

ON BUILDING A PEOPLE'S PARTY

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

WITH BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS in the hands of aggressive Republican reactionaries, with the pro-Roosevelt national democratic coalition badly shattered by President Truman's systematic betrayals, and with the Big Business reactionaries preparing an all-out effort to capture both major parties and the Presidency in 1948, organized labor and the broad masses stand in imminent political danger. The offensive of reaction is already threatening the country with an economic breakdown; it bears in itself the dangerous menace of fascism, and it definitely menaces world peace.

Consequently, labor and the people are feeling an urgent need for powerful political action. During recent years, under the Roosevelt regime, organized labor and its allies have been carrying on an increasing degree of independent political action through such organizations as the C.I.O.-P.A.C., National Citizens P.A.C., and the American Labor Party of New York State. But the present situation demands that they go far beyond these movements. They must begin to break definitely with the capitalist-controlled Republican

and Democratic parties and go about setting up an independent anti-fascist, anti-monopoly party of their own. This new party is vitally necessary in order to combat the reactionaries in the present Congress and also to deal the Republican and Democratic reactionaries a smashing defeat in the coming Presidential elections. It is absolutely necessary to begin building the new mass party now; but whether or not the party will be strong enough to put up an independent Presidential candidate and a slate of Congressional and local candidates in 1948, remains to be seen. In any event, the time is now at hand when the American labor movement must start to break its tutelage to the old capitalist parties and to stand on its own feet politically.

The most important experience of the American working class and its allies in independent political action up to this time was the big movement of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (C.P.P.A.), which culminated in the candidacy of Senator Robert M. LaFollette (the elder) for President in 1924. The C.P.P.A. movement has many lessons, both positive and negative, for the workers in their need for a new political orientation.

THE CONFERENCE FOR PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL ACTION

The C.P.P.A. was founded in Chicago in February, 1922. At least six major streams of political dis-

content went into its make-up. First and most dynamic was the strong movement of the 16 railroad unions for the Plumb Plan, which called for government ownership of the railroads. This movement, led by the railroad union attorney, Glenn R. Plumb, and by Presidents Warren S. Stone and Wm. H. Johnston of the Locomotive Engineers and Machinists unions respectively, took shape during the war years and embraced the entire body of 1,500,000 organized railroad workers.

The second major element entering into the C.P.P.A. was the labor party movement that had also developed in a number of industrial centers, beginning in 1917. The principal stronghold of this movement was the Chicago Federation of Labor, headed by John Fitzpatrick; but in New York City and other local communities, as well as in 15 states, there were also more or less vigorous labor parties.

A third decisive force was the well-defined farmer movement. This had strong state centers in the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the Wisconsin Progressive Party, and the National Non-Partisan League of the Dakotas, headed by A. C. Townley. The C.P.P.A. also included various other political and cooperative farmer movements.

A fourth element in the make-up of the C.P.P.A. was the Committee of Forty-Eight, led by J. A. H. Hopkins. This movement, made up of intellectuals, professionals, and city

middle-class elements, was something of a hangover from the Theodore Roosevelt Bull Moose Progressive Party of 1912. Also included was the Women's Committee on Political Action.

A fifth force, of considerable significance, was religious in character—the National Catholic Welfare Council and the Methodist Federation for Social Service.

Finally, there were the Communist and Socialist parties. Although the Communist Party, then known as the Workers Party, was born in the midst of this developing big political movement, it took a very active part, under its leader, C. E. Ruthenberg, in the whole development, particularly in the Labor Party section of it. Indeed, the Workers Party, working in alliance with the Fitzpatrick group of the Chicago Federation of Labor, was the most dynamic and influential organized force in the Labor Party wing of the C.P.P.A. In 1923, the Communist-led T.U.E.L., took a referendum vote of 35,000 local trade unions on the Labor Party, to which 7,000 replied, definitely voting in the affirmative. The C.P.P.A. proper, however, influenced by Socialist Party Red-baiting, refused to seat the delegates of the Workers Party. As for the Socialist Party, it at first opposed the entire movement which culminated in the C.P.P.A. On page 418 of his book, *Labor and Farmer Parties in the United States*, the Social-Democrat Nathan Fine says, "The Socialist

leaders resented the intrusion of the labor parties on the scene." They looked upon the labor party movement as dual to the Socialist Party. Later, however, they abandoned this sectarian position and penetrated the C.P.P.A., hoping to capture and control it.

The leading force in the C.P.P.A. was the railroad unions. They gathered the main bodies of labor around the movement and established working contacts with the farmers. Their militancy, especially in the pre-C.P.P.A. stages of the movement, may be gauged from the fact that they administered a smashing defeat to Samuel Gompers and his reactionary clique at the 1920 Montreal Convention of the A. F. of L., when the latter tried to block the railroaders' resolution calling for government ownership. Although no accurate statistics were ever assembled as to the actual organized numerical strength of the C. P. P. A., it probably ran to at least 3,000,000 persons.

The moving force that produced the great C.P.P.A. movement was the complex of economic and political pressures generated by World War I and its aftermath. During the war the workers had succeeded in building up the trade unions from about 2,500,000 to over 4,000,000. They had broken down the anti-union barriers in the steel, meat-packing, and various other industries. They had drastically cut the work-day to eight hours in many in-

dustries and, generally, they felt a new sense of economic and political power. The labor movement as a whole was definitely on the march forward.

With the end of the war, however, the bottom fell out of the economic situation, first because of an inflationary rise in prices and later because of the deep industrial crisis of 1920-21. The employers, ignoring all their fine promises made to organized labor during the war, launched a violent attack against the workers' living standards and trade unions. They slashed wages, forced strikes in many industries, and turned the power of the government against the unions. Their slogans called for the "American Plan" and the re-establishment of the "open shop." Alarmed by the world effects of the Russian revolution, the capitalist reactionaries developed terror against the Left wing, driving the Communist Party underground and ruthlessly deporting large numbers of foreign-born workers. This was the period of the infamous Palmer raids. The general result of this big employer offensive was that the unions lost strikes in the steel, meat-packing, building, lumber, printing, textile, metal, railroad, and various other industries. Altogether, it was the severest defeat ever suffered by American organized labor.

The farmers, too, were disappointed from being plunged into economic crisis. The agricultural crisis lasted from the end of the war all

through the "boom" 1920's. The price of wheat and other farm commodities fell rapidly and the mortgage holders descended upon the tillers of the soil. These hardships, even as those of the workers, forced the attention of the farmers toward politics, with the consequence that their organizations, like the trade unions, turned hopefully to the C.P.P.A. for political expression.

On July 4, 1924, in Cleveland, the C.P.P.A. selected its national ticket, consisting of Senator Robert M. La Follette for President and Senator Burton K. Wheeler for Vice President. This ticket was endorsed by the A. F. of L. and by many of its individual unions, although such reactionaries as John L. Lewis and W. E. Hutcheson supported the Republican candidates. The election platform, practically dictated by La Follette was directed against the monopolists and open-shoppers. Its 14 planks demanded a restoration of civil rights, condemned the use of the injunction in labor disputes, and insisted on a more democratic system of taxation. The platform especially attacked the monopolies, demanding, among other measures, public ownership of water power and the railroads. The platform also condemned "financial imperialists," "oil imperialists," and "international bankers," and called for a revision of the Versailles Treaty. It attacked militarism and demanded a reduction in armaments all over the world.

The candidacy of La Follette met

with fierce resistance from the reactionary press. Nevertheless, the C.P.P.A. ticket rolled up some 5,000,000 votes. La Follette carried Wisconsin and ran second in eleven other states—California, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming. La Follette was undoubtedly robbed of large numbers of votes by the alarmed, old-party politicians, particularly in the industrial states.

The C.P.P.A. collapsed after the La Follette campaign of 1924. The country was already heading into the hectic boom of the late 1920's, with all its "prosperity illusions." The trade unions, badly weakened by the ill-fated strikes of the early postwar period, were being led by their conservative officials into the intensified class collaboration that characterized this period. These leaders were determined to return to their old party alliances and, declaring that the La Follette campaign had been a failure, they spared no efforts to spread political pessimism among the workers. Consequently, on February 21-22, 1925, in Chicago, the C.P.P.A. held its final meeting. A move was made by the labor party forces present to continue the organization as a new political party, as might well have been done. But this plan was rejected by the railroad union leaders, who returned to the old "reward your friends and punish your enemies" policy. Hence, the C.P.P.A. movement literally fell to pieces then and

there. Thus ended the biggest effort ever made by the American working class and its farmer and middle-class allies to develop independent political action.

PROSPECTS FOR A PEOPLE'S PARTY IN 1948

Facing up to the vitally important Presidential elections of 1948, the stage is now being set for a much broader, clearer-sighted and more determined effort on the part of the workers and their allies to organize an independent anti-monopoly, anti-fascist party than was the case during the La Follette movement of 1924. A whole series of economic and political factors are pressing the toiling masses more urgently towards the foundation of such a party.

a) The general crisis of capitalism is far deeper after World War II than it was after World War I. Economically and politically, capitalism on a world scale has been weakened. Many nations are nationalizing their industries and moving toward the establishment of state capitalism and, in some cases, directly to Socialism. Despite the fact that American capitalism has emerged from the war as the strongest capitalist power, our national economy has nevertheless been fundamentally weakened by the world-scale debilitation of capitalism. During the past generation, with its wars, economic breakdowns, and fascism, the workers have had their faith in capitalism considerably shaken. The result is that now, al-

though the country is in the midst of a record "boom," the workers generally realize that a dangerous economic crisis is on the way and they are keenly aware of the urgent need to protect themselves by political action from the ravages of mass unemployment. While their mood cannot yet be called mass class consciousness, they are nevertheless moving in this direction. They are ripe for a new mass party.

b) The power of the monopolies has grown enormously since 1924, especially during the recent war. Big Business now heavily dominates American economic and political life and it is also reaching out to establish its imperialist control over the whole world. The masses of the workers, although afflicted with much confusion regarding the world role of American imperialism, nevertheless realize that the great trusts are their enemies and grow increasingly aware that they must fight them politically. This realization is particularly keen now that the workers have seen the victory of the Republicans in the recent elections. They also see the beginnings of the big offensive that the capitalists are developing against the trade unions, the living standards of the people, and elementary American civil liberties.

c) Another important factor making for the new party is the fact that the trade unions are vastly stronger now than they were at the time of the La Follette campaign 23 years ago. Numbering some 15-

000,000 members and entrenched in all the basic industries, they provide at least a five-fold wider labor basis for a mass party of workers, farmers, and city middle-class elements than they did in the days of the C.P.P.A. With clear-sighted and determined leadership, this party could roll up several times as many votes in 1948 as La Follette did in 1924. For many years, in the United States, a telling argument used by conservatives against independent political action by the workers was the contention that the trade union movement was too weak numerically to give a new party real strength. But this old-time argument has fallen to the ground with the tremendous growth of labor unionism during the past dozen years.

d) Since the days of the La Follette candidacy the workers and their democratic allies have had a wealth of economic and political experience. This also is pressing them on toward the formation of a new people's party. With the growing centralization of the Government, the workers have learned that most of the problems with which they now have to concern themselves, problems which they formerly considered matters for collective bargaining by the unions or which they left to the competitive workings of capitalism, have now become major national issues requiring organized political action by the democratic masses. Consequently, under the Roosevelt regime the workers for the first time developed

an elementary political program, the basis of which is Big Three collaboration abroad and the New Economic Bill of Rights at home. They also began to mobilize their political strength through such organizations as the C.I.O.-P.A.C., the American Labor Party, etc. The most significant development in this respect is the newly formed Progressive Citizens of America. All this experience is laying the basis for a strong third party movement.

e) Not the least important consideration making for the formation of a broad anti-monopoly, anti-fascist party is the existence of a greatly strengthened Communist Party. Our Party, with its Marxist-Leninist understanding, its extensive political experience, and its broad mass contacts, will prove a source of strength to the new party movement far greater than could be furnished by the youthful Workers Party of 25 years ago.

f) The immediate factor that is providing the spark, so to speak, for the new third party movement is the betrayal of the people by the Truman Administration, by Truman's abandonment of the Roosevelt foreign and domestic policies, his cold-blooded breaking of the railroad and coal strikes, his surrender to the profiteers in the matter of price controls, his refusal to defend the most elementary rights of the Negro people, his capitulation generally to the offensive of the reactionary monopolists. Truman's course is convincing huge numbers of the work-

ers that the Democratic Party, like the Republican Party, is firmly in the control of Wall Street; that the old Gompers political policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies" is obsolete; and that the workers' only hope lies in the formation of a great, new people's party. It is a case of either forming a new party or of surrendering to reaction. A recent Roper poll in *Fortune* stated that 23 per cent of the organized workers favor such a party. The recent Chicago Conference of Progressives and the other similar groupings that are taking shape—notably the formation of the Progressive Citizens of America—although still committed to the policy of working within the two old parties, nevertheless are basically expressive of the powerful mass trend toward the establishment of the much-needed new party.

PROBLEMS IN BUILDING THE THIRD PARTY

Conditions are ripe for the establishment of a broad people's anti-monopoly, anti-fascist party. The political situation promotes it; the workers and other democratic forces are increasingly demanding it. But in order to realize the new party in the great struggle around the 1948 Presidential elections, labor and its friends have many difficult problems to overcome. In doing so, they can learn much from the C.P.P.A. experience in the campaign of 1924.

a) *Build the party:* The most

elementary requirement for success is that the third party workers must resolve consciously and set out actively to build the party. They must understand very clearly that the working class is now in the historical process of breaking from the political and that, along with its allies, it is tutelage of the two bourgeois parties actually forming the new people's party. One of the fundamental weaknesses of the C.P.P.A. movement was that its leaders, save for the Communists, had no definite plan of forming a new party. Hence, although the LaFollette campaign clearly mobilized sufficient forces to lay the basis for such a party, the whole movement was finally allowed to fritter away its strength for want of a definite perspective. There must be no such hesitation and confusion now. The new party, from the present on, must be systematically and resolutely built. The 1948 campaign must produce a new, broad, national people's party, regardless of whether or not that party puts up a Presidential ticket, or whether the progressive forces endorse a candidate of the Democratic Party.

b) *Coordination of party building:* As was the case with the C.P.P.A., the mass trends making for a third, people's party today are developing along two main lines. First, there is the broad stream of pro-Roosevelt progressives working within the Democratic Party (with a much weaker tendency inside the Republican Party), who hope to win the

Democratic Party for a definitely progressive policy and Presidential ticket. Then there is the second, consciously third-party stream, which will proceed immediately to the building of the third party directly or in preliminary forms. Both of these trends must be stimulated, although there must be no illusions that the Democratic Party as such can be won for the task that a people's party will perform. The movement must go ahead both within and without the old parties. The two streams should understand themselves to be parts of one general movement, and they should work out coordinated tactics. To do this will be very difficult, but it must be accomplished. A great weakness of the C.P.P.A. was its failure to coordinate these two streams of development. On the one hand, practically no serious preliminary work was carried on within the two old parties in preparation for the independent LaFollette candidacy. On the other hand, there was much harmful wrangling, misunderstanding, and working at cross purposes between the conscious labor party forces and those more conservative elements in the C.P.P.A. who, with their roots in the old parties, were not yet prepared to launch a new party.

c) *Composition of the party:* The breadth of the C.P.P.A. movement, whose composition is analyzed above, provides a fairly good pattern for the new third party that must be formed. The party should include the broad-

est masses of workers, farmers, Negroes, veterans, women, youth, and city middle-class elements. It must be truly a people's party, with the labor unions forming its base and its leading section. Social-Democratic tendencies toward a narrow labor party should be combatted. The Communists must form an active, recognized section of the movement. To mobilize the necessary broad democratic forces for the new party will require an early and systematic cultivation and winning of all kinds of people's organizations, far more than was the case in 1924. Aside from its generally weak preparatory work, a particularly important feature of the C.P.P.A. was its strength among the farmers, as evidenced by its heavy vote in mid-western and western agricultural states. At the present time, however, the ties between organized labor and the farmers are very feeble. This grave weakness must be drastically improved, as a basic condition for a successful political fight in 1948 and for the launching of the third party.

d) *The party's program:* The program of the third party must definitely represent the interests of the great mass of the American people. The party must speak out in the name of the whole nation and it must appear as the continuer and defender of American democratic traditions. Roosevelt's foreign policies of Big Three collaboration and the domestic policies embodied in his New Economic Bill of Rights, es-

pecially as elaborated by the C.I.O. and the Chicago Conference of Progressives, provide the skeleton for such a program of national demands. It will be necessary, however, as the movement develops, to strengthen this program by greatly sharpened attacks upon monopoly capital (by calling for the nationalization of key industries) and by clarifying and intensifying the attack upon the predatory policies of American imperialism. The new party should break with the whole monopoly-inspired concept of "free enterprise," even though, because of the political unreadiness of the masses at this time, it will not be able to declare for Socialism. The party program should be developed and popularized in active political struggle against the reactionary Congress and Administration between now and the 1948 elections.

e) *The party organization*: The new party should be built up on the basis not only of the affiliation of various people's organizations, but also of individual membership. It must be solidly organized on a national, state, city, ward, and precinct basis. Of course, the problem of preliminary organizational forms will require much study. One of the greatest weaknesses of the C.P.P.A. was its very inadequate organization. It was hardly more than a loose conglomeration of affiliated organizations, and never developed the indispensable strong local network of committees and clubs. Such or-

ganizational weaknesses must be guarded against this time.

f) *Getting on the ballot*: Opponents of a people's independent party have long urged that the difficulties of such a party getting on the ballot are insurmountable. But this is only a defeatist argument. The experience of the C.P.P.A. showed that a powerful independent movement could smash its way through the barriers of the two-party system. While in various states the ballot problems are serious, they can be overcome if the problem is tackled well in advance and if all available forces are mobilized for the job. As Eugene Dennis emphasized in his recent report to the National Committee meeting of the C.P.U.S.A., the hindrances to the third party are primarily political, not technical. Once the workers and their allies decide in sufficient masses to form a new party, we can be sure that they will find the means to get the party's candidates on the ballot.

g) *United labor action*: A fundamental requisite for the success of the new party and for victory in the Presidential struggle in 1948 is the achievement of the greatest possible unity of action between the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and the Railroad Brotherhoods. The present disorganization in labor's ranks, if allowed to continue, can lead to disaster in 1948. Therefore, every effort should be exerted to get the three major groups of organized labor to cooperate on wage questions, in fighting reaction-

ary legislation in Congress, and generally in preparing for the 1948 election struggle. Pressure from the rank and file and lower officialdom will be necessary to break the reactionary attitude of the A. F. of L. leaders toward united labor action and political unity. It was one of the outstanding achievements of the C.P.P.A. movement that it was able to, and did, smash the Gompers clique's resistance to an independent ticket and progressive program. The present split in the labor movement is a great menace to the workers on every front, faced as they are by a general offensive of monopoly capital. This split absolutely must be bridged in the coming national elections. In the elections, as in various other phases of the workers' struggle, the alternative before the labor movement is "*United Labor Action—or Else!*"

h) *Red-baiting*: The peril of Red-baiting is another danger that must be fought in building the new people's party. Already in 1924 the Socialists did much damage to the C.P.P.A. with their Red-baiting, but in 1948 Red-baiting might well be disastrous. At present, with American imperialism engaged in an offensive both on the foreign and domestic fields, the reactionaries are using, as never before, Hitlerian Red-baiting and witch-hunting. With these methods they hope to terrorize and confuse the people sufficiently so as to enable the Republicans to carry the elections. Naturally, they will

make the new party a target for this vicious Red-baiting. Hence, for the party to fall victim to this divisive tactic and to take up a Red-baiting line itself, as many liberals and Social Democrats propose, would mean to surrender to the people's big capitalist enemies.

The danger from Red-baiting is newly emphasized by the anti-Communist, anti-Soviet line of the Social-Democratic controlled Americans for Democratic Action. The Social-Democrats would gladly split the trade unions over the boss-inspired Communist bogey, and they are now trying definitely to disrupt, on this fake issue, the liberal forces making for the formation of the third party. Such divisive tactics must be defeated at all costs. A fundamental for the success of the third party movement is that it not only does not fall victim to corrosive Red-baiting but that it definitely fights against this deadly poison.

i) *A victory strategy*: To defeat Republican reaction (and its Democratic aids) must be the major objective of the 1948 campaign. All other considerations should yield to this supreme necessity. This means that any step taken in the direction of building the third party must obviously be so conceived as to strengthen the whole fight of the democratic coalition and to improve its chance to secure the election of progressives to Congress and the Presidency. There must be no policy on the part of the conscious advocates

of a people's party to separate themselves from the general progressive movements in the old parties (as happened in the early stages of the C.P.P.A. movement), with the perspective of building the party brick by brick, in isolation, and over a long term of years. Contrary to this, there must be the closest coordination of understanding and work between those progressives who work exclusively within the old party, and those who, outside, are laying the foundation for the new party. The new party must be a great mass party in its first campaign and make a powerful contribution to the defeat of Republican reaction.

j) *Securing a Progressive Presidential Candidate*: The test of the new party movement will come in its ability to get a progressive Presidential candidate in the field, if not on the Democratic ticket then on an independent ticket. (The same problem will also occur with regard to all other political offices at issue in the elections.) The election strategy of Big Business, aimed to cancel out the democratic will of labor and the mass of the people, is to confront the country in 1948 with a choice between two reactionaries, one each at the heads of the Republican and the Democratic presidential tickets. The Democratic party leaders are going right along with this strategy. They are interpreting the mood of the country as calling for a big move by them to the Right. They are entering into a sort of competition in con-

servatism with the Republicans. They will undoubtedly strive to put in the field a conservative Presidential candidate, but one with just enough liberal coloration, they hope, to fool the workers. The outbreak of a big economic crisis could, of course, seriously alter this Democratic perspective.

If confronted with such a situation, with both old parties putting up conservative candidates, as most probably will be the case, the new party must have the political understanding and courage to put its own Presidential candidate in the field; for a choice between two reactionaries is no choice at all. It was a great virtue of the C.P.P.A. in 1924 that it met this type of challenge squarely. For when the two old parties nominated their tweedledee and tweedledum reactionary candidates—Calvin Coolidge on the Republican ticket and John W. Davis (a Morgan man) on the Democratic ticket—the C.P.P.A. boldly launched its own presidential candidate, La Follette.

If the Democrats put up an open reactionary or a "phony" liberal as Presidential candidate, the progressives will have no real alternative other than to nominate their own ticket. Such a Democratic candidate, as a Truman, for example, would not only be valueless to the people, but also would have no chance whatever of election. Only if the Democrats put up a progressive candidate can they possibly hope to win. In a situation where both candidates are

unacceptable, the election should be best utilized to lay the foundation of the new party on the broadest foundations and to elect as many progressives as possible to Congress.

The only possible chance (a faint one at best) to get a progressive candidate from the Democratic Party leaders will be precisely by holding over their heads the threat of a new party. In preparation for the battle for a progressive Presidential candidate, the workers and their allies should already be steeled, so that in no event will they allow themselves, in the 1948 elections, to be placed in the unhappy situation of being compelled to choose between two reactionary candidates.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The Communist Party, which played an important role in the events leading up to the big C.P.P.A. campaign of 1924, must play a much more important one in the 1948 political struggle and in the building of the third party. Our party must understand that the formation of such a party will represent a gigantic political advance for the American working class. We must, therefore, make the question of building the new party our major task and leave no stone unturned for its realization. Today our Party, far stronger than in 1924, can be a powerful factor in this great undertaking of the workers.

The Communist Party will have many tasks to perform during the course of this fateful movement. Especially vital will be the ideological ones. We Communists, fortified with our Marxist-Leninist training, must especially take the lead in analyzing and explaining the forces that are making necessary the formation of the new people's party. We must point out the historical significance of the new party movement in developing the class consciousness and class organization of the workers. We must show the grave fascist dangers inherent in a victory for reaction in 1948. We must make clear that only through a new party can the masses free themselves from the strangling grip of capitalist politicians and begin to strike blows in their own behalf. We must master every detail of the complicated general strategy and tactics necessary to lay the foundations for victory and the new party in 1948. We must especially free ourselves from all traces of the "Left"-sectarianism that handicapped our Party in 1924.

In this broad new party movement we Communists will have to strive to deepen the understanding of the masses regarding the growing general crisis of capitalism. With the working masses breaking loose more and more from capitalist ideological and organizational control, they will be responsive to our Marxist-Leninist lessons. We must ceaselessly stress the vital necessity of united labor action in all fields of struggle. We

must show the direct connection between the problems of American workers and those of the toilers in other countries. We must explain to the workers the need for the nationalization of key industries. We must educate them in the necessity and the principles of Socialism.

From an immediately practical standpoint, we should particularly impress three vital necessities upon the workers and their allies. These are, first, that there must be a progressive Presidential candidate in the field in 1948, without fail; if not on the Democratic ticket, then surely on an independent ticket. Secondly, that the foundations of a broad third, people's party must be laid down in the 1948 elections, regardless of whether the progressive Presidential candidate appears upon a Democratic or independent ticket. Thirdly, that reaction, in its Republican and Bourbon-Democratic aspects must be defeated, and that the whole progressive camp's strategy and tactics must constantly have this supreme necessity as a guiding principle.

To meet the heavy responsibilities that history is placing upon us

American Communists, we must build and strengthen our Party as never before as a party of action. We must cleanse the Party of the remnants of the passivity, bureaucracy, and tailism that were foisted upon us by Browderism during the long, easy years of the Roosevelt regime. We must relentlessly fight against all "Left"-sectarian trends. We must exercise far more political initiative and more ideological leadership, while at the same time developing more flexible and more firm relations with our progressive allies. We must activate our Party membership and demand higher standards of efficiency from our leaders. We must raise the fighting morale of our Party by infusing it with an ardent love of Socialism and with an unconquerable Communist spirit. We must begin serious work now toward accomplishing our big goal of 100,000 members by the fall of next year. Only by thus raising the work of our Party to higher levels in every sphere shall we be able to do our necessary part in the great task of the workers in building a broad, mass, anti-fascist, anti-monopoly people's party.