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Shades of Red: The Leninist Left and the Shaping of the 20th-Century US Trade Union Movement

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Left Out: Reds and America's Industrial Unions
Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin, 2003
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
375 pp., $75.00

Not Automatic: Women and the Left in the Forging of the Auto Workers' Union
Sol Dollinger and Genora Johnson Dollinger, 2000
New York: Monthly Review Press
214 pp., hardcover $48.00, softcover $23.95

Revolutionary Labor Socialist: The Life, Ideas, and Comrades of Frank Lovell
Paul Le Blanc and Thomas Barrett, eds., 2000
Union City, NJ: Smyrna Press
352 pp., $25.00

Communists and Trotskyists have played a major role in the building of and participation in US trade unions, beginning in the mid-1930s. Both branches of US Communism exerted their highest level of influence in the unions, roughly from the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization in November 1935, later renamed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), until a few years past the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s. The stories of the US Communist Party's (CPUSA) role in the organization and the leading of a number of the industrial unions affiliated with the CIO are well known throughout the literature that dates back nearly half a century.[1]

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[1]In fact, even before the party's success in the industrial unions during the mid-1930s and the late 1940s, there were a couple of books written in the pre-CIO era that deal with the Communist Party's role in the US trade unions during the party's first few years of existence: see David Saposs, *Left-Wing Unionism: A Study of Radical Policies and Tactics* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1926) and David M. Schneider, *The Workers' (Communist) Party and American Trade Unions* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1928). Although Saposs's book was critical, it was not unsympathetic to the Communist Party. However, a subsequent book, written over three decades later, was no longer friendly towards the party. See David Saposs, *Communism in American Unions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959). Another book written in the late 1950s concerning the CPUSA's role in the CIO unions was also hostile towards the party. See Max Kampelman, *The Communists versus the CIO: A Study in Power Politics* (New York:

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Although a few monographs have discussed aspects of the Trotskyists' role in the US trade union movement during the mid 1930s through the late 1940s,[2] the contributions of this group to the labor movement is generally not as well known as that of their larger and more powerful Communist rivals.

Two of the three books, the LeBlanc/Barrett and the Dollinger/Dollinger volumes, discussed in this review essay attempt to remedy this deficiency of the relative lack of scholarly treatment of the Trotskyists' role in the US trade union movement. The other monograph, the Stepan-Norris/Zeitlin volume, presents a unique and innovative analysis of the role of the Communists in the CIO unions, by documenting the group's significant contributions to the industrial unions through combining historical scholarship with an elegant statistical analysis. All three books are extremely interesting reads and provide new information for even the most informed scholars of US Communist history, as well as 20th-century US labor historians.

Le Blanc and Barrett's *Revolutionary Labor Socialist* covers the life of Frank Lovell, the trade union militant and Trotskyist maritime trade union fraction leader who was active in the Sailors Union of the Pacific (SUP) throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Beginning in the early 1950s through most of the 1960s,

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Footnote continued

Praeger, 1957). Two decades later, a former Trotskyist who had been active for many years in the United Auto Workers (UAW), wrote a monograph critically assessing the Communists' activities and tactics within the trade unions over three decades. See Bert Cochran, *Labor and Communism: The Struggle that Shaped American Unions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977). In the 1980s, three books appeared that took different ideological positions on the party's role in the trade unions. For a largely sympathetic and uncritical account of the party's role in the UAW, see Roger Keeran, *The Communist Party and the Auto Workers Union* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1980). With respect to the viewpoint that the CPUSA's policies in the trade unions during the 1930s were ultimately formulated in Moscow, see Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). For a balanced account of the party's role within the CIO unions, see Harvey A. Levenstein, *Communism, Anti-Communism and the CIO* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981). An excellent collection of essays that deal with various aspects of the CPUSA-led CIO unions is Steve Rosswurm, ed., *The CIO's Left-Led Unions* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992). In addition to the above-mentioned works, there have been a number of scholarly studies concerning the activities and ideologies of William Z. Foster, the leading US trade union Communist. See Edward P. Johanningsmeier, "William Z. Foster and the Syndicalist League of North America," *Labor History*, 30 (1989), 329–353; Johanningsmeier, *Forging American Communism: The Life of William Z. Foster* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Victor G. Devinatz, "The Labor Philosophy of William Z. Foster: From the IWW to the TUEL," *International Social Science Review*, 71 (1996), 3–13; James R. Barrett, *William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); and Barrett, "Revolution and Personal Crisis: William Z. Foster, Personal Narrative, and the Subjective in the History of American Communism," *Labor History*, 43 (2002), 465–482.

[2]For the Trotskyists' role in the US trade union movement during this era, see Constance Ashton Myers, *The Prophet's Army: Trotskyists in America, 1928–1941* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977), 59–82 and Robert J. Alexander, *International Trotskyism, 1929–1985: A Documented Analysis of the Movement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 773–775, 817–820, 836–837. For a series of four books written by one of the Trotskyists' leading trade union cadre in the Teamsters Union in the 1930s and early 1940s, who later became a leader of the SWP, see Farrell Dobbs, *Teamsters Rebellion* (New York: Monad Press, 1972); Dobbs, *Teamsters Power* (New York: Monad Press, 1973); Dobbs, *Teamsters Politics* (New York: Monad Press, 1975); and Dobbs, *Teamsters Bureaucracy* (New York: Monad Press, 1977).

Lovell was an active United Auto Workers (UAW) member who was employed at General Motors (GM) as a skilled craftsman in a unit that was responsible for designing new automobile models. In the late 1960s, Lovell moved from Detroit to New York City, where he served as the trade union director of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). He remained active in the SWP until his expulsion from the party in 1983, along with hundreds of comrades, when younger and newer leaders of the organization formally jettisoned the historic Trotskyist program in favor of developing an orientation to the politics of Fidel Castro's Cuban Communist Party.[3]

Born in 1913 in a small farming town in Illinois, Lovell attended the radical Berkeley campus at the University of California in the early 1930s, eventually earning a Bachelor's degree in philosophy. Attracted by the revolutionary and democratic tradition of early 20th-century Debsian socialism, the Industrial Workers of the World's (IWW) syndicalism and the idealism of the early US Communist Party, Lovell joined the Workers Party of the United States (WPUS) in 1935, an organization formed as a result of the fusion between the Trotskyist Communist League of America (CLA) led by James P. Cannon, and the followers of the radical minister A.J. Muste (the Musteites). In 1938, Lovell was a founding member of the Trotskyist SWP and remained a leader of the party's trade union work for many years. In addition, he served on national leadership bodies of the organization from 1942 to 1983. After his expulsion from the SWP, Lovell launched a new publication, *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* (BIDOM), in December 1983, in order to promote an authentic Trotskyist program that he felt the SWP had abandoned in its desire to support Castroism. He was BIDOM's first editor and served on the journal's editorial board until his death on 1 May 1998.

As a trade union activist, Lovell's major contributions came through his involvement in the maritime unions during the 1930s and 1940s. After joining the SUP in San Francisco in 1936, Lovell participated in the union's 90-day strike during 1936–7, which resulted in the union obtaining the right to operate its own hiring hall. Due to the horrendous working conditions under which Lovell worked as a merchant seaman, he never missed the opportunity to promote unionism among the colleagues on his ship. In his ten years as a seaman, Lovell talked with several hundred of his fellow workers in an attempt to educate them politically, in order to encourage them to fight for their interests aboard their ships.[4]

Lovell served on the 1946 maritime general strike committee with Trotskyist comrades Bernie Goodman and Tom Kerry. The strike was called in response

[3]A discussion of the evolution of the SWP, including its eventual embrace of Castroism in the early 1980s, can be found in Paul Le Blanc, "Trotskyism in the United States: The First Fifty Years," in George Breitman, Paul Le Blanc and Alan Wald, eds., *Trotskyism in the United States: Historical Essays and Reconsiderations* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996), 3–87.

[4]For a detailed and extensive study written by Frank Lovell (under a pseudonym) on the history of the workers' struggle in the US maritime industry from approximately 1915 through the early 1940s, see Frederick J. Lang, *Maritime: A Historical Sketch and a Workers' Program* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1943).

to the government's establishment of a wage labor board, which it proposed would serve as a third party in contract negotiations between the unions and the ship owners. In spite of the fact that the Communists controlled the National Maritime Union (NMU), the largest East Coast maritime union, and would not support the Trotskyist-led strike committee, the strike committee appealed to the NMU's rank and file who honored the picket lines. By successfully tying up 5,000 ships across the nation, the union emerged victorious in the most important maritime strike in US history.

The book is divided into three sections. The first part is a collection of many short essays, originally written as eulogies for Lovell's funeral, by people who knew him. It provides information on many aspects of his life from the trade union and political struggles that he engaged in to the warmth and humanity that he exhibited in his personal relationships. The book's second section contains some of his writings that focus primarily on the US trade union movement, working class radicalization and the history of US Trotskyism. The third section contains obituaries of a number of Lovell's comrades who were active in the Trotskyist movement with him. Many of these engaging portraits are written by Lovell himself, although a few are authored by others. These portraits are important in elucidating various aspects of the history of US Trotskyism, and provide crucial background information for understanding the milieu that Lovell functioned in for the latter six decades of his life.

All three sections of the book reveal the seriousness of Lovell's commitment to a radical politics, combined with his genuine warmth and humanity, that he believed would help improve both the US trade union movement and the lot of the US working class. And combined with his political intensity and humanity is a unique humor that Lovell expressed at opportune moments.

In one of the first section's essays, Bryan Palmer, the distinguished labor historian, reports on one of these moments that had been relayed to him by Bernie Goodman. At a meeting during the 1946 maritime general strike, Lovell took the floor to challenge the proposed Communist line in this strike. The chair of the meeting, a Communist, grew upset with Lovell's analysis and he reached over and smacked Lovell on the head with his gavel, drawing blood. Goodman was ready to physically attack the chair, but he was restrained by Lovell, who, while trying to stop the flow of blood from his head with a handkerchief, rose again and said, "I believe I still have the floor" (75).

The authors of *Not Automatic*, Sol Dollinger and Genora Johnson Dollinger, were Lovell's Trotskyist comrades in the SWP until 1953, when the faction within the party that the Dollingers were affiliated with left the organization over political differences with the Cannonite leadership. The Dollingers were Cochranites, followers of the UAW fraction leader Bert Cochran, whose activism in the union dated back to 1936. Besides Detroit and Flint area UAW locals, the Cochranites were also particularly strong in United Steel Workers (USW) and United Rubber Worker (URW) locals in Michigan and Ohio. One of the group's major differences with the Cannonites erupted over trade union strategy in the late 1940s. In the UAW, URW and USW, the Cochranites

wanted to form a broad left front with the CPUSA trade unionists, and desired to educate the US working class in "Americanized" Marxism. The Cannonites refused to permit the Cochranites to form this alliance with the Communist trade unionists, and viewed the Cochranites' philosophy and actions as an indication of their desire to liquidate the party.[5]

The major goal of the Dollingers's monograph is to correct the historical record with regards to the UAW's first decade and a half of existence. Specifically, the Dollingers argue that much of the UAW history that has been written overemphasizes the role of the CPUSA in the building of the union and the leading of important strikes, to the neglect of other left-wing forces, in the union's early years. In a decisive struggle that led to massive union membership growth, Genora Dollinger led the Women's Emergency Brigade (WEB) that contributed greatly to the success of the sit-down strike at the GM plants in Flint (Michigan) during 1936–37.

The book is divided into three distinct parts. The first, and the book's longest, section deals with the organization of the auto industry and major struggles occurring within the union from 1934 through 1948. This portion of the book is based on both primary and secondary scholarly sources as well as some of the personal experiences of Sol Dollinger, who became active in the UAW in the early 1940s. The second section deals with the Flint sit-down strike and the WEB; it is taken from an oral history interview that Susan Rosenthal conducted with Genora Dollinger in February 1995, originally published as a pamphlet. The third section, the shortest of the book, is primarily an analysis and extension of the oral history interview material,

[5]For a purely factual account concerning the trade union issues leading up to the Cochranites' split from the SWP, see Alexander, *International Trotskyism, 1929–1985*, 836–837. With respect to the majority Cannonite positions concerning this split, see James P. Cannon, *Speeches to the Party: The Revolutionary Perspective and the Revolutionary Party* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973). For the Cochranites' major document published in an internal SWP bulletin during this faction fight, "The Roots of the Party Crisis—Its Causes and Solution," see Cannon, *Speeches to the Party*, 338–399. Sol Dollinger signed this document under one of his party names, Emmet Moore. For the party names of Sol Dollinger as well as other prominent Trotskyists, see Barry Lee Woolley, *Adherents of Permanent Revolution: A History of the Fourth (Trotskyist) International* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999), 253–267. Upon leaving the SWP in 1953, Bert Cochran, along with several fellow Cochranites, organized the American Socialist Union, which engaged in political activities and published the *American Socialist* from 1954 to 1959. Beginning in 1959, Cochran also wrote a number of scholarly monographs on the US trade union movement and other political topics. See Bert Cochran, *American Labor in Midpassage* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1959); Cochran, *The Cross of the Moment* (New York: Macmillan, 1961); Cochran, *The War System* (New York: Macmillan, 1965); Cochran, *Adlai Stevenson: Patrician Among the Politicians* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969); Cochran, *Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1973); Cochran, *Labor and Communism*; and Bert Cochran, *Welfare Capitalism—And After* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984). Another Cochranite who signed "The Roots of the Party Crisis" was Harry Braverman (Harry Frankel) who later became well known for his seminal work in analyzing the development of the capitalist labor process throughout the twentieth century. See Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974). For an excellent article on Braverman's earlier life when he was a member of the SWP and a Cochranite, see Bryan Palmer, "Before Braverman: Harry Frankel and the American Workers' Movement," *Monthly Review*, 50 (1999), 33–46.

although the epilogue provides a brief analysis of the major problems confronting a bureaucratized UAW at the end of the 20th century.

The first two chapters of the first section present detailed discussions of the 1934 Toledo Auto-Lite Strike and the 1935 Toledo Chevrolet Transmission Strike, which the authors argue were key work stoppages that led to the eventual founding of the UAW in 1935. In their analysis of these two strikes, the authors point out the crucial role played by the WPUS, the political formation that the US Trotskyists were part of at the time. The next few chapters deal with Homer Martin's leadership of the UAW and the factional conflict that engulfed the union in the late 1930s. In this material, the Dollingers identify the factional alignment of the major left-wing forces active in Homer Martin's Progressive Caucus and the opposition Unity Caucus at the time, including the CPUSA, Jay Lovestone's Communist Party Opposition (the Lovestoneites)[6] and the Trotskyists, who had implemented the "French Turn" policy in 1936 by entering the Socialist Party of America (SP)[7], a policy that lasted approximately 16 months until the formation of the SWP in 1938.

In addition, in the following chapters, the organization of Ford in 1940–41, opposition to the "no-strike" pledge during World War II, as well as physical attacks by anti-union thugs on certain UAW activists (including Genora Dollinger) is covered in some detail. Finally, the section's last chapter discusses the crucial role that the Trotskyists in the 40,000 member Flint UAW locals (three out of the five local presidents were either SWP members or party supporters) played in obtaining the cost of living adjustment clause in the1948 GM contract.

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[6]For a major study on the Lovestoneites, see Robert J. Alexander, *The Right Opposition: The Lovestoneites and the International Communist Opposition of the 1930s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981). Concerning a discussion of the Lovestoneites' role in the US trade union movement during the 1930s, see 42–62 in this monograph.

[7]The debate over the "French Turn" first occurred in the Bolshevik-Leninist Group (GBL), the French section of Trotsky's international left opposition organization, the International Communist League. In 1934, the GBL entered the French Socialist Party (SFIO) with the goal of winning over the leftward-moving members of the SFIO to the ICL's program. For information on the "French Turn" in the SFIO, see Leon Trotsky, *The Crisis of the French Section [1935–36]* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1977). In the United States, after a period of debate, the Trotskyists implemented the "French Turn" when they entered the Socialist Party of America (SP) in 1936. This debate led to the first major split in the US Trotskyist movement, when the followers of Hugo Oehler (the Oehlerites), composed of approximately 200 comrades, left to form the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) after Oehler and Tom Stamm were expelled from the WPUS at the end of October 1935 for opposing the US "French Turn". As an organization, the RWL survived into the 1950s. For information on the Oehlerites and their activities in the US trade union movement from the perspective of one of the Oehlerites' leading labor activists from this period, see Sidney Lens, *Unrepentant Radical: An American Activist's Account of Five Turbulent Decades* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1980). For discussion on the US "French Turn" from the viewpoint of one of the founders and leaders of US Trotskyism, see James P. Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism: From Its Origins (1928) to the Founding of the Socialist Workers Party (1938)* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), 189–233. For additional information on the US "French Turn", see Myers, *The Prophet's Army*, 107–122 and Alexander, *International Trotskyism,* 779-786.When the Trotskyists were expelled from the SP in 1937, they took with them an additional 1,000 members, essentially doubling their size. Discussion of Trotskyist activity in the SP during this period can be found in Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism*, 234–256; Myers, *The Prophet's Army*, 123–142 and Alexander, *International Trotskyism*, 786–792.

In her oral history interview on the Flint sit-down strike, Genora Dollinger points out that Kermit Johnson, a Trotskyist and Flint SP member as well as her husband at the time, developed the plan to take over Plant 4, which was the key to breaking GM's resistance and the impetus for the company to begin negotiations with the union. In the third section of the book, the Dollingers correct the historical record by pointing out that, while the CPUSA members helped to successfully implement Johnson's plan, the SP played as significant a role as the CPUSA in leading the Flint sit-down strike. In addition, the authors also mention that historians have not acknowledged the important role that Proletarian Party[8] activists played in this strike through shutting down the Fisher Body 1 plant on 30 December 1936. In the conclusion to their analysis of this strike, the Dollingers argue that the success of this strike was due to the fact that many left-wing forces within the union worked together to ensure the strike's success. They state: "The facts are that the Socialists, Communists, Proletarian Party, and the Communist Party Opposition (Lovestoneites) functioned under an unwritten united front accord. This was one of the few occasions in recent labor history where the Communist Party joined in a genuine united front of the left" (188).

Of the three monographs, Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin's *Left Out* is the most intellectually rigorous. It is an ambitious and groundbreaking work that integrates much material in its analysis of the CPUSA-led CIO unions from the late 1930s through their expulsion from the CIO in 1949–50. In this work, the authors examine how the Communists achieved, retained and exerted power in nearly half of the CIO unions. Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin go further than previous historians and social scientists, examining these issues by conducting quantitative analyses, and combining them with historical and industrial ethnographic data, in order to provide new insights into these important issues.

The authors set the stage for their analysis by providing background information on both the CIO's formation and the three political camps into which each of the 38 CIO affiliates can be grouped.[9] Using 1946 as the base year for classification, 18 CIO unions can be placed in the "Communist camp," with 10 industrial unions falling into each of the "uncertain and shifting" and "anti-Communist" camps, respectively. The authors consider the industrial unions in the "uncertain and shifting" camp to be those "internationals in whose ruling coalition Communists were said to be influential, but not in 'control'" (15). Those unions classified in the anti-Communist camp "were led by officials, few of whom considered Communists a legitimate presence in the CIO" (15).

[8]The Proletarian Party (PP) emerged from the left-wing Michigan state organization of the SP in 1920 when it decided against affiliation with either of the two Communist groups, the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party, formed in 1919 from the left-wing split in the SP. In spite of retaining its independence from the two Communist groups, the PP considered itself to be a Communist organization and supported the Soviet Union. There has not been much written about this organization. For a brief discussion of the PP, see Alexander, *International Trotskyism*, 779.

[9]These groupings were originally developed by Max Kampleman in 1957. See Kampleman, 45–47.

Using a logit analysis (adequately defined and explained in a lengthy footnote for those unfamiliar with this statistical procedure), the authors examine the effects of independent variables such as "earlier Red organizing," "workers' insurgency," "independent organizing" and "amalgamation" on the Communists' odds of obtaining leadership control in the CIO unions. In fact, the presence of all four variables increased the likelihood that the Communists obtained such control within the unions. Through use of the same statistical procedure, Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin discover that the CPUSA-led unions were more likely to be democratic as opposed to oligarchic, to negotiate "prolabor," as opposed to "procapital," contract provisions that defended workers' rights, and to vigorously promote the interests of both African American and women members' rights on and off the shop floor, than their counterparts in the other two camps.

The statistical results are buttressed by careful historical scholarship based on a wide variety of sources of differing political orientations. In fact, the only chapters of this eleven-chapter book that lack statistical analysis are the last two chapters that deal with the CIO's purge of the CPUSA-led unions and the attacks that these unions endured during the politically inhospitable decade of the 1950s.

While virtually all previous works on the CPUSA-led unions as a whole end their analysis with their expulsion from the CIO (or shortly thereafter), the epilogue, subtitled "The 'Third Labor Federation' That Never Was," carefully stitches together a meticulous and fascinating analysis of the complicated and tense relationship existing between the CPUSA leadership and the expelled unions in the exceedingly dark days of McCarthyism, when the party barely functioned either above-ground or underground due to intense government repression. In 1951, shortly after the expulsions, the CPUSA instructed their unions and union cadre to strive for "labor unity," to forgo establishing a new trade union federation and to "return to labor's mainstream" (299). The party glorified the AFL and CIO unions with their 15 million members, and announced that they would be the focus of the CPUSA's labor activities, effectively relegating the left-wing unions to the sidelines.

Although the presidents and the top leaders of the expelled unions met in New York City in late 1951 to discuss issues of common concern, it was rumored that the real reason was to discuss the formation of a new labor federation. In spite of these union leaders' growing differences over trade union policy with the CPUSA, most refused to decisively break with the party that they had been affiliated with for decades. By the mid-1950s, many labor leaders at all levels were following CPUSA instructions by either carving up the left-wing unions or negotiating merger deals for their unions as a whole, in order to bring their membership back into the mainstream labor movement.

According to Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin, it was unfortunate that these left-wing unionists were unable to hold out a little longer. The crisis and tumult brought about in the CPUSA, leading to the eventual exit of many of these trade union leaders from the party, due to the aftermath of the 28 April 1956

reading of Khruschev's "secret speech" on Stalin's crimes to the Soviet Communist Party's Twentieth Congress,[10] would have allowed these unions to form a left-wing labor federation. Such a federation, according to the authors, "would have served … as an exemplar of innovative pro-labor programs, of interracial solidarity, of the push for women's employment equality, of dissent from the US government's intervention" in foreign nations, "and as a spur in the side of an indolent and declining AFL-CIO" (327).

In the early 21st century, when the American trade union movement is confronted by hostile political forces, declining union density, and decreasing collective bargaining power, combined with the struggle to organize new jurisdictions and industries, the US labor movement from the mid-1930s through the late 1940s does appear to represent the halcyon days of trade union power, when viewed through the lens of the past half century of losses and defeats. A major reason for the success of the trade union movement in this earlier time period was due to the enthusiasm, commitment, devotion and vibrancy of ideas that both the Communists and Trotskyists brought to the labor movement, as evidenced by the three books discussed and analyzed in this review essay. If the current trade union movement was to adopt, extend, and expand on the principles and tactics first introduced and developed by these "reds" in the unions during the mid-1930s through the late 1940s, the US labor unions of today might just have a fighting chance when it comes to defending the interests of the US working class.

[10]The painful revelations from Khrushchev's "secret speech" had a devastating effect on the CPUSA, although initially it led to considerable debate within the party and the opening up of the pages of the *Daily Worker* to all points of view. While McCarthyite repression during the 1950s had taken its toll on the party, there were still 17,000 members in the CPUSA in January 1956. Two years later, by the middle of February 1958, when William Z. Foster and his orthodox faction had defeated the reformers and retained control of the party, thousands of members had been lost, leaving the CPUSA with an estimated 3,000 members. For an account of the faction fight conducted by one of the leading reformers within the party, see John Gates, *The Story of an American Communist* (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1958), 157–191. Another reformer's perspective on this faction fight can be found in Joseph Starobin, *American Communism in Crisis, 1943–1957* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 224–237. In addition, see David A. Shannon, *The Decline of American Communism: A History of the Communist Party of the United States since 1945* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), 272–353, and the social democratic perspective of Irving Howe and Lewis Coser, *The American Communist Party (1919–1957)* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), 490–499.