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## The heritage of Jefferson

Claude Gernade Bowers

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### Recommended Citation

Bowers, Claude Gernade, "The heritage of Jefferson" (1943). *PRISM: Political & Rights Issues & Social Movements*. 658.

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THE  
HERITAGE  
OF  
JEFFERSON

*Claude G. Bowers*

*Earl Browder*

*Francis Franklin*

# THE HERITAGE OF JEFFERSON

Claude G. Bowers

Earl Browder

Francis Franklin

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WORKERS SCHOOL, NEW YORK

*This booklet contains addresses by Claude G. Bowers, Earl Browder and Francis Franklin, delivered at a Jefferson Bicentennial Commemoration meeting at Mecca Temple, New York, on April 9, 1943, under the auspices of the Workers School of New York. The Introduction is by Alexander Trachtenberg, chairman of the meeting.*

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	5
<i>Alexander Trachtenberg</i>	
JEFFERSON AND THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE . . . . .	11
<i>Claude G. Bowers</i>	
JEFFERSON AND THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION . . . . .	28
<i>Earl Browder</i>	
THE DEMOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON . . . . .	38
<i>Francis Franklin</i>	
THE WORKERS SCHOOL . . . . .	47

## Introduction

**T**HOMAS JEFFERSON'S faith in democracy is the precious heritage, not alone of the American people, but of all humanity. For the essence of this faith was a profound confidence in the people, in their readiness to fight for national liberation and their capacity to build a new life, no matter how difficult the struggle or how great the price.

Jefferson was not only a great national figure. His dynamic concepts and deeds, animated by a profound sense of internationalism and a progressive world outlook, drew freely upon all that was most revolutionary and advanced in the history and cultures of other nations and epochs. And, in turn, the lessons of the American Revolution swept across feudal Europe and helped quicken the vast democratic upsurge of the masses upon which rose the economic and political foundations of the modern world.

There are few figures in modern history whose accomplishments were so much in accord with the needs of the period in which they lived as Jefferson. If today he ranks with the immortals, if his teachings are studied and his memory revered by the peoples of the most remote countries, it is because his leadership found its source in the universal democratic strivings and aspirations of the common people the world over. Thomas Jefferson was the foremost ideologist of American democracy, the great American encyclopedist, the thinker and fighter who did

most to launch our young nation as the first popular republic in modern history.

The three addresses printed here deal with Jefferson's contributions to the building of this nation, and the significance of his teachings for us today, when, in a different and even more crucial period, the American people are fighting to preserve the achievements which Jefferson's life and work helped to make possible.

Recently a furore was raised in the press in connection with the results of a questionnaire on American history among college freshmen. The results were "shocking" to the authors of the questionnaire. There is no question but that the results did not present a pretty picture and reflect the neglect of the study of American history in our high schools and colleges.

But the authors of the questionnaire attributed this ignorance of American history on the part of the students to the insufficient stress in our current school curricula to the memorizing of names, dates, places and events. They advocated the "date-sequence" study of history, and decried the emphasis on *social* factors and interpretations which have of late been introduced into some American history texts and curricula.

One can readily imagine Thomas Jefferson, who urged the study of history *by the people* because "history by apprizing them of the past will enable them to judge of the future . . . to know ambition under every disguise it may assume, and knowing it, to defeat its views," becoming greatly concerned about such widespread ignorance of our own national history, but simultaneously expressing amazement over the *cause* to which this ignorance

is attributed. For it was not dates and names which aided Jefferson to chart an unerring course for American democracy, but his profound understanding of forces and relationships and their significance for the social, economic and political development of the young nation.

Only the scientific study of history, based on a correct understanding of social-historical forces, can lend meaning to those names, dates, places and events which in themselves are but a mere index to history. Only through such a Marxist approach to the study of the origins and development of our nation will they become indelibly implanted in the minds of students of history.

In undertaking their evaluation of Jefferson's heritage, Ambassador Bowers and Earl Browder are united in their common avowal of the American democratic tradition. Ambassador Bowers' approach to the study of the founder of American democracy is that of a Jeffersonian and a militant democrat. Earl Browder, foremost spokesman of the Communist Party in the United States, approaches the same subject as a Marxist. That they come to quite similar conclusions with regard to Jefferson's role and contributions, and that they do so at this particular historic moment of the present war of national survival, is significant to merit attention. For the common bond that unites these two distinguished personalities is the fact that both cherish the achievements of American democracy, for the security and maintenance of which they are ready to submerge all other differences.

The very coming together of two such outstanding Americans in their common tribute to Jefferson is a living symbol of that national unity which is an essential condition for victory over the fascist powers. And it is because



both are moved by a high sense of patriotism, and because they are animated by a deep appreciation of the progressive historic role which he played during the early years of the Republic, that they consider the study of Jefferson today to be of inestimable value as a guide to victory.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the death of Jefferson, on July 4, 1926, Mr. Bowers received at Monticello the Jefferson medal for his great work, *Jefferson and Hamilton*, published the year before. Ten years later, he completed his equally important study, *Jefferson in Power*. These volumes established Mr. Bowers, already eminent as a journalist, editor and political leader, as the outstanding American authority on Jefferson and his period. In later years, particularly as United States Ambassador to Spain during the period of the Franco fascist rebellion, which was aided by the active military intervention of Hitler and Mussolini and the suicidal policy of "non-intervention" of the democratic powers, Mr. Bowers evidenced his great statesmanship and firm adherence to democratic principles. Throughout that unequal struggle, which the fascist powers organized as a dress rehearsal for World War II, his sympathies with the democratic Loyalist Government and his high regard for the heroic Spanish people were matters of public record.

Today, as American Ambassador to Chile and its Popular Front Government, Mr. Bowers is aiding our government to cement the growing friendship and understanding between the peoples of the two nations, threatened by a common enemy. He has distinguished himself as an Am-

bassador who has done well by his own people, and has helped those to whom he is accredited.

In accepting an invitation to participate in the Jefferson bicentennial commemoration meeting under the auspices of the Workers School, Ambassador Bowers wrote: "I think the Workers School is manifesting a fine spirit and a proper appreciation of the fact that what we know as the American Way of Life is due to Jefferson above all other men in American history."

The Workers School is gratified by this tribute from so militant a fighter for democratic causes and so felicitous an interpreter of Jefferson's philosophy and ideals.

Earl Browder's deep interest in workers' education is of long standing and has found practical expression in many ways. His books and pamphlets, published in millions of copies, have helped to prepare and equip the working class to meet the grave problems posed by the war. He participated in the founding of the Workers School, under whose auspices he has made brilliant contributions on theoretical problems in the general field of Marxism-Leninism.

Like Ambassador Bowers, Earl Browder has dug deep in the rich veins of American history and has constantly spurred others to study its wealth of revolutionary and democratic traditions forged during one hundred and fifty years of struggle for human freedom. Under his leadership the Communist Party has become the most consistent bearer of those great traditions of which the Jefferson heritage is an integral part, and ever increasing numbers of Americans are coming to appreciate his own enormous contributions to a deepened understanding of the American tradition. Even political adversaries have had to rec-

ognize that his most recent work, *Victory—And After*, is a powerful contribution toward national unity and victory over the Axis.

Francis Franklin, member of the history department of the Workers School, appropriately a native of Jefferson's own state, is a graduate of the University of Virginia, founded by Jefferson. He is at present completing a study of one of the most important periods of American history—the first quarter of the nineteenth century, rightly considered the period of the building of the American nation, the years of the presidencies of Jefferson and his friends and disciples, Madison and Monroe.

The three papers, printed in this booklet, should prove a vital contribution to a deeper and richer appreciation of our national history.

ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG

April 13, 1943.

# Jefferson and the American Way of Life

By CLAUDE G. BOWERS

## I.

**N**O OTHER American approaches Thomas Jefferson in his contribution to the creation of what we call "the American way of life." He was its philosopher, its architect and its munition factory.

We know that no man born of woman is great enough or good enough to mount and ride on the backs of his fellow men; and this was the kernel of Jefferson's political philosophy.

We know that governments are created for the service of the people governed, and not the people for the service of the government; and that was Jefferson's revolutionary thought.

We know that governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed; and it was Jefferson who wrote that into the covenant of our liberties.

We know that in an ideal society the people must be free—free to think and speak their honest thought; free to write and publish what they write; free to speak even in criticism of their rulers; and free to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience without the interference of man-made law; and it was Jefferson who fought the heroic battle that made all this freedom the central thought in the American way of life.

When the stupidities of an insane king and a pliant ministry forced the American Revolution, nine-tenths or more of the revolutionary patriots thought of it as a protest about taxation laws and commercial regulations; and with these a successful issue was to mean a change in the personnel of the rulers and little more. It was Jefferson who thought of the Revolution as a resolving of society into its natural state, offering an opportunity for the creation of a new system based on the philosophy of liberty and natural right.

He scorned the idea that we were to patch the roof, cut a new window, and add a porch; he demanded that we build a new house. He was so much a revolutionist that in the parlance of this time, when even liberals are called "reds," he would have been called a red.

When he wrote his illuminating paper known as his "Summary View" and submitted it to the Virginia Convention as instructions to the Old Dominion's representatives in the First Continental Congress, his revolutionary contemporaries were so startled by its novelty that they put it aside as too radical for the times. It was the most profound document of the Revolutionary period. It got down to first principles. It tore away the rubbish of stale precedent accumulated through centuries of tyranny and bigotry. It sought the creation of society in the principle of natural right. It attacked the artificial barrier of natural trade. It stripped the monarchs of unnatural powers. It gave the land to those who redeemed it from the wilderness and denied the right of kings to grant vast tracts to favorites of the court who never saw it. Thus he began the building of the American way of life.

When summoned as the man best equipped to frame the

Declaration of Independence, he arraigned the King and Parliament for their tyranny and crimes and there most of his contemporaries would have stopped. But Jefferson knew this indictment was an ephemeral thing that would die with the tyranny and the crimes. He was thinking deeper than that, looking further into the future, and so in one immortal paragraph that cannot die so long as the American way of life shall live he laid the cornerstone of that way of life, and this is what he wrote:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed.”

And so while most of his revolutionary contemporaries were thinking of the new government to be created on the ruins of British imperialism, he was thinking first and foremost of the creation of a new society, a new perspective, a new outlook, a new day.

And so, with the Revolution crowned with success, the Convention met to frame the Constitution and the constitutional fathers were thinking primarily of the creation of a strong and stable government; Jefferson was thinking primarily of the protection of the rights of the people. He wanted a stable government, but he did not want a government so strong that it could tyrannize over the rights of men.

Thus, when in Paris he opened the proposed Constitution he was shocked to find so little that was in harmony with the preamble of his Declaration of Independence.

He accepted with general *éclat* the governmental framework devised, but he was shocked to see that there was nothing in the document for the protection of the people against the abuse of the power created. And his first thought was for the rights of men.

Instantly he was aflame. His pen flashed over the paper writing letters of protest and expostulation to the most influential men in the country. And this is the criticism he made in these letters:

“The absence of express declarations ensuring freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of the person under the uninterrupted protection of the *habeas corpus*, and trial by jury in civil as well as in criminal cases excited my jealousy.”

And again he wrote:

“Besides other objections of less moment, she [Virginia] will insist on annexing a bill of rights wherein the government shall declare that, first, religion shall be free; second, printing presses free; third, trials by jury preserved in all cases; fourth, no monopolies in commerce; and fifth, no large standing army.”

When Madison, the most conspicuous of the constitutional fathers, sought to persuade him that all these freedoms were secure in that the fundamental law forbade none of them, he impatiently replied:

“A Bill of Rights is what any people is entitled to and which no Government can deny or rest on inference.”

Now the significant, if not sinister, feature of this omission of a Bill of Rights is evident in the fact that it was

omitted after consideration and rejection, and some of those who fought its incorporation were the men Jefferson later had to fight when they, in power, enacted the infamous Sedition Laws for the destruction of the freedom of speech and of the press.

Jefferson led the fight; he aroused his friends and followers; he munitioned them and put them on the march with banners; and that fight ended only with the inclusion of the Bill of Rights, the most immortal part of the Constitution.

Without that Bill of Rights that Jefferson demanded the American way of life would never have been possible.

## II.

And behind this fight was the struggle for and against democracy—on which the American way of life must rest, and without which it must perish.

Thus we reach the twelve-year struggle to determine whether ours should be an oligarchic, a plutocratic, or a democratic republic.

Now many of the leading Revolutionary figures were not democrats. How shocking today to read in Madison's reports the constant recurrence in the debates of the Constitutional Convention of the slurring references to democracy as something to forbid! The timid were against it, the rich were against it, the financiers and the more influential merchants were against it, and of course the reactionaries and the economic Tories were against it; and these, with a compact organization, brilliantly led and abundantly financed, set to work during the first twelve years of the republic to make ours an oligarchy dominated by men of large means.



And again it was Jefferson who fared forth to challenge that arrangement. He led the fight; he created a party to wage the battle; he munitioned the people through the press; he organized all the people as human beings with natural rights from the highest to the lowest, and injected a civic conscience into the laborers on the docks.

And they denounced him with incredible fury as a traitor to his class; they summoned the political preachers wearing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil to damn him from the pulpits; they called him a Jacobin and a red; and in the last desperate effort to destroy him they enacted the infamous Alien and Sedition Laws and Jeffersonians were cast into jails and mobbed by ruffians in the streets.

But in the end, with his election to the Presidency in 1800, the hosts of democracy marched triumphant to the polls. It was not a Jeffersonian, but Henry Cabot Lodge, who wrote in his *Life of Hamilton* that the triumph of Jefferson "definitively determined that ours should be a democratic republic."

Thus, through Jefferson's herculean efforts, democracy came to America to maintain the American way of life.

### III.

But even before this, and long before, he had led in the struggles to make this way possible. Having written the Declaration of Independence, he resigned his seat in Congress to serve two years in the legislature of Virginia to wage relentless war on the feudalistic class system in that dominion.

Now, bear in mind that Jefferson through his mother's

family belonged to the old regime in Virginia; that this was dominated by the land-owning aristocracy; that its directing hand was on both politics and the church; and that this artificial aristocracy, from which was drawn a ruling oligarchy, rested on the old feudalistic system of primogeniture and entail.

Here was a system consciously devised for the creation of a ruling aristocracy in the land. Here was a law providing that these vast estates should pass always and solely to the oldest son; and a law which placed them beyond the reach of creditors. The eldest son might be a moron, a spendthrift or a fool; but society ordained that nothing born of his stupidity or ineptitude should be permitted to lessen by one inch the vast estate he had inherited. The purpose was to perpetuate the wealth, the influence and the power of a few families; to create an artificial aristocracy like that of Europe.

And Jefferson declared war on this phase of feudalism. He fought for democracy and against a law-made aristocracy. He insisted that in a free society every man shall stand on his own feet, assume responsibility for his own acts, prosper or fail according to his own merits. He did not believe in caste or class. He did not bow to families as such. And he hated feudalism in all its forms.

But, mind you, he was of the class against whose selfish interest he waged war. He waged war against the most powerful aristocracy in America to wipe out every vestige of feudalism and to preserve America and American land for the American way of life.

Thus again I would emphasize the fact that Jefferson's interpretation of the Revolution was the creation of a new, freer, and more equitable society. Again I reiterate that

no such thought inspired many of the leaders of the Revolution who thought in terms of a change of rulers only. And so it came to pass that many of the revolutionary leaders in Virginia fought Jefferson tooth and nail in defense of the antiquated system of primogeniture; and the hatred of these champions of a caste society followed him with undiminished ferocity until his death.

Had these feudalistic laws remained, there would have been no such thing as that which we describe as the American way of life.

#### IV.

But, you ask, if he wanted all men free, where did he stand on slavery? He stood four square against it. But, you say, he owned slaves, and the answer is, he did. Then why, you ask, did he not set them free? And the answer is that his hatred was for the entire system of slavery and he knew that emancipation by a single owner would be futile. And there was another reason too—the knowledge that such an act by him alone would have deprived him of the influence he might exert in forcing or persuading the extirpation of the entire system.

In his Notes on Virginia he had the courage to write these words:

“Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God: that they are not to be violated but with His wrath. Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.”

And again he wrote of the slaves that “nothing is more

clearly written in the book of fate than that these people shall be free."

Ah, but you say that these are words, and you ask: what did he attempt or do? And the answer is that he led the fight to end the slave trade, and if his indictment of this infamy does not appear in his Declaration of Independence it is that while he wrote it there in burning phrases, it was stricken out by the vote of the majority in Congress.

And the answer is that, in that same year, in the legislature of Virginia, he introduced the bill that put an end to that nefarious trade in human flesh.

And the answer is that he wrote a bill to legalize emancipation; and if it was not presented it was because those who, with him, felt that slavery should go, believed it would then do more harm than good.

And the answer is that when he wrote the Ordinance for the Northwest Territory, comprising many great commonwealths of today, he sought on this virgin soil to prevent the spread of slavery by incorporating this provision:

"After the year 1800 of the Christian era there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said States otherwise than in punishment of crimes."

And if this provision was stricken out, it was by Congress and over his protest.

There was never an opportunity throughout his life to strike a blow at slavery that Thomas Jefferson did not strike.

He knew that slavery could have no place in the free society he sought to build and in the American way of life that he envisioned.

## V.

And what else did he do to create the American way of life? He had the supreme courage to demolish the obstacles of man-made law that stood between a man's conscience and his God; he fought the Homeric battle for religious freedom; for the separation of church and state; and to end the social and political proscription of Americans because of their religion.

It is grimly ironical that the early settlers of our country, who came ostensibly to escape religious persecution across the sea, immediately began the proscription of other religious faiths and the persecution of opposing sects. The persecution of the Quakers and the dissenting sects was savagery itself. All the instrumentalities of intolerance were put at the service of religious tyrants. The citizen who could not subscribe to the creed made fashionable by man-made law was politically proscribed, and socially banished. And he who subscribed to one religious faith was forced by law to support with his purse another faith his conscience had denied. There was no religious liberty, no religious toleration, and there was a religious persecution and tyranny when Thomas Jefferson was born.

And in Virginia there was a combination of church and state; and in New England political preachers, in combination with cheap politicians, were distributing the political offices to their favorites in the name of God; and in the pulpits, hypocrites in innumerable instances were playing petty politics with a lack of scruples that would shame a ward heeler of today. In Virginia, politicians passed on to preachers the will of God, and preachers

thundered their support of the reactionary politicians from the pulpits.

And Jefferson knew this to be the European way; the European way of the darkest ages of European history; and he had the temerity to set forth with sword and shield to drive the demon of intolerance from American soil, to give the blessings of religious freedom to the American conscience, and to write indelibly into law the American way of life.

Within a few months after he had penned the Declaration of Independence he launched his war to make the conscience free; and he was to recall in his old age that in no struggle of his battling career had he encountered such bitter and unscrupulous opposition.

He was denounced as an atheist. And why? Because he said: "I may grow rich by art I am compelled to follow; I may recover health by medicines I am compelled to take against my own judgment; but I cannot be saved by a worship I disbelieve"; and because he wrote: "The life and essence of religion consist in the internal persuasion of belief of the mind"; and because he declared: "I consider religion as a matter between every man and his Maker, in which no other, and far less the public, has a right to interfere," he was denounced as irreligious.

And so he began his war for the American way of life in the religious sphere, cutting the bonds that bound the church and state, that every man might worship according to the dictates of his conscience. That battle was prolonged and bitter, but he won. And when he won that battle in Virginia he shook to its foundation the religious tyranny of New England.

But that was not enough for Jefferson. He demanded

a clear official declaration of the American way; and thus he wrote his immortal Ordinance of Religious Freedom, which holds preeminence in the world's literature of liberty. What a pity that this Ordinance and the argument that prefaced it are not compulsory reading in the schools today.

Now let us turn to Jefferson's preface and, as we quote, consider in your mind whether it does not define the American way of life.

Take this:

"Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested His supreme will that free it shall remain by making it insusceptible to restraint."

And take this:

"The impious presumption of legislatures and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greater part of the world."

And take this:

"The opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction. Our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions."

This the preface; and then the law:

"No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, but all men shall be free to profess, and by argument maintain their opinions in matters of

religion, and the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil character."

So generally accepted now are the principles here set forth that we of today can scarcely realize how revolutionary and iconoclastic were these views when Jefferson proclaimed them; nor understand why the battle for the adoption of the Ordinance of Religious Freedom was waged for several years before the victory came.

Defeated on the principle, the enemies of religious toleration in the end sought to whittle it away with amendments that would defeat its purpose.

They tried to inject into the law the declaration that the "Christian religion" was the religion of the state; if there could be no state church, there would be a state religion.

And that would have meant the political proscription of the Jew and the unbeliever, and religious intolerance would have been written into law. It was defeated.

Thus, if today in the American way of life men may worship God according to the dictates of their conscience; if today Jew, Gentile, Catholic, Protestant and unbeliever have equal right to participate in the civil life of the republic; if intolerance is proscribed, if religious persecution is outlawed, if in the American way the consciences of men are free, we do well this year to pay tribute to the memory of the great statesman and philosopher who fought the battle for religious freedom and toleration.

## VI.

And what else did Jefferson do toward creating the American way of life? He fought a battle for academic



freedom, to shake the directing hand of politicians and preachers from the professor, and to make education free.

In the colleges of his youth he had found the teaching stale and static, resting on the prejudices of the past, and proscribing modern thought. He found philosophy limited to dead thought. He found science frowned upon because it questioned or exploded the theologic theories of the middle ages. He found politicians seeking to convert the colleges into training schools of reaction. And in old age, when organizing what he hoped would be an ideal university in Virginia, he dealt iconoclastic blows to the old system, provided teaching based on modern thought, and gave preeminence to science.

When in search of teachers of science of the highest order he found the best qualified in Europe, they denounced him as an enemy of his country; and he replied that science knows no country but all mankind.

When he offered a chair to such liberals as Dr. Cooper he was denounced for effrontery in the choice of a thinker who ran foul of religious bigotry; and he replied that he was not proscribing a great thinker because of his theological convictions that would not enter into his teaching.

I know of no period in his life when Jefferson looms more heroic than when more than eighty years of age, enfeebled physically but mentally and spiritually alert and virile, he fought his battle for academic freedom at the cost of his personal popularity.

He fought to the end for the American way of life; and if today, here and there, the academy is not wholly free it is a challenge to the American ideal.

What is the American way of life?

It means that men may think their honest thought and without fear proclaim it. It means that the platform is free, and no functionary of the state can lay a paralyzing hand upon it. It means that men may write and publish what they please in press and pamphlet and in books without interference because of their opinions. It means that men may peaceably assemble to consider public matters without restraint. It means that every man's house is his castle, into which even the highest officer of state dare not enter without due process of law. It means the protection of the habeas corpus. It means that men's religion is a matter between their conscience and their God, and that none shall be politically proscribed in law because of their religious faith. It means that every child shall be entitled to his schooling at the public cost and that in universities there shall be no legal proscription of the truth. It means that all men, regardless of their financial or social status, stand equal before the law, and if at times this is not true it is a negation of the American way of life as Jefferson saw it.

And to bring these blessings to the American people, Jefferson in every instance made the fight. No American can approach his contribution to the American way of life.

I have sometimes marveled at the attempt of reactionary elements to evoke the memory of Jefferson in defense of vested wrongs. There is rich irony in the theory that he was a reactionary or conservative. He was throughout his life denounced and damned as a radical and a red. He was pictured as blood brother of Marat. He was called a Jacobin and a terrorist. He was proclaimed an enemy of

all religion from the political pulpits of his time. He was called an enemy of property and a traitor to his class. No man in American history has been so roundly abused by the reactionaries of his time as a dangerous innovator as Thomas Jefferson.

He was a revolutionist.

He was an iconoclast.

He was a radical.

But he was a revolutionist against wrongs; an iconoclast against ancient tyrannies; and he was as radical as reason and social justice.

And I have sometimes been amazed to find among progressives of our day, speaking from the superabundance of their ignorance of his life, criticism of his reforms as mere palliatives with no meaning in our times. These forget that the world moves by degrees. That which is conservative today was revolutionary yesterday. There was no labor problem in Jefferson's day as we know it now. There was no problem of great corporations as we know them now. There were no such social problems as we have today.

But he who thinks that the philosophy and principles of Jefferson have no application now has read to little profit. Many have attacked him because once he said that he would like to see a revolution every twenty years—in every generation.

Is it possible that one can miss the implication? He meant of course a recognition of the fact that each generation meets new problems; that civilization should march forward; that systems harmless now may be harmful in the future; and that society must not be static but must move.

And there is not a problem of today for which one does not find a guiding principle in the philosophy of Jef-

erson. For he stood primarily not only for liberty but for human rights; for the duty of organized society to play its part in the economic and social protection of the mass of men.

It was Lincoln, a disciple, who said that "the principles of Jefferson are the definitions and the axioms of a free society." He belongs to the immortals. And in paying tribute to his memory in this 200th anniversary of his birth, we are merely dedicating ourselves anew to the American way of life.

# Jefferson and the People's Revolution

By EARL BROWDER

**T**HOMAS JEFFERSON'S place in history is that of one of those giants whose true dimensions, like those of a great mountain, require distance as a condition for appreciation. He is the first great figure in that line of historical development summed up by Vice President Wallace in the descriptive term of "peoples' revolution," who belonged not only to his own time but, by the power of his thought and the character of his contribution, reaches over into our own day as a living influence.

It is fitting that this commemoration is organized by the Workers School, to whom Jefferson is no stranger. If our public school system is pitifully weak in transmitting American history to the youth of our country, as has been charged, the Workers School does not share that serious shortcoming. No one can be associated for long with the Workers School without absorbing a basic understanding of the great historical process that produced our country, or without a high appreciation of Jefferson's part in that history.

More than ordinary interest attaches to the brilliant contribution to this occasion made by Ambassador Claude G. Bowers, the most authoritative biographer of Jefferson. Mr. Bowers' monumental political studies, *Jefferson and Hamilton* and *Jefferson in Power*, have earned their position as "required reading," as basic textbooks, for all who

would seriously understand the origins of American democracy. Mr. Bowers' paper read here tonight is an important supplement to his more basic works. It relates Jefferson to the crucial world problems of today, in the true spirit of that great man.

It is certain that Mr. Bowers did not light-mindedly give his paper under the auspices of the Workers School, just as it is equally certain that his motive was not partisan to the Communists who make up the bulk of Workers School support. Mr. Bowers is no Communist but a Jeffersonian Democrat in his political affiliation. But he recognizes the serious study and appreciation of Jefferson, displayed over many years by the Workers School, which have not been matched by any other institution of its kind. He knows that the Workers School, and the Communists, are interested in Jefferson for his own values and not for any partisan manipulations, that we understand Jefferson as part of the heritage of all America and the world.

Jefferson was no Communist, but the Communist Party can claim him as one of its principal precursors; we stand on Jefferson's broad shoulders with all progressive Americans.

Neither was Jefferson afraid of being called a Communist, as he so often was. It is recorded that

"Jefferson was denounced as a Communist, an atheist, a foe to all religion, and the bitter enmities engendered by this conflict harassed him during his life and assailed his memory after death"; . . . "but . . . in his long life, and under all assaults, he made no reply to his enemies." (*Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Volume XII, Introduction, p. xvi.)

Jefferson was a revolutionist not one whit behind Marx

and Engels in his stern realism, facing the inevitable violence and bloodshed that accompany social upheavals without flinching. Imagine the gusto with which Attorney-General Biddle (who exemplifies most sharply the sad results of neglecting American history) could write a decision of deportation against Harry Bridges, as an admitted adherent of the Jefferson who proclaimed, in connection with an uprising *in the United States*: "I hold it that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing" (Vol. VI, p. 65), and who elaborated the thought at some length, saying:

"God forbid we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion. . . . What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time, that this people preserve the spirit of resistance. Let them take arms. . . . What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." (Vol. VI, pp. 372-3.)

Jefferson came to power in struggle against the Federalists, in which a central issue was the attitude toward the French Revolution. John Adams was among those who accused Jefferson of subordinating American interests to an unreasoning loyalty to a "foreign power," revolutionary France. But many years later when Adams was reconciled with Jefferson, he admitted that it was the latter's "invariable favorable opinion of the French revolution" which laid the foundation for Jefferson's "unbounded popularity." There should be a little lesson in this for those Americans who so fiercely object to any "invariable favorable opinion" of the Russian revolution. Jefferson, indeed, went to the extreme of declaring:

“Rather than it should have failed I would have seen half the earth desolated; were there but an Adam and Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than it now is.” (Vol. IX, p. 10.)

Philistines who manipulate with the name of Jefferson explain away such expressions as the passing hot-headedness of youth, which they say Jefferson repudiated in his more mature years. The record, however, does not bear out this comfortable evasion. For in his old age, the ailing Jefferson wrote to his friend Adams, anent the delays in realizing the people's democratic revolution in the rest of the world:

“The generation which commences a revolution rarely completes it. . . . To attain all this, however, rivers of blood must yet flow, and years of desolation pass over; yet the object is worth rivers of blood and years of desolation. For what inheritance so valuable, can man leave to his posterity?” (Vol. XV, p. 465.)

It is not by any means, of course, in this bold facing of the issue of violence in the process of social change that modern Communists find their important point of contact with Jefferson's political thought. As a matter of fact, we Communists cite Jefferson on this question mainly to expose the essential un-Americanism of the red-baiters like Biddle and Dies, who swear by the name of Jefferson but want to outlaw, imprison, and deport American workers who endorse Marx and Engels, on the sole grounds of quotations taken out of context from the Communist Manifesto which are restrained in comparison with the flaming words of Jefferson.

Modern Communists are much more conservative in their utterances on this question than was Jefferson.



It is on even more fundamental political problems, however, that we find our special kinship with Jefferson. It is in the basic demand for self-government of the masses, and against all privileged-class rule; in the recognition of the decisive role played by class formations in society, based upon the system of production and property relationships; in the search for an economic system which will give a solid foundation for democratic self-government; in the recognition of science as the basic means of human advancement, and of internationalism as the necessary condition for fulfillment of the nation—it is in these profound political conceptions of Jefferson that we find our kinship, for Communism is the most complete and consistent development of these conceptions under modern conditions.

Jefferson was the first example of that combination of philosopher, ideologist, man of science, organizer of the masses, and practical political leader and statesman which is necessary to bring into being the power of democracy. As philosopher he freed the political thought of his day from the theological fetters, institutionalized in the state-church, which was the buttress of feudalism. As ideologist he led the formulation of the new democratic outlook on all phases of life, not only in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, but on all questions over a half century of our history. As man of science he grounded the new ideology in the practical conquest of nature. As organizer of the masses he turned the weapon which had won independence from Britain into a weapon for the enfranchisement of the common man in domestic politics—the Sons of Liberty became the Democratic Clubs (one of the first of which, by the way, was the Society of

Tammany). As practical political leader and statesman he coordinated and guided the rising mass movement in the conquest of political power, seizing the reins of government and ousting the old governing strata, organizing in the process the first people's newspapers. In all these elementary democratic tasks Jefferson gave us a model of democratic leadership, illuminating for all times and peoples, so long as there are privileged classes to be removed from power.

Jefferson was the first democratic leader to recognize the decisive role of classes and their relationship to the national economy. Thus he conducted his first great political struggle on the issue of the abolition of primogeniture and entail, the system of landed property which preserved large feudal estates, powerful aristocratic families, and the church-state relationship. All his life he labored for the broadest possible distribution of the land into the full control of the cultivators of the land. The foundation of the Jeffersonian concept of democracy was agrarian, the democracy of farmers owning the land they cultivate and entirely subordinating the other classes within the nation. This was at once the strength and the weakness of Jeffersonian democracy; its strength because it created the indispensable conditions for the mastering of a virgin continent and the realization of American nationhood, its weakness because in the process of development it destroyed its own economic foundation by giving birth to modern industry with its subordination of the independent farmer—who, to Jefferson, was the prime bearer of democracy.

The American bourgeoisie has been peculiarly unappreciative of Jefferson's preeminent role as the architect of American capitalism. To this day they prefer to wor-

ship at the shrine of Alexander Hamilton. Yet the policies of Hamilton were shortsighted and self-defeating, and if they had prevailed over Jefferson the consequences would have been the break-up of American unity, a basic compromise with feudalism and slavery, the stultification of American capitalist development to the level of Europe, and the subordination of the American continent to the older European civilization. Lincoln's role in the Civil War was but the completion of Jefferson's "unfinished business," and would have been unthinkable if Hamilton had triumphed over Jefferson. In a similar manner, today's fight for the abolition of the poll tax is the "unfinished business" we inherited from Lincoln, together with the whole task of cleansing the nation from the stench of the slave market that still lingers in Negro inequality.

Hamilton was the typical statesman of the upper bourgeoisie; shortsighted in the greed for huge and quick profits, fearful of the unruly democracy of the masses, and therefore eager for conciliation and reunion with the defeated forces of feudal aristocracy and reaction—the most deadly enemy of the rising new system of capitalism. The perfect modern counterpart of Hamilton in today's political alignment is Herbert Hoover with his yearning for accommodation to Hitlerism. Through Hamilton's politics, if they had dominated, the American bourgeoisie would have deformed and aborted their own American capitalism.

Hamilton was himself intelligent and courageous enough to recognize this fact, when he threw his influence to Jefferson as against Burr in the deadlocked Presidential election of 1800. By that act Hamilton admitted the bankruptcy of his former policies and shattered the Feder-

alist Party which he had built over the years. It was the one act of Hamilton which earned him a permanent place in the roster of American patriots, the act of surrender to Jefferson. But the modern Hamiltonians are unregenerate, and unworthy of their mentor, even as most modern Jeffersonians timidly try to obscure the bold outlines of their giant teacher and wish to transform him into a pigmy on their own scale.

Jefferson confirmed the victory of democracy for a whole era by his resolute and unhesitating project of the Louisiana Purchase. That was, at the same time, the greatest single factor in setting the grandiose outlines for the following rise of American capitalism, especially after Jackson and Lincoln had performed their tasks as Jefferson's disciples.

The opening up of the continent for settlement was the main basis upon which grew the technical superiority of American capitalism over the rest of the world. This was especially true with the inauguration of Lincoln's "homestead policy" in 1862, which gave land free to those who would settle and cultivate it themselves. The denial to rising industry of a vast reserve of cheap and helpless labor power, by the constant drain of population to the West for land settlement, was fiercely resented by the merchants and industrialists, who could not understand that they were opposing their own true class interests. This draining off of the industrial reserve army, which capitalists looked upon as a calamity, was the cause of the later supremacy of American capitalism. By raising the price of labor power, it enormously stimulated the development of labor-saving machinery. It created a great unified national market, it forced the abolition of slavery, it

created the soil for the rise of Yankee ingenuity and inventiveness which hastened the economic revolution of machine industry. Modern American mass-production industry rises in a clear line from the policies of Thomas Jefferson, not from those of Alexander Hamilton.

It is true, of course, that Jefferson's ideology was always basically that of *agrarian democracy*, and that he gave no direct answers to our modern problems, in which vast concentrations of industrial capital dominate a huge majority of propertyless industrial wage-workers, and in which agriculture, reduced to a subordinate position, has itself lost its former characteristics of independence and self-sufficiency. Jefferson came reluctantly, and only under pressure of aggression from Europe, to the conscious promotion of American industry which he always knew was undermining his beloved agrarian society. This dialectical contradiction and its working out in life are the red thread running through American history, binding its antagonistic and contradictory parts into a coherent whole. We can truly understand modern America, and find the solutions to its problems, only if we understand how this America came into being. For this understanding a full knowledge and appreciation of Jefferson and his role are indispensable. Jeffersonianism must be united with Marxism and thus brought to the higher level of historical development that corresponds to the tasks of the twentieth century.

It has been said: "Every party in this country today reckons Jefferson its patron saint." There is a formal truth in this, but not every party studies Jefferson today, or tries to bring his basic principles into operation under modern conditions. There is too much formal obeisance

to Jefferson, as a political ikon, and not enough attempt to understand Jefferson as the concentration point of the great moving forces of history of his time, which molded the America we in our turn must remold.

Today, in the midst of the deepest world crisis, there is ample ground for all followers and admirers of Jefferson to unite, in the heavy task of winning victory over the Axis. In this war through which we now live the most fundamental of Jefferson's principles is being challenged, the independence of the United States and its self-government, and the right of self-government of all peoples of the earth.

Until the Axis is destroyed, until Hitlerism is removed from the earth, all other problems are secondary. Jefferson's constant emphasis on the natural friendship between the American and Russian peoples laid the cornerstone of our present United Nations policy, the first necessity for victory.

In the fires of the present war, the figure of Jefferson is being rediscovered by the American people, with a deeper significance than ever before. It is a vital part of our whole rediscovery of American history.

Facing the great unknown of the future, America reaches back to its heroic past, not in retreat but to gather strength for the great tasks of the day, and for the leap forward to an even more glorious, more heroic, America in the world of tomorrow.

It is in this spirit that we commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of the greatest American, Thomas Jefferson.

# The Democratic Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson

By FRANCIS FRANKLIN

ON THE mountain top in Virginia where Jefferson lived, one may read over his grave the epitaph written by his own hand:

Author  
of the Declaration of  
American Independence  
of  
The Statute of Virginia  
For Religious Freedom, and  
Father of the University  
of Virginia

Of all his numerous achievements during a long and busy life, he singled out these three as those of which he felt the greatest pride. Of all the prominent offices he held, including the highest his country had to offer, he did not mention one. These three accomplishments, although a small part of his many services to mankind, may be regarded as revealing the essence of his philosophy.

The depth and greatness of Jeffersonian democracy consist in the fact that it was not merely the pragmatic outgrowth of fights over immediate issues, but was based on theory. It was something new in the history of the world when a philosopher, devoted to the mass of the toiling

people, helped establish a nation and afterwards was selected by the people to be the official leader of their Republic. Plato dreamed of a philosopher-king, as of a charming but idle fancy, but never of a philosopher democratically elected by the toiling population.

The theory of Thomas Jefferson, upon which the Government of the United States was founded, was different from Marxist theory, yet related to it. Jeffersonian theory was derived directly from John Locke, the great liberal philosopher of England who sought to establish scientifically the republican principles of the Puritan Revolution of the seventeenth century. Its origins can be traced through some of the progressive scholastics of the fourteenth century all the way back to some of the philosophies of ancient Greece and Rome. This same theory was borne from England to France by Voltaire and became the source of inspiration for the philosophers of the French Enlightenment who paved the way for the French Revolution. After the outbreak of the American Revolution, exchange of ideas between American and French philosophers began.

The revolutionary philosophy of the eighteenth century, which Thomas Jefferson voiced in its purest and most democratic form and which was put into practice in America more thoroughly than anywhere else on earth, was studied deeply by Marx and Engels. The founders of scientific socialism digested that theory, subjected it to a rigorous critique, purged it of what was speculative and unscientific, and developed it into the theory of scientific socialism. Thus, Jeffersonian democracy is one of the principal ideological sources of Marxism.

No American can understand thoroughly the character of the democracy we are now fighting to save without



studying the theory upon which our government was founded. Furthermore, no one can fully understand Marxism who has not studied the philosophy upon which the Government of the United States was established, for Marxist theory, in the epoch of the rising working class, was the outgrowth of that philosophy.

It is significant that the first official proclamation of the American nation was written by Thomas Jefferson, our greatest democrat. That proclamation—the Declaration of Independence—was addressed to the peoples of the world for the purpose of rallying international support. Our nation commenced its history in the effort to mobilize international solidarity. The principles which we proclaimed through Jefferson in our War of Independence were those adhered to by ever-growing numbers in the lands groaning under the tyrannies of Europe.

But what was mere theory in Europe in 1776 Americans were putting into practice. Nothing so aroused the enthusiasm of the peoples of Europe as the bold endeavor to found on the shores of a virgin continent a democratic republic such as then existed nowhere on earth. The philosophers of France had proclaimed the aim of wiping out "the infamy of the past." Americans sought in '76 to secure freedom to expand into a vast wilderness, which had never known the "infamy of the past," and thereon to establish a new civilization. European democrats inevitably saw that their fate was linked with that of America. Should the American endeavor fail, it would set back the struggle for democracy incalculably. Should it succeed, it would demonstrate to the world that democracy on a continental scale would work.

In the opening paragraphs of the Declaration of Inde-

pendence, Thomas Jefferson eloquently summarized eighteenth-century democratic theory. All of Jefferson's subsequent labors sought the practical realization of the program which he then announced.

The declaration of Independence based the right of our nation to freedom on the recognition of the rights of all nations without exception. Jefferson always interpreted the rights of nations to mean the right of majority rule within each nation. He recognized clearly, as proved by his subsequent organization of the Democratic Party, that this meant rule by the laboring population, who in every nation have always constituted the overwhelming majority.

That Jefferson consciously applied his program of restoring what he called the "freedom and equality of nature" to the enslaved Negro people is proved by the fact that the longest paragraph in his list of grievances against George III was a burning attack upon that despot for his crimes against the innocent people of Africa and for maintaining the horrors of slavery. Much to Jefferson's regret this passage was removed from the final draft of the Declaration by slaveholders and traders. Throughout his life Thomas Jefferson labored for the abolition of slavery, and came to recognize that Negroes not only had equal rights, but also equal native abilities with all other peoples.\*

In proclaiming the rights of all nations and identifying these rights with those of the majority of every nation, Jefferson enunciated the positive program of mutual collaboration and friendship among all peoples. While advocating war to secure either national liberation or national

\* *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Monticello Edition, Vol. XII, pp. 254-255. Letter to M. Henri Gregoire, Feb. 25, 1809.

defense, he absolutely and clearly repudiated every variety of war for conquest or subjugation. The whole foreign policy enunciated by Jefferson as Secretary of State, as founder of the Democratic Party, and as President of the United States was implicit in the principles enunciated in the Declaration of Independence.

That Jefferson listed the Declaration of Independence on his epitaph is easy to understand. That document proclaimed in a nutshell the whole of his philosophy. It proclaimed the national independence which was the necessary foundation for achieving his democratic program.

It is necessary to see why he listed his Statute for Religious Freedom and his founding of the University of Virginia as the other achievements in which he felt the greatest pride.

It was the belief of all eighteenth-century democrats that men, equal by nature to their rulers, were exploited only because they were held in ignorance and superstition. The biggest instrument for accomplishing this they regarded as the existence of established state religions, which justified tyranny through the doctrines in which they corrupted the minds of the people. Therefore, the democratic philosophers maintained that enlightenment of the mind of man was the first step toward freedom and the only means of permanently maintaining freedom. Abolition of established religion was the precondition for securing public enlightenment. This meant separation of church and state. Religion must be declared a private matter. Man must be free to express any opinion in relation to religion. This was the way Jefferson phrased his statute. It included the right to express irreligious as

well as religious opinions. Thus, Jefferson regarded freedom from established state religion as the absolute prerequisite for securing and maintaining political freedom. That principle of course has become one of the cardinal articles of faith for all patriotic Americans.

The final safeguard of freedom Jefferson regarded as free public education in the principles of natural science. Immediately after leaving the Continental Congress which adopted the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson fought for a bill to establish in his own state, Virginia, a free public educational system, running all the way from the elementary schools through a state university, which he hoped would be his old alma mater, the College of William and Mary. His bill was defeated, but he did not abandon the fight. As President of the United States, he attempted to secure the establishment of a National University in Washington as the first step toward a national system of education. Again his plans were defeated. Finally, in his old age, the last service he performed for his country was the founding of the University of Virginia as a model for education in the natural sciences and philosophy.

He established that great institution almost single-handedly. Its buildings, perhaps the most beautiful in all America, were designed by Jefferson, who, gifted with many talents, was the greatest architect America possessed. In his curriculum, he relied on natural science as the true foundation of knowledge, and definitely prohibited the teaching of theology or religion in any form whatsoever for all time to come—a plan, which, in the main, has been faithfully followed by that University to this day. At its formation, the University of Virginia

was unquestionably the most advanced institution of learning in the world. It was the living embodiment of eighteenth-century scientific philosophy and the eighteenth-century principle of academic freedom. No one can attend the University of Virginia even today without imbibing from its traditions something of the spirit of its founder. Jefferson secured for his faculty the most brilliant and socially advanced thinkers of the day. For this accomplishment, he was denounced as an "Anti-Christ" in his old age with the same venom which the reactionaries had shown against him in his youth.

Jefferson did not oppose the right of churches to establish private schools for religious education, but he urged that land grants just outside the walls of the University be extended to the various denominations, in order that the religious students might come in contact with those trained in science. This suggestion was never followed.

In understanding Jefferson's devotion to natural science as the only means of acquiring knowledge, it is necessary to remember that the Jeffersonian philosophy attempted to formulate a scientific social theory. In seeking to elaborate a program for human freedom and advancement, Jefferson and the other democratic philosophers of the period sought always to explain society in terms of nature and of natural law.

Jefferson clearly recognized the existence of classes and the class struggle. Moreover, he saw the economic foundations for the conflict of classes, which revolved around the relations of the different classes to property. In advocating freedom and equality for all, Jefferson really proclaimed the high endeavor of establishing through democracy a classless society. He could not conceive of the ex-

act means for achieving this great aim, for they did not exist in his day. Yet his ideal of equality was one which can be achieved only when the inequalities of class divisions are eliminated. Jefferson did not regard human nature as unchangeable or class divisions as necessarily permanent, but as the product of material and cultural conditions. Always he believed in progress, in the infinite perfectibility of man. That is why Communists, in seeking their ultimate as well as their immediate program, can rightfully claim—in the deepest sense—to be continuing the Jeffersonian tradition. Every Communist is first and foremost a democrat, and no one can be a Communist who is not a democrat. Lenin, in a more advanced age than that of Jefferson, voiced Jefferson's faith in democracy with his great slogan, "Through democracy to socialism." We can point to the actual elimination of classes through democracy under the democratic Soviet Republic as the living proof of the correctness of Jefferson's faith.

No one understood better than Jefferson that full democracy is possible only when the people possess means of production, the guarantee of economic security. In his day, property ownership by the people was conceivable only on the basis of widespread small holdings in land. That was why Jefferson always looked to the American West as the material foundation for democracy.

While small holdings were actually the only means of securing democracy in Jefferson's day, no one knew better than he that his age did not possess all wisdom for the future. He saw—more clearly than any one else in his day—the solution to the problems of his age; but, in reference to the future, he declared:

"Each generation is as independent of the preceding, as that was of all which had gone before. It has, then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness; consequently, to accomodate to the circumstances in which it finds itself, that it received from its predecessors; and it is for the peace and good of mankind, that a solemn opportunity of doing this every nineteen or twenty years, should be provided by the Constitution, so that it may be handed on, with periodical repairs, from generation to generation, to the end of time, if anything human can so long endure. . . .

"The dead have no rights. They are nothing, and nothing cannot own something. Where there is no substance, there can be no accident. The Corporeal globe, and everything upon it, belongs to its present Corporeal inhabitants, during their generation. They alone have a right to direct what is the concern of themselves alone, and to declare the law of that direction, and this direction can only be made by their majority. That majority, then, has a right to depute representatives to a convention, and to make the Constitution what they think will be best for themselves." \*

Thus, Thomas Jefferson, the father of American democracy, moved as far as was possible for his time in the direction of Marxian theory.

All those who, with science as their guide, work for the freedom of all nations, for the right of majority rule, and for the material and cultural improvement of mankind, are continuing the Jeffersonian tradition. Following that tradition today leads us to work for the solidarity of the United Nations for offensive global war. It will lead us after victory to the lasting world union of democratic states for peace.

\* *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, pp. 42-43. Letter to Samuel Kercheval, July 12, 1816.

## The Workers School

**T**HE Workers School, which will celebrate its twentieth anniversary this fall, has pioneered in progressive workers' education. It has contributed enormously to a correct understanding of world political, social and economic conditions and problems, and to a revived and deepened study of American history and its democratic traditions.

The tens of thousands of workers who have studied at the Workers School have taken their places as front rank fighters for progress in the labor movement. They have helped make America stronger, to prepare and equip it for the tasks which today, in the midst of a war for national survival, require the supreme effort of a united and determined nation to withstand and defeat the onslaughts of a crafty and ruthless enemy.

Courses at the Workers School encompass a systematic view of life through the interrelation of individual subjects, covering the entire field of scientific socialism.

The study of the war for national survival today comprises a large part of the curriculum. These courses are based on analyses, not only of the just character of the war, but of the policies necessary to guarantee victory. The courses on problems of war production and centralized war economy are among the most popular with trade unionists.

An equally important part of the curriculum is devoted to the study of American history. Besides an extended course of three terms covering the whole range of American history, courses on specific periods and subjects are available.

The Workers School further specializes in the systematic study of political economy, analyzing the economic systems that have existed at various stages in the history of human civilization, and that exist today in the capitalist system embracing the major part of the world, and the socialist system



of the Soviet Union. These courses help to dispel the confusion and fears spread by defeatist elements who loudly reject the possibility of peaceful coexistence between the two systems in the post-war world.

At no time was an understanding of the national question of such vital importance to the welfare of our country. The Workers School has always considered it a major question for study. At this time, however, it has enlarged its number of courses to include the national question in general, as well as special problems of the Negro people, the Jewish people and the Italian people, in particular.

Its trade union courses embrace the systematic study of the history of the labor movement, as well as problems of trade union organization, tactics and strategy, labor and politics, etc. These courses are not only attracting industrial workers but professional and other groups, women and youth.

Other courses that are permanently in the curriculum include labor journalism, languages, public speaking, literature, philosophy, and special courses to meet special needs as they develop.

It is the aim of the Workers School to avoid the academic approach. Its teaching is permeated with the live issues of the day, with the practical activity of the American people, with history in the making. The success of the Workers School lies in the fact that its students actively participate in its discussions and find in it a constant guide for the problems they face, as well as a source of inspiration to carry on the good fight for a free and democratic America.

Readers of this pamphlet who wish to know more about the Workers School and its study courses may write for a catalogue listing its entire curriculum to the Workers School, 35 East 12th Street, New York, N. Y.

