

## CHAPTER EIGHT CONCLUSION

These essays have ranged over three decades and four disparate industries. They have, however, asked similar questions about the role of Communists and the Communist issue in the American labor movement. This chapter will review and answer some of those questions<sup>1</sup> and examine how these essays modify traditional interpretations of the history of the Communist movement.

One set of questions has been bequeathed to us by previous works in the field. A group of historians, political scientists, and labor economists, as well as non-academic writers of a liberal, Socialist, or Trotskyist persuasion, have developed an extensive and elaborate critique of the Communist movement.<sup>2</sup> The major tenets of that critique were outlined early in the opening chapter.<sup>3</sup> To what extent is the critique valid?

Two different sets of questions are raised by the expulsion of the left-wing unions from the CIO. One set focuses on the expulsions themselves. Was the CIO's case against the left-wing unions valid? What effect did the expulsions have on the labor movement? The

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pages 46-49, for the first statement of these questions.

<sup>2</sup>David Shannon is an historian, Max Kampelman is a political scientist, and Philip Taft is a labor economist. Of the non-academic writers, Benjamin Stolberg was a Socialist, and Art Preis was a Trotskyist. Howe and Coser are academics, but neither were historians. Howe is the former editor of *Labor Action*, a paper published by the Trotskyists who followed Max Shachtman. Their works are listed in the bibliography.

<sup>3</sup>See above, particularly pages 10-20.

other set of questions probes the reasons for the Communist defeat. Did party errors and weaknesses contribute to the defeat, or were Communists faced with forces that no small, left-wing party could defeat? Does the defeat reveal inherent conservatism in the United States working class or the trade union as an institution?

A third set of questions involves an examination of the Communist trade unionists, not as unionists, but as Communists. Did Communists conform to the two requirements which Marx and Engels set forth in the Communist Manifesto?<sup>1</sup> Were Communists the leading fighters in the movement of the present, the drive toward industrial unionism? And did they build the movement of the future, a Socialist movement, in the course of fighting for industrial unionism?

## I

A major conclusion from these essays, and one which relates directly to the anti-Communist critique, is that Communist union leaders (or those union leaders who were called Communists by the CIO leadership) were considerably more democratic than their anti-Communist counterparts. Each essay sustains this conclusion. Although it may be somewhat tedious, this evidence should be reviewed.

In chapter one, it was observed that anti-Communists did not acknowledge that Communists had any right to participate in groups

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<sup>1</sup>For the quotation from the Communist Manifesto, see above, page 48.

or organizations led by anti-Communists. Anti-Communists favor the destruction of organizations if Communists lead or influence them. Communists, on the other hand, work very hard to get non-Communist and even anti-Communist individuals to join organizations which they lead.<sup>1</sup>

In chapter two, the response of a Socialist-influenced union leadership to a Communist-influenced opposition was explored. The first response of the Socialists was to declare the Communist-led caucus illegal, remove its adherents from union positions to which they had been legally elected, and demand that all candidates for union office sign an oath denying membership in the Trade Union Educational League. Two years later in 1925, when the largest locals in the union held a May Day celebration, the Socialist leadership of the union removed the local leaders on the grounds that one of the speakers at the celebration was a leader of the Communist Party. An aroused membership forced the leadership to rescind this grossly undemocratic action. The Socialist leadership finally succeeded in expelling the leaders of locals representing a majority of the union's members and instigating an internal struggle which cost the union two-thirds of its members. In the course of that struggle, the Socialists relied to some extent on hired gangsters. There is no evidence of any political repression in the locals led by those close to the Communists.

In chapter three, one sees the anti-Communist Homer Martin expelling the adherents of the Communist-influenced Unity Caucus.

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<sup>1</sup>For the position of anti-Communists on the destruction of organizations, see above, pages 12-15.

As in the ILGWU, the majority of those expelled were not Communists.<sup>1</sup> The role of those political groups which would describe themselves as "anti-Stalinist Marxists" first becomes apparent in this chapter. Not only do the Trotskyists and Lovestoneites oppose the Communists, but both endorse the expulsion of Communist union leaders.<sup>2</sup>

In chapter four, the effect of the anti-Communist victory of Walter Reuther as UAW president was analyzed. Reuther's victory brought about a sharp decline in union democracy. Opposition leaders were expelled, local newspapers were silenced, and local unions which opposed Reuther were placed under administrators. Communists were strictly forbidden to participate in union politics.<sup>3</sup>

In chapter five, the decline in union democracy after NMU president Joseph Curran broke with and defeated the Communists was outlined. While Curran was an ally or member of the Communist Party, his opponents were able to publish anti-Curran and anti-Communist leaders in the NMU newspaper and no workers were expelled from the union for political reasons. After Curran broke with the party, thousands of workers were expelled for political reasons, dissent was banned from the Pilot, and violence and intimidation were

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<sup>1</sup>In the UAW, only a handful of those expelled were Communists, while in the ILGWU almost half were party members. Of course, if the expulsions are seen as including those union members who continued to support the leaders they elected, then Communists were in a tiny minority.

<sup>2</sup>See above, pages 219-23.

<sup>3</sup>See above, pages 293-97.

employed against those opponents who remained union members.

In chapter six, the response of a Communist-influenced union leadership to an anti-Communist challenge was explored. The UE leadership never resorted to mass expulsions. At no time did UE leaders use expulsions as a weapon against union opponents. The most flagrant case of political expulsions in UE came when a right-wing UE local expelled twenty-six of its left-wing activists.

In chapter seven, the anti-Communist controversy in the CIO was examined. Again, there was no evidence of undemocratic activity on the part of the Communist-influenced unions. The anti-Communist unions, however, expelled the Communist-influenced unions from the CIO. The struggle against the Communist-influenced unions, as an anti-Communist admitted, brought political debate inside the CIO to a standstill.

In the face of this evidence, how can anti-Communist scholars maintain that Communists were undemocratic union leaders? One anti-Communist has argued as follows:

Prickett's contention that the Communist-dominated unions expelled by the CIO were democratic simply flies in the face of the evidence. In the case of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers' Union, for example, the CIO found that its policies "were determined in secret meetings with high officials of the Communist Party prior to their submission to the union's governing body and to the membership." There were similar findings for the rest of the expelled unions, as well as for those, like the ILWU, that chose to disaffiliate voluntarily.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Galenson, "Communists and Union Democracy," 241. The first sentence is footnoted as follows: "The reader is referred to the voluminous transcripts of the hearings conducted by CIO investigating tribunals prior to the expulsions." For a discussion of those hearings, see above, pages 404-410. Incidentally, Galenson is mistaken in his contention that the ILWU disaffiliated voluntarily.

The argument is, of course, a non-sequitor. To prove that Communists were undemocratic, it is stated that Communists discussed their union policies with other Communists before submitting them to the membership. UE anti-Communists discussed their strategy with non-unionists like Father Charles Rice, but this hardly made them undemocratic.

This argument was Professor Galenson's second attempt to prove that Communists were undemocratic. The response which the present author made to Galenson's first attempt goes directly to the point at issue:

Perhaps the most interesting passage in Professor Galenson's comment is his curious argument that it is impossible for a Communist-led union to be democratic since "a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for a claim to union democracy is the acceptance . . . of political democracy in the broader sense and . . . devotion to the rule of law in a pluralistic society." This is a splendid example of the sort of anti-Communist reasoning I find objectionable. No matter how democratically a Communist leader might behave, to Galenson he could never be truly democratic because he does not accept liberal, pluralist theory. The absurdity of the argument becomes apparent when one applies it to the IWW whose leaders had nothing but contempt for "the rule of law in a pluralistic society." Was the IWW undemocratic? The way one determines whether Communists were democratic or undemocratic leaders is by examining the way they exercised leadership, not by asking, as Galenson does, whether or not they criticized the Soviet Union.

Anti-Communist scholars are able to claim that Communists were undemocratic by avoiding an examination of the way Communists exercised leadership or a comparison between Communist and anti-Communist union leaders. Instead of that examination, which this dissertation has provided, anti-Communists have submitted a series of non-sequitors. It is said, for example, that Communists admired

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<sup>1</sup>Prickett, "Reply to Professor Galenson," 237.

"the Soviet dictatorship," that they discussed policies with outsiders, or that their policies followed "the Communist line." None of these points has any relation to the issue at hand: were Communist-led unions democratic?

There is no evidence that the Communist-led unions were undemocratic in any way. Indeed, if one reads anti-Communist writing carefully, one can find admissions of Communist democracy. Howe and Coser, two consistent and bitter anti-Communists, write that Communist unionists "specialized in distorting the very mechanisms of democracy in order to perpetuate their rule." "Seldom," Howe and Coser add, "has so meticulous an adherence to the outer forms of democracy so thoroughly violated its spirit and intent."<sup>1</sup> Anti-Communists violated the "outer forms of democracy" consistently, but since their enemies were believed to be Communists, these violations preserved the "spirit and intent" of democracy. Communists upheld these outer forms of democracy consistently. In other words, under Communist leaderships political opponents retained the right to organize, to attack the union leadership in local newspapers, to publish a caucus newspaper critical of the union leadership, and to oppose that leadership at union conventions.

It should be emphasized that neither the Communist-led or the anti-Communist unions were democratic in the ideal sense of the word. A totally democratic union, for example, would take measures to minimize the advantages held by the union leadership against an

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<sup>1</sup>Howe and Coser, American Communist Party, 383.

opposition caucus. It would finance distribution of the caucus' program, offer the caucus adequate space in the union newspaper for its criticisms of the union's leaders, and discourage activity on behalf of the administration by the union's staff. The union's officers would take pains not to use their prestige as union leaders to place the opposition in a poor light. The Communist-led unions did not do this. Instead, they used the advantages which an incumbent administration possessed except for one: the ability to suppress the opposition by denying them basic rights. This tactic was at the core of the strategy adopted by anti-Communist union leaders; it was scorned totally by those union leaders said to be Communists.

## II

The victory of the anti-Communists signalled a decline in union militancy in all of the unions examined. Although this decline was not as obvious as the decline in union democracy, it was perhaps more significant to the rank and file worker.

In the ILGWU, the expulsion of Communists in 1926 led to the loss of two-thirds of the union's members and the obliteration of union standards in the industry. In the UAW, Reuther's repression of the left enabled him to set a new trend in the labor movement with the adoption of long-term contracts which included extensive management perogatives.<sup>1</sup> Following the expulsion of Communists in the NMU Joseph Curran became the second highest paid union president in the

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<sup>1</sup> For the deterioration of union standards in garment, see above, pages 96-97; for Reuther's auto contracts, see above, pages 298-302.



American labor movement, while conditions for NMU workers deteriorated. The expulsion of UE, and the creation of a competing union, enabled GE and Westinghouse to depress wages and gain greater control over working conditions. In the unions studied, the effect of the anti-Communist campaigns was felt on the shop floor and in the pay envelopes of the workers.

### III

While anti-Communist scholars deny that Communists were more militant or democratic than anti-Communist union leaders, little effort is spent on showing that the Communists were poor union leaders. The main argument of the anti-Communists is that the Communists were only tangentially interested in improving conditions for American workers. The main concern of the Communists was advancing the cause of the Soviet Union. It is even argued that the activities of Communists in the American labor movement were shaped by the requirements of Soviet foreign policy. This perspective has encouraged the "periodization" approach to Communist history: Communist history is divided into seven periods, all but one of which stemmed from the needs of the Russian Communist Party and reflected Russian conditions. As one anti-Communist scholar put it, "the role of the union in the Communist strategy of power has always turned on the way Soviet leaders have viewed the requirements of their foreign policies." A shift from one foreign policy line to another "has inevitably produced a chain reaction effect on the orientation of Communist trade union policy throughout the world and the United

States in specific."<sup>1</sup>

Before contrasting the anti-Communist interpretation of party history with the historical record uncovered by these essays, three observations should be made. First, the assumption that Communist activities were dictated by Soviet foreign policy is a key polemical weapon against the Communists. Second, in specific cases, the notion is either false or meaningless. Third, in most cases, the conflict between the interests of American workers and Soviet foreign policy is either obscure or non-existent. Each of these points should be amplified.

The premise that Communist activities are determined by the needs of Soviet foreign policy is crucial to anti-Communist ideologues in two ways. First, it provides an important ideological weapon in the anti-Communist arsenal by enabling anti-Communists to distinguish previous radical oppositions from Communists. According to this argument, earlier radicals fought for "a program independently determined by American radicals," while the Communist program was "an instrument of aggression manipulated by a foreign government."<sup>2</sup> Second, and perhaps equally important, the premise allows anti-Communists to make sweeping and extremely questionable judgments about Communist strategy and motivation without any evidence. They need only a superficial knowledge of Soviet politics and a willingness to mechanically force American activities into a Soviet

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<sup>1</sup> Barbash, Practice of Unionism, 325-26.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

framework.

The premise, moreover, is either false or meaningless when applied to particular historical events. The decision to build an anti-fascist popular front after the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany can not be ascribed to the needs of Soviet foreign policy. French Communists (who initiated the popular front in France before the Comintern endorsed it)<sup>1</sup> had their own compelling motives for avoiding fascism. They knew, of course, that a fascist France would be more anti-Soviet than a democratic France, but they also knew that they and their comrades would face death and imprisonment under fascism, and that the organizations of the working class would be smashed. To ascribe the revolution against fascism to Soviet foreign policy is to forget the impulses and ideas which brought workers and intellectuals into the Communist movement in the first place.

People who are anti-Soviet and anti-Communist envision a sharp conflict between the defense of the interests of American workers and an admiration for the Soviet Union. Walter Galenson, for example, took Wyndham Mortimer to task for Mortimer's remark that "Stalin had many shortcomings, but by no stretch of the imagination could he be regarded as an enemy of the auto workers of America, or of the working people generally." Since "American Communists of the thirties and forties were ardent sycophants of the Soviet dictator," it was "incomprehensible that anyone . . . should attribute a positive role in the development of the American labor movement" to

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie Derfler, "Unity and the French Left: Some Views of the Popular Front," Science and Society, XXXV (Spring 1971), 34-47.

Communists.<sup>1</sup> To Communists, there was no conflict between higher wages and better working conditions for American workers, and an admiration for the leader of the sole Socialist state. There is no reason to assume that the first objective was a camouflage for the second. Indeed, with equal logic, one could argue that the second was a camouflage for the first. One could say that Communists were orthodox trade unionists who identified with the Soviet Union to distinguish themselves, either to their followers or to themselves, from their more traditional union colleagues. Neither argument would be valid. Communists worked for both objectives without the slightest trace of conflict.

This does not close the issue, but serious historians should begin an assessment of this question by noting how remote the possibility of a clash between the defense of the Soviet Union and the interests of American workers appeared to Communists. In the first place, both Soviet and American Communists shared an over-riding concern: the growth of a large and strong Communist movement. In the second place, the Communist International, particularly in the early years, had offered constructive advice which had helped the American party through a number of difficult decisions.<sup>2</sup> In the third place, American Communists had compelling reasons to believe that the defense of the Soviet Union was, in itself, in the interests of

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<sup>1</sup>Gaienson, "Rejoinder to Mr. Prickett," 242, 243.

<sup>2</sup>Theodore Draper, The Roots of American Communism (New York: Viking, 1957), 394.

American workers.<sup>1</sup> In the fourth place, while American Communists felt considerable passion for the Soviet Union, it never received their major attention as an issue.

If, however, it is conceded that the Soviet Union under Stalin had abandoned proletarian internationalism for narrow nationalism, or that Russia was no longer a Socialist state,<sup>2</sup> then it is impossible to deny, in view of the dominant position of the Soviet party in the Comintern, that the policies of the international Communist movement could reflect Soviet national interests rather than those of the international working class. But to concede a possibility is not to prove a certainty. One would have to examine actual Communist activity in some detail to determine whether Soviet foreign policy dictated the decisions of American Communists.

In a succinct paragraph, Daniel Bell has admirably summarized the anti-Communist view of party history:

Roughly speaking, seven twists or "periods" can be distinguished in communist tactics since the formation of the Comintern in 1919. Except for the first, the motives for these changes in the party line stem from the needs of the Russian Communist Party and reflect Russian conditions. The first period, from 1919 to 1921, was the episode of world revolution. . . . The second period, opening in 1921 and characterized by the NEP (New Economic Policy) in Russia, was a retreat from the excesses of Russian "war communism;" it accepted

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of this point, see above, pages 29-31.

<sup>2</sup>It would be incredibly arrogant (as well as common practice) for an American historian to offer a professional opinion on what is, after all, the most difficult issue in Soviet historiography. Readers, however, may be curious as to my opinion. To them, I will say that I believe that the Soviet Union has ceased to be a Socialist state. I have not been able to determine to my own satisfaction when the Soviet Union ceased to be socialist, and I have not yet worked out a clear position on the character of the Soviet Union under Stalin. I respect the motives of those who admired Russia while having reservations

the stabilization of world capitalism, evinced friendliness to the British Labour Party, and flirted with farmer-labor movements in the U. S. Except for a brief "left" turn, this tactic continued until 1928, when the "third period" began. In 1935, the "Popular Front" opened, and shut with a bang in the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939. In June 1941, following Hitler's invasion of Russia, the communists again became cooperative with the democracies, a phase that lasted until 1945 when new aggressive tactics were followed.<sup>1</sup>

The origins of the first and second periods do not fall within the time covered by these essays.<sup>2</sup> The essays, however, cast considerable doubt on the anti-Communist interpretation of the remaining periods.

1. Dual unionism and the third period. Anti-Communists argue that Communists resolutely opposed dual unionism until the "third period," which began in 1928 with the first Five Year Plan in Soviet Russia. The decision to form new unions had nothing to do with conditions in the American labor movement, and was, in fact, inexplicable to American Communists. It can only be understood as the natural international expression of the Five Year Plan.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, the notion that the decision to form dual unions was dictated by the Five Year Plan is absurd. In the first place, the

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about their judgment.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in the United States (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 138.

<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that Bell's comments are beyond criticism. It is difficult, for example, to see how "the stabilization of world capitalism" as an important factor coincides with the notion that the shift reflected Russian, rather than world, conditions. Certainly, the stabilization of world capitalism was more important in the shift than the adoption of NEP in the Soviet Union. Moreover, it is not at all clear why the second period is said to have reflected Russian conditions while the first did not.

<sup>3</sup> Barbash, Practice of Unionism, 327-28; Howe and Coser, American Communist Party, 253.

connection between the two is at best obscure. In the second place, the dates are wrong. Comintern criticism of American trade union policies began as early as 1926—long before the Five Year Plan. In the third place, a detailed examination of Communist work in the garment industry reveals that Communist formed dual unions only after a long, unsuccessful attempt to remain in AFL unions.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Popular Front. The popular front is generally said to have begun at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. This congress called for the formation of anti-fascist popular fronts. It was this decision of the international movement (or the Soviet leaders) which caused American Communists to abandon dual unionism and rejoin the AFL and later the CIO.

The notion that Communists were suddenly ordered to disband unions which they had endeavored to build, and that they complied unhesitatingly with that order, is a travesty of labor history. It ignores the complex shifts which took place within the third period.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pages 43-100, and particularly pages 92-97. This chapter poses the answer to a question which Howe and Coser ask: "how could the many Communists whose intelligence is beyond dispute bring themselves to accept such fantastic doctrines as social fascism?" Social fascism was the argument that just as the "social chauvinists" of the First World War had proclaimed their adherence to socialism but capitulated to nationalism and war, the "social fascists" would abandon socialism in a crisis and side with fascists against revolutionary Communists. A garment worker who had been stabbed by a hired gangster paid by the ILGWU leaders and defended in court by socialist leader Morris Hillquit would find this doctrine quite plausible. When socialist leaders praised police after Communist demonstrators were beaten up, or spoke of how Communists had sought to provoke the police, new converts among the Communists were made to the theory of social fascism.

<sup>2</sup>Those shifts are discussed briefly in chapter three. See above 231-33 for the concept of the "two TITULs."

In reality, the abandonment was part of a general shift in policy which was perfectly consistent with the "united front from below." By the time of the Seventh World Congress, Communists had, in practice, virtually abandoned all of the TUUL unions.

Moreover, for the serious student of the Communist movement, the shifts within the policy of the popular front are at least as important as the initial adoption of the policy. As originally proposed at the Seventh World Congress, it called for a united front of all working class parties. Gradually, however, the popular front came to mean the unity of the working class with progressive elements of the ruling class. In the labor movement, the crucial decision is not the abolition of the TUUL unions, since Communists entered the AFL as revolutionary opponents of the AFL leadership,<sup>1</sup> but the gradual accommodation with the leadership of the CIO.

3. The 1939-1941 period. Anti-Communists make two separate arguments about this period. First, they claim that Communists supported the Soviet decision to sign a non-aggression pact with Germany and refused to support the Allies against the Germans. This general statement about American Communism is accurate. Second, they apply this position to the American labor movement and argue that Communists provoked a series of strikes designed to disrupt national defense. The "most notorious" of these strikes is said to be the strike at North American Aviation. This second point is

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<sup>1</sup>Trotskyists and Musteites criticized the Communists when they entered the AFL on the grounds that the Communists planned to disrupt the AFL.



totally false.<sup>1</sup>

4. The war years. It is said that Communists became firm supporters of anti-fascist national unity following the German invasion of the Soviet Union (rather than the attack on Pearl Harbor). During the war, Communists became extreme patriots. They flagrantly ignored the interests of American workers and advocated incentive pay, union discipline against wildcat strikers, and the no-strike pledge. The Communists even abolished their own party as a step toward national unity. Finally, we have a clear case of Soviet orders rather than the interests of American workers being the motive for Communist activity.

Or do we? One could, of course, quarrel with the dubious assumption that there was something disreputable about the motives of Communists, while the motives of the patriotic liberals were commendable. Both feared the consequences of fascism. It is true that Communists had an additional motive, but it is difficult to argue that there is anything intrinsically disreputable about the survival of socialism. There is, however, a more fundamental issue here. The intense patriotism of American Communists went so far beyond the needs of the Soviet Union that some additional explanation is required. One Communist leader has recalled the exhilaration which he and his comrades felt when John Gates, a New York party leader, announced that he had enlisted in the Army. It is, in fact, impossible to

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pages 247-61.

understand the wartime policies of the Communists without a grasp of the depth of the party's commitment to the reformist politics of the popular front. This point is discussed further in the section of the chapter in which Communists are evaluated as Communists,<sup>1</sup> but for now it should be said that the reformist policies of Browder bred a desire for respectability which shaped the party's policies during the war.

5. The Cold War. It is said that Communists took the offensive in these years because of the international intransigence of the Soviet Union. This argument implies a certain view of the origins of the Cold War which has come under increasing criticism. More important, it is simply not true that Communists initiated conflict in the CIO. Throughout those years, Communists fought a largely defensive battle to retain their autonomy in the face of an aggressive campaign to enforce an anti-Communist, political orthodoxy on the CIO.

#### IV

At this point we should return to the questions posed at the outset. Some have been answered; others are, perhaps, unanswerable. But we should take them up now, one by one.

1. Is the anti-Communist critique valid? The critique of Communists in the labor movement has consisted of two arguments: first, that Communists were interested primarily in the Soviet Union and that all Communist trade union policies reflected the needs of

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<sup>1</sup>See below, pages 445-56.

Soviet foreign policy, and, second, that Communists, because they represented an ideology abhorrent to American workers, resorted to undemocratic tactics and were, in general, poor union leaders. Neither argument is sustained by the evidence.

2. Was the CIO's case against the left-wing unions valid? The CIO's case against the unions rested on two premises: first, that the unions "followed the Communist line," and second, that this made them poor unionists or somehow disqualified them from membership in the CIO. No attempt was made to show that the Communist line was in error; this was simply assumed. The CIO was able to prove its first contention reasonably well, but no convincing arguments or evidence was introduced to sustain the second point. There was no evidence indicating that the left-wing unions were deficient in any way compared to the unions which remained in the CIO.

3. What effect did the expulsions have on the labor movement? They helped to create a climate which discouraged political debate. They shifted the major organizing focus of the CIO from organizing the unorganized to raiding the left-wing unions. Finally, the expulsions helped to make the CIO unions less militant on economic and shop floor issues.

4. Did party errors and weaknesses contribute to the defeat, or was the party simply faced with forces which no small, left-wing party could defeat? This question tempts one to ahistorical speculation, but it is still important. My own view is that the party had built an elaborate foundation on sand; when the intense cold war pressure began, the foundation was bound to collapse. The refusal to

build the party in the 1936-1939 period, when Communists enjoyed high prestige, meant that Communist leaders were highly vulnerable. Their response to their vulnerability made them more vulnerable: they sought to deny rather than defend their Communist affiliations (whether those affiliations were organizational or ideological) and to build personal followings around their competence and dedication. Rank and file workers were won to the proposition that Communist Party membership was irrelevant, rather than the notion that the Communist Party represented the leading fighter for the working class. This political position was simply not strong enough to withstand the enormous pressure which the cold war brought to the labor movement.<sup>1</sup>

5. Does the defeat reveal inherent conservatism in the United States working class? No. In the first place, workers accepted Communist leadership repeatedly. In the second place, anti-Communist campaigns were unsuccessful without radical leadership. In the NMU, for example, two of the prominent leaders of Curran's anti-Communist caucus, were Charles Keith and David Drummond, ex-Communists who had fought in Spain and who still considered themselves to be better Communists than many individuals who remained in the party. One charge against Joseph Stack, a Communist vice-president, was that Stack had joined the CP for opportunistic

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<sup>1</sup>Starobin has argued that the CP should have capitulated before the CIO leadership in the cold war period for two reasons: first, the party did not have the base to challenge the CIO leadership, and second, its alliance with that leadership was one of its major achievements. One reason, of course, that the party was unable to challenge the CIO is that it had not built any base for such a challenge.

reasons. In the third place, most workers rejected anti-Communist campaigns. Anti-Communist campaigns were successful in only one quarter of the unions said to be "in the Communist camp." In each of those four cases, the anti-Communist campaign was led by the union's president, who had originally been close to or a member of the Communist Party.<sup>1</sup> In the fourth place, workers resisted the anti-Communist campaign in the unions with a vigor which is particularly impressive in view of the weak, apolitical defense offered by Communists.

6. Does this study confirm the contention of New Left commentators ~~that~~ trade unions are inherently conservative institutions? The first formulation of this argument had anti-working class implications. James Weinstein stated that unions were "inherently conservative," since "a successful union enables its members to be healthy, intelligent, stable family men, which is exactly what the employer wants them to be." Weinstein continued:

To be revolutionary the union would have to embody a consciousness that workers can have a better life than that of being workers. . . . Haywood and the IWW had no such understanding. To them the revolution simply meant a transfer of control of the factories from capitalist to workers.<sup>2</sup>

Using similar arguments, some SDS leaders argued that the struggle

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<sup>1</sup>Kampelman listed sixteen unions "in the Communist camp" in 1946. Of these, all but five were expelled. The National Maritime Union, the Transport Workers Union, the United Furniture Workers, and the United Shoe Workers all had union presidents which broke with the left-wing and which succeeded in defeating those officials who remained friendly to the party. Kampelman said nothing about the Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific, the fifth union not expelled. Kampelman, CP vs. CIO, 45-46, 94-96, 160-62.

<sup>2</sup>James Weinstein, "A Reply," Radical America, II (January-February 1968), 53-54.

for higher wages was "a conservative, if not reactionary, struggle."<sup>1</sup> Implicit in these arguments is the notion that class struggle no longer exists. Few workers, after all, would want to struggle against the employer's desire that they be healthy, intelligent, and stable, except for those who wished to be sick, stupid, and unstable.

Stanley Aronowitz has offered a more compelling version of the argument. One can not, Aronowitz maintained, explain the conservative character of the American labor movement by the political ideas of its leaders. Aronowitz criticized those "superficial explanations" of labor's conservatism, which "assume that if only the politics of radical labor organizers have been better, the whole picture would have been qualitatively different." Actually, it makes little difference whether labor's leaders are conservative or radical, since the union assumes obligations under collective bargaining agreements which force it to play a conservative role:

Under contemporary monopolistic capitalism, these obligations include (1) the promise not to strike, except under specific conditions, or at the termination of the contract, (2) a bureaucratic and hierarchical grievance procedure consisting of many steps during which the control over the grievance is systematically removed from the shop floor and from workers' control, (3) a system of management

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<sup>1</sup>These ideas were elaborated in two series of articles by Greg Calvert and Carol Nieman, which appeared in the Guardian, June 8, 15, 22, 1968, and August 24, 31, September 7, 1968. For a full discussion of the political controversies within SDS, see James R. Prickett, ed., Political Debate Within SDS, 1966-1969, pages 1-78. This unpublished collection of documents was originally edited for a seminar at U. C. L. A. It includes capsule histories of the debate by James Weinstein and Alan Adelson, and major statements by SDS leaders on both sides of the debate which originally appeared in New Left Notes, the Guardian, Progressive Labor, Boston PL News, and the Movement. Following a lengthy debate, the ideas represented by Calvert, Nieman, and Weinstein were rejected by virtually all members of SDS.

prerogatives wherein the union agrees to cede to the employer "the operation of the employer's facilities and the direction of working forces, including the right to hire, suspend, or discharge for good cause and . . . to relieve employees from duties due to lack of work," and (4) a "checkoff" of union dues as an automatic deduction from the workers' paychecks.

According to Aronowitz, these obligations have transformed the union "into a force for integrating the workers into the corporate capitalist system." These obligations constrain left-wing as well as right-wing union leaders. A struggle against the current leaders of the labor movement, then, would be useless. As Aronowitz put it, "it is possible to remove union leaders and replace them, but it is not possible to transcend the institutional constraints of trade unionism itself."<sup>1</sup>

Much of Aronowitz' analysis is perceptive, but the underlying contention that the institutional demands of the trade union make the politics of its leadership irrelevant is not persuasive. Radicals may have assumed that unions, as organs of struggle, were inherently radical; Aronowitz is to be commended for isolating those elements which propel unions to the right. But Aronowitz does not appear to realize that union leaders can resist or assist that drive to the right. Perhaps an examination of the four points which Aronowitz made will clarify this objection to his argument. First, Aronowitz noted that unions promise not to strike, "except under specific conditions, or at the termination of the contract." It matters enormously what the "specific conditions" under which the union retains the right to strike even if under contract are. UE contracts, for example,

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<sup>1</sup>Aronowitz, False Promises, 216-19.

retained the right to strike over grievances if the union preferred a strike to submitting the grievances to arbitration.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, while the right to strike is limited for the duration of the contract, the length of the contract makes an important difference. Only after the Communists were eliminated from the labor movement did long-term contracts become commonplace. Second, the grievance procedure, as Aronowitz noted, is designed to divorce workers from their own grievances, but alert, Communist shop stewards struggled against this tendency by consciously including workers in the prosecution of the grievance.<sup>2</sup> Third, left-wing unionists can seek to limit or delete entirely "management prerogatives" from the contract; they need not sign the sort of contract Aronowitz quoted. Fourth, while the checkoff does remove one important area of communication between rank and file workers and union stewards, alert, militant stewards, recognizing this, can set up other channels of communication.

Labor unions play a dual role: they are organs of working class struggle, and they, as enforcers of the contract, are often engaged in helping to discipline workers. The relationship of this perspective to this dissertation is double-edged. On the one hand, Communists were insufficiently aware of the conservative possibilities of stable industrial unions; on the other hand, those conservative possibilities did not become clear realities until after Communists were expelled.

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<sup>1</sup>"Against the Mainstream: Interview with James Matles of the U. E.," Studies on the Left, V (Winter 1965), 43-44.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Lynd and Lynd, Rank and File, 125, 168.



7. Were Communists the leading fighters in the movement of the present, the drive toward industrial unionism? In spite of the prevailing anti-Communism, few historians would deny the leading role played by members of the Communist Party in the organization of basic industry. Nearly one-third of the paid, organizing staff of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee were Communists, and party members were also key figures and unpaid workers in many local areas. Members of other political parties were also involved, but no party expanded the effort or made the impact which the Communist Party did. Even the party's bitterest enemies conceded the party's importance in the organizing campaigns.<sup>1</sup>

It was this enormous presence, not just in the labor movement but in other movements for social change, which gave the party its credibility among workers and intellectuals. This is a point which anti-Communist historians have difficulty in understanding. Daniel Bell, for example, has written the following:

It is, perhaps, a striking illustration of how compelling a myth can be that the intellectuals ignored the disparity between illusion and actuality. "We did not understand the fine points of Marxist doctrine over which the party fought with the Trotskyites and other factions," recalled Granville Hicks, "and we were not interested in them. It was enough for us to believe that Marxism was in general right and that the Communist Party was in general Marxist."<sup>2</sup>

Bell's explanation for the disinterest of leftists close to the party in the criticisms of Trotskyists and other splinter Marxists appears to be the power of a myth. The reason, however, why these disputes

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<sup>1</sup>See above, pages 238, 374-75.

<sup>2</sup>Bell, Marxian Socialism, 138.

interested few individuals is that Communists earned their credentials in the movement, while their Trotskyist critics had not.

Trotskyism represented something entirely new in the radical movement in that it secured its validation not from its own successes but from the failures of the Communist movement. Trotskyists, for example, pointed to defeats in Germany and Spain as justification for the Fourth International, rather than any successful political work of the Trotskyists. As a result, Trotskyist parties were not so much revolutionary organizations as they were a sort of perpetual gloss on the Communist movement. Trotskyism obviously had an attraction for certain contentious intellectuals, who would rather analyze than organize, but its influence within the working class movement was minimal. Only in the postwar period, when Trotskyists provided left-wing rhetoric for anti-Communist campaigns, did Trotskyists have an impact. Reuther, Curran, and Carey all had Trotskyist support in their campaigns against Communists.

Both of the two major Trotskyist parties, the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party, believed that the Communists were the main enemy in the labor movement. SWP leader James Cannon once told Leon Trotsky that "without opposition to the Stalinists [the Trotskyist designation for Communists] we [the Trotskyists] have no reason for existing in the unions." This is an extraordinary admission. Organizing workers against employers (or, in other words, the class struggle) was never as important to Trotskyists as fighting the Communists. Cannon's rationale was that "the old-fashioned craft unionists cannot prevail against the Stalinists," and so "the struggle

for control is between us and the Stalinists."<sup>1</sup> The Workers Party put forward the argument that "the Stalinists are the fiercest enemies of every genuine socialist or communist movement, and the greatest danger to the labor movement."<sup>2</sup> Trotskyists would ally with the conservative union bureaucracy, with anti-Communist ACTU members, and even with a racist union<sup>3</sup> in the struggle against "the Stalinists."

It was, then, the remoteness of Trotskyists from the mass movement, and the immersion of Communists within that movement, that led those sympathetic to social movements to work with the Communist Party and to ignore the party's disputes with splinter Marxist sects.

8. And did they build the movement of the future, a Socialist movement, in the course of fighting for industrial unionism? It is fair to say that they did not. David Montgomery has disagreed with this assessment in the following passage:

[Jeremy] Brecher's contention that Leftists of the '30s were so enamored of the CIO and the New Deal that they waged no struggle for socialist consciousness among their shopmates is a popular notion in the student Left today, but it rests on no evidence whatever. Many an older worker could tell him quite another story. What does he think the men talked about for 41 cold days and nights in Fisher Body Number 2? Neither he nor I has discovered the answer to that question, but my own experience in a sit-down strike 17 years later suggests

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<sup>1</sup>Cannon's comments appeared in a "rough stenographic draft" of discussions between Trotsky and SWP leaders reprinted in Tim Wohlforth, The Struggle for Marxism in the United States (New York: Bulletin Publications, 1968), 33-41.

<sup>2</sup>"The SWP and the UAW," New International, XIII (October 1947), 231.

<sup>3</sup>See above, page 411, footnote 2.

that they had far more in mind than simply the militant and dramatic<sup>1</sup> tactics on which our historical accounts have riveted their attention.

Montgomery raised an important point: much of the political discussion which occurred between workers was unrecorded. The most intensive political discussions, in fact, were likely to occur after union meetings, on picket lines, and in private homes. It is, however, unlikely that the positions Communists took in these discussions differed significantly from those which they took in other contexts. If one reads not only the party's theoretical journal and daily newspaper, but also the leaflets, shop papers, speeches at union conventions, and columns in local union newspapers in which Communists expressed their point of view, one can determine what sort of consciousness the Communist Party tried to build.

The party's election programs reveal the changing attitude toward liberal politicians which the party projected. In 1932, the party program argued that "only a revolutionary workers' and farmers' government can break through this paralysis" and sharply criticized Democrats and Socialists:

Terror is not the monopoly of one capitalist, one politician, or one party. The Republican, Hoover, orders the gassing and brutal clubbing of the workers in Washington. The "liberal" Republican, Pinchot, orders the clubbing and murder of the Pennsylvania coal strikers. The Democratic Mayor Cermak orders the beating, gassing and killing of Negro workers on Chicago's South Side. Ford and his "progressive" henchman, Murphy, carries through the murder of four Detroit workers at Dearborn. The Socialist Mayor Hoan, backed up by the Progressive Republican LaFollette, orders the same attacks on Milwaukee workers.

The 1936 Communist election program, coming one year after the

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<sup>1</sup>David Montgomery, "Spontaneity and Organization: Some Comments," Radical America, VII (November-December 1973), 76.

Seventh World Congress, revealed a certain ambivalence:

Democracy or fascism, progress or reaction—this is the central issue.

Roosevelt is bitterly attacked by the camp of reaction. But he does not fight back against these attacks. Roosevelt compromises. He grants but small concessions to the working people, while making big concessions to Hearst, to Wall Street, to the reactionaries.

The working people must organize themselves independently, under their own banner, with their own leadership and program. . . . A real peoples' party is arising. Organized by the workers and farmers themselves, the Farmer-Labor Party is growing in a majority of states. . . . The Communist Party unconditionally supports the building of the Farmer-Labor Party.<sup>1</sup>

This program indicates that Communists had tacitly abandoned the struggle for socialism as the major goal for the party, and had substituted the defense of democracy against fascism. At the same time, the party saw that defense as the task of the working class rather than of liberal politicians. By 1938, however, it was clear that CIO leaders had no interest in building a labor party, and Communists recognized the CIO leaders as legitimate leaders of the working class movement.<sup>2</sup> By this time, the party's identification with the New Deal was complete. In Wisconsin, for example, party election leaflets proclaimed, "Elect genuine New Dealers and Liberals . . . Vote for Fred Bassett Blair, Communist Candidate for U. S.

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<sup>1</sup>The party's election programs for 1932 and 1936 are available in the Communist Party verticle file, Tamiment Institute, New York University.

<sup>2</sup>In an interview with the author, Dorothy Healey argued that critics of the Communist Party err when they see the party as primarily pro-Roosevelt and as having helped to place the labor movement in FDR's camp. The firm support for Roosevelt, according to Healey, flowed from the party's backing of the CIO leadership. To continue to call for a labor party, when the leaders of the labor movement opposed one, would mean to break sharply with those leaders. But Communists regarded the CIO as the most progressive organization in the United States and opposed any break.

Senator."<sup>1</sup>

The notion that the defense of democracy, rather than the struggle for socialism, was the major task for Communists led inexorably to the liquidation of the party. By 1939, Foster noted approvingly, the party "liquidated its own Communist fractions, discontinued its snop papers," and was "now modifying its systems of industrial branches." As a collective unit, then, the party was no longer playing an important role in the movement. Instead, individual Communists assumed positions of leadership and were sharing "directly, although as yet usually in a minor measure, in the official responsibility of carrying on the movement."<sup>2</sup> Browder's proposal in the Second World War to literally dissolve the party and form the Communist Political Association can not be understood apart from the political liquidation of the party in the prewar period.

Communists still recognized the need to build the party, and usually one or two Communists, like Nat Ganley in the UAW, or Ruth Young in UE, would serve as a party spokesperson within the union. But most Communists did not announce their membership. There appeared to be no real reason to do so. In the first place, to announce party membership opened the individual up to anti-Communist attacks by government agencies and union opponents. In the second place, and more important, there was little to distinguish party

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Norman Markowitz, "A View from the Left: From the Popular Front to Cold War Liberalism," Griffith and Theoharis, ed., The Spectre, 98.

<sup>2</sup>Foster, "Twenty Years," 814. For a longer quotation from this paragraph, see above, page 241.

members from non-members, since the party did not agitate for socialism. Why should party members open themselves to the danger of redbaiting when they were not advocating Communist positions? When pressed about party membership, they would argue that it was irrelevant to whatever issue was being discussed. They had a point: often their opponents, unable to answer their arguments, resorted to "injecting" the Communist issue into the debate.

The consequence of this logical approach was that the Communist Party gradually took on a wholly negative connotation. One can see this in the defensive and civil libertarian approach of Communists at union convention. It was, however, probably more intense on the local level. A newspaper published by several hundred UE shop stewards described the appearance of left-wing UE leaders before the House Committee on Un-American Activities as if party membership was something of which someone should be ashamed:

You see it could have been you. All that you would have had to do to be chosen as the target of the attack would have been to have become a Progressive leader of the local, to have fought like mad for the workers and have been a Progressive Pro-UE candidate in the elections next Sunday. That's all, brother, nothing more, and instead of eating a nice quiet meal with your family this evening, you would have been sweating it out in front of the witch hunters of the Un-American Committee, while the neighbors whispered and pointed when your children or wife went down the street.

This passage referred to something genuine: the House Committee on Un-American Activities had subpoenaed left-wing leaders one week

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<sup>1</sup>Voice of the UE, August 11, 1949. Another issue of the same newspaper listed Trygvie Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Philip C. Jessup, U. S. Ambassador at Large, and Judge Dorothy Kenyon, U. S. delegate to the United Nations Economic Council as being "among those called Reds last week." Ibid., March 21, 1950.

prior to a local election in an attempt to discredit the left. But its tone hardly reflected creditably on the party.

The refusal to be open about party membership led Communists, or those close to the party, to make arguments which bordered on dishonesty. One UE district council paper, for example, wrote that "the pious sham of covering their dictatorial action behind 'CIO policy' is completely exposed when we find unions and members threatened with expulsion when they do not agree with Philip Murray's and Wall Street's ideas on the Atlantic Pact, but instead agree with such religious groups as the Federal Council of Churches with about thirty million members."<sup>1</sup> The left-wingers who made this argument had never before expressed the notion that the American working class ought to follow the leadership of the Federal Council of Churches. And when a Communist Party spokesman was asked on a radio program who was the last person to run against Joseph Stalin, he replied by eulogizing Philip Murray:

I'll answer the question in this manner—who is the last person who ran against the great American trade union leader, Phil Murray? Philip Murray has not had any opposition within his union as head of the CIO or Steelworkers Union—because within the ranks of that union there is such overwhelming unity in support of his leadership that any opposition would stand discredited in the eyes of the workers.<sup>2</sup>

The party faced a real problem: since it no longer tried to build support around the party itself, it was placed in the position of finding

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<sup>1</sup>Progress, June, 1949. Progress was the newspaper of District Council, Number 6, UERMWA-CIO.

<sup>2</sup>Transcript, "On the Spot," with moderator Bill Burns, in which Roy B. Hudson, "Western Pennsylvania Chairman of the Communist Party," was questioned by a panel which included William Hart of the USW, and Father Charles Rice, Rice Papers.



non-Communist organizations which agreed with the party's position on a given issue. The organizations often had profound political differences with the Communists. Indeed, the wider the gulf between Communists and the organization, the more useful the organization's agreement with the party on the particular issue became. The cumulative effect of this approach was disastrous. The organizations which Communists cited in support of their positions changed, depending on the issue. To many workers, it appeared that Communists were "hiding behind" one organization one week, and another organization the next week. Instead of being a defense against redbaiting, this approach probably built anti-Communism.

The party underwent a gradual transformation in the years following the Seventh World Congress, at least insofar as its work within the labor movement is concerned. Those who denied or refused to acknowledge their party membership gradually ceased to be Communists in any real sense of the word. Those who remained party spokespersons were without a functioning party group in the labor movement, and became indistinguishable from those who failed to acknowledge party membership. The party itself no longer had any special role to play. From the decision to abandon the struggle for socialism came the reluctance to build the party. And that reluctance placed Communists and their allies in an untenable position when the postwar anti-Communist attacks began.

V

At the heart of this assessment of the role of the Communist

Party is a certain ambivalence symbolized by the affirmative answer to question seven and the negative answer to question eight. Other scholars, writing recently, share this ambivalence. Thomas Kreuger has described the role of Communists in one popular front organization, while Norman Markowitz has examined the contribution of the popular front left as a whole.

Whatever else may be said about them [Kreuger noted], the politics of the popular front were not the politics of radical Marxism. . . . Party members worked hard; they always had; they worked, no doubt, harder than others. But they were now hard workers in groups with reformist aims similar to the Communist party's. They became militant, dedicated, organization men, loyal members of whatever team they happened to be working for. Party members became minions of the CIO, of numerous voluntary organizations, and of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

Kreuger found the politics of the popular front "insipid," and yet he credited Communists with playing an extremely constructive role in an organization (the Southern Conference for Human Welfare) which he admired.<sup>1</sup> A similar ambivalence can be observed in Markowitz' assessment:

During the 1930's and then World War II, the popular-front left made many vital contributions to American life. Its writers and artists explored the life of the common people, sang their songs, and to an extent brought their stories and aspirations onto the American stage and into the motion pictures. The popular front left created civil rights groups like the National Negro Congress, the Civil Rights Congress, and the Southern Conference for Human Welfare at the same time that its representatives worked with more conservative groups, such as the NAACP, to publicize the plight of black America. The popular-front left also fought discrimination against ethnic and national minorities in all aspects of American life. Above all else, the popular-front left provided the leadership in organizing the mass production unions and in helping to consolidate the New Deal's majority coalition. These achievements were certainly more significant than any made by social liberals alone before or since.

. . . [Yet] the popular front was extremely vulnerable—neither

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<sup>1</sup>Kreuger, And Promises to Keep, 68-71.

its liberal nor its Communist members were prepared to effectively challenge the Truman Administration's conduct of foreign and domestic policy. The liberals, because they had never resolved the contradictions implicit in their advocacy of humanitarian ends through capitalist means, could not pose real alternatives to the corporate capitalism of the New Deal. The Communists, because their mass organizations remained tied to the New Deal and their small party tied to the Soviet Union, had failed thereby to create an independent base within the New Deal coalition.<sup>1</sup>

The Communist Party, according to these arguments, failed to provide a radical alternative to the New Deal. This retarded the growth of a socialist movement by diverting much of the energy that would have gone into such a movement into the New Deal camp. It also made the Communists vulnerable to liberal attacks, since they were without a large radical base (and could not, under their self-imposed constraints, build one). At the same time, Communists brought a dynamism and social vision to liberal and reformist organizations which contrasted sharply with the period following the ascendancy of anti-Communist liberalism. Communists did not, anti-Communist claims to the contrary, betray liberalism; if anything, they were betrayed by their liberalism. To put it another way, Communists were superb liberals, but poor Communists.

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<sup>1</sup> Markowitz, "View from Left," 99-100. It is not clear why Markowitz saw the Communist Party's ties with the Soviet Union as a reason why the party failed "to create an independent base within the New Deal coalition." It would seem that this argument would rest on one of two assumptions. First, it could be said that Soviet influence on the American party made it unable to respond to American conditions. I would disagree with this argument for two reasons. First, Soviet influence has been overestimated. Second, when the American party responded to American conditions, it generally drifted further to the right. Or Markowitz may be arguing that no pro-Soviet organization could win significant working class support. If so, he is reading present-day working class attitudes toward the Soviet Union back into the 1930s and 1940s. This underestimates the widespread support for the Soviet Union prior to the intensification of the Cold War.

Nothing about this analysis should surprise students of the Communist Party's role in the American labor movement. Communists brought a dynamism and social vision to the labor movement which contrasted favorably with the movement's policies after the Communists were expelled. No group devoted as high a percentage of its resources, or provided as many paid and unpaid organizers, to the campaign to organize basic industry was a crucial advance for the working class and Communists deserve great credit for their role in that achievement.

In the process of that enormous achievement, however, the Communist Party lost those attributes which should distinguish a Communist Party from other political formations. Communists abandoned the struggle for socialism, gave their support to the New Deal, and made no serious or consistent attempt to challenge liberal ideology. They abolished the institution which enable them to play a coordinated and independent role within the labor movement—the party fraction—and stopped publishing shop papers. They failed to defend rank and file democracy in those unions led by anti-Communists even when they were themselves the victims of the undemocratic actions.<sup>1</sup> As unionists, they were far superior to their anti-Communist counterparts, but they were poor Communists.

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<sup>1</sup>Staughton Lynd and Gar Alperovitz, Strategy and Program: Two Essays Toward a New American Socialism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), 13. Lynd's essay, entitled "Prospects for the New Left," includes a section on the CIO which draws heavily on his interviews with radical workers who had been active in the CIO in the 1930s and 1940s. One worker recalled offering his support to Communists when they were being purged from SWOC, "but the Communists preferred to be dismissed quietly."