

For National Liberation of the Negroes! War Against White Chauvinism!

By EARL BROWDER

Extracts from a report to a meeting of American students, on behalf of the Central Committee, Communist Party of U. S. A., on the subject of the struggle for Negro rights in connection with the relation between white and Negro students in the School.

Comrades: I have purposely refrained from preparing a formal report, my purpose being to give the views of the Central Committee as informally as possible. I want to speak fully, frankly, and intimately about all the problems, especially the incidents showing the influence of white chauvinism, that have arisen in the school. I hope it will be possible to make this a Party meeting in the fullest sense of the word, that no one comes here with any reservations whatever, that we will liquidate all differences and unify the Party on the basis of the single Bolshevik approach, of one Bolshevik line.

We approach our problems here by speaking first of all of the Party, because we have failed to find a clear understanding among the students that the Party and its Leninist theory is the only possible instrument for solving our problems. On the contrary, we found a tendency toward groupings, toward a division of the Party members, instead of unification. This disintegrative tendency had affected the entire student body. We consider this to be one of our gravest problems, because when the unity of the Party is threatened, when groups of Party members begin to look toward group tendencies and attitudes for solution of their problems rather than toward the Party, then we are in a bad way, for then we are in danger of losing the only instrument whereby our problem can be solved.

Why do we have such problems as these white-chauvinist mistakes by our white comrades? Are these problems in the school of an accidental nature, or have they a connection with the state of our struggle among the masses? I think we will entirely fail to understand these problems in the school, of relation between white and Negro students, unless we take them in direct connection with the problems of the mass struggle arising in the United States.

What have we in the U. S. A. today? We have an unprece-

dented economic crisis which has shattered the old mass illusions about "permanent prosperity," and the new "Victorian Age" of American imperialism. The crisis has gone so deep that it has plunged large sections of the working class into starvation, is submerging sections of the lower middle classes and farmers, and is sharpening every antagonism, every contradiction, of American society.

In the past year the C. P. U. S. A. has been able in this situation to mobilize increasing masses of the oppressed for struggle against these conditions. We have proved the effectiveness of the Party line by certain results in the fields of struggle, in strikes against wage cuts and speed-up, building the revolutionary unions; in mass struggles for unemployment relief and insurance, for building the Unemployed Councils; and the struggle for Negro rights, mobilizing white and black workers for joint battle on concrete issues. We have shown that our program is correct, and that we are beginning to find the forms and methods of work, whereby it can be brought into life among the masses. We must approach our inner problems upon the basis of these mass struggles.

Among the political advances of our Party during 1931, the most decisive was precisely in the struggle for Negro rights. In what did these victories consist? In this, that the Party raised concretely the issues of Negro rights on the basis of the Leninist program on the national question, and aroused masses of Negroes and also of whites, to struggle upon these concrete issues. The masses have responded to our program, and in the struggle there has begun a sharp class differentiation among the Negroes.

Our Party for many years has raised the slogan of struggle for Negro rights. Why have we only now begun to arouse mass struggles? There are objective and subjective reasons for this. First, the results of the crisis, which fall heaviest upon the Negro masses, including the sharpening repression and lynch terror. The second includes primarily the improved work of our Party, based upon clarification of its political line and its concretization in immediate issues and daily struggles.

The reason for our comparative lack of success in the previous years, cannot be found in lack of sincerity, determination, energy, in carrying on our work. There were weaknesses in these matters, but the main explanation was the unclarity of our program, the lack of Leninist theoretical approach to the Negro question. Because we failed concretely to apply Bolshevik theory we fell into errors in the nature of bourgeois liberalism, and of a social-democratic approach to the Negro masses. We tended in practice to approach them with the attitude of bourgeois-liberal humanitarian-

ism, unrelated to the consideration of the Negro masses as an oppressed nation. We failed to develop the Bolshevik conception of the Negro question, in sharp contradiction to all the varieties of bourgeois thought. Consequently, we fell into the position of competing with bourgeois liberalism on its own terms, dragging at its tail.

It was the assistance of the Comintern which enabled us to overcome these fatal weaknesses on the Negro question. The Bolshevik program on the Negro question was not simply a generalization of our own experiences in America. It was an application of Lenin's program on the national question which summarized the world experience of generations of revolutionary struggle and especially the experiences of the revolutionary solution of the national question in the Soviet Union. We could not have arrived at our program only upon the basis of our own American experience. It was the existence of the World Party of Communism which made possible for us the elaboration of a correct Leninist program on the Negro question.

Have we used this program? Yes, only a beginning, but still sufficient to prove how tremendously powerful it is. But, comrades, we have not made the entire Party master of this powerful weapon, and therefore our progress lags far, far behind its possibilities—and necessities.

We can mention three or four high points in our work in the past year, which stirred the masses. First, was the war against white chauvinism, which we dramatized in the now famous Yokinen trial. We seized upon an incident of discrimination against a Negro by a member of our Party, held a public mass trial which proved the guilt of white chauvinism, and expelled the guilty one from the Party.

It is impossible for the Communist Party to lead the struggle for Negro liberation unless it begins by burning out of its own ranks every manifestation and trace of the influence of white chauvinism, of the bourgeois system of ideas of Negro inferiority which stinks of the slave market. The Yokinen trial was mass propaganda for this beginning of the struggle.

The purpose of our work on the Negro question is to establish unity of white and black proletariat in a common struggle to overthrow capitalism, and the leadership of the proletariat over the Negro masses in the struggle for their national liberation. The purpose of the ruling bourgeoisie is to destroy this unification, and to establish the leadership of the bourgeoisie over the Negro masses. The main ideological weapon of the bourgeoisie is that of white chauvinism; secondarily, it makes use of Negro nation-

alist tendencies. Therefore white chauvinism is the main enemy, against which we must conduct an intolerant war of extermination, against all its forms, open and concealed, a war of political fire and sword. That was the meaning of the Yokinen trial.

At first we expected only our Party and its close sympathizers to be interested and affected by the Yokinen trial. But we received a surprise and a great political lesson. We learned that the Bolshevik idea is so powerful that when we begin to apply it seriously even within the confines of our own Party, this becomes sensational news for all America. This trial was reported at length with photographs by every important newspaper in America. Why? In the first place, because all America was interested in a public challenge dramatically flung into the face of a basic bourgeois principle of social relationships in America. Secondly, the bourgeoisie thought by this publicity to arouse a storm of white chauvinism against us. They were mistaken. There was mass interest, the entire country was "shocked" to hear of such a bold challenge to the "American institution" of jim-crowism. But instead of a storm against our Party, the result was a big wave of sympathy and approval, in the first place among the Negro masses, but also among the white workers. This shows us how the smallest events inside of our Party may have most profound consequences among the masses. This applies both ways, favorably and unfavorably. Our mistakes drive the masses away from us, while a firm Bolshevik line draws them to us. The expulsion of Yokinen, expressing our declaration of war against white chauvinism, exerted a tremendous influence to draw the Negro masses closer to us. At the same time we must say, that whenever we allow to go unchallenged within our Party, any manifestation, even the smallest and most indirect, of white chauvinism, this echoes and re-echoes among the masses and drives them away from us. The Negro masses know everything that goes on in our Party that relates to the Negro question. It is not possible for us to extend our political influence among them except upon the basis of daily, continuous, uncompromising, relentless war against every manifestation of white chauvinism.

Soon after the Yokinen trial, followed the mass struggle to save the nine boys at Scottsboro from legal lynching. If we had not previously had the experience of the Yokinen trial, probably the Scottsboro boys would have become merely another item in the long list of Negro lynchings which disgrace America daily. If our Party had not been awakened, made politically alert on the Negro question, by the Yokinen trial, then in all likelihood the Scottsboro boys would have been executed with little ceremony and

less protest as so many hundreds and thousands of others equally innocent have been. But because the Communist Party had been politically armed and prepared, this made it possible to seize upon the Scottsboro case for a national mobilization of protest and struggle which aroused large masses throughout the country, and even throughout the world.

We had many weaknesses in the Scottsboro struggle. But on the whole we must say the Party conducted it correctly and with great effect among the masses. Already in this struggle we begin to achieve a sharp beginning of the process of class differentiation among the Negroes. At first, the Negro bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaders and newspapers were thrown into confusion by the Communist raising of the Scottsboro issue so widely and effectively. In the first days some of them came out in our support. But very quickly the deep-going nature of the Communist appeal to the masses frightened them and forced these petty-bourgeois elements to turn sharply against us, and to make common cause with the Southern state power of the lynching white bourgeoisie. Very soon we had the mass movement, on one side, headed by the Communist Party and sympathetic organizations; while on the other side, we had the lynch-law government, the Negro petty-bourgeois leaders, the socialist party and the white liberals; and these two sides engaged in the sharpest political struggle. This was a tremendous step forward in the education of the masses. It threw a searchlight upon the machinery of class rule in America, for all to see. Here we begin to see the slogan of unity of white and black workers, taking on its full political significance, while the masses begin to understand that the Communists are quite different from the liberal humanitarians who speak of "human brotherhood" and "class peace," but tolerate and actively support the machinery of legal and extra-legal lynchings and jim-crowism.

In the midst of the Scottsboro campaign we made another political step forward, in the struggle of the Negro share-croppers in Camp Hill. This battle was the first struggle directly resulting from our penetration of the Black Belt, of the agrarian population. It brought out the basic question of the Negroes as a nation, the question of the land and land-tenure, the question of the agrarian revolution, the overthrowing of the semi-feudal agrarian relationships. While immediately Camp Hill was only a struggle for certain partial demands, and correctly so, it threw a bright light upon the basic problem of the land, and thereby became a political milestone in the development of our Negro work.

We have other experiences of political importance. For example, in Detroit we were able to hook up together the struggle

for Negro rights with the struggle for protection of the foreign-born workers, by a joint movement on the Scottsboro case and against the alien registration law of Michigan. This effectively countered the efforts of the bourgeoisie to develop among the Negroes anti-foreign sentiment on the grounds that "foreigners are taking away the jobs of American Negroes," and of anti-Negro sentiment among the foreign-born on the basis of white chauvinism. When two such struggles are united together they take on multiplied political importance and power. Our Communist Party is the only organization that can even conceive the idea of such fusion of the two mass movements for joint effort.

In Chicago and Cleveland, we had a higher development of unity of white and black in mass actions, in the protest movements against the police massacre of Negro workers fighting against eviction of unemployed workers from their homes. These movements led by the Party and Unemployed Councils stirred the masses to their depths. In Chicago, more than 60,000 white and Negro workers marched shoulder to shoulder in the streets in defiance of police prohibitions, supported by 50,000 more in the meetings in addition to the marchers. Before this demonstration the capitalist press was openly agitating and organizing for a repetition of the so-called "race riots" of 1919, when they tried to smash the union of slaughterhouse workers by instigating armed struggle between white and black masses; the demonstration on August 8, effectively smashed these efforts, and instead of "race riots," the bourgeoisie was forced to begin to talk about "the menace of unemployed riots led by the Communists." In Cleveland the same experience was repeated on the smaller scale called for by the smaller size of the population involved. These two mass actions greatly stimulated the growth of the Unemployed Councils; previously the white and Negro workers were slow to come into the Councils, but after they experienced the tremendous power of joint actions on the streets when white and black fought shoulder to shoulder, fighting for the demands of the unemployed and for Negro rights in particular, masses began to flock into the Councils. The greatest success of the Unemployed Councils followed directly from the taking up of the mass struggle for Negro rights.

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Comrades, I have spoken at length about our experiences lately in the mass struggle in order to show, first of all, how everything that touches upon the Negro question is for our Party a question of fundamental principle importance, a matter of life and death. This is equally true of the questions that have arisen among the

students in the school. When we saw our students dividing themselves into groups, fighting among themselves, with the main line of division being whites versus Negroes, it was at once clear to us that we are dealing with the influence of bourgeois ideas among our students, the influence of an enemy class, which could take effect because our students have been insufficiently armed with Bolshevik theory. Just as the tremendous problems of the mass struggle in America require the instrument of Bolshevik theory to solve, so also do the smallest problems in the school.

We have a difficult situation among the students; relations are strained and passions are inflamed. But it is not impossible of solution, if we can secure the collaboration of every Party member, upon the Party line, to raise these questions to a political level and apply Bolshevik theory. The Central Committee of our Party is determined that such a scandalous, disgraceful situation of white and Negro Party members quarreling among themselves, unable to unite in daily practical work, shall be immediately liquidated.

Have we the ability within ourselves to overcome these difficulties? I think we have. Let me recall to your minds the words of Comrade Stalin, when he pointed out that "our difficulties are such that they contain within them the possibility of overcoming them." This also applies to our present problems. For you students, members of the C. P. U. S. A., the meaning is that, by coming together as members of one Bolshevik Party, by applying in practice our Bolshevik theory, we will find everything necessary to solve these problems.

Of course, we will fail to solve our problem if we look outside of ourselves for the solution. There is no magic formula, no vague "higher power," which will come and do the job for us. This meeting here, your collective and individual participation in it, must provide everything necessary to set into motion such forces as weld solidly together, in unbreakable unity, the white and black members of our Party for our common Party purposes, and liquidate every trace of the influence of enemy class ideas, first of all, of white chauvinism.

It is my distinct impression that among the students there has been a process of disintegration, of breaking up into groups and grouplets. Perhaps there are no definitely crystallized groups, but the tendency has affected the entire student body. The main reason for this is, that when faced by certain mistakes by some white comrades in the direction of white chauvinism, the student body as a whole was not sufficiently mature politically to squarely face this situation and liquidate it. Instead there developed a subjective and personal approach, and then to form groupings to solve the prob-

lem. Immediately this resulted in the rise of a great zeal to find and correct the mistakes, not of one's self and one's little group, but of someone else and another group. I must say that there has been no lack of zeal among the students for the correction of mistakes—but always the mistakes of the other person. There is no eagerness for self-correction. But it is clear that mistakes have been general, both political and practical, and that what is required is a general self-correction and joint effort of the student body as a united fraction of our Party. Unfortunately, our students were insufficiently armed with Bolshevik theory for this task.

If you, students, had sufficiently understood the Leninist theory of the national question, how could the white comrades have left the task to the Negro comrades of correcting the errors of white chauvinism? No one denies that white chauvinist errors were committed; but we do not see white comrades coming forward as the champions for their correction, as is your duty. On the contrary, the white comrades had the tendency to admit such errors only to pass on at once to the detailed examination of errors of the Negro comrades, which they put in the foreground, and to also develop some really grotesque ideas of how to solve the problem.

It is not my purpose in this report to deal with the particular errors and identify them upon certain individuals. That must be done, but I am not the best person to do it, because I have not the closest acquaintance with the details of these errors and their authors. Who is best qualified to really expose each particular error? I think the person who committed the error could do this best. In the name of the Central Committee I invite each one of you to expose and combat your own errors; we will help you, and if it is then insufficiently done, we will supplement your self-criticism. It is necessary to attack individuals only when they defend their mistakes; when they join with us to attack the mistakes, then we are all on one side fighting shoulder to shoulder. The mistakes are on the other side and will thus be driven out of our ranks. Anyone who holds tightly to a mistake, refuses to abandon it, considers it is an essential part of himself which he must protect at all costs, such a person and only such will find himself in conflict with the Central Committee and eventually outside the Party.

What are the mistakes that have been made? They have been concessions to white chauvinism; setting up artificial separation between white and Negro comrades during the journey to the school; a paternalistic attitude toward Negro comrades by white comrades, assuming direction of their daily behavior; failing to correct such mistakes when they occurred, insufficient political sensitivity to the

meaning of such mistakes; efforts to counter one mistake of white chauvinism by setting up against it a mistake of Negro nationalist character; allowing the development of bad personal relations, calling of names of "bourgeois nationalist" and "factionalist"; development of ideas of systematic separation of white and Negro, in a proposal of a "Negro Federation" within the Communist Party; and so forth. Further, there was a tendency to minimize the political importance of the whole situation.

These mistakes were contained in what have been described by some comrades as "very little" incidents. But comrades, you must understand that it is precisely such "little" things inside the Party that are the most dangerous because most difficult to combat and eradicate. It is comparatively easy to fight open, unashamed white chauvinism. There is no particular merit in that inside the Party, because there is and can be no such manifestations of white chauvinism tolerated inside. White chauvinists who should happen to find themselves inside our Party are quickly expelled without ceremony. Therefore, all manifestations of the influence of white chauvinism within the Party always and necessarily takes on a more or less concealed form, in some "little" incident. We must, as Bolsheviks, have a keen political nose for such hidden chauvinism, drag it out in the open and liquidate it, without vulgarizing the struggle or creating anything where it does not really exist. That is a test of our ability to defend the Bolshevik line, tested in practice by our ability to develop daily solidarity between white and Negro comrades in the common work.

Were these mistakes the result of bad intentions? I am sure they were not. I am sure the comrades involved were shocked to find they had fallen victims to bourgeois ideology. But there is an old saying: The road to hell is paved with good intentions. The comrades, in spite of the best of intentions, fell into the swamp of bourgeois ideology and the whole student body was soon floundering about in contradictions, unable to liquidate the situation.

What was the basic cause of this helplessness? Is this such a bad body of students? No, I think it is on the whole a very good body of students, of Communists. It represents a selected group of our best. But they *all* made one fundamental mistake, represented in its crassest form in the statement: "We are faced with a practical problem, not a problem of theory."

Whenever we approach a problem from the viewpoint of narrow practicality, we will inevitably fall into rotten liberalism, a form of bourgeois degeneration. You should understand this now, since in our school we are studying at this moment the issues on the theoretical front in the Comintern. This should give you a

keener appreciation of the practical implications of theory than before. The greatest weakness of our Party is still its low theoretical level, and the main purpose of your attendance at this school is to equip you with theory, not abstract theory, but Bolshevik theory which means theory organically connected with daily life and practice.

There have been some complaints that the discussions and struggles on these theoretical questions have interfered with the studies in the school and broken up the regularity of classes. Such a view is a completely formal understanding, and separates theory from practice in such a way as to destroy the revolutionary significance of both. I want to read to you a quotation from Comrade Stalin on theory, which was used in the recent speech of Comrade Kaganovich. It is worth repeating many times. Comrade Stalin said:

"Theory is the experience of the movement of all countries, taken in its general aspect. Theory becomes, naturally, objectless, if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice becomes blind if it fails to illuminate its path with revolutionary theory. But theory may become the greatest power of the workers' movement if it is indissolubly connected with revolutionary practice. Theory, and only theory, can add to the movement certainty, the power of orientation, and understanding of the inner connection of surrounding events; theory, and only theory, may enable practice to understand not only how the classes are moving at present, but also how and to where they must turn in the nearest future."

It is precisely from this Bolshevik approach that we must say that the situation among the students is a disgraceful one, because it reveals that weakness, fundamental for a Bolshevik, of separation of our revolutionary theory from the practice of everyday life. We are not bourgeois liberals, humanitarians, ethical culturists. We are Bolsheviks, members of a fighting Party of the working class, who know that the only road to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Communism is through welding together the iron unity of our Party, the vanguard, in relentless struggle against all the enemy-class ideology which penetrates into our ranks, as the prerequisite to the effective struggle against the class enemy physically.

To the white comrades it is necessary to say openly: You are primarily responsible for the bad relationship, because through you it was possible for the bourgeois ideology of white chauvinism to be reflected in our school, which was the root of the situation. You were not sufficiently armed theoretically, not enough on your guard, against alien influences. You have not been enough Bolsheviks. You must realize your responsibility. You must also make an end of the game of balancing off your mistakes as against those of the

Negro comrades, like a little shopkeeper balancing his petty books. You must realize that your mistakes are much more serious for our Party than those of the Negro comrades. If you cannot understand these things, then you are still unable to understand the fundamentals of the Leninist program on the national question.

Does this mean that the Negro comrades have made no mistakes? No, they have also made mistakes, which we will speak of openly. And when we say those of the white comrades are much more serious, this does not mean that we minimize the importance of correcting the Negro comrades. Furthermore, the mistakes of Negro and white comrades are not disconnected. Every sort of deviation from the Bolshevik line is a concession to the ideology of an enemy class. The white chauvinist mistakes were deviations in the direction of the American ruling imperialist bourgeoisie; those of the Negro comrades were deviations towards Negro bourgeois nationalism, in the main. These are two roads toward the same camp.

We thus give the class characterization of these mistakes. At the same time it is necessary to speak sharply against those comrades who speak of the Negro comrades as "Negro nationalists," etc. This is not a Bolshevik method of criticism, it turns the attention away from the political problem toward the person, while our desire is the opposite, to raise the discussion above persons to political issues. Let there be a stop finally to this whole method of political discussion which consists in attaching an enemy label to a Party comrade; when the time comes for such labels, the discussion is over and the issue has become one of putting a non-Communist outside the ranks of our Party.

Both deviations that came to the foreground in this discussion, would have the effect of serving the interests of the bourgeoisie, of American imperialism, by perpetuating the separation of the working class into two parts, white and Negro. It is therefore clear that we have to struggle on two fronts, simultaneously, against both deviations. The main front is that against the white imperialist ruling bourgeoisie, and the main danger is therefore white chauvinism, against which we must make intolerant systematic war of extermination. This struggle must be led by the white comrades, whose especial duty it is to react sharply and quickly for struggle against every manifestation of white chauvinist influence.

The front of struggle against Negro nationalism is more complicated and must be handled more carefully. With the beginning of class-differentiation among the Negroes, which we have noted during the Scottsboro campaign, the struggle on this front has become hot. This is our struggle against DuBois, Pickens, Kelly,

Miller, Walter White and Company of the N.A.A.C.P. (National Association for Advancement of Colored People), and against Garveyism. It is on this front that we especially need the services of our Negro comrades, fully armed with the weapons of Lenin's theories. Your work here in the school should be carried on especially with this in mind. How important this is for our Party can be seen by the highly important place won by our Negro comrade, Harry Haywood, who is one of our leading theoretical workers today, precisely by his contributions on this front.

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Comrades, my report was deliberately informal, because I feared that a well-prepared formal report might be taken formally. I have spoken extemporaneously, hoping thereby to come more intimately into your problems, and influence each of you to make and entirely new, fresh approach to the problems of your daily life.

The questions you are dealing with practically today occupy a central place, for our Party's development. This very situation must be looked upon as an important moment in the history of our Party, as a crucial test of our Party's ability to face and overcome first of all within itself those problems which must be faced and overcome in a thousand-fold intensified form in the development of the revolution. Thus, today is one of the important moments in our Party development. Each one of you, by the nature of your participation in our discussion, will decide how you are going to influence the future of our Party.

That decision which each of you must make, is not the formal one of whether you hold up your hand for or against a resolution. We might all hold up our hands for the same resolution, but if we then go back into the school, not to remedy the present relationships but to make them worse than before, such a decision would be worse than a waste of time. No, the question each of you must answer is this: "Shall I join with the Central Committee, not only in voting for a resolution, but in transforming the whole life of the school, beginning with a transformation of my own part in it, toward complete unification on the basis of Leninist theory?"

In the discussion that is to take place, it will be important that each one of you will have to say. More important is, what are you thinking. One of the obstacles to achieving the results we wish from this meeting is that some of you are at this moment thinking such thoughts as this: "Yes, I will help the Central Committee; I will help my not saying what I really think." But that is precisely what will not help the Central Committee. It is your very thinking which is at the base of the whole problem, and if we cannot change your thoughts, so that your thinking helps to unify the

Party then your worlds are worth exactly nothing. With such thoughts you are repeating the mistake of Comrade Mintz, who, discussing the mistakes in the *History of the C. P. S. U.* tried to separate the "politically expedient" from the "objectively true." Such an attitude means one of two things; either one does not understand the fundamentals of dialectical materialism, or one declares that the Communist Party can find "expedient" that which is objectively false, which would mean a belief that the Party line is false. No, with such thoughts you cannot in any way help the Party.

This problem in the school is not accidental, as we have shown. And it cannot be isolated to the school. Its effects will spread far beyond. It is our task to so transform it, that we find within it not only the immediate solution, but also transform this incident into a weapon to raise the whole struggle for Negro liberation to a higher level, and an instrument for the further Bolshevization of our cadres. That means that we must make such a discussion here, and conclude it with such a unanimous resolution, that can be spread far and wide as the best kind of repudiation of all slanders against our Party, and the best proof that our Party not only wants to fight against white chauvinism, and for Negro liberation, but also that it knows how to make the fight, boldly and effectively. By taking part in this discussion now, you will be passing a real test of the Bolshevik qualities of a selected group of the leading cadres of the Communist Party of U. S. A.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS AFTER DISCUSSION

Comrades, after some sixty speeches in two-days discussions, I am sure at this late hour no one expects a complete summary. Therefore I will speak only a few concluding words.

In this discussion the line presented for the Central Committee has met a genuine response from the students, which is gratifying. It proves that the Central Committee did not make very big mistakes when it selected this student body; that it has the basic Bolshevik qualities in spite of mistakes. We have made a good beginning of real self-criticism. But we cannot be satisfied with this; this must start a process in the daily life of the school, and only then has it permanent significance.

In our discussion we have spoken about the struggle for Leninism now going on on the theoretical front in the Comintern. In the light of our discussion, which has been a step forward for our Party in concretely applying Bolshevik theory to daily life, in liquidating the gap between theory and practice, we can say that we

have begun to carry the line of Comrade Stalin's letter into the life of the Communist Party of U. S. A.

A few words must be spoken about some general problems raised in the discussion. First as to the extent of white chauvinism among the workers in the U. S. and in our Party. Two errors must be guarded against on this question. One is, to try to find some mechanical limitation to the influence of white chauvinism among the workers. While it is correct to speak of the labor aristocracy as the special bearers of white chauvinist influence among the workers, because this aristocracy finds a material interest in Negro subjection, it is not correct to limit this influence to the aristocracy of labor. White chauvinist influence penetrates as deeply among the workers as the whole influence of bourgeois ideology; that means, just so far as we have not broken it down by revolutionary education and re-education of the workers. There is a limited spontaneous breaking down of white chauvinism among the workers, but on the whole we can safely say that *only* to the degree that our Party organizes and leads the conscious struggle against white chauvinism, is this influence destroyed among the workers. The opposite kind of mistake is to speak of the whole working class as "white chauvinists." The masses are influenced by white chauvinism but they are not active bearers of this bourgeois poison. Active white chauvinists among the workers are a distinct minority. Similarly, within our Party, we must say that white-chauvinist influences are still widespread, but it is absolutely wrong to speak of white chauvinism as "rampant" within our Party; on the contrary, within the Party it is characterized by its sneaking, slinking character, trying to hide itself, because here it is an outlaw. These facts give us the scope of our inner struggle against white chauvinism, and show its difficulties. It is an essential part of the struggle against the whole system of bourgeois ideology. Each individual white worker finds it necessary to free himself from this influence by conscious inner struggle, as well as participate in the organized Party struggle against it.

Some comrades have tried to develop here the conception of two kinds of "nationalism," one bourgeois and reactionary, the other proletarian and revolutionary. Here is some confusion which must be briefly clarified. We are not dealing with two kinds of "nationalism," but with the national liberation struggle of the masses of the oppressed nation, on the one hand, and with the "nationalist" system of ideas of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation, on the other hand, which attempts to control the national liberation movement for its own class interests, and in the era of imperialism almost invariably subordinates it also to the interests of the oppressing im-

perialist power. These are two different and contradictory factors. The efforts of the subject people to liberate itself from oppression, this is a revolutionary struggle, an integral part of the world struggle to overthrow imperialism as a whole. Our task is to bring this struggle for national liberation under the leadership of the proletariat, defeating the influence of the bourgeoisie which can lead it only to betrayal. This is precisely the central point of Lenin's program on the national question, which is the instrument for unifying these two main forces for common struggle against imperialism. It is precisely a distinguishing feature of the Second International, of reformism, that in the name of a false "internationalism" it denies the right of national self-determination to the oppressed peoples. True internationalism, that is Leninism, places the right of self-determination as a basic programmatic point. The "internationalism" of the reformists is in reality the nationalism of their own respective imperialist rulers; while the national program of Lenin is an essential part of internationalism. Any "internationalism" that denies the right of self-determination to the subject peoples is false, is a mere cover for imperialist chauvinism.

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Comrades, these discussions have indeed marked a real mobilization for a political war against white chauvinism, for broader and deeper mobilization of the masses of white and Negro workers in the U. S. A., for the struggle for Negro liberation. This is an essential part of the class struggle, of the struggle for overthrowing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. We live and fight within the world fortress of capitalism, of imperialism, which finds one of its main instruments of rule in the division between white and Negro workers. But this division also represents one of the weakest spots of American imperialism, where we can strike quickest and hardest, it represents a pre-capitalist survival, a relic of slavery and feudalism, a crying anachronism, embodying all the contradictions of the decaying imperialist world. In this discussion we have more effectively armed ourselves with the Leninist theory, whereby we can call forth for struggle all the revolutionary forces generated by this national oppression of the Negroes, link them up with the rising forces of the proletarian class struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party, and thus with multiplied capacity for effective battle against the oppressors, the imperialist bourgeoisie, we will "sail into the face of the storm" of the revolutionary mass struggles that are being prepared in America on a gigantic scale.

The Tasks of the Communist Party U.S.A.

RESOLUTION FOR THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

THE Communist Party of U. S. A. has made some improvement in its work in strikes, hunger marches and the struggles of the Negroes. Notwithstanding this, and the increasingly favorable conditions for the fulfillment of its daily increasing tasks in the struggle against the offensive of the bourgeoisie, against the pronounced aggressiveness of American imperialism and the immediate perspectives of a new, imperialist world war, our Party has not yet made the essential change in its work necessary for the carrying out of its chief immediate task. This task is to overcome the isolation of the Party from the decisive masses of the American proletariat, to come before the masses as their vanguard in the struggle against the offensive of the bourgeoisie and against the imperialist war, and to firmly root itself in the decisive industries by means of solid personal contacts with the workers.

I. THE SITUATION

Capitalism of the United States has been hardest hit by the economic crisis, as expressed in the unprecedented fall in production and trade, and in the growth of mass unemployment, which plunges millions and millions of workers in the cities and in the rural districts into hunger and poverty. The crisis is destroying the petty bourgeois illusions of the masses about the "American standard of living," "community of interests of labor and capital," and creates the most favorable prerequisites for the formation and strengthening of the class front of the proletariat and the working masses.

In its efforts to save the capitalist system from a further deepening of the crisis, and to find a capitalist way out of the crisis, the American bourgeoisie is carrying on the fiercest attacks against the masses and is feverishly preparing for a war against its imperialist rivals and, above all, for intervention against the Soviet Union. Wage cut after wage cut is being forced through, millions of unemployed are subjected to hunger and poverty and the standard of living of the masses has already been forced down by more than 50 per cent through wage losses as a result of wage cuts and un-