

# INTERNAL BULLETIN

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## Contents

### RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE PLENUM OF THE SWP, May 1953

	<u>Page</u>
1. Plenum Resolution on the Internal Party Situation	1
2. Major Developments Since Eisenhower's Election and the Tasks of the Party -- Majority Resolution	2
3. Supplement to 1952 Convention Political Resolution -- Minority Resolution	13
4. Political Resolution -- Submitted by S. Marcy, V. Grey, T. Wilson	19
5. American Stalinism and Our Attitude Toward It -- Majority Resolution	26
6. Resolution on American Stalinism -- Minority Resolution	34
7. Plenum Resolution on the Organizational Principles of the Party	45
8. Plenum Record on Resolutions and Voting	54
9. Closing Speech -- By J. P. Cannon, National Chairman, SWP	56

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I.

PLENUM RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNAL PARTY SITUATION

(Adopted Unanimously)

The internal party conflict between the majority and the minority of the National Committee, which has been going on in the party for a number of months, was the subject of extensive debate at the Plenum. The relation of forces at the Plenum, which approximately reflected the relation of forces in the party, was clearly in favor of the majority.

At the conclusion of the debate, the minority stated that it recognized the authority of the Plenum and the right of the majority to determine and to carry out party policy as established by the National Committee. The majority agreed to organize collaboration in the leadership, to give the minority representation in party committees and to guarantee it all the normal democratic rights of a minority in party work and in the new stage of the party discussion.

On the basis of these declarations of the minority and the majority, the Plenum unanimously came to the following conclusions:

The internal struggle, in its present acute form, should cease, but there is no prohibition of factions.

The discussion should be continued, in a moderated and more objective tone, and in a calmer atmosphere.

Both sides in the conflict should obligate themselves to refrain from any talk of split.

Both the principle of majority rule and the democratic rights of the minority should be scrupulously respected in the branches as well as in the leading bodies.

The Plenum is of the opinion that on this basis, agreed to by both the majority and the minority of the Plenum, a long and firm period of party peace can be established in which the party work can be carried on unhindered, and a clarifying discussion of all questions in dispute can be fruitfully conducted.

(Unanimously adopted by the Plenum of the National Committee, May 1953.)

II.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS SINCE EISENHOWER'S ELECTION  
AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY

(Adopted by Plenum, 16 votes for, 9 votes against)

Eisenhower's election and the defeat of the Democratic-Labor coalition has been the outstanding event of American politics since the National Convention of July 1952. This first Republican victory in 20 years invested direct control of the government in Big Business and High Finance, signified by the cabinet composed of millionaires and one labor lieutenant of capital. It considerably increased the influence of the military caste upon the administration and its policies. It pushed to the forefront of power the most sinister and anti-labor elements in the ruling class, evidenced by Taft's domination of Congress and McCarthy's unrestrained witch-hunting activities. Extreme political reaction and unalloyed capitalist conservatism holds sway in the directing circles of the country.

The world has entered into the critical period where the general conditions have ripened to the point where a new world conflict can quickly be precipitated. However, the totality of the factors actually determining the moment of conflict is so complex, so fluid, and so subject to modifications that this critical period may stretch out over some years, without war breaking out, but during which it is possible for war to be unleashed at any time.

It is now necessary to assess the possibilities of war in the next immediate phase of world developments and to steer the party's course in accord with this appraisal.

The political developments within the United States have been paralleled by the significant changes in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death. Although neither set of events have yet led to any basic shifts in the world situation, they introduce certain modifications in the relations between the principal powers and in the world relation of class forces that may, for a limited period, vary the tempo of the war drive.

The secret and public diplomatic moves now holding the center of the stage are thus far preliminary and provisional. The Kremlin has intensified the drive for a deal with Washington to gain time for consolidating the new regime, to head off the march toward war, to throw blocks in the path of U.S. imperialism and draw away its partners in Europe and Asia. In the worst event, its "peace offensive" aims to fix the responsibility for war upon the imperialists where it belongs. Mao's government likewise wants time to develop its economy through respite from shooting war in the Far East. However, it is premature to conclude how far either Moscow or Peking can or will go in making the concessions demanded by Washington.

The Republican administration is being pulled by two contending groups of finance capitalists on war strategy. The Pacific Firsters have been pressing for resuming the Korean War and extending it into China regardless of consequences. The other group, dominant for the moment, prefers to proceed along more cautious and devious lines in solving the major problems of U.S. imperialist policy. As Dulles' tours indicate, neither group intends to be swerved from the objectives of tightening the encirclement around

the Soviet bloc and forwarding the military, economic and diplomatic measures required to implement global war plans and preparations. But there are increasing signs (parleys on the Korean truce, revisions of the military budget, relaxed pressure upon NATO, projected postponement of rearmament target dates, proposed lowering of draft quotas) that the leading policy makers in the White House and Pentagon are reviewing their calculations and considering a tactical readjustment in the pace of the war drive.

A series of international political and domestic factors dispose the administration to consider pausing for a while and to jockey for a better position. Since 1950 Washington has exploited its intervention in Korea to the maximum to further its war strategy and looks upon stepped-up action there as less of an asset and more of a liability. The new developments in the USSR and their repercussions, the setbacks to American power in Korea by the mounting colonial revolution, the undermining of imperialist France in Indo-China and North Africa and of Great Britain in the Middle East, Malaya and Africa, the anti-imperialist upsurge in Latin America, the insecurity of Washington's Western European allies, the crisis of NATO, the delay in the rearmament of Germany and Japan -- all induce Eisenhower and his advisors to reconsider their tactics in the international situation. The uneasiness among the American population over the Korean War and the growing financial difficulties imposed by the militarization program (the inescapable Federal deficit, higher interest rates, continuing inflation, the weakness of the dollar) operate in the same direction.

The early May speeches of Churchill and Attlee show how hard the Western European partners and Asian countries are pressing the administration to agree to negotiations with the Kremlin. This pressure cannot be arbitrarily brushed aside unless Washington is ready to risk heading into war without the acquiescence of its allies.

The administration would view any negotiations or agreements as tactical maneuvers. Without altering its plans of world conquest or military preparations, it could utilize the breathing spell to improve its positions at home and abroad for the inescapable showdown while deluding public opinion that Wall Street's government is actuated by "peaceful" intentions and the menace of war really comes from Moscow's refusal to be reasonable or from Peking's "aggressive" moves.

Instead of extending the conflict in the Far East and marching straight toward all-out war, as demanded by the Pacific Firsters, Eisenhower could take advantage of a slight delay for a detour to arrive at the same end. The President's hard core of provocative demands in his foreign policy response to Moscow and Dulles' tough talk are aimed to set the stage for squeezing the maximum concessions from the Kremlin and Peking under threat of total war against the Soviet bloc. If this incipient deal should fall through, that failure could be held up as added and conclusive evidence that it is unprofitable and futile to "appease" Moscow and that it is imperative to go full speed ahead. On the other hand, if sizable concessions can be extracted, these can help fortify American positions on the international arena and become springboards for the aggressive moves in view at the next and very near stage. The duration of such an interlude could be used to cinch up on military

preparations, extend bases in Western Europe and Japan, and try to beat back the anti-imperialist movements in the Far East, Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

A limited shakedown in American economy could simultaneously be used to try to weaken and housebreak the labor movement.

For these reasons a partial and temporary agreement between Western imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy on certain disputed issues is not excluded. This could terminate the shooting war in Korea and ease the strain in other places (Austria). But it would not put an end to the cold war or eliminate the danger of world war. Such an interlude would be fragile in its foundations, highly unstable and short-lived.

It could be upset -- and even prevented -- by the threat of a major depression in American economy, by the sudden and serious weakening of capitalist powers and positions in Western Europe, or by renewed outbreaks of the revolution in the colonies or elsewhere. Even if Washington and the Kremlin should come to terms, neither has control over the operations of world economy or the unfolding of the world revolution. Either of these processes, aggravated in the extreme in this epoch of imperialist death agony, can intervene with explosive force to wreck the diplomatic calculations of the American imperialists and Soviet bureaucrats and suddenly place before them the necessity for new decisions.

In the event that no truce is concluded in Korea, and negotiations on other questions collapse, this turn of affairs could lead to the resumption of hostilities in Korea and the spread of war in the Far East, which could touch off World War III.

The primary task of the party in the light of these events is to expose the real aims of Washington's diplomatic dealings and warn that at best they would do no more than temporarily postpone the projected assault upon the Soviet bloc. They would not end the aggressions of imperialist policy at home or abroad, or the counter-revolutionary activities of the Republican administration. The American people must put no trust in the peaceful pretenses of official propaganda. In addition to the slogans already popularized, the demand should be raised to do away with all secret diplomacy. The party should demand that the American people themselves have the right to make the decisions on the issues of peace and war.

## II. The Republican Administration and Labor

The Republican victory has broken the political coalition between the White House and labor's officialdom which existed under Roosevelt and Truman and has modified relations between the administration and the union movement. Under the Democrats the union officialdom relied upon influencing the White House in their favor in return for delivering the vote and blocking independent political action.

The brazen plundering of the country's resources and gouging of the working people by the profiteers and landlords has reached unprecedented proportions under the new Republican administration.

This forces the union officialdom into a more critical attitude on domestic issues which directly affect their interests and organizations.

At the same time, suspicion of the Big Businessmen and Brass Hats in the Administration helps create a more receptive audience in the union ranks for criticisms of Washington's policies and suggestions for a new political course for American labor.

Underneath the surface passivity of the labor organizations run currents of restlessness which now and then spurt forth in department stoppages and spasmodic strikes. The man-hours lost through strikes last year was the largest since 1946. This is paralleled by increased questioning among the workers of the consequences of official foreign policy and the political role of American labor. These are significant symptoms.

However, the continuance of the arms boom, full employment, minor concessions by the corporations, the strait-jacket of the bureaucracy, have prevented any wide and deep-going strike struggles except for the steel and coal strikes over the past period. Despite accumulated grievances, no significant change has occurred in the situation of the workers, as analyzed in the last Political Resolution. A basic change can come about only with a worsening in the material conditions of the masses.

Neither the administration nor its labor agents would ease their respective witch-hunts in the slightest in case of a partial deal with the Kremlin. But the consequences of altering the rate of the militarization program and the conclusion of a truce in Korea could modify the prevailing relations between Big Business and organized labor. A slackening in production, with consequent unemployment, would lead to a worsening in the economic outlook and living conditions of the workers. The elimination of overtime and the difficulties in getting two jobs would pinch the budgets of many families burdened with installment or mortgage payments. Even a minor shake-down would permit the employers, sure of support from government agencies, to take the offensive against the unions, tighten the screws upon the personnel in factories and offices, further hack away at union conditions and organizations and increase the speed-up. The monopolists will seize the chance to try to pound the powerful labor movement into submissiveness and regiment it still more for the next phases of their war-drive.

These provocations would arouse anger and protest among the workers. Despite a disadvantageous economic situation and the handicaps of their leadership, a growing spirit of resentment and resistance to the aggressions of the employers could erupt in sporadic strikes and wildcat actions.

A major shift in the economic situation would have to intervene before any drastic shake-up in the relations between the capitalists and organized labor would develop and before the mass of workers could begin to pass over from their present relative quiescence to large-scale class action and fierce social struggles. But the relaxation of war tension, coupled with Republican reaction spearheaded by McCarthyism and punctuated by Big Business attacks on labor, can shake the relative stability of class forces and give rise to a conjunctural sharpening of the class struggle. How deeply this would go and how long it would last would depend on unforeseeable circumstances.

The notion that little if anything effective can be accomplished in action by the militants in the union movement until a general war has run a considerable course, is false in perspective and practice. The transition of the workers to a more energetic state will be the result of prolonged molecular processes. Even small signs of a shift in their moods and actions must be noted and their first expressions grasped if the militants of the vanguard are to fulfill their role as a ferment in the process of radicalization.

Without plunging into any ill-considered or reckless moves, party members and sympathizers must remain alert to changes in the moods and movements of their shopmates and be ready to work with them as they rise up to defend their conditions. They should look for openings to bring forward the ideas and proposals of the transitional program as a guide to the activity of the militants and thereby extend the influence of the party and its program.

It would be wrong and unwarranted to overlook opportunities of this kind and permit them to pass by without intervention on the ground that they will not decisively alter the over-all situation. Even if the war drive should be stepped up and the war advances rapidly, cutting across a sharpening of the class struggle, and suppressing for a while its manifestations, such efforts would be justified. They preserve the working class from demoralization and despair, strengthen the militants in the eyes of the union ranks, help them cope with repressions and victimizations and win supporters for our movement.

### III. Party Tasks for the Next Period

The Theses on the Coming American Revolution, adopted in 1946, govern the broad course of the party in the historical unfolding of the struggle for socialism in this country. The work of the membership in the next period should be conducted in accord with the main line of orientation laid down in the political resolution of the 15th National Convention. Anything at variance with this revolutionary orientation must be rejected. All the specific tasks indicated are designed to implement our course of continuing to build an independent revolutionary party rooted in the mainstream of the organized working class.

For the coming months there is no single task within the framework of our major orientation like the national election campaign in 1952, upon which our forces are to be concentrated and to which others are to be subordinated. The party has to engage in a gen-

eral rounded program of activities suited to available forces and resources. The most important are the following:

### 1. Labor Party

The Labor Party provides the most general formula for our efforts to advance the politicalization of the union militants. For the time being our work around this issue is largely confined to education, propaganda and agitation. There are now few signs of organized moves in the direction of the Labor Party in the mass organizations. But the ranks manifest a willingness to listen to arguments for independent political action which must be cultivated. Regardless of the low ebb in the Labor Party movement, the party must persevere in its preparatory work in the CIO-PAC, the AFL-LLPE and unions and watch for occasions to hammer home the urgent need for the Labor Party in the press, unions, and mass organizations.

### 2. Union Work

Possibilities for fruitful trade union work are present even under adverse conditions. But the type and scope of union activities necessarily vary according to objective circumstances. Participation of the comrades in union actions is almost wholly -- and rightly -- confined at present to issues which remain within the framework of official policy and do not bring them into direct conflict with local and international officials.

However, it is possible, and advisable, within these restrictions to carry on certain types of work: to circulate the paper, fight shop grievances, oppose the witch-hunters, improve their own political education, contact the best militants and recruit them into the party. Through a judicious use of appropriate slogans from the Transitional Program it is possible to raise and help generalize the thinking of workers and guide their development. To carry out this union work it is imperative to improve the coordination of union fractions nationally and locally. Both have been extremely lax in the past period. Rectification of this will help increase the effectiveness of the fractions.

The party must take note of two important aspects of the union movement.

a) The presence of two different strata among the workers. One comprises the older, better-paid, more skilled and privileged, with lengthy seniority, who tend to be conservatized, more tired, less mobile. The other embraces the younger, poorer-paid, less skilled, without much seniority or stake in the job, harder-driven and discriminated against. These underprivileged layers, often including ex-GI's, women, Negroes, Mexicans, Puerto-Ricans, and other minorities, are less conservatized and likely to be more impatient, vigorous and combative. We must consciously direct attention to these fresh elements and base our work more and more upon them because they are the best material and will be the main driving force in the formation of any emerging left-wing.

b) The Negro workers play a twofold role inside the union, and between the Negro community and organized labor. Their strug-



gles against discrimination on the job, just in themselves, can also serve to heighten the consciousness and militancy of the white workers and in some cases push the union bureaucrats into action. The colored workers also transmit class militancy and radical ideas to their own Negro community. These considerations urge that particular attention be paid to the struggles and demands of the Negro worker. Wherever the union is officially on record to fight discrimination, the militants must keep this from remaining a dead letter and try to realize it side by side with the Negro members.

### 3. Negro Work

The party's attitude toward the NAACP as the predominant national organization of the Negro people is to support it, help build it, function within it, make it a better agency of struggle for Negro rights. This long-range work must be carried on with the same patience and persistence as union work, despite the undeniable difficulties imposed by its petty-bourgeois leadership and many other shortcomings of the organization. Efforts should be exerted to link the unions more closely with the NAACP and interest Negro unionists in becoming members and activists in the local organization, as the nucleus of its progressive wing and sympathizers with our ideas.

In addition to engaging in local movements on Negro grievances, local initiative can be taken on burning national issues, such as Los Angeles exercised in the Moore bombings, and Buffalo on the Willie McGee case.

Special attention should be given to holding classes for Negro contacts; to the Marxist education of our Negro cadres and to acquainting party members and sympathizers with the socialist approach to the history, struggles and problems of the Negro people.

### 4. Youth and Student Work

Particular heed must be given to the special needs and problems of young workers in industries, offices and neighborhoods in order to attract them to our movement.

Activities on the campus should stress (a) taking party campaigns to the students in local and national elections such as in the Dobbs-Weiss campaign and defense cases like the Kutcher, Trucks Law and Illinois 1030 fights. (b) entering campus protest movements against the witch-hunters to protect academic freedom, (c) where feasible, forming groups or clubs to educate the student youth in socialist ideas.

### 5. Struggle for Women's Rights

Agitation for child's care and recreational centers and for better school facilities offer one of the best approaches at present to the general field of struggle for women's rights.

In the shops the union membership can be mobilized to demand equal pay for equal work, uniform upgrading and the abolition of discrimination against women workers.

## 6. The Party Fight for Legality and Defense Cases

The intensification of the witch-hunt which intimidates so many likewise engenders opposition in widening circles menaced by McCarthyism. This provides a broader basis for organizing resistance to the witch-hunters. Our party has never failed to support any struggles against encroachments on democratic rights or in defense of the victims of reactionary attack from the Stalinists in the Smith Act and Rosenberg cases to the Quakers and Jehovah's Witnesses.

On its own behalf the party has carefully selected those issues and cases to fight back on which had the widest appeal and promised to rally the widest support. It has been practically impossible and politically undesirable to openly contest every act of victimization. At the same time, wherever the basic rights and legality of the party was threatened by federal, state or local legislation and effective forces could be mobilized, the party has accepted the challenge, as in the Seattle ballot case, the attempt to rule the SWP off the ballot in New York, the Illinois petition law 1030, and above all the Trucks Law in Michigan and the Devine Bill in Ohio.

This series of actions springs from our determination to fight the witch-hunters for the utmost freedom of functioning under the given conditions. The party is resolved not to yield an inch more to the reaction than is necessary or compulsory. The revolutionary vanguard has the duty to contend for the broadest scope for its political work submitting to restriction and repression only against overwhelming odds and irresistible force, and returning to the open field as quickly as changed circumstances permit.

The principled character of our policy in defending all victims of reaction, and the vigor of our defense work has enlisted broad labor and liberal support, exposed the Stalinists by contrast, and made the witch-hunters a bit more cautious in applying measures of repression against our party.

The fight for legality is closely bound up with our general activities as a political party. Participation in election campaigns is one of the best and most effective ways of establishing and safeguarding the right to function as a legal organization. The Plenum categorically rejects any tendency to retreat or retire from the electoral field under present conditions. Through such activities the party demonstrates that it is not a sect or a propaganda group but is striving to fulfill its role as guide and leader in the living mass movement. The courageous challenge to the witch-hunters on the electoral field as elsewhere attracts new forces toward a party which demonstrates that it is not cowed by the onset of reaction.

## 7. Opponent's Work

The 1952 Convention resolution states that, while it is necessary and important to carry on activity among opponent organizations, such work must be strictly subordinated to our main work in unions and mass organizations, not only in words but in practice.

The party favors opponents work in Stalinized movements wherever investigation ascertains that this promises fruitful results and is not at the expense of our major line of endeavor. Naturally, those comrades working within such organizations must adapt themselves to the tasks in hand. But it is impermissible for the party press or its representatives to adopt a conciliatory attitude toward the Communist Party or to any other alien political tendency.

Wherever we encounter the Stalinists in our work in the mass movement, our task is to challenge this rival and combat their ideas and influence as part of the contest for leadership of the radicalized elements. This is the more imperative in view of the latest rightward turn of the C.P. toward entry into the Democratic Party, supporting Democrats and liberal capitalist politicians, nestling closer to the trade union bureaucracy, and opposing in practice the real preparations for a Labor Party. This latest turn of the American C.P. is another link in a long chain of class betrayals.

Moreover, our opponent's work encompasses a broader field than Stalinist circles alone. Wherever new formations mobilizing significant mass opposition to capitalist reaction and heading in a progressive direction, start to crystallize, as around the ADA in New Jersey, the situation should be probed for possibilities of conducting fruitful work among them.

#### 8. Election Campaigns

The experiences of the last three campaigns (the Presidential, the Los Angeles and Oakland municipal elections) indicate the pattern for the party's electoral work in the present period. The party rejects the concept that election campaigns are to be run only under exceptional conditions as incidental activities. The party has a more positive attitude on this question. It seeks to enter elections wherever conditions are not prohibitive. The Los Angeles and Oakland campaigns conformed in all respects to these requirements and demonstrated what can be accomplished today. They showed that good results may be expected in return for the energy expended.

The aims of our electoral work are not primarily to amass votes, but to reach the maximum audience with our ideas, catch their attention through the slogans of the Transitional Program and our anti-war agitation, interest new people in socialism, and thereby develop a pool of supporters from which contacts can be drawn and recruits made in follow-up activity.

Election campaigns reinforce and supplement other types of mass work. They bring the message of the party into the unions through our candidates and help comrades in the shops who cannot otherwise openly identify themselves to refer their shopmates to the broadcasts and literature of the party as a basis for discussion. Election campaigns stimulate and elevate the political life of the branch, keep the party in closer touch with the sentiments of the people, and out in the arena of political life.

The prospective supporters of our movement have not been assembled in any single place or under any one banner, but are scattered throughout the mass, and can only be reached through precisely such means. The party's main efforts must therefore be directed not toward propagandizing in the relatively restricted politically advanced circles, but to addressing unionized workers, Negroes and other critical-minded but politically unattached elements, with our agitation on the immediate issues of greatest concern to them, linking these up with the transitional demands and our socialist views on the problems posed by the war, witch-hunt, capitalist rule, the colonial revolutions, etc.

#### 9. Press Circulation

As the voice of socialism and principal organizer of the party, the circulation of the press must be the constant concern of the branches and not be permitted to lapse into routine. The campaigns in the past few years have shown that circulation can be maintained and new circles of readers penetrated if this work is efficiently organized. With proper planning and direction sub campaigns can be morale builders for the branches.

#### 10. Educational Work

The experience of numerous branches has demonstrated the value of holding regular forums on the big issues of the day.

Internal educational work should center around basic training classes for new and prospective members, classes on the Transitional Program and its application to current problems, on the basic documents of our movement, on Marxist theory, and the history of the party.

### IV. 25th ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN TROTSKYISM

Next October will mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. It also coincides with the 50th anniversary of the birth of Bolshevism in 1903. Through the person of Trotsky and the Left Opposition in the Russian Communist Party an unbroken line of continuity links the beginnings of Bolshevism in Czarist Russia with American Bolshevism represented by the Socialist Workers Party.

The party should fittingly celebrate this occasion with an extensive program of public and internal activities under the supervision and direction of the Political Committee. These should be designed to inspire and inform sympathizers, contacts and members about the meaning of our prolonged fight for revolutionary socialism in the citadel of world capitalism.

The following activities are recommended to the Political Committee as part of this program:

1. A 25th Anniversary Fund to be raised apart from the regular budget and ear-marked for special projects as follows:

- a) The holding of the Fourth Session of the Trotsky School.
- b) Publication in pamphlet form of the six Los Angeles lectures on "America's Road to Socialism" and other pamphlets on the history of the SWP and the significance of its struggles.
- c) The sustaining and improvement of the magazine.
- d) Pamphlets on the CIO, the Labor Party and the Negro question.

2. A special anniversary issue of the magazine and a sustained series of articles in the paper.

3. National tours and anniversary banquets.

4. The Trotsky memorial meetings held in August should be linked up with the coming 25th anniversary of the party.

# # #

SUPPLEMENT TO 1952 POLITICAL RESOLUTION

(Submitted by the PC Minority)

(Rejected by Plenum, 8 votes for, 17 votes against)

1. In its first 100 days, the Eisenhower administration has continued and sharpened the drive of American imperialism toward world counter-revolutionary war begun under the Truman regime. In one way, the danger of a more precipitate war has become greater in consequence of the greater aggressiveness and changed personnel of the new administration.

a. Kennan's strategy of "containment" has been junked for the more bellicose doctrine "liberation."

b. The presence of John Foster Dulles in the office of Secretary of State has brought the most aggressive section of finance capital, the man most closely identified with the "preventive war" theory, to the helm of foreign affairs. From the first day in office Dulles has been feverishly conspiring to side track or undermine any diplomatic moves that could lead to any attenuation of the cold war.

c. While still not dominant, the "war with China" gang and its spearhead "The China Lobby," always an important part of the Republican Party, have assumed more prominence with the Republican administration in power. Without yet accepting their design for the war strategy, Eisenhower has steadily retreated before them, yielding to many of their proposals and integrating their conceptions to a more important position in the global strategy. The most significant move in this direction was the shake-up in the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the prominence now assumed by militarists who have flaunted their sympathies for MacArthurite conceptions and "war with China" aims. Further, a larger percentage of foreign "aid" is now slated for the Far East.

2. At the same time, Eisenhower inherited from the Truman administration all the contradictions and obstacles of welding together a counter-revolutionary coalition in the face of inter-imperialist contradictions, of a constantly rising and spreading colonial revolution and of the disruptive effects on the world economic equilibrium of American imperialism's dominant position.

The drive for European re-armament has clashed against the precarious economies of Western Europe, threatening constantly to undermine them, and has had to be slowed down. In effect, NATO has become a colossal bargain counter where by blackmail, intrigue, etc., the satellite powers have been struggling among themselves and with their American master for a larger share of limited rations. It was inevitable that Dulles' attempts to solve the situation by ultimatums should produce -- not larger armies or speedier re-armament but a crisis.

On the other side, the continued rise of the colonial revolution now spreading throughout Africa further emphasizes the second-rate status of the European powers and renders them even more impotent to counterpose any effective resistance to U.S. imperialism. But if world "law and order" increasingly rests on American assistance, it also magnifies Wall Street's problems immeasurably.

3. Into the midst of this situation, before the Eisenhower administration could tie together the threads of its new policy, came Stalin's death. Mistaking the crisis of the regime for a crisis of

the social system in the U.S.S.R. and believing it was now in a position to extort big concessions, the Eisenhower administration committed the fantastic blunder of launching a counter "peace offensive" (consisting of all demands and no offers.) The mistake was and is being dextrously exploited by the Soviet Union and China. From the other side, the European powers eagerly grasped the mistake to try to get off Dulles' hook and to secure a certain relaxation of the cold war. The coincidence of events, not increased strength, raised their bargaining power considerably vis a vis the State Department. As a result, Eisenhower needs time to straighten out the tangled lines of foreign policy and repair the shaky European coalition.

There is such a wide disparity between the sweeping capitulation demanded by Eisenhower in his "peace" speech and the secondary concessions possible in a deal as to make the whole project very dubious. A settlement in Korea, aside from assuaging a section of public opinion at home, has no serious advantages because it strengthens, not weakens, the Chinese Revolution, U.S. imperialism's second main target of attack. Austria, a seemingly negotiable controversy, likewise provides only dubious advantages to imperialism as it leaves open and insoluble the German question.

On the other side, even the pundits of the State Department are now learning that states and revolutions are no longer pawns in the hands of the Kremlin to be traded for its own needs. The industrialization, integration and social transformation of the workers' states of Eastern Europe, now extending to Eastern Germany, has become a historical and irreversible social fact not subject to alteration by diplomacy or deals. The rise of the New China, its attainment of co-direction with the Kremlin, placing the Asian movement under its aegis, obliges the Kremlin to support China against U.S., it cannot bargain with imperialism at China's expense without disrupting the alliance.

Under such conditions, with nothing substantial to gain from a "deal," Eisenhower by his blunders has thus once again inadvertently run head on into the major dilemma of U.S. imperialism: no basic settlement is possible short of war; the present unfavorable relationship of forces on the world scale cannot be altered by deals, diplomacy, or piecemeal measures (Korea); the coalition can only be consolidated by and in war since it is the only fundamental class interest -- and not a coincidence of interest nationally, economically or politically -- that binds the coalition together. As the war preparations reach a military and diplomatic impasse, the problem of war is posed to the American bourgeoisie in shotgun fashion.

4. It is precisely this impossibility of wresting any major concessions from a temporary agreement with the Soviet anti-imperialist camp, of succeeding in any serious way in the time provided to alter the unfavorable relationship of forces, that causes the American bourgeoisie to hesitate before the enormosity of the task that it has set itself -- world counter-revolution. The hesitation is further fostered by the fact that American imperialism must take the sole and unprovoked initiative of precipitating the war. Far from being goaded into this position by impatient allies, the U.S. must drag them reluctantly, unwillingly into the conflict. Instead of any direct assault from the anti-imperialist bloc, it faces a constant erosion of capitalist world stability by the prodigious economic growth of the

USSR, the Workers' States of Eastern Europe and of China -- and on the other hand the encroachment of the colonial revolution from the peripheries of the capitalist world. Unlike the German and Japanese ruling classes who were driven into war not only out of historic, organic and long-range needs but because of immediate crisis, the American bourgeoisie is not yet in a desperate position. The domestic market, its main economic base, has undergone no qualitative retrenchment -- profit-taking remains at peak levels. Hence the hesitations, indecision, wavering and even the differences of opinion within top ruling circles.

5. As was pointed out in the Political Resolution adopted by the July 1952 Convention, the danger and time-table of war is hinged directly to the evolution of the economic situation in the U.S. The outbreak of economic crisis will not only put an end to social stability, but it will hurl the remaining centers of capitalism in the world into revolutionary crisis. Whatever its other plans, or lack of plans, any strong trend to economic crisis will constitute the single, most compelling factor deciding the American bourgeoisie. Any indecision will be overcome by the assumption of power by the powerful cabal of reactionaries headed by the McCarthys and the Pentagon. What America faces is not economic crisis that will erupt into social crisis, and therefore make the war impossible because of the disruption of the social stability on which the possibility of waging war rests. It faces economic crisis which will lead into the war either directly or soon after the first beginnings of struggles which herald the social crisis. The full outbreak of the social crisis awaits the drastic cuts in living standards, regimentation, sufferings, casualties and defeats of the war itself.

6. Meanwhile the equilibrium continues to depend on the ability of the domestic market to absorb the large and ever rising productive capacity of American industry. During the latter period of the Truman administration, there was a deliberate attempt to provide markets for the ever-threatening overproduction by new investments in armaments and overseas aid. In addition to overall considerations for avoiding the crisis, the policy was aided by the desire for profit-grabs by heavy industry, and by the desire of the Truman administration to maintain full employment, the principal cement of the Democratic-Labor coalition. The limits of this policy were determined by realistic military factors -- after new plant and equipment for the war machine reached completion, continuance of as large military spending depends on the mass production of weapons, etc., and that is directly hinged on the date of the outbreak of the war itself. These limits were being reached as Eisenhower took office. In addition, an important section of the bourgeoisie is far more concerned with reducing the tax drain on its profits than with maintaining full employment. It is further felt that the re-establishment of a small reserve army of unemployed, which they mistakenly believe can be done without a major crisis, will re-adjust the relationship of forces between capital and labor to the former's advantage. The combination of measures, headed by reduction in arms and overseas expenditures -- although taken cautiously and under constant interference and demands of the Pentagon -- will within the next period, when joined to the creation of large surpluses, cause the beginnings of economic decline.

7. Until these tendencies mature, however, there is not likely to be any serious alteration in the general living standards. This is



reinforced by the fact that lowered arms expenditures and over-production tend to cause a deflationary and not inflationary trend in the economy. The removal of controls under these circumstances was the recognition of this existing fact.

Within the unions themselves, there is as yet no noticeable movement to the left. The bureaucracy still faces no serious challenge from the ranks, as seen from the recent auto workers convention. Even the clean-up in the IIA is being directed by the AFL Executive Council, mostly under pressure of intervention by government and because of the absence of significant rank and file rebellion.

Barring a new downturn in the economic cycle, and a resultant reduction in the standard of living, only a full-scale offensive of the employers against the unions could provoke major struggles, which might tend to give rise to labor party sentiments. The employers, however, are still forced to move cautiously and slowly. The projected revisions in the Taft-Hartley Law do not envisage any such offensive although they are clearly designed to alter, to the detriment of labor, the government-capital-labor relationships that existed in the Roosevelt-Truman era.

Big Business is still rolling in record profits. Mindful that any head-on attack against the powerful labor movement will disrupt the prevailing social stability and lead to a convulsion at home, it remains content, for the time being, with harassing guerrilla operations in the knowledge it can make certain progress in this direction without encountering effective resistance from the labor movement. The supine labor bureaucracy which is wedded to the war program is fearful of any challenge to Big Business while it so securely holds the reins of government in an openly anti-labor administration.

8. The decisive change that has occurred since the Republican victory is the rise of McCarthyism from the opposition to the most powerful, feared voice in the Eisenhower administration. The administration does not deal with McCarthy as another Republican senator, even an important one; it treats with him as with a separate power. His weapons of blackmail, intimidation and terror haunt every government bureau from the State Department down, influence their policies, determine appointments. Even if McCarthyism is not yet the decisive official voice in the government, his present position reveals more accurately the real physiognomy of the American state today. As the 1952 Political Resolution correctly forecast:

"Counter-revolutionary aims on the world arena favor and stimulate reaction on all fronts at home, in fact, require it. The prototypes for a land committed to counter-revolution are to be found in Hitler Germany, in Japan and in Czarist Russia. From a political and economic viewpoint -- from the mentality of the militarists as well as from the all-consuming needs of the war machine -- powerful independent trade unions are equally as intolerable in the land of the counter-revolution as are land reforms and the nationalization of property in the countries against which the war is directed.

"The issue before the American people is not whether 'American democracy' is superior to 'Communist totalitarianism' but that the inevitable counterpart of the war against Communism is the destruction of democracy and the imposition of the most vicious forms of capitalist

reaction at home. It is McCarthy, not Truman, who is the most faithful domestic representative of the world program of U.S. imperialism and it is the influence of McCarthyism which grows in direct ratio to the proximity of the war while Truman's declines, despite the fact that he has adopted most of McCarthy's program. To accept the anti-Communist war means in effect to abandon any effective struggle against McCarthyism as has already been made quite plain by the impotence of the union officialdom, the liberals and social democrats in face of the witch hunt. An understanding of the direct link between these two aspects of the same question will serve as the basis of the radicalization of individuals and groups today and of broader masses tomorrow."

McCarthy's witch-hunting purging operations are now reaching out more boldly to attack and defame the entire liberal or ex-New Deal wing of the bourgeoisie. Whatever the immediate intent of this fascist-like method, the effect must ultimately be to outlaw opposition and criticism of the most reactionary wing of the Republican party and create a totalitarian obedience toward it.

At one stage or another, McCarthy will surely extend his attacks to the unions. The extent of this head-on anti-labor offensive, and the ability of the American labor movement to mount a counter-drive may well determine the political physiognomy of America as it enters the war. This is one of the most important problems -- if not the most important problem -- confronting the American labor movement, and merits special attention, study and analyses from every angle on the part of the SWP.

Already many in the labor movement, including sections of the bureaucracy, are frightened at the growing power of McCarthyism and aware of the danger to themselves and the unions. The kind of struggle against McCarthyism that they will project is foreshadowed by the proposals of Biddle, president of the ADA, and Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU. But the spreading scope of McCarthy's attacks and the increasingly wide range of his victims is beginning to create the conditions for the formation of a broad movement against the witch hunt.

The struggle against McCarthyism must become one of the principal political tasks of the party in the next period, and offers us a significant opportunity to teach American workers the difference between a militant, principled struggle against McCarthyism, and a whining, ineffective, foredoomed opposition of the liberal variety. The struggle against McCarthyism will remain ineffectual unless and until the labor movement is mobilized in militant action and becomes the base and the driving force of the fight. The central slogan for the next period must be the calling of a Congress of Labor to consist of labor unions, Negro and liberal organizations which could launch the campaign against McCarthyism.

The contradiction between the world counter-revolutionary program of American imperialism and the growing revolutionary struggles in Europe, and colonial revolutions in Asia and Africa, will inevitably lead U.S. imperialism to a catastrophe. What this awaits are rebuffs and defeats abroad and the outburst of social crises at home. This perspective, based upon the facts, provide the greatest realism for the revolutionary outlook in the U.S. We must infuse the membership

with a conviction of this revolutionary perspective and the reasons for it, one of the central points of the Third World Congress documents. But no Marxist organization can survive merely by its conviction of a revolutionary future. What is necessary now is to devise the correct tactics in the intervening period of the witch hunt and the ascendancy of reaction to lay the groundwork for future struggles. This is correctly provided in the 1952 Convention Resolution and in "Roots of the Party Crisis," and must become party policy implemented concretely by the leadership.

The 1952 Convention Resolution analyzed the situation in the labor movement as one of "conservatism" and "relative quiescence." Nothing has occurred during the past year to alter this situation. Moreover, the United States is now heading into a maelstrom of global conflict as the spearhead of counter-revolution.

Thus both the present situation and the main indicated line of development is one of a continuation of reaction, until the time that war sacrifices alter the situation and prepare the conditions of social crisis. This is the basic view which must govern the party's perspective and activities in the coming period, until circumstances alter it.

It is quite true that, within this main line of development, we may witness serious conflicts and struggles before the war or during its early stages. We should be prepared at all times to take fullest advantage of them.

However, it would be false to base our main perspective upon interim possibilities. Our activity and perspective for activity must be based upon the present and the main expected line of the future. Both of these at present point to the deepening of the policy of proletarianization on the one side and the strengthening of our propaganda approach to the vanguard elements of the class in the unions, Negro organizations and in rival radical movements, on the other.

"The Roots of the Party Crisis," submitted by ten members of the NC (Internal Bulletin, Vol. 15, No. 8) contains a correct appraisal of the principal tactical direction of party work today. We propose the adoption of this orientation by the party, and the formulation of a program of party activity around it.

# # #

IV

POLITICAL RESOLUTION

Submitted by S. Marcy, V. Grey, T. Wilson  
(Rejected by Plenum, 1 vote for, 24 votes against)

1. The global class struggle now raging in most countries of the world, and casting its enveloping flames over the remaining countries, is the first phase of the basic, decisive struggle of our epoch. Proletarian tactics at home, as well as abroad, must flow from this strategic proposition. The concept of the war as a global class war, must be sharpened, and posed point blank, not only as a literary or even a historical, generalization, but as guide to action. Our position on this war can less than on any other war, remain in the realm of abstraction. The "world revolution" as a worthy goal of some future time, cannot be counterposed to the present, immediate, all-important task of defending our entire class camp, as the given, concrete, stage of the world revolution today.

Each new event in the present struggle must be weighed on the global scale. The most "national" tactic must be surveyed with the aid of the global chain, and understood as in fact, one of the links of that chain. Each big decision must be considered as it affects the global struggle. Concomitantly, our press must still more thoroughly propagate the concept of the present world war as a global class struggle, with more insight as to its real meaning, and its effect within our own national borders. Our press should more consistently employ the phrase "global class war" in order more clearly to define the social character of our support to Russia, China, Eastern Europe and the revolutionary movement all over the world. It is a popular but precise formula for revolutionary defeatism.

We must continually make crystal clear that we are uncompromising Bolsheviks who aim to facilitate the victory of our own class camp. We are opposed to abstentionism and pacifism, as well as to the special kind of pacifism touted by the Stalinists. With all necessary regard for capitalist legality, there must be no possibility of misinterpretation on any one's part as to where we stand, which side of the battle line is our side. This applies to the global war just as concretely as to any isolated battle of the class war in the smallest factory.

2. The struggles of the American working class are already connected in a hundred contradictory ways to this global war, even though this class has not yet attained to consciousness of its historical unity with its world class camp. As the American class struggle breaks out into a more unrestricted field, however, it must surely adopt the banner of proletarian internationalism, not in the Platonic spirit of merely observing the parallel nature of the other revolutions on the globe, but rather in the drive, at first extremely hesitant and doubtful-- but at a later stage, irresistible in its onward rush -- to interlink its fate with the rest of the proletarian world.

This does not at all contradict the basic proposition that the American workers will find a specifically American way of carrying out their tactics. On the contrary, this is already guaranteed by the previous development of the class struggle. It is of course the grievances that arise at home which will provide the steam for the revolutionary engine. It scarcely needs to be emphasized that from the most elementary demand to give equal rights to a Negro on the job to the great sit-down strikes over wages and union recognition, the workers have expressed themselves in their own way, and developed their own techniques. And it is almost superfluous to add that the great explosive dynamism inherent in the American working class will vent itself in a purely American form.

The thousands and tens of thousands of individual revolutionaries who will lead the American Revolution, however, will first test their strength in the trials of the international revolution. They will learn their first important lessons from the school of the still-living Russian Revolution, and in a global classroom, and can only learn the lessons of Haywood and Debs in the international spirit of Lenin and Trotsky. It cannot possibly be otherwise when every leader of the class struggle in America is even now being branded as a Soviet agent, and is called upon to repudiate the Soviet Union and the whole world-wide class camp of his oppressed brothers.

The class character of this war predetermines that all, even the most incidental, struggles of the workers, will meet with a vituperation infinitely greater than that which met the miners' fight during the last war. Not agents of Hitler or Tojo, but agents of "communist" Russia and China will be the cry. No one can arm himself against this onslaught for long unless he stands firmly on the rock foundation of the Russian and Chinese revolutions.

On the other hand, the red-baiting is only the negative side of a global current. The full circuit can only electrify the American workers when they acquire the positive understanding that to be pro-Soviet, pro-Chinese, etc. is to be pro-American worker, and that the unity of their class is necessary on a world-wide basis. Just as the workers very soon realize that the foreman is only an agent of a great corporation, and after a lengthy series of harsh experiences begin to comprehend that the capitalist government is the executive committee of all the corporations, so they will come to understand that the American ruling class is one part of the world bourgeoisie just as they, the workers, are a part of the world proletariat.

Long before the final rising of the American workers, however, which every honest revolutionary may easily recognize for what it is, the global class struggle, its shape bureaucratically distorted, and its features bespewn with anti-Soviet mud, presents itself on the American scene a hundred times or more. The greater mass of the American workers do not yet see their own interests under this "foreign" disguise skillfully provided by the joint efforts of the Russian bureaucracy and the American bourgeoisie. They do not at this time understand the true nature of the witch-hunt, of the Rosenberg Case, the CP trials, the Kutcher Case, etc. But a small minority principally composed of the American labor bureaucrats, spews out the most poisonous abuse against these cases, and by its loud cries, often gives the false appearance of representing the majority of American labor. A small minority of workers recognize these cases as an integral part of their own struggle. This group will prove to be the most advanced on the domestic questions too. It is our task to build a cadre far bigger than this present group, but out of the same human material. It is our task to steel this cadre with the program of intransigent internationalism, that is, the only internationalism that has meaning for the class struggle today -- the active defense of our global class camp, especially including the Soviet Union and China.

#### OUR ATTITUDE TO THE STALINISTS

3. The Stalinist parties are a global phenomenon. The American CP is no exception to this rule. The American Stalinists are not qualitatively different from any other Stalinists. Since the world Stalinists are at present in the leadership of most sections of the world class struggle, and since the US bourgeoisie is the leader of the capitalist camp in that struggle, it is completely understandable that the American bourgeoisie should ruthlessly attack

the Stalinists at home. It should be doubly clear, and obvious to all, that the bourgeoisie is not attacking the Stalinists because of their treacherous role within the working class movement. These attacks are directed against the Stalinists because they are part and parcel of the world Stalinist movement, which in spite of itself is at the head of several workers states, and mass revolutionary movements in other countries. In defending the Stalinists against persecution, we are not defending their treachery to the workers, and not merely defending civil rights as such, but defending our global class interests against our most hated class enemy.

4. It must be clearly understood that in the present upturn of the Stalinist parties it is very difficult to recruit from them, even though we work with them. The successes in Eastern Europe and the revolutionary victories in the far East can at this time fortify their belief in Stalinist "theory" and their **worship** of the "accomplished fact", (even though this accomplishment most crushingly refutes their theory). The persecutions at home, in addition to the successes abroad, also tend to give them strength, and a degree of hope that the historical forces are with them.

Under these conditions, it takes the utmost clarity on our part to differentiate ourselves in a revolutionary manner. Even more than clarity, it takes the constant implementation of our program with respect to theirs, and in competition with them. It takes the continual crystallization of our Marxist thought into the mold of revolutionary actions. The aim of these actions, in the long run, must be to seize the initiative from them on every class issue so as to prepare to seize the leadership of the whole global class struggle, which without us must be lost.

This is a more difficult task than merely approaching the Stalinists. This is not merely a question of overcoming inertia, old habits, finding a new milieu, etc. It is a question of sharply posing our position on the USSR, our general anti-war tasks, our principle of revolutionary defeatism, none of which they can effectuate without coming over to our position, the position of revolutionary Marxism, of Trotskyism.

#### OUR WORK IN THE PP AND ALP

5. (A) The American Labor Party and the Progressive Party **have** generally a working class character, and it is proper for us to work in them. A more careful assessment of these parties, however, must include the following observations:

Their program and their line is the line of bourgeois radicalism. They are, with the possible exception of Marcantonio's election machine, CP or semi-CP fronts. When, or if, the CP leaves them, it will not necessarily leave behind the real independents, and anti-collaborators, while they, the CP wither to death on the capitalist Democratic vine. Such a view would be utterly formalistic and one-sided.

The proposed Stalinist maneuver to enter the Democratic Party is just another typical opportunist maneuver of Stalinism, but within the framework of their "left" turn.

It is not a return to the Popular Front of the Thirties. This can be said categorically, not because the CP is incapable of the most venal betrayals of the workers, but because of the present character of its international line. We have already witnessed, for the last five years, the ALP and PP's unprincipled support of capitalist Democrats in the elections, and even a few Republicans. And at a time when their leaders, the CP heads, were on trial for conspiring to "advocate the forcible overthrow of the government". The ALP and PP's actions of this type

were in essential harmony with the nature of Stalinism, but being subordinate to a general international "left" turn, could not by themselves, pull the CP or even the ALP back into the politics of the Popular Front line.

It is not ruled out that the CP can return to some kind of Popular Front of the classical variety. But this would require some change in the world situation, and more particularly, a change in the approach of world Stalinism. And the Moscow bureaucracy has not as yet definitely shown any indication of such a turn. It does not take much foresight, in this situation, to say that the CP turn toward the Democratic Party is foredoomed to failure. (Unless the proposed turn is, in fact, the signal for a new international turn in the Stalinist line, in which case, they will be on the other side of the class barricades.)

Under the present conditions the CP cannot successfully carry out this projected maneuver. This is not especially because of the working class character of their party, but because, even as Stalinists, in the present global class war, they are compelled to defend the Soviet Union, which needless to say, the Democratic Party intransigently opposes. Their entry into the Democratic Party may supply us with yet another index (if one more is necessary) with which to judge their cynicism. But it cannot turn them into pro-capitalist democrats at this time, without their openly breaking with Stalinism.

(B) The dominant ideological tendency in the ALP, apart from Stalinism, is bourgeois radicalism. A bourgeois radical tendency among the workers is of course superior to a conservative tendency, and offers a better milieu in which to work. Certainly even the mildest militants in the unions during the last war, were essentially to the left of the CP, and it was proper to work with them. Likewise, those who stand out against the CP for an independent radical party may continue to offer a good field for our work.

If the CP accomplishes its desired maneuver, the residue remaining in the ALP and PP will not be to the left of the CP as far as the global class war is concerned. Today, the touchstone of working class radicalism is more than ever the Soviet Union, and more and more, the world wide class struggle. The elements left in these parties will be those most opposed to or indifferent toward the Soviet Union. Their essentially bourgeois radicalism will not for long inoculate them against the diseases of anti-sovietism which now infects the labor movement.

This is the most probable perspective under the above conditions. Such a perspective however in no way changes the immediate importance of vigorous and consistent activity in these parties. And even though we must be prepared for the eventual evolution of these parties to the right, we must continue to take advantage of every opportunity to reach the new layers of workers and students whose leftward development may not be immediately cut off by the abrupt political turns of the leadership. (It is from these new layers that we have obtained our most recent political recruits.)

C. On the basis of the above analysis, a section of our membership in the New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago branches, should engage in political work in the ALP and PP. Obviously this work should be done by competent, qualified members.

#### DEFENSE OF THE USSR

6. We are the best defenders of the USSR and of the whole global class camp. We do not for a moment yield this task to the Stalinists. We are opposed to

their nationalistic, pacifistic illusory defense, a defense which no matter how personally heroic it may be on occasion, is inadequate, treacherous, and unworkable. We defend the Soviet Union against the White Guards of all countries. At the same time, we tirelessly explain that only the successes of the global struggle, only the victory of the world revolution -- will finally guarantee the existence of the Soviet Union -- and other conquests as well.

Our defense of the Soviet Union has the most concrete meaning of all to our co-thinkers inside the USSR itself. But the next most important country for this Trotskyist position is the United States. We live in the country where the most powerful bourgeoisie of the world are actively preparing the counter revolutionary onslaught, where even now they are dragooning the workers away from farm and factory, to hurl them against the uprisings of their own class brothers in Asia, only as a prelude to marshalling them into bewildered phalanxes of anti-Soviet intervention. Thus it is all the more important for us to explain that the class interests of the American workers lie in the continued existence of the Soviet Union, that an attack against it is an attack against themselves and that its destruction would be a terrible setback in their own liberation.

We live in a country which must also prove to be the key to the world revolution itself. Thus even were the global issues not already thrusting themselves into the union halls and bourgeois forums, it would be our task to raise them -- to defend the world revolution at its present concrete stage (USSR, China, etc.) in whatever presentable, understandable way we could.

We must sharpen all formulations of the above line, and carry out the class duties which flow from it. The press must be ever more clear on the Russian question. The paper should carry more articles on the progressive character of the economy of the USSR, at the same time explaining the fundamental nature of the economy, why the bureaucracy is secondary, i.e. why it is a workers state. We must have more articles in the magazine attacking the anti-Soviet renegades, and the new crop of bourgeois "Marxist" opponents of the USSR as well. We should have a more systematic, revolutionary defense of the Stalinists who are being attacked as Soviet agents. We should explain the historical limits of the bureaucracy's capacity to defend the USSR, the bureaucracy's incompatibility with a revolutionary i.e. successful -- defense. Accompanying this necessary propaganda and educational approach, our activity in the mass movement today must proceed on the basis of understanding these things. Our concept of the defense of the USSR, which "differs from the Stalinists' as heaven does from earth" as Trotsky put it, must be set into revolutionary motion. Our active, concrete, realistic defense of our own class camp in the global war, is meaningless without the most uncompromising defense of the USSR. In spite of Korea, the USSR still remains the focal point for the bourgeois attack on our class camp. It is at the present stage still the focal point for our defense.

The military intervention has begun in Korea, and may be extended into China. But until the American Revolution is higher up on the agenda, the bourgeoisie will continue to regard the Russian Revolution as the main enemy, and its destruction as their main task.

#### TRADE UNION TASKS AND PERSPECTIVE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

7. The American proletariat is only one link, albeit the most important link in a global class chain. On the basis of a full and



all-sided comprehension of this unshakable fact, it is necessary to build our American party into a capable leadership for characteristically American revolutionary events.

The sixty million and more American workers are already exploited more than any place else in the world if we consider only the broad gulf which separates them from their exploiters. More than this, the mad pace of mass industry is faster and more murderous here than anywhere else, and is only justified in the workers' minds by the reward of automobiles, telephones, washing machines, etc. As the party has predicted many times, a drastic change in this standard of living cannot but meet the most determined resistance from the American working class. Such a change must come -- by virtue of the deep-going contradictions of the capitalist system.

The revolutionary potential of the American working class, however, is incontestably the greatest in the world. The objective conditions ( which include the world conditions) are maturing for the emergence of this section of the world class camp as the decisive factor in the impending global showdown. Whatever the nature of the first of American capitalism's approaching crises, it will give an opening that American labor will not be slow to take. Everything we know and have experienced of the American working class leads inescapably to the conclusion that they will take full advantage of the first serious crack in the wall of American capitalist domination, and push with Trojan might until they have demolished every vestige of capitalist power in America, and the whole world as well.

Aside from the maturing of the objective conditions, all the American working class needs is the leadership of a genuine, devoted, revolutionary Marxist party. The positive side of the American workers' intensely practical viewpoint must become welded to the broadest and most theoretical Marxist generalizations in order to solve their coming gigantic problems. These American needs are in essence already provided for. The American Revolution already has the nucleus of its leadership in our party and our program.

The American working class, probably less than any other in the world, can be led from the outside. The leaders must grow up inside the plants. They must be flesh of the workers' flesh, bone of their bone, attuned to their troubles, small as well as big, and yet be revolutionary Marxists. In order to lead this army of giants into battle, we must sink our roots deeply into its machine made earth, and grow -- grow qualitatively where it is difficult to grow quantitatively.

While the 1952 Political Resolution correctly characterized the present attitude of the American working class as "relatively quiescent" and this mood has not as yet appreciably changed, it is important that a worker revolutionist base himself on the grand prospect of our epoch, and take care not to stub his toe on the present temporary, purely transitory lethargy in the working class. It is necessary, while adjusting ourselves to a momentary and fleeting reality, all the more carefully, and seriously to prepare our cadres for the future events which must not be allowed to pass over our heads.

To this end, we must harden ourselves, inure ourselves, train ourselves by unsparring, unrelenting work in the very depths of the masses. Wherever there is the smallest turn in the situation, even if it be in contradiction to the main trend, we must take advantage of it, push it, get the most out of it, keep the class struggle alive, and prove that the subjective factor, our leadership, is always an element even in the least hopeful situations. We must seek out the

rank-and-file militant and share his troubles as well as his fights with the boss. We must actively participate in those fragmentary phases of the class struggle which involve even the smallest plants, and even the smallest departments of the larger plants. If the union hall is not the best forum at present, then the work-shop itself still provides one. If this becomes more difficult, then the work-bench, and the lunch corner must provide one.

While attempting in every way to seek out the arena of the Stalinists including all their front organizations, we must never lose sight of our main goal, which is the broad mass of the American working class. Hence our slogan for the party membership. Deeper, deeper, and deeper into the trade unions, no matter how difficult the present situation may be. With patience and a clear perspective, our comrades will train themselves for the coming struggle while gaining the only real vantage point from which to conduct the struggle, the heart and core of the working class.

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May 25, 1953

AMERICAN STALINISM AND OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD IT  
(Adopted by Plenum, 16 votes for, 9 votes against)

I.

The Communist Party of the United States is different from its sister parties in such countries as France and Italy. It has all their vices -- cynicism, opportunism unrestrained by any consideration of class principle, readiness for any treachery -- without their virtue: A firm base of support in the mass movement of the most militant workers which deprives the leadership of a free hand and compels them to take sentiments of the workers into account in every turn of their policy, especially under conditions of war and social crisis and a revolutionary upsurge of the masses.

By contrast, the Communist Party of the United States is isolated from the main mass of the living labor movement, exerts very little influence upon it, and is not regulated or restrained in its policy either by the interests of the workers or their sentiments at any given time.

The leading cadres of American Stalinism are not labor bureaucrats in the ordinary sense: that is, officials of mass organizations in which they exert an independent influence as leaders, and are restrained, and to a certain extent regulated, in their policy by this relationship to the mass. The top cadres of the American CP are functionaries of the Kremlin whose task is to serve the aims of its foreign policy on every occasion. They have no independent power or influence as authentic leaders of an organization or movement.

They depend for their positions on the favor of the Soviet bureaucracy and can be dismissed at its will with hardly any more fear of repercussions than the dismissal of managers and clerks of a local branch office of a national business firm. The case of Browder, who long served as "leader" by appointment, and then was dismissed and disposed of without difficulty when his services were no longer required, was only the most publicized and most dramatic illustration of the actual relationship of the official leaders to the party to the Moscow bosses and paymasters.

Lacking any serious independent influence or mass base to which they would have to be responsive, and being free from any real control by the ranks of the party itself, the leading functionaries of American Stalinism are obliged to carry out any turn of policy required by the momentary interests of Soviet foreign policy, and at the same time are free to do so.

II.

The original cadres of the C.P.U.S. originated as a left wing in the Socialist Party in the course of the struggle against the First World War, and gained a powerful impetus from the victorious Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in November 1917. The left wing of the SP adopted the program of Lenin and Trotsky, came out for the Third International immediately upon its formation in March 1919, and split with the SP reformists and centrists over that issue in December 1919.

The young Communist Party suffered far more severe repressions in the period of the post-war Palmer raids than have yet been invoked in

the current witch-hunt. Virtually all the most prominent leaders were indicted, a number of them were convicted and imprisoned. Thousands of rank and file members were arrested in wholesale raids. The party was driven underground right after its formation and did not emerge into full public activity as a legal party until 1923.

The persecutions of the early period decimated the ranks of the party, but its leaders and cadres stood firm and gained thereby a strong moral authority in the eyes of all radically-inclined workers and intellectuals. Armed with the program of the Russian Revolution, and reinforced by its prestige, the CP soon swept all rivals in the radical movement from the field -- IWW, Anarchists, Socialist Party -- while assimilating their best elements, and met the outbreak of the 1929 economic crisis with a monopolistic domination of the whole field of American radicalism.

### III.

The degeneration of the party leadership and cadres, manifested by their unspoken but nonetheless actual renunciation of the perspectives of the socialist revolution in this country, brought them easily and logically to Stalinism, with its theory of "Socialism in One Country." The expulsion of the initiating nucleus of Trotskyists in October 1928 dramatically signaled the definitive transformation of the Communist Party of the U.S. from a revolutionary organization into a controlled instrument of the Kremlin's foreign policy, and the simultaneous transformation of its entire staff from independent leaders of an organization of their own construction into docile functionaries of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy.

This basic transformation of the character and role of the party remained unnoticed by the general mass of workers and intellectuals, newly awakened to radicalism with the onset of the economic crisis. The American Stalinists appeared to be the most radical, even only "revolutionary" grouping. They also profited enormously from the enhanced prestige of the Soviet Union, resulting from its economic advances under the first five-year-plan. The pioneer Trotskyists were isolated and their criticisms ignored in the first years of the depression, when the mass forces for the great radical upsurge were assembling.

The paralysis of the ossified AFL bureaucracy and the Social Democrats on the one side, and the isolation and poverty of forces of the Trotskyists on the other, left a vacuum into which the Communist Party moved without serious obstruction or competition. It gained a monopolistic domination of leadership in the newly-assembling vanguard -- first in the unemployed movement and in the imposing body of students and intellectuals radicalized by the depression; and later in the great labor upsurge which culminated in the formation of the CIO. Even the weak rival movements, the Socialist Party and the Muste organization, which experienced a growth in this period, were heavily influenced by Stalinism and offered no serious resistance to it.

### IV.

The American Stalinists cynically exploited the new mass movement of radicalism, which had come under their influence and domination, in the interests of Soviet foreign policy, betrayed the struggle for

socialism as well as the immediate interests of the workers, and were directly responsible for the demoralization and disorientation of the richly-promising movement. The Rooseveltian social program was the decisive factor in heading off the mass movement and diverting it into reformist channels. But the Stalinists, who supported Roosevelt for reasons of Kremlin foreign policy, miseducated, betrayed, corrupted and demoralized the vanguard of this movement -- a vanguard which numbered tens of thousands of the best and most courageous young militants -- and thus destroyed the first great prospects to build a genuine revolutionary party in America on a mass basis.

The American CP reached its peak of membership and mass strength and influence in the early period of the CIO. Its influence began to decline in the latter period of the war, and has been declining steadily ever since. The Stalinists have lost nearly all the influence and control they once held in the unions. Today they are an isolated sect in the labor movement, and the extent of their isolation is steadily increasing.

## V.

War and post-war events, which have pushed mass-based Stalinist parties in some other countries into class battles and even into revolutionary actions, have not had the same effects on the American Stalinist party. Their policy, dictated by the Kremlin's aim to influence American public opinion in favor of a "co-existence" deal, has been that of a pacifistic nuisance and pressure group. The post-war events have not invested the functionary-leaders of American Stalinism with any revolutionary virtues. The whole post-war course of their policy, centered around the treacherous formula of "co-existence" -- which implies an offer to support American capitalism in return for an agreement -- has been and remains a policy of class-collaboration. This has not been changed by radical phrases or in the least sanctified or mitigated by the refusal of American imperialism, up to the present, to accept it.

The latest turn of the American Stalinists to the Democratic Party, which they ardently supported in the war-time era, and their opposition to an independent labor party -- is not a revolutionary demonstration, but a continuation of their policy of class treachery. Neither can it be excused as a mere device to seek "cover," for an honest class party of the workers never seeks "cover" in the class party of capitalism.

The formal modification of the American Stalinists' refusal to support the civil rights of Trotskyists -- demonstrated in their demand for the prosecution and imprisonment of the SWP leaders; their opposition to the defense of Kutcher; their disruption of the Civil Rights Conference in 1949 over these issues -- is not in any respect whatever a sign of "Trotskyist conciliationism." It is merely a temporary lip-service concession to liberal elements whose support they need for the movement in their own defense cases. And this lip-service concession was forced upon them by the independent struggle of the SWP for its own civil rights and the effective united front policy of the SWP directed at the CP as a supplement to our independent struggle.

VI.

The Stalinists have suffered heavily from the intimidation of the witch-hunt, which began with the start of the cold war, and the prosecutions and imprisonment of their leading functionaries. But persecution is by no means the sole cause of their precipitous decline. The persecutions of the CP in its first years, which were far more extensive and severe, drastically cut down its numerical strength, but only strengthened its own morale, and enhanced its moral influence in wide circles. The same was true of the IWW, which was savagely persecuted in the First World War period, and its aftermath. Far more leaders of the IWW were imprisoned in those years than is the case of the CP up to the present. But the IWW came out of it with an enhanced reputation and a greater sympathy than ever in socialist, liberal and progressive labor circles. It was its theoretical and tactical errors, not the persecution, which brought about the decline and eventual eclipse of the once-popular IWW, despite the admirable bravery and self-sacrifice of its cadres.

The decline of the American Stalinists began before the witch-hunt started against them. It got well under way in the latter period of the Second World War when they were still basking in the favor of the government and doing all their dirty work of supporting the war and the no-strike pledge, promoting incentive pay, speed-up schemes, fingering militants for the FBI, and cheering for the imprisonment of the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party.

First, the Stalinists over-played their hand in the fight in the unions around the no-strike pledge, and this brought a revolt of the genuine militants against them. Second, they were outflanked by the Reutherites, who sponsored the GM strike soon after the end of the war, while the Stalinists sabotaged it. Third, our effective campaign of exposure and denunciation during the war and post-war period alerted many militants to the true character and role of the Stalinists.

Our exposure and denunciation of their stool-pigeon role in the Minneapolis case -- recognized far and wide as a violation of the traditional labor ethics -- compromised them in the eyes of many thousands of liberals and trade unionists, and fixed upon them a stigma they can never erase. The Stalinists have also been compromised by their support of all the frame-up trials, mass-murders and slave-labor camps which informed American workers hate and despise, and justly so.

The decline of the American CP, which in some respects takes on the nature of collapse, comes primarily from its own moral rotteness. The Stalinists' cynical promotion of characterless careerists, while honest militants were expelled and slandered, finally boomeranged against them. At the first sign of danger these careerists -- in the Stalinist unions and peripheral organizations, as well as in the party -- began to desert them in droves, and to carry their bits of information to the FBI. Never in history has any radical organization yielded up so many informers, eager to testify against it. Never have so many rank and file workers -- who wanted to be revolutionists -- been demoralized and corrupted, and turned into cynical deserters and renegades. The most effective and enthusiastic participants in the witch-hunt and purge of the Stalinists from unions,

schools, and all other fields of their operation, are former Stalinists or former fellow-travelers.

The moral rottenness of the CP deprives it of the sympathy which has been traditionally given to persecuted groups, and at the same time deprives it of confidence in itself.

## VII.

The leadership of the next upsurge of labor radicalism in the United States is not assigned in advance, either to the new labor bureaucracy or the Stalinists. Neither the one nor the other has any progressive historical mission, and both must be regarded as transitory obstacles in the path of the American workers' evolution, through struggles, betrayals and defeats, to the showdown struggle for power under a conscious leadership. Only through the leadership of a revolutionary Marxist party can the struggle for power conceivably be led to victory in this stronghold of world capitalism.

As far as the American Stalinists are concerned, our differences with them are differences of principle which cannot be compromised or blurred over at any time. Our basic relation to them, now and at every stage of the further development of the class struggle, is and will be that of irreconcilable antagonism and struggle for the leadership of the new movement of labor radicalism.

The necessary approach to the Stalinist workers was correctly prescribed by the Convention resolution as a tactic supplementary and subordinate to our main orientation and work among the politically unaffiliated militant workers in the unions. It requires both a policy of united front for action on specific issues consistent with our principles, and fraction work in Stalinist organizations and peripheral circles, where opportunities for good results may be open and we have the necessary forces to spare for such activity.

The absolute condition for effective intervention in the continuing crisis of the CP or any work in this field is a sharp and clear demarcation of the principled differences between our party and perfidious Stalinism, and an attitude of irreconcilability in our struggle against it. Our work in the Stalinist milieu comes under the head of opponents' work, as traditionally understood and defined in Leninist theory and practice.

Such work in Stalinist organizations and circles, as in any other milieu dominated by political opponents, requires a certain tactical adaptation on the part of individual party members assigned to such work. But it must at all times be understood that this tactical adaptation is not the line, but a method of serving the line.

The united front with Stalinists on specific issues consistent with our program is not a form of friendly cooperation, such as that between two political organizations, whose programmatic differences are diminishing to the point where fusion can be contemplated. The united front activities of the American Trotskyists and the Muste

organization in 1934 were of this type. The united front with American Stalinists, like that elaborated by Lenin against the Social Democrats, has a two-sided character. On the one hand it is a joint action, or a proposal for joint action, against the capitalist class on specific issues of burning interest to the workers. On the other hand, it is a form of struggle against the corrupt and treacherous Stalinist functionaries for influence over the workers involved in the actions or proposed action.

The absolute condition for successful work in this field is sharp and clear demarcation of program and independence of our own party organization.

#### VIII.

The struggle of tendencies in the next upsurge of labor radicalism will have the double aspect of continuing struggle for the leadership of the broad mass movement and a simultaneous and continuing struggle for leadership of the vanguard -- that is, of the unprivileged, younger, more militant and aggressive workers (and intellectuals) who will be seeking a programmatic formulation of their instinctive revolt.

The three forces which can now be foreseen as the main contenders in this coming struggle are the neo-Social-Democratic labor bureaucracy, the Socialist Workers Party and the CP. It is probable that the labor bureaucracy (or a section of it) will head the upsurge in its initial stages. Even that, however, is by no means predetermined; it depends on the depth, sweep and speed of the radicalization, which in turn will be determined by objective circumstances. In any case, the SWP, remaining true to itself and confident of its historic mission and its right to lead, will be an important factor in the situation from the start, and will have every possibility to extend its organization and influence with the expansion and deepening of the workers' radicalization.

The key to further developments will be the struggle for the leadership of the vanguard who will eventually lead the whole mass. In this decisive domain, as far as can be foreseen and anticipated now our direct and immediate rival will most probably be the Communist Party. (The notion that some previously unknown and unheard of tendencies and parties, without a body of ideology, experience and cadres, can suddenly appear as leaders of the vanguard finds little support in the experiences of the great radical upsurge of the 30's in the United States, as well as in the postwar upsurge in Europe.)

It is by no means predetermined that the CP will have the advantage, even in the first stages, of the struggle for leadership of the newly-forming vanguard. And, given a firm and self-confident independent policy of the SWP, its victory over the Stalinists in the further development and unfolding of the struggle can be expected.

In the upsurge of the 30's the Stalinists held the key to every development in every field of radicalization (workers, Negroes, intellectuals) because they monopolized the leadership of the vanguard from the start. It would be absurd to assume that this performance can be easily repeated next time. And it is impermissible for Trotskyists to say that it is predetermined -- for that is tantamount to



saying that the Stalinists are endowed with a progressive historic mission; that they represent "the wave of the future" in the United States, which we must accept in advance and adapt ourselves to; and therefore that the right of the SWP to exist is in question.

It is true that the Stalinists outnumber us numerically, that they have more money, more paid functionaries, and a more widely circulated press than we have. This gives them indubitable material and mechanical advantages which are by no means to be discounted. Nor is it to be excluded that the continuing persecution of the government can have the effect later on of arousing the sympathy of wide circles of workers unacquainted with their past record of crimes and betrayals, although the persecutions have not noticeably had this result up till now.

In the course of a world war the U.S. Stalinists may gain a certain credit in the ranks of the opponents of the war because of the hardships and privations it imposes. On the other hand, it is not excluded that the Kremlin's demands on the American CP -- at any stage of the pre-war period, or even during the war itself -- can propel the CP into flagrant opportunist or adventurist policies which would add to its discreditment and isolation.

Against the CP, as contender for the leadership of the new vanguard, is its record which has been most effectively exposed and denounced by the SWP (Moscow Trials; monstrous bureaucratism and betrayals of workers' interest in unions they controlled; strike-breaking and stool-pigeon role during World War II; eager support of the government in the prosecution and imprisonment of the SWP leaders; betrayal of the Labor Party, etc.) This infamous record lies deep in the memory of wide circles of workers and will not be forgotten when the new upsurge begins.

The discreditment of the Stalinists has been in no small degree due to our unrelenting, unceasing and systematic exposure and denunciation, which are remembered in wide circles and rise up to confound the Stalinists at every turn. Our exposure and denunciation of the record of the Stalinists has been more effective in this country than anywhere else. It was in this country for example -- and due in the first place to the work of our party -- that the Moscow Trials were discredited before world public opinion.

The relation of forces between organized Stalinists and organized Trotskyists is more favorable to us in the United States than in any other major capitalist nation. Our cadres are far superior to the cadres of the American Stalinists in quality, and our reputation in the labor movement stands out in shining contrast to theirs. It is a downright insult to the intelligence of the workers who will come forward in the new radicalization -- if it is not cynically disloyal to assume that the criminal record of the Stalinists, which we have advertised far and wide, in some way qualifies them to gain the confidence of the vanguard in the new radicalization, while our unsullied revolutionary record will count for nothing in our favor in direct struggle and competition with them.

Allegations that the American Stalinists are now "in the same class camp with us," and have become our dependable allies in the fight against American imperialism are false in fact and an impermis-

sible painting up of the real face of American Stalinism. In reality, the American Stalinists at the present time preach a class collaboration policy of "co-existence;" follow an ultra-conservative, cowardly, and treacherous policy in the unions; and betray independent political action through a labor party by herding their members and sympathizers into the Democratic party of U. S. imperialism.

Assertions that the American Stalinists "can no longer betray" are misrepresentation of reality which can only help perfidious Stalinism. Such sentiments disclose an attitude of conciliationism to American Stalinism that is alien and hostile to our traditions. The Plenum of the National Committee stresses the urgency of educating and re-educating the party in the basic principles of Trotskyism on this vital question.

RESOLUTION ON AMERICAN STALINISM

(Submitted by P.C. Minority)

I.

(Rejected by Plenum, 8 votes for, 17 votes against)

The Political Resolution of the Fifteenth (July 1952) National Convention, the last convention held by the Socialist Workers Party, characterized the present political situation of American Stalinism as follows:

"For almost five years the Stalinists have been thrust into a position of opposition to U.S. imperialism and to the official labor bureaucracy. Except for the brief interlude of their alliance with Wallace they have been completely cut off from all allies in that camp. This has not come about because of any policy or design on their part but as a result of the evolution of the American and world situation. Important changes have occurred as a result in the outlook and composition of the CP membership and its immediate periphery. Petty bourgeois, careerist and opportunist types who swarmed around the CP during the palmy days of Roosevelt and the war have abandoned it in droves. What remains of the whittled-down party are a large cadre of corrupted functionaries, old case-hardened Stalinists, and others who are prepared to suffer the full consequences of the repression, who completely identify themselves with the camp of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China and who tend to become more and more revolutionary in their outlook and conceptions than at any time since the ultra leftist 'Third Period.'"

Nothing has occurred during the past year to necessitate a change in that appraisal, nor is there any indication that the Stalinist leadership will be able, in the immediate period ahead, to alter their situation.

The new turn of the CP, as seen in the draft resolution presented for their pre-convention discussion, must be interpreted as an attempt to break out of the extreme isolation into which the Stalinists have been driven. For this purpose, they are prepared to utilize opportunist political maneuvers and other unprincipled means. This attempt, which we now see beginning, was foreseen and predicted by the SWP convention resolution in July 1952.

The current Stalinist maneuver is not an indication that they have altered their position on the Wall Street government or the war drive. Their political line remains what it has been up to now. Within this line we are witnessing a typical opportunist oscillation which has as its goal the breaking of their present isolation and broadening of their contact with the masses. In order to try to achieve this end, the Stalinists are prepared to soft-pedal their independent organizations, enter into existing mass organizations, commit the political crime once more of advising support to labor-endorsed candidates of capitalist parties. These opportunist concessions are based upon the premise, set forth by the CP leadership, that "a broad mass party of the worker-Negro-farmer masses is on the political agenda in the United States. Almost certainly, stormy political developments will produce it within the next few years" (William Z. Foster). They are based upon the further premise that this party will emerge from the existing mass organizations and the "left wing" of the Democratic Party.

This unprincipled maneuver of the Stalinists cannot succeed in altering their present relation to the labor bureaucracy, the Democratic party officialdom, or the governmental apparatus. All of those with whom they seek "unity" regard the Stalinists with jingoistic ferocity. It is excluded that a new significant "people's front" can be manufactured by the Stalinists so long as the world struggle between the two opposing class camps remains essentially unchanged.

This analysis of the present position of the American CP is in line with the analysis of the policy of the Stalinist parties in the countries of the Atlantic Alliance made by Pablo at the 12th Plenum.

"But fundamentally, regardless of this or that desire of the Soviet bureaucracy, because of the inexorable development of the objective situation, which excludes the possibility of a compromise, the Stalinist line will remain what it has been for some time: a contradictory melange of an opportunist attitude directed toward the whole 'nation' and militant action based more especially on the mobilization of the working class against the war preparations of the bourgeoisie."

While opportunities for such a line in practice are incomparably more restricted here in the U.S. than elsewhere for the Stalinists, this description substantially fits their line here as well.

## II.

As the 1952 convention of the SWP recognized in its resolution, we cannot conduct the fight against Stalinism today entirely with the same methods we employed during their "people's front" periods. Instead of being on the extreme right wing of the labor movement, the CP is today on the left, an opportunist opponent of the war-drive, and the chief victim of the witch hunt.

Since the Stalinist "Third Period" two decades ago, we have had only a single brief interlude during which the Stalinists were in opposition to the government prior to 1946. That was during 1939-41. It is important to take cognizance of the advice which was given to our party at that time by Trotsky. Trotsky advised a serious tactic aimed at taking advantage of the Stalinist left line. "Imagine the effect on the Stalinist rank and file," he said. "It would be very good. They expect from such a terrible enemy as us that we will throw cold water on them. We will surprise them with some terribly hot water."

It is within our power to provide "some terribly hot water" for the Stalinists at the present time. It is therefore false to bow to currents of thoughtless and conservative resistance to this work that exist within the SWP. Those comrades who resist the necessary work that must be done among the Stalinists and their periphery are sentimentalizing the past into a permanent political outlook. Nothing could be more dangerous in politics.

The resolution of the 1952 convention laid down the proper guides for this work in the following paragraphs:

"These conditions, properly utilized, place us in a favorable position to undermine the influence of the CP leadership among their rank and file, to divert some of their new recruits in our direction

and even to win adherents from them directly.

"In the forthcoming presidential election campaign, as in all our public activity, we have the opportunity to demonstrate on the broad arena of working class politics how revolutionary socialists conduct the struggle against the threatened war against the USSR, Eastern Europe, China and the revolutionary workers' movements. This propaganda, put directly, positively, in all its revolutionary implications will have a strong impact on the Stalinist ranks who cannot fail to notice the real Leninism as contrasted with the spurious variety peddled by their own leadership. The conditions will thus be created for a polemic with Stalinism before a Stalinist audience which can only yield favorable results. . .

"Our tactics toward the Stalinist ranks will gain in effectiveness by combining the propagandist methods already described with a consistent policy of loyally supporting them against repression and of pressing them for united actions in defense of democratic rights. Such a position places the Stalinist leaders in an impossible situation. They cannot admit that Trotskyists can have a principled class position on the witch-hunt and they cannot permit the proximity of our membership with theirs. Yet it has been clearly demonstrated that they cannot oppose our participation in such actions without exposing themselves as unscrupulous factionalists, endangering their remaining non-party support and creating dissatisfaction in their own ranks.

"Regardless of immediate gains, the long-range aim of this tactic is to break down the hostility the Stalinist leaders have erected against Trotskyism. Once this barrier of slander and suspicion is removed and Stalinist workers can judge with some objectivity between the policies of the two parties, our political program will more than compensate for our inferior numbers in the struggle for the allegiance of the advanced workers. This tactic is a necessary supplement to our main course of struggling for influence and leadership over the principal body of trade union militants and politically unorganized workers." (Our emphasis.)

In these paragraphs our convention resolution correctly defined our line of work so far as the CP is concerned, as well as its subordinate character in our over-all tactical orientation. There is no justification for any change. On the contrary, all developments during the past year reinforce the need for this tactic and dictate its continued employment on a more vigorous basis.

### III.

The opportunist maneuvers of the Stalinist leaders represent an excellent opportunity for the party. Again, the 1952 convention resolution clearly foresaw this contingency:

"The changed position of the CP in relation to official bourgeois society and the altered conceptions of the rank and file as to the tasks of the party clashes directly with the unchanging orientation of the Stalinist leadership. Under the tutelage of the Kremlin and because of their own conservative, opportunistic background, the bureaucrats continue to pursue the same type of peoples' front, class collaborationist policy they did in the Thirties and the Forties, adapted now to the various "peace" campaigns launched from Moscow. In fact they are more prepared to abandon independent class politics, to

support bourgeois politicians on the flimsiest grounds than are some of their petty-bourgeois allies in and around the Progressive Party. The anachronism of this policy is not only that it produces no results, and that the isolation of the CP worsens but that with each failure the Stalinist leaders shout louder for a 'progressive coalition' and condemn those who want to 'go it alone.' The utter lack of realism, not to speak of lack of success of the policy of their leadership creates serious moods of discontent, questioning and restiveness among the rank and file. The 'Browderism' of the present leadership becomes more frustrating than the policy of Browder himself who actually had powerful bourgeois and union allies. The moods of discontent are further aggravated by the fact that the sources of authority in the party, because of the jailings and its illegal condition, are no longer clearly discernible or established in the eyes of the membership."

This estimate has been precisely confirmed as absolutely correct by the developments of the past year. Soon after the November election, the CP leaders proposed the dissolution of the PP and the transfer of activity to the Democratic Party. They met with resistance and soon altered their proposal, at least formally, as can be seen from an article by William Z. Foster in the Communist Party National Discussion Bulletin issued in March, 1953. Foster proposes that the struggle for this new party, for "unity within the mainstream of labor and within the framework of these organizations through which the mass of labor and the Negro people express themselves politically" is the main task of the CP. He then adds: "Within the context of this main line of struggle, the Progressive Party can be an important factor in defending the masses' daily interests and in helping to produce an eventual mass farmer-labor party." This was a retreat from the former stand of dissolution of that party and complete concentration upon the Democratic Party, the Political Action Committees, etc.

Further evidence of criticism and uncertainty within the CP are contained throughout the discussion bulletin. An article by the Auto Section Committee says: "We urge reconsideration of Part II of the Resolution with the aim of eliminating tendencies there to feed lesser evil concepts. Either some of the phrases should be reformulated, or this section should include specific reference to the Democratic Party as the 'twin evil,' owned by a capitalist class and trotted out in accord with its needs and reject any illusions that the workers can ever 'take over' this party on a national scale."

An article signed by "A Group of Steelworkers" said "we disagree with the Draft statement that we were correct in supporting the Progressive Party in 1952." This group favors "attempting through PAC to raise issues in the Democratic Party and force them either to make some fight on these issues or enable us to better expose them to the workers. In some areas we can raise the demand for more labor representation, control and candidates." In this way this group hopes to "begin to build the idea of the necessity of a third party." Then the "Group of Steelworkers" adds: "We feel that one of the basic reasons for the past mistakes is the tendency on the part of the organization to accept as final anything handed down from higher bodies and not critically examining or discussing it."

An article signed G.S. asks "Why has our party from time to time made such extreme swings from Right to 'Left' and back again," and

finds the answer in "lack of efforts to master Marxism." An article by one Karl Michael favors "establishing a 'political relationship with progressive elements in the Democratic and Liberal Parties, as well as in the major centers of the labor movement'" but then adds: "Some wrong conclusions have been drawn, however, from this orientation. There has been a tendency to counterpose this united front movement to building of left-wing organizations. This has advanced even to the point of liquidating left wing groups."

The Cleveland Industrial Division of the CP quarrels with any one who would interpret the Draft as a support to lesser evil theories. Another article asks that the Draft Resolution "be sharpened up" on the "basic reactionary character of the Democratic Party," whose "leadership is of the most reactionary pro-war stripe."

All of these comments and many others contained in the discussion bulletin indicate resistance to any attempts to interpret the new CP turn, which is towards work in the Democratic Party, the PAC, the NAACP and other "Right-led organizations" as a change in political position. Thus if the CP leadership should try, in the coming period, to make a serious right turn in their political program, it would undoubtedly provoke dissatisfaction and hostility among layers of its membership and in the peripheral organizations.

In the New York section of the Progressive Party, the ALP, a serious battle has opened up between a large grouping of party activists led by Marcantonio on one side and the Stalinists on the other. While not offering any political program different from that of the Stalinists, the Marcantonio wing opposes any attempt to liquidate the Progressive Party forces into the Democratic Party, stressing the reactionary domination and policies of the Democratic Party, which, Marcantonio says, has a program of "big profits and war," and which together with the Republicans "in fact constitute one party." He quarrels with the Stalinist contention that "people will not leave the Democratic and Republican parties for a third party." He says that he repudiates "utterly" any policy of entry into the Republican, Democratic or Liberal parties where anti-war elements would become "the untouchables, the invisibles and the mutes." He adds, "I refuse to believe that what to do is to surrender."

This fight in the ALP is being duplicated in a number of other localities. This underscores the importance of investigating these opportunities and taking advantage of them.

#### IV.

Any correct policy for the Progressive Party must begin with a recognition of the changed nature of the PP after the desertion of the Wallace-capitalist forces in 1950. The resolution of the 1952 SWP convention formulated this as follows: "This change in the character of the party has removed it from the arena of direct competition with the big capitalist parties and placed it in the camp of radical, left-wing politics." Thus the resolution concluded that "our attitude toward the Progressive Party must be determined by the following considerations: That it is the sole electoral organization of importance in the anti-imperialist camp besides ourselves. . . ."

The above characterizations of the Progressive Party are correct. There have been no developments which would justify altering it.

Sectarian notions to the effect that the PP is a "capitalist party" as it was in 1948 can only lead to an unreal line of propaganda on our part. Neither the Stalinists, nor the non-Stalinist PP supporters, nor the mass of the American people would be able to understand such a line as it has no foundation in reality. Such propaganda or any tactics based upon it would only succeed in marking us as an ultra-left sect which makes extravagant and unreal demands upon the credulity of the average worker which it cannot back up with evidence.

The question of policy toward the PP has occasioned a dispute in the Chicago branch of the SWP. The tactic proposed by the majority of the branch executive committee is in conflict with the line of our last convention resolution, and is clearly sectarian and abstentionist. It crushes this important field of work under a load of objections by placing every other form of party work ahead of it. It places this necessary maneuver outside the "regular work" of the party, and subordinates it to this "regular work" thus displaying classic routinism and sectarianism in the face of an opportunity. Finally, it refuses to formulate any tactic whatever which could take advantage of what it correctly describes as an "internal revolt" against the Stalinists within the PP. It strongly hints that the most progressive outcome of this situation in the PP would be the crushing of the "internal revolt" since its "progressive aspects" are "outweighed by the continued existence of an opponent organization." This line, which hides behind "radical" and "intransigent" formulations, can have no other result than to place an unnecessary sectarian barrier in the way of our intervention in this important situation.

The minority resolution of the Chicago branch executive committee favors "participation in the current discussion in the PP" in order to "lead to creation of a center of opposition around our people and our viewpoint which would become a bridge to recruitment into our party." The Chicago minority proposes to take as a starting point for our work the resistance to the Stalinist dissolution move and the antagonism of the anti-Stalinist group to "class-collaborationist politics" and the sentiment within it for a labor party.

This proposal is absolutely correct and should become the guide for work in PP groups wherever the possibilities exist.

#### V.

Stalinism has been driven back in the American labor movement. But this retreat has, from our point of view, two chief defects. In the first place, the CP still retains substantial cadres in the American union movement, including the predominant influence in an independent trade union federation representing between one-third and one-half of a million workers, and substantial fractions in other basic unions in the U.S. In the second place, the blows against the CP have been delivered, not by the left but by the right. As the convention resolution points out:

"However, it should be noted that these blows come all from the right, from official reaction. The Stalinists have not been supplanted in the unions and mass organizations by more radical opponents in



the midst of rising class activity but by conservative, reactionary elements in a period of ebb-tide of the class struggle. This tends to mitigate the moral effect of the blows received, to veil the war-time betrayals of Stalinism and may possibly gain them some broader sympathy as the witch-hunt extends to broader layers of the labor and liberal movement."

These conditions must cause us to realize that, although the relationship of forces between our party and the CP has been altered slightly in our favor, it has not yet been decisively altered.

It is our task to challenge the Communist Party for the allegiance of the leftward moving workers in the mass movement, and to strive with every means in our power to head off the Communist Party and attain the leadership of the mass left wing when it arises as a result of the coming social crises. There could be no worse mistake, however, than to bask in the illusion that this task has already been accomplished. It still lies before us, and can be accomplished only by means of a two-fold effort. We must strive to gain independent leadership in the mass movement. This is our first task. And we must strive to crack away important sectors of the CP supporters, primarily among the workers and youth who adhere to that party. This includes the task of finding every possible means of winning out in our present struggle with the CP for influence over those groupings of workers and youth who have already begun to move leftwards.

Our primary orientation remains toward leftward moving militants among the organized workers who now owe no allegiance to any radical party. We cannot, however, adopt a Musteite or DeLeonite aloofness towards the struggles and formations in other radical milieus. In fact, this is impossible, because the CP, with far greater forces than our own, will never leave us a clear field toward the virgin mass. We will meet them in competition on every hand, particularly as the radicalization begins and the CP finds more elbow-room for its work than in the present situation of repression.

## VI.

How to fight the CP in the mass movement? The proper tactical approach in this respect is very important. It involves not primarily what we say about Stalinism to the Stalinists, but what we say about Stalinism to the American workers. We cannot avoid the problem of Stalinism even when we go to the non-political mass -- especially when we go to the mass -- because it is always among the first questions to arise.

We must divest ourselves of two important illusions. The first is that the CP can be successfully fought solely by references to its past record. In the first place the very workers to whom we are now addressing ourselves were also supporters of Roosevelt and the Second World War, and do not consider this betrayal on the part of the Stalinists as an argument against them. Only the few most advanced militant today consider support of Roosevelt to have been a betrayal; with them we have an advantage over the CP which we should use to the fullest. For the mass this is not true.

Furthermore, it has never been shown that Stalinism is successfully destroyed by pointing to the betrayals of the past period. The

workers look to the stands and events of today; they take their leadership where they can find it. The rapid wartime and post-war growth of Stalinist parties in Europe and Asia, despite the fact that they had committed crimes far more malignant than those of the American CP, teaches this lesson. The struggles of today are fought out on the issues of today.

The second illusion we must purge from our thinking is one which stems from a mis-estimate of the American workers' present level of political consciousness. It is not possible for us to launch our propaganda against the Stalinists to the mass on the basis that the Stalinists do not struggle effectively against the Third World War or defend the Soviet Union by correct methods, until we first try to convince our audience that these struggles are correct and necessary. Thus it can be seen that in all our propaganda the struggle against Stalinism must be completely subordinated to the struggle against imperialism. This is not a mere formalism which we draw from abstract political theses which tell us that imperialism is the main enemy. It is an absolute essential dictated by the facts of life in this country.

Our propaganda to the workers that the Stalinists betray the anti-imperialist struggle can have no meaning to any worker other than one whom we have convinced that such a struggle is necessary. In this way and in this way alone can we make our stand on Stalinism comprehensible and effective; only if it is previously based upon the most effective anti-imperialist blows. In this respect some of our propaganda intended for militant workers has been misdirected and incomprehensible to them. It has assumed too much agreement on the part of the workers, and has proceeded without laying a comprehensible basis to attack the Stalinists for their peace campaign, in a fashion which must leave every non-radical worker who reads it completely up in the air. This kind of propaganda falls between two stools: it overreaches the non-Stalinist worker and falls short of our needs in dealing with the Stalinist-influenced worker. Thus it is left without a tangible audience, with the exception of those who already agree with us on both imperialism and Stalinism.

The American working class has been heavily inoculated with anti-Stalinism, but it is an imperialist anti-Stalinism, not a Marxist one. We will have our greatest successes in transforming their present attitude into genuine socialist anti-Stalinism as we succeed in playing our role in the mass movement. If we can offer correct leadership if we can advance proposals in opposition to those of the Stalinists that meet the needs of the mass movement or its left wing, we can make progress on that road.

Thus we were most effective during the war period, and struck our best blows against the Stalinists in the fight against the no-strike pledge, speed-up, piece-work, etc. Today we are not as well situated in this respect, because of the fact that the Stalinists are in opposition, not in alliance with imperialism. But we can do the same type of work on a smaller scale in relation to the struggle for a labor party, against support of any capitalist candidates and other such issues, and our opportunities will increase when the class struggle becomes more active and militant.

Our pressing problem with regard to Stalinism is not the future struggle over radicalized masses but the present competition for left-

ward moving individuals and groups among the workers and youth. While this current is now extremely small, the party that succeeds in turning it towards itself will thereby gain great advantage as the current increases to a flood of radicalization.

With these workers and youth, a slam-bang simple slugging of the Stalinists for their crimes and betrayals of the past misses the mark. They want and can only be convinced by answers to questions such as these: Does socialism make inevitable a dictatorship such as they have in Russia? Aren't the Trotskyists just dissident communists who are against the Kremlin but really have the same general philosophy? How do we know the Trotskyists would be any different from the Stalinists? Can't we do it peacefully in America? How can we guard against a Stalinist degeneration when Stalinism is so strong in the world? etc., etc.

In brief, we need a thorough-going propagandistic approach to those elements who are becoming interested in radical politics. To fight against Stalinism as well as to fulfill our other political needs, we require a restatement of basic Marxist ideology and perspective in terms of the present preoccupations and consciousness of the American workers.

Several branches of our party have observed that the CP leaders are unable to maintain the old wall of separation which they have erected between their ranks and our party over the years. Sections of the CP ranks are friendly with our comrades in discussions and in actions, and the Stalinist leadership has not yet found a way to prevent this fraternization. This opening is the result in part of the present CP political line, and further, of 25 years of courageous defiance of the CP machine and good squads, of innumerable struggles bravely conducted by our party against Stalinist terrorism, of a line of honest united front offers, of our political demonstration of consistent opposition to Wall Street and defense of the Soviet bloc, and of our civil liberties campaigns, both in defense of our own comrades and in defense of the CP. Such an opening, created at the cost of greatest efforts and by means of a correct line, is extremely valuable and must not be left unused. Our comrades should take full advantage of this new situation which has developed primarily during the past two years, and should make every attempt to drive the wedge deeper between the Stalinist ranks and periphery on the one side and the Stalinist leaders on the other. This is particularly important in unions and shops, where CP members are to be found in considerable numbers.

The fact that the Communist party is the sole important competitor which we face for the allegiance of the radicalized sections of the population has now been accentuated by their new policy of work. The Stalinists have embarked upon a strong effort to break out of their isolation. Thus we shall meet them in more direct competition.

Experience has taught us in the past few years that we can get our most effective licks in against the Stalinist leadership when we crowd them in front of the radical-minded public to whom they find it impossible to explain their vicious anti-Trotskyism. Only in the groups which they control and dominate completely can they any longer afford to brush us aside, refuse offers to work together in combat against the witch-hunt, etc.

We thus have an advantage in the struggle for awakening workers and youth when we meet the CP in the mass movement. We can best use that advantage by demanding of the CP leaders that they come through on their expressed desire to build non-partisan oppositions against the witch hunt and the reactionaries. In this way we can expect to break down barriers between our members and CP ranks still further, and to also gain an edge in the competition for the radicalized elements.

It is incumbent upon every party member in the mass movement to guard against any trace of Stalinophobia or vulgar anti-Stalinism. It would be harmful for our party to show excessive pre-occupation with "keeping our skirts clear," etc. at the risk of compromising our principled reputation. Our differentiation from the Stalinists must be accomplished politically, and not through a fearful drawing-back.

Experience has shown that the workers, when not momentarily blinded by red-baiting hysteria, respect us for our principled and vigorous stand in defense of the CP. Moreover, it is precisely those workers who are moving leftward who are angered by the witch hunt, and who would be repelled by the slightest sign of weakness on our part. Any specious "cleanliness" which we might attain in this way would turn into its opposite in a period of mass radicalization when the workers turn in fury upon the witch hunt and accord respect to those who suffered under or fought it.

Our political differentiation from the Stalinists takes the form of a criticism and attack in our press and public activity, and in the mass movement as issues arise upon which the differentiation can be clearly made. Our anti-Stalinist educational work must take as its starting point the decisions of the Third World Congress. The present developments within the Soviet bloc afford us an unparalleled opportunity to demonstrate the correctness of the Trotskyist analysis and also to assist in the process of dissolution of world Stalinism. The party should take as its guide for this purpose the resolution of the Thirteenth Plenum of the IEC.

We cannot permit ourselves to yield to any sectarian notions in this field of work, or to become infected by vulgar anti-Stalinism. We must have a fully correct approach. In this respect the word-mongering about a "soft" or "hard" approach is absolutely meaningless. Our tactics in approaching a dangerous rival which is at present in a pseudo-left turn that we can expect to last for the coming period cannot be summarized in a single uniform formula. The essence of the correct tactic is the twofold approach as outlined in our past resolutions: 1. Attacks on issues that are clear or can be made clear to our audience, and 2. United front and propaganda proposals and approaches.

In this resolution we have restricted ourselves to the problems at hand. We have not entered into agitational contests of denunciations of Stalinism. Our views on Stalinism are fully expressed by the official documents of the movement, most completely and in a way most suitable to the present situation by the documents of the Third World Congress. We have dealt here only with our pressing tactical problems.

Along the lines developed in this resolution, the party can

enter into competition with the CP for leadership of the advanced workers with confidence in the future. This struggle is of primary importance, and great questions of the future of the American revolution and the development of world socialism hang upon the outcome. The party must operate in this field with greatest care and correctness, and with the traditional methods of Bolshevism in fighting rivals.

-45-

NATIONAL COMMITTEE PLENUM RESOLUTION ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL  
PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTY

(Unanimously Adopted)

I.

The Plenum of the National Committee reaffirms the resolution adopted by the 1938 Founding Convention of the Socialist Workers Party "On the Internal Situation and the Character of the Party," as follows (except that any reference indicating or implying affiliation with the Fourth International is no longer valid in view of the fact that the Socialist Workers Party formally disaffiliated from the Fourth International in 1940 because of the anti-democratic Voorhis Act):

"The Socialist Workers Party is a revolutionary Marxian party, based on a definite program, whose aim is the organization of the working class in the struggle for power and the transformation of the existing social order. All of its activities, its methods and its internal regime are subordinated to this aim and are designed to serve it.

"Only a self-acting and critical-minded membership is capable of forging and consolidating such a party and of solving its problems by collective thought, discussion and experience. From this follows the need of assuring the widest party democracy in the ranks of the organization.

"The struggle for power organized and led by the revolutionary party is the most ruthless and irreconcilable struggle in all history. A loosely-knit, heterogeneous, undisciplined, untrained organization is utterly incapable of accomplishing such world-historical tasks as the proletariat and the revolutionary party are confronted with in the present era. This is all the more emphatically true in the light of the singularly difficult position of our party and the extraordinary persecution to which it is subject. From this follows the party's unconditional demand upon all its members for complete discipline in all the public activities and actions of the organization.

"Leadership and centralized direction are indispensable prerequisites for any sustained and disciplined action, especially in the party that sets itself the aim of leading the collective efforts of the proletariat in its struggle against capitalism. Without a strong and firm Central Committee, having the power to act promptly and effectively in the name of the party and to supervise, coordinate and direct all its activities without exception, the very idea of a revolutionary party is a meaningless jest.

"It is from these considerations, based upon the whole of the experience of working class struggle throughout the world in the last century, that we derive the Leninist principle of organization, namely, democratic centralism. The same experience has demonstrated that there are no absolute guarantees for the preservation of the principle of democratic centralism, and no rigid formula that can be set down in advance, a priori, for the application of it under any and all circumstances. Proceeding from certain fundamental conceptions, the problem of applying the principle of democratic centralism differently under different conditions and stages of development of the struggle, can be solved only in relation to the concrete situation, in the course of the tests and experience through which the movement passes, and on the basis of the most fruitful and healthy inter-relationship of the leading bodies of the party and its rank and file.

### "The Responsibilities of Leadership"

"The leadership of the party must be under the control of the membership, its policies must always be open to criticism, discussion and rectification by the rank and file within properly established forms and limits, and the leading bodies themselves subject to formal recall or alteration. The membership of the party has the right to demand and expect the greatest responsibility from the leaders precisely because of the position they occupy in the movement. The selection of comrades to the positions of leadership means the conferring of an extraordinary responsibility. The warrant for this position must be proved, not once, but continuously by the leadership itself. It is under obligation to set the highest example of responsibility, devotion, sacrifice and complete identification with the party itself and its daily life and action. It must display the ability to defend its policies before the membership of the party, and to defend the line of the party and the party as a whole before the working class in general.

"Sustained party activity, not broken or disrupted by abrupt and disorienting changes, presupposes not only a continuity of tradition and a systematic development of party policy, but also the continuity of leadership. It is an important sign of a serious and firmly constituted party, of a party really engaged in productive work in the class struggle, that it throws up out of its ranks cadres of more or less able leading comrades, tested for their qualities of endurance and trustworthiness, and that it thus insures a certain stability and continuity of leadership by such a cadre.

"Continuity of leadership does not, however, signify the automatic self-perpetuation of leadership. Constant renewal of its ranks by means of additions and, when necessary, replacements, is the only assurance that the party has, that its leadership will not succumb to the effects of dry-rot, that it will not be burdened with deadwood, that it will avoid the corrosion of conservatism and dilettantism, that it will not be the object of conflict between the older elements and the younger, that the old and basic cadre will be refreshed by new blood, that the leadership as a whole will not become purely bureaucratic 'committee men' with a life that is remote from the real life of the party and the activities of the rank and file.

### "Responsibilities of Membership"

"Like leadership, membership itself in the party implies certain definite rights. Party membership confers the fullest freedom of discussion, debate and criticism inside the ranks of the party, limited only by such decisions and provisions as are made by the party itself or by bodies to which it assigns this function. Affiliation to the party confers upon each member the right of being democratically represented at all policy-making assemblies of the party (from branch to national and international convention), and the right of the final and decisive vote in determining the program, policies and leadership of the party.

"With party rights, the membership has also certain definite obligations. The theoretical and political character of the party is determined by its program, which forms the lines delimiting the revolutionary party from all other parties, groups and tendencies in the

working class. The first obligation of party membership is loyal acceptance of the program of the party and regular affiliation to one of the basic units of the party. The party requires of every member the acceptance of its discipline and the carrying on of his activity in accordance with the program of the party, with the decisions adopted by its conventions, and with the policies formulated and directed by the party leadership.

"Party membership implies the obligation of one hundred per cent loyalty to the organization, the rejection of all agents of other, hostile groups in its ranks, and intolerance of divided loyalties in general. Membership in the party necessitates a minimum of activity in the organization, as established by the proper unit, and under the direction of the party; it necessitates the fulfillment of all the tasks which the party assigns to each member. Party membership implies the obligation upon every member to contribute materially to the support of the organization in accordance with his means.

### "A Party of Revolutionary Workers"

"From the foregoing it follows that the party seeks to include in its ranks all the revolutionary, class conscious and militant workers who stand on its program and are active in building the movement in a disciplined manner. The revolutionary Marxian party rejects not only the arbitrariness and bureaucratism of the Communist Party, but also the spurious and deceptive 'all-inclusiveness' of the Thomas-Tyler-Hoan Socialist Party, which is a sham and a fraud. Experience has proved conclusively that this 'all-inclusiveness' paralyzes the party in general and the revolutionary left wing in particular, suppressing and bureaucratically hounding the latter while giving free rein to the right wing to commit the greatest crimes in the name of socialism and the party. The S.W.P. seeks to be inclusive only in this sense: that it accepts into its ranks those who accept its program and denies admission to those who reject its program.

"The rights of each individual member, as set forth above, do not imply that the membership as a whole, namely, the party itself, does not possess rights of its own. The party as a whole has the right to demand that its work be not disrupted and disorganized, and has the right to take all the measures which it finds necessary to assure its regular and normal functioning. The rights of any individual member are distinctly secondary to the rights of the party membership as a whole. Party democracy means not only the most scrupulous protection of the rights of a given minority, but also the protection of the rule of the majority. The party is therefore entitled to organize the discussion and to determine its forms and limits.

"All inner-party discussion must be organized from the point of view that the party is not a discussion club, which debates interminably on any and all questions at any and all times, without arriving at a binding decision that enables the organization to act, but from the point of view that we are a disciplined party of revolutionary action. The party in general not only has the right, therefore, to organize the discussion in accordance with the requirements of the situation, but the lower units of the party must be given the right, in the interests of the struggle against the disruption and disorganization of the party's work, to call irresponsible individuals to order and, if need be, to eject them from the ranks.



"The decisions of the national party convention are binding on all party members without exception and they conclude the discussion on all these disputed questions upon which a decision has been taken. Any party member violating the decisions of the convention, or attempting to revive discussion in regard to them without formal authorization of the party, puts himself thereby in opposition to the party and forfeits his right to membership. All party organizations are authorized and instructed to take any measures necessary to enforce this rule."

## II

The Plenum of the National Committee reaffirms the resolution adopted by the 1940 Convention of the SWP on "The Organizational Conclusions of the Present Discussion," as follows (except that any reference indicating or implying affiliation with the Fourth International is no longer valid in view of the fact that the Socialist Workers Party formally disaffiliated from the Fourth International in 1940 because of the anti-democratic Voorhis Act):

"The Bolshevik party of Lenin is the only party in history which successfully conquered and held state power. The S.W.P., as a combat organization, which aims at achieving power in this country, models its organization forms and methods after those of the Russian Bolshevik party, adapting them, naturally, to the experience of recent years and to concrete American conditions.

"The S.W.P. as a revolutionary workers' party is based on the doctrines of scientific socialism as embodied in the principal works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky and incorporated in the basic documents and resolutions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and of the conferences and congresses of the Fourth International.

"The S.W.P. rejects the contention of social democrats, skeptics and capitulators disillusioned in the Russian revolution, that there is an inevitable and organic connection between Bolshevism and Stalinism. This reactionary revision of Marxism is a capitulation to democratic imperialism. It is capable of producing only demoralization and defeat in the critical times of war and revolution.

"The rise of reaction on a world scale, accompanied and produced by the disastrous course of Stalinism in the working class movement, has catapulted all centrist groups and parties (Lovestoneites, Socialist Party, London Bureau) away from Bolshevism and in the direction of social democracy. In whole or in part, all of these groups attempt to identify Bolshevism with Stalinism. Without exception these groups are all in a state of collapse and passing over to the side of the class enemy.

### "Petty Bourgeoisie Transmits Skepticism"

"This tendency (Souvarinism) has manifested itself in leading circles of our party (Burnham) and in certain sections of the membership. Their skeptical criticisms of Bolshevism express their petty-bourgeois composition and their dependence on bourgeois public opinion. The petty bourgeoisie is a natural transmission belt carrying the theories of reaction into the organizations of the working class.

"Those who seek to identify Bolshevism with Stalinism concern themselves with a search for guarantees against the Stalinist degeneration of the party and the future Soviet power. We reject this demand for insurance as completely undialectical and unrealistic. Our party, in the first instance, is concerned with the struggle for state power, and therefore with creating a party organization capable of leading the proletarian struggle to this goal. There are no constitutional guarantees which can prevent degeneration. Only the victorious revolution can provide the necessary preconditions for preventing the degeneration of the party and the future Soviet power. If the party fails to carry through and extend the revolution the degeneration of the party is inevitable.

"Insofar as any guarantees are possible against the degeneration of the proletarian party, these can be obtained only by educating the party in firm adherence to principles and by a merciless struggle against all personal and unprincipled clique combinations within the party. The outstanding example of this clique formation is the Abern group which is based solely on personal loyalties and on rewards of honor and place within the party for those whose primary loyalty is to the clique. The history of the Fourth International in this country amply reveals that such a clique, with its utter disregard for principles, can become the repository for alien class influences and agents of enemy organizations seeking to disrupt the Fourth International from within. The S.W.P. condemns the Abern clique as hostile to the spirit and methods of Bolshevik organization.

#### "REVOLUTIONARY CENTRALISM"

"To overthrow the most powerful capitalist ruling class in the world, the S.W.P. must be organized as a combat party on strong centralist lines. The resolution adopted at the founding convention gave a correct interpretation of the principle of democratic centralism. Its emphasis was placed on the democratic aspects of this principle. The party leadership has faithfully preserved the democratic rights of the membership since the founding convention. It has granted the widest latitude of discussion to all dissenting groups and individuals. The duty of the incoming National Committee is to execute the decisions of the convention, arrived at after the most thorough and democratic discussion, and to permit no infringement upon them.

"Conditions, both external and in the internal development of the party, demand that steps now be taken towards knitting the party together, towards tightening up its activities and centralizing its organization structure. For the work of penetrating into the workers' mass movement, for the heavy struggles to come against capitalism, for the onerous conditions of war, it is imperative that a maximum of loyalty be required of every leader and every member, that a maximum of activity be required, that a strict adherence to discipline be demanded and rigidly enforced.

#### "THE PRESS"

"The party press is the decisive public agitational and propagandist expression of the Bolshevik organization. The policies of the press are formulated on the basis of the fundamental resolutions of the congresses and conferences of the International, the conventions of the party, and decisions of the National Committee not in

conflict with such resolutions. Control of the press is lodged directly in the hands of the National Committee by the convention of the party. The duty of the editors is loyally to interpret the decisions of the convention in the press.

### "Control of Public Discussion"

"The opening of the party press to discussion of a point of view contrary to that of the official leadership of the party or of its programmatic convention decisions must be controlled by the National Committee which is obligated to regulate discussion of this character in such a way as to give decisive emphasis to the party line. It is the right and duty of the National Committee to veto any demand for public discussion if it deems such discussion harmful to the best interests of the party.

"The petty-bourgeois opposition in our party demonstrates its hostility to Bolshevik organization by its demand that the minority be granted the right to transform the press into a discussion organ for diametrically opposite programs. By that method it would take the control of the press out of the hands of the National Committee and subordinate it to any temporary, anarchistic combination which can make itself heard at the moment.

"By the same token, the demand of the petty-bourgeois opposition for an independent public organ, expounding a program in opposition to that of the majority of the party, represents a complete abandonment of democratic centralism and a capitulation to the Norman Thomas type of 'all-inclusive' party which is inclusive of all tendencies except the Bolshevik. The granting of this demand for a separate organ would destroy the centralist character of the party, by creating dual central committees, dual editorial boards, dual treasuries, dual distribution agencies, divided loyalties and a complete breakdown of all discipline. Under such conditions the party would rapidly degenerate into a social democratic organization or disappear from the scene altogether. The convention categorically rejects the demand for a dual organ.

### "LEADERSHIP"

"To build the combat organization capable of conquering state power, the party must have as its general staff a corps of professional revolutionists who devote their entire life to the direction and the building of the party and its influence in the mass movement. Membership in the leading staff of the party, the National Committee, must be made contingent on a complete subordination of the life of the candidate to the party. All members of the National Committee must devote full-time activities to party work, or be prepared to do so at the demand of the National Committee.

"In the struggle for power, the party demands the greatest sacrifices of its members. Only a leadership selected from among those who demonstrate in the struggle the qualities of singleness of purpose, unconditional loyalty to the party and revolutionary firmness of character, can inspire the membership with a spirit of unswerving devotion and lead the party in its struggle for power.

"The party leadership must, from time to time, be infused with new blood, primarily from its proletarian sections. Workers who show promise and ability through activity in the union movement and its strike struggle should be elevated to the leading committees of the party in order to establish a more direct connection between the leading committee and the workers' movement, and in order to train the worker-Bolshevik for the task of party direction itself.

"The party must select from its younger members those qualified, talented and promising elements who can be trained for leadership. The road of the student youth to the party leadership must not and cannot be from the class room of the high school and college directly into the leading committee. They must first prove themselves. They must be sent without high-sounding titles into working class districts for day-to-day work among the proletariat. The young student must serve an apprenticeship in the workers' movement before he can be considered as candidate for the National Committee.

### "PROLETARIANIZE THE PARTY"

"The working class is the only class in modern society that is progressive and truly revolutionary. Only the working class is capable of saving humanity from barbarism. Only a revolutionary party can lead the proletariat to the realization of this historic mission. To achieve power, the revolutionary party must be deeply rooted among the workers, it must be composed predominantly of workers and enjoy the respect and confidence of the workers.

"Without such a composition it is impossible to build a programmatically firm and disciplined organization which can accomplish these grandiose tasks. A party of non-workers is necessarily subject to all the reactionary influences of skepticism, cynicism, soul-sickness and capitulatory despair transmitted to it through its petty-bourgeois environment.

"To transform the S.W.P. into a proletarian party of action, particularly in the present period of reaction, it is not enough to continue propagandistic activities in the hope that by an automatic process workers will flock to the banner of the party. It is necessary, on the contrary, to make a concerted, determined and systematic effort, consciously directed by the leading committees of the party, to penetrate the workers' movement, establish the roots of the party in the trade unions, the mass labor organizations and in the workers' neighborhoods and recruit worker militants into the ranks of the party.

### "Steps to Proletarianize the Party"

"To proletarianize the party, the following steps are imperative:

"1. The entire party membership must be directed towards rooting itself in the factories, mills, etc., and towards integrating itself in the unions and workers' mass organizations.

"2. Those members of the party who are not workers shall be assigned to work in labor organizations, in workers' neighborhoods and with the worker-fractions of the party -- to assist them and learn from them. All unemployed members must belong to and be active in organizations of the unemployed.

"Those party members who find it impossible after a reasonable period of time to work in a proletarian milieu and to attract to the party worker militants shall be transferred from party membership to the rank of sympathizers. Special organizations of sympathizers may be formed for this purpose.

"Above all the student and unemployed youth must be sent into industry and involved in the life and struggles of the workers. Systematic, exceptional and persistent efforts must be made to assist the integration of our unemployed youth into industry despite the restricted field of employment.

"Lacking connection with the workers' movement through failure or inability to get jobs in industry or membership in unions, the student and unemployed youth are subject to terrific pressure from the petty-bourgeois world. A large section of the youth membership of the S.W.P. and Y.P.S.L. adopted the program of the Fourth International, but brought with them the training and habits of the social democratic movement, which are far removed from the spirit of the proletarian revolution.

"These student elements can transform the program of the Fourth International from the pages of books and pamphlets into living reality for themselves and for the party only by integrating themselves in the workers' movement and breaking irrevocably from their previous environment. Unless they follow this road they are in constant danger of slipping back into their former social democratic habits or into complete apathy and pessimism and thus be lost for the revolutionary movement.

"3. To attract and to hold workers in the ranks of the party, it is necessary that the internal life of the party be drastically transformed. The party must be cleansed of the discussion club atmosphere, of an irresponsible attitude toward assignments, of a cynical and smart-aleck disrespect for the party.

### "Organizing Real Campaigns"

"Party activity must be lifted out of dragging, daily routine and reorganized on the basis of campaigns which are realistically adjusted to the demands and direction of the workers' movement. These campaigns must not be sucked out of the thumb of some functionary in a party office, but must arise as a result of the connections of the party with the workers' movement and the indicated direction of the masses in specific situations.

"All party agitation campaigns, especially in the next period, must be directed primarily at those workers' groups and organizations in which we are attempting to gain a foothold and attract members. General agitation addressed to the working class as a whole or the public in general must be related to those specific aims.

"The press must gear its agitation into the activity conducted among specific workers' groups so as to transform the party paper from a literary organ into a workers' organizer. The integration of the party into workers' movement, and the transformation of the party into a proletarian organization, are indispensable for the progress of the party. Successful achievement of this internal transformation is a

thousand times more important than any amount of empty phrases about 'preparation of the party for war.' This transformation is, in fact, the only real preparation of the party for war, combined of course with the necessary technical adjustments in organization forms.

"The S.W.P. must adhere to the principles and program of the Fourth International, transform itself into a democratically centralized Bolshevik organization, integrate itself into the workers' movement. On that basis, and on that basis alone, can the party meet the test of the war, survive the war and go forward to its great goal -- the establishment of a Workers' Republic in the United States."

### III

The Plenum of the National Committee reaffirms as follows the organizational principles and procedures of the party:

As provided by the party constitution, the National Committee directs all the work of the party, decides all questions of policy in accord with the decisions of the national convention, appoints subordinate officers and sub-committees, including the Political Committee, and in general constitutes, between national conventions, the functioning central authority of the party.

The Political Committee, appointed by the plenum, functions as the central authority of the party between plenums of the National Committee and is authorized to speak and act in its name. It shall be optional with the Political Committee whether or not it will conduct a poll of the National Committee before acting on any question before it, except that such a poll shall be taken upon the request of any National Committee member for a plenary meeting of the National Committee. The Political Committee is obliged to comply with the decision of the majority of the full National Committee in such a poll.

All party organs, institutions and bodies, including the party locals and branches, shall be under the supervision of the Political Committee, acting for the National Committee. All party units and individual party members are required to comply with any directives of the Political Committee between plenums of the National Committee, pending appeal to the plenum.

As provided by the party constitution, Local Executive Committees shall direct the activities of the Locals and act with full power for the Locals between city conventions. Branch Executive Committees, on the other hand, as provided by the party constitution, shall be subordinate to the Branch membership.

In accordance with the principle of democratic centralism, the minority shall have the right to present its views in the internal party discussion. The plenum, and between its sessions the Political Committee, has the right and duty to lay down rules for the regulation of the discussion, to see that it is fairly conducted as has invariably been the case in the past, and to see that it does not disrupt party work and the orderly functioning of the party in all its activities.

The principle of majority rule shall apply with full force and effect in all party bodies and in all party activities.

VIII.

PIENUM RECORD ON RESOLUTIONS AND VOTING

STATEMENT BY MARCY: I have submitted a Political Resolution. I want to vote against the majority and minority resolutions on Stalinism and their Political Resolutions.

Vote on Draft Resolution of the Political Committee --  
"American Stalinism and Our Attitude Toward It"

<u>Regular</u>	In favor	16
	Opposed	9
<u>Consultative</u>	In favor	7
	Opposed	5

(Marcy's vote cast for that portion of his Political Resolution which deals with Stalinism.)

Vote on "Resolution on American Stalinism" (Submitted by PC Minority)

<u>Regular</u>	In favor	8
	Opposed	17
<u>Consultative</u>	In favor	3
	Opposed	8

Vote on Political Committee Draft Resolution --  
"Major Developments since Eisenhower's Election  
and the Tasks of the Party"

<u>Regular</u>	In favor	16
	Opposed	9
<u>Consultative</u>	In favor	7
	Opposed	5

(Marcy cast his vote for his Political Resolution, with statement.)

Vote on "Supplement to 1952 Political Resolution" (Submitted by the PC Minority.)

<u>Regular</u>	In favor	8
	Opposed	17
<u>Consultative</u>	In favor	3
	Opposed	7

Vote on "Political Committee Draft Resolution on the Organizational Principles of the Party"

Statement by Cochran: "On the basis of the deletion of all characterization of the minority, which it is our understanding and agreement that the majority is willing to do, we are ready to vote for the majority Organization Resolution and withdraw the minority resolution."

"Resolution on Organization" (Submitted by the Political Committee Minority) -- Withdrawn.

Vote on "Political Committee Draft Resolution on the Organizational Principles of the Party"

<u>Regular</u>	Carried unanimously.
<u>Consultative</u>	Carried unanimously.

Vote on "Political Resolution" (Submitted by S. Marcy, V. Grey, T. Wilson)

<u>Regular</u>	In favor	1
	Opposed	24

<u>Consultative</u>	In favor	2
	Opposed	10

Recommended that NC refer to PC the "PC Majority Draft Resolution on the Internal Party Dispute" with understanding that a joint resolution on the Internal Party Dispute be drafted in light of agreement reached.

Vote on Dobbs' report which contained above recommendation:

<u>Regular</u>	Carried unanimously.
<u>Consultative</u>	Carried unanimously.



CONCLUDING SPEECH AT THE MAY PLENUM  
OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SWP

Sunday, May 30, 1953

By James P. Cannon  
National Chairman

Engels once said, quoting Hegel, that a party proves its right to exist by the fact that it splits and can stand a split. We have seen that law demonstrated in the past history of our party on several occasions. At this Plenum, the Socialist Workers Party has proved that it can stand a faction fight of the greatest severity and intensity, and still preserve and even strengthen its unity.

In my opinion, we have cemented here a real and genuine unity, which has two antagonistic and yet supplementary aspects. On the one hand, the Plenum has seen the firm consolidation of a majority group, which can now lead the party with unchallenged authority. On the other hand, the Plenum has shown a strong minority of qualified comrades, with many talents, who have not surrendered or been asked to surrender any of their opinions or any of their normal rights as a minority.

Party unity and party peace have been secured and guaranteed at the Plenum by an agreement of the majority and the minority, after a hard year-long struggle, on the basis of a definite and clearly established relation of forces. For that reason, I think we have a right to confidence that the party unity and the party peace are firmly based and secure.

In my opinion, we will now have a long peace in the party. And it will be a most beneficent peace for the party, in two respects. First, the party work will be developed unitedly, and with more spirit and energy than for a long time. Second, the party patriotism of the members of both factions will be stronger than ever, and they will compete with each other in friendly rivalry to prove who are the best party builders and party doers. The discussion of questions in dispute, whether fully developed or merely tentative or embryonic, can now be conducted in a calm atmosphere, without factional bias or exaggeration, without insults or denigration on one side or the other -- with the aim of clarifying the issues; with the aim of teaching each other and learning from each other.

I think we are all aware that we have participated in a historic Plenum. It will be regarded in future times as a turning point, an event of transcendent importance for the socialist revolution in the United States. For the revolution is not simply the struggle for power, and the transformation of the social system from capitalism to socialism. The revolution is also the preparatory period, the period in which we are living now. And the most important part of the preparation for the revolution is the building of a Leninist party, which alone can organize and lead the struggle for power in this country and carry it through to irreversible victory. In the factional struggle which has culminated in the peace agreement at this Plenum, the party has demonstrated its right to live, and its ability, by its own inner resources, to conquer the problems which challenged its claim to a great historic mission.

The most important question of the workers' movement is the question of the party -- which is the question of the leadership of the workers' movement. By the same token, the most important question of the party is the question of the party leadership. We know, of course, that it is not the party that creates the program. It is the program that creates the party, as well as its leading staff. But this does not happen automatically. It requires human intervention at the right time. If this intervention comes at the right time, historical periods are leaped over, and much time is gained. If the human intervention is not available, there are great delays and needless defeats.

The most important party in the entire world is the Socialist Workers Party. It is the party with the greatest historical mission ever given to a group of people on this planet. Trotsky wrote in 1929, in his first letter to the founding group of our movement, that in the final analysis all the problems of this epoch will be solved on American soil; that, although in order of precedence it seemed that the revolution would come sooner in other countries than in the United States, a change in the historical order was easily possible which might put America in the first rank; and that in any case, a social crisis could arise in this country much sooner than anyone assumed, and from the beginning have a very feverish development. And Trotsky said that the conclusion from this perspective is that it is necessary to prepare. From that point of view, he said, our founding conference, which he was addressing, had a world historic importance.

The present situation in the world shows the long-delayed revolution marching with seven-league boots. The decline of capitalism seems to be symmetrically matched by the rise of tremendous revolutionary movements and the strengthening of the revolutionary currents, especially now in the colonial world. From all indications, a revival of the October Revolution, with all of its spirit and all of its power, is germinating in the Soviet Union again, promising to bring into the arena as an independent factor the immeasurable power of the new Soviet proletariat, which now matches the mighty proletariat of the United States in numbers and social weight.

All the revolutionary forces moving in the world now confront as their mortal enemy, the great power of American imperialism, with its program of war and counter-revolution, designed to arrest the development of the revolutionary process in other parts of the world. As long as this power remains, with its capacity for military devastation, every revolution throughout the world remains tentative, pending the outcome of the struggle with this monster of American imperialism. The development of an economy for use -- the transitional development of China and all the colonial countries to a higher system of organized and planned economy utilizing the most modern techniques -- is threatened and arrested at every step by the necessity to defend the revolutionary gains against the aggression of this monstrous reactionary power of American imperialism.

We are all convinced that the course of the world revolution is now irreversible. But the speed at which it develops, and the time between the present and the eventual socialist transformation of the entire world, hangs in the balance until the issue is settled in the United States. For the final decision of the issue of capitalism or

socialism will be made, as Trotsky said, on American soil. It is from this circumstance that comes our great historical mission. It is from this that comes our great destiny.

We know that our party, as at present constituted, is not ordained. We are human, and therefore capable of error and of failure. But if we fail; if we ossify into sectarianism, or degenerate along the lines of opportunism, or succumb to the pressures of our times and let history pass us by -- it would simply mean that others, picking up the program and taking hold of the thread of Marxist continuity, would have to create another party of the same type as the SWP. If we can prevent the breaking of that thread; if we can prevent the degeneration and defeat and disappearance of our party -- we will contribute all that history calls upon us to contribute to the further development of the revolution in this country.

American capitalism -- the most powerful and last stronghold of the outmoded system of capitalism -- will not be overthrown without a struggle of such proportions as to exclude the idea that it can be successful accidentally, or without conscious organization, preparation and leadership. Only a Leninist party can organize and lead the revolution that will overthrow American capitalism and bring about the socialist transformation. Only a Leninist party can fulfill the task. If we fail -- if we as individuals fail -- the idea will still retain all its vitality, and must be realized by others who prove stronger than we are.

I believe, with Trotsky, that Marxism is saturated with the optimism of progress. By that, I have an unshakeable confidence, grounded on Marxist science and its analysis of social reality, in the victory of socialism in the United States. But I have nothing in common with the optimism of cheerful idiocy in regard to anything that is human, including our own human creation, the SWP.

During the course of the past year, I had serious doubts of the ability of the SWP to survive. At one time -- I will frankly admit to you here for the first time -- I thought that our 25-year effort, compounded on all the previous experience and work of ourselves and others, had ended in catastrophic failure; and that, once again, a small handful would have to pick up the pieces, and start all over again to build the new cadre of another party on the old foundations.

The reasons for my doubts, at one time, of the party's ability to survive were the following. I saw a factional "power struggle" developing in the party. I saw that in the central leadership, upon whom the whole weight of responsibility rested, there were so many neutrals that decision was paralyzed. I saw lack of a firm majority in the leadership of the party, and consequently the lack of any real authority in the party. The result was a headless, unrestrained and uncontrolled factional battle, with no clear goal in sight -- a "power struggle," as I saw it, without the evidence of a single group capable of winning the power in the party and leading the party firmly with the necessary authority.

My doubts on this score -- which, again I will admit frankly, at one time took the form of pessimism -- have all been resolved at this Plenum, for the following reasons. A large majority in the leading committee has been consolidated. This majority has shown its con-

scious understanding of its responsibility, and a firm will to lead, without which you cannot lead. The minority at the Plenum has shown its ability to recognize the realities of the relation of forces, has accepted them with discipline and responsibility, and has demanded nothing more than its normal rights as a constructive minority.

For these reasons -- that is, the attitude of the majority at this Plenum, and, I repeat, the responsible and disciplined attitude of the minority at the close of the Plenum -- for these reasons I have confidence in the party unity and the party peace established by the Plenum. I foresee no serious disruption of it for a long time to come. The Plenum shows to me that not only have the younger cadres of our party grown up -- important as that is -- but even more important, the party itself has grown up. It is no longer dependent on the Old Guard to the extent that it has been in the past.

A new leadership of the younger cadres has been consolidated, and has established its own authority, without which leadership is impossible. Its authority, in my opinion, can be strengthened, rather than undermined, by the simultaneous loyal collaboration and friendly competition of the minority. I think that after this Plenum the minority will make a serious effort to play such a role in the leadership -- the role of loyal collaborators and friendly competitors. And I wish them success.

Now, in view of the foregoing, we should recognize the new reality in another field, and welcome it too. The new reality is the inauguration of a new regime in the party. I repeat that: A new regime in the party. The old regime -- which I had something to do with, as has been said more than once -- had its merits and its faults; but it now belongs to party history. Its duty now is to make way for the new. Not, of course, to withdraw from activity or from participation in the work of the new regime -- but to withdraw from the central direction of the party into a supporting and advisory position to the new leadership consolidated at this Plenum.

The change of national officers, which you have already ratified -- my transfer to the position of National Chairman and Comrade Dobbs' simultaneous transfer to the position of National Secretary -- both registers and signalizes this change, and also symbolizes it. Comrade Dobbs steps into the executive leadership of the party, as part of the new regime, the new leadership. There should not be any doubts of the role the Plenum and the party expect him to play.

In the course of the four-day Plenum, there was much discussion of the episode of last summer, which some considered a mistake for one reason, some for another. However that may be -- and I think it was a mistake -- I think also that it was an episode in the life and work of Comrade Dobbs as a revolutionist. His services, however; his record in the mass movement before he came into the central leadership; his record of service in the party; what he has to give to the party, many things for which he is uniquely qualified and which none other in the leading circle can give -- that part of Dobbs is no episode. All that is the solid basis for evaluating and judging him. The new leading group has made this evaluation and judgment, and it has registered it here in his unanimous designation to the central post of executive leader.

My election to the post of National Chairman, I take to signify that I now am authorized by the Plenum to make my transfer of residence to Los Angeles permanent; that you will be satisfied if I contribute to the literary work of the party; with an occasional advisory letter and not too much meddling in your affairs; lectures now and then, and let it go at that -- with the specific understanding of all concerned that I understand it, as you must understand it, as a change in the regime: the ending of the party regime as it has been understood up to now -- not a rupture or an overthrow, but a growing over into a new regime, where a new leading group takes over the main responsibility and I pass into an advisory and supporting role.

In that capacity I will promise to the new leadership that they can count on my loyal collaboration. They have no need to fear anything else. My sole activity and concern in California will be to write some of the things I have long projected, for which I have preparatory plans and material gathered, and which I think will be useful to the party. If the party will accept that from me now, we can have a complete understanding, and we will go forward from this Plenum with an attitude of confidence in the new national leadership as a whole, which -- don't forget -- includes the minority too. They will also be sharing in the responsibility, in a double sense: the responsibility of discipline and loyal collaboration and, no less, the responsibility to freely make their criticisms and counter-proposals whenever they think the time has come for them.

With that, I will say that this is my last speech to you as a representative of the former "Cannon regime."

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