Party vigilance against enemy infiltration

Elmer Larson
PARTY VIGILANCE
Against Enemy Infiltration

By Elmer Larson
NOTE TO THE READER

THIS PAMPHLET contains the complete text of the article by Elmer Larson which originally appeared in the October, 1952, issue of the monthly magazine, *Political Affairs*.

It is reprinted here in pamphlet form to meet the wide demand for additional copies to combat the government’s use of stoolpigeons and informers in its attempt to penetrate, weaken and destroy, not only the Communist Party, but trade unions and other progressive and peace organizations of the people.

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The period since the end of World War II, and especially the recent years, has been marked by an unprecedented assault on the democratic liberties of the American people. While past American history is replete with many instances of attacks on the democratic rights of those who stood for progress, none can compare with the present well organized, sustained, widespread attacks. Its main significance lies in the fact that it is the necessary accompaniment of the drive of American imperialism towards war and fascism. The big monopolists, through their two-party system, through all branches of the Federal government (Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary) as well as state and municipal governments, have systematically proceeded to nullify the Bill of Rights and to undermine and destroy the foundations of bourgeois democracy. The heavy artillery of this assault has been the Taft-Hartley Act, the Smith Act, and the McCarran Act. This assault takes place behind a smokescreen of Red-baiting and witch-hunts in every field of endeavor, of mounting war hysteria.

Prior to the military defeat of the Axis powers in World War II, Nazi Germany served as the chief center of world reaction, attracting and encouraging the growth of fascism in all bourgeois lands. Today, this role is performed by American imperialism.

In attacking the democratic rights of the American people, the ruling class moves, not out of strength, but out of weakness; not out of confidence in the future, but out of desperation; not with the support of the majority of the people, but out of fear of the people. While attacking all rights and the organizations built by labor, the Negro people, professionals, progressives and liberals, it directs its heaviest blows against the Communist vanguard of the people's struggle for peace, democracy and progress. Using the infamous Smith Act as a battering ram, it has imprisoned eight members of the National Committee of the Communist Party, forced seven other Party leaders into a status of hunted political refugees, convicted other Party leaders in Maryland, and is either conducting or about to conduct trials against national and state leaders in New York, California, Pittsburgh, and Hawaii.

The F.B.I.—Gestapo of American Reaction

Under the fascist-minded, headline-seeking J. Edgar Hoover, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has become increasingly prominent in the past few years as the chief agency of the government in harassing, spying upon and persecuting, not only Communists, but tens of thousands of progressives, liberals, advocates of peace,
trade unionists, and fighters for Negro rights.

Operating out of its national headquarters in Washington, the F.B.I. maintains 52 field divisions throughout the country. In addition to its several thousand full-time agents, the F.B.I. relies on a whole network of informers whose "expenses" it covers from its funds. It has its agents not alone in this country, but serving in a liaison capacity with the intelligence and police authorities in England, France, Spain, Canada, Cuba, Mexico, and Brazil. These international connections were highlighted in the recent period by (1) the close relations with the Mexican police revealed in the arrest of Gus Hall and (2) the visit of the Chief of Police of Paris to F.B.I. headquarters in Washington on the eve of the anti-Ridge-way demonstrations, where he was instructed in the techniques for breaking strikes and peace demonstrations.

The F.B.I. works in closest conjunction with various governmental agencies, private organizations and individuals. Among these are the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) which is responsible for all intelligence activities outside the U.S.; the intelligence agencies of the Armed Forces; the Senate and House Un-American Activities Committees; and the Boards set up under the Loyalty Act, Taft-Hartley Act, and the McCarran Act; the various Red Squads and city and state police; employers' groups; the top brass of such organizations in the national group fields; reactionary newspapers, magazines, writers, radio and TV commentators; and a number of trade union bureaucrats and Social Democrats and the renegade groupings. Ex-F.B.I. agents are increasingly being used by private industry to head up personnel departments, by city and state governments for use on Labor Squads and Red Squads, by newspapers as writers, and by many private detective agencies.

The F.B.I. has methodically studied and improved upon the methods employed by the Czarist Okhrana, Hitlerite Germany, pre-war fascist Italy and Japan, and the intelligence and police administrations of England and France. It has put into use the latest scientific techniques and equipment (wire-tapping, concealed microphones, radio-equipped cars for receiving and transmitting purposes, photography, fingerprinting, chemical laboratories, firearms, etc.).

Hoover has boasted of the following "achievements" of his department: (1) The F.B.I. has processed over four million loyalty forms under the Loyalty program, resulting in the dismissal of 287 individuals while an additional nearly three thousand individuals being investigated "voluntarily" resigned. (2) In the last 26 years, the Identification Division of the F.B.I. increased its file
of fingerprints from 810,188 to over 122,500,000 representing receipts from some 12,065 contributors throughout the world. (3) 1951 investigations conducted by the F.B.I. field offices concerned 775,660 "investigative matters." Each special F.B.I. agent in the field has an average of 21 "investigative matters" at all times. (4) At the F.B.I.-conducted National Academy, police officers from such places as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Scotland Yard, Puerto Rico and elsewhere are in attendance.

Testifying before a Senate committee, J. M. McInnery, Assistant Attorney General, stated that under the Internal Security Bill (McCarran Act) his Division is going through the records of 188 organizations that he lists as "Communist fronts" with a view to selecting about 40 of these against whom to proceed.

Negro leaders have long ago called attention to the shocking failure of the Department of Justice and the F.B.I. to do anything to apprehend and bring to trial those responsible for the murders of Mr. and Mrs. Harry T. Moore in Florida as well as the many other instances of violence and murder against Negroes throughout the country. Speaking before a Senate sub-committee, Hoover smugly reported:

"The Federal Government through the F.B.I. has been able to make excellent progress in the handling of civil rights cases. Such investigations are very difficult. At the same time we have had excellent cooperation from most of the authorities. Most of these cases arise in the South. I will say the authorities in many cases of those communities have cooperated wholeheartedly. There has to be a gradual re-education in order to meet the problem. You cannot go in and arbitrarily demand this or that."

Hoover's program, in a nutshell, is this: persecution and imprisonment for Communists and other fighters for Negro rights on the one hand, and "gradual re-education" for the lynchers and those who perpetrate violence against the Negro people on the other hand.

While the F.B.I. has failed to bring a single lynch to trial, Hoover and his boys are engaged in a nation-wide spree of snoop- ing and collecting information for the purpose of persecution and eventual prosecution of thousands whom it dares brand as "subversive." Even mild liberals who in the past showed some enthusiasm for Roosevelt's New Deal are now suspect. Hoover's blood-hounds have browbeaten janitors of buildings, neighbors, relatives, friends and employers to act as informers. F.B.I. agents, posing as representatives of credit houses, loan corporations, social security agencies, insurance firms, etc., have phoned the homes of those
being investigated in order to secure confidential information about the lives, friends and activities of these individuals. In some cases, F.B.I. agents would phone the wives, posing as former army buddies of their husbands, and try by this device to get such confidential information.

The false picture glorifying the F.B.I. that is conveyed to the American people in such movies as *Walk East on Beacon*, and in various radio and TV programs, in articles, books and speeches, painting Hoover’s thugs as heroes and guardians of democracy, should be countered with the widest public exposure of the true facts. Americans should be aroused to speak out in clear and unmistakable words against the contemptible “war of nerves,” of persecution and abuse by F.B.I. agents against the wives and children of America’s political refugees—Gil Green, Henry Winston, Bob Thompson, James Jackson, Fred Fine, Sid Stein and Bill Norman. The F.B.I. should be publicly shown up for what it really is—the vicious enemy of all that is decent, progressive and democratic in American life, the foe of the Negro people, the tool of the employers for union-busting, the inveterate persecutor of all who work for peace. Where Communists and progressives are approached by F.B.I. agents for any reason, they should take a determined, courageous stand in defense of their democratic rights. They should view such agents as they would strike-breakers and refuse to talk to them, refuse to cooperate with them, refuse to go voluntarily to F.B.I. headquarters for questioning, refuse to allow them into their homes, or in any way have anything to do with these vile characters.

**Vigilance in Combating Enemy Agents**

The American people have a long tradition of hatred and contempt for the use of informers. Every school child loathes the name of Benedict Arnold. American workers remember how employers’ spies were and are used to prevent and break up union organization and defeat labor’s struggles for economic improvement. The Negro people know what use slaveholders made of informers to crush the many slave revolts of the pre-Civil War era and how they are used today to break up the organizations of the Negro people, disrupt the fight for Negro rights, and betray militant fighters to the enemies of the Negro people.

Reaction has found it necessary to counter these long-standing traditions of the American people by a concerted effort to glorify these present-day Judases as courageous patriots, as honorable men and women who are performing a noble service to the American
nation. Stoolpigeons are being pompously trotted out in the various Smith Act trials, at Congressional and deportation hearings. The words of informers are accepted as gospel truth by the Loyalty Boards. Moving pictures such as "I Was a Communist Spy for the F.B.I." based on the "story" of the stoolpigeon Cvetic are featured on the screen. The spy Lautner has spread his fables like a worn-out phonograph record that is played and re-played at trials and hearings throughout the country. A whole conglomeration of assorted informers have suddenly blossomed out as "authors" to cash in on their vile profession—Budenz, Philbrick, Calomiris, Chambers, Bentley, etc. A Philbrick Day is declared by the Governor of Massachusetts. Hair-raising articles by informers fill the newspapers. Reaction seeks to inculcate the whole population with the idea that it is noble and patriotic to spy on one's family, neighbors, friends, shop mates, school mates and teachers, on members of one's profession, etc. In a country notorious for its many racketeers and racketeers, the spy and anti-Communist racket has become a highly lucrative one, as can be seen by the revelation that Budenz has netted $70,000 as a professional anti-Communist, besides his $25,000 salary as a "professor."

The events of the past few years have made it crystal clear that the F.B.I. has sought by every device to infiltrate the ranks of all progressive organizations, and in the first instance, those of the Communist Party, with its informers. This constitutes its "secret weapon," intended for a two-fold purpose: (1) To disintegrate the Party from within, to sow demoralization and confusion within its ranks, and to bring about the isolation of the Communists from the masses; and (2) to facilitate the objective of American reaction from without, to make possible harassment, persecution and imprisonment, and bring about the complete illegalization of the Party and all progressive organizations and their final destruction. In this way reaction hopes to deprive the American people of all leadership in the fight for peace, for democratic liberties, for progress.

The American bourgeoisie are not novices at the use of spies against the working-class movement. The pages of American labor history bear testimony to the extensive employment of labor spies to frame, jail and even execute militant labor leaders. The Palmer Raids (1919-20), one of whose chief architects was J. Edgar Hoover, were preceded by the infiltration of government stoolpigeons into the ranks of the Communists and various progressive and militant organizations of the workers and foreign-born.

Prior to the organization of the millions of workers in the basic
industries, the main centers for use of spies within the country against the workers and their organizations were to be found in the big corporations themselves, their spy agencies within the plants as well as such professional union-busting, strike-breaking agencies as that of Pinkerton and others. During and immediately following the First World War, the F.B.I. cooperated with these employers' attacks and launched vicious drives against the anti-war advocates, against the Left-wing Socialists and the builders of the new-born Communist Party, against militants in the I.W.W. and within the A. F. of L., and against the foreign-born. The new feature that has emerged sharply, particularly since the end of World War II, is that the F.B.I. has become the main organized center for engaging in spying activities against Communists, progressives, liberals, and against labor, the Negro people and all who work for peace. It serves as a clearing house as well as the directing center for the spying carried out by city and state police, by employers' groups and by private organizations.

Nor has American imperialism confined its spying activities to use at home. Especially events during and since World War II have shown how persistently American agents have been used against the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe, and the New China, for purposes of espionage, murder, wrecking and sabotage. Yugoslavia stands out as an example of the betrayal of the cause of peace, democracy and Socialism, engineered by imperialist agents and spies at the helm of the government and the Yugoslav Communist Party. The trial of Rajk in Hungary and of Kostov in Bulgaria, the arrest of Slansky in Czechoslovakia, have demonstrated that the main center for all efforts to destroy these People's Democracies is to be found in Wall Street. Under the Mutual Security Act vast sums have been assigned for espionage and sabotage activities against the Socialist nations. The disclosure contained in the diary of Major-General Robert W. Grow, the military attache at the American embassy in Moscow, revealing his spying activities in the Soviet Union and his fervent hopes for a new World War, further dramatized this fact.

The Role of Stoolpigeons

The class enemy needs and makes use of stoolpigeons for a variety of reasons. Sometimes these many purposes may be combined in one person. At other times, different people are used—a sort of division of work. Generally speaking, the class enemy seeks to accomplish the following through its stoolpigeons:

First, to provide the class enemy with what it deems vital infor-
mation for purposes of harassment, persecution and prosecution—
names, addresses, and descriptions of members, especially of leaders
of organizations; documents, leaflets, and literature; information
relative to the activities of party organizations and members. Usually stoolpigeons assigned to such purposes prefer to keep
quiet on ideological questions, lest they expose themselves. The
various Smith Act trials have seen a whole procession of these types
whose role was primarily to finger people, to identify books and
documents, to present a police version of what transpires in the
Communist Party, in Party schools and in the interpretation of
Marxist-Leninist classics.

Second, the type of informer whose purpose it is to worm himself
into positions of leadership with a view to influencing and distort-
ing the line of the Party, to sabotage the effective carrying-out of
organizational decisions, to promote factionalism and disunity, to
create and exaggerate differences, to sow moods of demoralization,
panic, and lack of confidence in the working class, in the Party and
in its leadership, and generally to do everything possible to bring
about the isolation of the Party from the masses. International
experiences (Moscow trials of the Trotskyites, the Titoites of Yugo-
slavia, Rajk, Kostov, Slansky, etc.) should be taken to heart.

Third, the agent-provocateur type whose purpose it is to promote
adventurist actions, who often disguises himself as a super-militant,
who may resort to planting of forged documents and other incrim-
inating materials on individuals, in the homes of comrades, in
meeting places or headquarters, who helps frame up individuals
or organizes provocations which can provide the enemy with the
necessary pretext to attack the organization as a whole. During the
latter part of the 19th century, two major provocations were en-
gineered to help smash the labor movement of our country—the
frame-up and execution of the militant leaders of the anthracite
miners (Molly Maguires) by a Pinkerton agent-provocateur, and
the hurling of a bomb in the course of a labor protest demonstra-
tion in Chicago with the subsequent frame-up and execution of a
number of the leaders of the 8-hour day movement (Haymarket
Martyrs). The Czarist Okhrana made extensive use of agent-prov-
ocateurs against revolutionaries and their organizations (Azeff, etc.).
The burning of the Reichstag in 1933 was a monstrous provocation
perpetrated by the Nazis to provide a pretext to smash the Com-
munist Party, wipe out democracy and consolidate and entrench
fascism in power.

What kind of people are used as stoolpigeons? The F.B.I. tries
to picture its informers as high-minded, courageous, patriotic indi-
viduals sacrificing their time, their energy, their health and risking their lives, all for the noble purpose of protecting our nation against "subversives." The true facts are at complete variance with this story-book fairytale spread by Hoover. They show the following to be the true picture:

First, there are those individuals who are sent into the organization to play the role of informer. Often these consist of people whom the government already has the goods on for the various crimes committed by them and who are offered immunity from public exposure and imprisonment for services rendered to the F.B.I. One of the government's witnesses in the Foley Square frame-up of the members of the National Committee, the spy Charles Nicodemus, became an informer after the F.B.I. secured his freedom, though he was originally arrested with two guns in his possession. While it may be true that some of the small fry among these informers received only "expense" money for their dirty work (although the Foley Square trial showed that they are not adverse to padding their "expenses"), some of the key informers have been able to make quite a financial racket by performing at endless trials and hearings at $25 a day plus expenses, while some have "written" books, newspaper articles, given lectures, spoken on the radio and generally cashed in as "experts" on Communism.

Second, there are those individuals who are already members of the Communist Party and are converted into acting as informers—opportunists, self-seeking careerists, weaklings, disgruntled individuals, degenerates, drunkards, people loose with funds, etc. The enemy rummages through the lives of people, seeking out weaknesses and vices, resorting to blackmail, bribes and coercion of individuals where possible into becoming informers. Louis F. Budenz, who has served as one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution at various Smith Act trials, peddling the imbecilic nonsense about "Aesopian language," was denounced in Congress on May 20, 1950, by Senator Chavez as one who does not "know truth from falsehood" and whose "perjured testimony" had convicted "many innocent persons." This 20th century Judas is symbolic of the kinds that Hoover would have the American people believe are the paragons of Christianity, of virtue, of decency, of morality, of patriotism.

How do F.B.I. informers operate? The first and basic lesson taught every stoolpigeon is to work in such a way as to win the confidence of the Party members, of the Party organizations. Without this they can't hope to get to first base with their foul work.

In her book *The Red Masquerade*, the stoolpigeon, Angela
Calomiris, gives some insight based on personal experience as to how stoolpigeons operate, as follows:

1. When approached by the F.B.I. to become a stoolpigeon, they warned her not to make efforts directly to get into the Party, but rather “to wait until you’re invited to join.” They emphasized that it was important to find the “right sponsor.”

2. The F.B.I. gave her the following guide of conduct: a) Don’t appear too anxious to join; b) Once in, don’t ask for jobs; c) Don’t ask direct questions; d) Don’t ever ask anyone’s full name; e) Don’t change your way of living; f) Don’t try to change your personality. (“Be as natural as you can.”)

3. She was told to report on every contact with a Communist— to report names, addresses and descriptions of people—to report on all meetings she attended—to send in copies of leaflets and literature put out.

4. She was advised to write or type her reports and mail them to the F.B.I. Whenever she was in “trouble” or “stumbled on something of unusual interest,” she was to phone it in. She was warned never to go to F.B.I. headquarters. Appointments with F.B.I. agents were made for various street corners where she was picked up in an F.B.I. car.

One of the F.B.I. agents told her that the “ideal plant should be able to inspire confidence without ever giving any in return,” “be friendly but . . . know how to keep his mouth shut,” “be alert and quick-witted, but as stable as the rock of Gibraltar,” “have a job which allows him to come and go at odd hours without arousing suspicion,” and “he shouldn’t have family ties.”

While the stoolpigeons used in the various Smith Act trials had the special assignment of spying inside the Communist Party, most of them were also used to spy on other workers’ and progressive organizations. In fact, some made it a habit to join as many organizations as possible, the better to carry on their dirty work. Calomoris claims to have joined at least eight other progressive organizations.

Since the Smith Act speaks about “teaching” and “advocating,” the F.B.I. was most anxious to have its informers attend Marxist gressive organizations. In fact, some made it a habit to join as students, the literature used and the topics discussed. At the Smith Act trials, the F.B.I. presented some of its informers as “experts” on Marxism-Leninism in order to lie about and distort the true meaning of the writings of Marx, Engels, and Stalin and present a police caricature of Marxism-Leninism.

A clever stoolpigeon seeks to conceal his dirty work in such a
way as to avoid being detected. Calomiris tells how she once spied some membership records at a section headquarters, smuggled them out to be photostated, and then had them put back in the original place. She describes how later, at a section meeting, she made a big point of the fact that she had seen such records at the section headquarters and accused leading people of lack of vigilance. By this trick, she tried to give the impression to the members that she was a loyal member who was concerned with the security of the membership.

Generally the activities of all enemy agents are primarily designed to attack and attempt to destroy the Party, particularly at moments of great crisis, combined with blows from the outside. While the enemy has been forced to reveal some of its spies in the course of the Smith Act trials, it would be sheer stupidity to think that it has revealed all of these or necessarily its main agents.

While dealing with the type who are recruited as F.B.I. spies and some of their methods of operation, it would create a false sense of security to think that this follows some rigid, prescribed blueprint. The enemy uses all kinds of elements for its sinister spying. Some of them may be clever, others are not. Some employ certain methods, others follow different patterns. What has to be kept always in mind is the fact that the enemy is able to plant its agents and have them operate undetected for long precisely where there is an absence of the necessary Party vigilance.

**Vigilance Against the Class Enemy**

The extent to which the enemy has been able to penetrate our Party as shown in the various trials and hearings should be a cause for genuine alarm in our ranks. Nor can we in the least be satisfied with the relatively small results shown in ferreting out enemy agents. It is necessary from the top down to be critical of the slowness with which we recognized the danger and rallied our Party in the struggle against this menace. The excellent Report* delivered by Gil Green over two years ago on this subject was inadequately utilized to mobilize our entire Party and certainly was not followed up with additional articles and material.

The struggle against enemy penetration will only be successful to the degree to which this struggle becomes the concern, not only of some special committee, but of the entire Party—every Party member, every Party committee, every Party leader. Vigil-

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ance must run like a red thread through everything we do today. It is imperative that we exercise the greatest vigilance and take the maximum measures to protect our members, leaders and Party organizations precisely among the most exploited and oppressed where our Party must have its strongest base—the workers in the shops and the Negro people.

Proper Party vigilance calls for a struggle against two possible dangers: 1) A tendency to underestimate the enemy; to fail to realize that the use of spies is not a minor but rather a major weapon in the enemy's arsenal, designed to attack and destroy the Party; to be complacent. Such an approach reflects bourgeois-democratic and legalistic illusions, a failure to understand the new situation in which our Party operates today. 2) A tendency towards becoming panicky in face of the revelations at the Smith Act trials and hearings as to the existence of planted informers; to feel that nothing can be done to ferret these enemy agents out of our ranks; to exaggerate the extent to which the enemy has succeeded in infiltrating our ranks and to begin to suspect everybody. Both tendencies are dangerous and often those who are the victims of the first, once their dream world balloon is pierced, fall victim to the second danger.

While we must at all times guard against hysteria, this must in no sense lead to an ostrich-like approach that is satisfied with superficial appearance. The eyes and ears of all comrades and Party leaders should at all times be kept wide open for the least signs of enemy penetration. Every suspicion and every doubt should be pursued and resolved. An atmosphere must be created where comrades feel free to take up their doubts and suspicions with leading comrades and committees, not to keep these to themselves or engage in loose talk outside of the proper Party channels. Where incidents take place showing the handiwork of the enemy—incidents leading to arrests, to trailing of Party leaders, to ouster of comrades from jobs, to "unexplainable" failures in the execution of decisions or undertakings—all such incidents should be thoroughly investigated.

It would be well that we heed the following warning sounded by Gil Green:

"The time has come for our party to give due recognition to the fact that the enemy employs more than one weapon, and fights on more than one front, in its attempt to destroy our Party. We are cognizant of the frontal assaults directed against us since the war. We are also aware of the intense, unabating ideological barrage of the enemy. But we are not as sensitive to its fifth-
column methods of struggle, its use of diversionary tactics, its methods of infiltrating our ranks and how it attempts to conduct political guerrilla warfare from within, exploiting every weakness in our ideological and organizational armor to disrupt and paralyze our work.

The following three conditions are indispensable to the struggle for vigilance against the menace of enemy penetration: 1) The struggle for the political line of the Party; 2) The struggle for the fundamental principles of Party organization; and 3) The struggle for a correct cadre policy.

The Struggle for the Political Line of the Party

The struggle for a correct political line is basic in the fight against enemy penetration. For the enemy seeks to create disagreement with, distrust in, and opposition to the political line of the Party. It seeks to disorient our Party, confuse its membership, and isolate it from the masses of people. Enemy agents can best thrive in such an atmosphere. It is not accidental that the F.B.I. succeeded in having a number of its agents worm their way into the Party and even into sections of its leadership precisely during the period when Browderism was dominant within our Party. For this bourgeois ideology was a fertile soil for the operation of enemy agents.

The first and fundamental condition to a successful struggle against enemy penetration, therefore, is the struggle for the political line of our Party as embodied in the reports, resolutions and decisions of its highest body, the National Convention, and as implemented and further developed between conventions by the National Committee of the Party.

The political line of the Party is based on a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the present situation within our country and throughout the world, from which flow the tasks confronting the working class and our Party in this historic period: the fight for peace, against the growing menace of fascism, for the economic interests of labor, for equality for the Negro people, for independent political action by labor and its allies, and the building of a mass Third Party dedicated to the cause of peace.

The struggle for the political line of the Party calls for an uncompromising battle against all expressions of Right opportunism and "Left" sectarianism. The Right opportunist danger expresses itself in the tendency to overestimate the strength of the American bourgeoisie while underestimating the strength of labor and its allies, including that of the international peace camp; to
underestimate the danger of war and fascism; to reject proletarian internationalism and to succumb to national chauvinism, including white supremacy; to capitulate to the labor bureaucrats and Negro reformist leaders. The “Left” sectarian danger expresses itself in the tendency to view war and fascism as inevitable and to see the fight for peace and democracy as futile and already lost; to neglect or reject the united-front tactic and ignore the majority of organized workers and the Negro people who are under Right-led, reformist leadership; to make the Left centers and progressive-led organizations which speak for a more advanced position, but still represent a minority of those who can and must be won in the struggle, the prime center of our activities.

Precisely in this period when American imperialism serves as the main center of world reaction, when it is waging wars against the colored peoples of the world (Korea, China, Viet-Nam, the Philippines, Malaya), when it serves as the chief prop for the whole system of colonial domination of the millions in Asia and Africa, we find an intensified barrage of chauvinism pervading every channel aimed at influencing the minds of the population, consciously and assiduously fostered by monopoly capital. The ruling class in this way seeks to justify its wars against the colored peoples, on the one hand, and to maintain its barbarous system of national oppression of the Negro people from which it reaps immense super-profits, on the other hand. The struggle for the correct political line, therefore, requires a conscious, determined fight for Negro rights and against every expression of white chauvinism among the masses generally, and in the first instance, within the ranks of the Party. While the struggle against white chauvinism is mainly the task of the white comrades and is the pre-condition for a successful struggle for Negro rights, Negro Communists must wage a simultaneous struggle against the pernicious influences of bourgeois Negro nationalism which would deny the role of the working class as the most important ally of the Negro people in the fight for full equality.

The struggle for a correct political line is crucial to our work in the shops and within the trade unions. This requires a struggle for a policy of shop concentration, for concentration upon the workers in the basic mass production industries, for shifting the main weight of our trade-union work to work among the workers in the Right-led trade unions. That which should distinguish Communists in the trade unions and shops is their consistent struggle for the economic and political interests of the workers, their pursuance of a policy based on class struggle as against the class collaboration
policies of the Greens and Murrays, their relentless struggle for labor unity and for trade union democracy. All deviations and opportunistic distortions of our Party’s line for work in the shops and unions, all attempts to deny the role of the Party and to preach in effect economism, must be sharply fought against.

Finally, the struggle for a correct political line necessitates an uncompromising fight against the various renegade groupings—the Browderites, Titoites, and Trotskyites. They try to pose as “Marxists” in order to confuse and divert those who are seeking the path of struggle for peace, for progress, and for Socialism. Each of these groups directs its main fury against the Soviet Union and the People’s Democracies. These groupings seek by every means to foster confusion in the ranks of the Party, to encourage opportunistic and sectarian manifestations, to sow and feed upon factionalism wherever it may rear its head. Enemy agents planted in our Party find these renegade groupings and their “radicalism” a God-send enabling them to better serve their masters. All manifestations of Browderism, Titoism, or Trotskyism, any signs of liberalism in combating these groupings, must be sharply fought.

The Struggle for the Principles of Party Organization

The attacks of the class enemy upon our Party have made necessary various organizational steps to assure that our Party can fulfill its vanguard role under any and all conditions. American history has shown that in the fight for independence from Britain as well as in the fight against Negro slavery the advanced forces were compelled to take certain measures to shield themselves from the antidemocratic blows of their enemies. This was also true of the early pioneers who built the labor movement. We need not apologize for whatever measures we find necessary today to protect our Party as the political party of the American working class. John Gates was a thousand times correct when he told the McCarran Board:

“We are fully justified in adopting every measure possible to thwart unconstitutional invasion of our privacy. We are not a secret organization. We have always sought the widest publication and dissemination of our program and of our views on all issues affecting the people.”

Such protective measures cannot be interpreted to mean that the basic Party organizational principles have outlived their use. While these basic organizational principles, like everything else, must be adapted to assure maximum Party security and the maximum continuity to all our political work, the validity of these principles in
this period cannot be questioned. On the contrary, more than ever is it necessary to wage a relentless struggle for their enforcement. This is essential in uncovering enemy agents and in defeating their dastardly designs within our ranks. The enemy can best operate where these principles are flouted. What are some of these basic Party organizational principles and how do they apply today?

Inner-Party democracy is essential to the fullest clarity of our Party membership, to their fullest participation in the formulation as well as the execution of Party policy, to the fullest activation of the membership. Speaking before the McCarran Board, John Gates defended the principle of democratic centralism upon which our Party is based, stressing that the Party is "a million times more democratic than the Republican or Democratic Parties," and pointing to the democratic nature of the Party's pre-Convention discussions leading up to the Convention and the final formulation of its basic resolutions and decisions. For Communists, inner-Party democracy is not a license for petty-bourgeois chatter, but rather a medium for hammering out the line of the Party and unifying its ranks for its execution in every-day political life. The conditions in which our Party operates today often require new approaches to realizing Party democracy, but they do not in the least negate its importance. Where Party democracy is discouraged, it is far easier for enemy agents to operate undetected and unmolested. A classical example of this was the situation in the Yugoslav Communist Party whose leadership was infested with Hitlerite, American and British spies.

**Criticism and Self-Criticism—The Law of Party Growth and Development**

Criticism and self-criticism are prime requisites to the growth and development of Party organizations and cadres. Where these are nil or perfunctory, there lies the danger of stagnation and retrogression, of opportunism and of bureaucracy. Criticism and self-criticism are decisive in formulating Party policy, in testing that policy and learning from its results, in evaluating the work of all Party organizations and Party leaders, and constantly correcting and improving all of our activities. For it to be more than purely formal, the aim of such criticism must be to search out the roots of errors and weaknesses and indicate the path to their correction. Criticism and self-criticism should at all times be constructive with a view to improving the work and helping comrades rather
than tearing down such comrades. Where criticism is absent or discouraged, where it is used for destructive rather than constructive ends, there is where enemy agents find a protective wall behind which to operate. Such enemy spies as Lautner would have found it difficult to conceal themselves for such a long time, had their work been subjected to the penetrating light of Bolshevik criticism.

Party Discipline and Party Unity

The Party cannot fulfill its role as the vanguard of the working class without maintaining discipline and Party unity. To do otherwise would result in the degeneration of the Party into a debating society incapable of providing the needed leadership against a most cunning, ruthless, resourceful and determined class enemy. The strength of such Party discipline and unity lies in the fact that the Party is a voluntary association of the most advanced, the most loyal, the most class-conscious and self-sacrificing elements of the working class, basing itself on the liberating science of Marxism-Leninism, and pursuing as a common purpose the advancement of the immediate and the fundamental interests of the American working class, the cause of Socialism. Whoever and whatever weakens this discipline and undermines the unity of the Party objectively aids the class enemy. Every breach on this front, particularly at this time when the Party is subjected to continuous blows from the camp of reaction, should be exposed and vigorously combatted. The example of Phil Frankfeld should be a timely warning to our entire Party (opposition to the line of the Party on the character of the fascist danger and how to struggle against it; elements of political and personal degeneration; unprincipled factionalism). Experiences of Communist Parties throughout the world have shown that enemy agents thrive on the promotion and the intensification of factionalism. Factionalists and "oppositionists" in a Party draw enemy agents like honey draws bees, both because this provides a convenient cover-up as well as a channel to distort the line and split the Party. Where factionalism exists one may often find the hand of a conscious enemy agent. In a factional atmosphere self-criticism is alien, and loyalty to the Party and the working class is replaced with loyalty to a faction and to certain individuals. Under such conditions united and effective action becomes difficult if not impossible, the Party becomes bogged down in endless discussion, differences become exaggerated, collective work becomes extinct, and the Party is turned inward instead of enhancing its political work among the people.
Collective Leadership vs. Bureaucracy

Collective leadership remains at all times a cardinal principle of Party organization. The attacks upon our Party may necessitate reducing the size of Party branches and of leading committees, or a greater stress on initiative at all levels, on more individual responsibility, but it in no way does away with the need for collective work and for collective leadership. It would be an unpardonable crime if bureaucracy, which has been a long-standing disease within our ranks, were today allowed to flourish and justify itself in the name of "Party security." Bureaucracy and Party security have nothing in common. The spy and bureaucrat Lautner could get away with his dirty work for so long because, among other things, he was not accountable to a functioning, collective committee which in turn was answerable to the Party leadership. Enemy spies feed upon bureaucracy since they can move about unquestioned and unanswerable to the Party membership, to the Party organization and its leading committees.

Execution of Party Decisions—Check-Up and Control

Once the political line has been determined, Stalin teaches, organization decides everything, including the very fate of the political line itself. There can be no artificial wall between politics and organization. He who would attack the Party line often does it by undermining the organization and execution of Party tasks. Enemy agents are able to resort to bluff and deception to hide their sabotage of Party decisions where there is no check-up and control of activities. In this way they are able to deceive the Party, win the confidence of its members and leading committees, be entrusted with important responsibilities and promoted into Party leadership. From the witness stand the stoolpigeon John V. Blanc of Cleveland told how he fooled the Party by pretending that he recruited several workers from his shop and secured a number of Worker subscriptions (the F.B.I. paid for initiation fees, dues and subscriptions). Had there been a serious check-up on results claimed, had there been real live contact established with Worker readers and subscribers, it is hardly likely that Blanc could get away with this deception.

Often enemy agents find their work made easier because we continue to tolerate looseness and sloppiness. This shows up in relation to where we hold meetings and how they are organized, how appointments are made and kept, how names of comrades are bandied about, how telephones are used, how notes are kept, how loose talk
and gossip are spread, etc. Enemy agents make it a point to be good listeners, to encourage others to talk, to frequent places where comrades tend to gather. It is necessary to declare a war against all forms of looseness and sloppiness in our methods of work.

The Struggle for a Correct Cadre Policy

A correct political line, by itself, is not enough. For it takes people to bring the political line to life. It takes people to apply policy. Without the proper people often the best of decisions become meaningless. Based upon a correct political line, the proper cadres become invincible, while, at the same time, the proper cadres help forge a correct political line. More cadres is the crying need of the Party today—cadres, not in the narrow sense of inner-Party functionaries divorced from mass work, but cadres for work among the people, in the peace struggles, in the fight for Negro rights, in the shops and trade unions, in the organizations of the people.

To be of greatest use to the enemy, their agents seek above all to penetrate our Party cadres, to get into positions of leadership within the Party and within progressive organizations. Bewailing the necessity of revealing some of his informers for use at trials and hearings, Hoover told a Congressional committee: “As you well know, you cannot develop an informant overnight. It takes months and years to get them into the high echelons of any organizations, particularly the Communist organization. The Communists have become more and more security conscious.”

At the heart of the problem of struggle against enemy penetration is the pursuance of a correct cadre policy—of knowing one’s people, of the proper selection, verification, training and development of cadres. Too often we have a hit and miss approach to cadres, try to solve our problems not by enlarging our cadre pool but by constant reshufflings, proceed on the basis of expediency and endless emergencies. What is lacking is a long-term approach to the bringing forth of new cadres and promoting those who have proven worthy of such promotion. Too often there is a pitting of newer, perhaps younger and more energetic comrades against older, more tested and tried comrades who perhaps find it harder to maintain the same pace shown by them a few years before. Our Party needs both the new and growing forces that are emerging as well as the older and more mature forces.

Verification of Party cadres must become a permanent feature of all our work. It cannot be confined to some formal questionnaire no matter how useful this may be. Above all, the verification must
be based on a continuing evaluation of the quality of work performed, of political growth shown, of weaknesses exhibited and the ability to correct such weaknesses. It should become an elementary feature that when a comrade is being released from a responsibility irrespective of whether this involves a demotion or promotion, or simply a transfer, that such person's past work is critically evaluated. This will help the comrade to grow. Such evaluations should be made available to the new committee with which the comrade will be associated. It is necessary to end the impermissable situation where people can operate over many years, hold innumerable responsibilities, and yet never have their work properly evaluated. This does not aid the comrade's growth. Nor does it make the new committee with which he will work aware of both his good qualities as well as his weaknesses and shortcomings in order to better help the comrade. Too often there is a petty-bourgeois approach to "selling" the comrade to the new committee with which he is to work, praising to the skies his good points and covering up or ignoring his weaknesses.

The development of Communist cadres for work in the trade unions is of decisive importance. This is far from being an easy matter since in no other country has the bourgeoisie been in such a position as here to bribe and corrupt trade union leaders, to convert them into labor lieutenants of American imperialism, into betraying the interests of the workers. The employers have long learned how to play on the vanity, the conceit, the arrogance, of those who become divorced from their trade union base and who show signs of becoming "soft." There is a need for far greater attention to the political training and development of our trade union cadres, to strengthening their ties and integrating them into the Party organization and leading committees, to combating all manifestations of opportunism and any signs of bourgeois corruption. These comrades who for the most part come from the shops and have emerged into union leadership in the course of sharp class battles can and must be among the most valuable of our Party's cadres.

Today, more than ever, our cadre policy must be based on bringing forth, at all levels of leadership, comrades from the shops and unions, comrades imbued with a working class ideology and who have ties with the workers in the shops. Attempts to keep leading committees as "closed corporations" confined to full-time Party functionaries and rationalizing why shop workers are either excluded completely or are maintained nominally on such committees, have to be ended.
Together with bringing forward of shop and trade union comrades must go a policy of advancing into the leadership Negro comrades and women comrades, particularly Negro women. The hurdle to fully realizing this policy is the prevalence of white chauvinism and male supremacy within our ranks which must be rooted out.

The past year or two has been a trying period for our Party. Numbers of Communists have been jailed under the Smith Act and other repressive measures. Numbers of them among the foreign-born are facing deportation. Communists have been denied jobs or ousted from existing employment. Communists, as well as non-Communists, have been spied upon and harassed by Hoover's snoopers. Communists have felt on their backs the fury of the blows struck by the government, by the employers, by the labor bureaucrats and Social Democrats, by jingoistic warmongers. These years have been filled with sharp struggles on every political front. These trying times have served like a giant magnifying glass—they have shown up those who are firm and those who are frail, those who are loyal and those who are fair-weathered, those who are courageous and those who shrink before the enemy's attacks, those who exhibit confidence in the future and those who lose their heads and become panicky. The steadfastness of people in the face of the enemy attack is an important criterion in judging cadres. Fundamentally, this period has shown our Party and its cadres to be sound, firm, courageous, standing their ground and fighting back, determined and capable of fulfilling their vanguard role under the most difficult of conditions.

The following main criteria for the selection of cadres emphasized by Georgi Dimitrov bear constant reiteration and application today: "First, absolute devotion to the cause of the working class, loyalty to the Party, tested in the face of the enemy.... Second, the closest possible contact with the masses.... Third, ability independently to find one's bearings in making decisions.... Fourth, discipline and Bolshevik hardening in the struggle against the class enemy as well as irreconcilable opposition to all deviations from the Bolshevik line...."

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For thirty-three years our Party has continued in the forefront of every struggle of the American people. It was baptized in struggle and has courageously weathered all enemy attacks. It has a proud tradition which Communists and the American people as
a whole can take pride in. It has pioneered in the struggle for peace and for friendship with the land of Socialism, the Soviet Union. It has pioneered in the struggle against the open-shoppers, in support of endless hard-fought strikes and economic struggles, and for the building of industrial unions in the mass production industries. It has pioneered in the fight for the rights of the unemployed, for Social Insurance and Social Security. It has pioneered in the battle for full, equal rights for the Negro people, waging such imperishable struggles as that for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and of Angelo Herndon, of Willie McGee and Rosa Lee Ingram, of the Trenton Six and Lieutenant Gilbert, and of countless others. It has pioneered in the struggle against domestic and international reaction and fascism—for the freedom of Tom Mooney and of Sacco and Vanzetti, in defense of Republican Spain, and on the battlefields to destroy detested Hitlerism. It has rejoiced in the forward sweep of Socialism which has liberated one-third of world’s humanity from the blight of capitalism, of imperialism, of fascism. It has forged a leadership of which the American working class can be proud—men and women like William Z. Foster, Eugene Dennis, Gus Hall, Henry Winston, Ben Davis, Gil Green, John Williamson, Bob Thompson, John Gates, Carl Winter, Jack Stachel, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Irving Potash, Pettis Perry, Claudia Jones, Steve Nelson and many others.

Our Party faces the storms ahead, confident in the American working class and the people, knowing that victory, despite difficult sailing, lies ahead. Our sentiments have been well written in the following words of Lenin:

"Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, overdo things, commit stupidities ... acting thus the bourgeoisie acts as all classes doomed by history have acted. Communists should know that the future, at any rate, belongs to them."
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