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The road to peace according to Stalin and according to Lenin

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**THE
ROAD
TO
PEACE**

by **JAMES P. CANNON**

25^c

Pioneer Publishers

New York

The Road to Peace

ACCORDING TO STALIN

AND

ACCORDING TO LENIN

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The Stalinist Peace Policy

1. Support Without Sympathy

It isn't planned that way in the present scheme of things, but every once in a while virtue is rewarded; and sometimes bad luck catches up with those who deserve it most. We have an example of the latter before our eyes right now. I am speaking this time about the American Stalinists — not the honest workers they are taking for a ride, but the professional functionaries at the head of the crooked and treacherous outfit operating on behalf of the Kremlin in the American labor movement under the name of the Communist Party and numerous other aliases and fronts.

They prospered in the last half of the Thirties before the newly-organized workers in the CIO got their number. And in the first half of the Forties — the period of the war and the Stalin-Roosevelt Pact — they really rode high with governmental favor and immunity. But look at them now. They are in all kinds of trouble for sure, and nobody seems to care.

Never, I daresay, have victims of misfortune gone unattended by so many people, with sentiments ranging from indifference to delight, for so many different reasons. The home-grown Janizaries of the Kremlin monster find themselves in the position of a scouting party of foreign legionnaires, cut off in hostile territory and marked expendable by their high command. Never before in the history of the labor movement has a group under persecution been so discredited, despised and abandoned — with their claim to the honor of martyrdom disallowed and even the grace of commiseration deliberately withheld. These Ishmaels of the labor movement, with every man's hand against them, have to go it alone.

The reasons for their isolation are various. The super-patriots, united by hysteria in a broad, loose coalition, extending in its composition all the way from hinterland kluxers to big city social-democrats — all of them frothing at the mouth with Stalinophobia — applaud the persecution of Stalin's American agents under the gravely mistaken impression that they threaten revolution and constitute a real and present danger to the existing order of things.

The opportunist labor skates, many of whom played footsie with the Stalinists during the war and cooperated with them in enforcing the no-strike pledge, have seized upon the witch-hunt as a heaven-sent opportunity to liquidate the Stalinist influence in the trade unions and cinch up their own monopoly of control, posts and pickings.

Rank and file workers, who have had bitter experience with the Stalinist hacks in the unions and hate them from memory of their bureaucratic brutality, mendacity and treachery, have for the most part welcomed the mopping up operations against their pockets of resistance in the unions. The trade unionists have refused any support to the Stalinist leaders under prosecution — although solidarity in the fight for civil rights and defense of anyone denied them, regardless of political differences, has long been a tradition of the American workers' movement, and one of its best. It took the Stalinists to so be-foul even this issue as to turn the workers in anger against their own tradition, an action which, in the long run, will redound against them and their movement.

I am one of a small minority opposed to the witch-hunt against the Stalinists and the legal prosecutions of their leaders, for reasons devoid of any respect or sympathy for the defendants in the dock or any trace of political conciliation with them. They finally became victims of a law which they upheld and applauded when it was first invoked against honest revolutionists in the Minneapolis trial of 1941. These scoundrels without honor and conscience supported the prosecution in Minneapolis and cheered the verdict brought in against us under the Smith Act. More, they even conducted an open campaign to shut off any contributions from the unions to help us pay the legal expenses of our trial and appeal.

The Stalinists were tied in with the American war machine then, beating the drums in patriotic frenzy and

denouncing us as agitators for revolution who ought to be locked up. Now, with a new turn of events, they are getting a dose of their own dirty medicine — and many people think we should get a certain satisfaction out of it, and even approve it. But we cannot agree with this line of reasoning.

Our motivations, however, are practical, not sentimental. This legal lynching doesn't do us or the workers' movement any good. The conviction of the eleven Stalinist leaders, now sustained by the Supreme Court, will only forge another link in the chain of precedent designed to shackle the democratic rights of all. We, and every other tendency in the labor movement, and the movement as a whole, will pay dearly for this and every other successful attack against the right of free speech, even though the victims in the immediate instance are Stalinists. That is why, as a practical proposition, in allegiance to the principle of solidarity in the fight for civil rights, we support the defense in this case, as in all others.

But — it may be asked — what about the broader question of **political** solidarity with the Stalinists? Has not this turn of events which brought about their conviction under the same law used against the 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party at Minneapolis in 1941, and the changed attitude of the Stalinists toward the war question — the most important of all questions for a workers' political party — have not these changes brought the two parties closer together and created the basis for a friendlier relationship in place of the mortal antagonism of other days?

Such questions can only be based on a misunderstanding; on the impression that the Stalinists have changed their nature, and with it, their program. This is not the case, as an examination of their present propaganda and activities will demonstrate. The Stalinists have changed nothing in the essence of the matter. And it goes without saying, the position of the Socialist Workers Party, being founded on principle, is what it was.

The American Stalinists remain what they have been in war, in peace and in all kinds of weather: not revolutionists, not representatives of the class interests of the American workers, but the servile agents of Russian foreign policy, with no more independence than a provincial branch office of a New York business firm. This is not

a matter of opinion but of facts open to observation and proof. You can start at either end of the relationship between the Communist Party in New York and the Soviet foreign office in the Kremlin, check what is said and done by either one, and find invariably that the other says and does exactly the same thing, with only one small difference in timing: Moscow says it first.

Every propaganda slogan of the American Stalinists, today as yesterday and always — “war” as in 1941 or “peace” as in 1951; lynch-law then, “free speech” now — they all can be traced back to the point of origin in the Kremlin every time without fail. Or conversely, you can start with the Kremlin line on any question and follow its execution step by step in all the turns and zig-zags of Stalinist policy in the United States. It makes no difference which end you start from. The answer always comes out the same. The echo always follows the sound.

This basic relationship between the Soviet bureaucracy in Moscow and their New York agency has to be kept in mind in evaluating the so-called peace program now advertised at bargain prices by the American Communist Party. Its tracks lead straight back to its origin as an expedient of Soviet diplomacy in the cold war. The peace ballyhoo of 1951 may sound more radical than the shameless jingoism of 1941-45, and some workers of the younger generation who lack experience and theoretical study to judge by may be taken in by it. But in reality it is only the other side of the same coin. It has nothing whatever to do with the revolutionary struggle against war which Lenin taught and to which we are committed. I am going to prove this to the hilt.

2. *Jingoes Into Pacifists*

If your ears are still ringing from the boiler factory sound effects of the war shouts and screeches of the American Stalinists, which topped all others on the patriotic noise meter in World War II; if you don't hear so good any more and can't pick up and distinguish new sounds as readily as you could before your ears got hurt — let me tip you off to something. That noise you hear, or think you hear, is not what it used to be. The Stalinists have changed their slogan. They are not hollering for war anymore. Now they want peace. In fact, they demand it.

I know what I am talking about, for I have investigated the matter and am in a position to report not only that (1) the Stalinists now want peace, but also (2) why they want it and (3) how they say it can be had. I have at hand for use as source material the 252-page report of the proceedings of the "15th National Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A."; plus the 80-page pamphlet containing the convention report of a character by the name of Gus Hall, who is advertised as National Secretary; also numerous collateral documents. They are all written with deadening uniformity in that graceless style which makes all Stalinist writing read the same, but I give you my word, I have read them all.

If you are incredulous and disposed to say, "he's pulling our leg, he wouldn't really plow through that dreary stuff" — let me explain. The job of checking up on the Stalinist Peace Campaign and filing a report was handed to me by the editorial board. I am a soldier of the revolution and I shirk no task assigned to me, however onerous and distateful it may be. The peace propaganda of the Stalinists has been running on for a long time now, and most people with good hearing have heard about it. But the printed official documents mentioned above sort of sum up and codify the aims, motivations and arguments of the whole campaign, and thus can serve best for reference. That's why I read them.

Peace is only one of the things the people of this world need, and the one they are least likely to get first, for peace means the status quo and that has to be changed. But the Stalinists, who always have an ax of their own to grind, now push all other questions aside and reduce

everything to the one formula of peace, as previously they ruled out all other considerations and subordinated everything to the war. The interests of the exploited workers in the imperialist metropolises and the heaving masses in the colonial world; the burning issues which can be resolved only by struggle — they all get lost in the shuffle in either case, as far as Stalinist designs are concerned.

Thus, in a prefatory note to his pamphlet, Gus Hall is introduced as “an outstanding champion of peace and democracy.” That’s all; nothing is said about Hall “championing” anything else. The prairie patriots and New York social-democrats can come out from under their beds; there is no immediate threat of revolution here. Hall’s speech is recommended as “a challenge and a rallying call to all who earnestly want peace, regardless of all other differences of political opinion or outlook.” That is the keynote of the National Secretary, setting the line of the 15th Convention from beginning to end, as we shall see. Everything but peace, the wonder-working cure-all, is left out — including the class struggle and its unavoidable culmination in revolution, which is not always and not necessarily the concomitant of peace.

Getting into his speech, Hall lays down the line that “the struggle for peace in general” is “the central task of our Party.” And that, according to Hall, doesn’t mean stepping up the class struggle of the workers against the capitalists, and raising their militancy and class consciousness. It does not include any instruction in the Leninist doctrine that the struggle against war is not and cannot be a special task; that the only effective way to prepare the struggle against war is to carry on the struggle against capitalism in times of peace. Nothing of the sort. It means, says Hall, “working for a single major peace center,” uniting “all groups” who want peace and nothing else.

He cites as the model the recent Warsaw Peace Conference of professional fellow travelers, congenial stooges and moon-struck clergymen steered, like all such gatherings, by hard-faced jockeys from the Stalinist riding stables. This Warsaw Conference, he says, “characterized itself as a peace movement — period. It has rejected all attempts to put on it the stamp of a pro-communist movement, an anti-fascist movement, an anti-imperialist movement — or a class-against-class movement.” There you have it. If you are looking for “Workers of the World

Unite," a slogan which is 100 years old but still good, you have wandered into the wrong convention by mistake. Hall's report has nothing to say about that. This bird flutters only for peace — period, and no question marks. And just so there may be no misunderstanding whatever, this projected "peace center," says Hall, is to include "sections of the capitalist class."

The campaign for "peace in general" is to lead up to electoral activities. Through the medium of an independent labor party perhaps? Just hold your horses. Hall calls for "peace tickets and peace candidates" on a local scale, "which can become an important medium for new realignments in our country's political life" and culminate in "a national peace ticket for the 1952 elections" in which "sections of the capitalist class" will be invited to participate. Wallace and Taylor got away from them, but they are already on the prowl for replacements of the same kidney for 1952.

All this pacifistic horseplay is expected to put sufficient pressure on the ruling circles of the United States to convince them that peace is a good thing and that they can get along with the Soviet Union if they only want to. Let us have peace, they all say, peace is possible; all that's necessary is to want it and ask for it. Foster, who writes a letter to the Convention, lays down the line which is repeated like a ritual by all the reporters: "We do not consider war to be inevitable. . . We are also firmly convinced of the possibility of the peaceful co-existence of capitalism and Socialism in the world."

Claudia Jones, reporting on "Women in the Cause of Peace," chimes in with a denunciation of "the false idea of the inevitability of war." And Betty Gannett, reporting on "Some Ideological Tasks in the Struggle for Peace," warns all and sundry that all the work on this front "is determined by the central political task of the day — the struggle for peace." All the other Convention reporters said the same.

From these salient quotations from the official documents of the 15th National Convention of the Communist Party of the United States, it is clearly established that the American Stalinists are in favor of peace between this country and the Soviet Union. And they claim they know how to get it. Every time they say "peace" — and that is every time they open their mouths — they repeat the

magic formula. The six slogans for practical action, outlined by Hall in his report, lead up to the final and decisive one — the demand for “negotiation and agreement with the Soviet Union to maintain peace.” That’s what they want. That’s what all the tumult and the shouting is for.

In plainer words, this is Stalin talking to Washington through his American stooges and saying in effect: “Let’s get together and make a deal.” There is no doubt whatever that Stalin is willing to make such a deal with the imperialists and to pay a price for it. It should not be forgotten that they had a deal once before. A new one on a temporary basis is by no means excluded: That’s what the projected meeting of the Big Four is about. Just what a possible new deal between Stalin and the imperialists would look like can be discovered in advance from an examination of basic Stalinist policy and a review of the way the old deal worked out in practice. That is the next point on our agenda.

3. *What Stalin Offers*

"Peace, it's wonderful," says Father Divine, who is not bound by the law of gravity and floats on the clouds above all mundane realities. "Peace can be won by negotiation and agreement with the Soviet Union," say Foster, Gus Hall, and all the other New York Charlie McCarthies of the Kremlin ventriloquist, who are by no means divine. Their prognostication, however, has an unearthly quality similar to the hallucinations of the self-proclaimed Harlem God.

But those who rule out the possibility of some kind of temporary agreement between Washington and Moscow — the jumping jingoes, drunk with power and ignorance, who denounce any negotiation with Moscow as "appeasement" and want to start throwing bombs right away — they are talking through their hats too, and their counsel is not likely to prevail in the highest circles of the American ruling class who make the ultimate decisions.

In my opinion, a formal agreement is possible, and even probable. But such an agreement, if finally arrived at, can only be limited, conditional and temporary. The result of such an agreement can be nothing more than an uneasy armed truce. The Stalinists mislead and disorient the workers with their monkey-chatter about the possibility of a solid, enduring peace based on the status quo. The essence of the conflict consists in this: American imperialism requires and demands more than the Soviet bureaucracy can possibly give and continue to exist.

Stalin has a great deal to give the imperialists, and is ready and eager to give it in payment for an agreement, as he did before; and that may be enough, once again, to buy a truce. But the prospects for real peace in the world lie entirely outside the realm of any negotiations between Washington and Moscow, and will be realized by other means. They can "negotiate" till the cows come home, but the pacifists, muddle-heads and deluded dupes of the Stalinists, who expect salvation from the conference table, are doomed to disappointment. They are not living in the real world.

The price which the Stalinist bureaucrats are willing to pay for an agreement with Washington should be no

secret to informed people. It is already indicated by their past practices and present tentative offers — made known by several trial balloons sent up at Kremlin instigation by various national Stalinist parties — as well as by the basic theory of Stalinism devised to justify its foreign policy since Stalin came to power in the Soviet Union in 1924.

It is known to practically everybody by now that the Communist parties in the countries outside Russia are not independent organizations, democratically electing their own leaders and working out their own policy even within the limits of a general international program. In a long process of expulsions, splits and purges these parties have been completely sterilized, deprived of all self-acting democracy and autonomy, and rigidly controlled by staffs of "leaders" selected and appointed by the Kremlin, and removable at its will. It is only necessary to mention the otherwise inexplicable meteoric rise and sudden, catastrophic fall of Browder, a subservient mediocrity who missed the signals, to illustrate this truism.

These parties are instruments in the execution of Soviet foreign policy, automatically subject to its requirements. They constitute some of Stalin's chips in the game when his diplomats go to the conference table. They are used as pressure groups during times of disagreement to stir up domestic trouble in the capitalist countries by pacifist agitation. Sometimes this leads to support of strikes and demonstrations. The workers enter these actions in good faith for the redress of grievances inherent in their intolerable position as victims of capitalist exploitation. The Stalinists are not primarily concerned with that, however. Indeed, they are not concerned at all. Their motives are exclusively political and issue from the momentary requirements of Soviet foreign policy as conceived by the Moscow bureaucracy, and they change their tactics and even reverse them overnight, with new turns in the diplomatic game.

The national Communist parties make "trouble" for their capitalists, or help them to curb the workers' movements, with equal readiness and facility. This unprincipledness and calculated treachery were already demonstrated in the Spanish Civil War of the late Thirties. There the Stalinists murdered as many of the best proletarian leaders as they could, and strangled the proletarian revolution

in the hope of winning the confidence and good will of the Western imperialists for a bloc against Hitler. With the collapse of this plan and the subsequent signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, the national Communist parties immediately reversed their course and repaid Hitler for the agreement with a rabid anti-war agitation in the countries allied against Nazi Germany. When Hitler tore up this agreement and attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Stalinist parties in the Western countries became all-out patriots overnight, and used all the influence they had to harness the workers' movements to the national war machines of the states allied with the Soviet Union.

After America's entry into the war in alliance with Russia, the American Stalinists became the most aggressive advocates of the no-strike pledge and the incentive-pay speed-up scheme to get more work out of the workers for war production while their basic wages were frozen. The American workers have not forgotten this, and it is to be hoped they never will, for these actions showed the real face of American Stalinism and its real attitude toward the American working class.

The break-up of the "Grand Alliance" of the Western powers and the Soviet Union brought a reversion of Stalinist tactics back to "radicalism" again and a general position of opposition to the governments. It is this "radical" opposition that Stalin is now offering to trade off as part of the price of another deal with Western imperialism in general and Washington in particular. That is the real meaning of the peace campaign with its central demand for "negotiations and agreement with the Soviet Union." Not long ago the British Communist Party put out a feeler in the form of a statement reminiscent of "Peoples Front" days, offering to withdraw its opposition to the Labor Government on condition of such an agreement. This was followed even more directly and authoritatively by the declaration of Togliatti, just returned from Moscow, at the Seventh Congress of the Italian Communist Party at Milan in April.

"We are ready," said Togliatti, "to give up opposition in Parliament and in the country to any government which would radically modify Italy's foreign policy so that Italy shall not be swept into the whirlwind of a new war." Togliatti, ostensibly directing his remarks to the

Italian puppet government but in reality to its American master, is conveying a message straight from Moscow: "Change your foreign policy, negotiate and agree with the Soviet Union, and we will withdraw our opposition in Parliament, 'and in the country.' We will stop our agitation for strikes for higher wages, and tell the hungry unemployed to eat peace slogans for a while and be happy."

Stalin is ready and willing to sell the services of the Communist parties in the capitalist countries, and in the colonial and semi-colonial countries too, to curb revolutionary movements and guarantee domestic peace, in return for an agreement with the Western imperialist powers. And what is more, this offer is seriously meant and in the event of a deal, would be carried out in practice as it was before. Whether this could stop the revolutionary movements and colonial uprisings is another matter.

The second offer Stalin is prepared to make and carry out is to stop all "expansion," all infringement on the existing borders of the capitalist part of the world, either by military aggression or internal coups of the national Communist parties. He will even go so far as to aid in crushing any genuine workers' revolution which might occur, as was done in Spain. If, as the Washington statesmen and generals represented when the "Truman Doctrine" was proclaimed, their aim is only to "contain" the so-called "communism" of Stalinism in its present domain — in short, to preserve the status quo — they are demanding only what Stalin really wants, and they can get an iron-clad agreement to that effect tomorrow morning. That can very well be the basis for a temporary agreement and truce emerging from the projected meeting of the four powers, for which the Deputy Foreign Ministers are now discussing an agenda in Paris.

But will Stalin's offer to stop the radical agitation of the national Communist parties and freeze the division of the world at the present borders — will or can such an offer be accepted by Washington as anything more than a temporary expedient until better preparations are made for an all-out war? This question raises another question which goes to the very heart of the world conflict: the validity of the theory on which the whole Stalinist "peace" campaign is based — the possibility of the "peaceful co-existence" of capitalism and the Soviet Union with its nationalized economy and monopoly of foreign

trade. This question must now be examined theoretically and practically, for the real issue of war and peace centers precisely here.

4. *The Theory of "Peaceful Co-existence"*

In the politics of Marxism the tactics of the day, as well as the strategy for the long run, flow from a theory which, in turn, is a generalization of previous experience in the evolution of class society in general and of capitalism in particular. This accounts for the consistency of Marxist policy in all the stages and fluctuations of the class struggle, and rightly entitles it to the name which Engels gave it — scientific socialism. Bourgeois politics, of which Roosevelt was perhaps the most brilliant practitioner, dispenses with all governing theory and trusts to experiments, hoping always to hit the jackpot. Stalinist politics is a hybrid cross between the two. In practice it is strictly empirical. But since it claims succession to the Marxist heritage, it is always constrained to justify its actions by a "theory" invented after the fact for that purpose. The result is a simulacrum of Marxism without its living substance.

This political method of Stalinism is illustrated in its current campaign for peace. The Stalinist bureaucrats want the imperialists of Western capitalism to let them alone to enjoy what they call "socialism" in the Soviet Union — a "paradise" of fat privileges for the bureaucrats and forced labor camps for millions of the workers, and a monstrous police terror to keep the others in line. A theory has been concocted to justify this utopian wish for non-interference, and it is trotted out on all occasions as the premise for their peace campaign. This practice of hooking up slogans designed to serve an immediate need to a subsequently elaborated "theory," allegedly sanctioned by Lenin, is what is known in the Stalinist jargon as "ideology"; and is intended to "educate" their dupes and inspire them with conviction in their agitational sloganeering.

This "ideology" naturally had a place on the agenda of the 15th National Convention of the Communist Party

of the U.S. The report on "Some Ideological Tasks in the Struggle for Peace" was presented by Betty Gannett. Following the lead given by Foster and the others, Betty hauled off and delivered the following ideological revelation as point number one:

"The possibility and necessity for peaceful co-existence and competition between the capitalist and socialist states and the fundamental principles on which this possibility is grounded, as taught by Lenin and Stalin, and as manifested in the thirty-three years of Soviet foreign policy."

No, Betty. Lenin didn't teach that; and it wasn't "manifested" in Soviet foreign policy during Lenin's lifetime. Stalin "taught" it, as you say; that much of your assertions is true. All the rest is false. You are lying about Lenin.

What did Lenin actually think and teach about "the possibility of peaceful co-existence"? Well, here is what he said in March 1919: "The existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for any length of time is inconceivable. In the end one or the other must triumph."

That is printed in Vol. XVI of Lenin's collected works. Look it up. And, if you think that was just a chance remark, contradictory to his general line of thought on the question, here is another quotation, twenty months later, even more specific and emphatic. On November 27, 1920 Lenin said:

"We have now passed from the arena of war to the arena of peace and we have not forgotten that war will come again. As long as capitalism and socialism remain side by side we cannot live peacefully — the one or the other will be the victor in the end. An obituary will be sung either over the death of world capitalism or the death of the Soviet Republic. At present we have only a respite in the war."

That appears in Vol. XVII of Lenin's collected works. Look it up. And while you are at it browse around in the unfamiliar green pastures of Lenin's writings for a while. You can find a whole flock of similar statements by Lenin, all along the same line and all expressing the same consistent thought — that "peaceful co-existence" of the Soviet Republic and the imperialist states "for any length

of time" is not "possible," as the Stalinist falsifiers say, but exactly the contrary.

Lenin regarded the Russian revolution of 1917 as the beginning of the international revolution. He also thought the capitalist world would have the same opinion. That is why he did not expect them to let it alone and recognize its right to "peaceful co-existence." He was right about that, too; the imperialists couldn't see any room for the Soviet Republic in the world of their hearts' desire. Each side acted according to this common opinion. The imperialists blockaded the new Soviet state and hurled their interventionist armies against it. Lenin, on his part, organized the Comintern in March, 1918 to help carry the revolution into the imperialist homelands.

Of course, Lenin was not against peace; or rather a truce, for that is all he hoped to get. He signed the "peace" of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 and sent Chicherin to the Genoa Conference as his deputy to negotiate in 1922. But Lenin did not deceive himself or others. He called a truce with irreconcilably hostile imperialist powers by its right name, a "respite," a "breathing space." It was Stalin who invented the catastrophic theory of the possibility of "peaceful co-existence" between the imperialist states and the Soviet Union. He adapted Soviet foreign policy to that single end, drawing the revolutionary teeth of the Comintern in the process and converting the national Communist parties into mere pressure groups in the service of Soviet foreign policy.

But life refused to conform to the theory founded on a wish. Far from being "manifested" peacefully, as Betty Gannett recites, "co-existence" has been manifested for 33 years by blockade of the Soviet Union, military intervention, the construction of a "sanitary cordon" of hostile puppet states around its borders, diplomatic outlawry — and then the terrible devastation of World War II, which brought the Soviet Union to the very brink of collapse. Since the defeat of the Nazis, "co-existence" has been "manifested" by the cold war; trade embargoes; the ringing of the Soviet Union with a chain of air bases with bombing fleets poised for attack; and the stepped-up preparation of the Western imperialist powers headed by America for an all-out war.

Lenin was completely right in his theoretical prognosis. All the experience since then, up to this moment,

confirms him and discredits the contrary theory of Stalin. These facts are disconcerting to the Stalinists, and they are trying to talk them out of existence. That's just about what their frenzied peace campaign amounts to. Lit up on their own "ideological" hooch, they are even trying to talk the hard-headed imperialists out of their unreasonable hostility to an agreement. But up to now the imperialists, who think in terms of coarse material realities such as markets, fields of investment, and political guarantees to secure the investments and accruing profits, remain indifferent to all the palaver.

Convention reporter John Gates painfully records this obstacle. Repeating once again the 15th Convention refrain that "the Soviet Union stands for the peaceful co-existence," etc., he mentions the one thing missing: "There must be a will for peace on both sides to make that possible." Ay, there's the rub, as Hamlet remarked. It takes "both sides." And one side, with headquarters in Washington, goes right ahead, unconvinced by all the slogans and unrestrained by any sentiments of good will, preparing to back up by force its demands for the kind of a peace which the Soviet Union cannot give.

5. The Teheran-Yalta Agreement

Any serious consideration of the prospects of the campaign for "negotiation and agreement" between the Western imperialist powers and the Soviet Union must start from the fact that there was a previous agreement, and that this agreement was broken and followed by the present relationship of cold war. An examination of the terms of the previous agreement, and what happened to it, should be in order at this point.

At Teheran, with victory over the Axis powers in sight, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin outlined their plans for collaboration in the postwar period. They concluded there a solemn agreement "that our nations shall work together in the war and in the peace that will follow." The basis of the agreement was exactly the same as that now offered in the current peace campaign of the Stalinists — that the Soviet Union and Western imperialism should live and let live in "one world." As to the peace, the three heads of state said in their Joint Declaration, "we are sure that our concord will make it an **enduring peace.**"

The American Stalinists hailed the agreement with alacritous delight. Browder, then their official spokesman, with a direct pipeline to Moscow, said the Teheran declaration opened up "in the most realistic form a new perspective to the world." The agreement meant, he said, in his now suppressed pamphlet, **Teheran and America**, that "Capitalism and socialism have begun to find the way to peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the same world." For America this meant, said Browder — with the unanimous approval of "the plenary session of the Communist Party National Committee" to which he reported on January 7-9, 1944 — "the consolidation of national unity in our country, and its extension into the post-war period." To that end, "we must find the way to minimize, and to place definite limits upon, the settlement of inner differences in the country by conflict (he meant the class struggle) in the post-war period."

He offered American capitalism the services of the Communist Party "to cooperate in making this capitalism work effectively in the post-war period." At the same meeting of the National Committee, with his enthusiasm

for the Teheran compact rising to orgiastic frenzy, Browder repeated his famous offer: "If J. P. Morgan supports this coalition and goes down the line for it, I as a Communist am prepared to clasp his hand." His report was unanimously approved. The American Stalinists well understood, then as now, that their part of an agreement on the basis of "peaceful co-existence" was to sell out the class struggle of the American workers, to "minimize, and to place definite limits" on any "conflicts" such as strikes. And they were ready and eager to get on with the treacherous job. Bridges, the number one hatchet man in the unions, jumped the gun with a public proposal for a post-war no-strike pledge.

The basic Anglo-American-Soviet Union agreement of Teheran was later reaffirmed and concretized at Yalta, and the notorious theory of "peaceful co-existence" got a real work-out in practice in the immediate period following the collapse of Nazi Germany. Then the agreement itself collapsed and the cold war started. What happened? The most important concrete details of the Yalta agreement were not published, but they can be read in the events which unfolded right after the war and in some of the subsequent revelations of participants.

This is as good a place as any to right a historical wrong and accord justice to two much-maligned horse-traders — Roosevelt and Churchill — who have been falsely accused of making a bad bargain in the Teheran-Yalta deal. They are not guilty. Roosevelt and Churchill didn't give away anything that wasn't already gone; and they got many things of priceless value at the conference table which, in the given situation, the Western powers they represented could not have gotten in any other way. I am no friend of the American demagogue and the British tory and what they represented. But right is right, and from that standpoint I am bound to admit that they brought back to Western capitalism from Teheran and Yalta the guaranteed benefits of one of the greatest betrayals in history, and they didn't exchange anything of real value for them.

Those American politicians and public opinion makers, whose distinguishing attribute is belligerent ignorance with a complication of "commie horrors," accuse Roosevelt of giving away the world in a fit of unbridled generosity induced by vodka at a wild Yalta party. Roosevelt's

accusers ought to take a few swigs of that same vodka and sober up. The territories and spheres of influence accorded to Stalin at Yalta — the buffer states of Eastern Europe — were simply those already occupied by the Soviet armies or about to be occupied by them. In "giving" them to Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill did no more than recognize and reconcile themselves to military reality — the basis of all diplomacy. The most they could hope for in such a situation was that Stalin would agree to stop his armies at a certain line and go no farther. They got this agreement, plus an agreement to maintain the existing social system in the occupied territories, and both agreements were carried out.

In addition, and most important of all, they got an understanding which meant salvation for the tottering structure of capitalism in Western Europe. Capitalism in Western Europe was too weak to save itself in the first post-war period. It was the Stalinists, executing the Yalta agreement, who did the job for them. Both Italy and France were seething with revolutionary movements. When the regime of Mussolini "fell apart like a rotten apple," as Badoglio described it, it left a power vacuum which no bourgeois party could fill. The Italian workers emerged from 20 years of fascism as though it had never existed. The great majority of the working class — almost the entire class, in fact — proclaimed themselves communists or revolutionary socialists, and gave their allegiance to these parties. (There is a lesson here for those who think police terror can destroy the socialist consciousness of the workers.)

In France the situation was analogous. The old bourgeois parties, discredited during the war, had lost their mass following. The Radical Socialist Party, the traditional ruling party of French imperialism, was a hollow shell. The reformist French Socialist Party was deserted by the workers. The Communist Party of France emerged in the immediate post-war period with the support of the great majority of the workers in revolt against the old order of things. A revolutionary situation existed in both Italy and France. The time and the conditions were ripe for the extension of the Russian Revolution to the shores of the Atlantic.

But this was precisely what the Kremlin bureaucrats feared most. The very existence of the historical mon-

strosity known as Stalinism depends, and has depended since its inception, on the simultaneous existence of imperialist capitalism in the rest of the world, "peaceful co-existence" with it, and collaboration with the imperialists against the workers' revolution. That is what the theory of "Socialism in One Country," promulgated by Stalin in 1924, meant. And that is the way it has been carried out in practice ever since.

An independent revolution of the mighty working class in Western Europe, smashing the enfeebled bourgeois regimes like so many eggshells, would have broken out of Moscow control — as the example of Yugoslavia strikingly demonstrates — and would have brought immediate repercussions in the Soviet Union itself. The workers there, freed from the danger of capitalist restoration through military intervention of the Western powers, would have risen to their feet and overthrown the hated police-rule of the Stalinist bureaucrats in short order. The fate of Stalinism as well as that of capitalism was at stake in the profound post-war social crises of Western Europe.

6. *The Results of the Teheran-Yalta Agreement*

We have already seen how the American Stalinists reacted to Stalin's deal with Roosevelt and Churchill with the offer "to cooperate in making this capitalism work effectively in the postwar period." The Stalinist parties throughout the capitalist world, under Moscow control, responded in the same way and bent all their efforts to deliver on their assignment under the Teheran-Yalta agreement. In this world-wide counter-revolutionary operation the Soviet government itself was in the lead and set the example.

The surging revolutionary movements in Eastern Europe were crushed by the Soviet troops and the secret police apparatus which came in their train. Capitalist owners, who had been expropriated by the workers, were reinstated in possession of their factories. Bourgeois coalition governments were set up with Stalinist participation. The first victims of the Russian occupation everywhere were the revolutionary workers who had sought to seize the power which had fallen from the hands of their old exploiters.

In the revolutionary situation of the immediate post-war period in Western Europe, the Communist parties, under the direction of Moscow, wrote the blackest record in their long history of treachery to the working class, rivaling and even exceeding the monstrous betrayal of the Social-Democratic parties of the Second International in August 1914. Carrying out their designated task under the Yalta deal, the Communist parties took upon themselves the responsibility for the existing social regime, which could not stand up without them.

In both Italy and France they formed coalitions with bourgeois parties, newly rigged up for the occasion. They entered into the bourgeois cabinets as loyal parties of the coalition. They supported the bourgeois governments and took responsibility for them. They told the workers, clamoring for relief of their intolerable conditions and an end of the capitalist regime: "This is not the time." They drove the revolutionary-minded miners into the pits under the slogan, "More Production." They demagogically inveighed against strikes as "a weapon of the trusts," and

denounced the escalator clause in wage contracts as a "Trotskyite scheme" to provoke inflation.

The specific agreement with Churchill for the betrayal of the popular revolution in Greece has been revealed by James F. Byrnes, former U.S. Secretary of State, in his book, *Speaking Frankly*. He stated that Churchill and Eden had reached an "informal understanding that, if the British found it necessary to take military action in Greece, the Soviets would not interfere. In return, the British would recognize the right of the Soviets to take the lead in maintaining order in Rumania." When this was challenged by an anonymous British Foreign Office spokesman, Byrnes disclosed in *The New York Times* of October 18, 1947 a secret message from Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt dated March 8, 1945, in which Churchill said: "In order to have the freedom to save Greece, Eden and I at Moscow in October, recognized that Russia should have a largely preponderant voice in Rumania and Bulgaria while we took the lead in Greece. Stalin adhered very strictly to this understanding during the thirty days' fighting against the Communists and Elás in the city of Athens."

Here we have the explanation in black and white of why Churchill at the time of the British military intervention in Greece denounced the popular uprising as "Trotskyist" and confidently declared that they did not have the support of Stalin. If anybody wants to know how the Monarcho-Fascist dictatorship was fastened on the unhappy Greek people against the will of the overwhelming majority, the revelation of James F. Byrnes gives the answer. The deal was made in Moscow.

Even in China and Yugoslavia, where the Communist parties had conducted their own struggle during the war and gained a measure of independence, compromising agreements were entered into with the bourgeois parties, or offered to them. Since their split with Moscow, the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party have revealed that the deal whereby they set up a coalition government with bourgeois parties after the war was made under Moscow pressure.

Even in China, it was already known and is now confirmed by General Marshall in his testimony before the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees on May 8 — the Stalinists agreed to enter a coalition gov-

ernment with Chiang Kai-shek in 1946 under conditions assuring Chiang Kai-shek a majority with personal veto power. If this deal fell through, and if the upshot in China was a mighty revolution which swept Chiang Kai-shek out of power and out of the country and brought the Stalinists into full control — it was due to the stupidity and obstinacy of Chiang Kai-shek in rejecting the handsome deal offered him, as Marshall has revealed, and wasn't the fault of the Stalinists. They didn't plan it that way. Another power so often left out of account in diplomatic deals — in this case the revolutionary masses of the Chinese peasantry — intervened and upset a balance of world power that can never be restored.

The break-up of the agreement of Teheran and Yalta to "work together in the war and in the peace that will follow" cannot be rightfully ascribed to the Kremlin bureaucrats and the Communist parties they control and direct. They fulfilled all their commitments — and then some. It was the Western imperialists, and in the first place, the Americans, who discovered that the world social system they had become responsible to maintain could no longer operate and prosper with the Soviet Union, plus Eastern Europe and now China, outside its orbit of normal capitalist trade and investment, and the colonial countries on fire everywhere. They require and must have at any cost bigger markets for the sale of surplus goods and the investment of surplus capital under stable political conditions guaranteeing the investments. All that Stalin offered and delivered, all that he promised to do and did, was not enough. Washington broke the agreement. Washington is the aggressor.

The promulgation of the Truman Doctrine and the beginning of the rearmament program was a graphic and unmistakable announcement of intention to rewrite the Teheran-Yalta agreement with the sword. The Marshall Plan was designed to force the Eastern European countries back into the Western orbit by economic pressure and sanctions. This confronted the Kremlin with the ineluctable alternative of retreating to the pre-1939 borders, and then to keep on retreating until there was no place to go — or of taking counter measures in the buffer countries.

These states could not stand up against the Marshall Plan on a capitalist basis, with a feeble and bankrupt native capitalist class, having no capital to invest in pro-

ductive enterprises, and foreign investment capital embargoed by America. The Stalinists were forced into their program of nationalization in these countries as the condition for the survival and development of their productive apparatus. If they were able to establish a political monopoly of control to enforce these measures, and if the whole business of expropriating the native bourgeoisie economically and politically could be done by bureaucratic manipulation and police action — this is only a striking demonstration of how weak, how unviable, were the capitalist regimes in these countries which the Stalinists had hitherto propped up.

If the capitalist system of production was destroyed in this process, the primary blame — or credit, as you wish — belongs to Washington, whose initial aggressions, in violation of the spirit of the Teheran-Yalta agreement for "peaceful co-existence," set in motion the chain of events which led to this result. Giving credit where credit is due, it must be said that in this affair the primary revolutionizer of property relations in Eastern Europe was Washington, not Moscow.

The United States got a good bargain for itself in Teheran and Yalta, the best it could hope to get by diplomacy. But it proved to be not enough. In breaking the agreement and starting the cold war, the unwitting revolutionists of Washington still further upset the already precarious world stability and opened up some cracks through which an unsuspected new world power intruded itself. The masses of the colonial and semi-colonial world, long waiting for their chance, broke through and changed the whole world picture and relation of forces irrevocably. The position of American imperialism is now worse than before. The catastrophe of the Korean adventure is in itself striking evidence of this.

The power-mad jingoes who had thought they could "lick the world" by force or even terrorize it into submission by threats, now feel constrained, after the Korean experience, to cool off a bit and wait and prepare better before plunging into the awful and unpredictable hazard of another world war. If this temporary chastened mood induces or forces the imperialists to return to another deal with the Kremlin on approximately the same basis as before — and this may well happen — it can only be done in recognition of their worsened position and the necessity

for more thorough preparations. It will not in any case be because they have been converted to the asinine theory of "peaceful co-existence."

Washington would aim to use a new temporary agreement and truce as a springboard for far-reaching demands which correspond to its real necessities as an expanding imperialist power in a shrinking world. Those who want to face the real problem of peace must understand what these demands are and why they cannot be different. They are not the invention of any genius in the State Department, but are rather spelled out for it by the iron necessities of the economic position of the United States as the leading imperialist power in the world.

7. *What Washington Wants*

If one understands bourgeois diplomacy as the art of straight-faced lying, of proclaiming high-sounding principles in order to prepare the moral climate for a military struggle for practical aims and needs — and this is generally taken for granted by grown-up people — then it is necessary to look behind the official statements, speeches, prayers and pronouncements emanating from Washington and examine the economic necessities and drives of American imperialism. The real program is rooted there, and it cannot be replaced by any alternative program motivated by other considerations as long as the U.S. government remains what it is — the executive committee of the ruling capitalist class.

The cold war of economic sanctions and propaganda malarkey — with the occasional and incidental slaughter of a couple of million people, as in Korea — is allegedly waged in behalf of a “free world.” The money-sharks who decide American policy have dedicated it, so they say, to a high-toned crusade for “democracy against totalitarianism.” The labor skates and the social-democrats of all grades and breeds, for their part, second the motion. Some of them even claim they invented the phony formula.

The “free world” we are supposed to be defending just accidentally happens to include Spain, Greece, Turkey, and Portugal, and all the lands of colonial slavery where the word freedom is not even in the dictionary and the word democracy has not yet been coined. And our precious allies in the fight against “totalitarianism,” include, by mere coincidence, Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, Franco, Salazar, the fascist king of Greece, the colonial overlords, the Latin-American dictators and other blood-smear-ed tyrants who have been admitted into the free world on a pass.

Diplomatic double-talk aside, what is really involved in the cold war is a conflict of class interests and social and economic systems, which cannot be reconciled. American imperialism, the main representative of a decayed social system, whose fate is inextricably tied to the fate of capitalism on a world scale, is of necessity the ally of reactionary capitalists, landlords, usurers and colonial exploiters everywhere. It is the mortal enemy of every

manifestation of new and more progressive economic forms, of every revolutionary movement of the workers, and of every struggle of the colonial peoples for national independence and freedom anywhere in the world, regardless of the leadership of these movements at the moment. That is the real line-up. That is the real content of American diplomacy, stripped of its hypocritical verbiage. Freedom and democracy have nothing whatever to do with it.

The simple fact of the matter is that the productive apparatus of American capitalism is piling up ever greater surpluses of goods and capital which its domestic market cannot absorb. Having fallen heir to dominion over the capitalist world system, it needs the whole world for markets and fields of investment. But while its requirements in this respect have been growing in the post war period, its field of normal operation has been cut down even from what it was at the end of the war, to say nothing of the immense prospects for which it had waged the war in the Orient and thought had been won with the defeat of Japan.

The more areas torn out of the capitalist orbit by Soviet expansion and colonial revolutions, the narrower becomes the field for American imperialism and the more desperate its need. From this flows its frantic and ever more belligerent foreign policy and the stupendous arms program designed to back it up. The Truman doctrine of "containing communism," a declaration of belligerency and aggression in its time, is already out of date. The Soviet Union remained "contained" at the formal borders established at Yalta. But other areas, considered as "belonging" to imperialism, have been slipping away. The imperialist orbit has been shrinking and the position of the United States has been steadily worsening.

More than a year ago the policy makers at Washington woke up to the realization that the imperative need of world capitalism is no longer to "contain communism" — a word they use indiscriminately to describe the Soviet Union, its satellite states, revolutionary China, and popular movements against imperialism everywhere — but to push it back and reconquer the lost areas. This new and drastic extension of the Truman Doctrine was enunciated by Secretary of State Acheson in his famous Berkeley speech of March 16, 1950. There he calmly announced as one of the important aims of American foreign policy the introduction of "orderly representative processes" into

"the old group of countries we are accustomed to thinking of as the satellite area." These are none other than the buffer states of Eastern Europe, which were solemnly recognized as in "the sphere of influence" of the Soviet Union at Yalta.

Acheson ostensibly is not satisfied with the degree of "democracy" prevailing in the "Peoples Democracies" dominated by the Kremlin. It can be admitted in passing that he has something there, for all the democracy you find in these "Peoples Democracies" you could put in your eye. But that complaint is only window dressing on Acheson's part. They were all police states before the war, and neither he nor his predecessors lost any sleep about it. Washington is not worried about the democracy or the lack of it in Greece, Spain, Turkey, South Korea, Latin-America, or any place else open to American trade and investment. The real grievance which American foreign policy aims to redress is the new economic system established in these countries of Eastern Europe under pressure of necessity, and the political control which closes them off from American exploitation. The real meaning of this point in Washington's program is to push the Soviet political influence out and replace it by American influence, to restore the system of private property and landlordism, and open up the countries in general to the exploitation of foreign capital.

But the satellite states of Eastern Europe are only the starting point of the new program enunciated more than a year ago and consistently adhered to ever since. It is not only Eastern Europe. Now it is the vast market of China, the prize for which the war with Japan was fought, the prize which slipped away and which they hope to regain. The frank speech of Assistant Secretary Rusk in New York recently is only a public announcement of this aim which has been implicit in Washington's refusal to recognize the new revolutionary government and establish normal relations with it. It is Korea. It is Indo-China where Eisenhower in a recent radio speech saw the "aggression of Communist imperialism" in the struggle of the Indo-Chinese people for independence against their French overlords. It is the colonial revolutions and workers' movements everywhere in the world. That is what is meant by Point 5 of Acheson's Berkeley program, in which he demands that the Soviet Union "cooperate in ef-

forts to prevent indirect aggression across national frontiers" — the diplomatic definition of popular movements against capitalism and colonialism anywhere.

And even all this does not measure the full scope of the aims of American foreign policy as it is now fixed. The ultimate aim is nothing less than the overthrow of the Soviet Union, its dismemberment, and the re-establishment of the private property and landlord system, overthrown by the Revolution in 1917. The United States is driven, as the price of its own existence as the leading imperialist power of the world, to include all these aims in its program. That is what its diplomacy works for and that is what they are arming for.

Pacifist sermons will not deflect them from their course. Pseudo-serious chatter about the "necessity and desirability of peaceful co-existence" can deceive and disarm workers and sincere but impractical people who think the boon of peace can be bought with shibboleths. But peace cannot be secured that way. The only road to a stable and enduring peace for the people of the world is the hard road of struggle pointed out by Lenin.

8. *The Road of Lenin*

Lenin, a disciple of Marx, defined our epoch as the epoch of wars and revolutions, and all experience since 1914 has confirmed his analysis.

In the brief span of thirty-seven years, the world has seen the First World War, and in the midst of it the Russian Revolution of 1917. The decade of the Twenties brought the second revolution in China and the British general strike — flaming signs of crack-up in the imperialist metropolis and the colonial extremity of an obsolete social system. The decade of the Thirties produced the Spanish civil war, and the world-wide economic crisis which set the stage and was followed by the Second World War. Out of this war came a successful revolution in Yugoslavia, post-war revolutionary situations all over Europe, and now the great and mighty tide of colonial revolution rising in the Orient. At the present hour we have a "localized" war in Korea which has already taken a toll of two million lives, and all-out preparations for a Third World War, with international civil war and revolution implicit in the event.

There is absolutely no doubt about it — the truth of Lenin's characterization of our epoch is written in its living history.

Lenin taught that wars are caused by imperialist rivalries and struggles for markets and fields for the investment of surplus capital. World War I confirmed that analysis, and World War II dotted all the i's and crossed all the t's.

Lenin also taught that a new social system of planned economy based on nationalized property and reenforced by a state monopoly of foreign trade cannot "peacefully co-exist" with imperialist states "for any length of time." "In the end," said Lenin, "one or the other must triumph."

Lenin further taught that the colonial people, kept in poverty and backwardness by imperialist domination, could find the way to national independence and the development of their productive forces only by revolutions in the colonies joining forces with the proletarian revolutions in the metropolitan centers of imperialism.

Lenin finally taught — what he and all of us learned from Marx — that the class struggle of the workers in

the imperialist countries must inevitably culminate in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a socialist society.

On that basis — and on that basis alone — taught Lenin, real peace and a good life of freedom and abundance can be secured for humanity. This is the road to peace, according to Lenin.

The peace campaign now being conducted by the Stalinists runs counter to all these teachings, to all the experience of the past thirty-seven years which confirmed them, and to the future social reality which they project. The central theme of the Stalinist peace campaign, as we have seen, is "the possibility and necessity for peaceful co-existence between the capitalist and socialist states." The main agitational slogan is the demand that the U.S. government "negotiate and agree with the Soviet Union." And their slogan of action, waving in all the May Day parades, is "Unity of the Big 5." The method of the campaign is the mobilization of workers' organizations, pacifist societies, church groups, and "sections of the capitalist class" to present this program to the imperialist government on signed petitions, ornamented by pictures of the dove of peace especially drawn for the occasion by Picasso. This is the road to peace, according to Stalin.

The Stalinist peace program is a proposal to maintain the status quo indefinitely. What does that signify for the workers and colonial peoples? It signifies the abandonment of the revolutionary struggle for the socialist transformation of society in the capitalist countries; the reconciliation of the workers to life-long wage slavery for themselves, and the same perspective for their children and their children's children. It signifies the abandonment of the aspirations of the colonial slaves for national independence and a better life.

The Stalinists have proved by their past practices that they are ready and willing to maintain the status quo on that basis. In their current propaganda they again offer this program to the great powers concerned — to the workers and colonial peoples on the one side and the imperialist exploiters on the other. In the service of that program they offer treacherous slogans to the masses and material concessions to the imperialists. The Stalinists for their part are ready and willing — but they are not able. Their program is doomed because neither of the

two great powers, neither the workers and the colonial peoples nor the imperialists, can accept it and abide by it.

The imperialists, on their side, through the program enunciated by Acheson in his Berkeley speech a year ago and military preparations to implement it, are serving notice that the Stalinist program doesn't go far enough to meet their requirements. They demand that the Soviet Union and revolutionary China cease to exist as they are at present constituted. The rulers of America may not have taken the trouble to read Lenin, as in general they don't like to bother with theory, but they are convinced in their hearts and in their money-bags that two rival social systems cannot "peacefully co-exist" to their advantage. The peace they demand is a peace that the Soviet Union and revolutionary China cannot give and continue to exist.

The workers and colonial peoples, on their part, cannot accept the Stalinist program because their lives grow more intolerable as the capitalist world system plunges deeper into decay and drives them on the road of struggle against existing conditions. It is precisely the status quo that must be changed in order that peace may be secured and the people may live in a manner suitable to human beings.

In the cold-war peace, presently highlighted by a shooting, bombing and burning war in Korea, the imperialist diplomats, along with their apologists on the one side, and the Stalinists along with their dupes and stooges on the other, agree on recognizing "aggression" as the one and only unpardonable sin. They tirelessly accuse each other of committing this sin, or of planning to do so, as if nothing else matters. But what doesn't matter and cannot apply is this criterion itself. In the very nature of this epoch in general, and of the present world situation in particular, this term "aggression" is a false and hypocritical standard by which to judge the justice and necessity of an action. It is a trap for the workers and colonial peoples, designed to paralyze action in their own interests.

The very existence of capitalist imperialism is an aggression against the masses, robbing them of their right to a decent existence by force and fraud. The institutions of capitalism — its armies, police and courts — are instruments of this force, as its official propaganda and

moralistic preachments are instruments of the fraud. In the black-is-white language of diplomacy and official propaganda, the American intervention in Korea, for example, is not an act of aggression, although a couple of million Koreans — mostly civilians, the old and the sick, the women and the children huddled in their straw-thatched villages — have already been bombed to bits and burned to ashes in the process. All this — this atrocity of the ages — has been done, so it is said, not to commit "aggression," but to repel it. That doesn't change the reality, however, and doesn't bring the dead back to life, the dead who didn't hear the explanation.

In truth, aggression can no more be outlawed in the present relationship of classes and nations than the blows and counter-blows of contending armies in the field, for the relationship is one of antagonism and struggle all the time. Just as the very existence of predatory capitalism is an act of aggression against the masses, so the very existence of the Soviet Union, with its nationalized property; the labor movement in the developed countries of capitalism; and the surging revolutionary movement of the colonial peoples — they are all standing and unceasing acts of aggression against the imperialist world system. In the language of Marxism this is known as the class struggle. And this struggle, this "aggression," however unconscious of its goal its participants may be at the moment, is designed and historically destined not to maintain the status quo but to change it fundamentally — and nothing can stop it.

It is this struggle of the workers and colonial peoples, spontaneously developing as the unavoidable result of the decay of capitalism and the insoluble contradictions engendered by it — it is precisely this struggle, despite all the inadequacy and treachery of the leadership at the moment, that is today the main, indeed the only real, deterrent to the outbreak of a Third World War.

The colonial revolutions, by the demonstration of their mounting power throughout the Orient, are doing a thousand times more to slow down the war plans of Washington than any pacifist prayers and petitions. One has only to read the testimony of the General Staff members and of Secretary Acheson before the Senate Committee for proof of this out of their own mouths. The revolutionary sentiments of the undefeated European workers and

the fear of civil war at home are the main reasons for the stumbling reluctance of the European bourgeoisie to go along with the war plans of Washington. An aggressive and politically independent labor movement in the United States, firmly resisting war and fighting its own independent fight on class struggle lines against its real enemy — the ruling capitalists — would be the biggest road-block of all in the way of the war-mongers and war-makers.

Imperialist capitalism is the cause of war, and the struggle for peace is inseparable from the struggle against capitalism. The peace campaign of the Stalinists, by which they sabotage the class struggle of the workers and try to deflect it into pacifist petition campaigns for diplomatic deals in the momentary interests of the Kremlin bureaucrats, is no less treacherous than the jingo sell-out of the workers during World War II. The fight against perfidious Stalinism; in the name of the class struggle policy of Lenin, is a necessary and inseparable part of the fight for peace.

The class struggle of the workers, merging with the colonial revolutions in a common struggle against imperialism, is the only genuine fight against war. The Stalinists who preach otherwise are liars and deceivers. The workers and colonial peoples will have peace when they have the power and use their power to take it and make it for themselves. That is the road of Lenin. There is no other road to peace.

The Stalinist Ideology

1. Back in the Packing House

At hog-killing time in the frosty fall down on the farm, the neighbors gathered from miles around to help in the cooperative labor of converting the live animal into food for humans. Plump hams and lean-streaked slabs of bacon were made ready for the smoke house. Thick sections of flabby fat back were salted down in stout oaken barrels against the time when they would finally come to rest in a simmering pot on a bed of dandelion greens; the two ingredients slowly melting and merging in a liquor of delectable flavor elsewhere unknown this side of paradise. Fresh pork chops, loin roasts and succulent spareribs were chopped out of the carcass for immediate consumption, all hands present getting a crack at them in a big feast on the spot, and a bundle to take home; while the various odds and ends were ground up for head cheese and sausage. But with all that utilization of diverse parts quite a bit of the butchered pig was wasted and thrown away.

I was never down on the farm, and this account of amateur hog-butchering there is based on hearsay and imagination. However, I did work in a big Kansas City packing house when I was a boy — two of them, in fact, Swift's and Armour's. Part of the time I worked on the "hog beds," as they were called, and I remember the process pretty well. It was not a job for the finical — I can tell you that from experience; but it was supremely economical and efficient. There was no waste. They made use of all parts of what once had been a pig, even the bristles, tails and snouts; everything, as they used to say, except the squeal.

I was thinking of this long-gone experience on a tired Friday afternoon last week when I finally got through with the last of eight chapters of a pamphlet on the peace campaign of the Stalinists, now running as a separate series on another page of this paper. I finished the messy and most distasteful task which had been assigned to me with a feeling of relief and satisfaction. But there was a fly in my ointment, or maybe it was a cinder in my eye. Anyhow, I knew there was something amiss. I had to admit to myself, as an old packing house man, that in confining the pamphlet to the limited theme of the peace campaign, I hadn't been able to use all the stuff I started out to work on. The left-over notes and reference material were piled all over my desk and I didn't know what to do with them. Of course, I might have thrown them away. But then, again, I might have done that with the whole litter of unwholesome reports and speeches in the first place and come out with cleaner hands and a more agreeable smell in my nostrils.

I hadn't done that. I had finished the main job, but there they were — the left-overs. And while my hands were still soiled with

the muck and filth of the material I had been working on, I was confronted with a problem. Should I clean up and report the assignment finished, or should I go back to work and process the remnants? I solved the problem once, but lapsing into the habit of lackadaisical people who don't know their own minds, I didn't solve it for good and had to come back to it. Instead of throwing all the left-over material into the waste basket and forgetting about it, I just dumped it into a drawer and went off for a weekend in the fresh clean country among friends and comrades to match. But I kept thinking of the ugly odds and ends I had left behind.

Conscience, that pestiferous little monster, kept at me with deprecating looks and nagging reminders. "You didn't finish your duty," said the intolerant and uncompromising imp from Satan's domain. "What about Gus Hall's summary speech, with all the repulsive characteristics of a Stalinist functionary sticking out of his answer to a delegate who had ventured to express an opinion? There is an education in the democratic process and the true function of leadership in a dissection of that episode alone. And what about Betty Gannett's 'ideological report' with its unconscious exemplification of what Stalinist ideology really is, and other revealing aspects of the convention proceedings? Are you going to let all that pass and scamp your task now, while you have all the material before you in one mass for the first time in years? Are you a bolshevik who does a thorough job when it is assigned to him, or a weak-willed menshevik who does his work as he does everything else — halfway, because that is his nature? In other words, are you a man or a mouse? Think it over." So spoke the voice of conscience.

Well, I thought it over and here I am on Monday morning back in the packing house again. I am sorting out the oozy remnants and scraps of material left over from my pamphlet on the Stalinist peace campaign, resolved to use them, too, in some kind of by-products of the main enterprise before I finally finish up the lousy job for good and go fishing.

One of the left-overs is Betty Gannett's report on "ideology." There is a lot more of the real ideology of Stalinism in this report than she knew. We'll take a look at it next week.

2. *The Art of Lying*

The Stalinists didn't invent the art of lying, but they expanded and developed it into a philosophy and a way of life. In that curious lingo of Stalinism, by which they communicate among themselves and with others who are properly conditioned, this philosophy and way of life goes by the name of "ideology." The Stalinists have discovered that the human brain is a delicately sensitive organ, easily affected for good or ill, depending on what hits it first and hardest, and susceptible to befuddlement as well as to enlightenment. The brain may be knocked into malfunctioning by blows of a club; and virtually the same effect can sometimes be achieved by the steady bombardment of propaganda disguised as instruction or indoctrination. The Stalinists know this and work at it.

The main feature of the business is the recourse to assertions

and pronouncements which, like the revelations from the papal throne of the Catholic Church, are not subject to doubt or investigation. The believers are supposed to take the stuff as it is dished out without examination, inquiry or demands for proof.

A Stalinist operator, skilled and practiced in this indoctrination technique, is Betty Gannett, who delivered the report on "Ideological Tasks" at the Fifteenth National Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A. — the proceedings of which, insofar as they relate to the theme of peace, are now under review on another page. She laid down the line on what it was necessary for the faithful to believe and repeat on other matters also. And like all other reporters to the Fifteenth Convention — or any other Stalinist convention, for that matter — her pronouncements were unanimously approved by the assembled delegates. That's what they were there for.

One of the things the delegates were instructed by the reporter to believe and propagate to the multitude was that democracy is growing and flourishing in the Soviet Union, crowding out everything else, it seems, like crab grass in a lawn. Another instruction was the desirability and necessity of loving and admiring Stalin. There were other commands, but these two in particular leaped out of the report and hit me in the eye. Being a heathen and public sinner, however, with an inquiring mind and a fancy for evidence to support assertions, I am not bound to take her say-so. I want the privilege of asking questions and I want further information, which I suppose I will have to supply myself.

You may have heard whispers to the contrary, but Betty Gannett states categorically that Stalinist party members must believe in and explain "the profound and pervasive democracy in the Soviet Union; the participation of the ordinary man and woman in government; how elections are carried through; how local Soviets function — in order to give the lie to the charge of 'totalitarianism.'"

Just a moment, please. Let's have some detailed amplification on this point. I am interested in democracy and profoundly believe in it as the mechanism by which the masses will organize the victorious struggle for their own emancipation from capitalism. I further believe that only by direct participation can the masses work out and solve the many and complex problems of the transition period after the proletarian revolution.

Just how is "the participation of the ordinary man and woman in government" manifested in the Soviet Union today? Do they have the right of free speech, free press, and free assembly, the prerequisites of free democratic action? They do not. Betty Gannett knows, what everybody else knows by this time, that all the talking in the Soviet Union is done by the ruling bureaucrats; and that all the newspapers and other mediums of information and communication are controlled by them. She knows, also, that the only time the Russian workers ever get a chance to assemble is when they are called together to vote for resolutions and decisions made in advance and handed down by the same ruling bureaucrats. No, there is not a particle of free speech, free press or free assembly in the Soviet Union. Therefore there is no democracy, "pervasive" or otherwise. Everybody knows this, and anyone who says otherwise is a liar by the clock.

The report of Betty Gannett demanded that people be enlightened on "how elections are carried through in the Soviet Union." That's a hot one. Just how are they carried through? The reporter didn't tell us that, so I'll tell her. Everybody has the right to vote for Stalin and the rest of the slate of bureaucrats selected in advance. But suppose someone wants to vote for another slate. Or better, suppose some group wants to form a separate party and put up its own slate of candidates. How do they go about it?

I have been a friend and supporter of the Russian revolution since 1917, and still am. I have comrades in the Soviet Union who are formed into an opposition party — the Russian Section of the Fourth International. It is an honest and revolutionary party, profoundly devoted to the October Revolution and the defender of its heritage. Soviet democracy was one of the first planks in the platform of their long heroic struggle. But these honest revolutionists are all in prison; that is, those who have not been murdered for demanding some of this "pervasive democracy" which Betty Gannett speaks of with such cynical falsity in her report to the CP convention. All other groups who tried to speak out against the defamation and betrayal of the Revolution and the suppression of democracy suffered the same fate. The martyred victims of Stalin's "profound and pervasive democracy" number millions in the Soviet Union.

The convention reporter on "ideology" instructed the delegates to "give the lie to the charge of 'totalitarianism.'" She said, "analysis and data should be furnished" on this "pervasive democracy" and other subjects. But she neglected to furnish any of the data, or even to suggest what such material would look like and where it could be found. In case any of the delegates, and party members or sympathizers to whom they relayed the convention instructions, are interested in this specific information, there are two ways to discover it. One is to read the numerous volumes of former beneficiaries of everything "pervasive" in Stalin's domain who have escaped and live to tell the story; the other is to make a personal investigation.

If you doubt the unanimous testimony of all who have escaped from Stalin's torture chambers and forced labor camps, just take a trip to the Soviet Union and see for yourself. If you get in and look around and ask questions, I can guarantee you — on the basis of the experiences of thousands of others who went to the Soviet Union as devoted supporters of the regime, as it had been represented to them by all the Fosters, Gus Halls and Betty Gannetts — you will see all the democracy there is to see; all there is to see, that is, through the bars of prisons or over the gun towers of the forced labor camps, where at least ten to fifteen million work, suffer, starve and die without recourse, without any attention to their cries.

If by keeping your mouth shut and your eyes closed, you escape prisons and concentration camps and enjoy the life of a free worker in the Soviet Union as it is operated under Stalinism, you will get a good chance to find out through personal experience what is really going on there. You can't miss the ubiquitous police terror penetrating into every corner of the people's lives. You will carry a "work card" on which every tardiness or absence from work or any little dereliction, real or cooked up by the foreman, is noted,

marking you for punishment and discrimination in any factory wherever you may work thereafter. You will learn about passports — not for foreign travel, for that is forbidden to Soviet citizens except bureaucrats on official business — but internal passports necessary for the individual worker merely to travel from one town to another, one of the most hated regulations of the old Czarist regime. You will discover “trade unions” whose function is to speed up production, but which have nothing to do with negotiating wage scales and adjusting grievances.

I merely offer this suggestion that curious Stalinist party members and fellow travelers make a personal investigation of this “pervasive democracy” which Betty Gannett demanded they should advertise far and wide. But I don’t expect any of them to take up the suggestion. They purposely blind themselves to a lot of things, but deep down they know more than they pretend to. They prefer to talk up the glories of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union from a distance. The truth is becoming too well known for anybody in his right senses to take chances on investigating it at close range. The percentage of reckless adventurers who want to verify the facts of the situation by personal observation and experience is decreasing to the vanishing point. The curiosity about “democracy in the Soviet Union” is not as “pervasive” as it used to be. It will take a lot of “ideological campaigns” to change that. You can score this as a victory for truth over Stalinist “ideologists” and their lies.

3. The Importance of Loving Stalin

Reporting on “Ideological Tasks” at the Fifteenth Convention of the American Communist Party, Betty Gannett examined the situation in the party ranks and found it serious, if not dangerous. It seems there are some weak spots through which enemy counter-propaganda is making its way like flood waters seeping through the cracks in a dike. She calls for an ideological sandbag brigade to seal up the leaks. She notes that this subversive propaganda is directed not only at the USSR, but also — and this is where undue familiarity becomes intolerable impudence — at “its great leader Stalin.”

“It should be of great concern to us,” says the reporter, “that these Trotskyite-Titoite slanders at times find subtle expression even in our own ranks. Thus, a comrade here and there will fall prey to the lying contention about the ‘deification’ of Stalin, and the slander-propaganda with which the anti-Sovieters seek to conceal the profound love and admiration of the Soviet people for the great leader of the land of socialism.”

Such an attitude toward “the brilliant successor of Lenin,” who, all party members are required to believe, “is loved and revered by the hundreds of millions of ordinary people throughout the entire world” — to say nothing of the ten million or more Soviet citizens in forced labor camps and the rest of the police-ridden working population in the USSR with their “work cards” and internal passports, who are simply nuts about Stalin — this irreverent attitude must be knocked down. And the culprits through whose ignorance

or negligence this attitude finds "subtle expression even in our own ranks" must be named and called to order.

Two sleeping sentinels who allowed this deviation to pass through the lines are singled out for special mention as horrible examples. One of them is a writer on *The Daily Peoples World*, a Stalinist organ published in San Francisco, by the name of Nat Low. And the other culprit — this is self-criticism in excelsis — is none other than the reporter herself, Betty Gannett. She admits having been negligent in her duty to admire Stalin in one respect on one particular occasion and seeks restoration to Stalinist normality through the catharsis of public confession.

This Nat Low is a dirty dog who had the unspeakable nerve to criticize George Bernard Shaw for once having expressed the opinion that "Stalin is the greatest statesman in the world." That, Low had said, reveals Shaw's "obsession with the Great Man idea." But Low is not going to get away with that kind of "capitulation to this slander" of the Trotskyites-Titoites and other criminal under-estimators of the loved and revered Stalin, if Betty Gannett can stop him, and she thinks she can. She goes to work on the errant columnist-capitulator with the favorite instrument of Stalinist surgery — the hatchet. "What place," she demands, "has such an 'evaluation' in a Marxist newspaper?" She formally declares, ex-cathedra, that "Low the Marxist does not understand what apparently Shaw the Fabian grasped, that there is no antagonism between leadership and the people in a socialist society."

That settled the case of Nat Low, this shameless "evaluator" who obviously doesn't know right from wrong. There is nothing more to be said. The matter has been disposed of by an official pronouncement, and "the rest is silence," to shift the quotation marks from Gannett to Shakespeare. True, there is no real argument advanced. No uncontested facts are adduced, no proofs are offered. No allowance is made for a difference of opinion about Stalin and Shaw's estimate of him. And as a matter of course, nothing is heard from Nat Low in his own defense. His deviation has been outlawed by assertion, by pronouncement. That is the Stalinist method of indoctrination. That is Stalinist ideology rammed down your throat. You can choke on it, but if you want to stay in the Communist Party you can't talk back.

Betty Gannett's own error, which she confesses with the whole-hearted abandon of an exhibitionist-convert at a revival meeting, was somewhat different from Low's. It was far less serious, it would appear at first glance, and the ordinary person with a tolerance for human peccadilloes might not even notice it. But the convention reporter couldn't rest until she got it off her chest. What had Betty Gannett done that impelled her to flop down on the convention floor in grovelling repentance? She hadn't failed to love Stalin — God forbid! — but she had slipped up on another obligation which all well-behaved American flunkies owe to the Moscow boss. You can believe it or not, but Betty Gannett, a ranking hatchet-woman in the camarilla of Stalinist functionaries, and a convention reporter in charge of ideology at that, failed on one dreadful occasion to pay the required tribute to Stalin's literary style — that special method of putting words together, peculiar and individual to Stalin, which Trotsky once said affected the reader like a mouthful of chopped-up bristles.

She had showed lack of "vigilance," she said, "in an issue of the pre-Convention discussion bulletin, when the editorial committee, and I, a committee member assigned to compile the contributions, allowed to be printed without comment an article on 'simplicity of language' which conspicuously omitted the name of Stalin." Mark that down in your book, if you are thinking of joining the Stalinist party, so you won't forget that your requirement to "love and admire" Stalin includes also his literary productions. For, says Gannett, "Stalin above everyone else has presented the most complex theoretical propositions with a mastery, simplicity, clarity and power." Didn't you know that? Well, you'd better start learning lest you too become guilty of the fatal omission which Betty Gannett fell into in a moment of weakness and forgetfulness under the pressure of "Trotskyite-Titoite slanders" about the "deification" of Stalin.

The merits of Stalin's literary style are at best debatable — a "moot point," as the lawyers say — and I can get you plenty of critics who will take the negative. But that doesn't faze Betty Gannett, who follows one straight line from politics to art. "Who," she asks — "who can ever forget the great lesson of linkage to the people which Stalin presented for us, in the symbol of Antaeus which he drew from Greek mythology?"

Well, to tell you the God's truth, Betty, I not only forgot that Stalin had presented the symbol of Antaeus to us; I didn't even know he had done it in the first place. I have read references to the mythical story of the giant who drew his strength from the earth in the writings of so many others that the symbol has become rather trite. But I'll be a long time forgetting your reminder that Stalin showed the genius of his originality by "presenting" it also. And every time I think of Stalin I'll think of Antaeus and remember that he was finally finished off by Hercules. Could this victorious Hercules stand as a symbol of the revolutionary working class catching up with Stalin and all his gang of corrupt and crooked functionaries, and dealing out to them the fate of Antaeus? I think so, and I hope with all my heart it will not be long delayed.

4. *The Bureaucratic Mentality*

Uncontrolled power, the goal to which all bureaucrats and authoritarians instinctively strive, has reached its apogee in the Soviet Union under the Stalin regime, with all the evil consequences inherent in this abnormality. Where there is no freedom of criticism, no free play of ideas, the healthy and wholesome process of collective thought is crowded out to make way for the reciprocal corruption of arbitrariness and subservience. There is inhuman disregard of the rights and opinions of others on the one side, and abdication of the intellect on the other. The ruling bureaucrats, who are the carriers of this corruption, are also its victims. Their minds become irremediably diseased, and their fatal sickness is infallibly expressed in their mental processes and their manner of expressing them. In the vast domain of Stalinism where all critics and opponents of the regime are in prison or dead, or condemned to silence by police terror, all the ruling bureaucrats have developed a single, uniform

method and style of speaking and writing. This official language dispenses with any effort to enlighten, convince and persuade. It rests solely on assertions and pronouncements which settle all questions — from economics and politics to art and linguistics.

When nobody has a chance to answer back, you can get away with anything. That's the way it is in the Soviet Union at present. And this system, along with the method of thinking and style of expression that goes with it at the Russian spring-head, flows down through all the functionary cadres of the national parties of international Stalinism like a polluted stream, turning everything it touches into filth.

In the Soviet Union it is horrible and degrading — all the more so because the power behind it is absolute from one end of the country to another. It is no less horrible and degrading in the Communist Party of the U.S., where the same practices are faithfully imitated. But it is also somewhat ludicrous. Here the will of the feeble functionaries is present but the power to proscribe is strictly limited to the dwindling ranks of an isolated and demoralized party. Unbelievers, like myself, are free to snicker at their clownish absurdities, and cheerfully do so. The National Secretary of the American Stalinist party, strutting over the platform in his summary speech at the 15th National Convention, in precise imitation of an all-powerful Soviet bureaucrat laying down the line, resembles a rickety dead-end kid limping around in a marshal's uniform with a sword too heavy for him to lift and a pistol he can't shoot. The will is there, the expressions and the gestures — everything except the power. And if you want my opinion, that's a good thing for this country and its working people.

If you plow through the dreary field of the convention report, as I did in the line of duty, in the hope of turning up some evidence of collective thinking — some contributions, amendments, criticisms or suggestions from the assembled delegates — you will not find it. This so-called report of the 15th Convention proceedings, bulky in volume as it is, is exclusively a collection of the reports given to the convention by the various official functionaries. There is no record of what, if anything, the delegates had to say about the report. For this kind of information you have to read between the lines of Secretary Gus Hall's summary speech in answer to criticisms. And that's quite a guessing game, for the critics are answered but not quoted. It is not even clear whether the critics were present and spoke at the convention or had just been running loose in the party surreptitiously dropping remarks out of the corners of their mouths. The latter was probably the case, for Hall's strictures seem, by internal evidence, to be aimed at absentees from the convention who were destined soon to be absent from the party.

"You know," said Hall, apparently to nobody's surprise, "around the country, in almost all the states, there is a core of comrades around the Party that I will call 'the disgruntled type.'" Obviously something has to be done about that, for there is no provision in Stalinist jurisprudence, as practiced in the Soviet Union, for people to be disgruntled and stay out of prison or a forced labor camp. The means for this healthy corrective being lacking in the United States, Hall reached for the best substitute he could find. He did not suggest that the disgruntled people be invited to formulate their criticisms and have a fair discussion of them in the party

ranks. And it never entered his thick bureaucratic skull to point out that a convention where dissatisfied party members had no voice was a mockery of workers' democracy. It never occurred to him to propose a real convention where they would be represented as a minority with full provision to air their grievances. It seems there has been too much tolerance and too much talk already.

Hall's proposal was a short cut to wind up the disagreeable business. "I think," he said, "that we must talk to these comrades in a different vein than we have until now. . . We must tell these comrades, 'if you are sincere, if you want to help the Party and you have some beefs, come up to the Party leadership and discuss them!'" But what if the "disgruntled" are against "the Party leadership"? Suppose they want to throw them out, not to "come up" to them and talk things over? Hall never even considered that possibility. There is no place for such "beefs" in Stalinist practice. "In this period especially," said Hall in winding up his remarks on this point with the finality of Stalinist wisdom, "we cannot have a liberal approach to such an influence." That ought to satisfy everybody — except the "disgruntled" whose existence was never provided for in the first place.

Reading between the lines of Hall's summary speech, I gather that one disgruntled party member did actually get into the convention and make a speech there. Just how this happened, if it really happened, is not explained. Perhaps there was some slip-up in the apparatus somewhere along the line; with the best will in the world, air-tight perfection is hard to get in these matters. Anyhow, some fellow, whose speech is not printed, seems to have said something which Hall refers to as "the Davidow controversy and the struggle against liquidationism." Just what Davidow was beefing about we can only surmise from Hall's references to his blasphemous assertion — quoted by Hall — that "the party has watered down the Marxist-Leninist concept of Party membership" and his complaint that "there are loose organizational concepts within the party." Hall's cavalier treatment of this episode doesn't throw much light on the content or merit of Davidow's "controversy" but it can stand as a first class illustration of bureaucratic polemic and pedagogy. "In Comrade Davidow's speech there was a strong element of shadow-boxing." He is wrong because "the party has not lowered or watered down the standards of membership since the 1945 Convention."

As for his beef about "loose organizational concepts," he obviously doesn't know what he is talking about. "Comrade Davidow sets up another straw man." Loose organizational concepts, or loose anything else, simply do not exist outside Davidow's imagination. "Which? Where? . . . I do not think so," says Hall. That ends the argument. All that remains, before passing on to the next point, is a brief, and absolutely unanswerable, suggestion to the critic on proper procedure: "I think it would be much better for Comrade Davidow, in a self-critical manner, to examine his wrong view without rationalization and shadow-boxing, and come to the conclusion that the Party position is correct, and proceed from there."

That's all for Davidow, the lone dissenter obliquely reported as possibly present at the convention by the references in Hall's speech. His complaints are answered in exactly the same way as all other questions are dealt with in Hall's speech and in all the other

speeches which roll off the bureaucratic assembly line — by denials, assertions and pronouncements. That is the way the bureaucratic mind works, and they don't even know that there is anything wrong with it. What's wrong with it is everything.

5. *The Revolutionist and The Bureaucrat*

There is good sense in the old saying that two heads are better than one. The same thought can be profitably extended into the conception that the collective thinking of many, freely expressed, can yield better results in the long run than the arbitrary and capricious decisions of an individual who decides and rules without control or restraint. This is the argument for the practical efficiency of democracy in general, and in the workers' movement in particular.

It is true that democracy is a rather cumbersome process, while bureaucratic short cuts seem to "get things done" without delay. But the trouble is that things done this way are often done wrong. And without the corrective restraint of democracy there is no way of righting them; one error leads to another and things go from bad to worse to the detriment of the people whose interests are directly involved. This is the evil story of all uncontrolled bureaucracies — in trade unions, parties and governments.

The great teachers of the working class knew all about this. They were dead set against bureaucratism — every one of them. They were confirmed democrats. I don't mean democrats in the sense of that fraudulent "democracy" by the mechanism of which the masses of the people have the illusion of deciding the conduct of affairs by voting for hand-picked candidates every two or four years; while all the mediums of information and communication remain in the hands of a small clique of money sharks who own all the industries and rule the country behind the parliamentary facade. No, our teachers scornfully exposed and denounced the fraud and deceit and general skulduggery of bourgeois "democratic" politics. They were democrats in the real sense of the word. They maintained that the people should freely discuss and participate in deciding all matters of the general welfare which concerned them — their methods and conditions of work, the affairs of their own organizations, and the government.

Marx and Engels proclaimed that "The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the workers themselves."

From this profound thought it necessarily followed that the workers would have to create their own organizations of combat and run them themselves. When the founders of scientific socialism said the workers must emancipate themselves, they meant that nobody would do it for them, and nobody could. The same holds true for their organizations, the instruments of struggle for emancipation. If they are really to serve their purpose, these organizations must belong to the workers and be democratically operated and controlled by them. Nobody can do it for them. So thought the great democrats, Marx and Engels.

The successors of Marx and Engels—Lenin and Trotsky—who executed their testament as leaders of the great Russian revolution, acted in the spirit of the masters. Lenin outlined the perspective of a really democratic workers' state where "every cook" would learn to take part in the administration of public affairs. Trotsky began his great struggle against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Russian revolution with the demand for the restoration of Soviet democracy. Genuine democracy is profoundly revolutionary, and all four of our revolutionary teachers — the masters, Marx and Engels and the great disciples, Lenin and Trotsky — were genuine democrats.

Indeed, if you take the trouble to consider the question theoretically and read the history of revolutions in search of what really happened, it becomes clear that the great revolutionists were democrats precisely because they were revolutionists. They had to be democrats in order to organize and lead revolutions. Social revolutions are made by the masses; their independent action is just what social revolution is, in Trotsky's classic definition. When the masses rise up out of passivity and acquiescence and intervene in events and decide them — that is the time of revolution.

The conception of Marx and Engels, which was shared by their great disciples, that the workers must emancipate themselves, determined their approach to the masses and their attitude toward them. They were in no way disposed to "order" revolutions, as many superficial writers have said and some ignorant people have believed, if for no other reason than that they knew it could not be done that way. Their task, as Marx and Engels explained it, and as Lenin and Trotsky carried it out in practice to a superlative degree, was to bring the element of socialist consciousness into the labor movement; to organize and lead it, but in no case to try to substitute themselves for it. All their writings are permeated with this conception and this practice. They do not give orders to the masses. They inform, they enlighten. They try to explain and persuade. Reading them you can learn. That is why their writings remain ever fresh and new, the greatest treasure of the new revolutionary generation — the heritage of a hundred years of socialist culture.

The bureaucrats are the opposite of all that, and the polar difference sticks out of all their writings and utterances. There is nothing revolutionary about the bureaucrats. They fear the masses and distrust them and are always swept aside during periods of upsurge. Only when the masses quiet down do the bureaucrats have their day — the gray people of the ebb tide. You see this manifested in all workers' organizations in all mutations of the class struggle, from strikes to revolutions, and from trade unions to the organs of state power.

Stalinism, the supreme example in all history of a labor bureaucracy swollen to monstrous proportions, and multiplying in themselves all the negative traits of the ordinary conservative labor skate, who is their blood kin and lacks only their opportunity and their power — Stalinism is the most misunderstood phenomenon of our time. Most ludicrous of all is the widespread impression that these representatives of reaction and stranglers of revolutions are secretly plotting revolution on a world-wide scale. Just mention

the word Stalinism to Social Democrats, for example, who fear revolution for their own reasons, and they take to the cyclone cellars on the double, scared out of their livers and their lights. The United States government recently convicted eleven functionaries of American Stalinism for "advocating" and representing a "clear and present danger" of revolution, and the Supreme Court has upheld the verdict. This is a combination of misunderstanding and frameup.

The proletarian revolutionist is one thing and the Stalinist functionary is another. They are not only different in their aims and purposes. There is a profound difference in their mentalities and in their methods of expressing them. The revolutionist is a democrat, organizing opposition to the power of the present day, and striving to create a new power of the people.

The functionary is merely a bureaucrat, always and everywhere serving an existing power. The revolutionist is a thorough-going radical and is personally disinterested; he wants to change the social order in the interest of all, and considers it beneath his dignity to seek personal advantage. The bureaucrat, in all organizations, and under all conditions, is profoundly conservative and meanly selfish; he strives to preserve the status quo in the interest of his privileges. The revolutionist trusts the masses because they are the makers of revolutions. The bureaucrat fears them for the same reason. The bureaucrat gives orders like a policeman. The revolutionist tries to explain things like a teacher. The bureaucrat lies to the people. The revolutionist believes the truth will make them free, and tells it.

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