation army, wherever it will be possible. And this army will remain "reliable" until it becomes disintegrated through contact with the revolutionary movement in occupied countries.

The Polish Warning

The Nazi rule in Poland is the most bloody chapter in the history of oppression in this war. In Poland, Hitler's Gauleiters attempted to convert an entire nation into the colonial slaves of Germany, and to set a terrifying example of fascist barbarism by a virtual extermination of the Jewish population. In spite of this the widespread Polish resistance movement has adopted a chauvinistic character on its periphery only. Illegal publications, that have arrived abroad, prove that the illegal movement in Poland in its decisive core is democratically and socialistically-minded. The explanation for this is to be found in the fact that worker cadres form the backbone of the Polish national movement, worker cadres with a rich past of struggles and an old Marxist tradition.

The leading role of worker groups in the resistance movement, the gradual elimination of class distinctions that have taken place under the German occupation, and finally, the discreditment of the bourgeois parties, which -- with the exception of the peasant party-- are rightly held responsible for the shameful collapse of the Polish

state, make it appear probable that the Polish proletariat after the expulsion of the Nazis from Poland will be the decisive and perhaps even the only class capable of political action in Poland. With the condition, of course, that it is not suffocated in the Stalinist embrace.

There are no guarantees that the Polish working class will not be crushed, and empty optimism is a bad adviser in political questions. Events accompanying the conflicts over the Curzon line bode ill for the future. Both sides demand all conceivable rights, with the exception of the only right that is pertinent here, namely the right of national self-determination for the Ukrainian and White-Russian populations.

If the Polish revolutionary movement is to survive in its first beginnings against the Stalinist counter-revolution, the international working-class movement must fulfill its duty of class solidarity. The circumstance, that simultaneous with the strangulation of the Polish revolution might come the nationalization of large land estates and industries, is of very minor importance compared to the fateful consequences that would follow in the wake of a defeated Polish workers' revolution. Germany then would be next to lie on the dissecting table, and here the knife of the counter-revolution would be set to work with cries about the "war debt" of the German people, about the necessity to burn out the "Russian infection-source of Europe", of the "sacred right" of Russia to have German forced labor rebuild the territories destroyed in the war in the East.

"Down with the counter-revolutionary intervention in Poland"; the fate of the European revolution will be decisively influenced by the success of this slogan. And the defense of the coming European revolution against all assaults of world imperialism and of the international counter-revolution, as well as against its usurpation by the Red Army, is, it appears to us, the most important duty of every class-conscious worker.

The Italian Lesson

The revolutionary wave that swept over the Italian industrial centers after the fall of Mussolini, has been crushed by a two-sided intervention, as was to be foreseen. Caught between the pincers of the Wehrmacht in the North and the Allies in the South, the Italian workers' movement has again been forced into illegality or semi-legality. The first round of the new revolutionary conflicts in Europe presents itself for the time being as an isolated episode. At the moment impotent liberalism, as represented by Sforza and Croce, dominates the legal plane of Italian internal politics and the question Monarchy or Republic seems to be the main problem. However, the December strikes in Northern Italy and the rapid growth of workers' organizations in the South are the harbingers of a greater conflict. Behind the military fronts the collision of the revolutionary forces of Italy with the coalition of bourgeois reaction and Anglo-American imperialism is shaping up.

Like Russia in 1917, so was Italy in 1943 the weakest link in the imperialist chain. Like Russia then, so Italy today offers a series of uncommonly favorable conditions for the maturing of revolutionary possibilities. The reformist and Stalinist parties are still

comparatively weak in number. The experiences of twenty years of fascist terror have been too dearly bought, to disappear from the consciousness of those layers of the population that are capable of action, without leaving its stamp. The pressing needs of the peasant population will guarantee the proletariat, given a correct agrarian policy, a reliable ally. The concentration of industry during the fascist era and the far-going dependence of important industries on state support will help demonstrate the workability of socialist solutions when the bourgeois state structure is being shaken. Finally, the policy of repressions followed by the AMG, will facilitate the unmasking of the pseudo-democratic parties and their dependence on London and Washington, and it will enable the working class to make its cause the cause of the nation.

Of course; In Italy -- as in all other countries -- the breakthrough to socialism will be possible only when the revolutionary-Marxist party in the struggle against Stalinism and reformism becomes the party of the working class. To achieve this, it must start out from a correct estimate of the class forces and political groupings, and it must prepare itself to make patient use of the maturing revolutionary crisis. Nothing today is so hopeless as sectarian ultimatism. The question of power does not present itself, in the course of a revolution, as the starting point of the consciousness of the proletariat, but as its final product.

The desire for democratic liberties, which in Italy finds expression in elementary form, is the legitimate reaction of a people that for twenty years has lived under a system without any liberties whatsoever. In itself it is just as little an expression of democratic illusions as is the demand for work by the unemployed. To give a subordinate and limited role to the struggle for democratic demands is to have an absolutely deformed picture of the concrete possibilities of a pre-revolutionary period. The more stubbornly the bourgeoisie resists the granting of democratic rights, all the more determinedly should the people be mobilized to struggle for democratic liberties. This is no bothersome detour in the pursuit of the final aim, but a necessary shortcut to it. It is the broadening of the democratic foundation which prepares, in a period of transition, the soil where the socialist workers' democracy can take root. The socialist overturn is not slowed up by the energetic struggle for democratic rights. This struggle, on the contrary, is a necessary pre-requisite which makes the overturn possible.

As democratic demands, one must not only consider freedom of the press, freedom of organization and assembly, etc., etc., but all the democratic freedoms -- the right of national independence and the convocation of a national assembly included.

We must also support unconditionally the demand to clear occupational troops from Italian soil if we do not want to become the accomplices of the occupational powers. But if we accept this demand, we thereby also take sides with the national movement for liberation.

Today, still directed against foreign imperialism, tomorrow the national movement will find itself in opposition to the Italian collaborationist parties. Since these parties lean on the possessing

classes, who hope to master social unrest with the help of foreign bayonets, the national movement will thereby assume an increasingly anti-bourgeois character.

Principled rejection of the constituent assembly has long since been a symptom of radical infantilism. The German left wing took that point of view when Liebknecht stated in 1918: "For or against socialism, against or for the National Assembly, there is not a third." This formulation barely stood up two months under the pressure of events.

In Italy in 1944 there will be stubborn resistance from the side of the occupational forces and of the bourgeois governments they support to the demand for democratic elections and the immediate convocation of the constituent assembly. In such a situation to fail to mobilize the masses for parliamentary representation is not to commit the tactical error of Liebknecht-Luxembourg in 1918, but to commit a downright stupidity. And no appeal to the historical necessity of soviets (councils) will make that any better.

For the alternative is by no means Constituent Assembly or Councils. For the formula for Italy -- insofar as here and now something definite can be said about it -- will be Constituent Assembly and Councils. Workers committees, as the seeds for councils, will in all probability spring up spontaneously -- this is one of the lessons we can draw from the short July days of 1943. The final liquidation of fascism in Northern Italy, where the fascist tops and the big industrial chieftains are one and the same, will force the workers to take control measures in the factories for political reasons. Added to this there will be the economic crisis which will hit Italy with uncommon hardness and which the bourgeoisie in its desperate dependence on foreign imperialism will face without a program and without the capacity to act. In a situation of impending economic catastrophe, measures like control of production and consumption come automatically to the fore. These are the only measures that will be able to prove effective against the consequences of the shutting down of Italian war production and the hunger-policy of the new masters. Control of production calls for workers' organs which can carry it through.

And the slogan of "Socialist United States of Europe"? In the strategy of the class struggle it has only the function of a central propaganda slogan. The call for a Socialist United States of Europe is no answer to the immediate needs of the workers of Naples and no magic formula for solving the difficulties which the workers of Turin and Milan will have to master tomorrow. It can only assume its full concrete weight when the workers' movements of several European countries will, in accordance with the conditions in these countries, find themselves in action face to face with the question of the seizure of power.

The revolutionary Marxist party will everywhere step forward as the propagandist for an all-European solution. It will always and untiringly point to the unbreakable relation between democratic rights and socialized means of production. No considerations will keep it from proclaiming the necessity of socialism. But it can grow beyond the propagandistic stage only if it can prove its ability to solve the day-to-day problems of the workers. It must learn to deal in practical

politics or it will fall, a small group of honest socialists on a lost post.

The Dissolution of the Comintern

The dissolution of the Comintern is an organic part of Stalin's war policy, in which, between turns and changes, the betrayal of the working class is the only constant. By the pretended liquidation of the International Secretariat of the former Communist International, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the Allies have been rid from an embarrassing dead weight, without thereby doing any essential damage to the influence of the Stalinist parties in the different countries. Its war successes permit the bonapartist regime to reveal its liquidational features more openly.

But in his maneuvers between imperialist partners Stalin is by no means brought to these successive turns through political errors. Whether in the Russo-French pact, or the Russo-German pact, or the conference in Teheran, in every instance of Russian foreign policy, whether the partner was Laval, Hitler or Roosevelt, Stalin has always sold the interests of the proletariat to the highest bidder. Not because he is following a "false policy". But because the interests of the workers' movement are not his interests, nor those of the regime he personifies.

No matter how deep the cleavage between the Soviet Union and its temporary imperialist allies may be; deeper and more irreconcilable is the contradiction between the revolutionary-socialist camp and the camp of the Bonapartist counter-revolution. This decisive contradiction will break out in a series of inevitable conflicts in the post-war years in Europe. How quickly a wedge can be driven between the servile, ideologically barren Stalinist party tops and the masses of Communist workers under their influence, is one of the decisive questions of the coming period.

The scope of Stalinist influence on the workers in the different countries varies according to country and tradition. The Russian mortgage weighs most heavily on the movements in the Balkan countries. But in France and in Middle European countries too, a disciplined party nucleus has been able through years of illegality to preserve a strong influence over wide layers of the population. The situation seems to be relatively favorable in those countries where the continuity of the party organizational work through outside circumstances has been interrupted, where old cadres through an extended period were outside the control of Moscow, and where the manifestations of the inner corruption of the Third International, insofar as they were known at all, were considered as slander of the class enemy.

This is the case in Italy, where -- as the recent events within the Communist party prove -- the adherence of schooled workers to communism is not identical with an unconditional acceptance of the Moscow directives. Taking everything into consideration, we witness -- in spite of evidence of decomposition and beginnings of splits -- a growth in the influence of the pseudo-communist parties in Europe. The victories of the Red Army have a stimulating effect on the activity of these parties and broaden their radius. The heroism of the

communist workers in illegality benefits in effect the prestige of Stalin. If one adds to this the organization loyalty of the average European worker, who with great difficulty comes to the decision to break with a party to which he feels bound by long years of struggle, then one has revealed the springs of a mechanism which enables Stalin even now to draw agitational profit from every betrayal and to make honest revolutionary workers the gravediggers of their own movement. The vanguard will succeed in breaking up this vicious circle and draw the communist workers away from the Stalinist parties only if it is able to politicalize the practical needs of the masses with convincing sharpness. In the first period after the collapse of Hitler-Germany the old traditional workers' parties will be the ones to gain from the radicalization of the masses, and at the same time they will be lifted up by the wave of petty-bourgeois radicalism. This advantage can only be wrested from them by opposing the political illusions of the communist and reformist workers and defending their interest with equal determination.

February 15, 1944

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UNEMPLOYMENT -- LESSONS OF THE THIRTIES

By Peter Paul

The menace of mass unemployment is very close, and hundreds of workers have already been thrown out of their jobs. Hundreds today, thousands tomorrow, and the day after -- mass unemployment.

We need an immediate program of action, something the workers can understand and which they know from their own past experience will work -- militant organizations of the unemployed.

The Trade Unions

Much has been written about unemployment after this war -- the need for an independent labor party, the thirty hour week, no cuts in wages, etc.

The ideal procedure is for the trade unions to create auxiliary sections for their unemployed, with full voice on questions directly affecting them. These auxiliaries should be linked together in councils both locally and nationally. The trade unions cannot afford to calmly allow their unemployed to just drop from the union rolls. The unity of unemployed and employed must be maintained. All this is true-- but until the official trade unions accept their full responsibility, the unemployed must build their independent organizations.

No party or trade union has yet given a coherent plan to meet unemployment. Only our party can organize and give the leadership necessary for the coming struggle. Only our party knows the road ahead and will fight until the victory of socialism is here.

Capitalist Unemployment

Unemployment has always been an integral part of capitalism. The ruling class has used it as a weapon. The unemployed against the employed -- divide and rule.

Periodic economic crises have steadily grown from the depressions of 1877-78 and 1893-1894, with their thousands of unemployed, to 1921-22, with four or five million unemployed, and from 1929 to 1932, with unemployed running as high as ten million. From 1932 to 1936, another jump -- seventeen, eighteen, nineteen million. And in the decline of capitalism, the periodic crises occur closer together. After World War No. I, unemployment became a chronic problem.

Everything was tried, except relief, to "solve" the problem. An apple a day -- New York had the apple seller with his box of apples. There were national drives for funds for the Community Chest, every one to give his fair share for relief. Then "block aid", where each block was to take care of its own unemployed. The great share-the-work drive -- one of Hoover's ingenious ideas. The work was to be divided among available workers. If a worker was making \$25.00 a week, he was to share his job so that two could starve instead of one.

Deepening of Crisis

But as the crisis deepened and the savings of the unemployed were exhausted, mass pressure for relief was led by the Communist and other radical parties. The ruling class gave ground. Private charity was, and had always been, inadequate. Local counties set up relief boards. This was only a stop-gap. Next the states were forced to help, and they called on the national government for aid. Then the unemployed tried to set up cooperatives and barter organizations. Among these, the Unemployed Citizens League of Seattle was one of the best known.

Again and again it has been proved, until it is recognized as a fact, that only the radicals can and will do the necessary work in forming organizations of the workers, because only the radicals understand the true nature of capitalism. In the days of the Molly Maguires and the Knights of Labor, the trade unions were organized and led by the early radicals. The bureaucrats only took leadership after the Jimmy Higgins work, the arrests and beatings, were over.

The first Communist I knew came to town with a portable typewriter, a mimeograph and a ream of paper. He found some of the worst cases among the unemployed, issued a leaflet calling for a block meeting. He discussed the need for an organization, gave them guidance, took them to the relief office and demanded relief for those cases. Usually an arrest would follow, then more leaflets. The International Labor Defense was called in to fight the legal battle, and then the Unemployed Council would grow, and so would the party. These were fighters with a program. The program was weak but workingclass through and through.

Because of the narrow one-sided control by the Communist Party, the Unemployed Councils, while a national organization, were never able to really organize the unemployed on a mass scale, and were used to some extent by the trade unions like the early I.W.W. That, is, let the Unemployed Councils do the fighting, give support in an underhand way. The I.W.W. was used to fight the boss and then the union bureaucrats would take over.

The trade unions were under the control of men whose only leadership consisted in retreating before the ruling class, who would not and could not put up a fight for the unemployed members of their own organization. At the time when the unemployed, in desperation, were setting up barter organizations, the Communist Party started these Unemployed Councils, the nuclei being block committees. Committees were sent out into the various towns and cities. But because of the inadequate leadership of the Communist Party, other parties were forced to set up their own unemployed unions -- the Workers Alliance, and later, the Unemployed League.

The ruling class was terrified by the threat of the unemployed. Many had their private yachts ready for a quick getaway from the country. No one knew better than the capitalists the true state that the country was in -- bank failures, plants closing down, relief kitchens, soup lines, millions riding the railroads, youngsters forced to leave home and find work or relief in the best way they could.

The Bonus March

In 1932 two events occurred, and repercussions were felt around the world. Both were marches to Washington, one of the unemployed war veterans in their famous Bonus March, the other of the unemployed in their National Hunger March.

The veterans displayed two slogans on their cars and on the freight trains. "Heroes of 1917 -- Bums of 1932" and "We Fought for Democracy -- What Did We Get?" The first slogan flowed from their major demand -- the bonus. The veterans came to Washington with the demand that Congress should vote immediate payment of the Adjusted Service Certificate (issued in 1924, but payable in 1945), granting \$1.00 a day for service at home and \$1.25 for service overseas. Hence the name Bonus Army.

In view of the struggle of 1932, we can understand why Congress voted this year for Mustering-Out pay, and did not date it twenty-five years ahead.

The bonus march was in a sense a spontaneous movement of the unemployed veterans. It was not approved by the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and other "respectable" organizations, Neither the Democratic and Republican parties, nor the liberals, Socialists and Communists, had much -- if any -- influence on the veterans.

Driven by hunger and want, small groups in various parts of the country started for the capital. Four hundred of them brought their wives and children. Negro veterans were conspicuously active in many of the contingents. Southern whites and Negroes fought and lived side by side.

The bonus marchers, while able to create a leadership from their ranks strong enough to get them to Washington, were politically inexperienced, and trustful of "friends". W. Walters from Portland and similar "leaders" were agents provocateur. But in spite of all attempts to get them out of Washington, the veterans remained firm. They intended to stay in Washington until their demands were won.

By the end of July the Federal authorities decided that they could wait no longer. They did not dare wait. The police were ordered by the Treasury Dept., which owned the property at Pennsylvania and Third, to remove the veterans from the property. In the attempt the police killed Bill Hushka and Eric Carlson. Under the pretext that the police were no longer able to maintain order, the troops were called out.

On July 28, 1932, General Douglas MacArthur, then Chief of Staff of the Army, led his troops -- cavalry, tanks and infantry -- down Pennsylvania Avenue. At Third Street they attacked the first contingent of the veterans. With tear gas and bayonet jabs and rifle butts they drove the veterans from the shacks and shelters they had lived in for ten weeks. The veterans fought back, expertly tossing the tear gas bombs back at the attackers, only retreating when physically overwhelmed. MacArthur's soldiers were young boys, all the war veterans being deliberately left at Fort Myers.

The veterans moved across to Anacostia Flats, where the main body of the Bonus Army was encamped in shacks and tents. All told there were around 20,000. The troops set fire to the shacks, and by that night the veterans were scattered over Virginia and Maryland.

The Hunger March

Early in 1932 the Unemployed Councils, under the leadership of the Communist Party, were leading militant hunger marches, both local and state-wide. The Bonus March gave a powerful impetus to the drive for a national hunger march, although the Walters leadership had successfully resisted all attempts to link the bonus demands with the broader demands of the unemployed for jobs and relief that would take care of both the unemployed and the veterans.

While the veterans movement was spontaneous, the Hunger March was planned. From California, Texas and the South, from the Northwest and from New England and New York, contingents of the unemployed streamed into Washington. The march was synchronized so that the columns from various parts of the country arrived at practically the same time.

The Unemployed Councils sent over three thousand delegates, representing thousands of unemployed groups. For us to come across the country penniless was possible only because everywhere we found the masses in sympathy with us and our demands.

As the columns increased in size we were able to force from the states and cities, food and gas to carry us to the next large city. The leaders of the column would take the whole group to the court house where they gave an ultimatum -- you feed us or we stay here. In this manner, and through small contributions sent out from the local unemployed councils, as well as unemployed meetings arranged along the way, the march progressed.

On the whole the march was well organized, but one incident that occurred in Kansas City illustrates the difficulties created by the Stalinist leadership. It took us a day and a half to find the party headquarters, and when we asked for the Unemployed Council we were told that they didn't have any unemployed councils, they were all Communists.

In Indiana, we met our first stiff opposition, from the Klu Klux Klan. Because of the active support of the miners and the trade unions, and the discipline of the columns, we were able to proceed with only slight difficulties.

In our column we lost two comrades, through lack of shelter and medical facilities. Our women comrades, besides being among the most militant, acted as nurses and took care of our sick.

Marching into Washington, we were again met both by friends and by the Klu Klux Klan. Our columns were herded out on New York Avenue, with a large police force on both ends of the street. Food and water were carried in to us from Baltimore, forty miles away.

We made one march through Washington itself. We were unable to present our demands to the President or Congress, but were able to see a couple of influential politicians. With a promise from these

men that our demands would be placed before Congress, our leaders at a mass meeting advised us to go home and prepare for further militant meetings and demonstrations.

Our leaders sent telegrams to the Unemployed Councils asking for money for gas and food, and advice regarding our homeward march. While they were uptown, the authorities tricked us by saying our leaders wanted us to join them uptown. Once the column started moving it was surrounded by police and troops on motorcycles with baby machine guns, and it was forced out of town. By that night the marchers were in a rout, the columns broken up and scattered all over Maryland and Virginia. The inadequacy of the Stalinist leadership was now evident -- they had made no serious plans for our trip home.

Although both the Bonus Army and the Hunger Marchers were driven out of Washington before their demands were met, these marches were not failures. Within the next year, the veterans did receive a bonus and the unemployed did receive more adequate relief.

F.D.R. Takes Office

In March 1933, when F.D.R. took office, the unemployed figure was at the all-time high of 17,500,000, but the headlines described the suffering of the banks rather than of the unemployed.

A major crisis was here but the working class was unable to take advantage of it and F.D.R. was able to set up measures that to some extent gave a lease of life to the decaying system.

Capitalism will never fall apart of itself, but must be taken over by the working class under the leadership of its party, the S.W.P.

While Hoover was a supreme individualist, F.D.R. was the spokesman of a powerful group of capitalists who realized that relief must be given to a few so that the majority would not take everything. Again -- divide and rule.

Chronology of Relief

A short summary of the various relief organizations is in order. Roughly, the dates were;

1931 -- New York is the first state to set up a state relief organization.

1932 -- On May 12, Congress passed the Federal Emergency Relief Act appropriation. \$500,000,000 to be used as federal grants to aid the states in their relief programs.

Harry Hopkins, a professional social worker from New York, who was head of New York relief, was put in charge of the F.E.R.A.

1933 -- On May 16, F.D.R. signed the bill known as the National Industrial Recovery Act. The P.W.A. was supposed to prime the pump with a \$300,000,000 public works program.

It must be realized clearly that no capitalist statesman or theorist understands the crisis of capitalist economy, and that as a consequence they misread the signs and adopt all sorts of theories. The only reason the stinking corpse is still walking around is because no one has pushed it down and buried it. It is up to the workers through their party to settle accounts.

1933 -- On November 15, \$400,000,000 P.W.A. funds were to be used by a new agency, the Civil Works Administration. Over 4,000,000 men were working on this project by 1934, at prevailing wages for a full time work week. Half of these workers were from state relief rolls, the other half from those unemployed but not yet on relief. This was the nearest to an all-time high for relief -- 27,500,000 men, women and children were given some sort of relief.

1934 -- on February 28, it was announced that the C.W.A. would be liquidated. Unemployed demonstrations took place all over the country, tens of thousands of letters and telegrams poured into the office of the F.E.R.A. and the White House. C.W.A. workers who would qualify as paupers were put back on the state and local relief resources.

The breakdown of local relief had gone so far that many capitalists feared revolution. The states welcomed federal aid to escape bankruptcy. But later as conditions improved the bosses were again insistent that federal credit be withdrawn.

1935 -- At this time 12,000,000 employable workers, 7,000,000 households, were on relief rolls, millions were on the road and working part time in the harvest fields. A minority were put on the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) and got an average of \$50.00 a month, compared with \$25.00 a month average on relief.

Even in relief, like wheels within wheels, we see the old boss law, divide and rule. Dividing those on jobs from those on relief, using the unemployed as a whip against the trade unions, lowering wages, speed-up in full swing, etc. Security wages (so-called) were being used on W.P.A. In New York a common laborer got \$55.00 for a 120-hour month, while skilled workers got \$93.50 for a 120-hour month. San Francisco wages were just a little lower but in the rest of the country the wages were cut according to the wage scale prevailing.

In 1935 there was a wave of strikes. Business had long been pressing for the abandonment of the prevailing wage principle. The C.W.A. had given full time work at the prevailing scale. W.P.A. had used the prevailing scale but had cut hours by one third, or the so-called "security scale". Unskilled workers were working almost twice the hours of the skilled. The skilled workers -- plumbers, bricklayers, iron workers, plasterers, etc. began to walk off the job without formal action from their unions. The bureaucrats were forced to take over the leadership and try to head off most of the strikes. In New York on August 9, 1935, the Central Trades and Labor Council, after a formal strike vote, made it official. But the real picketing and fighting was done by the unskilled workers through the Workers Alliance.

In 1936 the A.F. of L. was able through craft tactics, by separating the building trades from the other unemployed organizations, to get Congress to write into the W.P.A. a definite commitment to prevailing wages. Cuts in wages were stalled off, prevailing wages were to be paid, but the hours were cut so that the workers were getting less real wages than before.

Strikes were breaking out in all states. The changeover from C.W.A. to W.P.A. was carried out by laying off workers faster than they were being put back. Court houses in various cities were stormed by the unemployed -- Kansas City, St. Louis, all over the country.

1936-37 -- W.P.A. began mass layoffs, and from then on mass layoffs were the order of the day. The business index was used to show that industry was on the upswing. It was, but not for the unemployed. In April, 1936, F.D.R. for the first time publicly admitted that unemployment was a permanent thing.

1936 -- In a survey of sample cases it was found that less than 10% of families averaged three meals a day. Many had only two and some only one. Meat, eggs, butter, milk had disappeared from their diet. Some lived on food given by friends, others on garbage and scraps from stores.

1937 -- 600,000 were dropped from W.P.A. rolls. They tried to get back on relief. It was heartbreaking -- many never did.

1938 -- In the spring the White House didn't dare oppose a demand from all quarters for a bigger W.P.A. appropriation. The business index showed a slight improvement in the fall and again -- mass reductions of W.P.A. It is estimated that between November and January 310,000 were given the blue discharge slip from W.P.A., and the relief rolls increased by thousands.

Many states refused relief to any employable whether or not there were jobs -- and there were no jobs.

Mayors, governors, the American Association of Social Workers, demanded the layoffs stop. There were tent cities around state and county court houses. Wholesale evictions from homes.

1938-39 Orange stamp and blue stamp food tickets -- Relief appropriations were cut to the bone. Workers in the South were getting \$4.00 a month per family, in New York, \$37.00. The Orange and blue stamps were a plan to distribute surplus farm commodities, plus a few dollars in cash, throwing the full burden of relief back on the states and counties.

Founding of Workers Alliance

The Workers Alliance was founded in 1936 as a merger of three unemployed leagues -- the Unemployed Councils (C.P.), the Workers Alliance (S.P.) and the National Unemployed League (Muste American Workers Party). The united Workers Alliance was a militant organization and most of the old Unemployed Council members were in it, but it was composed mostly of unskilled workers. The trade unions had their

members back in the unions and were giving a craft leadership to the skilled workers. The intellectuals, writers etc. had their own organization.

It is not within the scope of this article to dwell on the world-shaking events of this period -- Hitler taking power in Germany, formation of the 4th International, from a former opposition of the 3rd International, the most militant and class conscious who had not joined before now joining the Fourth International. But it is impossible to understand the early militant struggle of these various unemployed groups and the real militant leadership given by the political parties, and their later degeneration into letter-writing reformist organizations, without understanding the twists and turns of the Stalinist Comintern on the international field -- the turn of the Third Period (ultra-left) to the "Democratic Front", to the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939.

The Stalinists were the most active and disciplined group and they used weak leaders like D. Lasser, who was President of the Workers Alliance, for their own ends.

The Workers Alliance turned from working-class action to class collaboration and the workers were led off into writing letters of protest to various government agencies. The Workers Alliance at its convention had gone on record for a labor party. The Stalinists used this as a chance to get votes for F.D.R. and other class enemies of the workers.

Time and time again the call for a national hunger march or a state hunger march would be urged by the rank and file, only to be side-tracked by the leadership.

Finally, in order to head off any opposition from the ranks, the Stalinists began wholesale expulsions of our militants from both the Workers Alliance and, through their control, of other unemployed groups such as the Writers League, social clubs, Professional League of Project Workers. Two thousand workers in New York were expelled at one time. Progressive groups organized into factions. They wanted to stay and work inside the Workers Alliance and try to straighten it out, but they were forced out.

Finally the progressives issued a call in New York for a new Workers Alliance and in October, 1938, the new organization was named Unemployed and Project Workers Union. Our party played a prominent role in this organization.

It has been pointed out many times in articles by our leaders, that in the depth of a depression when unemployment is so vast, both workers employed in industry and the unemployed lose their self-confidence and are afraid to move. But as the crisis lessens the workers confidence returns with the revival of industry, and there is a movement to fight for some of the gains which were lost in the depth of the depression.

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Lessons of the Struggle

One or two important lessons should be drawn from the mass struggle of the years 1929-1940.

The basic cadres of the revolutionary party are drawn from the factory workers, those workers who are actually employed in the factories. Unemployed organizations can be built and grow very rapidly in times of economic crisis, and it would be easy for us to get false ideas about their revolutionary stability. But the minute a worker gets a job in industry he quits the unemployed organization. Those workers who are beaten down until they have only despair left, give up all fighting and sink lower and lower until they become part of the lumpen proletariat. It is from these elements that the Fascists build their murderous gangs. If the unemployed were organized through trade unions, as discussed earlier in this article, much of this disillusionment and demoralization could be prevented. On the other hand, this method of organizing the unemployed would aid the unions, particularly in strikes, when it would be possible to prevent the formation of a pool of scabs.

I went through five years of work in the unemployed movement. I was in the Street Unit, as it was called in the early C.P. days, and in three local, state and national hunger marches. I don't know of any work that is more heartbreaking and discouraging than the task of keeping an organization like this together. It would be hard even in an ideal situation, where the party is able to give concrete guidance and help, but to be in the minority and have to fight misleaders as well as the boss!

One lesson I had to learn the hard way. In the early days of the unemployed councils we would take up case after case and fight for their relief. We fought for them instead of fighting with them and as a consequence lost their membership as fast as we won their case. The workers would rather fight with us and learn to stand on their own feet. Then they become good material for the party.

In the spring of 1934, some new methods and new techniques of militant struggle were brought into play. It was demonstrated for the first time what a great role can be played in the struggle of industrial workers by an unemployed organization led by militant elements. The unemployed organization in Toledo, which had been formed by the Muste group, practically took over the leadership of the great Autolite strike and through mass picketing raised it to a higher level than was ever thought of by the old craft unions.

The Minneapolis comrades were able to get the official backing of the trade unions, mainly the Teamsters. Their fight for the relief of the unemployed was raised to even higher levels.

The Roosevelt-Woodrum campaign to slash W.P.A. didn't stop with the unemployed. It hit the trade unions, especially the building trades. Strikes that were called against the layoffs and wage cuts were mishandled from the start. Union bureaucrats who are class collaborationists and haven't the courage to fight the bosses, can be expected to back down before the bosses government. It was only in a

few isolated instances, when the workers showed great militancy, that any gains were made. F.D.R. took vicious action against the Minneapolis unemployed. Many were thrown into jails and penitentiaries, and others placed on probation.

Our party and our comrades have learned much from the struggles of the past. We have the cadres who have been in the fight during the depression years and we have learned many lessons.

With the drawing to a close of one phase of the war, hundreds have already been laid off because of cut-backs in war orders and thousands will follow soon. Washington statisticians already predict 15 to 19 million unemployed as soon as the war is over.

This article is an attempt to show from the struggle of the past some part of the road of the future, although future fights will be shorter and will telescope very rapidly. It will not be necessary to repeat the work of the thirties. We can build, on the base of past experiences, the kind of organization best suited to fight and win the coming struggles.

But the opportunists have gone through the same experiences and they will know how to make use of them. They will either attempt to build full-fledged organizations, or get in on the ground floor of organizations built spontaneously by the workers. One of our main tasks will be to eliminate these misleaders, and to consolidate the various unemployed organizations which will spring up in the post-war period.

A correct program and slogans will not only weld the unemployed masses together, but will also train new leaders, and new members for our party. In the struggle for partial and transitional demands, workers need mass organizations of the unemployed. But the trade unions will be the principal arena of the coming fight, and it is our task to direct the attention of the unions to the problem of organizing their unemployed, and to develop slogans which can be used in this work, such as:

A job for every unemployed worker at trade union wages.

Opening of all idle factories, to be operated through government subsidies under workers' control.

A \$20,000,000,000 public works and housing program.

A thirty-hour week with no cut in wages.

An Independent labor party.

I believe the convention should go on record to instruct the incoming National Committee to set up a special committee of one or more comrades, whose purpose shall be to prepare the party for the coming struggles of the unemployed.

Articles should be written by this committee and it should instruct other individual comrades to write articles dealing with the various phases of this important question:

The problem of Negroes and of women, who will be the first to be laid off.

The attempts to divide the soldiers from the trade unions and the unemployed.

The problem of the best form of organization.

How the trade unions should build auxiliary organizations.

The need for a better understanding between the trade unions and the unemployed.

The Fascist danger.

All the innumerable dangers and educational needs of the future.

Through the press and through internal bulletins, the party should prepare for the coming fight. Let's be ahead of the field and give concrete guidance to those who want to fight but need the path explained.

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DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM AND CENTRALIST VULGARITY

By M. Brown

Comrade M. Stein, in defending the utterly incorrect action of the Control Commission, has burdened himself with a conception of democratic centralism that is equally as false. The tender little rubber-band, which was conceived in the semi-hysterical atmosphere of the New York membership meeting on July 27, is now being stretched to a point where it threatens to snap back and throw Comrade Stein into an organizational outlook that can be called anything but Leninist. It was to be hoped that when Comrade Stein opened his article with the remark that the dispute has "much deeper roots", he wouldn't permit himself to be carried away by the idea. Unfortunately, he has really deepened the question although without touching upon the genuine elements of Bolshevik organizational procedure.

Centralist Vulgarity

The question is; How does democratic centralism stand in relation to theoretical discussions between members of our party and those of an opponent organization? From the point of view of Comrade Stein, whether or not we add the adjectives "organized" or "unorganized" produces a qualitative difference. "We have not prohibited political discussion between a member of our party and a member of an opponent organization when he meets in the shop, in the plant or on a personal basis," says Comrade Stein. "We do demand however that all organized discussion, all organized political relations between members or groups of members of our party with members or groups of members of opponent organizations, be carried out only with knowledge and approval of the proper party committees." To carry on an "organized" theoretical discussion with members (or a member?) of an opponent organization may betray "political collaboration". The best way to avoid Comrade Stein's conception of "political collaborationism" is to first consult the proper party committees and act on the basis of directives received from them. It is obvious from the manner in which Comrade Stein unfolds his position that the problem of consenting to such a hazardous undertaking exists on the level of opponent work. He says: "If the discussion group between four members of our party and the five members of the W.P. was organized not for opponent work, than it could only fall into one other category -- political collaboration" (my emph. M.B.) This is indeed a remarkable statement! "Organized" theoretical discussion can only be one of two things; either political collaboration or opponent work! And then, who can tell where in the course of such discussions, one is likely to pass from one into the other.

The picture becomes all the more confusing when we try to interpret the terms used by Comrade Stein. What, perchance, does "organized" political discussion mean? Does it involve attending a meeting conducted by an opponent organization? Does it involve attending a Shachtmanite lecture? And then again, what does "discussion" mean? If one of our party comrades ask a question from the floor of an opponent organization's lecture, is that discussion? If he bandies words with the speaker, is that discussion? Or -- what is worse! -- if he strolls down to a bar with two or three Shachtmanites after the lecture, and discusses the Russian question with them -- does that fall within a violation of Comrade Stein's conception of party discipline? At what point is he acting in a "conscious" manner and at what point is he acting in an "unconscious" manner? And if Comrade Stein desires to analyze factors of consciousness, which factor is luring the comrade into a bar room in the company of Shachtmanites; the discussion or the beer?

Comrade Stein handles general terms in a very cavalier fashion. He speaks of ". . . centralism in action and especially in dealings with enemy organizations, or groups of members in opponent organizations". (my emph. M.B.) "This," he cries triumphantly, "is our yardstick." No one disputes the necessity of centralism in action as it is meant in the Bolshevik manner of party activity. But so far as "dealings" is concerned, I regret that this term can mean anything. It carries significant weight when we consider that Comrade Stein uses it as a key expression of his "yardstick". Comrade Stein also cries

about "accepted practices". Morrison justly asks everyone who presumes to speak of Bolshevik procedure to show". . . where a particular procedure has been followed in the history of the Bolshevik movement". Comrade Bennett asks very much the same question in regard to the specific problem in dispute. Stein answers this question by citing Article VIII, Section 8 which reads; "Political collaboration with non-members of the Party must be formally authorized by the Party committees having jurisdiction". Remarkable! Having decided to view any "organized" theoretical discussion between our comrades and people of opponent organizations as "political collaboration", Comrade Stein proceeds to take this creature of his own mind as a fact and places it within the scope of a formal violation of the Party Constitution! Alas, Comrade Stein, we are still disputing the question of whether or not the problem involved can be called "political collaboration." Please let's not run ahead of ourselves. . .

Democratic Centralism

I am of the opinion that no ruling on "dealings" with opponent organizations can guard against political collaboration with opponent organizations. (Here I use political collaboration in a sense quite different from the way in which the phrase is used by Comrade Stein). Only the educational level of our Party will determine that. To place the emphasis of democratic centralism on questions that are decided by the educational level of the party is utterly incorrect and arises from a formalistic approach to the whole meaning and spirit of Marxism.

But in what respect does democratic centralism stand in relation to the situation of the four comrades? To be sure, democratic centralism is a yardstick for organizational procedure, but it is not one that is divided into inches and half-inches the way it is conceived to be by Comrade Stein. One cannot conceive of democratic centralism to be a ruler that will measure a line for every contingency in a Bolshevik Party. The Old Man, I believe, said somewhere that democratic centralism is a flexible instrument in which the relationship of democracy to centralism is never fixed in absolute terms but rather shifts according to the pressure of external events. For Comrade Stein, this would not appear to be so. He demands a rigid algebraic formula dictated less by common sense than by fine and sharp measurements of what is organizationally correct and incorrect.

Generally, I believe, one can say this; that democratic centralism, if properly applied, assures a unified activity on the part of the Party, a concentrated struggle on the part of the party's forces against the enemies of revolutionary socialism. Internally, it guarantees the party as maximum an amount of democratic life as is possible, insofar, to be sure, that the ranks are united in the activity involved in party work. From this it does not follow that the Party must become completely absorbed in its internal political interests and such differences as may arise. But, by the same token, it does not follow that the Party must become completely absorbed in its external political problems and view internal problems as being of a nuisance value. Both are tested by each other, both rest upon each other. Comrades who insist that all political differences must disappear once a decision is democratically arrived at estimate the nature of democratic centralism incorrectly. The essential point is that the differences

must not make themselves felt in the concrete tasks and activity of the Party. It is precisely toward this end that all the roads of democratic centralism must lead; this is its essential care.

When Comrade Stein speaks of "agents" of the Party, he ascribes to the term connotations that it does not possess. We are agents of the Party in the practical work of the Party and in maintaining and spreading the prestige and principles of the Party. But we are also students of the Party's ideology, testing it be it in a positive or negative manner. This may involve testing the Party's principles in the light of practical activity or alongside the principles (or lack of principles) of opponent organizations. We may or may not have to study Shachtman's arguments against us straight from the horse's mouth, but study them we must! That may be only one of many ways in which the security of our own principles can be assured us, but still it is one way and should not be shunned. The question as to whether or not a meeting with opponent groups is "organized" or "unorganized" is totally irrelevant when a purely theoretical or educational discussion is involved. The term "organized" comes to bear when concrete joint activity follows from such an organized group. That, Comrade Stein, is collaboration, a form of collaboration, incidentally, that can have a varying number of levels. That, Comrade Stein, is what demands disciplined guidance on the part of the Party committees! Does the possibility exist that organized theoretical discussions can lead and turn into opponents work? Of course. But who will be doing the opponent work -- the Shachtmanites or us? That, Comrade Stein, depends entirely on the education of our own comrades and on the soundness of our own principles. Given a favorable level of educational study within our Party, it is unquestionable that Shachtman would have more to fear from discussion groups than we would. I feel sufficiently confident that in the event theoretical discussions between our people and those of the W.P. were to take such a turn, the comrades involved would feel it incumbent upon them to act under the direction of the proper Party committees.

Comrade Stein criticizes Comrade Morrison's remarks about the "emancipating spirit of Bolshevism" as being an anti-Party mood in the relation of individual party members to the discipline of the Party as a whole. On this point, Stein's exaggerated inferences become slightly excessive and even malodorous. The emancipating spirit of Bolshevism rests in the tremendous stimulus given to independent thinking, to the intellectual alertness that Marxism affords its followers. It is precisely this which is the source of Bolshevik discipline as expressed in democratic centralism. Democratic Centralism and the emancipating spirit of Bolshevism are cojoined in the same respect that democracy and centralism are cojoined. It is not Morrison but Stein who tends to separate the discipline of the Party from the intellectual life appropriate to it, just as he tends to counterpose centralism to democracy.

In thinking of Comrade Stein's views toward Comrade Morrison's "moods" I am drawn to comment on his conception of "conciliationism". This is a term which he practically labels on such comrades who would be prone to defend the right of the four to enter into organized theoretical discussion with opponent groups. The four themselves, of course, are dismissed as "political collaborationists". For my part,

I have always viewed "conciliationism" as meaning a yielding of political principles to opponents and enemies of the Party. Stretching the point still further, conciliationism would mean an excessive official friendliness to an opponent organization which still remains separated from our program by serious political differences. The fact remains, however, that Morrison and those who probably agree with him on the problem have maintained a firm and intransigent position of political hostility to the Shachtmanites. What then is left to be expected from them that would not "betray" any sort of "conciliationism"? Only comrades, I must confess, who would view the so-called organizational "defection" of the four as "political collaboration" would betray more, and that, I suspect, would be a crude level of anger and unstable emotions toward the W.P. far over-reaching the political differences involved.

The Main Issues

"Surrounded by a hostile world", writes Comrade Stein, "our Party can survive and grow only on the foundation of programmatic firmness and irreconcilable hostility toward its enemies, including the petty-bourgeois betrayers of Marxism who call themselves the Workers Party". Quite true, but the Party must continually guard itself against another very serious product of isolation-sectarianism and a tendency to reduce Marxism to vulgar formulae. I believe that Comrade Stein's organizational conception involves just such an incipient vulgarization of democratic centralism.

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