

SPARK

A MARXIST MONTHLY

Published by the P.R. Club, Communist Party (Expelled)
P.O.Box 34, Tremont Station, N.Y. 57, N.Y.

Vol. II, No. 2

Price: 15¢

February 1948

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THE THIRD PARTY VICTORY IN THE BRONX

The United States and all of its political parties rocked with the victory of A.L.P. candidate, Leo Isacson, in the 24th Congressional District. This expression of the American people must have been received joyfully all over the world as another factor for peace.

What a wonderful sight to see the working class gloating over a victory which puts Boss Flynn in political hock. And yet--and this is the point of this editorial-- that victory is being squandered. It is being squandered by those CP leaders who were cynical about victory, afraid of it before the elections and even now.

The Republican, Democrat, Liberal, A.L.P., and Communist Parties and Isacson and Wallace all felt in common that Isacson could not win. Democrat Propper would win. They are all practical, sober politicians who are not so naive as to be swayed by the moods of the people who thought that Isacson could win because the 2 in 1 parties and their bipartisanship were exposed.

The P.R. Club thought that Isacson would win--despite the wet rag of C.P. leadership--because this neighborhood, where we work (a solidly proletarian neighborhood of Negro, Jewish, Puerto Rican, Italian, and Irish workers) has made evident its disgust with the two-party system. This was also evident back in October 1946 when the P.R. Club issued its S.O.S. and was expelled for such renegade ideas as pushing a third party. Until now third party gains in this area have been checked by the so-called leaders of the workers. Now, despite their leaders, the workers have moved ahead.

The C.P. can now float a few light words about the lessons of the campaign into its editorials, but it obscures the weakness of the campaign and thus perpetuates that weakness. During the election campaign, a frontal attack on the Marshall Plan was avoided by concentrating on the Palestine issue. Isacson did it openly; the party encouraged it quietly. Nevertheless, out of the real experiences of the canvassers (of course

not of the CP leaders) came a genuinely hopeful and spontaneous excitement. This frightening upsurge forced Flynn to throw Mayor O'Dwyer--and Eleanor--in to divert the excitement. The diversion failed because this excitement represented a realization of strength and thereby multiplied the activity which won the election.

With the very shock of victory (55.5% of the total vote!) Isacson did the workers who won his election a disservice. He proclaimed the key to his victory the Palestine issue. This wasted and confused the real lesson. Isacson's analysis was adopted wholeheartedly by the major parties as a vehicle for narrowing the base for the Bronx upsurge. Democrat Propper even went so far as to suggest the administration's position on the Palestine issue as the obstacle to his success. Of course, the Palestine issue was a strong and valid part of the campaign but only a part of a larger reason. Why did Flynn's Bronx desert both machines and give the U.S. a lesson of great value for 1948? The people believed that locally and nationally a third party could win--and had to win to prevent war in the world and fascism in the U.S. The people voted down the Marshall Plan, the Taft-Hartley Law, UMT, the sabotage of the UN, and the Palestine betrayal. They voted--in a word--for peace. That word today is the program which has to include all the international and domestic problems, but must not be obscured by any one part of it. The conscious voting for the Third Party as a weapon for peace must not be obscured by any one issue.

It is to the credit of the rank and file members of the CP and the PCA who worked hard in this election--as well as the Bronx garment workers (in Dubinsky's union BUT NOT HIS POCKET) that they took matters into their own hands, forgot about the limited excursion of a protest vote and won. They began to see a little of the dynamite in their strength--the strength that reversed the disgrace of the last election when the ALP cringed before Flynn offering support which was refused. If their leaders could bear the disgrace because they are "respectable", the workers wouldn't. One would almost think that this example would teach the CPUSA to trust the intelligence of the workers, to lead them. Instead the CP not only didn't keep abreast of the workers--it tailed miserably. It expected a rise of ALP votes to about 30% of the total at the best--and got 55.5%.

What a victory this would be if there were a real CP (and this is something to think about for those expelled who think nothing can be done until we have a real CP.) These people voted for working class power. Nothing separates this intelligence in the Bronx working class from embracing Socialism, but the fact that the CP's rejection of Socialism has been superimposed on the people generally. The workers take a stride forward and the CP squanders the advance and influences other non-Communist leaders to squander also. This is the real crime of the CP.

A LETTER ON THE THIRD PARTY

✓We have received a copy of a letter sent to NCP by a Communist Party member from New York City. We consider this an excellent refutation of current "leftist" arguments against the 3rd Party movement in the U.S. To date NCP has not reproduced this.✓

February 3, 1948

Dear Comrade:

I am sorry that I have taken so long to answer your good letter. As you know I am in agreement with much of what NCP says. I think I should point out at this time that I also have certain areas of disagreement with you. Of these probably the most important and by all odds the most timely concerns the proper role of real Communists in the current Third Party movement.

In order to delimit the area of disagreement in NCP's own terms first let me say:

- (1) I know no other way to solve the problems of the masses than the revolutionary way (and I know that there is no other way).
- (2) I know that these problems cannot be solved without a bona fide CP. THAT though the workers do and will struggle without such a CP that they cannot struggle successfully without it.
- (3) I believe that the correct fundamental goal in this country is the dictatorship of the working class.

I agree that the renegacy and tailism of CPUSA which has permitted liberal and petit-bourgeois groups to assume the hegemony of the emerging coalition has created the danger that it may become an anti-Communist third party as Dimitroff warned at the Seventh CI Congress that it might. (Danger or no, it is definitely not an anti-Communist party now as Wallace's Feb. 1 speech at Columbus plainly showed.)

It is further apparent that a CPUSA that tailed anti-Soviet-eers such as Mead et al for years can't be counted on for anything except to try to sell out the workers. Of course not; the real job of leadership to prevent a sell-out must be done by the Comrades who are determined that we must have a real CP. Small as we are in number, not yet agreed altogether on program, and with a certain amount of Trotskyite and adventurist chaff to slough off, we are nevertheless the only ones who can do this job.

I differ from NCP chiefly in that (1) I don't think we should or dare wait until a sizeable bona fide CP is in being before starting to work like hell for a Peoples' Front, but rather that those of us who

want such a CP must start now from where we are and build the bona fide CP by building the Peoples' Front; and (2) I am convinced that the "rope" of Lenin, i.e. the advice that Lenin gave the incipient British Communist Party in 1921, applies fully to us in the present situation. My reasons are as follows:

First as to NCP's contention that we must build a bona fide CP before we can build a real Peoples' Front, I should like to raise the following points:

(1) As far as the bona fide CP is concerned we are at just about the same stage as the British Communists were in 1921 when Lenin gave them his advice. They had "four (all weak and some of them very, very weak) parties and groups" which were not agreed on program. He advised them "to unite on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of obligatory participation in Parliament" (Refusal to participate in Parliament was the leftist tendency at that time, as refusal to promote a Peoples' Front except under just the right conditions is the prevailing "left" deviation, -W.A.) and then to form a bloc with the Labour Party to help bring that party to power. (All my Lenin quotes are from the Little Lenin Library Edition of "LEFT WING" COMMUNISM: AN INFANTILE DISORDER; Section IX, "Left Wing" Communism in England.)

To the formation of this bloc or front Lenin interposed just one firm condition: that "the CP retain complete liberty to carry on agitation, propaganda and political activity. Without the latter condition no such bloc should be concluded, for that would be an act of betrayal."

(2) I believe Lenin's advice applies equally to us today, i.e. to real Communists outside CPUSA and to those inside who are willing to make the break. We should unite at once on the basis of the principles of the Third International, the Cominform Manifesto, and of the Peoples' Front as outlined for the American Party by the Seventh CI Congress (and consistently sabotaged by CPUSA). We should cement our unity by the correct application of these principles to the Wallace candidacy, and to the building of a permanent Third Party whose hegemony we must prepare to assume.

Obviously in supporting Wallace's Third Party or any other Lenin's condition that the CP must retain full liberty to continue its independent role, to agitate, criticize, etc. has to be met. We will have no part of an anti-Communist party.

(3) By correctly supporting this Third Party, thus strengthening its opposition to the Marshall Plan and anti-Soviet war-mongering, while also threatening it with the "rope", we will have an unequalled chance to talk to workers who poisoned by the red hysteria would not otherwise listen to us. We can thus explain Socialism and the workers government to them and make rapid strides in building a mass bona fide CP.

We must convince the masses of the correctness of our theory by taking a leading part in the fight for their immediate political and

economic demands, -demands which are being put forward, even if somewhat inadequately by Wallace.

(4) TIMETABLE TO FASCISM. Marshall Tito in his speech to the Second Congress of the Peoples' Front of Yugoslavia (Sept. 7, 1947) said: "We are again in need of a fierce and stubborn struggle against reaction and fascism." It seems plain to me, but apparently not equally so to NCP, that the master-strategists of American imperialism are planning to clap down an American Brand of fascism on us, and that in the not distant future. The preliminary moves have been made or are under way: the incitements of the un-American Committee, the loyalty checks, the Taft-Hartley crackdowns, the reactionary unity of the major parties and the NAM, and the mounting crescendo of red-baiting and anti-Soviet hysteria. Reaction is preparing "der tag". The big push, if the imperialist's timetable is not upset by the resistance of the masses, will come, as in Hitler's case and Mussolini's, on the heels of a major economic crisis when millions of unemployed, torn loose from their economic and political moorings, are ready to grasp at any demagogic straw.

It is no accident that both major parties have conspired together, each the while blaming the other, to destroy all such checks and controls as might mitigate the violence of the coming economic debacle.

We are in a race against time; we dare not risk waiting till 1950 or more likely 1952 to start building the Peoples' Front which alone can disrupt the cleverly conceived plans of the imperialists for American fascism as a prelude to their attack on the Soviet Union. We need such a party in 1948, -later may be too late.

So much for the question of the timing of a third party. Then the question may be raised that Henderson, Snowden and McDonald were nominally* a coalition with the forces he leads. Certainly not if we believe what Dimitroff told us at the Seventh CI Congress and Tito reaffirmed in his September speech. Tito said: "Many people think today that Peoples' Fronts are something obsolete, something superfluous at this stage of development; but this is wrong." And again "A new danger of war may therefore arise if we are not vigilant; if we fail to draw conclusions from the recent past, and do not take energetic measures against all war-mongers; if all the democratic forces not only in every individual country (My emphasis-W.) but in the whole world do not unite to conduct the most energetic struggle against the war-mongers and for peace."

Under American conditions therefore the elements from which the coalition must be formed consist of all anti-fascists who prove the sincerity of their opposition to the imperialist war-mongers by refusing to red-bait American Communists or the Soviet Union.

Despite his vacillations it would be straining at a gnat to pretend that Wallace does not qualify at this time. Furthermore fragmentary polls of worker opinion so far available indicate that far and away, the greatest part of his support comes from the low income groups

* (omission) Marxists while Wallace is not. Does that mean that we should not enter into

(industrial workers and almost certainly also from the poor farmers). These are the classes from which a mass Peoples' Coalition must be recruited; it would be the sheerest folly for us to refuse to support the only leader in whom they have confidence, even although we cannot fully share that confidence. To do so could only estrange us from the masses and seriously hinder the formation of any Peoples' Front, as well as prevent us from using the fight to build that front as a ladder to recruit the more advanced workers into a real CP.

Thus I disagree with NCP (5 Jan. '48) that to support Wallace because failure to do so would be unpopular with the masses is opportunist. In his Chicago speech Wallace put forward a program which corresponds pretty closely with the needs of the masses for struggle against the imperialist war-mongers and Marshall-planners as well as for their immediate economic needs. Our chief fear is that he may not stick to that program. Also we want socialism and Wallace has illusions about "progressive" capitalism. But under comparable conditions Lenin advised support of Snowden and Henderson. Certainly they were no less demagogues and liars than Wallace. On the contrary they pretended to want socialism, but not of course in their lifetimes, and used their Fabian pretensions to justify their every sell-out to British Imperialism. Wallace is more honest and therefore even if weak and vacillating less dangerous.

Again NCP speaks of confusing "the enthusiasm of certain trade union officials with the views of the working class", and also that the "risks" of not supporting "Wallace do not seem to have deterred a majority of high trade union officials from being markedly anti-Wallace so it can't be quite as 'risky' as it seems." Surely NCP does not want to pretend (no matter how low our opinion of CPUSA trade-union pie-cards) that the AF of L, Brotherhood and CIO unions opposing Wallace are more responsive to their members' needs and wishes than the unions which support him.

The impressive undercurrent of support among workers despite the opposition of certainly 90% of the top union leadership, the paralyzing traditional two-party straight-jacket, and the certainly that he cannot be elected in 1948 shows how hard the masses are bucking their anti-Wallace leaders.

I think we have to be careful not to denounce and oppose everything CPUSA does merely because they are wrong 95% of the time. There is plenty about their handling of the Peoples' Front since 1935 and the Wallace candidacy in particular to criticize and to spare, even for those of us who believe we should give him real but conditional support.

Coming back again to the "rope" NCP (5 Jan. 48) says: "The most powerful of the erroneous arguments (for supporting Wallace) is a very subtle one and consists -- of a counterfeit (Original emphasis) "rope of Lanin". You say that CPUSA has been talking about it for years "and the essential point of (it) they miss entirely". Yes, they have misused the "rope" tactic to perpetrate a horrendous hoax on American (and particularly New York) workers. They have supported some of the mangiest

spark

tripe in the American political scene as NCP says: "With a 'rope'? Not at all. They just support him - period." NCP is justifiably pretty mad about this, and so am I.

What NCP has proved here however is not that the "rope" is a counterfeit, but that CPUSA has passed off tactics which bear no real relationship to Lenin's advice as being in fact the real "rope", and in so doing has caused grave injury to the workers. But NCP, I take it, is not offering its recommendations to CPUSA, the Browderites or to any other groups whose secret ambitions are to sell the workers down the river while appearing to adhere to classical Marxism-Leninism. It is telling what in its opinion real Communists should do.

What right then does NCP have to assume that, because the counterfeit "rope" used by designing opportunists is a fraud, that Lenin's tactic correctly applied by real Communists would also be counterfeit and a fraud? As a matter of fact Lenin wasn't just guessing that the tactic would work. He was suggesting an agreement of British Communists with the Labour Party such "as (for fifteen years-1903-17) the Russian Bolsheviks insisted on and secured in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e. the Mensheviks."

If CPUSA hopelessly perverts the "rope" by giving unconditional support to anti-worker candidates and parties, NCP is also guilty of distorting it. It says (17 Nov. 47) that "the 'rope' still has a few good hangs left in it". But here and elsewhere you make it clear that while you are rather keen to spring the trap on Henry (using the occasion of course to spread Communist propaganda if possible), you hope this can be accomplished without contributing to his political strength or to that of his party.

Well it just can't be done. The "rope" is a much subtler tactic than that. It consists of a number of closely inter-related and inseparable elements, all of which are either described or implied by Lenin:-

(1) Real political support for the coalition in order to elect its candidates (or to force them to take power in case they are reluctant). As Lenin pointed out, this is an absolute condition if the "rope" is to be used successfully:-"At the present time the British Communists very often find it hard to approach the masses and even to get them to listen to them. (He couldn't have hit the nail on the head better had he been writing of USA-1943-W.) If I as a Communist come out and call upon the workers to vote for the Hendersons against Lloyd George they will certainly listen to me." Read Wallace for Henderson. Yes they will listen to us and everything else starts from there.

(2) Warning the masses that the coalition's leadership because of its class composition will possibly or almost-certainly betray them either before or after their assumption of power.

(3) Educating and propagandizing the more advanced workers to the need for the dictatorship of the workers and poor farmers, and thus recruiting them into a bona fide CP.

(4) By virtue of raising the political level of the workers (points 2 and 3 above) forcing the weak leadership of the coalition to carry

out its pledges to the masses and to take a correct course or to stand hopelessly exposed to the workers as traitors with the consequence that the workers learning from this experience will turn to the CP for leadership and take state power as a workers and farmers government.

Thus the "rope" properly carried out can act as a deterrent or preventive as well as a "cure". A Wallace whose shilly-shallying, vacillations and anti-Soviet tendencies are thoroughly and continuously exposed to his followers by his supporters and whose slightest gesture in the direction of the Marshall Plan is denounced from within his own ranks is going to think twice before he betrays the workers.

I must apologize for belaboring my point at such length, but it seems to me that Lenin's advice to the British Communists in 1921 is of peculiar value to us today. We (the bona fide CPers) like them are weak, disunited and ideologically unsure of our course. We too have not as yet gained the confidence of the masses, who now accept as leaders men we have good reason to distrust. The tactic detailed by Lenin is designed to gain the hegemony of the workers' movement for the Communists under these admittedly difficult conditions. In my opinion we cannot afford to ignore it.

We should therefore use this opportunity to achieve ideological and organizational unity, and to build our real CP, through our achievements in welding a permanent People's Front of which we must in due course assume the leadership.

A couple of further observations may perhaps be pertinent. Of all the betrayals of which the CPUSA has been guilty, its actions with regard to the Marshall Plan have been just about the worst. The refusal of the CPUSA to affiliate with the Cominform, organized primarily to coordinate the fight against the Marshall Plan, and particularly the craven excuse offered for the refusal showed the workers of Europe that the CPUSA is unwilling to stand and fight (on any issue that is, except for pie-card jobs.) While the DW was giving mild lipservice to the Cominform's Manifesto, the CP unbneers were unanimously supporting the Marshall Plan at CIO conventions all over the country, in the name of unity. Unity with the imperialists and their labor stooges that is, and a knife in the back for the workers of the world, America included.

The Marshall Plan is the most critical issue in the world today. Wallace is opposing the Marshall Plan, with reservations, but still opposing it. The only way workers in America in spite of their misleaders, can show their brothers from Brest to Stalingrad that they do have some support in this country for their fight against American imperialism is to vote for Wallace. Workers of the World Unite, the man says. For this reason alone I contend, to undo some of the damage from the CPUSA's cowardly shennanigans, we would have to get out and roll up the vote for Wallace if he were Beelzebub himself, which with all due deference to NCP, he is not. And the fact that the CPUSA now happens to be tailing Wallace doesn't alter our obligation in the slightest.

Finally, I think that favorable editorial and other comment about Wallace in the Soviet press during the past year, both before and since he became an avowed candidate, is not without significance. It would be naive to suggest that Soviet information as to the American political

scene is less than adequate, or that the opinions expressed are only casual. Neither, it is fairly apparent, are they diplomatic statements or agitational slogans which, if we are to avoid Browder's error, we must needs reinterpret. Certainly, the S.U. isn't going to give us a bum steer in a matter which is equally vital to them. No, I think it is their honest opinion that with all his weaknesses Wallace is the best candidate available, and that we will do well to support him, with the "rope" in all of its aspects to be sure, and to build around him a powerful permanent People's Coalition against the imperialist drive to fascism and war. They have been known to be right.

P.S. Since writing the above I have engaged in a friendly exchange of correspondence with NCP. I told them that I believe a full Marxist discussion of this issue by Comrades who want a real CP is urgently needed at this time; that my purpose in writing was to provoke such a discussion. NCP replied however (25 February) that they have "neither the means nor the desire to issue a 'forum' sort of publication, our purpose being to propagate what the Committee believes to be Bolshevik views and to refute what the Committee believes to be non or anti-Bolshevik views." Certainly NCP is fully within its rights in this stand. In an earlier communication I told NCP of a request from another group (SPARK) to use my letter in case NCP did not. While NCP did not reply directly to this point, they gave their implicit consent: "There is no noticeable lack at present of publications that welcome what we regard as mistaken views."

- - W.

COMMUNISTS IN NMU

We are reproducing in full the initial statement of the Maritime Committee for a Communist Party from "FORE 'N AFT", Feb., 1948. We consider this the first correct Communist statement to appear in the midst of the great confusion in the National Maritime Union.

Dear Comrade:

This is the beginning of a Maritime News Letter whose purpose will be to assist in the fight to develop real Communist activity in our industry and in the United States, and to develop a program of action based upon the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, dedicated to the struggle for Socialism.

Because of the opportunist role of the present leadership of the CPUSA, (specifically, the waterfront leadership) and the resulting confusion to all workers, bona-fide Communist theory and activity has become a pressing necessity. In the maritime industry, the opportunism and careerism of the present CP leadership have been disastrous to the class-consciousness of the Maritime worker and ruinous to maritime relations. None of the present problems of the unions of the industry can be resolved in any part to the satisfaction of the real interests of the workers until the core of all these problems, the character of the CP, is properly resolved. It is a political fantasy to believe that the unions' problems can be solved in the real interest of the workers without a real Communist Party giving militant leadership. Anything

short of militant CP leadership of the working class results in what we witness today: confusion, splits and the resurgence of right-wing activity in the United States.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of all sincere Communists, whether currently CP members, expelled, dropped or resigned Communists, to build a real CP in the U. S. To do this NMU Communists can start in their own union — and immediately! This is why some of us have started a simple, "old fashioned", Communist unit — and for these four reasons:

1. We must fight the Imperialist preparation for war abroad and steps toward Fascism at home in order to assist the struggling People's Democracies throughout the world and to preserve our own Democracy.
2. We who believe in a socialist U.S.A. in our time are going to work for it.
3. We who helped build the NMU are going to fight for it and save it.
4. We know that none of these three can be achieved unless we build an independent and real Communist Party.

As you read this, face a few sour facts. Consider the various fruits peddled as Communist policy in the NMU by the CP leadership, well-intentioned CP rank and filers and expelled Communists. Analyze your own recent record in the NMU. Just how Communist has it been. Have you, too, been "liberated" from the old principled Communist ideas and attitudes and are you now a sensible, practical machine character? Is the once solid Communist core in you dead — or only "withering away" at the moment. Are you an ersatz "loyal" CP hack, or on the other hand, has the CP's degeneration angered you so much that your goal has become the destruction of the CPUSA, rather than the building of a real CPUSA? Or — are you at the moment making the transition to respectable liberalism. If none of this fits, perhaps you are "romantically enough" a disillusioned Communist, or perhaps what Lenin called the "sniveller". Think it all over from the beginning and decide where you stand. It will make the difference for a long time to come.

Many Communists hold the illusion that the building of a real CP can be accomplished only through the complete destruction of the present CP at any cost. They nurture the false idea that the real CP they desire will rise from the ashes. They have fallen into the trap of such "logic" by assisting in the growth of the Rank and File Caucus in the NMU, believing that this was the only vehicle from which to fight an entrenched opportunistic machine. Too many honest seamen enjoy membership in the Caucus only as a result of their rejection of the present CP leadership and their awareness of its many obvious errors. While grievances against the CP leadership are valid and correct, these seamen, who are not in principle anti-communist, are faced with the contradiction between, on the one hand, their awareness of the CP's opportunism, and on the other hand, their unawareness of the dangers of "Communist red-baiting", cooperation with Trotskyites and other wrecking elements within the Rank and File Caucus. Therefore, we feel

that many Communists in the Caucus are duplicating the same practices they fought in the party.

WE WHO DESIRE TO WORK TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REAL COMMUNIST PARTY ON THE WATERFRONT, REJECT EQUALLY THE OPPORTUNIST POLICIES OF THE PRESENT CP WATERFRONT LEADERSHIP AND THE ANTI-WORKING CLASS ORIENTATION OF THE RANK AND FILE CAUCUS.

Before a Communist attempts solutions, he should really investigate the problems facing him. The basic analysis and solution for this period is contained in the Manifesto of the recent conference of the 9 Communist Parties in Belgrade. WE SUBSCRIBE TO THAT MANIFESTO. (In the next weeks we will circulate this and related material to the Communists in the NMU)

The conference found the world split into two camps. The Imperialist, anti-democratic camp, led by the U.S.A., has as its purpose the crushing of democracy and progress all over the world, the revival of Fascism, and the subjugation of the whole world to the U.S. The anti-imperialist, democratic camp, led by the Soviet Union, has as its purpose the blocking of imperialist aims, war and fascism, and the strengthening of democracy all over the world.

This "planned" war is not inevitable. There is a great gap between imperialist desire for war and their ability to implement their war plans. It becomes the responsibility of the American working class to the workers of the world to frustrate these ambitions of Wall St. Defense of their own interests as American workers is coincident with the defense of the interests of the workers of the world.

American Communists have a special role as Communists within the Agressor Nation to thwart these plans of American Imperialism.

We know that before the U.S.A. can seriously embark upon a third world war against the democracies of the world, she must first destroy all democratic rights and institutions of the American workers. Fascism in the U.S.A. is the prerequisite for war against the Soviet Union. Fascism is the frantic "solution" of Wall St. in this period of the sharpening of the universal crisis of Capitalism and the strengthening of world democracy and Socialism.

The working class must be prepared for leadership in this crisis. Therefore, our program in the NMU must be to smash the Marshall Plan for the domination of the world; to smash the Taft-Hartley Law without legalistic illusions of compromise; to refuse to load and sail ships destined for imperialist use. We can do this successfully if we don't fall into the error of underestimating the strength of the American working class or the democratic forces of the world, or of the NMU. We can do this if we take a lesson from the Australian longshoremen and the Canadian seamen who stopped all shipment of cargoes destined for Dutch imperialist use against the Indonesian people.

We can take lessons from our own maritime industry. Remember 1917

--West Coast longshoremen refused to load ships destined for intervention against the Soviet Union. Remember -- Frisco longshoremen who refused to load ships destined for Japanese imperialist expansion.

Mass militant action to enlist public support for the Peoples of China, Greece and Indonesia must be obtained. This, the present leadership of the CP has consistently failed to do. We point to their notorious failure to rally support for the French working class in its recent crisis, leaving the French workers completely unsupported. Fortunately the valiant efforts of Communist and non-Communist crew members of 2 ships docked in Marseilles left these French workers not entirely unaided. The NMU is in a key position to militantly guarantee in eloquent actions the national sovereignty of the European nations threatened by the Marshall Plan.

The prevention of Fascism in America is the prevention of another world war. There is only one way that Communists can effectively plan this fight against Fascism and Imperialism, and that is through the application of the People's Front in the USA. To understand this clearly, NMU Communists should carefully study Dmitroff's "United Front Against Fascism" (Report to the 7th Congress of the C.I.), the Manifesto and the organ of the Cominform ("For A Lasting Peace, For A People's Democracy") and Tito's recent report to the People's Front in Yugoslavia. An important point made by Tito was that the People's Front was not obsolete, as some Communists have recently decided, but more valuable than ever.

Dmitroff said in his report that the application of the People's Front in the U.S.A. should be --an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, non-red-baiting third party. Today we have the beginnings of a 3rd party in America, whose orientation is anti-fascist and anti-imperialist. Luckily, due to bad judgement on the part of the anti-3rd party forces, who decided to kill a 3rd party by leaving it en masse, we have also a non-red-baiting 3rd party. Although the program of this party is a correct one, there are subtle dangers involved. The 3rd party is too much a Wallace party, a one man party. It still harbors shame-faced illusions about possibilities in the Democratic Party. Despite repeated warnings from its own members that the success of a genuine third party must rely basically on organized labor, the CP leadership in all the discussion on a 3rd party, has relied on public statements, and the prestige of "leaders" instead of the organization of a membership 3rd party. NMU Communists should work for the 3rd party and for clarity on the Third Party problem. They should not be misled by the previous CPUSA "prematurity" double-talk on the 3rd party in America, which resulted in its current tailing after Wallace. The guarantee of a correct 3rd party in America, which will not be sold out in the course of the election campaign, is a real Communist core working for a 3rd party now.

On the 3rd party question--or any other question--we are faced with the confusion produced by a phony CP. There is no Communist Party in the USA today. The party which bankrupted that name is an opportunist, social-democratic party, whose leadership misleads the American working class from within. Nowhere has the CPUSA leadership (and specifically the Waterfront Leadership) better exposed its unprincipled deals and job security than in the NMU. Here the worst manifestations of oppor-

tunism show clearly -- from economism and tailism to open degeneracy and gangsterism. Its main strength has been based not on a real Communist program in the interests of the seamen and workers generally, but on how many Communists (in name only) it could elect to office. Its whole apparatus has been devoted to perpetuating in office people whose main interest in Communism has been and still is "Job Security". Correct Communist leadership should not be the building and perpetuation of an intricate "pie-card" apparatus. Instead, responsible Communists must project correct policy and thereby earn the respect and trust of non-Communist and Communist rank and filers alike.

The revision of Marxist theory to fit the opportunist line of the present CP leadership has resulted in mass expulsions from the CP nationally. In the NMU this has resulted in expulsion and mass demoralization -- and created the present split in the union. The day is not far off when the present CPUSA leadership will have to answer to the workers for assisting in the formulation of the red-baiting resolution at the National CIO Convention of 1946; for its vote against the Veto at the N.Y. State CIO Convention of 1947; for voting for and even participating in formulating the resolution on the Marshall Plan at the 1947 National CIO Convention. The main weapon of the leadership of the CPUSA against any militant working-class leadership, both within and without the party, was and still remains slander, character assassination and rumor-spreading. The complete suppression of criticism and democracy within the party has resulted in the building of a monumental and bureaucratic machine.

The U.S.A. needs a real Communist Party -- one which would not be afraid to affiliate with a Communist Information Bureau because of Wall Street's reaction or because its rank opportunism would be exposed in an international body. The U.S.A. needs an anti-opportunist party which could have only one consideration -- to lead correctly regardless of the "repressions" involved. It would be a party which stood and fought for Socialism in our time. This is the party that we Communists in the NMU have to build. It can best be built by the coordinated work of Communists in the CPUSA, expelled, dropped and resigned Communists.

Because we Communists, who helped build the NMU, now have the responsibility of saving it, we have to clear the confusion of incorrect policies and attitudes. We have to develop an independent role and tail behind no man or caucus. We have to prove in this key union what has to be proven all over the U.S.A.

For this reason, we are setting up "house" -- a Communist unit. Our intentions are simply these: present a correct-independent Communist position in the NMU; find and recruit the right guys who are going to build a real Communist core in the NMU and a real CP in the US; distribute the literature needed for understanding today's problems, including the Cominform Organ, New Times and Marxist classics. We have to start study classes; we have to work in conjunction with all other principled groups in the U.S.A. working to build a real CP. We will do now, with modest beginning, what we should have done long ago in the NMU. And we will analyze ruthlessly all past "Communist" errors.

Therefore, we ask you to consider where you stand. If you are

with us, we want you to help us implement our intentions. By the next issue we will be set up organizationally with a P.O. Box - etc., through which you will be able to contact us. If you disagree with us on certain points, we urge you to write your disagreements and your reactions so that we can carry on a systematic Communist discussion which will result in the most valuable collection of Communists. In any case, face the issues squarely and decide whether you are a Communist or not. If you are, there is no obstacle in the way of our common work for a real CP and a clear Communist policy in the NMU supported not only by all Communists, but by the NMU rank-and-file.

We have been able to mention only the essential points, and very briefly. Even within these limits, we have only attempted to project a correct Communist policy without detailed proof. This is a good starting point for all of us to enter the discussion. We expect to hear from you soon, and we expect to work with you.

FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM, FASCISM AND WAR!

FOR A STRONG NMU GUARANTEED BY A REAL COMMUNIST CORE!

FOR A REAL COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE USA IN 1948!

FOR SOCIALISM IN OUR TIME!

Comradely yours,
Maritime Committee for a Communist Party

/SPARK asks you to read very carefully the following
PROVOCATEUR-ING comment on FORE 'N AFT by NCP Report./

MORE EVIDENCE OF RISING FERMENT IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND OF EFFORTS of CPUSA apparatus to "handle" the situation in a "new" way is the issuance among NMU members and others in the New York City area of a new publication, Fore'n Aft--a very salty title calculated, no doubt, to appeal to many Jelly Tars.

The Maritime Committee For A Communist Party, otherwise unidentified, is the publisher. The publication has as yet given no address.

The political line proclaimed by this new manifesto is opportunist of the "Centrist" variety and, except in its call for adherence to the Communist Information Bureau, exhibits no substantial differences from the proclaimed (as distinct from practiced) line of CPUSA. Many nice things are said about Socialism, but there is strict silence as to the one thing that differentiates pseudo-"socialist" parties and Trotskyite parties from bona fide Communist Parties, namely, the fundamental strategic goal, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Numerous other grave and fashionable errors are made. The fight against fascism is split away from the fight against capitalism. Workers are urged to fight "to preserve our own democracy," which falsifies the state of existing conditions here and implies a fight to preserve the existing bourgeois-dictatorship.

Sharply opposing (naturally) what it calls "destruction" of CPUSA the manifesto implies that CPUSA could be destroyed, which is untrue.

Under capitalism, CPUSA can no more be destroyed than the Second International, or the Socialist party, or the various Trotskyite parties can be destroyed, inasmuch as destruction of the influence of any of these would be contrary to the interests of the big bourgeoisie and of its hangers-on in the apparatuses of these outfits.

The manifesto suggests that imperialist war can be avoided without getting rid of capitalism. It describes the Wallace movement as "non-redbaiting," whereas Wallace in fact put his tolerant attitude toward CPUSA precisely on the basis of CPUSA's repudiation of the revolutionary goal. It talks much of "a real CP program" but, having skipped the central item, is unable to say what a real CP program is.

Internal evidence and surrounding circumstances suggest that a substantial and somewhat hungry segment of CPUSA apparatus has concluded that it cannot crush the movement for a new, Bolshevik CP in this country, and that therefore it must try other, subtler measures.

A note from SPARK: NCP's Recipe for Slander

NCP, which boasts of its abstinence from polemic, nevertheless indulges in slander promiscuously. Using slander as greasy as the stuff issued by the CP's National Committee, it attacks three publications which stand for the application of the People's Front in the U.S.A. First, SPARK; then Harrison George's book "Crisis in the CPUSA"; and now, Fore 'n Aft. Its formerly open anti-People's Front policy has had to go underground, since the formation of the Cominform. Its attacks on Communists who are trying to work in the light of the Cominform Manifesto are based on the following technique: (1) It accuses the publication of being a tool of the CPUSA bureaucracy within the expelled movement--and on the basis of such latrine gossip as "internal evidence and surrounding circumstances". (2) In order to hide its own rejection of the fight against war and fascism through a 3rd party in '48, it attempts to restrict all discussion to the dictatorship of the proletariat and brazenly insists that a publication which believes in the dictatorship of the proletariat does not. (3) It accuses the publication of separating the fight against fascism from the fight against capitalism in order to disguise its own rejection of the need to fight for the preservation of bourgeois democracy while fighting for Socialism. (4) It demands identification and specific data (as a smear technique) of groups which must maintain a certain level of "security" in their work--for a time. (5) It always misrepresents the ideas of the publication, always paraphrases, never quotes (take Dowling's word or be damned)--all this with a chronic dyspeptic sophistry. NCP grants no forum for discussion of problems vital to the Communist movement in the U.S. Its slander is in effect an attack on the ideas expressed in every issue of NEW TIMES or the COMINFORM ORGAN. Dowling thinks that brushing a few strokes of varnish on Comrade Stalin is a mystical formula against exposure as a dangerous demagog and provocateur in the expelled movement. Stalin, himself, once did a "job" on those . . . who cloak their venom in "I am a Stalinite". NCP's attack on FORE 'N AFT is a great service to our movement--in exposing the character of NCP.

DISCUSSION ON----

Harrison George's "Crisis in the C.P.U.S.A."

SPARK invites discussion of Harrison George's important book. In this issue, we are printing the first part of our review. The second part, dealing with organizational problems and factionalism will appear in the March SPARK. SPARK's very erratic typewriter (blaming a typewriter, by the way, is no more a passing-of-the-buck than waiting for a depression to create a real Communist Party in this country) owes Comrade George an apology. After we had endorsed George's book very definitely, the typewriter infiltrated with: "This book will help bring chaos out of the confusion in some CP minds." Obviously, we had meant "order out of the confusion".

The honored title "EXPELLED" has been bestowed on Harrison George--without the dignified ceremonies. This award merits extra attention in that despite his status as a CP leader, George has taken a principled detour from the well-worn muddy ruts of American CP leadership and has, instead, asserted himself as a Communist. We are certain that this Marxist detour from the established opportunist ruts will in 1948 become the main road for American Communists.

George's fight against bureaucracy and opportunism in the CPUSA is consistent with a long Communist record. Since his recent activity has been confined to the west coast and since he is unknown to many of the newer members of the CP, it is in order to mention his background briefly. (In his own words) "...I have been a wage worker since the age of 14, joined the Socialist Party in 1910, the Industrial Workers of the World in 1914, and, a political prisoner for opposing imperialist war in 1917, joined the Communist Party from Leavenworth Penitentiary in September, 1919, as a charter member; helped start the Daily Worker in 1924, and for over eight years was Editor-in-Chief of the Daily People's World in San Francisco, resigning from Associate Editorship on July 1, 1946, because of heart trouble, which incapacitates me for full time party activity..."

The PR Club whole-heartedly endorses this book despite some disagreements. Disagreement on the best methods of implementing our agreements in no way contradicts our endorsement. We also feel it important for Comrades in the U.S. to endorse what they think is correct--not just sit back and watch what happens. In our limited space, we cannot rehash the contents. Instead--and we feel it is more important--we are attempting to spread the "Crisis". We have had some success with over 300 of these. We would have better results if those who agree with the book would help us distribute it.

We will take the book at its word--a thesis for preconvention discussion. In our discussion we will try to indicate the scope of the book, discuss certain aspects of the Third Party question and factionalism. George traces the birth and development of opportunism in the CPUSA through to its present degeneracy in the complete capture of the CP by an opportunist faction.* He gives ample proof in California of the

*Read Fergus McKean's "Communism Versus Opportunism". @ \$1 from PR Club.

complete bureaucracy which engineered all the phases of this opportunism. Although George deals with many errors, he stresses the main errors of right opportunism. He explains the rights and duties of Communists according to the established principles of real Communist Parties: democratic centralism, regular democratic conventions and elections. If the constitutional angle is overemphasized, it is not the most serious overemphasis, considering that the CP membership is ignorant of its most elementary rights.

The "Crisis" is written with a careful realization of the overwhelming problems facing us. It is written with a conviction founded on the power of people; it is not written with an impotence founded on the "objective", "inevitable" "forces of history" minus the people. The "Crisis" is an invaluable disinfectant for that disillusionment which waits for the historical stages and forces sitting on Kautsky's ground floor to right the wrongs done by the hysterical stooges and farces sitting on Foster's ninth floor.

The building of a real CP is threatened by all the pitfalls of our past. This is especially so because we have only begun to analyze the utter confusion of CPUSA history--a "top secret" in the CP itself. To such needed research, George has made a good contribution. The "Crisis" contains brief but valuable discussions of our earlier trends towards opportunism and away from the 7th Congress of the C.I. It is also important--for political and not for galloping-gossip reasons--to indicate the shady backgrounds of some of our "beloved" leaders. This shock-worthy material, designed to loosen the roots of rank and file blind following, includes Stalin's denunciation of Foster for his factionalism and cooperation with disguised Trotskyites in the CPUSA of 1929, the horrible story of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's removal in the I.W.W. for a shameless deal which sent innocent iron workers to jail, and Schneiderman's (chief liquidator of the California CP) record of expulsion from the Young Communist League as a Trotskyite and the subsequent burial of this fact. George gives a good account of the Machinists strike in San Francisco that led to the expulsion of unionists by Harvey Brown and the expulsion of Communists from the party by the CP bureaucracy. Harrison George traces his own mess with the CP bureaucracy during this period, the attempt to use him against the machinists and against Vern Smith who defended them, and the later gangup on George himself.

Most of the book deals with the People's Front. Comrade George analyzes the California CP's coalition deals in the scenery of the Kenney-Pauley deals. He traces the quiet beginnings of Browder's switch from the People's Front--the Third Party in the U.S. (In June 1946, Browder was writing in terms of the People's Front; by Dec. 1946, Browder was perverting what he had said in June.) George discusses Third Party movements in the period 1930-1946, the decisions of the 7th World Congress of the C.I. in detail, and the CPUSA's misrepresentations of the Dimitroff speech of February 1946 and of the New Democracies in general.

We feel that George's discussion of the People's Front in the U.S. is correct. He makes a very important correction of the following weak spot in Vern Smith's Report:

"The best thing for the Communists to do immediately is to go

to the workers and farmers with a Communist program, and get some class conscious members. When there are enough, then it will not be difficult here, as it is not in Europe, to go to liberal and progressive parties, to unions and other organizations, and make partnerships with them for election purposes. Then they will agree with us on many things, for we will have the votes. Until then, coalition can cost too much, though if you can get some of it without sacrificing fundamental principles and the chance to grow, it will not hurt."

Of this statement, Harrison George says clearly and correctly:

"Where Smith errs, or appears to err (since he had already said that the Party 'should participate' in a 'Third Party', providing it isn't anti-Communist), is in his implication that no electoral coalitions be entered into until there are what he calls 'enough' Communists so 'it will not be difficult'.

"Smith evidently looked at the 'difficulties' and how our Party in California succumbed to them because it did not really follow a firm Bolshevik line. But the remedy is to correct the line, not to dodge the difficulties. Lenin never avoided a coalition merely because there were a few Bolsheviks. This touch of 'leftism' in Smith's statement clearly was a revulsion at the unprincipled parliamentarism practiced by the California Communist Party in the 1946 elections."

There is one important error made by George in his discussion of the Third Party. This error also, we feel, is a revulsion at Dennis' call (with CP liquidation in mind) for "a grass roots mass membership-organization". Comrade George says that the Party must:

"...2. Clearly and explicitly define the task ahead as one of the building of a People's Front in the United States against war and fascism, through the coalition of workers and farmers by federations of organizations, and the immediate separation of all possible forces of labor from both political parties of the bourgeoisie!" (p.76. See also p.92-93)

Certainly, Comrade George is correct in exposing the CPUSA leadership's liquidationism (elaborated on pages 92-93). But, as he pointed out to Comrade Smith, he should not confuse the CPUSA's misuse with the correct concepts. We think that the membership concept of a Third Party in the U.S. is essential for the promotion of every requirement for a correct Third Party given by George in his book. It is true that in European countries a federation is involved--but^{ever} there, Tito made some very important criticisms. In his recent report to the People's Front Congress in Yugoslavia, Tito emphasized the character of the People's Front as the "organization of all progressive individuals". He pointed out the weaknesses in People's Fronts in other countries where the "People's Fronts consisted of the various parties headed by leaders who were not only waverers but were reactionaries and traitors". He warned against a "predominantly formal character instead of constituting a fighting unity".

The unions, progressive organizations and minor state parties which would have to be the separate parts of a federated third party are all controlled from the top by a consistently opportunist and often reactionary leadership. The workers in these unions can have little to say

via their leaders (and isn't this "via leadership" channel exactly where the CP leadership has misdirected so much mass pressure?). The many good mass organizations which once existed in the U.S. have long since been liquidated by the CP and are out of the picture. Unlike Europe where many small parties are involved in the fight against fascism and for national independence, we have two Wall St. parties. Also--very important--we have no Socialist Party (i.e. outside of the social-democrat CPUSA) in the U.S., which would be an important consideration in a People's Front. Even such organizations as PCA are controlled from the top (with the help and handover by the CP) by such as Kenney. Those organizations whose membership will be the greatest strength in a Third Party cannot be represented through their heads.

For the various Third Party beginnings around the country, federation is a dangerous thing. These are tied to the old machines in their areas. The most backward of these want a federation which will fall apart the day after election. This will leave their members free to drift back to the old machines. A membership Third Party is needed in the U.S. exactly for the purpose of smashing the old affiliations of its members. Isn't the purpose of a Third Party to smash the war program of the U.S. government--but at the same time to be a transition for the most advanced elements in the Third Party to a Communist Party? Consider a member of the Kenney-led Third Party in California in a federated set-up. After Nov., he is prey to Kenney's local plans. But if he is part of a new national membership party, he has new loyalties and responsibilities to it--not to any renegade part of it. As long as the American worker has to worry over war and fascism he needs permanent organizations and not temporary election coalitions.

To help form a Third Party with separate state and national organizations is logical, but to restrict the Third Party to their federation is suicide.

Another reason for a membership party is the freer atmosphere (through direct participation) for thinking out new loyalties. At this point, when we have to build a real CP, the fewer the old top participation controls the better. As we said in January SPARK, "The correct work invested in building a Third Party with the best People in the U.S. can logically turn into a valuable inventory for a real Communist Party's recruits." It is a process of presenting the correct line to the millions who support the Third Party; it is a process of making their powerful spontaneous movement a conscious one--without illusions about progressive miracles under capitalism and aware of all the dangers of sellout.

One other point is involved--the problem of building someone else's party instead of the CP, especially when there is no real CP. Is it someone else's party? Traditionally, it has been, but also, traditionally, with the wrong program. At this time, in the U.S., it is an anti-fascist, anti-war, non-redbaiting party--so it is our party. The problem is to keep it such a party. As we have said before, let's not get too "orderly" about what we do first, second, etc. There is always too much to do at once for a Communist. There are a lot more people available to build a Third Party than a Communist Party. The Communists should not try to build a Third Party alone; therefore they should not present themselves with the problem of "how can I do both". They should

not be afraid to trust non-party people--especially at this point in the U.S. when you certainly can't trust the leaders, including CP leaders.

Some of our friends have been wary of Harrison George's warning that a Third Party can become a fascist party. His point is valid if applied correctly. This warning must not damn the actuality on the basis of possibilities. Today, the Third Party has a correct position. Where could the fascist danger come from? --From a continuation of our past policy of handing over the organization to the most distant, respectable machine operators who never built it. If the Walshes and the Kingdons have sold out in troubled waters for safer craft, so can the Kenneys and the Wallaces. Only the presence of Communist vigilance and an independent Communist role can safeguard the Third Party against sellout. If the movement rolls along in its present manner, it will inevitably face the possibility of never materializing or of being switched into Social-Democrat orbits and becoming a Marshall Plan instrument. Then we really have the possibilities of a fascist party on our hands. But, the possibilities of a Third Party becoming a fascist party via redbaiting should not be used against the present developments in the Third Party.

Aside from our point on federation, we feel that the explanation of the People's Front (which is most of the book) is excellent. We would certainly be interested in Comrade George's ideas on current developments in the Third Party movement.

/March SPARK will carry the rest of this discussion on the "Crisis".
CRISIS IN THE C.P.U.S.A. by Harrison George @ \$1 from the PR Club or the
 author: Box 3135, Los Angeles 53, California.

LITERATURE

THE FOLLOWING CLASSICS ARE NEW EDITIONS PRINTED IN THE S.U. IN 1947.

Engels: Anti-Duhring--\$2

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