

# CPA Discussion Page

Open to All CPA Members—Send Your Contributions to Communist Political Association, 35 E. 12 St., N. Y. C.

## Sees Only Dissolution As a Major Mistake

Dear Mr. Browder:

I have just finished reading Duclos' article and your introduction. In that introduction you show a courage, an integrity and scientific thinking that made me proud to be a member of the CPA, that restores my confidence in our ability to face problems and reach the correct conclusions. As long as we keep this approach our ultimate victory is certain.

I rather agree that the dissolution of the CP was a mistake. I don't agree with all Mr. Duclos' other statements. I think the analysis that for some time our problem in America is to make capitalism work is still correct although discussions may change my views.

The lesson I think to be learned from this is the need of more individual responsibility toward policy and less dogmatic thinking—some-

thing that has always been advocated from the top, but on the lower levels rarely carried out for the lack of the understanding and courage for thorough examination. I believe you made a mistake in advocating the dissolution of the CP, but that the 80,000 American Communists who almost blindly followed that mistake bear the real responsibility for the consequences. Certainly you were never a tutor to dogmatic thinking or blind loyalties.

Because I am a trade union leader I will personally take a lot of heat for whatever adjustments in policy we make. That is a very small price to pay to see the Communists again scientifically and courageously critical of their own policies.

With sincere confidence in your leadership and the American Communists, I am proudly "A Communist."

A CPA MEMBER.

## Memorial Day In a Phila. Shop

Editors:

I am not great shakes as a Marxist, but just the same as a workingman I want to add my contribution to the discussion.

This Friday an incident took place in my shop which in its simple way greatly clarified my understanding of our future activities as Communists, and of our attitude towards capitalism in general (outside of individual progressive-minded capitalists). For the first time in two years we did not get paid for the Memorial Day holiday. This act symbolic of the very nature of capitalism—the basic antagonism of the workingman and the boss. He is beginning to assert the basic argument of almost all owners—if you don't like it—quit.

And now I want to take issue with only one of the points Browder makes in his discussion of the Resolution. He feels that the ideological differences of the capitalist nations and the Soviet Union are only surface conflicts. With this, I must disagree. Such a position can only be true under the following conditions:

1. Where millions of progressive Americans had never heard of Socialism.
2. Where there never had been any American parties or groups fighting and educating for planned economy and Socialism.
3. Where a tremendous Socialist literature does not exist.

Since the reality is just the opposite and since the Socialist Soviet Union represents the ideal for which millions of Americans look to with hope, then the very existence and development of a socialist land represents a source of real irritation to capitalism. No, this is not a superficial ideological difference.

The logical development of Browder's ideas must inevitably lead American Communism into the same as Social-Democracy and make us play the reactionary role of wiping out progressive America.

Browder's new theories must be completely rejected and I am sure that Communists will wholeheartedly accept the Resolution of the National Board.

J. B., Philadelphia, Pa.

## Unity Does Not Mean Passivity

Comrade Duclos in his article has, I feel, made a real contribution to Marxist thinking in this country by awakening us to the dangers inherent in the present world situation. His initiative has helped to eliminate some of the smug complacency which even the events of the past few months had not fully erased. It would, however, be his wish, I am sure, that we use the stimulus given by this article to arrive at our independent decisions, based on our study of Marxist-Leninism, and on our knowledge of the American scene and our contacts with the American masses.

It is significant that the Communists in the trade union movement never really carried out in full the line followed by our Association during the past 18 months. An instance of this is the question of the postwar no-strike pledge. Communists throughout the trade union movement failed to push this issue, partly because of uncertainty as to its correctness, and partly because the masses of the workers were obviously unwilling to accept such an idea.

The confusion attending the Greek events of a few months ago is another example of this. At that time, I was present at a union meeting where, at the insistence of the rank and file of the workers, a resolution was passed condemning the British government for its actions. Yet the Communist leadership of this local union remained completely silent throughout the entire discussion. They did not dare to oppose the action, yet they were uncertain and uneasy about it.

While this situation was helped a few days later by Comrade Browder's forthright remarks on the Greek events, it nevertheless reflected the tendencies that were pulling Communists in the trade unions in two directions at once—their feeling that the Association recommended soft-pedaling of any direct attacks on British and American imperialism, and, on the other hand, the pressure of the trade union masses for a more militant policy.

generous to fail to do everything in our power to seek unity with this section of the big bourgeoisie. I do not know how large this section may be, and I certainly would not call it "decisive" because I feel that the term is misleading. The pro-war sections of monopoly capital were obviously "decisive" in the 1944 elections, for it is apparent that Roosevelt would not have been reelected without their support. The "decisive" factors in future situations will be determined by the relationship of forces at the time, and by our work in molding those forces.

In seeking the broadest possible unity, however, we must avoid the danger of surrendering our leading position in the working class. This weakness has certainly existed in the past period. We must work actively to mobilize all possible segments of the population in a fight for unity behind the program stated in Part I of the National Board resolution of June 2.

We have sometimes acted in the past as though the realization of this program were inevitable—we must realize now that this is possible only through the active struggle and leadership of the working class, in united effort with farmers, professionals, small business men and such sections of monopoly capital as are prepared to join with us. Just as the courageous and effective struggle of the Soviet Union caused increasing sections of world monopoly capital to join in the fight against German fascism so will our greater leadership and our increased effectiveness in the struggle for our program gain for it the support of such sections of the American bourgeoisie as may be undecided on their course for the coming period.

## Says Browder Relied On the Wrong Theories

Dear Comrade Browder:

Recognizing the correctness and validity of the National Board Resolution, I would like to express my opinion that it was entirely comprehensive, even for one of your stature, to have made mistakes in the complex situation imposed upon us by the war.

I see your mistake as one of wrong emphasis, relying too much on the bourgeoisie to carry out the mandates of the forward march of history. It is well to know that historic compulsions do move the bourgeoisie, sometimes in a progressive direction. But our chief role as Communists is to speed the locomotive of progress by the active mobilization of its engineers, the working class. Theories which depend on evolution as such, or on other classes, to do the job cannot be valid.

What distinguishes the Communists from any other group claiming to give leadership to the workers is that we see the need for the workers themselves to fight for their own needs, never for one moment relying on other classes to do it for them. I remember some time back in teaching new members' classes, pointing out to our new comrades the great power of the people when set into motion under our leadership. The knowledge of this gave them true inspiration to go and carry out their Communist tasks.

Your ability, Comrade Browder, to make correct Marxist predictions has been consistent. Over the years your forecasts have come true. But they became reality only because the people were set into motion to put them into effect.

Stettinius, Trieste, Greece, the seating of the Argentine delegates).

Let me not be counted, however, among those who, because you have erred, forget the great contributions you have made in the past and your potentialities for service to the working class in the future. I remember well your own statement that only those who do nothing make no mistakes. We are now in the process of correcting those mistakes. The deep love and respect the American workers have for you, Comrade Browder, will not diminish but be greatly enhanced when you, together with all of us in the Communist Political Association, go on to carry out the tasks correctly outlined for us in the National Board Resolution.

JEAN SMITH  
Brighton-Manhattan Beach Club, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Finds Considerable Merit in Both Browder and Foster Positions

Dear Sirs:

The discussion on the resolution of the National Board makes it quite plain that there is considerable merit in the positions of both Foster and Browder. While I believe that the resolution deserves our energetic support, I feel that it is not necessary to accept or reject the Browder viewpoint in toto.

Duclos is justified in attacking an overly optimistic view envisaging postwar cooperation between the forces of labor and trustified monopoly capital. The rapid drives toward reaction launched by sections forming part of the Anglo-American coalition indicate the need for a militant antifascist struggle spearheaded by labor and its organized political vanguard, the Communists. The course of action outlined by the resolution must be the agenda for all who wish to serve humanity's interest by opposing a criminal war of rapacity against the Soviet Union and/or the free peoples beginning to adopt democracy to their needs in Europe and Asia.

This is not to deny the unfairness of the charge in the Duclos article that the Browder policies seriously weakened the cause of progress in the U. S. A. by dangerously deviating from a true Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the Tehran and Yalta conferences. One

would never know from reading the Duclos article that America was faced with a full scale fascist conspiracy, accompanied by the unrestricted use of anti-Semitism and red-baiting, during the 1944 presidential election. The probably decisive role played by the CPA in defeating the Dewey-Hearst-McCormick cabal is totally ignored by Duclos. It was necessary to build the broadest type of pro-Roosevelt alliance of win-the-war forces to guarantee the defeat of fascism and it is to Browder's credit that he realized the historical necessity for doing so. When the realities of the situation made possible a coalition of labor and capital to crush German and Japanese fascism, a necessary accomplishment impossible of achievement without the adherence of both blocs, it constituted no anti-Marxist position to fight to bring this about. Where we did err, however, was in soft-pedaling even educational work relative to the incalculable superiority of socialism over capitalism. There was a distinct tendency to lose sight of the identity of labor's forces in the broadened-out coalition and, all in all, political disorientation followed, noticeably among the youth whose sole activities became social.

BERNARD G. WINTER  
New York City.

I do not feel that the change in the structure of our movement is as basic a question as the problems I have discussed above. It is, however, a very important point, and should be answered clearly. I do not feel that the National Board resolution gives a clear answer to this question.

While it is a moot point whether the change in structure contributed in any manner to the victory in the 1944 elections, I feel that it has clearly served a purpose in giving our movement the opportunity to be more effective in the American political set-up. The Communist Party was never able to function as a political party in the American sense of the word. Its use of the name "Party," particularly in a period when the broadest political work is an urgent necessity, can serve to create confusion and to make unclear the direction of our most effective work.

The two-party system does not exist in perpetuity, it is true, but it is strongly entrenched; there is little doubt that we will have to operate within that system for some time to come. It is still fully possible for us to function as an independent political party of the working class in the Marxist sense, while maintaining the Association structure. Whenever and wherever the time is ripe for a third party movement, progressive forces will undoubtedly work for its formation!

I do not fully agree with the use in the National Board resolution of the terms "opportunism," "revisions of Marxism-Leninism," etc. To my way of thinking, this partakes too much of breast-beating and self-castigation, and too little of clear analytical thinking. I feel, in addition, that the National Board resolution, as written, requires certain clarifications.

A TRADE UNIONIST.

Your recent writings, however, did have the tendency to make us self-satisfied and sit back in our arm chairs. The glowing postwar prospects put forward by you (if the capitalists were only smart enough to see the light)—such a position in itself has the effect of immobilizing the people. It should have been made clear at all times that all gains made by the workers have never heretofore been realized without a tough struggle and that any further gains made by them will have to be wrung from the capitalists by strongly organized action led by labor.

This all sounds very elementary but it is apparent that we must return to fundamentals. Your policy did in fact lead to immobilization in many instances already pointed out by others (the appointment of

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The approach of the Association during the past year and a half has left us to a considerable extent demobilized and disarmed. We have tended to impute to monopoly capital virtues which it does not possess, and to surrender to the monopolies the leadership in the fight against fascism. This has left us dangerously unprepared for the breaks and divisions in the anti-fascist camp which began well before the complete defeat of Nazi Germany.

It is still important, however, to continue the fight for the broadest possible unity behind a progressive, anti-fascist postwar program. This unity must be broad enough to include any sections of big business which will support this program. The split which has existed within the ranks of monopoly capital in both Britain and America since the days of the Spanish Civil War, if not in fact since the rise of Hitlerism, has some basis for continuing.

Certain sections of the American bourgeoisie have been motivated in their support for the programs of Teheran and Yalta not so much by a fear of Germany as by a recognition of the strength and invincibility of the Soviet Union. (It is significant that the Teheran agreement was not signed until after the great Soviet victory at Stalingrad, when the power of the Red Army was demonstrated.) This motivation continues into the postwar period, and should not be ignored in our thinking.

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