

Political Independence and the CP

By Harry Ring

What next for the Communist Party? This question was brought sharply to the fore when the party's convention voted in favor of the organization elaborating its own political views instead of applying by rote the views of the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party.

Arguing in favor of ending political subservience to the Kremlin, the Gates wing of the CP leadership pointed out that the party's long record of such subservience had served to help discredit and isolate it before the American people. It was further argued that such a declaration of independence would effectively counter the damaging charge that the CP is an agency of a foreign government.

PARTY AND CLASS

While these arguments are not devoid of merit they duck the basic issue involved. If the Communist Party is to end its allegiance to the Kremlin bureaucracy where will it transfer that allegiance? Social classes — the workers, the capitalists — have independent and conflicting interests. But political parties cannot and do not exist in a state of pure "independence." They necessarily represent by their program and activity the interests of some social force.

For example, the campaign against the Communist Party as an "agency of a foreign government" has been a major cold-war weapon of the American labor bureaucracy. But the fact is that this bureaucracy is guilty of a like crime. Within the ranks of labor it defends and represents the interest of a government,

which from the viewpoint of the class interests of the workers is a foreign government — that is the government in Washington which is controlled by and acts for the tiny clique of industrialists and financiers which rule over the workers and whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the workers.

CAPITAL'S LIEUTENANTS

To preserve its vast material privileges, the American labor bureaucracy defends the capitalist status quo. It supports the reactionary foreign policy of the Wall Street government, preaches the need for class peace and support of the existing "democratic institutions" of a Big-Business dominated government. With their program of class collaboration, the labor fakers daily verify the correctness of the classic Marxist characterization of them as "labor lieutenants of capital." (In the last analysis, the Kremlin bureaucrats also operate as agencies of imperialism in the working-class movement.)

While these observations on the role of the American labor officialdom as an "agency of a foreign power" may appear as a digression from the question at hand, the fact is that it is directly relevant. If the Communist Party is to end its allegiance to the Moscow bureaucrats only to become an appendage of the American labor bureaucracy then nothing has been gained from the viewpoint of the interests of the American and international working class.

The danger of such a transfer of allegiance from one labor bureaucracy to another is not merely theoretical. It is implicit

in the political perspective of the top leadership of the CP as expressed in its draft resolution, its resolutions on social democracy and on the Negro struggle.

Let's take a look at a current expression of evolution in this direction as contained in George Morris' column in the Feb. 25 Daily Worker which takes ILGWU President David Dubinsky to task for his declaration that "we have never cooperated with them [the CP], and we never shall."

Morris with quiet pride, reminds Dubinsky that "there was a period when he and his associates in the ILGWU leadership accepted and even welcomed Communist Party cooperation. In some of the key locals there was even joint leadership (united tickets) for a number of years."

"If it happened before," Morris declares, "it can happen again."

While one can agree that the possibility is not excluded that "it can happen again," the question that confronts the CP membership is whether it should happen again. If one were to select a specific official union leader to demonstrate the thesis of the union bureaucrat as a lieutenant of capital it would be difficult to find one more suitable than David Dubinsky.

Morris points out that Dubinsky uses the Liberal party "as a tail to old party politicians and support for reactionary policies." This statement could be expanded into a good sized book. Since the beginning of the cold war Dubinsky has led the pack in jingoism and red-baiting. Waging the cold war has left him with little time or inclina-

tion for fighting the bosses. Morris reports that the last ILGWU convention revealed that "wages in the cloak and dress field have hardly moved up since 1946 although the cost of living jumped nearly 50% since then."

The rank and file of the ILGWU, particularly its most oppressed section, the Puerto Rican workers who now comprise a large section of the membership in New York and elsewhere, could fill out that picture with graphic details if they could break through Dubinsky's bureaucratic machine long enough to be heard.

How then can Morris justify this perspective of "cooperation" with Dubinsky and the social-democratic wing of the union leadership he represents? He explains that the CP resolution on Social Democracy has "far more in view than Mr. Dubinsky." (Although Mr. Dubinsky is definitely not excluded.) According to the resolution, as logically interpreted by Morris, the approach is determined by the fact that "a possibility [exists] of a common struggle for objectives with followers of the social democratic group that may not exist in other sectors" of the union movement.

Leaving aside conjecture as to the greater possibility for a common struggle with the ranks of the garment workers than say the steel workers the question remains: Can these objectives, "independent political action," etc., be achieved by cooperation with the Dubinskys or in struggle against them?

When Morris speaks of Dubinsky's "followers" who does he mean — the rank and file of the garment union or the select

W. Indian Negro Leader Quits CP

An event having repercussions in the French Communist Party and particularly in the Communist Parties of the French colonies is the resignation of Aime Cesaire, CP leader of the French West Indian colony of Martinique. A famous poet, Cesaire is also the representative of Martinique in the French parliament.

He made his resignation public last October in an open letter in which he gives two sets of reasons for quitting the CP. First, the failure of the French CP to abandon its Stalinist methods. Second, the fact that it has blown hot and cold on the issue of colonial freedom and the rights of colored peoples depending on French politics. The following are excerpts from Cesaire's letter of resignation.

"Neither posthumous rehabilitations, state funerals, nor official speeches will cancel out the deaths, the tortures, the executed victims [revealed by Khrushchev in his speech to the 20th Congress]. . . One had expected of the French Communist Party an honest self-criticism; a disassociation with crime that would exonerate it; not a denial but a new and solemn departure; something like the Communist Party founded a second time. . . Instead we have seen stubbornness in error, persistence in lying, the absurd pretension of never having been wrong. . .

" . . . I make allusion to the vote of the French CP on Algeria, the vote by which the party gave to the Mollet-Lacoste government full powers for its policy in North Africa and we have no guarantee against a repetition of that vote.

"I believe I have said enough to make it apparent that it is neither Marxism or communism that I am renouncing, it is the misuse that certain people have made of Marxism and communism that I reject."

members of Dubinsky's job trust and his union pie-cards? There is ample common ground for struggle with the long-oppressed members of the ILGWU. But such a struggle for social and political progress cannot win unless it is based on the perspective of replacing Dubinsky and his "followers" with a leadership based on a class-struggle program which alone can further the interests of the ranks.

This clearly is not the per-

spective of Morris or of the Gates or Foster faction leaders, who jointly support the convention documents which justify the proposed cooperation with Dubinsky and his "followers." Such cooperation, we repeat, does not mean independence for the Communist Party, but only a transfer of allegiance from one corrupt labor bureaucracy to another. Such a course can neither advance the interests of the workers or resolve the ideological crisis which still grips the party.