

*Shall the
Communist Party
Change Its Name?*

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Note

The interest in the recommendation to change the name of the Communist Party is not limited to Communists alone. The proposed change has stirred wide discussion and comment, particularly in labor circles.

This pamphlet contains excerpts dealing with this question from the speeches of Earl Browder, Eugene Dennis, Roy Hudson and John Williamson, at the meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party, held in New York on January 7-9. They are prefaced by an appeal for 25,000 new recruits to join the Communist Party.

These speeches are brought together in one pamphlet because prospective members will want to know more about the political organization they are being asked to join. It is part of the democratic method of functioning of the Communist organization to appeal to all potential recruits to join forces with it in achieving full political clarity and a deeper understanding of the enormous perspectives for historic progress opened up by the Teheran Agreement. Such clarity is the prerequisite for vigorous mobilization of the people to guarantee victory in 1944 in the military struggle against Hitler fascism and on the home front in the decisive election struggle that looms ahead. A larger, stronger and politically more effective Communist organization will help to strengthen the unity of labor and the nation behind the epochal Teheran Declaration.

The Communist Recruiting Drive

FEBRUARY 12, 1944—the 135th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln—has been chosen as the day to open the drive for 25,000 new members of the Communist Party.

When Abe Lincoln, son of a worker, undertook in 1861 the job of guiding our country through the war against slavery, to preserve “government of the people, by the people, for the people,” he found the workers and independent farmers his strongest reliance for the national unity of the patriots of all classes which was indispensable to victory.

It is something like that again in the present war, many times greater than the war that Lincoln led.

The new, world-wide “emancipation proclamation” for the national liberation of all peoples, signed by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain at Teheran, not only assures victory in the most dangerous war, but also opens a vast new prospect of economic well-being in peaceful construction in all countries.

But the nation’s policy of resolute war through to the victory and the destruction of Nazism and fascism is being challenged by a powerful defeatist movement. The national policy of war to victory is at stake in the 1944 elections just as the war policy of Lincoln was at stake in the elections of 1864.

The key to victory is national unity. Neither the war nor the coming national elections is a struggle for the special interests of any class. Patriotism is to be found among the decisive sections of all classes, including the capitalists. Nevertheless, again as in Lincoln’s time, the strongest bulwark of the unity of the nation is necessarily to be found in the millions of workers and farmers. Instinctively every worker feels that in a just war the martial spirit and intelligent patriotism of the workers in the industries and trade unions and on the farms are bound to be the firmest foundation of the national unity. It is especially among

The Communist Party is indispensable to the strength and solidarity of the labor movement to pursue this course—the course which alone can receive united support of the labor movement and of the majority of the nation. It is more than ever necessary to organize politically the best members of the working class of our country. They must have the added strength and firmness which they can obtain only from education in the theoretical and practical use of the Marxist-Leninist science, and from Communist political organization.

In this drive to enroll new members, we place the first emphasis upon trade unionists. The conscious political activity of the members of the trade unions to aid in the solution of the problems of the nation has become the first necessity for the nation.

Particular attention must be paid to the enrollment of working women, whose place in the national life is increased by the coming of millions of girls and women into the industries and the trade unions.

The finest of the young people now entering our industrial and trade union life by millions must be given the opportunity, through enrollment in the Communist Party, to develop their political understanding and their capacity in civilian life to support the efforts of their ten million brothers in the armed forces.

The Negro people must be given the opportunity to become members of the Communist Party, as the best way to realize the slogan of the Communist Negro leader, Councilman Ben Davis, that the jim-crow system can and must now be forever wiped out from the life of our country. It is necessary to enroll into the Communist Party the most active and devout church people, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish.

The call for the building of the Communist Party is a call for the embodiment of the best human material into the most advanced and enlightened political organization of the people. It is in the finest traditions of the labor movement, in the finest traditions of America, it is in accord with the patriotic and military ardor of the freedom-loving peoples of all the world. It is in the spirit symbolized by Abraham Lincoln.

Earl Browder

Last May, when the dissolution of the Communist International was announced, the *New York Times* and other papers voiced the demand that the Communist Party of the United States should also dissolve itself and disperse. At that time I wrote a series of letters to the press in which I challenged the validity of this proposal, but expressed the readiness of the Communist Party to discuss this or any other question with any responsible spokesmen of public life, from the single standard of how best to win the war. My letters were reported to and approved by the June plenary session of our National Committee.

We received no response from anyone to discuss this or any other proposals for changes in the form of activities of the Communist movement in this country.

At this meeting of our National Committee we are faced only with the question, therefore, whether there are any changes which we ourselves, unilaterally and without discussion with anyone else, may find it expedient to adopt in the interest of the nation, of the war, and of the working class which we basically represent.

Recently we have published a pamphlet entitled *A Talk About the Communist Party*, a report of speeches made by myself in Detroit and Chicago to party membership meetings. The function and role therein described for the organization of Communists, of Marxists, are permanent features of any such organization, whatever may be its name or immediate practical tasks.

Such an organization we are sure must be maintained in the United States, and must be built even stronger. We know that for the United States to be without such an organization would weaken our country internally and in its foreign relations. Internally, the organized Marxists furnish one of the most stable points of support and orientation for the whole

democratic-progressive camp; in foreign relations they furnish the nation essential experience in the necessary policies for dealing with Communists in other lands, such as China, Yugoslavia, Italy and France, where Communist cooperation is absolutely inescapable if Europe and Asia are to be reorganized in a period of relative peace and order. From this point of view alone, the practical conclusion must be drawn that the continued and growing activity and organization of the Communist movement in the United States are in the interest of the nation, of the war, and of an orderly world after the war. This is a conclusion which we believe inescapable not only for ourselves but for all intelligent democrats.

There is not the same compelling fundamental reason why the organization should bear the name "Communist." It is conceivable that a situation might exist in which another name would be practically more expedient, and in several countries that has been found to be the case by the Marxists of such lands. But it is our considered judgment that there is nothing in the situation of the United States which makes such a change from the name "Communist" to something else an expedient one. It might even be detrimental, in giving an opening to our enemies to create more confusion in the country by spreading suspicions that the new name is camouflage to cover direly sinister conspiracies. At the same time, the very name itself has the highest prestige of its history, and is not to be discarded lightly and without the most serious necessity.

It is around the concept "Party" rather than of "Communist" that there exists today in America the most practical obstruction to our cooperative relationships with other democratic groups.

What is called the "two party system" in the United States is an old tradition which dominates most American minds. It recognizes as a "party" only that particular combination which is in power, and the combination of the opposition which is an immediate alternative to take power. All lesser political groupings are contained within the "two major parties," which in fact are coalitions of many groups which in most countries would be separate parties; or if the lesser group takes the name of "party," and becomes one of the so-called

"minor parties," it is regarded as a sect which has withdrawn itself from the practical political life of the nation.

This "two party system" has been tremendously strengthened and buttressed against the storms of constant political changes that go on within it, by the system of direct primaries which gives all voters the opportunity to enroll under one or other of the two major parties and participate in choosing its candidates, as well as the party committees and delegates to conventions.

Obviously, to realize the promise of Teheran the broadest democratic-progressive united front must be maintained in the United States. Equally obviously, the Communists will be a part, and a small minority part, of that united front. The Communist organization will be in a long-term alliance with forces much larger than itself.

It follows from this fact, that in the peculiar American sense of the word, the Communists will not be operating as a "party," that is with their own separate candidates in elections, except under special circumstances when they may be forced to act through "independent candidates."

This is already our practical situation; and we are now extending the perspective of national unity for many years into the future. It is no longer an "emergency situation" but is merging into a "normal" situation.

All these considerations point to the expediency of a decision that the Communist organization in the United States should adjust its name to correspond more exactly to the American political tradition and its own practical political role.

Such a decision would be that, instead of being known as "The Communist Party of the United States," our organization should call itself something like "American Communist Political Association."

Under such a name we will find it much easier to explain our true relationship with all other democratic and progressive groupings which operate through the medium, in the main, of the two party system, and take our place in free collaboration at their side.

Eugene Dennis

A change from "Communist Party" to that of "American Communist Political Association" by its very formulation will markedly symbolize one of the main political conclusions at which we have arrived for the present and next period of political developments within the country. It will help show that our organization is not orientated upon a course of seeking governmental power now or in the postwar years immediately following. This change would, to some extent, serve to emphasize in broader circles that we are bending every effort to organize a national coalition of all patriotic, anti-fascist forces *now and on the morrow*, so as to speed the destruction of Hitler and the Axis, *and* to ensure and maintain a just and durable peace. It should serve to focus attention on the fact that after the war, within the country, we are pursuing a course of unity of action to protect and improve our nation's democratic institutions and liberties and to promote maximum production, employment and social security within the framework of capitalism.

Obviously there is another reason which points to the advisability of changing from Party to Association. In making such a change we would not merely change our name, but also our electoral status. It is true that in so doing we would lose the privilege of an electoral party, including the right to nominate and run a party ticket (a right which today is considerably curtailed). Yet by so doing we might obtain the right and opportunity to participate in one or another of the major election campaigns in conjunction with, and along lines similar to that employed by the Farmer-Labor Association of Minnesota, the United Labor League of Philadelphia, or the Washington Commonwealth Federation. And most important, we would be able more effectively to strengthen our collaboration with broader sections of the labor movement which are developing greater political understanding and activity, but

which in electoral campaigns operate through a vote for progressive candidates of one or another of the major parties, or existing state Farmer-Labor parties.

As for the 1944 Presidential and Congressional elections, there can be no doubt that we will support the win-the-war candidates put forward from the camp of national unity, irrespective of party label.

Certainly the change which we propose from Party to Association should facilitate the practical application of our unity policy in these fateful wartime elections. It should facilitate our collaboration with the other political groups and labor forces during and after the elections, especially if we work correctly and convincingly explain our move. It should remove certain artificial barriers which now hinder a large percentage of party members, including thousands of Communist trade unionists, from working more closely together, and in a normal fashion, with other labor and progressive forces in one or another of the established party primary and election campaigns.

Furthermore, it seems to me that the proposal to change from Party to Association is necessary and desirable from a longer range viewpoint. For the outlook is that after the 1944 elections, the political realignments which are now taking place and will continue to unfold, most probably will crystalize in one of two ways: either by a basic regrouping within one of the major parties, in which labor and the popular forces would secure a leading political influence and position in many existing state, city and precinct organizations; or, if this fails to materialize, it is likely that there may emerge a third party, nationally, as a leading and decisive mass party, based on unifying the labor and people's organizations in collaboration with the progressive forces from both existing major parties.

In either event, or whatever the specific form the crystallization of progressive, anti-fascist political alignments may take following the 1944 elections and in the immediate post-war period, the change of our own organization's name and electoral status can help advance the unity of the democratic camp, the unity of Communists and non-Communists within

the organization of a broad labor and progressive political alignment or party coalition, irrespective of its form.

In considering a change in the name of the party, the question arises as to whether we might not also select some other name than "Communist." It is clear that conditions might arise in which such a change could or should be made. Such conditions might include considerations regarding a merger or unification of the Communist Party together with other groups of advanced anti-fascist labor forces to form a broader Marxist working class party, in which it might be desirable to choose a new name for the organization.

But neither of these or other similar factors exist today. There are no compelling political reasons for making such a move at this time. In fact, there is every reason today to maintain the name "Communist," as well as the Marxist-Leninist character of our organization which will continue now and in the future.

For the name "Communist" has the greatest prestige and helps signify the specific and distinctive characteristics of our organization as the most advanced and progressive political organization of the American working class, as an American Marxist political organization. The name "Communist" denotes better than any other our ultimate goal and programmatic objective. The name "Communist" is bound up with rich and lasting American and international working class traditions and with our own significant contributions to the cause of liberty, freedom and social progress.

Moreover, it is important not only that we make our solid contribution as Communists to the nation, but also that we work openly and publicly as Communists, as Communists in name as well as in fact. This is important especially at present precisely in order to accelerate the growing collaboration of Communists and non-Communists, of that united action which is indispensable for the anti-fascist unity and future of our nation. These, then, are some of the reasons which, in my opinion, should influence us to retain the word and symbol "Communist" in any new name which we may adopt at this time.

Whatever final decision we may reach on what name to sub-

stitute for the word Party, whether "Association," "League" or "Society," we shall of necessity likewise have to change certain forms of our organization and methods of work. For instance, as already indicated, such a change will alter the forms of our electoral activity in the sense that we shall no longer function during election campaigns as an electoral party with an official party ticket. Those Communists who run for public office will run on one or another party ticket, as candidates supported by a coalition of labor, progressive and other patriotic forces; or, in certain cases as independents.

But whether or not Communists run as candidates—and in the 1944 elections this will be on a relatively limited scale, *we Communists will be called upon to multiply our mass work, including during the elections, in collaboration with the other sectors of national unity*, with all win-the-war forces, especially with the trade unions. This will not only require the most active participation of the Communists in labor's political organizations and campaigns, it will necessitate a great strengthening and expansion of our independent, Communist political activity. It will especial require that we vastly improve and multiply our mass agitation and propaganda, our Communist political-education mass work, nationally and on a local scale. It will further require that we bring about a radical improvement in the Marxist-Leninist training and development of all party personnel and members, particularly of our trade union cadres, so that we will be better equipped, theoretically and practically, to meet our great responsibilities, to solve the complex strategic and tactical problems of the new historical period we are entering.

Finally, it is clear that whatever changes we may make in our party's name and electoral status the fundamental objectives and characteristics of our party will remain. For irrespective of name, we are and shall continue to be an American working class political organization, guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism. And because of this, now and on the morrow, we shall be in the vanguard, defending and promoting, at all times, the vital interests and welfare of the working class and of our nation and people.

Roy Hudson

The tasks of the working class in the light of the perspective raised by the Teheran Conference decisions require that labor develop such policies and organization as will enable it to enter into full collaboration as an independent political force with all other forces supporting Teheran. The maintenance of national unity and the ability of America to play the role required of it if the coalition is to be maintained, depend upon the ability of labor to accomplish this task.

Labor is now becoming an independent political force. Today there does not prevail the traditional political apathy of the American trade union movement. Instead of being indifferent to the political struggle, it has been developing political understanding. Instead of rejecting political action, political action is being undertaken on an ever broader scale. And what is of historic significance, the decisive section of the labor movement, the C.I.O., has developed a political program which, if applied, will enable labor to become an independent political force. It is around this program and those forces headed by Murray and Hillman, who are seeking to apply it, that the great majority of labor can find the means of becoming that independent political force capable of solving its historic tasks in relation to the Teheran conference.

The emergence of the working class as an independent political force is not in the main taking place organizationally around the Communist Party and the Communist program. We are, however, giving our full support to the program and activities of the progressive labor movement which are aimed at organizing its political strength. We continue to make this the center of all our work because it is the key to the solution of all other problems.

We Communists see eye to eye with all other such forces who are also seeking to organize the political strength of labor and

are already actively collaborating with the most important of these forces. Yet this collaboration is capable of improvement and we know that if this improvement is brought about it will increase our ability to contribute and help strengthen labor's role. At least one of the things that stands in the way of more effective collaboration is confusion regarding the role and program of the Communist Party. This is expressed in the doubts that exist as to whether collaboration on this basis with the Communists is a short or long time proposition.

Those who accept collaboration with us undoubtedly speculate about the day when there will be a parting of company. Those who welcome our collaboration because they feel we have something to contribute are likewise still influenced to a great degree by doubts on this question. Even those who, while not sympathetic to Communism, consider that we have an indispensable role to play, nevertheless are not without their doubts as to the long range policy of our party.

Thus, while we have and intend to continue to have a common objective with these forces they have unjustified doubts which have a disturbing effect. The fact that we have the character of a political party does not help clear up this question and possibly makes it more difficult. I believe that the change in the name will make it easier to clarify this question. If that is the case then it will enable us to strengthen our collaboration with decisive forces, thereby speeding up the organization of the American working class as an independent political force and firmly establishing the Communists as an integral and accepted part of these forces.

There are also an increasing number of extremely important forces who in terms of their stand on every issue of the day and collaboration with us are in every sense of the word Communists except that they don't have a card. These people know the direction in which the masses are moving politically and that our policies and activities are decisive in helping the masses there. But too many of these people are still not certain that we will continue to move with the political movement of the mass of workers. The change recommended will help re-

move such obstacles, and if these obstacles exist, their removal will enable us to recruit into our ranks many such people who will also help attract even far wider sections.

It has not always been possible for Communists in some industries to fully make their influence felt as Communists. Under those conditions, to have emphasized the fact that they were Communists would only have been a help to those who sought to attack labor and disrupt its ranks. However, if the change in the name that has been recommended helps us to achieve those changes in our relationship with broader labor forces, it will also soon, and very soon, create those conditions where every Communist trade unionist will be able to contribute a maximum in helping determine our policies, in helping more directly lead our movement, build it and increase its influence among the masses. And if this comes about, if the trade unionists have greater opportunities to make their contribution in the direct work and leadership of our movement, it will be important indeed.

The change in our name to the American Communist Political Association is a step that is indispensable at this time if we Communists are to make our maximum contribution to strengthen national unity behind the decisions of the Teheran Conference. It will enable us to ensure that labor will rise to its historic tasks. It will enable us to enlist new thousands for support of the principles of Marxism-Leninism which Earl Browder has taught us to apply to American conditions.

John Williamson

As a consequence of Teheran and the perspectives agreed upon for the period of post-war reconstruction, one of the conclusions recommended in Comrade Browder's report is the change of the term "Party" in the title of our organization to "Association." This conclusion is very important to our relations with all other forces of the win-the-war coalition in our country. Unquestionably, this will be a subject of tremendous public discussion, in which we want our party members to participate not only within the party confines, but beyond, to help bring clarity to workers and the people generally. This will help cement our relations, politically and organizationally, with new hundreds of thousands of Americans.

The better to understand this recommendation for the change of name, we must avoid two initial reactions, one the extreme of the other: either, that the change would mean little and that we would function as before, or, that our role as a Marxist organization based on the working class would be liquidated or replaced; that the "Communist Association" would be less important than the Communist Party.

In the light of the perspectives and the political condition Comrade Browder outlined, what will be the political function of such a Communist organization? Indeed, wherefore such an organization?

Such an organization is indispensable and its political influence and organizational strength must be multiplied many times over, because:

First, as history has so amply attested, our Marxist-Leninist theory and program enable us, in distinction from all other forces even within the coalition, to understand events, foresee their course, evaluate the relationship of forces and groups within the country, and help influence and determine the direction of events.

Secondly, a Marxist political organization of the type envisaged is indispensable because of the urgent need to facilitate and speed up the unity and greater organization of the labor movement and to raise the political understanding of the workers to new levels, commensurate with their responsibilities. In other countries, because of the absence of a two-party system such as we have, the direction of accomplishing this is through the affiliation or integration of the Marxist forces with the mass political parties of the workers; in the U.S.A., as yet, there is no mass political party of labor. It is definite, however, that the working class in our country is maturing politically and is finding organizational forms other than a Labor Party of national scope, even as it moves in the direction of independent working class political action. As a Marxist political organization we have an especially great responsibility during this year of the fateful 1944 elections. We must facilitate this political development of labor and help achieve the maximum political unity of all labor as a part of the great coalition behind the Commander-in-Chief in the 1944 elections. The understanding, unity, and, above all, the political organization of labor in the Wards and Congressional Districts, as an integral and vital part of the win-the-war coalition of all classes and patriotic Americans, can well be decisive in ensuring victory this year.

How will the "Communist Association" conduct its day-to-day mass work? Just as now, Communists will continue to help build, activate, and participate in leading trade unions and all people's organizations. Within these organizations they will contribute their best in ideas and activity and will subordinate themselves to majority decision. We will, as an organization, react to all vital issues in the communities, cities or nation that concern the people. We will strive wherever possible, to stimulate the organizing of the broadest mass movement around such issues on an effective program, and, as a Communist organization, become an integral part of this mass movement.

In the field of electoral activities, as part of the labor movement or of other people's organizations, among Negroes, na-

tional groups, women, church people, or youth groups, Communists will participate as individuals in those political parties or support such candidates as represent the best interests of our nation, in accordance with the principles of strengthening the win-the-war coalition for victory and an enduring peace. Wherever Communists are active in such people's organizations or coalitions, they have had and have no reason to aim at "capturing" them. On the contrary, our aim is to collaborate with all other people's forces. Our only desire is to contribute to the common goal, to assume responsibility and activity with all of our ability, and to participate in leadership to the extent that the majority desires.

In our own activity as an organization, we shall be able less and less to get along with old formulas and practices. Our activities as an organization will have to be examined in the light of new events and experiences. It is already clear that increased emphasis must be placed on education and mass propaganda. The press, literature, schools, etc., must occupy a hundred times more of our time and effort than today. Does this mean we are reducing ourselves to a mere propaganda organization? Nothing of the kind. At this moment, when leadership by example in all fields of mass work—especially in the labor movement, among the Negro people and the national groups, among the women and professionals—is so urgent for victory in the 1944 election, *political clarity and understanding are a decisive contribution toward and an organized part of effective mass political action and organization.* The "Communist Association" as a workers' political-educational organization will be fulfilling its Marxist vanguard role to the American people and nation.

Let us examine further the content of the work of the members of such a "Communist Association." The increased emphasis on education will be directed first of all to our own members, and to those sections of the labor and people's movement with whom we are collaborating. But in addition by utilization of all educational weapons—the *Daily Worker*, *The Worker*, *The Communist*, the *New Masses*, the Marxist-

Leninist classics, as well as popular literature, schools, forums, and debates—we shall increase our efforts to make our thought and principles available to the people in all communities. It is clear that regular reading by every Communist of the *Daily Worker* and *The Communist* becomes a hundred times more urgent than ever now.

While the average thinking worker learns through struggle and experience, that is not enough for us. We must study. We must understand Marxist-Leninist principles in order to help influence the course and outcome of struggles—whether it be a single struggle or the developments in the nation and the world. We also learn from our participation in the struggles how better to apply the strategy and tactics of our policies and how to enrich Marxist-Leninist theory itself. The first piece of literature for the current Recruiting Campaign—Earl Browder's *A Talk About the Communist Party*—is as indispensable for the party member as for the prospective recruit. That pamphlet says:

“The first responsibility of party membership is that each one of us has to systematically improve his own mind. . . . The more the members educate themselves and the more consciously they organize their own self-education the stronger they emerge as party members and party leaders. . . . One of the shallow misconceptions of the party is that once you join the party you can stop thinking for yourself; that the party does the thinking for you and hands down the decisions and all you have to do is to be a disciplined member and carry them out.”

The whole emphasis in Comrade Browder's pamphlet is to root out such misconceptions. It stresses the need of raising the level of understanding of the individual party member and the strengthening of his own ability to answer all problems that arise. It points out that the accomplishment of this aim will greatly strengthen the collective thinking and actions of the party. This understanding is particularly essential today in finally completing the transfer of trade union comrades to community branches and actively involving them in community branch activity.

The "Communist Association" is conceived as a Marxist political-educational organization. Therefore, it will not stand on the sidelines merely educating or propagandizing. Even more than now—but with better political equipment—we will react to and develop mass activity around all vital issues affecting the workers and the people as a whole, whether in a neighborhood, a shop, an industry or in the nation itself, and we will join with all others in advancing all progressive causes.

We are not yet prepared to give answers to all questions as to the form of organization. In the course of preparing for the National Convention, these will have to be worked out. *But even now it is clear that for us as an organization the present community form of Club or Branch is the best and should continue.* Changes in structure would only be necessary to facilitate our working freely as Communists as part of election coalitions.

Now, what are the perspectives of growth of the "Communist Association"? We have a right to expect that, in this period of intense political thinking and activity of the American people, increasing numbers of workers will want to learn the answers to the complex problems before them. There is a tremendous desire among them to see the road that lies ahead to social progress. They will want to come together in political association with one another and will be ready to join an organization that represents their views. Since we know that the "Communist Association" will facilitate and help promote unity, understanding and activity, and that joining will not limit the mass activities of its members, we feel that the attractive power of this organization is great and that it will grow.

The new developments and the changes recommended at this Plenum make it possible to win many thousands of new recruits to a Marxist organization at a tempo that has not been possible previously. Why? Because:

1. The methods of functioning that we shall adopt will make clearer and emphasize to the prospective recruit the possibility of supporting Marxist policies through member-

ship in the "Communist Association" without leaving his or her own mass organization. While this is true even today, it has not always been fully understood, and some of our Branches have contributed to this misunderstanding.

2. To those trade unionists who always say that their union is taking on political forms of activity and therefore they are waging the same fight as we are, and that it is not necessary to belong to a political organization, we should be able to point out more convincingly that trade union struggle alone is not enough. Membership in a Communist organization, which is in no sense a "competing" organization, will help them, through the acquisition of Marxist understanding on current issues of the day, to be more effective workers and leaders in their unions, and mass organizations.

3. These changes should also stimulate widespread recruiting by enabling us to come to grips still more boldly and effectively with the slanderous misconception that Communists are not part of American life but are "agents" of somebody or other. We will force people to discuss our ideas and proposals on their merits—not under conscious or unconscious misconceptions.

Our present and future members should everywhere take their place as Marxists, defending their rights and ideas publicly and winning supporters. In the course of such defense of Marxist policies, recruiting should be a normal activity.

To those who may think it is not decisive whether we carry through to success the present Recruiting Campaign, I would emphasize:

1. The fact that a stoppage in the steel industry can still take place on the very day that General Eisenhower is announced as the Commander of the Second Front, demonstrates the crying need for a larger party and a more politically equipped party membership among the steel workers. There are similar conditions and provocations in other industries—the electrical-radio industry, for example—and yet the workers and their leaders have not committed the blunder as in the steel industry. That shows greater understanding and undoubtedly greater ability to influence the workers and to seek

alternatives to strikes. It also reflects a larger and more influential party membership in these industries. Another example was the splendid struggle of the Transport Workers Union in New York. The T.W.U. was subjected to a hundred times greater provocation and difficulty than the steel workers; yet not only did they refuse to strike, but they substantially won their demands. Furthermore, with the support of the labor and progressive movement, they carried their victory over into the Councilmanic elections.

Fulfillment of the present Recruiting Campaign will help guarantee uninterrupted production and defeat of defeatists like Lewis within the labor movement. It will help patriotic labor leaders and workers find effective answers to strike provocations while defending the workers' interests.

It is possible in this campaign to get hundreds of leaders of trade unions, Negro mass organizations and churches, women's organizations, national group organizations, community and youth organizations, to join our party with thousands of rank-and-file members. Recently a Section Organizer in a large industrial section of the Midwest reported the instance of a union leader of a local of over 10,000 members who has collaborated with the party, reads its press and agrees with its program. He was approached to join the party and agrees, but correctly wants to join openly before the whole world. Asked if he thought the workers would disagree, he was sure they would not, since he has been called a Communist for years and still gets elected to office. In such a case it would be well for such a leader, upon joining the party, to place the matter before several hundred of his shop stewards and active members, telling them that being constantly called a Communist made him get acquainted with the program and the policies of the Communists, and that he then found his own ideas corresponded to those of the party. He should then inform them that although he knows every American, including himself, has the right to any political opinion and membership in any political party, he has decided to tell them about his action. Of course, he will explain that this does not commit the union to his political viewpoint any more

than any other local is committed to the Republican or Democratic Party if its president happens to belong to either of these parties, or that a Catholic in the office of local union president commits the local to Catholicism. If this union leader agrees to this procedure, I am confident of what the answer of the stewards will be. His Communist membership will then be taken out of any mystery status and he will be still more effective as a union leader. I am sure there are hundreds of trade union leaders who can be recruited in this present campaign.

2. The success of the present Recruiting Campaign is also linked with victory in the 1944 elections. Twenty thousand additional Communists can mean several times that number additional active workers in joint labor committees in the Wards and Congressional Districts, in the C.I.O. Community Councils, and in the Ward and Precinct clubs of the win-the-war coalition.

It is possible to guarantee the success of the Recruiting Campaign by connecting it with a well-organized enlightenment campaign inside and outside the party. Let the new member join with us in hammering out clarity and understanding—in answering every question in anyone's mind that remains unclear—in mobilizing labor and the people to guarantee victory in 1944.

The question may arise: Does not the proposed change of name from "Party" to "Association," or the dissolution of shop and industrial branches, mean a departure from Leninist organizational principles? The answer is no.

A real understanding of Marxist-Leninist theory means learning its substance—learning to use it as a guide in the solution of the practical problems that arise under the specific conditions of each country and epoch. The substance of this specific feature of Leninist organizational principles is that the Communist political organization, already equipped with correct policies and perspectives, constantly maintains and strengthens its maximum contact with the working class, teaches as well as learns from the workers, and is thus able to win broad support from the workers and become a larger and

more influential workers' political-educational organization.

The proposed changes in name and branch organizational forms correspond to the realities of the present situation and will be the medium of bringing us closer to the millions of organized workers and the people generally. Changing from Party to Association will facilitate the further strengthening of the coalition for winning the war and ensuring a durable peace in the post-war reconstruction years. Dissolving the shop and industrial branches and adopting the exclusive form of community branch, under present-day conditions in our country, does not lessen our contact with the masses. On the contrary, it makes it possible politically to clarify and mobilize our members on all urgent questions confronting the labor movement and the nation; to become active wherever our members are in contact with workers, including shops, local unions, and communities. Under present-day conditions, the community branch provides the most effective organizational form for functioning as an American political organization influencing, inspiring and mobilizing broad sections of the people in the nation's victory drive. The dissolution of the shop and industrial branch removed an outworn organizational form, which threatened to create artificial barriers between Communists and non-Communists in the trade unions and thus weaken the struggle for maximum unity and threaten the closest relationship between our party and the masses.

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