

DISCUSSION ARTICLE BY J. MINDEL

ONE OF THE REASONS for the errors committed by the Communist Party was complacency and an easy-going approach to theoretical mistakes. Another was the trust the comrades had in Comrade Browder. We always expected Browder to be the first one to acknowledge mistakes and help correct them. This led to the substitution of the bourgeois practice of one-man leadership for the Communist principle of collective leadership. Such an attitude led to the loss of initiative and self-criticism, and made it impossible even for Comrade Foster to raise his warning before the entire Party. Even lately many trusted Comrade Browder to correct the mistakes committed and to help strengthen and unify the Communist Political Association. Browder failed to correct his mistakes.

The answer to this is to be found in an examination of Browder's speeches and writings. They will disclose that the change in the line of the C. P. and the dissolution of the C. P. itself were influenced not by the historic Teheran conference alone. Teheran did not demand a policy of retreat. Teheran demanded and demands now a policy of struggle, the mobilization of all the anti-fascist forces for its support. The dissolution of the C. P. was not dictated by Teheran. The dissolution was a con-

cession to reactionary finance capital, a policy of retreat before their attack upon the war effort of the nation, the Roosevelt Administration, organized labor, and the Communists.

One has only to recall the difficulties the country encountered in converting industry to serve the war needs, the sabotage of certain monopolies, such as aluminum, and the refusal of others speedily to convert their plants for war production and to build new plants.

The industrial leaders as a whole proved their inability to cope with and meet the needs of the nation in the crisis of war. The government, under the leadership of the late President, had to assume the initiative in planning production for war, building new plants with the people's money and renting them out to the same monopolies for their private gain. The economy of the country has thus been run on the basis of state capitalism on the one hand and private enterprise on the other. An unrestricted market and high profits were provided by the government for the goods produced. The representatives of big business occupied the key positions in the apparatus created by the government to serve the needs of war. Labor and the public received some secondary positions.

The initiative and patriotic zeal shown by labor, especially organized labor, in promoting the steady flow of war supplies alarmed the monopolists. The seven-point program advanced by Roosevelt to curb war profits and regulate prices enraged most capitalists. A frontal attack upon the Administration and labor was made by the monopolists and their agents, and the President's seven-point program was defeated in Congress.

Roosevelt accepted the defeat and compromised with the financial oligarchy.

Instead of resisting the attacks of monopoly capital and assuming the leadership in mobilizing labor and the win-the-war elements to resist the reactionaries, we, under the leadership of Browder, retreated.

Probably the President was correct in judging that any further pressure in that direction would cause disaffection from the war effort among capitalists, whose prejudices would be outraged, and that would do more harm to the war than the increased economic efficiency would do good.—Earl Browder, *Teheran*, p. 72.

The further retreat during the elections was adequately dealt with by Comrade Foster in his report to the National Committee. But what escaped our attention is the fact that Browder already completely absolved American finance capital of being imperialist. In his article in

Political Affairs for February, 1945, Browder stated:

They [a few obvious conclusions] confirm the fact which we noted in January 1944, that the decisive sections of the American capitalist class have abandoned the old policy of hard-boiled reaction and imperialism and are seriously trying to adjust themselves to the democratic currents and needs of the nation at war.

The United States is indeed a land of miracles! The "decisive section" of the American bourgeoisie changes its nature by the simple educational process of improving its mentality. Its new "intelligence" becomes now the decisive factor that determines its actions. This new discovery on the part of Comrade Browder makes all the work of Marx and Lenin outdated. Imperialist capitalism is no more. The inner contradictions of capitalism and the law of uneven development are done away with at the stroke of a pen.

The economic and political development of the different parts of the United States is uneven. The different levels of development produce friction and antagonisms in the ranks of the capitalist class itself. The recent industrial development in the West is obstructed by the monopolists of the East. New forces are struggling for the industrial development of the South, for the abolition of the feudal remnants there, for more education, for the development of a local market for their commod-

ities. In this effort they are obstructed by finance capital of the North and the bourbons of the South, this reactionary alliance obstructs and seeks to defeat every effort for progressive action to remove the economic, political, and social inheritances of the slave system. Browder's revisionism led to the dissolution of the Party in the South, and to abandonment of the Negro and white people of the Southern states to the mercy of the reactionaries. The logical conclusion of Browder's new theory, that the decisive section of the monopolists and financial oligarchs can be progressive, led in practice to the belief that their allies, the Bourbons of the South, the allies of finance capital, will also become infected with "intelligence" and humanism and will voluntarily give up the system of oppression and persecution and the reactionary laws operating in the southern states. The Negro and white people in the southern states and labor need not worry about the future. The feudal remnants existing in the South will fall of themselves as soon as the Bilbos and the Rankins become "intelligent."

Finance capital is the fusion of industrial and banking capital. This fact, nevertheless, does not diminish the contradictions within the capitalist class itself. On the contrary, it sharpens them. As exporters of capital, finance capitalists seek to perpetuate reaction, feudalism, and fascism everywhere. As monopolists they seek to control the natural re-

sources of every country, take possession of the land, and turn every country into a producer of raw materials.

On the other hand, as producers of commodities they are in need of extended markets. These markets can be secured in the U.S.S.R., in the reconstruction of Europe, in the industrial development of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and in raising the standard of living at home.

Monopoly cannot do away with competition altogether; alongside the monopolies new industrial enterprises are created. New capitalists seek a place in the economic and political structure of the country. This explains the difference between the Kaisers and Eric Johnstons, on the one hand, and the du Ponts and Pews, on the other. This is the basis of the contradictory foreign policy of the United States.

The forms of struggle adopted by American imperialism to gain hegemony in world affairs has differed from time to time. One of these forms is known as the policy of isolation. Isolationism is not a policy of keeping America out of foreign entanglements as the official proponents of isolation want us to believe. The policy of the American trusts of participation in cartel agreements for the economic division of the globe belies their assertions.

American imperialism believes it can rule the world with the power of money, and therefore makes every

effort to defeat any international agreements that may curb that power. Vandenberg, Taft, and Wheeler are not accidental individuals who represent their private views in Congress. They are the agents of finance capital in the halls of Congress and continue the work of Lodge, Harding, and Hoover.

The Teheran and Yalta agreements among the United States, England, and the Soviet Union were of great historic significance. They made certain the defeat of Nazi Germany and laid the basis for the destruction of fascism everywhere — politically and morally. The defeat of Germany and its satellites makes certain the defeat of the remaining member of the fascist Axis, Japan.

Teheran and Yalta also laid the basis for the close alliance of all peace-loving nations to ensure peace for a long time to come. The result of these conferences is the United Nations organization formed in San Francisco. The continuance of the collaboration of the big powers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, was achieved in spite of the machinations of reactionary representatives of finance capital at San Francisco.

Comrade Browder sees the solution of all the contradictions inherent in world capitalism in one single factor—the peaceful coexistence of the two social systems—the socialist and capitalist. The idea that peaceful coexistence of the two social systems is possible was long ago envisioned by

Lenin and Stalin; and that the U. S. is a powerful factor to insure it was part of the Soviet foreign policy since the inception of the Soviet state. At the Genoa Conference, in 1922, the Soviet delegation, on the instructions of Lenin, made the following declaration:

While remaining true to the principles of Communism, the Russian delegation is of the opinion that in the present period of history, which renders it possible for the old system and the new and growing social system to exist side by side, economic collaboration between the states representing these two systems of property is imperatively demanded in the interests of universal economic restoration. . . .

Stalin reiterated this statement in 1927. But neither Lenin nor Stalin ever thought that this coexistence is automatically insured or that agreements between the capitalist states and the Soviet Union by themselves insure peace, or do away with the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system, which are the real cause of war, crisis, unemployment, and starvation.

Comrade Browder is not certain himself that his theory of a “new epoch” can be built only on the collaboration between the United States and the U.S.S.R. But once he made that the cornerstone of his theory he had to find the force that would insure that collaboration. This new force was forthcoming—the “intelligence” of the American imperialists.

Browder is not altogether certain

that the higher "intelligence" will penetrate the skulls of what he calls the reactionary minority. But he finds a solution to this perplexing problem. He advises the C.P.A. to mobilize the working class and all progressive forces in support of the "intelligent" capitalists, who will in their turn press upon the reactionaries to drop their imperialism.

The tendencies of individual capitalists Browder ascribes to the whole capitalist class. The reform policies of Roosevelt which grew out of the crisis and the war, Browder accepts as a permanent policy of the capitalist class as a whole.

The truth of the matter is that while individual capitalists may join, or even initiate, progressive and democratic movements, this nevertheless does not change the nature of the class itself.

Every Marxist knows . . . that classes retain their distinguishing characteristics regardless of the free movement of individuals from one class to another; similarly, movements in political life retain their distinguishing characteristics regardless of the free migration of individuals from one movement to another, and despite all attempts and efforts to fuse movements.—Lenin, *Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*, p. 21.

Comrade Duclos' article was of real service to the American Communists. It hastened the process of the examination of our policy, and it will bring about a stronger and more unified C.P.A. Theory, criticism, self-criticism, and collective work will become the weapons of all militant workers in the struggle for an enduring peace, democracy, security, and jobs.