

# Third Party and Labor Party

## Forces Making for the Break-up of the Two Party System-- The Norris Scandal -- Perspectives for the Labor Party

By Ben Gitlow

The basis of capitalist political power is the two-party system. Through the two party system the capitalists are able to keep the masses divided as Republicans and Democrats. The big capitalists are either Republicans or Democrats, the small storekeeper, like the big capitalist, is either Republican or Democrat. The farmer, rich, poor or farm-hand, is either Republican or Democrat. The skilled mechanic, like the professional and the laborer and unemployed worker, is either Republican or Democrat.

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### The Two-Party System--Bulwark of American Capitalism

There is no danger of the political security of the big capitalists being undermined so long as the masses can be kept within the two-party system. Whether they go Republican or Democratic does not change anything because to-day the Democratic and Republican parties are like two peas. They are in fundamental agreement as far as service to big business is concerned. They represent the interests of Wall Street, of the big bankers and manufacturers of the United States.

As long as the two-party system of American capitalism is maintained, class differentiation along political lines will develop very slowly. The two-party system has been weakened on a number of occasions. The capitalists, however, have been able to prevent the break-down of the two-party system. Generally the two-party system was threatened during a period of economic crisis. But with the passing of the economic crisis the movement for a third party passed away.

Such was the case of the Roosevelt Bull-Moose movement of 1912. The severe agricultural crisis and post-war deflation gave us the La Follette movement of 1925. The third party movement always represents a rebellion against the political parties of the big capitalists. Its character is distinctly petty-bourgeois, and, because of its reformist platform and appeal to the middle class and workers, it has always succeeded to rally millions of the middle class and of the working classes to its support.

The present economic crisis is again bringing to the fore the threat to the two party system. In Washington the atmosphere is charged with third party talk. This is so because of the economic crisis. The stock crash, unemployment, bank failures, the tightening of credit, the agricultural crisis and the drought have hit the middle class very hard. And to this must be added the losing fight of the middle class against monopoly, which thru the great mergers of recent years is pushing the middle class off the competitive board. One can begin to understand the state of mind that is developing among them. The representatives of the petty bourgeoisie reflect the dissatisfaction that is present in the ranks of the middle class. Conditions are forcing the middle class to abandon the hope that in the form of the two-party system it can get relief from the blows it is receiving on the one hand, from the monopoly interests and, on the other, as a result of the economic crisis.

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### The Movement for A Third Party

The result is that the agitation for a third party is growing in their ranks. It is growing also because the petty bourgeois politicians have their ears to the ground and are listening to the grumblings of the workers who are also caught in the economic crisis. Their discontent is general. Unemployment, wage cuts, speed-up, starvation and impoverishment of the workers are responsible for a deep resentment which is at the bottom of their discontent. This discontent, the petty bourgeois politicians believe can be turned to action in support of a third party movement of the petty bourgeoisie. The signs of a possible third party movement in the 1932 presidential elections are to be read in the events agitating political circles in Washington. On December 21 the elected officials of the farmer-labor party held a conference with Senator Shipstead to discuss the possibility of a third party movement in 1932.

The Socialist Party of Milwaukee has come to a definite political pact with the La Follette political machine to support and join a third party movement in 1932.

The Lucas-Norris controversy is bringing talk of the third Party movement to the fore. Robert H. Lucas, executive director of the Republican National Committee, is accused by Senator Norris of using the funds of the Republican National Committee to defeat him (Norris) in the elections for re-election as senator from Nebraska. Norris was running on the Republican ticket.

The New York Times of December 23 refers to the Lucas developments as follows:

"The Senate's left wing Republicans evidently have determined that Mr. Lucas shall sever his connection with the Republican National Committee, or that the party organization shall take the consequences. What those consequences will be is a matter of conjecture, but an opinion exists that the Lucas incident may be used as the cornerstone for the structure of a new third party, or of an organized

rebellion which will amount to a third party."

"The broadside of Senator Cutting, a former Bull Moose, showed that he had definitely allied himself with the Norris insurgents. For several months there have been rumors that Mr. Cutting and Governor-elect Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania were working in accord which gave color to the suspicion that a third party movement was in prospect for the Presidential campaign of 1932."

The letter of Professor Dewey to Senator Norris asking him to take the leadership in the movement for a third Party and to definitely break loose from the Republican party is another development from the Lucas-Norris controversy.

Professor Dewey is chairman of the League for Independent political Action. His letter contains the following appeal for a split away from the Democratic as well as Republican Party.

"The Democratic party stands for exactly the same principles as the Republican party and its machinery is controlled by the same invested groups. If the Democratic party comes into power its insurgents will receive the same treatment from it that you receive from your party. The new political philosophy needs its own incarnation."

The launching of a third party movement is a step forward because it breaks up the political front of the big capitalists, because it will cause a political fermentation among the masses which will hasten the develop-

ment of class consciousness on the political field.

The dangers in the third party movement is that it will tend to divert the workers and exploited farmers from independent action against the capitalists into the swamp of petty bourgeois reformism. In other words it will make them the tail end to the political cart of the petty bourgeoisie, that is to the third party which will be a party of capitalism not against capitalism.

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### The Labor Party

The growing sentiment for a third party makes it necessary to bring forward at once the Labor Party in order to organize the workers and exploited farmers on the basis of the class struggle. That is for independent working class political action against all capitalists large and small.

The third party movement will absorb and swallow up the S. P. This is an opportunity for the Communists if they will push forward the Labor Party movement on a class basis, uniting in the Labor Party all the genuine labor party forces who will not go along with a middle class reformist Party like the third party will necessarily be.

The Labor Party will thereby afford the Communists a very important bridge to the masses.

The third party movement will cause a serious rift in the trade union bureaucracy and among the trade union masses. This creates favorable opportunities for rebuilding and broadening the left wing.

In other words the third party movement development reflects favorable opportunities for applying correct Communist policies.

## The Youth Movement

### THE YOUTH IN THE NEEDLE TRADES

#### Program Proposed by the Young Communist League (Majority Group)

(Concluded from last issue)

Our chief slogan in the struggle to win the young workers in the needle trades must be; unity of the young workers in the reactionary unions, in the NTWU and the unorganized young workers for organizing the needle trades youth and to fight for their economic demands. The program of economic demands for the needle trades youth includes:

1. A minimum wage scale for young workers to be worked out for each section of the industry, no wages to be lower than \$20 a week.
2. A 36-hour week for all young workers. Time and a half for overtime.
3. Equal pay for equal work for all young workers.
4. The regulation of apprenticeship by the union; every young worker, after six months as apprentice, shall receive the regular wage scale.
5. Payment of wages for the time spent in the continuation schools.
6. Trade schools to be placed under the control of the union.

1. The left wing must fight for the unrestricted admission of all young workers into the union, for special initiation rates based on wage scales to make it easy for the young work-

ers to join the union. The left wing must fight for the establishment of youth sections in the reactionary unions to fight for the interests of the young workers as against the bosses and the union bureaucrats. The campaign for youth sections as well as the sections themselves if they are established can be made into a powerful lever in the struggle against the reactionary bureaucracy in the needle trades.

2. The youth Section in the NTWU must emerge from its state of impotence and inactivity and become an effective factor in bringing forward the demands of the youth and in stimulating the movement for trade union unity.

The slogan of: *One industrial union in the needle industry* must reflect itself in our work of winning the youth. Our objective must be to form a solid fighting front of the young workers in the NTWU and U. forces fighting for youth sections and the demands of the youth in the reactionary unions. Such unity of the militant youth forces, upon our program of struggle against the bosses and bureaucrats, can become a powerful aid to the struggle of the left wing.

### CCNY STUDENTS AGAINST DRILL

#### Vote on Military Drill After Christmas

#### COUNCIL VOTES

NEW YORK, Dec. 12.—A referendum on the question of military training at the College of the City of New York will be held before the Christmas recess. The students demand that the military training course should be dropped even as an elective course. An unsigned circular originating undoubtedly from the military authorities, defended military training and denounced those opposing it. The Communist students at CCNY issued an appeal for "the complete elimination of military science from the curriculum."

Before 1925 military drill was compulsory. After much agitation in that year, the students voted against compulsory drill. At the present time, military training is elective. The student council, however, recently went on record by a vote of 5 to 2 as opposing the elective course in military science and decided that the question of dropping the course should be submitted to a student referendum.

Several demonstrations have occurred on the campus and two students were expelled for statements made at anti-drill meetings.

Relief, strike aid and clothing for the Danville strikers should be sent to J. C. Blackwell, Treasurer, Textile Union, Danville, Va.

### POLICE ATTACK YOUTH IN COURT

#### Rumanian Police Bayonet Young Communists

SOFIA, Rumania, Dec. 13.—Police entered the prisoner's dock in the court and brutally attacked seventeen young Communists on trial there with bayonets, felling two.

When agents of the political police entered the courtroom the young Communists cried out: "Turn these murderers over to the hangmen!" The accused then broke out singing the *International*. Upon orders of the judge, the police charged helpless prisoners with drawn bayonets.

#### The New Charity

In normal times the wealthy feel impelled to give up some small portion of their booty to charity in order to save their consciences and stave off revolt. The present distress has given them a new scheme to save money. Now they force those who are working (in Municipal employ and in large corporations) to give 1% of their salary for charity. Thus they shift even the burden of charity to the backs of the workers. It's an ill wind. . . .

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The farm relief bill stipulates that it is to be loaned for mules and not men. Hoover has won a great victory for the mules.

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#### At Last—A Remedy!

"Cardinal Hayes Orders Prayers for Jobless—Supplications to be Made at All Masses Till Situation Is Relieved."