



"Without a Revolutionary Theory
There can be no Revolutionary Practice!"

Vol. 2 - No. 5



Price 10 Cents

May, 1959

Communist Party Leaders Plead for Mercy; Exposed As Class Collaborators

In 1953 ten Ohio Communists were indicted under the notorious Smith Act for "conspiring to teach and advocate forcible overthrow of the government." As a result of the trial, five of the defendants were acquitted. Five were

convicted and received sentences ranging up to five years, plus fines. Since then, those convicted have been free on bail pending the outcome of their appeal. Among those convicted were Anton Krehmarek and Martin Chauncey "leaders" of the Cleveland organization of the old Communist Party.

Also convicted was Lucille Bethancourt, one of the founders of the POC and a signer of its "Declaration". The Chairman of the POC, Joe Dougher, was one of the defendants who won acquittal by the jury in the same trial.

The Krehmarek-Chauncey letters seen on this page beside the statement of Bethancourt and Dougher, dramatically disclose the moral chasm which divides the former from the latter. But this is more than a matter of personal political integrity; it is that, of course. Even more significant however, is the fact that at the same time it embodies the essential contrast between the line and leadership of the old CPUSA — as exemplified by Krehmarek and Chauncey — as against the line and leadership of the POC as exemplified by Lucille Bethancourt and Joe Dougher!

We reproduce here two letters sent by Krehmarek (on behalf of Chauncey and himself) to Lucille Bethancourt on March 19, 1959, and April 3, 1959.

In these letters is revealed the

Statement of the National Executive Committee of the POC

In the "Worker" of April 12, 1959, there appeared an article on the Cleveland Smith Act victims. The first paragraph reads as follows:

"Anthony Krehmarek and Martin Chauncey, representing the six Ohio Smith Act defendants, met recently with Thomas Hall, Chief of the Criminal section of the Internal Security Division, Justice Department and demanded that the Ohio Smith Act case be dropped."

The reader is given the impression that the Ohio Party leadership was on the ball in the fight against reaction and for the legality of the Communist movement in the U.S.A. But that impression is a false one. It is a hypocritical fraud.

The documents signed by the "leader" of the Communist Party of Ohio, Anton Krehmarek which we publish in Vanguard are indeed a revelation to some honest but naive souls. To us in the POC it is neither strange nor illogical.

The depth of political degradation and cowardice which is exuded in every sentence of the documents merely confirms what we have been saying for the last three years: That the leadership of the CP U.S.A. has adopted a policy of class collaboration all along the line. That the revisionist line adopted at the 16th Party convention served as a theoretical and political rationale for belly-crawling before the class enemy — American Imperialism.

In these letters we can easily discern the damnable conciliationism of such theoretical hogwash as "peaceful constitutional transition to Socialism", "The American Road to Socialism", the perverted "Anti-monopoly coalition", etc.

Here Krehmarek says openly and brazenly that on the initiative of the Party "leadership" they had a conference with "the head of the Criminal Section of the Internal Security Department" and that "present also was another individual who I take it for granted was from the FBI."

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Class Character of German States: Two Germanys

In all the discussion about Berlin and the question of Germany, a question which the atom-maniacs distort in their usual lying manner, one truth is constantly kept from the American people. This is the truth of the workers' state, the German Democratic Republic, "East Germany."

The capitalist press has two approaches to the GDR, one to label it a "Satellite-slave state" and the other, more assiduous lie propagated by the New Leader-Republic-Post social democratic "stooges", that the GDR is no different from West Germany.

The differences between the two states are the differences between Socialism and Capitalism, and in the compositions of the leading government personnel there is a story in itself.

The West German state is led by bourgeois elements most of whom were willing and able Nazis, and who today faithfully serve imperialism. The Minister of the Interior, Schroeder, (a lawyer) was a Nazi brown shirt; Defense Minister Strauss, (teacher) was a political education officer in the Nazi Wehrmacht; Erhard (economist), Economics Minister was an economic research expert for the Nazis; Treasury Minister Lindrath (civil servant), was an SS officer; Blank (professional peacard), the Labor Minister was also a Nazi officer, as were most of the rest of the motley gang who run that corner of the "free world".

In the GDR it's a different story. Here we find veterans of the International Brigade, concentration camp victims, underground fighters against the Nazis and most of all WORKERS.

Grotewohl, the Prime Minister, and his deputy Ulbricht are respectively a printer and joiner. Defense Minister Stoph is a bricklayer; Trade Minister Rau and Interior Minister Maron are metal workers. The Education Minister Lennitz is a compositor; Supply Minister Wach is a shoemaker; Transport Minister Kramer is fittingly a railway man; and the Building Minister Scholz, a bricklayer.

Rau, Melke (State Security Minister), Kramer, and Scholz are veterans of the International Brigade. Government ministers Wabra, (Control Commission) Girma (Education), Rumph (Finance), Leuschner (Deputy Foreign minister), and Ulbricht are all concentration camp victims.

The overwhelming working class composition of the leaders of the GDR is just one more proof of its workingclass character and of the heroic role it is playing. Today it stands steadfastly against the West German Nazis and their American imperialist masters. It is no wonder that the American imperialists froth at the mouth and seek by every foul means to overthrow and destroy the GDR.

Underterrd by this, the GDR is building Socialism and stands proudly with the other Socialist nations led by the Soviet Union in the fight for world peace, socialism and freedom.

JIM BARRY

May Day '59

73 Years of Revolutionary Tradition

MAY DAY began with the struggle of the American workingclass for the eight-hour day. But the May Day tradition has long since grown far beyond the simple economic demand for a shorter work day: It has become the day that

the workingclass around the world demonstrates its unity and strength in the struggle against imperialism and war; its determined stand for peace and socialism. We have real reason for national pride in the American origin of this international symbol.

In 1866 at the founding convention of the National Labor Union, one of the forerunners of the present-day AFL-CIO, a resolution was passed which stated in part: "The first and great necessity of the present, to free labor of this country from capitalist slavery, is the passing of a law by which eight hours shall be the normal working day in all states in the American Union. We are resolved to put forth all our strength until this glorious result is attained." As yet relatively uncorrupted by the various blandishments of the class enemy, the American labor movement was one of the first to project the abolition of capitalism as a basic necessity in order to free the workers from inhuman exploitation.

From 1866 to 1886, the struggle for the eight-hour day was a part of bitter strike struggles that swept the nation during that period. In 1886, the organized labor movement announced that beginning May first, eight hours would constitute the legal working day. The revolutionary concept of a "legality" established by workers was thus established, although it took many years of bitter struggle to realize the initial goal of the eight-hour day.

May Day spread quickly around the world, and the Workingmen's (First) International called upon the workers of all lands to de-

monstrate on May First for their just demands, or peace, and basically for an end to wage slavery.

Throughout the years, May Day has been the day when the streets of cities throughout the world ring with the marching feet of workers, with slogans of socialism in every language. It is the day when the might of armed workers in the socialist countries proclaims before the entire world that socialism will hold fast against imperialism and counter-revolution.

In the United States where May Day originated, the capitalists and many of their "labor" lieutenants each year strive to convince the people that May Day is some foreign conspiracy. But the workingclass cannot and does not forget its history of struggle.

This year as in past years, we militantly proclaim our class program of peace and democracy; for national liberation for the Negro people; for independence for Puerto Rico; for solidarity with the national liberation movements of all colonial peoples.

This May Day, in the tradition of the original May Day, we demand the Six Hour Day. We join with all other the American workers in their daily struggles for higher wages and better working conditions. We will fight side by side with the super-exploited Negro and Puerto Rican workers for an end to all forms of discrimination.

We rededicate ourselves to the building of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party, to the cause of the working class, to Socialism.

The Economic Situation

Part IV

MACHINE TOOL ORDERS

The level of new orders and shipments of machine tools has long been recognized as especially meaningful in attempting to anticipate the development of the various phases of the economic cycle. Briefly stated the reasoning behind this is as follows:

The driving force of the recovery phase, as we have noted, is large-scale investment in plant and equipment, a major element of which is the replacement of old worn-out or outmoded machines with new improved ones. But before the general replacement of old machines with new machines can take place, the "machines that make the machines" — the so-called "machine-tools" must be built up. (Common types of machine-tools include: machines for boring, broaching, drilling, gear-cutting and finishing, planing and shaping.)

Large machine-tools take from nine months to eighteen months to construct. Therefore, as experience has shown, the ups and downs of the machine tool industry cast the shadow of coming events before them.

From an all-time high of \$137.5 million in December, 1955, the value of net new domestic orders (it is best to omit export orders here) for metal-cutting machine-tools dropped steadily for two-and-a-half years to a low point of about one-tenth of that amount in April, and again in July, 1958.

Although there has since been a very noticeable pick-up in this index, the following facts remain:

1) The machine-tool industry

is still operating at only about thirty per cent of capacity.

2) Machine-tool shipments in 1959 will be below the 1958 level, according to the consensus of the tool manufacturers, themselves.

3) Even the modest rise in machine-tool orders which has occurred does not represent, in the main, plans for expansion of capacity. "Most new machine-tool orders (today — ed.) represent normal replacement or modernization (largely automation — ed.)" (Wall Street Journal, April 14, 1959). The same survey is also the authority for the facts cited above.)

Looking at this key index then, one can agree with the sense of the exasperated statement of the president of one of the best-known machine-tool companies (Brown & Sharpe Mfg. Co.) when he says: "Fundamentally, I see no evidence that industry is going into any expansion craze very soon."

To which we simply add that the recovery of jobs, even to the 1957 level, which is the main concern of the workingclass, such a recovery depends precisely upon such an "expansion craze."

We repeat: The rise in industrial production during the last eight months of 1958 was based upon artificial factors, particularly increased government expenditures. It was not based upon the cyclical development of productive forces. Although in 1959 some basis may be developing for a real cyclical recovery, it cannot yet be said that it is definitely begun.

From this fact flows the most important two-fold political conclusion:

Wall Street and Washington,
(Continued on page 2)

The Negro Question and the Communist Party's Revisionist Line

When Marxist-Leninists say that the Negro question is an "Achilles heel" of American imperialism, the point is that it is not only a vulnerable point, but that it is an indispensable part of American imperialism, an inescapable contradiction! The oppression of the Negro people is an inherent and essential feature of the American "free enterprise" system. The nature of imperialism cannot encompass the necessary historic liberating ANSWER to the Negro QUESTION!

Yet the revisionist and conciliatorists of the old Communist Party leadership now make strenuous effort to formalize their de facto abandonment of the revolutionary position on the Negro question, an effort organized around a "Draft Resolution on the Theoretical Aspect of Negro Question". (Published as a supplement to Party Affairs).

In his discussion of the Resolution, James S. Allen turns his introspective eye upon the source of past "errors": "We were led to believe" (You see it was all in the mind!) "that . . . with respect to internal economic development, American capitalism had reached its apex and had fallen into a condition of permanent stagnation; had indeed entered upon a period of constant decline. It was not then anticipated (it was just a mental "blockage"—ed.) that there would be further industrial expansion which would lead monopoly capital to tap the labor supply of the Black Belt to a greater extent than during the first war (World War I)". As a result, Allen goes on, "From a peasant point in the majority, the Negro has become predominantly a people of wage earners . . . a basic change has taken place that requires a new look at our position (on the Negro question)". (Our emphasis, ed.).

According to this line of argument, American imperialism, by its nominal "internal economic development" can shed this Achilles heel, the Negro question, when one stops to think on it, the possibilities opened up by this theory seem nothing less than overwhelming to the imagination! The Achilles heel of working class struggle can also be saved from revolutionary rupture if only (as James Allen puts it) monopoly capital continues to "tap the labor supply of the Black Belt to a greater extent" than before. For, this would mean that U. S. imperialism was experiencing no cyclical crises or depressions, and no general decline as a part of the capitalist world system of production.

Why stop there? The peasants of every colonial country in the world can look forward (according to the theory of the CPUSA) to their liberation from national oppression by being transformed into proletarians (like the sugar worker of Puerto Rico, the oil workers of Venezuela, and the tin miners of Bolivia, who have been enjoying such "national liberation" at the hands of American imperialism for half a century already!)

One thing is clear: In order to have belief in this theory of the Negro question as put forth by the CPUSA today, one must have a great faith in the future of American capitalism and must identify the interests of the Negro people with it. Those who see the Negro question in this light are basically bourgeois reformists. We say this is no more than plain Marxist-Leninist logic. We challenge the National Committee of the old Party to refute it.

Let us now turn to a second example of how the revisionist

the Negro peoples movement as a whole is a revolutionary ally of the proletariat in the struggle for Socialism.

It is not surprising that in rejecting the Marxist-Leninist position on the Negro question Jackson and the rest of the leadership of the old Party have turned back toward the arsenal of bourgeois "explanations" of the Negro question.

After having said that the "nation-like" features do not determine the character of the Negro question, Jackson says:

"The Negro people in the United States suffer a special form of national oppression. It is national in the sense that all class strata are subject to a common yoke . . . They are racially identified and set apart by racist laws and customs, social existence and by actual ethnic identifications." (ibid. p. 10).

Let's see: All Negroes are oppressed. All Negroes belong to the Negro race. That much is clear. But why should people of the Negro race be oppressed? That is the Negro question of questions!

That is precisely the question that the Resolution seeks to evade with its characterization of the Negro people not as an oppressed nation and national minority, but as " . . . a racially distinctive people or nationality." The Negro people are apt to be "racially distinctive" for some centuries at least.

The point is that the fighting determination of the Negro people in the United States to fall into step with the national liberation tide of the oppressed peoples of the world is not going to wait for centuries for justice and equal rights. This determination ranges them more and more consciously on the side of the forces of socialism, and the workingclass against the common imperialist exploiter and oppressor.

This is the basis, the only real basis, for rallying the white workers to take up the challenge of the Wall Street-Dixiecrat plot against the civil rights and national liberation struggles of the Negro people; the basis of a common objective interest in an inescapable struggle for existence.

No Marxist-Leninist will make the mistake of considering that these ideological battles are matters of mere theoretical abstractions without "practical" significance. In future issues of the Vanguard we shall spell this out in relation to many aspects of the class struggle. We shall close this article by citing the tremendous practical significance of the theory of the Negro question.

Early this year the NAACP formally and publicly indicted the U. S. labor movement for its failure to give more than mere lip service to the struggle of the Negro people for civil rights. Shortly thereafter, the sad accuracy of this criticism was dramatized by the disgraceful open collaboration of a Textile Workers Union local in the firing of NAACP members in Virginia. These developments emphasized the warning sounded in the November issue of Vanguard:

"The most outstanding aspect of the current crisis of American democracy is the deterioration of the Negro-Labor alliance, the failure of the trade union movement to take up the Wall Street Dixiecrat challenge to the struggle for Negro liberation."

Today we underscore that warning. Upon the swift correction of this critical failure of class responsibility depend such major tasks of the labor and democratic movement: 1) The organization of the South. 2) The smashing of the southern bulwark of imperialist reaction within the United States; 3) The victory of the six-hour day struggle; 4) Independent political action by labor, beyond the status of mere window-dressing for the

Jimmy Higgins Takes a 'New Look' at the CPUSA

First, I am a worker. My parents were poor farmers — like most workers and farmers we knew nothing whatsoever about the theory or philosophy of the working class. We thought of the word CLASS as having to do with the quality of articles, commodities or things. We lived a life of religion, superstition, ignorance and fear. I lost all of this in my first strike to build a labor union. I wanted to make this clearer before I proceed to show that life itself has taught me many things. There is an old proverb, which goes something like this: "Sometimes one has to be hit on the head before one wakes up." Of course this method of education applies to this writer only — I hope.

Most people of my age remember the depression of the 30's, when 16 million workers were unemployed. Day after day I pounded the sidewalks with worn-out shoes and sore feet, looking for a job. Finally, I found a job in a place that boasted of no union, with the wages being less than the money which I had been receiving on relief. Shortly thereafter the workers decided that a union was the only answer, so we all walked out to form a union. Over enthused with the prospects of a better life in organization I became very active in the strike. My activities caused me to be ambushed and severely beaten by four company sluggers; these thugs were paroled from the Joliet penitentiary and paid by the company as strikebreakers. This dear reader, is a very good pattern of "people's capitalism."

After this fascist attempt to murder me I became wide awake to the fact that company officials do not want their employees to become active in any strike, for the simple reason that it is possible that the workers might get together and discover where the company profit comes from. On account of the terrific beating received during the strike, I was unable to go to work for two years, so to the relief rolls I go with a family of four children. Relief had become more difficult to obtain now as picket lines swelled outside relief stations. It was at this time, that my eight year old daughter became ill with appendicitis and died in Cook County hospital. The family doctor refused to see her because I was on relief and had no money. Money relations prevailed, instead of human relations. Watching the tiny casket slowly lowered into the grave I began to ask myself this question, WHY? I kept searching for the answer, because I knew that I hated something, then I found the answer in a statement, made by Karl Marx, the founder of scientific socialism and communism, some years ago: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

I knew then, it was capitalism that I hated. I became class conscious and joined the Communist Party during the Browder period. I joined this great working class party to study and to be taught

Democratic Party. On May Day, 1959, we rededicated ourselves to Negro-white workingclass solidarity, to the support of the national liberation struggle of the Negro people, and to the victory of Marxism-Leninism over revisionism on the Negro question, as on all others.

All the "amalgams" in the pharmacy of revisionism will not rid Wall Street of its Achilles heel. Upon that fact is hinged the historic revolutionary alliance of the workingclass and the Negro people.

the science of Marxism-Leninism, the road that over 900 million people are now using to build a better world. Two years ago at the 16th National Convention held in New York city the leaders of the old CPUSA took the "American Road to Socialism" the road of revisionism. That which used to be a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party has now become congealed with revisionism, a disease having a general likeness to imperialism and highly contagious.

There were leaders from the National Committee who walked the floor during the conference, with faces made up like "paper tigers" lighting cigarettes one after the other, trying to start fist fights. I couldn't help but wonder if these men had anything to do with the liquidation of ALL left centers in the struggle for Negro rights as impediments to the policy of major concentration in the reformist led mass organizations as now practiced in the old party.

I wanted to get a chance to ask them about the White Citizens Councils and about what had happened to the Civil Rights Congress, the Negro labor Councils, the Council on African Affairs, and Paul Robeson's "FREEDOM" the left paper in the Negro field, but I couldn't get the floor or get a word in "edgewise." It was horrible. Another thing that floored me was the anti-Soviet articles that started to appear in the Worker while I was carrying a route of 25 papers. This was all brought up in my club, but it was like a "hot potato" the comrades were afraid they might be expelled. My club chairman, commented "but you can't criticize the leadership."

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Economic Situation

(Continued from page 1)

with the direct and indirect assistance of the opportunists of all stripes, are straining with "all deliberate speed" to force upon the people a program of "creeping austerity", all the while camouflaging their intent with false "recovery" claims. They make an austerity and they call it "prosperity."

The workingclass and the masses of the people generally are beginning to awaken to this plot against their jobs and living standards. The full import of this maneuver is borne in upon them with every rise in taxes, every price increase, every increase in the work-load, every discontinuance of unemployment compensation benefits, every chiseling away at the quality of services and consumers' goods. The recent militant struggles of the textile, coal and timber workers in North Carolina, in Kentucky and in the Newfoundland woods foreshadow a general extension of sharp class struggle by the workers against the "austerity" suit which the monopolists have tailored for them.

It is the duty of Marxist-Leninists to do every thing in their power to strengthen and raise the level of this struggle. An absolutely indispensable part of this task is the struggle for the victory of Marxist theory over Keynesianism and all other forms of bourgeois political economy, as well as the revisionist accommodations of it.

Next month we shall examine the reasons that the Keynesian plan of increased government expenditures will not ease the economic situation, but rather, will lead to a further intensification and politicization of the class struggle.

Statement of National Executive

(Continued from page 1)

Shades of Dimitroff!!! — Where in the world do Communists have "conferences" with the Gestapo who is persecuting them? Did the Cuban Communists appeal to the repressive organs of the Batista regime?

Has there ever been an appeal by the Spanish Communists to Franco's fascist police?

Did the heroic French Communists ever appeal to Pétain's security police when they earned the title of the Party of the Executed?

Only Tito's minions rely on the imperialists' good will. Only their American counterparts, the leaders of the CPUSA rely on the organs of repression of the American imperialist state.

Dear Lucy

Cleveland, Ohio
March 19, 1959

"...in January and I have undertaken to take some steps in relation to our case with which we want to acquaint you. Last Tuesday we filed a motion on behalf of all the defendants for the reduction of the bail to \$1,000 on each defendant. It is now preparing to file a motion to dismiss the case altogether.

"Before doing so we decided to call up the Dept of Justice in Washington and ask for an appointment to discuss with the attorneys pertaining to our case. The appointment was granted on an extremely short notice and we had the time to consult you before we went in. We were in Washington yesterday (March 18) and met with the head of the Criminal Section of the Internal Security Department Mr. Thomas E. Hall. Present was also Mr. William Kenney who had been in our case and another individual who, I take it, for granted was from the "D."

"We had an hour long conference in the course of which we argued for the immediate termination of our case by the government. We feel that the use of so much a strong force on this. The officials, however, refused to commit themselves on the matter. They were merely interested on the matter of government witnesses about whom we had hinted we had important information (also rights). They argued on any of the points we had raised.

"We indicated to them the temper of our country which is strongly opposed to any revival of this kind; on the grounds of the government's duty on the common discrimination in our case in continuing to hold us on indictment than all other cases had been in our country, as well as the human factors involved in the uncertainty, harassment, inability to hold jobs, etc. while the word 'indicted' hangs over our heads. — I urge them to drop the case.

"In the course of our visit we went to the Capital Hill and talked to a number of members and Congressmen on the status of our case. Among these were Senators Young and Lanning of Ohio and Senator of North Dakota. — We were unable to reach Sen. Clark of Nevada. — We also talked to Congressman Francis S. Taylor and Frank Yank of Ohio. — We were received courteously in all cases and all of them expressed varying degrees of interest from one angle or another and promised to do something.

"In the course of the discussion in the Dept of Justice we promised to speak for all of the defendants inasmuch as we were specifically asked if we did, we also filed the all reduction motion on behalf of all the defendants.

"We would appreciate hearing from you on this and to convey to us whether those suggestions and proposals and actions you consider to be necessary, we would also suggest that you undertake some actions from your own and especially some involving public pressure on the Dept of Justice by various organizations, families, friends, etc. — We are, Congressmen etc. Now is the time that such pressure can be most effective. — We feel that those who are the defendants in our case, do have to take into account the needs of the people at a given moment so things are conveyed to them.

"We hope you will give this your immediate attention and let us know what is happening at your end. — With a & wishes

L. Krechmarek

How can real Communists rely on or appeal to those who have amply showed their social sense of justice by the legal murders of Sacco and Vanzetti, Willie McGee and the Rosenbergs, not to speak of Mrs. Ingram and so many others who languish in the capitalist jails, victims of class justice.

Right from the horse's mouth you get the information as to where the support is coming for their belly-crawling Crusade for a Mercy. Who has pledged support?

The same organs of opinion of the imperialist bourgeoisie who during the trials condemned the Smith Act victims and helped to indict them.

Have these spokesmen for finance capital changed their minds about Communism? No, they have not!!!

There has been no change of "political mood" by them. It is the so-called CPUSA "leaders" who have changed and submissively ask for forgiveness, the spokesmen for Wall Street, who are very class conscious and who know full well what is good for the ruling class, rush over to assist them in their act of repentance.

A long time ago Lenin explained what makes the revisionists and renegades tick when he stated:

"... prison, exile, penal servitude and emigration constantly increase the number of those withdrawn from the ranks, while a new generation grows slowly. Among the intelligentsia, especially that section of it which has 'hitched on' to one or another form of legal activity, there is developing a complete lack of faith in the illegal Party and a disinclination to spend efforts on a task which is particularly thankless in our times.

"Friends in need are friends indeed", and the working class, which is passing through the difficult time of attack by the old and the new counter-revolutionary forces, will inevitably witness the defection of very many of its intellectual 'friends for an hour', friends in time of festivity, friends only for the duration of the revolution, but who are yielding to the general depression and are prepared to proclaim the 'struggle for legality' at the first success of the counter-revolution.

"(A bourgeois intellectual, who in the days of his youth joined Social-Democracy, is inclined, because of his petty-bourgeois psychology, to give up the struggle in disgust: so it was, so it will be; to defend the old illegal organization is hopeless, to create a new one is still more hopeless.)" (Selected Works, Vol. IV, pp 57-58).

Observe where Krechmarek and Chauncey direct the main appeal for support. Krechmarek says: "We have also approached the Cleveland Bar and the Cuyahoga Bar to consider the matter . . . We have further taken the entire matter to the Cleveland daily newspapers—specifically The Press, and the Plain Dealer."

A campaign among the masses of workers and toilers is out of the question. That would put them in bad with the same people they are trying to "convince".

What a sham! Is this how communists should fight for legality? Of course not. If communists should depend on the "good faith" of the ruling class and their spokesmen for their political existence then they will never be allowed to act as members of a vanguard Party, whose main task is to defend the working class and to lead it to Socialism by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Co-Defendants Condemn Krechmarek; Reject Communist Party Crawling

Lucille Behancourt, a young woman of Latin-American descent, was convicted and sentenced to 3½ years imprisonment in the Cleveland Smith Act frame-up trial. Now free on \$7,500 bail, she writes the following open-letter to a co-defendant, Anton Krechmarek, Ohio leader, member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, USA, and writer of the letters reproduced herewith.

By LUCILLE BETHANCOURT

As a Marxist-Leninist and a member of the Provisional Organizing Committee to Reconstitute the Communist Party of the U.S.A. on a Marxist-Leninist basis, I want to be placed on record as emphatically and completely in disagreement with the visit of Messrs Krechmarek and Chauncey with representatives of the Internal Security Department and the FBI, on March 18, 1959 in Washington, D.C.

I not only disagree with the visit but I disagree with the groveling before, and placating of, the police agents of American imperialism.

My line and policy is the line and policy of the POC which is to appeal to and depend on the

support of the workingclass and the people in our struggle to force the Government to drop all proceedings against us.

I cannot be part of any projection or line that indicates that we are begging for forgiveness because of "changing political moods"; this smells of the mood of revisionism. We should never have been indicted nor tried under the Smith Act or any other Act. Neither I, nor any other communist I know of has ever been part of any conspiracy.

My line and policy is derived from the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, as stated in the Twelve Party Statement of the Workers and Communists

(Continued on page 4)

Cleveland, O.
April 3, 1959

Dear Friends:

Thanks for the letter (sent by Chauncey) regarding to our attitude of recent date. We agree with that a meeting of the defendants in this case is very much needed and we propose it be held the week end of April 25th. One or both of us from here will participate.

We filed a motion with the Court to reduce bail to \$1,000 on each defendant. There has been no action on the motion so far. We too have been feeling the pressure for return of bail funds and we are grateful that people have been so active with us in raising the bail. This has dragged on the motion was filed on March 18th.

When I wrote to you before we have continued our efforts to get action for dismissal of the case. A new was done up and sent to all the Congress and Congressmen with whom we had contact. We are now making copies of this memo to about 150 local leading figures and suggesting they intervene in whatever way they can.

We have also approached the Cleveland Bar and the Cuyahoga Bar to consider the matter and if possible recommend in some form the Dept of Justice dropping their attitude on a new trial and commencing their de-ice that the case be dropped. We have promised that the matter will be perfect.

We have further taken the entire matter to the Cleveland daily newspapers — specifically The Press, and the Plain Dealer. The Cleveland Press will have a story and possibly an editorial emphasizing the needless harassment involved in the continuance of the case. (You remember the Press did an editorial job on a suggestion that we visit the Cleveland Bar for providing us with good defense attorneys. It was a good idea but we were told at the time to file our motion for dismissal. We have a definite pledge from the Press to have a story with pictures, plus an editorial criticizing the authorities for failing to terminate the case before this. — We are confident that in both instances on the basis of personal commitments made to us this will be done.

You probably remember Bill Turner from the Press. A few days ago he was featured on the front page of the Press, picture and all. He had interviewed Kingman during his visit to Cleveland. Kingman's son made a speech to him and last week in which he praised Turner highly for the complete objectivity with which he reported the interview and held him up as an example to all other newspaper reporters in America in this respect.

I am enclosing a few copies of the memo we prepared and we hope that you will undertake whatever action you can from your end. If you need more let us know and I will be happy to send more copies. If there is any possibility of even one small financial help we would appreciate it. It will take us away to carry out some of the activities we have engaged in as outlined above — a trip to New York, etc.

Best regards from Martin and myself.

P.S. Received no word from you. Do you want us to act also in your behalf on the matters outlined in my two recent letters?

Legality for CP's never comes as a "gift" from the ruling class of their spokesmen. It comes only, only as a result of the pressure of the workers, the masses of toilers and other democratic strata of the population.

Wherever the bourgeoisie stamps its seal of approval on such "Socialists" as Norman Thomas, Muste or their ilk and gives them "legal" status, it only means that such "Socialists" are in the camp of the bourgeoisie, and it is no different for "Communists", who seek respectability and "legality" by promising to behave.

In this connection, it should be noted that the ruling class is using the tactic of holding hostages quite effectively in dealing with the CPUSA leadership. Right now they keep Gill Green and Henry Winston in jail as a reminder to the whole leadership that they had better continue their class collaborationist line or else!

The ruling class knows that the line of the CPUSA does not hurt them. The contrary is the truth. As a matter of fact, they like that line.

In the N. Y. Times of April 3, 1959 we read the following: "Communists in the United States are now reported under orders to wear a 'new look'."

"The House Committee on Un-American Activities, telling of this today, said:

"To a degree, unmatched in party history, Communists are now promoting themselves as loyal to the United States, peace loving and humanitarian in purpose, and anxious to work in harmony with Socialists, liberals and even capitalists for the good of the nation."

The ruling class likes that line so much that it aims to keep it by swinging a sword of Damocles, expressed by their tactic of holding hostages, so that the misleaders of the CPUSA do not get out of their class collaborationist, revisionist line.

Joe Dougher, ex miner a veteran of American workingclass struggle, a veteran officer of the International Brigade in Spain, and the National Chairman of the Provisional Organizing Committee for the Reconstitution of a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, is especially equipped to comment on the Krechmarek letters and the Smith Act trials. A Communist Party member at the time, he was a co-defendant in the Cleveland trial, along with Martin Chauncey, Anton Krechmarek, and Lucille Bethancourt.

By JOE DOUGHER

The position taken by the Communist Party leadership at the Smith Act trials was one of capitulation and groveling before the onslaught of the bourgeoisie.

First the defendants took the position that "we will not admit that we are Communists — let them prove it." This the government proceeded to do, meanwhile creating in the minds of the jury (and many workers generally) the impression that there was something sinister about being a Communist. In the early trials with only one exception, the defendants did not take the stand as witnesses, but instead used outside "experts" on Marxism.

In the Cleveland trials, for the first time the defendants took the witness stand to defend their rights and the Communist Party;

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Party Leaders Plead for Mercy

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nied, Debs was asked if he had considered asking for a Presidential pardon, Debs replied:

"I have asked for none, nor shall I. I stand on the threshold of going to prison . . . with perfect faith in the rectitude of my course and an absolute confidence in the justice and ultimate triumph of the cause to which I have gladly given my services. To ask pardon would be to confess guilt." (Ch. 19, The Bending Cross, by Ray Ginger).

Who today carries the American, Debs tradition? Those who even in the name of the "American Road to Socialism", grovel to secure mercy from the ruling class? Or those like Lucy Bethancourt who demand their freedom in the name of the invincible cause and rights of the working class?

"The old CP leadership . . . has shown itself unworthy of the confidence of the American workingclass and of the international movement."

Thus declared the August 1958 founding conference of the POC, and certain of our friends recited from the severity of those words.

We now call upon all who challenged or doubted the justice of that judgement simply to study the documentary evidence presented on this page. We shall leave it to them to say: Were we too severe, or on the contrary, were we not too RESERVE in our condemnation of the revisionist-conciliationist clique that calls itself "leadership of the CPUSA"?

In support of the courageous stand of Lucy Bethancourt, we appeal not to the bourgeoisie but to the common people, the workers, toiling farmers, the Negro people, and the Puerto Rican people to support the demand for unconditional freedom for all Smith Act victims; for the end of Smith Act and all other forms of legal terror against the workingclass and socialist movement!

Housing: Opportunities For Struggle

It is nearly a quarter of a century since Roosevelt spoke of "... one third of a nation ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed." The situation as regards housing has not, on the whole, improved, particularly for working class and low-income families. The myth, cultivated by the large real-estate interests, that low-income housing problems have been solved, that the critical situation is now in "middle income" housing is so much hogwash. It is a good many years since anyone looking for an apartment at less than \$25 per room in New York could expect to find several vacancies from which he might choose; usually there are no vacancies at all.

In most larger cities the problem falls roughly into two parts — privately owned housing, and "public" housing. With regard to the first, this essential point is obvious: That is to fight to retain and strengthen rent control, to fight to reestablish it where it has been repealed, to demand universal rent-control coverage of all housing. In the present period of unemployment and inflation, this is a demand that will get very wide support from the working class and all sections of the population.

Special measures are needed to deal with landlords who prey on Negro, Puerto Rican and Spanish families by ignoring building and health regulations, subdividing already small apartments, who ignore rent limits and then get off with, at most, token fines. But demands for stricter enforcement of building codes are not enough. In New York and similar places the main demand should be that if the landlord will not repair his buildings the city must step in and do it, billing the landlord for the costs. Legal and procedural details will vary from one city to another and from state to state, and we cannot here give detailed blueprints. But the essential point is that the responsibility belongs to the landlord and to the city. In some cities or areas it might be worth while to consider campaigns for an arrangement whereby, if a landlord fails to make necessary repairs, tenants would pay their rents into a special fund out of which repair costs would be paid. In New York State, and perhaps in a few other places, pressure should be organized on the Rent Commission to utilize much more frequently the policy, which it has used occasionally, of reducing rents to a nominal one dollar per month until repairs are made.

Closely related to the above is the need for organizing resistance to evictions where people are being driven out of whole areas to make way either for luxury apartments or for high-rent office and commercial structures. There are many areas where there is a solid base, not only for demonstrations and petitions, but for definite resistance to evictions, sit-ins, moving furniture back into apartments, etc. A minimal demand, in any case, is for

other housing that is completely acceptable and no higher in rent than what tenants have been paying.

A special point that has long been neglected is the landlord boycott of children. There is good reason for believing that a campaign — including demonstrations and city-council petitions, publicizing of names of landlords and real estate agents who refuse to rent to families with children, picketing their offices and homes, etc., would get very wide support. The agents should not be neglected in such a campaign; nobody has to be low rent agent specializing in low rent apartments; they cannot dodge their own personal responsibility.

On the "public housing" side there are some special problems. "Public" housing has been one of the major developments in the past 20 years; a few theoretical points should be noted. The Housing Authorities (the New York one, with 75,000 tenants is the largest landlord in the world) are not socialist enterprises; they are not even public service enterprises comparable to the Post Office or the Public Parks. They are, rather, an extension of, an integral part of, the real estate trade as a whole, with their upper administrative posts filled largely from the big real estate firms. Actually, the Housing Authorities are interesting examples of the interpenetration of monopoly and the state machinery.

In New York City the plans and policies of the Housing Authority are closely integrated with the development activities of the biggest real estate firms, and not infrequently are subordinated to the latter. The General

Lucy Bethancourt

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Parties of the Socialist countries, and applied to American conditions.

I am for the reduction of bail to a thousand dollars for each defendant and the dismissal of the case altogether because it was conceived and carried out solely as an attack on the American workingclass.

I would associate myself with a demand to drop the proceedings against us to be sent to the Justice Department and to be followed up with an appeal to the American workingclass and their allies, asking them as individuals and as organizations to demand that the Justice Department drop the proceedings against us and all other victims of political persecution.

When we go to the workingclass and their allies, and tell them we stand for Marxism-Leninism, and explain it to them openly and show them we have no other policy but what is in their interest, and that it must be an integral and fundamental part of the class struggle, we will gain their support and not be dependent on an appeal to bourgeois justice and its agents, which is the line of Titoism.

I cannot see myself appealing to the same agents of American imperialism who deliberately framed me and all of the others who have fought in the vanguard of the workingclass. I want to be able proudly to take my case to the workingclass and their allies, the real American people. I want to be in a position to expose the rotten, corrupt Capitalist system and its agents who are detrimental to and holding back society.

I will not compromise myself by an act of collusion with American imperialism.

Grant project in West Harlem, for example, was quite openly a sop worked up at the last minute to help undermine tenants' opposition to the private "middle income" Morningside Gardens project; the latter, by the way involved the eviction of about 2,000 families to make room for 600 or 700 high-rent apartments. The New York City Housing Authority has always been more concerned with "slum clearance", i.e. with improving real estate values, than with providing housing that workers can afford to rent. In its first 20 years the authority built 78,000 new apartments, but in the process it tore down 64,000 old (but by no means always poor, unsafe or dilapidated) ones. This is an average net gain of 700 new apartments per year, hardly an impressive achievement for the largest city in the world.

These facts are an essential background for any realistic program in regard to housing. We demand more new housing, of course, much more. But new housing takes time, and the immediate central demand must be for an end to the demolition of working class housing. As long as there is a shortage of housing, destruction of existing housing should be stopped. If or when the shortage disappears, the fact will be demonstrated very simply by refusal of people to live in dirty, old and unsafe buildings, and there will be time after that for demolition. This means a campaign for a drastic change in the whole policy of the Housing Authority (we are speaking of New York, but the situation elsewhere is not fundamentally different). It means that large projects should be erected only on the outskirts (with adequate transit made available) or where there is empty land. Emphasis should be on the erection of small buildings and the rehabilitation of existing buildings. Such a change would mean many shifts in emphasis and administration with the Housing Authority; but these problems are solvable.

What was said above about the need for organizing resistance to evictions for new commercial projects applies equally to evictions sponsored by the Housing Authority. Actually, the two are frequently intertwined — as in the New York Coliseum deal and in the Arts Center-Fordham University project a bit to the north. Evictions should be fought, regardless of who is "sponsoring" them.

The housing problem is not fully solvable under capitalism. But these and similar measures would help to lessen the worst pressures.

This article, submitted by a reader, begins a discussion of the housing problem. In our next issue, we will continue the discussion, looking at other aspects — in particular the past and present role of the Communist Party U.S.A., left centers, and possibilities for mass action. We welcome letters and articles on this subject from our readers. — Editor

Vanguard

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Joe Dougher

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but there was no defense of Marxist-Leninist theory. In fact, we spent much of our time trying to figure out how we could convince the jury that we believed the path to socialism would be "peaceful" and paved with the roses of capitalist "democratic processes". We even asked the court to try us without a jury — to rely on the decision of a single capitalist judge, but the court denied the request.

Some of the defendants, including myself and Lucille Bethancourt had strong reservations about these incorrect policies. We did not fight these policies vigorously; our wrong conception of unity prevented us from disassociating ourselves from these unprincipled positions.

The open capitulation, sell-out, and betrayal of the workingclass reached a peak in Puerto Rico. In December 1956, William Patterson and Alan Max were dispatched to Puerto Rico to make sure the Puerto Rican Communist Party leadership "understood" the capitulationist line, and to help the eleven indicted leaders "prepare" for their Smith Act trials.

Before the trial was due to begin, the Puerto Rican Party, under the approving eyes of Patterson and Max, published a statement calling for support for the "Hungarian patriots", and characterizing the Soviet Union as the bloodiest imperialists in the history of the world! When the trial date arrived, it was postponed until April 1957!

Meanwhile, Cesar Andreu, the Party's ideological leader, was awarded the Literary Prize of the Year by the University of Puerto Rico for an anti-liberationist movement book that he published. Three of the indicted leaders had the "good fortune" to have the proceedings against them dropped. April came and went — the trials were postponed indefinitely.

When the final decision was handed down in the spring of 1958, the Appeal Court ruled that 1) The Communist Party of Puerto Rico was not and is not subversive; 2) Its leaders are not Moscow-controlled; 3) Two of the defendants who lost their jobs should receive retroactive pay going back to 1950 (8 years). Judge Polo stated when vacating the proceedings against the defendants that the Puerto Rican Communist Party was not a criminal conspiracy, but that the Nationalist Party (dedicated to Puerto Rican independence) was such a conspiracy.

Nor were the acquitted Party leaders abandoned in the cruel competitive economic arena. No desperate struggle against blacklists for them: Cesar Andreu now holds a job as a script writer for the government television station; Pablo Garcia is established in one of the largest and plushiest law offices in San Juan; Juan Saez Corales works for a furniture company holding exclusive

Jimmy Higgins

(Continued from page 2)

Time or space does not allow me to list all the reasons for the sickness in the old CPUSA, but I sure do know who can do something about it. Yes, that's right. YOU and only YOU my comrades inside or outside the old CPUSA. . . If you are beginning to feel sick and constipated with revisionism why don't you come over and join us in the PROVISIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FOR THE RECONSTITUTION OF A MARXIST-LENINIST COMMUNIST PARTY. Where everything is healthy and growing. Where the slogan "Workers of all countries unite" is put into practice.

government contracts.

After the proceedings were dropped, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, speaking in Philadelphia characterized the release of the Puerto Ricans as another tremendous "victory". "I assure you comrades" she said, "there will not be any more Smith Act victims." She seemed very sure of herself; was she in on the deal?

When Patterson returned from Puerto Rico, he recommended the liquidation of the Puerto Rican Communist Party on the ground that it was "riddled with left-sectarianism".

The Krcmarek letters, reproduced on this page, expose the political depravity, moral cowardice, and dishonesty of the old Party leadership for all to see. The meet brazenly with the police agents of U. S. imperialism, avoiding embarrassment by "not (having) time to consult" with their uncorrupted comrade.

Their appeal for support to "one hundred and fifty leading figures". Of course, the workingclass does not qualify for inclusion in this exalted category.

The Bill Tanner of the Cleveland Press named by Krcmarek and Chauncey as a great liberal because of his "objective reporting" is the same Tanner who played a particularly vicious role before and during the trial. In an open attempt to intimidate the jury to guarantee convictions, he insisted that pictures of the jury be taken for publication, even in defiance of the judge. Surely Krcmarek and Chauncey remember this incident; I cannot forget it.

Only about two months ago, one of these "leaders" in Ohio asked a comrade to accept an assignment to work in the Cedar Central district, a one-time national concentration area. The comrade had to inform him that the Party in Cedar Central had long since been liquidated by the leadership; there was no one left to work with. "Besides" said the comrade, "I am going to join the POC because they have guts enough to struggle as Marxist-Leninists."

This revisionist "leader" replied that they, the leaders of the Communist Party believed in the same principles as the POC, but that if they advocated those principles, they would be faced with going to jail!

Nobody will be fooled for an instant by this talk about "agreeing with the POC". They cannot cover up their tracks as easily as that.

They are revisionists, and these latest letters show clearly that THE ROAD OF REVISIONISM LEADS TO THE CAMP OF THE CLASS ENEMY!

Literature

Of the POC

- Against Opportunism 35c
- For a Revolutionary Position on the Negro Question 35c
- Two Roads 35c
- Resolution on the Jewish Question 15c
- Marxism-Leninism vs Revisionism 35c
- Marxism, Humanism and Hyman Levy 35c
- On the Question Of Youth 10c

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Planetarium Station
New York City

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Box 5086, Cleveland 1, Ohio

Published by the Provisional Organizing Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party.