CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

THE DAILY WORLD:
Story of a Communist Newspaper.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ABSTRACT  .......................................................... iv

## INTRODUCTION

- Purpose ......................................................... 1
- Scope ......................................................... 3
- Organization ............................................... 3

## CHAPTER

### I. COMMUNIST PRESS THEORY AND FUNCTIONS

- Original Theory ................................................. 5
- Characteristics ............................................. 16
- As the Worker Functioned .................................. 19

### II. THE HEYDAY YEARS: 1924-1939

- Background .................................................. 26
- From "Weekly" to "Daily" ...................................... 29
- Depression Period .......................................... 40
- Allied With the Nazis ...................................... 54

### III. THE UP AND DOWN YEARS: 1940-1956

- From Allies to Enemies Again ............................ 62
- Post-War Confusion ......................................... 69
- Korea and the Red Scare .................................. 78
- The Secret Speech Causes an Apology .................. 85

### IV. THE LANGUISHING YEARS: 1957-1972

- Disillusionment at Home and Abroad .................... 98
- From "Daily" to "Weekly" .................................... 100
- Declining Influence and Circulation .................... 108
- New Name and a New Image ................................. 112

## CONCLUSION .......................................................... 127

## BIBLIOGRAPHY .......................................................... 132
ABSTRACT

THE DAILY WORLD
THE STORY OF A COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER

by

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The purpose of this thesis was to identify and describe the major highlights in the history of the Daily World, official newspaper of the Communist Party of the United States.

The focus was on the paper's background, major periods, turning points and characteristics that set it apart from conventional American newspapers.

Data were gathered from a variety of sources, including history and political science works, contemporary biographies, news and general purpose periodicals and, primarily, from a detailed study of many issues of the communist paper itself.
Of special concern in this study was the mental trauma of communist journalists. Throughout the history of the paper (since 1924), writers had to struggle with the contradictions inherent in writing for the communist press and their desire to write the truth as they saw it. The result was that many journalists left the paper and the party frustrated, disillusioned and broken in spirit.

The study revealed that the paper had its greatest influence and highest circulation throughout the 1930s. During the 1940s, circulation dropped drastically, leveled off for a time in the 1950s and declined steadily in the 1960s. But, despite the Daily World's declining influence and circulation, it will continue to exist as long as there is an official Communist Party in the United States. No matter how small or inconsequential the party becomes, there will continue to be an organ to express its views, theories and goals.
THE DAILY WORLD
Story of a Communist Newspaper

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to focus on the highlights and significant events in the history of an American newspaper somewhat neglected by most textbooks that cover the history of the American press. This is the story of the Daily World, semi-official organ of the Communist Party of the United States.

For a brief period in its relatively short life (since 1924) it had an influence on its faithful readers and sufficient notoriety to become the target of many people and groups, including conventional American newspapers, and attracted the attention of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R-Wisc.).

The DW, for many years, identified itself as the official party organ. Because of world events, the newspaper gradually evolved from a hard-core, highly motivated propaganda and agitation weapon, to its present
character, which is a toned down, less controversial version that is, in many ways, similar to many left-wing and other so-called, radical publications.

The most obvious outward sign of this metamorphosis was the change in its name from Worker to World in 1968. This indicated a broadening of its message that heretofore was directed specifically at this country's labor force and working classes.

Through revolution, as traditional Marxian doctrine states, the capitalistic and imperialistic government of the United States would be overthrown by the workers and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat. As the DW constantly reminded its readers, this dictatorship would be just a temporary but necessary stage in the transition from capitalism to socialism -- the classless society. In reality, since the party is the vanguard of the proletariat, it is really a dictatorship of the party -- and even more properly -- a dictatorship by the party's leaders. That no such revolution has taken place is one of the major reasons why the newspaper modified its character. In other words, it was forced to revise itself to reality or appear ludicrous. However, faith in the Marxian doctrine continues and the inevitability of the revolution is still accepted, but in the more distant future.
Scope

At the same time the significant events of the DW are examined, this thesis will also deal with four other related aspects: (1) A look at the paper's effectiveness in attempting to carry out original communist press theory and functions, (2) A discussion of several key communist journalists and their personal struggle as writers for the paper, (3) Comparisons from time to time with conventional ("capitalistic") newspapers and (4) How the paper was coordinated with other aspects of American-Communist life.

Organization

Divided into four main chapters (Communist Press Theory and Functions; The Heyday Years -- 1924-1939; The Up and Down Years -- 1940-1956; and The Languishing Years -- 1957-1973) this study presents the story of the Daily World by highlighting the events and peculiarities of its history that dramatically illustrate this paper's difference with conventional American papers and its departure from customary journalistic thinking and style.

Before one may study any communist publications, there are three significant conditions that must be realized. First, the criteria of what constitutes a "communist" publication are not always susceptible to clearcut definition. Many are "shop papers" published by communist factions in particular factories. Others are mimeographed works of assorted deviationists and heretics.
from "Stalin orthodoxy." This problem is not a factor in identifying the DW, for not only did it clearly express the communist point of view, but usually the official party line also.

The second condition one must face when studying communist publications is to understand Communist Party jargon, or "communese." Communese differs from "English" in several important aspects: for example, the word "correct" means in harmony with the communist line of the moment, rather than meaning universally true. In fact, many things that are "correct" are demonstrably untrue.

The third condition that must be recognized is learning what is significant and what is not in communist newspapers. Frequently, what is omitted is more important than what is actually said. Sometimes, the mere fact that some object received a considerable amount of news space (column inches) in the press is more revealing than what was actually said.

While the bulk of this study does not dwell upon communist ideology, the basis of that ideology as they pertain to communist press theory and functions should be understood.
I. COMMUNIST PRESS THEORY AND FUNCTIONS

World events have always had an effect on newspapers, and it has caused many of them to change. This has been particularly true of the communist press in general and the communist press in the United States in particular. More important, while much communist press theory has remained unchanged from that originally promulgated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, it has, in actual usage, been continually distorted and shifted in its perspective so that it fits modern-day Soviet thinking. This is most noticeable in the United States, when the communist Worker changed its name in 1968, after 44 years, to the Daily World, thus signifying a "broadening" of its viewpoint.

However, for most of its life (since 1924), the paper earnestly tried to support, without revision, the doctrine of Karl Marx and Nikolai Lenin. The press stood at the very top of the hierarchy of the means of propaganda and agitation. The Marx-Lenin theory saw the press as (1) a channel through which the party could influence the masses, communicate with them and direct them in the
process of constructing the classless society and (2) a tool of education and organization. 1

Later, Joseph Stalin added his thoughts: The press was to be the strongest instrument with which, day-to-day, hour-by-hour, the party speaks to the masses in their own essential language. There is no other means so flexible for establishing spiritual links between the party and the working class. 2

Stalin listed 10 tasks of the press. They were, to:

(1) propagate the ideas of Marxism and Leninism.
(2) forge a lasting link with the popular masses.
(3) agitate for the principles of the party.
(4) organize the workers in the fight for communist principles.
(5) educate them in the spirit of communism.
(6) explain the policy of the party.
(7) foster vigorously a habit of the party.
(7) foster vigorously a habit of criticism and self-criticism.
(8) organize socialist emulation.
(9) fight for peace.
(10) expose the warmongers. 3

The communist press is more than a medium for the discussion and dissemination of party propaganda and agitation. A potential for mobilizing the membership is explicitly recognized and exploited. The great emphasis on the importance of the party press -- far in excess of
that which is normal to other political organizations -- is due as much to the organizational ability as the propaganda potential of the material issued. The father of the Bolshevik revolution, Nikolai Lenin, stressed this when he stated:

A newspaper is not only a collective (mass) propagandist and collective agitator, but also a collective organizer. 4

With the aid of those around the party paper, as well as in the paper, there will automatically develop an organization that will be concerned with not only local activities, but also regular general work. It will teach its members to carefully watch events -- to estimate their importance and their influence on the various sections of the population, and to devise suitable methods to influence these events through the revolutionary party. The mere technical problem of procuring a regular supply of material for the newspapers and its regular distribution will make it necessary to create a network of agents who will be in close contact with each other, will be acquainted with the general situation, will be accustomed to fulfilling the detailed functions of the national work and who also will test their strength in the organization through various kinds of revolutionary tactics. To train a network of agents for the rapid and "correct" distribution of the literature is to perform the greater half of the work of preparation for an eventual uprising.
Lenin identified two theories of the press especially important in a movement using organizational weapons. First, the press can communicate tactics -- what to do and how to behave in relation to specific targets and enemies. The communist press contains detailed (though often oblique) instructions for communist sympathizers on day-to-day problems. Readers of the Daily World, for instance, look for the general line of the party, but more especially, for discussions of internal problems of unions and other organizations, including left-wing anti-communist groups. Such a function is not vital to a group interested only in general propaganda, but it is vital if members are thought of as "shock troops" to be armed with knowledge that may spell the difference between defeat and victory in combat situations.

Second, the newspaper is a collective organizer in the sense that it is a focal point around which action can be centered, for example, by offering definite things to do and goals to accomplish. The very task of building a news-gathering and distribution system can help train, prepare and unite the rank-and-file. Consider the following analysis of the Worker by the Communist International in October, 1953:

The paper must very soon take steps to create a strong network of worker-correspondents in the localities, in order to instruct and help them in writing their letters and to raise their political level; not only to print letters, but to point out the political importance and the lessons of any
given moment. The Worker does not deal with questions of building the Party [not then, but now it does with the CPUSA], and yet these questions are of decisive importance for the development of the CPUSA, its transformation into a mass party, its Bolshevization, its revolution.

The paper must create a section of party life and party construction. In this section, the paper must, (1) explain the line of the party on the most important questions and fight for this line. (2) It must fight for a checkup on the execution of the party's decisions, of the tasks set by it, showing how the execution is going on, explaining the tasks of the party with concrete examples and showing how to carry them out. (3) It must give information on the tasks and methods of the mass work of the communists, particularly with regard to unions. (4) The paper must popularize the experiences of the organizational building of the party, the work of the "cells," (smallest local unit of party organization) the fight against bureaucracy, for discipline and recruiting programs. (5) It must give information on questions of propaganda and agitation, on the work of the schools and on participation and demonstrations.

The paper must have permanent connections with the active party members in the unions in order to systematically popularize the tasks of the party in this work. The paper must explain to non-party workers the current tasks of labor union work, with workers' letters, at conferences with worker readers of communist papers, so that not the
least detail of labor union life, of union policy and work of the party, should remain unexplained to the non-party masses. Questions of opposition work in the AFL/CIO and in independent unions must also be covered.

When party members are schooled in the use of the press as an organizational weapon, it becomes especially dangerous to permit dissident groups within the party to have publications of their own or even to have access to the party press. The party press is the only official, decisive public agitational and propagandist expression of the Bolshevik organization. The policies of this press are formulated on the basis of the fundamental resolutions of the conferences of the International, the conventions of the party and decisions of the National Committee not in conflict with such International resolutions. Control of the press is lodged directly in the hands of the National Committee by the party convention and it is the duty of the editors to loyally interpret these decisions of the party.

The opening of the party press to discussions of a point-of-view contrary to that of the official leadership of the party or of its convention decisions must be controlled by the National Committee which is obligated to regulate discussions of this character to the party line. It is the right and duty of the National Committee to veto any demand for public discussion harmful to the best interests of the party. In The Organizational Weapon, Philip Selznick says:
By the same token, the demand of the petty-bourgeois opposition for an independent public organ in opposition to that of the majority of the party, represents a complete abandonment of "democratic centralism." The granting of this demand for a separate organ would destroy the centralist character of the Party by creating dual distribution agencies, divisions of loyalty, and a complete breakdown of discipline. Under such conditions, the Party would rapidly degenerate into a "social democratic" organization or disappear altogether.9

Communists cannot endure any break with the unit of command, and so long as the press is viewed as a power vehicle, a multiple-party press expressing divergent views, is intolerable. Lenin wrote:

Freedom of the press is freedom for the political organizations of the bourgeoisie and their agents. To give these people such a weapon as freedom of the press, would mean facilitating the task of the adversary -- helping the enemy. We do not wish to find ourselves committing suicide and for this reason we will not introduce freedom of the press.10

Any writing containing the slightest criticism implying the modification of the foundations of the Soviet regime is a "criminal act." If a journalist is showing signs of "independence" and tries to write an article which, through its style and form, stands out against other articles, the editor-in-chief usually disapproves of it and advises him to rewrite it according to the established pattern. The party's continual problem with, and frustration of, its journalists is discussed in detail in later chapters of this thesis.
In a communist society, according to Karl Marx, the press should function mainly to perpetuate and expand the politico-economic system. The media of communication should exist to spread communist gospel and not to aid in searching for the (universal) truth. Under this theory the mass media are simply instruments of the government and, as such, are integral parts of the all-powerful state and directed by the party or its agencies. When communism takes over the United States, as the theory goes, the press will receive its news from a state-owned and operated news agency (e.g., like Tass in Russia or Hsin-Hua in China). There would be three types of newspapers: (1) The Party press (like Pravda) which is authoritative and sets the pattern for the rest of the press; (2) Journals of various segments of the social order (e.g., like Russia's Trud of the labor unions, Red Star, army, and Izvestia, government); and (3) The many small factory, mine and farm publications used to carry the party to the grassroots.

Marx, Lenin and Friedrich Engels agreed on many ways and means that should be included in the fight for the classless society. Of special interest was to convince the masses of the correctness of communism's policy by explaining the strategy and tactics to them -- winning them over by persuasion. This explanatory persuasiveness forms the basis of communist propaganda and agitation, the two most important functions of every Communist Party and
newspaper -- in Russia and in non-Communist nations. Thus, the four major functions of the communist press, as outlined in original press theory, are to perform the roles of: (1) mass propagandist, (2) mass agitator, (3) mass organizer and, (4) mass critic and controller. Each of these must be fulfilled by a newspaper every day, in every issue, on every page. They are the criteria for the selection of material and for deciding what, how, and where it should be printed.

Propaganda and agitational functions. Propaganda and agitation have the same basic function in the communist press: to educate the masses so that without coercion or social pressures, they will follow the party and fulfill their assigned tasks in the communist program. They differ only in their approach to the common task.

In communist usage, propaganda is concerned in general with the theoretical aspects of Marxism and Leninism and with the application of that theory in day-to-day practice. Agitation, on the other hand, activates the masses for the fulfillment of the overriding task of inspiring the population with the idea of communism. It tries to arouse hatred toward the "class enemy." In this, agitation appeals to emotion, sentiment and to communist patriotism. It uses simple ideas and slogans, while propaganda has a scientific character and approach.

To accomplish the functions of propaganda and agita-
tion, all news items try to influence the sentiment and mood of the people, to encourage patriotic enthusiasm to the point of willingness to make sacrifices or to inflame hatred of the western "imperialists," and inner "parasites," "enemies of the people" and "dogmatists" in the communist world movement. There is little straight news. Even more than propaganda, agitation pervades each page because of its potential effectiveness as an instrument for calling the "masses" to immediate action in racial riots, political demonstrations or labor strikes.

While the press also uses leading articles and genuine features in its agitational work, it favors shorter, simpler means of journalistic expression. Information and news lend themselves to this purpose, but even more suitable are headlines, slogans and political cartoons.

Headlines and slogans can briefly and pungently express the agitational idea. Bold type and prominent placing can catch the reader's eye and make him read them. Color can also add to their prominence. On some occasions both slogans and drawings are printed in red ink. Cartoons are used in the communist press almost entirely as a political weapon aimed at western "imperialists" and "warmongers" and for evoking hatred against them.

News is not treated by the communist press as a means of giving the reader an accurate, objective picture of events, but rather to support the aims of the party. A free flow of information might contradict party images and
slogans, and hinder indoctrination. The party finds it imperative, therefore, to regulate the flow of information, to restrict and adapt or slant the news in such a way that not only does it not clash with the party line, but supports and augments it.

**Organizing functions.** The party demands more than just the education of the working masses; it also helps in uniting them in the complex process of the creation of the communist state, to assure that they systematically perform their assigned tasks in the desired way. In other words, news must be organized itself, otherwise it is news of mere events and happenings.

A Soviet specialist in press affairs, D. Kuzmichev, has said the purpose of information is not that of commercializing the news, but of educating the great mass of workers and organizing them under the exclusive direction of the party according to clearly defined objectives. Information is one of the instruments of the working class, not one of its reflections.  

**Critical and controlling functions.** The press is best suited for the transmission of criticism from below, from individuals or labor union organizations with complaints of shortcomings, mistakes or excessive bureaucracy under capitalism. By opening its pages to criticism the paper assumes, in the communist view, the function of a guardian of public interests against capitalistic imperialists and
parasites -- but not against the party itself. In this manner, it performs the function of a public controller, in communist thinking. But criticism must never touch the foundations of the Marxist-Leninist theory and party leadership, or its outward symbols and institutions. The critical function of the press must follow the party line and must only criticize with the party's approval. Most of the critical matter emanating from official quarters is the result of more or less organized, planned efforts.

**Characteristics**

There are three basic characteristics of original communist press theory: (1) Ideological character -- expression of class interests; (2) Partisan character -- evaluation of events in the light of party policy; and (3) Mass character -- mass participation in distribution, writing, printing and selling of the paper.

A press basing its work on such foundations must, in the communist view, be the only truthful press. Lenin said, "Partisanship is the highest expression of historical truth, the result of a truly scientific and objective faithful analysis of social phenomenon."¹²

Thus, the communist journalist must always ask himself why he is selecting a particular news item or theme for his article, feature or satirical sketch and how the material should be presented. To deviate from this is to commit the crime of "objectivism" or "escapism." These
words need defining from the communist point of view:

**Objectivism**: presentation of facts or events without their social or class evaluation.

**Escapism**: presentation of matter not relevant to social reality or political demands.13

These definitions tend to be less distinct in practice. But, for example, "objectivism" would be features on life, arts and the theater which fail to show the class struggle or character of such things. Western art and culture in general must be shown to be decadent. Items such as a description of the scenic beauty of Switzerland or articles on U.S. skyscrapers would be condemned as "escapist." ✓

In America, the Communist Party failed completely in molding the minds of all its journalists to always avoid objectivism and escapism. The stories of disillusioned journalists are part of this thesis.

"The communist press is not a free press in the democratic sense. It does not respond to public opinion or attune itself to the interests of its readers," said Anthony Buzek, former correspondent for the Czechoslovakian News Agency.14 But, the contrary is the case, in the United States at any rate. And that is, it attunes itself to the opinions of its special segment of American society. This is no less than what most specialized publications do. Of course, most other publications do not directly propagandize against the U.S. form of government. Actually, it is not a free press in the democratic sense.
because it has total dependence (or did have until the 1960s) on the party. It was inhibited by a biased approach to objective reporting, a directed slant to all its comment and by a preconceived evaluation of the news.

However, for communists, it is a free press because the Communist Party is the outward, political expression of the struggling working class, and therefore the press must depend on the party. In the application of the communist "dialectic," recognition of the necessity of such independence turns it into "real freedom" -- freedom from capitalistic profiteering but freedom to serve the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party. According to this concept, there is true freedom of the press only in a communist society -- as in Russia.

Lenin maintained that bourgeoisie U.S. papers misused news and information to deceive the masses in furtherance of the interests of capitalists, and that only in the communist press, freed from such interests, could news and information become truthful and objective.

News and information, Lenin said, were necessary because without them it was impossible to make propaganda and agitation. But, if they did not serve this purpose, if they only informed for the sake of information, they were useless and could be damaging as well. Lenin stated in 1921:

Freedom of the press means freedom for the rich to buy the press, freedom to utilize their wealth for the fabrication and forging
of so-called public opinion in the interests of the bourgeoisie.15

Self-censorship. The process of censoring everything against which the party could object started with the journalist himself. This self-censorship was motivated either by his political consciousness, or by concern to avoid risk of political errors that would brand him unreliable or ideologically immature. This could mean the end of his journalistic career. This situation led to personal internal struggles of many journalists who were unable to adjust their inherent desire to write the truth and the requirement that they write what the party told them.

As the Worker Functioned

By the time the Daily World began to be published in 1968 the paper's image and style had gradually changed considerably from that of the Worker and the Daily Worker, published from 1924-1968. Since the paper's most dramatic change was a relatively recent development, the following discussion briefly describes how original communist press theory was applied or modified by the Daily Worker and Worker.

The Daily Worker served as a unifier of party policy, an organizer of action and a party builder. Moreover, it did not let the membership forget the identity of the party's enemies, and sometimes its friends. Day after day,
the paper drilled a central theme into its readers: that life in the United States was terrible; that only in communist nations, especially in the Soviet Union, was life worth living at all. The day's news was scanned for some incident to distort and to criticize the United States.

Dr. William Caldwell, formerly of the Research Institute on Communist Strategy and Propaganda (School of International Relations, USC), said in 1965:

The key to communist propaganda effectiveness is not that the communists create the issues -- sometimes they do, but more often they don't. They are skillful at what issues will profit both their party line and the line of their press. They jump on these issues, fanning them, even to the extent of having trained people -- agitators -- jump in and take part, and often lead these protests and demonstrations.\textsuperscript{16}

The communists regarded themselves as apostles of a new order living in enemy-controlled territory. Readers claimed that the paper cut through the capitalist press and its smog of lies, distortions and fakes, bringing truthful information. This was the highest principle of a "free press" according to them. Their faithful readers still believed in the accuracy of the newspaper regardless of one of its well-known characteristics -- "shifting realities." This occurred when the paper was suddenly forced to swerve to a completely new or opposite concept. This was usually caused by a totally unexpected shift in the party line without advance notice to the paper, or an old truth turned into a new lie (or vice versa). In other words, the paper
followed the communist line faithfully no matter how suddenly it swerved, wiggled or tied itself into knots.

The communists were practical as well as skillful. Cheap reproduction assisted in transferring production costs to distribution costs. The party wanted mass readership. Why publish something at a high price or a fancy quality that only a few would buy?

In order to carry out its function of agitation and propaganda, the DW had to be strictly controlled. In the paper's early years, journalists and editors were totally determined in advance. Editors were completely guided by the agitation and propaganda department of the Communist Party. Communist holidays and anniversaries were publicized. The editors' work proceeded according to a fixed plan in harmony with instructions of the party and under its domination.

By the late 1950s, the choice of an editorial staff was still clearly and closely controlled, but not all staff members were professed communists. Dr. Caldwell said:

I would estimate that most if not all of the staff would have been members, but may not have been card-carrying communists for fear of being branded as a communist. No one would have been on the staff, at any rate, until their loyalties to communist ideology were well established.17

As a result, the party created a very effective link between its committees and the editor-in-chief which greatly facilitated the task of using the press intensively as an instrument of party policy.
The more communist material that a member read, the less time he had for reading capitalist propaganda. The DW advertised Soviet movies and books, lectures and bazaars, short stories and poetry in steady streams. Here the communists said is the "new people's society," bringing the "real truth." The theme was always the same -- Russia and communism represented a new world of hope, promise and achievement, creating communist man in all his remarkable, spiritual qualities. The United States was weak and decadent. No wonder, according to the DW, the Soviet soldier of World War II spent his time reading William Shakespeare and Count Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy while the uncultured GI read assorted inferior trash.18

The party member was urged to read Soviet literature and see the "glorious communist" in the United States working his heart out for the regime, for communism and for the eventual revolution. This propaganda was drilled into the member and his family. The paper sought to associate communism with such men as Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. For example, the DW on Lincoln's birthday in 1953, said: "Lincoln's heritage is carried forward mainly by the working class party and the working class vanguard, the Marxist Party." The DW writers sought to distort the works of such men as Walt Whitman, claiming for instance that Whitman's love of freedom is the story of their own aims: "poet and prophet of a people's democracy." Mark Twain's life, said a DW article, "was an inspiration
for the fight against imperialism and war and exploitation"

Carried to its logical conclusion, these articles and the attitude behind them, created different holidays, customs and habits for the communists. Even Christmas was exploited in the press. One editorial said, "It is time to send out cards for peace and to urge amnesty for communists in jail and to appeal for funds." This constant saturation with communism through party literature and the press had its effect, of course, in shaping communist man. A comrade writing in Party Voice (another U.S. communist newspaper) admitted what was happening to many members:

I have no doubt that there are comrades in our movement who have not read a single American book outside of progressive literature, but who can discuss in detail the latest Soviet book or periodical from China. We have many comrades who have been brought up on Soviet culture and who are not familiar with the cultural life of our own [American] people. There are some who never see an American film. There are others who see the decline and fall of American culture but fail to see what is new and growing.19

This was how the communist press was designed to promote a subversion of life in America.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I


7. Ibid.

8. Ibid, pp. 50-51. It has been suggested that this purpose for the communist paper is in itself a revolutionary idea; certainly it is novel for a newspaper that is essentially propagandist in nature. However, Selznick seems not to make much of it, and in using his material here, one must defer to his treatment of the subject. What does seem important, however, is the fact that the Communist Party did set up quite a task for its press.


17. Ibid.


19. Ibid.
II. THE HEYDAY YEARS: 1924-1939

Background

The Worker preaches the class struggle, but it is going to be fair about it. It will be just as fair in its treatment of the capitalists, the capitalistic system, its hangers-on, leeches, parasites, and apologists as they are in the treatment of the working classes. The Worker will never have a good word to say for the exploiters and their hirelings. If we cannot unearth any new evidence of the horrors of capitalism, if we can discover from time to time no new proofs of the folly, incompetence, and cruelty of the ruling class, we will remain silent, but praise for some act of real charity toward those whom they have robbed will never be found in these columns. We leave that for their own sheets which envy and ape them -- the slippery organs of liberalism and social democracy.

If the stories are badly written and poorly spelled it makes no difference. These little things will be attended to. That is what the editor is paid for -- when he gets paid.

The paper's policy is that in a fight with the employer and his political henchmen, labor is always right. ALWAYS RIGHT. We are prejudiced in this matter and we admit it. Do not expect us to be "fair." A whole lot of workers will not agree with this policy. They still believe that it is respectable and Christ-like to be fair
with an opponent that uses teeth, knees, and elbows in the clinches. It may be Christ-like, but it's damn poor judgement as the results prove it.

It is doubtful that this paper will ever acquire the polished style of journalism that the intelligentsia of the revolutionary movement so much admire. We hope not. This paper will carry better news, better articles, better editorials, better cartoons, and better all-around educational matter.

This paper is not being published to please or satisfy other editors. From the conventional journalist we want no praise and probably will get none. As a matter of fact we are going to develop a new school of journalism -- the proletarian school. Its disciples will write and draw with but one purpose -- the overthrow of capitalism through militant and intelligent action of the working class.1

"Thus Sayeth the Worker," as the front page editorial on the first issue of the Worker was so aptly titled.

First published in New York under this name on February 22, 1922, it moved to Chicago in 1924 when it became a daily and then returned to New York in 1926. Prior to the Worker, the "official organ of the Communist Party" was known as the Toiler, a weekly published in Cleveland since 1919, the year that the Communist Party of the United States was officially formed. The Toiler grew out of the Ohio Socialist, also a weekly, published from January, 1919, to November, 1919.

As the first editorial illustrates, the Worker came on strong and furious. A weekly at this time and only six pages per issue, it called itself "An organ of the revolutionary working class expression." A lefthand flag next
to the nameplate bore the Soviet hammer and sickle surrounded by the same slogan as on Pravda: "Workers of the world unite!" Its righthand flag proclaimed: "One fight, one foe, one victory." It blazoned headlines such as:

CAPITALISM AND CHAINS OR SOCIAL REVOLUTION AND FREEDOM?

PROFITEERS CAN'T DISRUPT MILK PRODUCERS UNION

For two years, the paper was spotted throughout with the announcement: "The Daily Worker is coming." During these next two years the paper remained six pages per issue. There were no sports, ads, society articles, art or cultural articles. Interestingly enough, it did deal with some problems that may be thought of as strictly the results of the 1970s, for instance, "The Problem of the Liberation of the Working Women" (March 11, 1922) written by Katherine Gutlow, Jeanette Pearl and Rose Pastore Stone.

Not until April, 1922, did the paper print a masthead. Up to that time, some of the regular stories were bylined by Thomas J. O'Flaherty, Alexander Trachtenberg and Solo De Leon. Its April 15 issue indicated J. Louis Enghdahl, managing editor; William F. Dunne, labor editor; Robert Minor, correspondent (who became editor in 1929); Art Young, cartoonist; and Elmer T. Allison, business manager.

By late 1923, sports stories started appearing regularly although there was no actual "sports page." Its first sports story also was angled toward the class struggle and sports stories for years to follow would do
the same:

On the well-kept athletic field of the Western Electric Co., at Cicero, Ill., the soccer team of the Young Workers League of Chicago showed that they can keep to the front in sports as well as they do in the field of the industrial and political struggle.2

From "Weekly" to "Daily"

One month after this story, the first issue of the Daily Worker appeared with Enghdahl as managing editor and William F. Dunne, assistant editor. From offices at 113 West Washington Blvd., Chicago, the DW came forth on January 13, 1924. Still six pages an issue, its first-day editorial was on an inside "editorial" page rather than on page 1 (as in the case of the Worker). Nevertheless, it echoed the same promises of the earlier Worker two years before:

The Daily is here, and we turn a new page in the world story of labor's struggle. A giant is born . . . The Daily is born! It comes to fight! It comes to inspire and call the many to the struggle! . . . The bosses have declared the Daily their enemy. They know it will raise the standards of a real struggle against the few who rob and plunder the many, and keep them in submission. They know the Daily fights for the Communist order where all classes will vanish. They know the Daily is a challenge to the continuance of their ruthless and bandit rules. But, it also fights for the shorter workday, increased wages, better working conditions, against child labor, for free press, free speech.3

Most papers and the public in general fight for such things as free speech, free press and better working
conditions. But what the DW was doing was to mix universal appeals with communist goals and the results did not appear absurd nor dangerous at all.

Unlike its predecessors (the *Worker*, the *Toiler* and the *Ohio Socialist*), the DW did not simply evolve from the *Worker* automatically. In fact, the DW was a well-planned establishment of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (the Communist International, or Comintern, department).

At the Third Comintern Congress, during June and July, 1921, Lenin had emphasized to American delegates the importance of establishing a daily in English. On August 23, 1923, the campaign for a *Daily Worker* was launched. Gregory Zinoviev, head of the Comintern, wrote Charles E. Ruthenberg, executive secretary of the "Workers Party," as the communists called themselves then. In the letter, Zinoviev said:

It is a most deplorable fact that against some 10 foreign-language communist dailies there is not a single English communist daily in America... Until the workers party has at least one English daily with a wide circulation it will not be able to reach sufficiently wide masses of the American proletariat.

While DW birthday anniversaries made no mention of the Zinoviev letter (possibly because its author was later shot on orders from Joseph Stalin), the very day the message arrived, a DW campaign committee was set up.

Quotas were laid upon the foreign-language federations according to their size to raise the necessary sums. When
the Third National Convention of the Workers Party met on December 30, 1923, a few months after Zinoviev's appeal, $73,000 of the $100,000 needed to start the newspaper had been raised. Early in 1924, the paper received an additional $35,000 from Moscow, according to Benjamin Gitlow, former Communist Party general secretary. But since it was an inflexible rule that foreign parties, Red fronts and fifth-column operations must carry themselves wherever possible, thereafter the DW had to shift for itself. To raise cash, the party did not hesitate to use traditional bourgeois promotional schemes. For instance, in the 1920s, one could win a trip to Moscow by selling Worker "subs" (subscriptions).

At the time the paper was first issued, considerable pressure was being put on the United States to recognize Soviet Russia. This proposal was stoutly opposed by Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, who insisted that Moscow was incubating violence and offered, among other Comintern documents, the Zinoviev letter to prove his point.

Under these circumstances, it was only natural for the first issue of the DW to pick out Hughes as enemy No. 1 of the communist cause. On its first page, it reprinted the text of the Zinoviev letter, but in place of his signature, it printed a facsimile of that of Vasil Kolarov, the Comintern's general secretary. This false substitution was made the foundation of a story that screamed: "Hughes is a liar." On the editorial page of
Secretary of State Hughes has translated and published in the subsidized press of this country, an article appearing in Moscow, in the press of the Russian workers and farmers, voicing their joy that in the United States there will be an English-language daily. Thus Hughes speaks to prejudice American labor.9

Meanwhile, the Comintern had laid down rules governing the party press. It must follow "decisions of the Comintern, be edited by reliable Communists, be subject to the control of the presidium (top ruling body of the party) whether the party is legal or illegal."10 Thus, the DW appeared with a pledge to "join hands with the comrades of the Communist International."

During these early days, the DW's editors were amazingly literal-minded and humorless. When Anthony Bimba, a New England atheist and prominent member of the party, delivered an antireligious speech in Boston, the DW editors ran the story under the headline: THERE IS NO GOD -- BIMBA. According to Louis F. Budenz, who later became DW managing editor, that huge headline appeared over a "lurid" account of the trial of Bimba. To the delight of the editors of the DW, he had made this raw declaration of atheism at his court hearing. The Bimba headline became a "laughing matter" among the rank-and-file communists, because it had exposed their views so crudely. "Their concern was not the insult to all believers, but the gross giveaway of the atheistic views they really held."11
Also during its infancy, the DW dearly loved involved ideas which were incomprehensible to the uninitiated (and maybe the initiated as well). Possibly the prize was the following:

What is the basis for concretizing and applying the line of the 12th Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the mass work of the Party? The 12th Plenum of our Party remains the basic guide for examining the work of the Party and carrying out the line of the 12th Plenum of the ECCI. The 16th Plenum of the Party established that since the 15th Plenum, the Party has begun to understand the line of the 14th Plenum resolution and established that earnest beginnings have been made to carry it out in life.12

Later years would witness a changing image and a more coherent newspaper.

But one aspect has remained since the beginning: the DW was always critically in need of finances. Fund-raising and subscription campaigns were always big "news" items and were always saving the paper from bankruptcy. Hardly an issue was published without some reference to needed funds. Sometimes it was merely one line of type squeezed between two stories, such as: "Build the DW with a Sub" or "the size of the DW depends on you." But on more desperate occasions: "Slackening of efforts now dangerous -- rush funds to save the Daily" or "Danger -- immediate action necessary." More often, the attention devoted to fund raising and subscriptions was evident in front-page subscription appeals, lengthy articles and ads for fund-
raising events such as picnics and bazaars. Here is an
example of just one of many subscription articles of the
paper's early years:

We want everyone who agrees with policy
of this paper -- the abolition of
capitalism and the establishment of a
workers' state by the revolutionary action
of the workers themselves -- to subscribe
and to get at least one fellow-worker to
subscribe . . .

The fighting working class papers are
few and far between in this land of
injunctions, lynchings, stool pigeons,
and gunmen. We can't have too many and
in no other way can the money of the
workers be spent so effectively.13

Chicago was the home of the DW for these first two
years of its life. Prior to its move to New York, the
paper remained six pages an issue. There were still no
classified ads or story datelines. However, some regular
columns started appearing (e.g., "The World of Labor") and
a cartoon series called "Uncle Wiggly's Tricks" began.
Although it lacked columns and series of divergent views,
the DW had, by 1926, already gained sufficient notoriety to
receive the following review from James O'Neal, editor of
the socialist New Leader: " . . . The filthiest thing that
ever happened in the U.S."14 Despite such well-expressed
"praise," the DW was reported to have a circulation average
of 60,000.15 O'Neal's feelings may stem from the fact that
when the Communist Party was formed in the United States in
1919, it was generally regarded as an offshoot of socialism.
In the years to follow it would, of course, deviate
widely from the socialist ideal and would finally come to stand for its political and moral opposite.

It was at this time -- early 1926 -- that leaders of the party said the paper was losing too much money in Chicago. They insisted that the paper needed greater financial support, and this, they thought, was possible only in New York. The question went to the Comintern where the DW's financial history was reviewed. After three months of wrangling the paper's new home became New York. Ironically, its economic condition did not stabilize. Early in 1927, the DW could not meet its payroll of non-party workers -- printers and typesetters. The International Labor Defense and International Workers Aid, two party auxiliaries, were instructed by the party to provide $100 and $150 respectively within 24 hours.

The party itself reported that the reason for the move from Chicago to New York was based on economics. But, to read the DW, one was led to believe that the reason was political in nature. The DW's reasoning appears logical as well as frank:

The HQ of the Party were originally located in N.Y. City. They were removed to Chicago BECAUSE AT THAT TIME and under the circumstances surrounding the Party work, Chicago offered a better center from which to conduct the Party work. It may well happen that in the future other cities besides New York or Chicago will offer the best vantage from which to conduct work. The Party's Central Committee does not believe that the question of where the Party HQ are located or in what city the DAILY WORKER is published
is a question of principle. It is a question of what the circumstances surrounding the Party work are and these circumstances may change from year to year.16

The front-page editorial of its first edition appearing out of New York was optimistic and encouraging:

Now the DW has come to New York to take advantage of the broader base which exists here and to create a better and stronger paper with the new editorial forces which are available here. The only English-language Communist daily in the world establishes itself in the home of the imperialist oppressors.17

This editorial may have been optimistic and encouraging, but it did not help to relieve the financial binds that plagued the DW. Among money-raising unorthodoxies, the DW is probably the only paper in history to have nibbled a cafeteria to death! This happened back in the 1920s, shortly after the DW moved into New York. The paper was housed in a party-owned building at 30 Union Square. The street floor of this building contained a party-managed cooperative cafeteria, with the DW's editorial department above and its presses in the basement below.

Due to the habits of the comrades who spent endless hours over coffee and cakes in the "gabby pursuit of the Marxian dialect, this cafeteria, run by a meek, willing, serious little man named Cecil Pollack,"18 became one of the few enterprizes of the U.S. party's history to show a profit.
But above and below Comrade Pollack's profitable eatery the DW was in weekly crisis due to a lack of "political understanding" among its back-shop workers, as well as its paper suppliers. For these "reactionary elements" not only demanded the prevailing wages and prices but they refused to extend the DW any credit. As a result, many inches of would-be news, editorials, features and other articles were devoted, instead, to fund-raising. When the need for funds on some occasions were especially critical, appeals for funds even found their way into standard news stories, such as this one on the visit of the queen of Roumania:

While the entire capitalist press is singing hymns of praise for the queen of terrorland, the Daily Worker is showing how the queen has been serving as mistress of the butchery of the Roumanian masses.

The DW stories about the queen interfere with the plans of the American investment bankers to perpetuate the slavery in which Roumanian workers and peasants find themselves.

The DW "greetings" to the queen will make it harder for Wall Street to throw millions of U.S. workers and farmers into a war in defense of our ruling class investments in Roumania, Bulgaria, Poland and other white-terror countries.

That's why Coolidge has it in for the DW. That's why the DW got Standard Oil's number. That's why the post office is being ordered to stop the DW. That's why all the American capitalists and their agents WITHOUT A SINGLE EXCEPTION hate the DW with unbound viciousness and fury.
And that's why you -- every working man, every working woman, every impoverished farmer -- must stand by the DW, must give everything to KEEP THE DAILY WORKER.

Now that the secretary of state, Frank B. Kellogg of our much vaunted democratic republic is falling at the feet of the Roumanian hooligan monarch, it is the best time for you to show special solidarity with the DAILY WORKER.

Now that the capitalists are preparing to stop the DAILY WORKER, it is absolutely necessary for you to beat back the bourgeois watch dogs by tripling your efforts to KEEP THE DAILY WORKER.

Can you think of a better opportunity to hit the exploiters in the face than with a substantial donation to KEEP THE DAILY WORKER?

Remember -- that the cost of perhaps one chair of the queen's bedroom in New York is enough to KEEP THE DAILY WORKER for one year.19

This is the way the DW remained for the next three years. In January, 1929, the DW was still six pages an issue but made several front-page changes: Its nameplate went from a block sans serif to old English style similar to the New York Times. Additionally, the hammer and sickle remained, but now it was superimposed over an outline of the earth. Underneath was the Pravda slogan: "Workers of the world unite."

Before turning to the Great Depression years, it is amusing to note what the DW had to say about Babe Ruth's home-run record under the headline: "Babe Ruth -- the Hero of Business Sports":

... who broke the world's series home run
record all in vain. The Cards took the World Series. As against the $ pro-sports business which manufacturers individual stars, there is the growing movement for mass participation in the athletic events of the labor sports movement.

Just before the economic crash, poems started appearing in the DW. They too were nothing more than party propaganda. For example:

SPRING TIME IN GASTONIA

It is spring time in Gastonia
It is spring time by the mill
It is spring time for the robin
And it's spring time for the bee

It is spring time for the bosses
In the playground on the hill
And its (sic) spring time for the police
But it's work time for those in the mill

Where the child is forced to labor
Thru the long and loathsome day
While the bossess (sic) out on the playground
May plot and plan and play

But the time is soon approaching
When the workers will realize
That their only hope for freedom
Is to fight and organize

Then we'll eliminate the piece work
And we'll ventilate the mill
And we'll free the child from labor
And be content on Loray Hill20

Even aviation (both civil and military) did not escape being used for the communist cause. Here is a relatively unimportant story about a New Zealand flyer:

Imperialist Flyer -- with French and Wall Street imperialism planning long flights to boost their air services, British imperialism does not want to be outdone. So Frank Mase, New Zealand flyer, is planning a flight from
London to New Zealand, to boost the British imperialist air service.

To illustrate shifting loyalties, the following two captions referring to new U.S. bombers should be compared. The first appeared in 1929. The second in 1935:

New huge plane to bomb the workers. The latest in destruction of workers from the air.

The world’s largest amphibian plane makes its debut: the U.S. Navy’s newest patrol bomber as it was photographed during a test flight.

Depression Period

After being exposed to so many stories that were twisted and angled to suit the purposes of party propaganda, it is important to note that many of the early news stories concerning the stock market crash of 1929 were completely straight. The first story of any length that was related to the crash appeared in the November 14, 1929, issue under the headline: "Stock Market Dropping." However, as the implications of the crash gained momentum in the following weeks, this failure of the capitalistic system could not be passed by with simple, objective news stories. The return to subjective reporting came on November 23, 1929, when the DW used a holiday occasion for propaganda purposes. The Thanksgiving Day issue included a photo of President Herbert Hoover with the caption:

Chief imperialist Hoover will eat a scrumptious Thanksgiving Dinner, while hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers starve. 21
Throughout the depression years, Hoover's program to relieve the economy is called by the DW: "Hoover's Fascist Program." Holidays were always exploited and Christmas 1929 was especially ripe for DW ingenuity:

Capitalist newspapers have a profitable game of panhandling in the name "Christmas charity" for a handful of selected derelicts of the capitalist system. This hypocritical "Christmas" game of graft and superstition is useful this year to cover up the economic crisis and the unemployment of 5,000,000 real workers.22

It was during 1929 that the DW gave birth to another of its most notable characteristics -- continuing and unexpected editorial reversals. Nimble though they had been some of the time, no DW editor ever possessed all the agility necessary to keep in step with the zigs and zags of the party line as laid down by Moscow. One story is told by Whitaker Chambers (of the 1948 Alger Hiss case fame) of Robert Minor, a "gifted" man who sacrificed a considerable cartoonist's talent to become a communist and writer for the DW.23

In 1929, Minor was editing the paper when Jay Lovestone, then the party's national leader, was summoned to Moscow. Lovestone was a pawn in a test of strength between Stalin and Nikolai Bukharin, an old Bolshevik who was Minor's revolutionary idol. One day Minor brought in a long article he had written headlined "Lovestone Backs Bukharin." Late the same night, as the paper was about to be committed to the presses, Minor rushed in, disheveled
and breathless. Somewhere he had learned that his story, so lovingly contrived out of loyalty to Lovestone and idol- 
atriy of Bukharin, was a grave mistake. He changed it to fit with party lines. The next day it appeared under the 
headline: "Lovestone Denounces Bukharin." The subsequent expulsion of Lovestone and execution of Bukharin left Minor, at least visibly, "unaffected."

Such reversals were not uncommon procedures among the DW's staff. DW reporters were given to understand quickly that facts and figures were just bourgeois prejudices if they doublecrossed the party line. No communist demonstrations were let down by the DW. If a dozen comrades were out soap-boxing, their class war organ never put the figure below 5,000. For example, on March 6, 1930, the paper published a story of a "titanic" clash between 100,000 demonstrators and some 25,000 "cossacks" of the New York police. All this made stirring reading, but it was quite exaggerated.

What actually happened was that the DW called for a mass demonstration in Union Square, and about 2,000 of the party faithful turned out to hear speeches by Minor, William Z. Foster, (who was to become leader of the Communist Party of the United States by 1953), and Israel Amter, another of the party bigwigs. There being considerable unemployment at the time, some 33,000 curious bystanders also turned out to watch the show. Grover Whalen, New York's police commissioner, anticipated trouble
and so was on hand with 1,000 police. The trouble began when Foster called for a march on City Hall, and Whalen forbade it on the grounds that the communists had not filed the three-day notice necessary for the issuance of a "parade permit." Whalen offered a compromise -- he would provide his own chauffeur-driven limousine and a police escort to take any delegation Foster selected to City Hall. According to the *New York Times*, Foster was having none of that, and ordered the march anyway. Obediently, the 2,000 communists walked right into the nightsticks of the police. After a few minutes of vigorous swinging, the mob broke and scattered in all directions.25

Four months after this communist demonstration, the nameplate of the DW was changed again -- from old-style English to sans-serif block style. Additionally, it was complemented underneath by the slogan that for the first time identified the DW officially as part of the Communist Party: "Organ of the Communist Party USA (Section of the Communist International)." As such it continued to exploit the suffering brought on by the depression for the next two years by demonstrating its solidarity with the Soviet Union. On January 1, 1932, the Olympics were to be held in Los Angeles, and the depression stories were momentarily relegated to inside pages on the day that the DW headlined: "Against the Los Angeles Olympics:"

Only the cream of the world's best athletes, nursed and paid by their respective countries, will be on display
at the Olympics. What about the millions of other athletes outside these special institutions (colleges, YMCA's, etc.)? What about the vacant lot gang, the Negro Athletes, and the working youth? Are the Olympics for them? Certainly not.

Youths fortunate enough to be employed are driven like slaves in the work places. Even restful sleep is impossible after a day's work due to aching muscles strained in ceaseless labor. And what chance have the under-fed and under-nourished unemployed youth to compete with milk-fed professionals? There will not be one amateur at the Olympics. Huge expense accounts are the pay envelopes for the athletes. The best paid have the most time to train, therefore, the biggest professionals will be at the Olympics. The Soviet Union, one sixth of the world where the workers rule, has not even been invited. We must draw but one conclusion: THE OLYMPICS ARE NOT FOR THE WORKERS.26

The economic crisis brought on by the great depression finally hit the DW itself during the first quarter of 1932. During one of its frequent appeals for funds, the January 20, 1932 issue called out: "Workers: Lack of Immediate Response Threatening Life of Daily Worker." But the funds did not come in as the DW hoped. For the first time in its 8-year-old life, it was forced to suspend some issues. February 15 was a two-page issue with the entire front page devoted to an editorial in massive type:

Readers -- only by the most desperate measures were we able to get out any DW today; two pages today -- but what will happen tomorrow?27

There was no issue at all on February 16. A four-page issue appeared on February 17: "Four pages today made possible by the splendid response of workers all over the
country." Of the next four days, only three issues were published. The front page editorial on February 22 said: "Slackening of Efforts Now Dangerous; Rush Funds to Save Daily."

"Save the Daily Worker" became a flag next to the nameplate for the remainder of February and March. Near the end of March, the emphasis was on "half-dollars:" "Only four pages tomorrow -- rush your half-dollars"; "Scatter Boss Press -- send half-dollars." The last days of March came and went without the DW. By mid-April, the paper was suddenly out of this financial problem and continued to publish uninterrupted.

It was during the middle of this depression period that the DW began having regular sports columns (by Edward Newhouse); stage and screen articles; and the temporary absence of a masthead -- which came and went. The first articles on what was happening in Europe under Adolf Hitler and Nazism began appearing and a definite anti-Nazi attitude started to be expressed.

The depression years did not stop James Glaser, New York Times copy editor and devout communist from quitting the Times to become managing editor of the DW in 1934 at a 35% cut in salary. One of his first assignments was to write a brief announcement of his shift from the Times to the DW. When he picked up the Worker the next day, he was shocked to find a completely different story announcing that he would write a series of inside stories about graft
and corruption on the Times. Glaser rushed from office to office of party leaders to learn who had changed his copy. He was finally introduced to a "representative from Moscow" who explained that the new version was necessary to assure readers that Glaser did not bear the taint of a capitalistic paper. Glaser never gave in to the pressure to write such a series, but he saw a lot more of that "representative." He turned out to be Gerhardt Eisler (who later became propaganda chief of the Communist East German government). After having worked a five-day week on the Times, Glaser found that DW workers were laboring six days, so he ordered a five-day week. When Eisler found out, he vetoed the order. He told Glaser that "we couldn't delay the revolution for a day."  

One day Glaser received a story from Harry Gannes, the foreign editor, stating that the revolution in France was imminent. Glaser had not heard of this so he asked Gannes where it came from. "Comrade," he said, "this is the line." Glaser chewed him out for sitting down at the typewriter and dreaming up such a story. Gannes reportedly told Glaser he should not talk like that. When Glaser killed the story, Eisler told Glaser he had "insufficient political development" and still had "bourgeois traits."  

Glaser found the DW as inefficient as it was journalistically dishonest. Once he asked a copyboy for a cut of William Green, the late AFL leader. After much
searching, the cut was found filed under "P" for "Prominent Labor Fakes."30

Once a woman representing a communist-front organization came in to demand a front-page story on a money-raising women's bazaar -- and with an accompanying banner headline. Glaser laughed, saying "you can't have an eight-column line on a bazaar." But since the DW always liked to accommodate its friends, Eisler intervened and that was how the story ran. Two years later -- 1936 -- Glaser worked up the strength to quit both the party and the paper and to stop being a "lunkhead, chump, and a poor, miserable tragic fool," as he referred to himself.31

The DW may have been the official organ of the Communist Party at this time, but the newly formed Newspaper Guild could be thought of as an organ of the DW! In 1934, Harry Raymond, DW City Hall reporter, became a member of the New York chapter of the recently organized Guild. As a DW representative, he sat in the chapter's councils and helped lead it into communist captivity. As a captive union, the Guild struck paper after paper in the New York area to bring about higher wages, but never would it tolerate any talk of a strike against the DW which, notoriously, paid the lowest wages in town.32 This communist domination of the Guild continued for about ten years (See Chapter III for more on the Guild).

Near the end of the depression era, the DW dropped the hammer, sickle and party slogan from the front page.
Instead, it substituted under the nameplate: "Peoples champion of Liberty, Progress, Peace, and Prosperity."

This outward change signified an inner (but short-lived) shift that had for some time been in the making. Saddened by the depression's failure to rally new comrades around the red flag, party leaders gradually abandoned Lenin's rigid revolutionary line and turned more and more toward collaboration with various liberal groups. At the party's 1938 National Convention, Earl Browder, general secretary, said communism had become "Twentieth century Americanism."

In the earlier days of the paper's existence, only comrades who had been beaten over the head in the class struggle were given police cards and a typewriter. Harry Raymond, City Hall reporter, spent six months in jail as an aftermath of the 1930 riot (See page 42).

Many who came to the paper in the two or three years after 1936 needed no such wounds, since it was this mild period of democratic slogans, and benign collaboration with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Father Divine and the ghosts of Jefferson and Lincoln.

This shift in character was neither consistent nor long lasting. Pro-Roosevelt in 1936, the Christmas 1939 issue included a large page 1 cartoon (five columns wide; ½ page deep) showing Santa Claus with "Roosevelt Administration" printed on a large belt around his trousers. Looking very smug and with a cigar out the side of his grin, Santa was putting "war profits" in a stocking
labelled "Wall Street." Right beside him is an obviously starving and pathetic little figure holding out a broken plate for food, his ragged clothes are labelled "Public."

The end of the 1930s with regard to the press in general was described by Martin Dies, former head of the House of Representatives's Special Committee on Un-American Activities. It seems very apt when applied to this discussion of the DW in this period:

The high standards of accuracy and objectivity under which the journalism profession had become known as the fourth estate, had deteriorated sadly.34

As the Great Depression came to an end in the late 1930s, the DW eased up on stories about the nation's economic situation. But regardless of the economic situation or the DW's leading stories, the inner struggle of many DW staff writers continued. James Glaser quit after two years; Howard Rushmore could stand it only for three years. He joined the DW early in 1937 as a movie reviewer and feature writer.

Rushmore had a background of Midwestern city room experience, and a lot of stubborn illusions about objective reporting and writing straight news. It took his first movie review, in 1937, to teach him otherwise -- and his last review, in 1939, to make him quit the paper. That last review, by the way, concerned "Gone With the Wind," and appeared in the issue of December 24, 1939. It was rewritten by Ben Davis (a black) who labelled the movie "an
insidious glorification of the slave market."35

One day, an editor pounced on Rushmore saying, "you
must always apply the light of Marxism to Hollywood."

I failed to smell out John Bull in
another Hollywood lure, "Man of Conquest," and called it a fine cinema biography of
Sam Houston. Next day, one of the lead-
ing comrades accused me of serving the
cause of American imperialism. He hadn't
seen the picture, but he was sure I had
fallen for Hollywood propaganda.36

At one of the weekly staff meetings, Rushmore
suggested that the DW could stand a little more "capitalist
technique" in the news columns. In this he was joined by
several other reporters. The suggestion created a minor
panic. Harry Gannes, the foreign editor, screamed indig-
nantly that treason was in the air. Abe Magil, another
editor said coldly, the DW cannot be classified under the
bourgeois term "newspaper." In that case, said another
staff member, a DW man can't be called a reporter. "What'n
hell is he?" "He," said Gannes, "is a revolutionist." The
staff got together after the meeting and discussed ways and
means of flashing their police cards and saying: "I'm a
revolutionist from the Daily Worker."37

Rushmore said that in all his years on newspapers he
had never seen a staff so unanimously against its editors
as the DW city room men. The editorial board was composed
of "political hacks" who had backed the right communist
factions at the proper time. They not only received more
pay than the ordinary staff man, but were able to wrangle
their wives and girl friends into jobs in "front" organizations. The reporters had no such luck. Their wages were approximately half the minimum Newspaper Guild scale. They tried to earn extra money by outside writing. The editorial board, however, blocked these efforts, accusing them of "selling out to the capitalists."

In one way or another, Rushmore said, the editors won the reporters' hatred. Fred Ellis, editorial cartoonist, ranked among America's best until he went to the DW. There he took a cruel mental beating -- the editorial board normally gave him the ideas and he had to make the cartoons fit.

Rushmore said many reporters, out of habit, tried to write the news as it happened, but were told off in a hurry. Since the average DW reporter seldom, if ever, read the speeches of Stalin and Lenin, fitting the news into the party-line groove of the moment was not always easy.38

When news could not be fitted to print, it was simply ignored. In New York, four Germans including one woman were tried for conspiracy to steal U.S. secrets and were sentenced to death on December 2, 1938. A month later, two other Germans were convicted of espionage and of photographing military fortifications in the Panama Canal Zone. During these Nazi spy trials between October, 1938, and January, 1939, the DW splashed the stories on its front pages, giving it bigger play than any other metropolitan paper. Soon thereafter, a number of Soviet agents were
hauled in on the West Coast and a trial of Soviet spies took place, also in New York. Neither the capture of the Soviet spies or the subsequent trials ever took place as far as the DW was concerned.

The city desk had a blacklist of writers who had opposed the party line. These were kept out of the DW even if, at the moment, they were serving the cause nobly. For example, Edwin Seaver, book reviewer for three years on the DW, was told to ignore all works by anti-Stalin writers if he could not smear them. His editors thought nothing of ignoring a pro-labor best seller if it was written by an anti-Stalin author.

At this time, reporters were not permitted a common vice of capitalistic newspapermen -- poker. On one occasion reporters were gathered in the telegraph room between stories where the non-communist telegraph operator made a fourth man. The editors called the operator a "poker-playing, whiskey-drinking capitalist" and broke off the game. One of the most notable poker-playing party reporters was Harry Raymond (introduced earlier), who came onto the staff of the DW in 1931 when he was released from prison after serving six months for "unlawful assembly" during the riot of 1930 (see page 42).

We envied Harry Raymond, our city hall reporter, who would come in from his beat with tales of glorious games of stud.39

During a strike on the Brooklyn Eagle, he spent most
of his off-duty time, as did most of the reporters, on the picket line. But the five editors never took their turn. Harry Raymond objected at a staff meeting one day, and from then on nothing he did met with the approval of the editors. His stories were killed. But, he sprang back into popularity in 1953 when he was described as one of the DW's "star reporters" (Post, September 12, 1953, p. 21).

It was not only the reporters that gave trouble to the editors, but the annual necessity for filing a sworn statement of ownership to the federal government. The DW had been a perennial source of anxiety for the party leadership since its inception. Moscow's attitude was that of a proprietor, but obviously, local communist bosses could never admit such a relationship, particularly in an affidavit to a federal government agency. It was, therefore, necessary to confer local legitimacy on the DW, and the efforts to do this took the form of a bewildering succession of paper corporations, secretly owned by paper holding companies which had still other holding companies to hold them. This maze, it had been asserted, led back to a properly executed and legal bill-of-sale in a Kremlin safe.40

Until 1939, the listed shareholders of these phantom corporations were a shifting company of party nonentities and Comintern satraps. When this country passed the Foreign Registration Act in 1939, the Department of Justice discovered that the DW was receiving $25,000 worth of
cabled news free each year from Moscow. This was held to be a subsidy and the DW was ordered to register as the agent of a foreign power. To meet this situation immediately, the DW reluctantly discontinued Moscow service. Then, to avoid further legal complications, Earl Browder, party boss; created a dummy corporation (Freedom of the Press, Inc.) which turned out to be a stroke of genius. Combing the party's outer fringes, Browder came up with three elderly ladies who would serve as guardians through the crisis. Each of the ladies possessed some patrimony and impeccable DAR lineage. They were:

Mrs. Caro Lloyd Strobell, 81, whose great-great grandfather fought at Valley Forge.

Miss Anna M. Pennypacker, 66, daughter of a former Pennsylvania governor.

Mrs. Susan Homans Woodruff, 61, granddaughter of the founder of Banker's Magazine.

Confronted with this astonishing shotgun wedding of the Communist Party to assorted Daughters of the American Revolution, the U.S. attorney general was unwilling to take action against the DW.

Allied With the Nazis

The Foreign Registration Act may have disturbed the party leaders and DW's top editors, but a series of flip-flops started occurring at this time that could have started Karl Marx turning head-over-heels in his grave. Rumors to the effect that Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia would
sign a non-aggression pact was met with this DW editorial in June, 1939:

Whispered lies to the effect the Soviet Union will enter into a treaty of understanding with Nazi Germany, are nothing but poison spread by the enemies of peace and democracy.43

It was but two months later that these "whispered lies" were proven to be not lies at all. On August 23, 1939, Stalin entered into a non-aggression, mutual-aid pact with Nazi Germany. Communists all over the world were shocked and confused: there was no official leak of such an agreement. The DW that day missed the story, but a page 1 editorial assured the Polish people of the Soviet Union's "uncompromising support for their freedom and independence."

Confronted later that day by other newspaper reporters, Earl Browder, then editor-in-chief of the DW (as well as general secretary of the party), kept his silence. Not, however, before answering one question: "Will the Hitler-Stalin pact be a blow to Poland?" "That, of course, is nonsense," he said, "and the kind of nonsense which is very valuable to Berlin. The agreement will actually strengthen the Poles." Less than a month later, on September 17, the Red Army marched into Poland. On the 29th, Stalin split the conquered nation with Nazi Germany.

As for news on the Pact itself and subsequent flip-flop on the Soviet's allegiance: not a word. Nor was there any explanation on why the DW said the Poles had nothing to fear when Russia and Germany were already planning on
The news did not fit: so it was not printed.

Nevertheless, the Pact distressed all of the DW reporters who still retained an archaic sense of honesty. Mike Gold, a columnist, promptly took a month's vacation. The rest of the staff could not duck so easily. One of them was the girl in charge of the "letters to the editor" department. Immediately after the Pact was signed, her desk piled up with letters from indignant party members demanding an explanation of the Nazi alliance. The girl was startled, since the average DW reader was normally the most trusting of souls. After the "explanation" was published (that an escape clause in the Pact would permit Stalin to fight Hitler anyhow if necessary, plus the fact that Russia had bought time to build up her forces), the indignant letters doubled in volume. The comrades were not satisfied. The managing editor put the staff to work writing fake letters of approval and the angry fan mail went to the furnace. This treatment of the Pact story is a very interesting contrast with the different attitude that prevailed among the news staff when faced with another major flip-flop: the 1956 Secret-Speech (discussed in Chapter III).

For years, Adolf Hitler had been represented to the readers as a hideous monster. Now the picture editor had to find a nice, smiling full-face of Adolf and destroy all caricatures of the new comrade. The pretty cuts of the Roosevelt smile also went to the furnace signifying the
end of the benign cooperation. When the text of the actual pact came into the DW office minus the "escape" clause, Browder and other reporters were sick at heart. Nevertheless, the DW's man on the street "interview" spoke only adoringly of Stalin, Hitler and their big deal. 45

In a manner of speaking, 1939 was a turning-point year for the DW. Between 1924-1939, the DW had a certain lure for the socially minded newspaperman. Perhaps its struggle against an unfriendly world gave the paper a halo of martyrdom that touched the romantic heart of the proletariat of the Fourth Estate. By the late 1930s it was reported to have a circulation of 100,000 (but only 5,600 when it dropped to weekly status in 1958.) 46 Viewed from a bourgeois city room, the DW may have seemed boldly militant in calling names, ignoring libel laws and defending the much-maligned underdog. As Howard Rushmore said it:

Until 1939, I still met "capitalist" reporters who said they would give their right arms to have my job -- they wanted to be Stalin's press agents. 47

All that was changed in 1939 when press-agentry for Stalin suddenly meant press-agentry for Hitler as well. The DW would go through this fall from "grace" as it were only to rise again during the early 1940s. Howard Rushmore summed up his feelings as a reporter on the DW when he quit in 1940:

The cause was my accumulated disgust with lying for the cause, murderous office politics, and the general atmosphere of mental chicanery in which
the paper lives. Many comrade reporters still cling grimly unhappily to their typewriters. A lot of them are decent fellows, too muddled or too scared of being jobless to quit. I hear that an edition is never put to bed now without that final cable from Moscow; that a handsome cut of Benito has been placed in the morgue "just in case;" that no one smiles any longer on East 12th Street. No longer do "capitalist" reporters buy beer for Daily Worker men and say wistfully, "I'd give my right arm to have your job." An illusion is dead -- killed by Joe and Adolf.48
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

2. Worker, Dec. 8, 1923, p. 4.
3. Daily Worker, Jan. 13, 1924, p. 3.
9. DW, Jan. 13, 1924, p. 3.
10. Woltman, op. cit.
11. Louis F. Budenz, This is My Story, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1947, p. 101. Anthony Bimba was also the author of History of the American Labor Movement, which, in effect, denounced Abraham Lincoln as an enemy of mankind, and taught subversion and scorn for all national heroes. But as the Communist Party changed its lines, so did the DW which eulogized national heroes for communist purposes. For example, Abraham Lincoln (p. 22) and the United States entry into World War II, December 8, 1941.
20. *DW*, May 1, 1929, p. 5.
33. "Browder's Americanism", *Newsweek*, June 6, 1938, p. 11.
III. THE UP AND DOWN YEARS: 1940-1956

From Allies to Enemies Again

Whatever the long-range goals of the Soviet-Nazi Pact were supposed to have been, there was short-range work in abundance for the American Communist Party. The Roosevelt administration would be accused of promoting a "war-and-hunger budget." New and greater agitation would be spread through the nation for "higher wages, shorter hours, an American standard of living." The communist schedule forecasted strikes, commotions, demonstrations -- anything to block "Bundles for Britain" in the form of munitions and planes. Some communists even ventured the thought that the Soviet Union might persuade Hitler to abandon anti-Semitism and that, thereafter, the two totalitarian regimes might march together across the world.

The DW was given strict instructions by party chiefs not to deride Hitler in cartoons, but to open both barrels on Britain. This suggestion was unnecessary, as the documents coming out of Moscow made clear that England, with its back to the wall, "was the main enemy of mankind."
To prevent the spread of war seemed an important objective to the communists: their reports, resolutions and speeches were filled with that pervasive goal. Of course, they could and would shed the argument when Soviet interests required it. But, in 1940, it furnished a powerful incentive to work hard against American aid to Britain.

Further insight into the DW's activities during the World War II years is gained from the words of Louis F. Budenz, who rose to managing editor of the paper but resigned in disgust and frustration from the DW and the Communist Party in 1945.

One of Budenz's first jobs on the party press was to illustrate the new stand taken by the party on Ireland. Since Great Britain was, for the time being, the chief enemy of mankind because it was battling Hitler, overnight the Irish were rediscovered. Prior to 1940, general indifference to the Irish had marked the official communist attitude. Although the "official" attitude was to change, the prevalent communist concept was that the Irish were a degenerate national group that would get completely on the right side of the [political] fence only when forced to do so by the revolution.²

In 1940, Browder made it quite plain and public that the change in attitude toward the Irish was really being made primarily for "defense." He told Budenz, in private, it was also being made to assure a rise in journalistic standards of the paper. There was a perpetual tug-of-war
around the publication as to whether it should be more popular or more educational; the thought it should be more popular tended, at this time, to be prevalent. It was difficult, however, to be popular among non-party readers when editorial policy tried to defend the acts of Hitler. An example of the sort of articles that appeared before Germany's invasion of Russia follows. In February, 1941, Budenz wrote concerning the Baltic states:

Any area or small country which has the good fortune to win the protection of the Soviet Union will be kept out of the blood bath, insofar as possible. The Mongolian People's Republic can testify eloquently to that. So will the tiny Baltic republics when this mammoth conflict has ended.3

The belief that the subjugation of the Baltic states would move them into the path of progress, into the "future," was the defense Budenz made for these Hitler-like acts. Soviet-prepared news stories which continually barraged the DW from Moscow furnished glowing views of the Baltic invasion. The peasants and workers were represented as rushing out to greet the Red Army as "liberators."

The DW shifted from supporting Roosevelt in 1939 to depicting a "belligerent" Roosevelt in 1941. Concerning the President's attitude toward England, the DW wrote in 1941:

Is President Roosevelt callously leading the nation to the precipice to which Woodrow Wilson brought us? Regretfully, the answer must be: Emphatically, yes! Our present chief executive is as enamoured of the British Empire as was the man who
devised "the war to end war!" He becomes increasingly belligerent in tone, and there can be no doubt that he is set upon crushing Hitler Germany by military means. Such an enterprise will now lead to the extension of war, to an impasse once again whereby the whole world will be in flames.4

It was not long before the DW ceased to wrestle with the news concerning Hitler's acts: the paper performed another sudden editorial reversal after June 22, 1941. On that day, Hitler invaded Soviet Russia. With the USSR in peril, the Communist Party scrapped its sabotage campaign to weaken America's entire defense program. Overnight, the DW did one of the quickest turnabouts in newspaper history. Among other things, it dropped its "Irish Desk," created during the Hitler-Stalin Pact to stir Irish sentiment in the United States against Britain. The paper's own headlines immediately before and after the Nazi's moved into Russia tell the story:5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before June 22</th>
<th>After June 22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FDR WAR DRIVES ASSAILED BY DETROIT NEGRO PRESS</td>
<td>WAR DEPARTMENT BALKS FDR ORDER AGAINST JIM CROW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEEDUP KILLS AIRCRAFT WORKER</td>
<td>MASS PRODUCTION SPEEDS UP AT CALIFORNIA PLANE FACTORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SHRUNKEN BELLIES OF NEGRO HARLEM FACE MORE</td>
<td>BRITAIN PLANS TO HONOR U.S. WITH JULY 4th HOLIDAY:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHRINKING FOR THE WAR OF CHURCHILL</td>
<td>BITTERNESS FORGOTTEN AS BRITAINS HAUL OUT FLAGS FOR BIG CELEBRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW THE SECOND IMPERIALIST WAR IS BEING FINANCED</td>
<td>IN THE SPIRIT OF 1776 -- CRUSHING HITLERISM IN 1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;HOME GUARD&quot; LA GUARDIA NEGLECTS CITY, TO STIR UP FALSE PANIC IN WAR DRIVE</td>
<td>LA GUARDIA PLANS THE GREATEST DEMONSTRATION OF MASS UNITY IN U.S. HISTORY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even the movie reviews followed the new line. Before June 22, war films were "poor" cinema. "Man Hunt," reviewed on June 15, "would be exciting entertainment" except that its director was serving "Hollywood's bought-and-paid-for warmongering." However, by June 28, Bob Hope's "Caught in the Draft" was a "load of laughs" that relieved the people's "tension over a deadly serious problem." "From Imperialist War to People's War" was the way the DW summed it all up. One top editor explained that the DW actually maintained a steady course during this period: "The switch was made by this country's government."

Twenty-four hours after the attack, the DW of June 23 denounced the Nazi invasion as an "unprovoked criminal attack upon the greatest champion of peace, freedom and national independence" and demanded "full support and cooperation with the Soviet Union in its struggle against Hitlerism." Other striking points were that the new war was "also an attack on the peoples of Germany" and "upon the peoples of the United States and of the entire world..." The Soviet government is now waging a struggle "... in defense of the most vital interests of the peoples in all countries." The American people "will see the cause of the Soviet Union is the cause of all advanced and progressive mankind."
Throughout the war, the DW moved back and forth. The nod of Moscow to the right sent the paper spinning in that direction; if it was to the left, the paper stumbled after. 6 When at the end of 1941 the Japanese dropped their bombs on Pearl Harbor, the outcry went up from the National Committee of the party: Everything for victory over the world-wide fascist slavery. The communists began to root for the war, to hail the Anglo-Soviet-American alliance, to acclaim Roosevelt a hero and to fill the air with shouts for a second front -- all according to the tone set by the chiefs of the USSR. On December 8, 1941, the front-page story in the DW of the Pearl Harbor attack even resurrected Abraham Lincoln:

JAPAN OPENS WAR ON U.S.

The CP pledges its loyalty, its devoted labor and last drop of blood in support of our country . . . In the tradition of the communist leaders who in 1861 joined the U.S. Army under commissions issued by President Lincoln, 100,000 American communists today step forward to support the bigger war against slavery, a war in defense of the whole world's freedom.

All honest Americans who have been misled by the Lindberghs, the Coughlins, the Norman Thomases must see the treachery, the threat to the national existence of our country that lies in the intrigues of such organizations as the America First Committee and must break with their influence.

All Americans must join in one mighty stream of national unity to assure that "government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."7
Thus did the Communist Party throw up their hats for the Roosevelt whom they had hissed as a "warmonger" and "Wall Street puppet" a year before. It was the same Roosevelt but the Soviet Union had changed sides and the communists here obediently turned their coats with it.

By the same token, the DW would cheer the Teheran meeting in December 1943, at which Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin and Sir Winston Churchill swore to peace for years to come. The American communists wanted an Anglo-American-Soviet alliance until the atom bomb devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Then they were to make another turn-about as Moscow showed its teeth to the United States and threw the unholy shadow of WW III across the riddled world.

After Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt may have been in good graces with the DW and the communist party, but some other Americans were not so lucky. There was a day in 1943 when the DW actually blamed David Dubinsky, International Ladies Garment Workers Union president, for the fall of the Russian city of Kharkov to the Nazis. "Who let Hitler retake Kharkov?" angrily demanded an editorial in the March 17 issue. Its answer: Herbert Hoover, Norman Thomas and Dubinsky, whom the DW termed "especially guilty." Why? Because they had protested Stalin's execution of two Jewish labor leaders in Poland -- thereby, in some incomprehensible fashion, delaying the second front. Dubinsky, who was chairman of the Jewish Labor Committee, was an "anti-
Semite" to the DW and "head of a gang of unscrupulous Fascist agents."

Post War Confusion

In the short period from the end of WW II to the beginning of the Korean War, the DW was described as a:

Clean-looking 12-15 page tabloid disarmingly similar in external appearance to any small-town American daily. Its makeup was easy to read; its typography modern. The DW city room is much like that of any other paper, with flat-topped desks in rows, large central table for copy editors, and partitioned offices at one end of the room for the editors.8

The DW city room may have appeared much the same as a conventional newspaper, but access to the DW was somewhat unconventional. While Budenz was editor, access to the DW was by a buzzer system, operated by a receptionist who had strict orders to admit only party members and known friends. Always around the city desk there were two men charged with watching the friendly outsiders and keeping them on the move. On one wall was a large sign: NO ONE IS TO USE THE MORGUE. In most newspapers, the "morgue" is open to all staff members and on some newspapers, outsiders as well. The managing editor's office was kept locked, guarded and soundproofed, according to Budenz. That was to assure protection from the staff itself and to guarantee against eavesdropping on secret conferences with commissars from the famous "ninth floor." Throughout most of its years in New York, the DW was located on the eighth floor
of a 12-story building on East 12th Street. The ninth floor housed the Communist Party headquarters. The whole atmosphere, Budenz said, "was charged with concealment and conspiracy."\(^9\)

In 1945, a new panel of editors became necessary after Budenz had left. It was the Communist Party's national committee, and not DW shareholders, who announced the new appointees. Receiving no benefits, "shareholders" exercised no responsibilities. They were never called to meeting, never given a balance sheet and never consulted concerning DW policy or management. DW "shareholders," in short, existed purely to hide true ownership and to provide a phony compliance with post office regulations necessary to obtain a second-class mailing permit. (This has been discussed in Chapter II).

Earl Browder was head of the CPUSA and William Z. Foster, secretary and chairman. They were, in part, responsible for the new DW staff. They could not know that some of these staff members would attempt, in 1956, to direct the DW away from Soviet domination toward an independent and free course. This attempt would not be entirely successful, but the principal personalities involved are worth describing.\(^{10}\)

John Gates: editor in chief. Slight, hard-bitten, pugnacious, former political commissar of the Communist International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. An ex-steel union organizer, he had no past newspaper experience when he was named to the DW. Like Budenz,
Glaser and Rushmore, before him, Gates resigned from the party in frustration in 1956.

Milton Howard: associate editor. Husky, doctrinaire, commissar type who was tough with his staff. He had been with the paper since 1932.

Alan Max: managing editor. Replaced Budenz in 1946. Professional-looking, lanky, with a sense of humor. He had also been with the paper since 1932.

Robert F. Hall: Washington Bureau; shambling, soft-spoken Mississippi native who, for some years, was a communist candidate for Congress in Alabama.

Max Gordon: city editor. Supposedly got his job on the strength of his thoroughly undiluted Marxism. Stocky, wild hair and sartorial carelessness.

Benjamin David Jr., President of the DW's dummy corporation -- Freedom of the Press, Inc. Huge Negro, bushy-mustached with a Harvard law degree.

Helping to appoint this staff was one of Earl Browder's last official acts. But his leaving the party was to come as a shock to the DW staff. This was another instance where the DW missed the boat, or as someone so aptly put it -- where the editors got caught with their party line down.11

May 20, 1945, was Earl Browder's 54th birthday. The DW next day carried the staff's best wishes. "You are one of the greatest leaders of the people," said the DW. "We express what all of us feel so deeply about you, the beloved leader of our movement." At that very moment, Browder had in his pocket a crumpled letter from Jacques Duclos, French
Communist Party secretary who had been called Stalin's alter ego in Europe. In effect the letter read Browder out of the party. On May 22, two days after his birthday, the New York World-Telegram broke the Duclos letter. This threw the party leadership into a panic. Browder was obliged to run the letter in full with an apology in the May 24 edition of the DW: to the DW, its ex-chief was a "political faker," and an "arrogant anti-Marxist."

It was shifts like this that also caused book burnings. As an example, after Browder's fall from power, many of his books were burned. The principle was as simple as this: what is true today in the party may not be true tomorrow.12

Adjusting to party shifts was a regular occurrence at the DW and the staff tried to anticipate such events. But, in 1948, another unexpected problem occurred. It was mentioned in Chapter II that the American Newspaper Guild was communist-dominated at its beginnings in 1934. A membership revolt in 1948 changed all this and the DW management failed to get a new contract. Released from its communist-dominated shackles, the Guild had a golden opportunity to show its power. When the DW fired a girl employee and denied her the severance pay she was due, she took her case to the Guild. It wrote a letter which must have been effective. In two days the girl got $200 in cash and notes for $696 more.13

But, as far as was made public, this was the only
step the Guild took to force the DW to practice the union line it preached, because it is the only complaint on record any DW member had made. Although determined Guild action against the DW at this time would have been a severe blow, both financially as well as logically, it is doubtful if anything short of the total collapse of the Communist Party in the United States would have killed the paper.

According to the affidavits of ownership which the Post Office Department required of all publications holding a second-class mailing permit, the daily circulation had dropped the last three years from more than 25,000 to 11,334 by 1952, with a corresponding dip for the Sunday edition from 67,199 in 1950 to 32,360 in 1952.14

Along with the loss of the Guild contract, declining circulation and financial difficulties, the DW encountered a crisis of another sort: a newsprint shortage. The DW used the commercial market for newsprint. During the post-war shortage of 1947, it ran short and was just about to suspend publication. At the last minute, the American Newspaper Publishers Association came to the rescue and tapped the New York Times, an ANPA member, for 16 tons of the precious paper for the DW.

The Times came through with the newsprint although it had been singled out for years for vicious attacks in the DW, which regarded the Times as a symbol of "capitalism." A few readers wrote in to the Times to protest. In reply, the paper said it felt sure that its readers, upon reflec-
tion, would agree there should be no discrimination against any applicant for newsprint simply because its views opposed those of the *Times*. It was but three years later--1950--that a federal court would use the DW's "views," not regarded as significant by the *Times*, as evidence in its case against leaders of the Communist Party. Incidentally, neither the *Times* nor the American Newspaper Publishers Association ever received a word of acknowledgement or thanks from the DW.¹⁵

It is evident that getting the DW out was a painful scramble for its staff. In no year had its operating deficit been less than $50,000. Whatever it may have contributed to keep the paper alive, Moscow had by no means provided all that was needed. One of the reasons for the DW's deficits was, of course, its lack of advertising. Though the paper professed to despise advertisers, and had frequently characterized them as the "venal corrupting bosses of the non-communist press," it had in fact wooed them. The regular advertising was mostly business cards of little merchants, dentists, undertakers and the like who were presumably party sympathizers. It ran occasionally a full- or half-page greeting from communist-dominated unions (such as the International Workers Order, which peddled communism to foreign language groups while selling them insurance) or other organizations.

Its "want section" was seldom more than a half column and consisted mostly of ads for governesses, rooms available
and apartments for rent. There was, in addition, a "What's On" column where, for 35 cents an agate line, party clubs and individuals invited other comrades to lectures and "hootenannies" -- a word which seemed to define any kind of social gathering.

The DW's attitude toward crime and the racial problem was as unique as its attitude toward advertising. All crimes and other mishaps involving Negroes were regarded as cases of racial discrimination. Whenever a Negro was killed by a policeman, no matter what the provocation, the DW marked it down as a "lynching." According to a 1949 DW article on lynching by Howard Fast, there were more "lynchings in New York City than all of the South put together." This distorted treatment of racial issues resulted in an astonishing exchange of ideas between readers of the DW editors. For instance, is "white lie a chauvinistic expression?" B.M. writes in. "Absolutely," replied the editor. "Expressions which make everything white appear good and everything black appear bad butresses white chauvinism."

When the cycle of movies started in the late 1940s which presented Negroes sympathetically ("Home of the Brave," "Lost Boundaries," "Pinky," "Intruder in the Dust"), the DW first hailed it as an advance in race relations. Then the party cracked down. Any such admission, the Politburo had suddenly realized, would refute Stalin's concept of Uncle Sam as Grand Kleagle of the Ku Klux Klan. V. J.
Jerome, the communist party's cultural commissar and editor of the now defunct Political Affairs (the party's bible of Marxist theory and history), laid down the law to the DW editors:

These new Negro interest films represent a change of tactics in the face of the rising tide of militant struggle of the Negro people and an attempt to divert this tide into harmless channels. This strategy is at all times to undermine the Negro liberation movement; to keep the Negro from understanding the real basis and nature of their oppression.  

The Worker's movie critic at the time, David Platt, acted according to Jerome's "illuminating analysis." He tore into "The Story of Jackie Robinson," wherein the Brooklyn Dodger's famous Negro second baseman plays himself. Its theme was don't fight back according to Platt. In effect, the DW accused Robinson of betraying the Negro people. (This, incidentally, was after Robinson had testified in Washington that Negroes want nothing to do with communism).

The July 1948 issue of Ebony magazine carried a letter from John Gates, DW editor, protesting misstatements about the DW in its April story about Negroes on daily papers. The story declared that "the daily newspaper hiring the most Negroes is the Daily Worker, which has two." The DW, according to Gates, had supplied Ebony with the correct data. Gates' letter declared, "Aside from three editorial employees, two editors, and a reporter, we have a number of other Negro employees. Out of a total of
68 employees, 13 of them are Negroes." There were two Negro editors at the time (one was Ben Davis -- but research for this thesis failed to substantiate Gates' claims regarding the others).

Even obituaries did not escape being used for propaganda purposes. The most notable treatment of this sort in the late 1940s concerned the suicide of former Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal. Its obituary called him "this Wall Street character." It concluded with:

So he has cut his throat at last! He who? The man who cut his country's long ago.

The fact of the matter was that Forrestal was depressed by what he regarded as unfair attacks on his role as Secretary of Defense. He entered the U.S. Naval Hospital at Bethesda, Md., in 1949 for nervous exhaustion. He appeared to be recovering, when he leaped to his death from a high window in the hospital on May 22, 1949. He was 57 years of age.

The two top stories that dominated the front pages of the DW as the 1940s closed out were the Arab-Israeli conflict -- in which the paper supported the Jewish side (the "underdog" angle), and the Karl Mundt/Richard Nixon congressional bill that would have outlawed the Communist Party. Through the year 1948, the bill was referred to, by the DW, as the "Mundt Police-State Bill." The DW's stories and editorials which called for the defeat of the Bill were labelled by Alex Wiley (R-Wisc.) in an open letter to the DW as the "foulest sort of gutter journalism."
Korea and the Red Scare

The DW may have been subject to a few criticisms of the sort described above, but generally speaking, the DW was not considered dangerous as far as U.S. security was concerned. But, in August, 1950, a three-man federal court spent a week studying a handful of clippings from what they first thought was an insignificant-looking tabloid. The United States introduced those clippings as evidence that the 11 top leaders of the Communist Party constituted a menace to the nation and should be imprisoned immediately. Among the 11 were Gates (DW editor) and Davis, the Negro president of the Daily Worker publishing company, Freedom of the Press, Inc.

To the judges of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and to the U.S. attorney, Irving Saypol, the DW was more than just a "crackpot house organ." It was a directive to Reds all over the country telling them to help further the aims of communism from day to day. "A reading of the DW since the invasion of Korea," Saypol said in his argument, "justifies the conclusion that, with the welfare and security of the United States and its armed forces at stake, the DW's loyalty to the communist forces in Korea and throughout the world is undivided and unquestioned." 22

The initial cable announcing the invasion of South Korea by the Reds arrived in U.S. newspaper offices Sunday afternoon, June 25, 1950. The DW's edition next morning led off with this front-page headline: "REPORT FIGHTING IN
KOREA. North Said to Rebuff Rightest Aggression." The news itself was sketchy, but on the bottom half of page one, the DW started a five-segment series on Korean politics by Pak Hen En, deputy chief of South Korea's Communist Party. Thus, less than 24 hours after hostilities broke out, the propaganda started rolling on behalf of the forces of world communism.

By the second day, the DW had it all figured out: John Foster Dulles, the Republican foreign affairs advisor and consultant to the secretary of state, was the "trigger-man who started war in Korea" in a carefully "laid out plan to embroil America into the trap of an atomic war which could and would hit out biggest cities." The Korean War is blamed on American imperialism in Korea that started in 1945. Therefore, the United States planned this "criminal military intervention." Under the extraordinary headline SOUTH KOREA INVADES NORTH KOREA, the following story appeared:

What is happening in Korea is not a WAR BETWEEN NORTH KOREANS AND THE SOUTH KOREANS. On the contrary, the people of North and South Korea are united in their common demand for unity and independence of their country. This is the heroic struggle of all Korean patriots, North and South, against the shameful pressure exerted from the outside to keep the nation divided.23

By the third day the DW reported: "President Truman today put the U.S. into a large-scale war against the peoples of the Pacific . . ." By the fourth, the paper
was able to boast of a Red victory: "KOREAN TROOPS FREE SEOUL: DRIVE SOUTH." On the fifth day, the U.N.-approved intervention was just "a bloody military adventure cooked up by General MacArthur."

The morale-shaking articles started, with such headlines as: WALL STREET WAR BRINGS DISASTER AT FRONT, and [man] KILLS SELF FOR FEAR SON MIGHT BE DRAFTED FOR WAR ON KOREA. Soon the DW turned on General MacArthur: MACARTHUR'S BOMB-LADEN PLANES SPEED TO ATTACK KOREAN PATRIOTS; MACARTHUR'S SECRET TACTICS -- SLAUGHTER OF KOREAN CIVILIANS. Its editors dredged deep for this one: THE BANKERS PLOT TO MAKE MACARTHUR U.S. FUEHRER.

The problems of the Negro were quickly exploited to further Stalin's overall strategy of convincing the Asians that this was a war of the white race against all others. When the Ku Klux Klan terrorized a Negro dance hall in South Carolina, the DW blamed "the racist war against the colored people of Asia." "The connection between a police action against the Korean people," it said, "and the terrorist activity against the Negro people at home becomes apparent." Under the headline, JIM CROW IN UNIFORM, the paper declared: "The Truman-MacArthur invaders of Korea have rushed Negroes as shock troops to dam with their bodies the human Korea stream surging toward freedom."

It hardly seemed possible to relate U.S. Korean policy with an accident in Harlem in which a boy fell down a sewer. The DW did. The accident occurred near Yankee
Stadium around East 161st Street. About 147 blocks south, at Union Square, that same day, the communists were to stage a peace demonstration to protest U.S. "aggression" in Korea. They had no meeting permit so the police kept them out of the square. Here is how the DW angled the story:

While over 1,000 police in Union Square Aug. 2 were clubbing workers demanding hands off Korea, a ten-year-old Harlem boy fell into an open untended sewer.24

In June, 1953, the Korean War ended. A page 1 editorial of the DW expressed the communist sentiment:

Victory for the people, despite the enraged cries of the Rhees, the Chiangs and the McCarthys, who see their only future in full-scale Asian war. A seas-fire (sic) in Korea seems imminent.

We welcome it as a great victory over the diseases and criminal few who thrive on bloodshed, the merchants of death, and tier (sic) grisley political lackeys.

Honor to the great Chinese people without whose entry into the war, the war criminal MacArthur might have crossed the Yalu and embroiled us in an even more disastrous conflict.25

Also dominating the headlines and editorials of 1953 was the battle between Sen. Joseph P. McCarthy and the communists. One of the DW counter-attacks included a running column entitled "Americans vs. McCarthyism" in which his purposes and methods were attacked while the communist party and their goals are defended. The DW shrewdly took advantage of the government's own criticism of McCarthy. Although in agreement with his purpose, many high-ranking government officials, including the President, as well as
the capitalist press, severely criticized his methods and questioned his motives. With the DW doing the same thing as the government and the capitalist press, it seemed like all were in agreement.

It was evident that 1953 was a big news year for the DW. But the biggest story of that year was not the end of the Korean War nor the fight with McCarthy. It was the trial of the Rosenbergs. Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were tried, convicted and executed for transmitting atomic secrets to the Russians. Not only did the DW defend them as obviously innocent victims of a criminal court system, but used their Jewishness to make the claim that the entire affair originated from the entrenched anti-Semitism of the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration. There were several months of extremely large and emotional headlines, and background stories on them, their family and especially their two young sons. Included was a regular series entitled "Questions and Answers on the Rosenberg Case."

If ever the DW had a cause resembling a "crusade" this would be it as far as its entire history was concerned. An example of the DW's emotional headlines is the one from June 7, 1953 DW at which time the Rosenberg appeal seemed hopeless: THEIR EYES ON THE TICKING CLOCK: WIRE EISENHOWER -- "CLEMENCY." On Monday, June 22, a black-bordered front page announced the execution of the Rosenbergs: 50,000 PAY FINAL TRIBUTE TO MARTYRS. And the story lead-in:
50,000 working people, plain people, with hearts and emotions, poured out their grief and anger over the barbaric murder of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg.26

One of the interesting sidebars to the main Rosenberg story in that issue accused the warden of Sing-Sing Prison of moving up the execution, thus shortening the time in which the President might have been considering a phone call to halt the execution. What is even more interesting was the reason for the change. According to the DW (and substantiated by other accounts in the "capitalistic" press), several Rabbis objected to having the execution on Friday night, as scheduled; because it was the Jewish sabbath. The DW supported this view, of course, but asked why was not the execution time delayed (to Saturday night, for instance) rather than moved forward?

For several weeks after the execution, the DW did not let up in its assault on the court system, the government and others involved in the successful prosecution of the Rosenbergs. It may be pointed out that some non-communist elements (capitalistic newspapers, politicians, etc.) also had their serious doubts as to the guilt of the Rosenbergs; and others raised the issue of anti-Semitism too. In any case, one of the final stories on the Rosenberg's concerned their two children under another emotionally-arousing headline: MICHAEL SHIELDS HIS LITTLE BROTHER FROM THE SAD NEWS.27

During the Rosenberg case, the DW was accusing the
government of anti-Semitism. Another Soviet surprise at this period of time, put the DW in the precarious position of defending itself of the same charges. Not long before Stalin's death, Moscow announced the discovery of a doctor's plot against the Soviet hierarchy, and nine physicians were jailed. MOSCOW NIPS PLOT TO KILL ARMY CHIEFS, Headlined the DW on January 18, 1953. Because of the evident absurdity of the charges, and because the Soviet government openly labelled the doctors as part of a "Zionist plot," the arrests were widely construed as anti-Semitism, a fact that had serious repercussions in the American Communist Party -- devoted to the defense of Negroes and other "exploited minorities." Day after day, the DW labored to show its readers that while the accused were certainly guilty -- a thing it took for granted -- the case was not anti-Semitism. Then, suddenly, Stalin's uneasy successor, Georgi Malenkov, turned the doctors loose. The DW quickly reversed its stand. "The Case of the Soviet Doctors: How a Socialist State Protects its Citizens," ran the headline of March 12, 1953. "In the Soviet Union," crowed the DW, "when a mistake has been made, the government admits it and the innocents are released." But, in the United States, it went on, "the government hides it -- though they are innocent, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg go to the chair."
The Secret Speech Causes an Apology

There were few significant shifts until midway through 1956. At this time, the DW went through another turning point. On June 5, 1956, the State Department released the full text of Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech denouncing Stalin as a phobia-ridden murderer. What had hitherto been newspaper reports (although the truth was fully known to the party leadership), was now a public document. As usual, the party leadership, currently under General Secretary Eugene Dennis (successor to Browder), was hesitant and indecisive -- and silent. But the DW would not evade immediate comment. Its editorials the following day, and in days afterwards, did not mince words in expressing the drastic conclusions which the paper's staff drew from the revelations, not only of Soviet realities, but of their own imitations of Soviet policy.

In reporting Stalin's death (in 1953), the DW called him "man of peace"; "The cobbler son who built a world"; "His name and his work will endure through the ages." In 1956, with Khrushchev's secret speech, the headlines shifted: "Lenin's principles abandoned by Stalin"; "Minorities were exiled and mistreated"; "Stalin unleashed mass terror 1936-1937." One writer headed his column: "Stalin wasn't God; and we weren't angels."

It is with the publishing of the speech that the DW underwent an unusual but meaningful experience. There took place a sort of "workers revolution" within the editorial
offices of the DW itself. It was the failure of this revolt that would help make up the minds of such writers as John Gates and Howard Fast to quit both the paper and the party. In addition to editor Gates, staff members Alan Max, Joseph Clark, Ben Levine and Bob Friedman attempted to carry forward an independent editorial stand that would set the DW apart from any other communist newspaper in the United States and the world. Within 24 hours of the New York Times release, the staff made the decision to print the text of the Khrushchev speech despite opposition within the party councils. As a result, the DW became the only communist paper in the world to do so. In doing this, the staff had decided to break with the patterns of the past. Later, the DW's bitter criticism of the subsequent crushing of the Hungarian Revolution was to be equally unique (see Chapter IV).

The pretense that news was only what the party press published, and that if a news report remained unreported, it had somehow never happened, had to be ended. Yet, as the presses rolled on the DW, Khrushchev himself had said (at the end of the Stalin secret speech):

We cannot let this matter get out of the Party, especially to the press . . . We should not give ammunition to the enemy; we should not wash our dirty linen before their eyes.  

John Gates' own words provide keen insight into the staff's real purpose in violating traditional press theory and contemporary party policy:
To be sure, our purpose in publishing the speech was to strengthen Socialism, whereas the State Department hoped to weaken Socialism. That William Z. Foster and his cohorts would oppose us in the Party's National Committee was no surprise. But, now Dennis joined with them.

It is at this point that Gates initially decided to leave the DW:

At this point, I handed in my resignation as editor-in-chief on the grounds that if I did not enjoy the National Committee's confidence, I could no longer edit the paper. . . . The Party's leadership was fearful of the consequences of so open a clarification of the issues, and refused to accept this resignation. I withdrew it, and the paper continued to speak its mind as the majority of the editors saw the issues.

The pages of the DW were opened to hundreds of letters of diverse and critical opinions in contrast to 1939 and the Stalin-Nazi Non-Aggression Pact. And for the first time, an open discussion spread like wildfire through the party -- everyone had something to say -- there were a lot of "flowers" (reference to Mao Tse-Tung's Hundred Flower speech). Everyone gave their thoughts -- except the national leaders. "From their mental dugouts not a shot was fired."

On June 7, the DW admitted: "We were wrong, terribly wrong." The DW abjectly apologized for its "blind and uncritical attitude" during Stalin's regime and for its "stupid and arrogant condemnation of those who told the truth about the violations of justice in the Soviet Union." With its remorse, the DW even dared to mingle some criti-
cism of the new Soviet regime. It rapped the Russians for their "mistake" in not publicizing Khrushchev's speech themselves and took him to task for omitting Stalin's anti-Semitism from the indictment. The DW added: "We do not consider the speech to be the last word on just how Stalin's terror control came into existence and maintained itself for 20 years and of the role of other communist leaders."

We were wholly ignorant that these crimes had been committed, yet there was reputable evidence had we but listened. We did not want to believe these crimes could occur in a socialist state, and so we refused to believe. What was unforgivable and inexcusable was the manner in which we passed judgment -- harsh and sometimes vindictive -- on many of our fellow Americans based solely on their criticism of the Stalin rule.31

In the aftermath of Stalin's tumble from grace, the DW published some indignant letters. For instance, one ran:

You have followed successive flip-flops with amazing jolt-proof gymnastic dexterity, without even being at a loss for editorial words. The doctors were plotting, the doctors were not. Beria was in, Beria was out. Tito was in, Yugoslavia was a dictatorship with ruthless suppression of opposition. Yugoslavia is now finding its independent path to socialism. Stalin is up, Stalin is down. The editors have carved out a position even more unassailable than the Soviet leaders have claimed for themselves. The Soviet leaders admit to previous mistakes. The editors smoothly absorb new positions without a backward glance.32
Not even Khrushchev was sacred to some letter writers:

If there is one central point to the present re-evaluation now taking place in the USSR, it is that nobody is infallible. Stalin certainly was not, and Khrushchev is not...33

Then a bitter irony occurred. For at the very time of the paper's revolt against the party dominated thought, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, having found a dubious tax case against the party, moved in and took over the offices of the DW. When reporters from other news media queried the Treasury Department in Washington about what happened, the department claimed it knew nothing of the seizure. Evidently, 45-year-old Donald A. Moysey, a New York District director of the IRS, had arranged the raid on his own.34 Time magazine described that raid with some unflattering descriptions and obvious bias:

Outside a shabby, nine-story office building on Manhattan's east 12th Street...four nattily tailored men climbed out of a taxicab, moved quickly across the sidewalk and into the grimy lobby. There they wedged themselves into the tiny elevator and rode to the eighth floor headquarters of the Communist Party's biggest propaganda machine, the Daily Worker.35

The IRS men, under the instructions of Moysey, slapped a lien of $46,049 on the DW for unpaid income taxes in 1951-53, and then ordered all the DW's assets seized as security. What the federal men called "assets" consisted of a collection of dusty morgue files and ancient office machines and furniture. However, the seizure did not
prevent the DW from publishing, for the newspaper used an 
outside printer. Gates simply moved his staff two stories 
downstairs to the city room of the communist Yiddish-lang-
uge newspaper, the Morning Freiheit, to produce its 
issues. By the late afternoon of the day of the raid, all 
the DW's copy was closed and sent to the composition room 
of F. & D. Printing Co., a separate corporation in the same 
building. The next day, the banner headline sung out: 
OUR ASSETS SEIZED -- HERE WE ARE.

To many dailies across the country, the seizure of 
the DW was Page 1 news and the DW took quick advantage of 
the free publicity. It boosted its press run and claimed 
it was selling 5,000 extra copies daily (on top of the 
10,000 circulation figure of that period).36

Some newspapers deplored the raids, but not because 
they considered them an attack on freedom of the press. 
The reaction of the New York Herald Tribune was typical. 
The timing of the seizure was questionable, for Moysey, it 
said, had given the communists a welcome distraction from 
explaining 

... to each other and to the outside 
world the dizzying turns in the party 
line whereby Stalin, their hero of 30 
years, is suddenly revealed by the 
Kremlin to have been a monster and a 
miscreant.37

Unofficially, aides of Moysey explained that, although 
the Communist Party claimed it was tax exempt, it had 
ever applied for tax exemption, as required by law, nor
had it ever filed a statement of contributions and expenditures with Congress, as other [political] parties do. As for the DW, they added, it kept claiming it was losing money, but the newspaper had failed to produce proper records to prove this.38

But the editors fought and won to save the paper. Gates was tireless, defiant, fencing with the federal officers, snarling at them like an angry bulldog.

What a proud time that was. It did not matter whether we were a Communist paper or a vegetarian paper or the NY Times; alone we fought for the finest tradition of our American democracy and won. The offices had been seized, the assets, the morgue, the typewriters, and blue pencils and all the rest; yet we proved that a fighting paper is in the hearts and hands of the people who make it, not in a suite of offices.39

But these rare instances and short-lived ones were ineffective in the long run. As writers came and went, they thought they were aligning themselves to the working class. In reality they were surrendering their independence to the Communist Party, which for its own conveniences had fused the concepts of party and class. Those editors who could see and rise above the high wall of the party would get together at the DW staff meetings and know that they only had unorthodoxy in common. The leadership knew it too. Some of these writers were hated and resented by the leaders. In fact, there was hardly anyone at these meetings that was more than tolerated. So the secret
speech became a reality for them -- not because of what happened in Russia, but because of their experiences in the CPUSA.

At this moment when some writers on the DW were attempting their own overthrow of dictatorial forces, Howard Fast -- famed novelist, DW writer and party member since 1943 -- left the Communist Party. Author of such well-known novels as "Citizen Tom Paine," "Spartacus," "Not by Bread Alone," "Freedom Road," "My Glorious Brothers" and "The Fallen Angel," Fast presented a philosophy of the writer and how the party can destroy his mind and (sometimes) his principles in his book "The Naked God."

In "The Naked God," Fast described his life as a writer in the Communist Party.

To Fast, the writer is a "singular" and "lonely" person. In the small hours of the night, "tearing" out of himself his particular story, he is perhaps more alone than almost any other person can be. He is the "prisoner of his thoughts, fancies and visions," and he must struggle with them, capture them and order them into a structural whole. No matter how bad a writer is, Fast said, he is still a "creature of conscience" and is dedicated to the truth as he may see truth within his own limitations:

To me, at least, it was neither surprising nor mysterious that the first bitter voices raised against the communist party tyranny in Hungary were the voices of writers; therein lies the logic of my own existence and the existence of so many colleagues;
and therein lies the tragic and implacable dilemma of the writer in our time. 

The simple crux of it, as Fast saw it, is that the writer must, as an artist, perish under tyranny. Under tyranny, the doctor can continue his practice of medicine, the carpenter can build houses as surely and precisely as before, and even the worker can continue to play his ordinary roles in production. But for the writer, tyranny demands the antithesis of his art, which is obedience.

It is no accident of fate that the writer was drawn to the Communist Party, yet so often left it in despair, anger and frustration. The nature of the writer is compassion, according to Fast. Not because writers as a breed are more compassionate than others, but because the writer day-to-day, year-to-year is engrossed in the follies and hopes and dreams of human beings, as they relate within the social framework, must result in compassion to one degree or another.

In the light of this, writers saw in the Communist Party their continuing logic of their existence as writers. They saw the Communist Party as a practical means of doing away with the oppression of man by man. Less easily, did they come to understand that within the fanatical framework of obedience and discipline, they themselves must suffer -- and eventually made the choice of giving up either the party or all hope of growth and achievement. For whatever capitalism does to the writer, it does not exercise the
subtle process of destruction that is part of the communist practice, nor does it set any single individual as the high priest of decision.

In a democratic society, a great writer or artist carries the armor of tradition; he has the right to express his individual point-of-view. Even if he is not understood, his art entitles him to at least a degree of veneration.

In the communist society, the individual artist is despised. "Yes, the party values its writers but it has an inbuilt contempt for people. Such is the attitude of the Communist Party toward the writer and the artist -- it is parochial and contemptuous." Thus, every writer who speaks as an individual, no matter how dedicated and loyal his motivation may be, is potentially the enemy and destroyer of the party.

However, this is not to assert, as Howard Fast has, that the truly talented artist cannot overcome this situation, pay the price for his dissent and attain greatness. Not many have, granted, but perhaps it is possible; witness the harassment of Alexander Solzhenitsyn or Boris Pasternak.

It may be that many communist writers consider themselves free men, but even if they do, they also accept the definition of that freedom within the taboo and punishment of the Communist Party, as Fast said:

I can only tell as a writer what happened and why I could no longer exist in the Communist movement. I no longer enjoy the practice of my craft; it is full of pain and too many memories, but it is all I know, and I
don't ask that anyone should weep for writers. Ours is an old and honorable craft, and perhaps someday it will be that again.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III


2. Ibid., p. 206. It is interesting to note that only a year before Budenz resigned in "disgust" and "frustration" he was described as a "100 per cent patriot; three-fourths a Stalinist" (James P. Cannon, The History of American Trotskyism, New York, Pioneer Publishers, 1944, p. 176).

3. Ibid., p. 216.

4. Ibid., p. 217.


8. Woltman, op. cit., p. 16.

9. Ibid., p. 82. For example, Woltman said that when Pittsburgh Judge Michael A. Musmanno showed up on the eighth floor, he was unceremoniously ushered out. The DW accused him of spying.

10. Ibid., pp. 81-82.

11. Ibid., p. 80.

12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

15. Woltman, op. cit., p. 82.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 84.

18. Ibid.

21. DW, June 7, 1948, p. 2.
27. DW, June 22, 1953, p. 6.
30. Ibid.
32. DW, May 25, 1956, p. 5.
33. Ibid.
37. Newsweek, op. cit.
38. Ibid.
40. Ibid., p. 120.
41. Ibid., p. 108.
42. Ibid., p. 132.
IV. THE LANGUISHING YEARS: 1957-1972

Disillusionment at Home and Abroad

The Polish and Hungarian events of 1956 rocked the entire communist world such as no single event had done. The revolutionary changes in the two countries took different forms and communist attitudes were divided. In Poland the change took a positive form. The Soviet leaders realized that in clashing with the Polish national revolution, they would not budge Wladyslaw Gomulka and would turn Poland against them. In Hungary the opposite thing happened. Instead of avoiding the use of force against the people, as in Poland, Soviet leaders intervened in the situation on two different occasions, turning the country against them while the world stood aghast.

When the Soviet Union intervened in Hungary, the DW took a controversial stand and aroused the protest of most party leaders. John Gates continued his battle for DW independence with this editorial on the Soviet action in Hungary:

The action of the Soviet troops in Hungary does not advance but retards
the development of socialism because socialism cannot be imposed on a country by force; it does not help but damages the relations between socialist states; it does not strengthen but weakens the influence of the Soviet Union.

What is taking place in Hungary has two sources. First, there were the grave distortions of socialist principles introduced by the Soviet Communist leadership. The second source was the continuous attempt by reactionaries in Hungary, openly supported and encouraged by Washington, to overthrow socialism.

The use of force by the Soviet troops in Hungary will bring no lasting solution to that country's problems. That is why we support the Hungarian masses who sought to solve their own problems as they were settled in Poland -- without violence, without foreign troop intervention and without allowing the supporters of the old fascist regime to regain power.¹

The Soviet action in Hungary was the parting of the ways between thousands of American party members and the world organization to which they had given "self-sacrificingly." Until the Hungarian upheaval, the fight for a changed American communist movement had been gaining ground, despite opposition from the Old Guard and despite the indecisiveness of many of the middle-of-the-road readers. The DW was the only communist paper in the world to denounce the Soviet action. In agreement with the strong stand of the DW, many quit the party even though the DW's intent was to speak out against an injustice, not destroy the party.

By the time the February, 1957, convention opened, the
party's membership had greatly changed and the entire proceedings had a certain unreality. Thousands of members had left in the preceding six months, and those who remained were not only few in number but were the least capable of change, particularly the top leaders Foster, Davis and Dennis. The convention achieved a typical compromise. Virtually the same national leadership as before was re-elected. This assured the continuation of the stalemate that had existed for a decade and doomed any new program in advance.

From "Daily" to "Weekly"

It was at this time that Foster and Davis moved to oust John Gates as editor-in-chief of the DW. Many party leaders were closer to Foster's view than Gates'. But they feared the consequences of ousting an editor who had become identified in the public mind as the protagonist of a new and independent course.

Gates decided to quit the paper and the party, because of two important events. The first was the 12-party statement at the Moscow celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. It was a clear retreat to the rigid and dogmatic days of the Cominform. To make matters worse, the American party leaders insisted that the American communists must endorse the declaration -- despite the fact that it had been evidently restricted to those nations in which the communists were in power. The purpose
was to establish a new loyalty test by which to judge party members. It was Gates' feeling, evidently, that this was an attempt to drag the party itself backwards to oblivion.

The second event was the party leadership decision to suspend the DW. This paper had survived as a daily for 34 years, and had written an important page in the history of American journalism; it had outlived many an earlier financial crisis and could do so again. But the latest financial crisis had made the paper's situation worse than it had ever been. It had shrunk to four tabloid pages, a publishing schedule of four days a week and the staff and expenses were cut almost in half. The paper's circulation had gone to 5,000 daily and 10,000 Sunday.² of these circulation figures, many of the papers went to the FBI, the capitalist press and other students of communism. The drop in circulation was due not only to the losses in party membership but also because of Foster's crusade to discredit the paper. For a time, when the paper was speaking out boldly, it had achieved a spontaneous increase in circulation. But after the staff began to be muzzled, it lost the support of those who wanted it to speak out as it had done previously, and it continued to meet with hostility from the conservative members of the party. This time the appeal for funds was producing little results. This is accounted for by the drop in circulation, disillusioned readers and members leaving the party. Max Gordon, city editor, added another reason: "There has been so much
stress on fund-raising, the readers don’t become alarmed as they used to."³

The National Executive Committee of the party on December 22, 1957, voted to recommend the immediate suspension of the DW, to be replaced by a weekly. Gates voted against that and wrote an appeal to the full National Committee. Gates considered this decision to be the "most fateful" and the "most harmful" action ever taken by the party; that "the country at large would consider that with the ending of the DW, the party, too, was ceasing to exist for all practical purposes." Gates went on to say that:

I do not think the death of the DW is inevitable . . . Substantial funds are being deliberately withheld by a minority of comrades who are in effect waging a political strike against the program of the last Convention, against the majority of the national leadership, and against the paper whose policy is in accord with that of the leadership. The paper is being destroyed by a small group of willful and reckless comrades in the leadership who never believed in the 16th Convention program in the first place and have done everything to reverse it. This group has been led by Foster and Davis and in recent weeks joined by Dennis. The Party leadership must once and for all repudiate the Foster thesis, defend the paper and its political line, and seek to unite the entire Party behind the paper. It must reiterate the policy of the 16th Convention with its placing of dogmatism and sectarianism as the main danger and with its call for a new course in the Party’s theoretical and organizational work.⁴

A mail vote of the National Committee was taken and the decision to suspend the DW was upheld overwhelmingly.
The last issue of the Daily Worker appeared on January 13, 1958, exactly 34 years to the day since its birth.

It had always been extraordinarily difficult for a radical movement in the United States to sustain a daily newspaper because of high costs and lack of advertising. For the last 10 years of its existence, the DW operated on an annual deficit of $200,000 which was raised chiefly by the herculean labors of the Communist Party. The existence of the DW as a daily newspaper for 34 years was a small miracle, whatever recognition it may have gained by radicals in general and by some in the newspaper profession given a shoestring budget and a tiny staff.

On the evening of Thursday, January 9, 1958, John Gates wrote his letter of resignation. He then called up Simon Gerson, the paper's executive editor, and told him he was calling a press conference the following day to inform the public. Gerson said he was sorry about Gates' decision and would send a reporter from the DW to cover the story. In his letter, Gates evaluated his decision to resign in the light of what he had come to believe:

I have come to this decision because I feel the CP has ceased to be an effective force for democracy, peace, and socialism in the United States. The same ideals that attracted me to socialism still motivate me. But, I do not believe it is possible any longer to serve those ideals within the CP.

It had taken John Gates only a few minutes to write the letter. It was not published in the DW. How many thousands
had taken this same step without writing such letters of personal justification?

The main story and editorial of the next issue of the DW announced the demise of the paper as a daily:

For the last 10 years, we have been faced with a continuous drop in circulation, a dwindling of advertising, and a continuous illegal harassment of readers, advertisers, and newsstand dealers by various government and non-government agencies. All this has occurred in the face of ever-mounting production costs.

We take the deepest pride in the fact that even in our closing days we have held high the banner of the struggle on the central issue of our times -- the fight for peaceful coexistence and for American-Soviet friendship.

Here is what a couple of the leading capitalist newspapers said about the folding of the DW. The New York Times:

There will be few if any tears shed in the newspaper world of this country of Moscow's organ in this country.

Chicago Herald Tribune:

It never succeeded in making a place for itself journalistically, intellectually, or politically.

And Commonweal, which reports on affairs related to the Catholic church:

As much as we can sympathize with any publication that must fight rising costs, we can feel little regret about the passing of the Daily Worker. We cannot regret the passing of an organ that would disseminate totalitarian views.
It appears that most reactions were based on the assumption that the newspaper was going out of existence. But, its January 13 front page: WE'LL BE BACK FIGHTING FOR PEACE, DEMOCRACY, AND SOCIALISM, should have been taken seriously. Six days later, the first edition of the weekly Worker appeared under the editorship of James Edward Jackson (who remained until 1965) with the same familiar style and with not a word about ceasing publication.

The Worker remained a weekly newspaper for the next four years. The wave of independence of the Gates' faction never represented the majority of the paper, but when Gates quit the party, he took most of the intellectuals with him, leaving the machinery to a devoted cadre of party bureaucrats and collapsing the active membership to about 10,000.

The tone of the articles shortly after Gates' departure returned to the hard-line propaganda directed by the party and the Soviet Union. The zig-zags returned too. For example, a Worker editorial demanding a "permanent ban on nuclear testing" appeared the same day that the Russians resumed testing. The very next issue the paper had four articles justifying and approving the resumption.

Time magazine described the Worker as a "sickly-looking failure." It claimed the eight-page tabloid was "red but not read," yet admitted that among the 11 communist publications, it was the most influential. 10

Although described as a "failure," in October, 1962, the Worker began publishing twice a week (Tuesdays and
Sundays). The dominating story then was the Cuban missile crisis. Headlines such as the following preceded President John F. Kennedy's ultimatum:

I SAW THE APARTMENTS WHERE THE SHELLS HIT
U-2 PLANES CAN TRIGGER NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST
KENNEDY RENEWS THREATS AGAINST CUBA'S FREEDOM
HALT AGGRESSION AGAINST CUBA: PRESERVE WORLD PEACE
TO INVADE CUBA WOULD TRIGGER CATASTROPHE FOR U.S.

A typical story during this time seemed to return the reader to the sensationalistic style of the 1930s and '40s when the paper was going through its most popular period:

In Washington, the dogs of war are straining at their leash. Their fangs are bared at the Cuban people and they are yelping for blood. But the blood that would be spilt could be your own. You must act to stop the war against Cuba or you may not live to regret it.11

When Kennedy blockaded Cuban ports, the headline read:

BLOCKADE BRINGS ATOM WAR PERIL TO U.S. DOORSTEP.

Under a photo of Kennedy, the following story appeared:

In our country, almost any child the age of the President's daughter, Caroline, can tell you that the most fundamental ethic of religion is "to do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Caroline knows this, but has her Daddy irrevocably turned his back upon this simple but profound teaching?12

On October 30, the Soviet Union agreed to remove the missiles and the Worker responded by heaping credit upon
The world can breathe more freely today. The pledge of President Kennedy not to invade Cuba, and the vow of the Soviet Union to remove immediately from Cuba such missiles as Washington considers "offensive" weapons were welcomed wholeheartedly by the vast majority of the peoples everywhere on this planet. The winners were all mankind.

Premier Khrushchev's statesman-like act on the Cuban missile crisis offers the whole world a new lease on peace. But the war pack clamored for the invasion of Cuba. Rockefeller (Mr. Imperialism) among them are now attempting to get Americans to misread the offer for peace. They are insisting: now is the time to get tough.13

Khrushchev may have been described as "statesman-like" in 1962, but exactly two years later, October, 1964, he was criticized as "too hasty in making decisions." Khrushchev was officially ousted as the premier of the Soviet Union on October 15. The first story appeared on October 20 and claimed that he resigned "voluntarily because of advanced age and deteriorating health." But later:

Khrushchev had been complaining of his advanced age . . . Apparently, however, Khrushchev's request for release from his posts last week coincided with the decision of the Soviet leadership that the urgency of some present conditions made a change in the leadership essential.14

And, to explain the suddenness and apparent ease of the move:

It must also be understood that while such a sudden shift seems strange to Americans, this is common procedure
under the parliamentary form of government. Under our Presidential system, once the people have decided at the ballot box he should be president, he remains in office for at least four years, even if the people, or even his own Party, should come to believe that he no longer should head the government.15

Of course, the writer overlooked the possibility of impeachment proceedings that can occur in the United States (even though difficult to do).

Five days later, on October 25, an article by Gus Hall, secretary of the CPUSA and still the party's leading spokesman, suddenly gave another reason for Khrushchev's downfall. He revealed that it was the result of "mounting dissatisfaction." In the routine Worker procedure, no explanation is given on why the first article claimed his move was voluntary because of ill health. Hall said Khrushchev most likely received, but refused to correct, a vote of criticism and instead turned in his "resignation." The matter of the criticism came only from what appeared in the communist press: individual decisions too hastily made, refusal to accept criticism and wrong economic decisions.

Declining Influence and Circulation

There may have been no explanation offered as to why the discrepancies in the Khrushchev articles, but there was an apparent explanation for the Worker's continued drop in influence and circulation. Many newspapers fold because of bad times, but the Western communist press was fast becom-
ing a victim of good times in 1966. As cold war tensions eased and the former proletariat started, in *Newsweek*'s words, "driving Fords and Fiats," (no doubt a symbol of the middle class!) few readers were turned on by the Marxist message. Combined circulation of New York's *Worker*, Rome's *Unita*, London's *Morning Star* and Paris's *Humanite* had declined from a postwar peak of 1.2 million to 300,000 in December, 1966.16 And in seeking ways to halt the slide, communist editors found themselves in a dilemma: how to sustain their traditional fervor while appealing to workers no longer interested in Marx, Lenin or revolution. The party has yet to find a politically acceptable circulation-saving formula. In 1966, the *Worker*, for example, may have still run a caricature of Lyndon Johnson next to Adolf Hitler, play up stories on Vietnam, the racial issue and President Johnson's War on Poverty ("one rat in a tenement house becomes an army of rats devouring thousands of persons")17 but in general it no longer seeks to incite its readers to revolution:

The idea that we advocate violent revolution is a canard, growing out of a liberal-minded reading of Marx and Lenin, who in specific historical circumstances talked of revolution. Only in the early days did the Party talk of revolution.18

Instead, its objectives have been more gradualist -- in keeping with the line of peaceful coexistence laid down by Moscow. Even the *Worker*'s approach to the Sino-Soviet dispute in December, 1966, was subdued. The *Worker* buried
Soviet party's First Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev's call for a world communist conference on page 3. On page 1 of the Worker was a routine story about a "peace-left-liberal" coalition in New Jersey.

The Worker remained the most frequently cited of the approximately 75 communist and left-wing publications. And while many were difficult to identify, there were no doubts about the Worker. "Our editorial policy," said editor Carl Winter, successor to James Jackson, "reflects communist thinking but does not necessarily represent official attitudes or party decisions." This was quite a switch from the paper's slogan in the 1930s in which it identified itself as an "organ of the Communist Party of the USA (Section of the Communist International)" (See Chapter II). When Winter became an editor in February, 1966, he acknowledged that the Worker ran on an annual deficit of $125,000. Nevertheless, he tried to give the paper at least some of the punch it had in the 1930s and condemned capitalism and "Wall Street warmongers." But, the stories on supermarket boycotts, strikes at Westinghouse Electric Corp., racial discrimination and the war in Vietnam were hardly communist exclusives. On the election of that year, the paper editorialized that the GOP victory was due to those voters who "discarded the Democrats in protest against President Johnson's war abroad and his failure to wage war on poverty and discrimination at home."

The public response to Winter's Worker was so cautious
that he was reluctant to give circulation figures saying, "They're not in the building." But, when pressed, he claimed 17,000. This figure seemed high in the light of the circulation trend of the paper in the last few years. But the same figure was given by an article in the Saturday Evening Post (which could mean the magazine picked up Winter's figure or did research of their own).

On the matter of original reporting, Winter, "his voice hardly rising above the clatter of the Tass wire," seemed apologetic about the lack of firsthand reporting. "It is too expensive," he said. However, this hardly explained the word "Delayed" above many of the Worker's stories. When Gus Hall, general secretary of the CPUSA, talked with Brezhnev in Moscow in September, 1966, it took a full month for the story to reach New York. The correspondent mailed his copy -- giving Hall a chance to return to New York and look over the story.

It was six months before the Worker reported the Six-Day war between Israel and the Arabs in June, 1967. By then, January 7, 1968 (p. 6), Gus Hall linked capitalism and Israel together. Israel was condemned as the "criminal armed aggressor." Oil interests of the United States used Israel as an instrument to remove the Arab forces who stood in their way of "maximum colonial profits from oil." Without United States and British help, Israel would never have won. From the 1967 Six-Day war until the present, Israel is accused, by the paper, of being the trespasser and
exploiter of Arab lands. Israel's actions, in fact, were likened to U.S. actions in Vietnam.

**New Name and a New Image**

Winter's attempt to put "punch" back into the paper in 1966 may have failed, but a particularly successful fund-raising drive in 1968 once again turned the paper into a daily. At the same moment, it was decided to initiate the new daily with a completely new name and style in order to boost circulation.

Aware that modern-day youth considered the Communist Party rigid and conservative, staffers tried to broaden the paper's appeal. The name was changed from *Daily Worker* to *Daily World*. "The term 'Worker' was too exclusive," said Executive Editor Simon Gerson. The paper was also trying to reach white-collar workers. Though the Communist Party remained the chief backer, the *World* picked up support from sympathizers who, even if they rejected communism, shared its opposition to racial inequality and the war in Vietnam.

The first *Daily World* appeared in July, 1968 with a conservative layout. The shrill polemics were gone. The DW seemed almost as prosaic as a house organ for some large trade union. In its initial issues, it reported the first New York-Moscow air link, the threatening steel strike and the tussle over the poverty program.

An editorial even had some kind words for the United
States: "The recent increase in activity in Washington and Moscow toward more cordial relations should be welcomed by all Americans." And some sharp words for "self-styled leftists who denounced any step toward a detente as a 'betrayal.'" The World started running very little news of the party (which was not making much news in those days in the United States). Nor was ideology pervasive in all stories. A critic took exception to an off-Broadway play, "The American Pig," which ridiculed life in the United States: "The idea of satirizing vulgarity by being more vulgar backfires," wrote the critic. "If you murder art -- somebody is going to pay for it." In the old days, it would have been rank heresy for a communist to value art above social comment.

Despite attempts to recruit non-party youth to work on the paper, it still was largely staffed by oldtime party members. The readership remained similarly middle-aged. Blandness seemed to be the chief weakness of the first few months of the World, as well as a certain amateurism. On page 3 of the July 18, 1968 issue, a story told how "Dick Gregory lay gravely ill" in jail while friends feared for his life. On page 8 of the same issue was a photograph of Gregory just after his release from jail with the caption: "Dick's back." But, to the faithful, the Daily World, no less than the Worker before it, remained, as an editorial proclaimed: "America's only English-language daily newspaper dedicated to peace, democracy and truth."
At this point it is desirable to summarize the paradox of the DW's survival as a newspaper with few paying customers, little advertising and spiraling costs. There would appear to be three important reasons. First, the paper in 1968 persuaded Bertram Powers, the tough-talking head of the New York International Typographical Union, to allow an automated shop, in which control of the work flow of the teletypsetters could be economically regulated by the paper's management rather than the ITU. Second, many of the staff writers were paid very little -- far below standard salary rates of conventional papers, and some were not paid at all. Additionally, reporters did not turn in expense accounts. Third, unlike other dailies, the DW did not rely on advertising revenue to cover its operating expenses. Therefore, the paper was not affected by the ups and downs of both the labor and advertising markets. The cash to meet the DW's operating losses was provided by bank loans which, in turn, were repaid through fund-raising appeals, drafts on the party faithful and "quiet" donations from Moscow. In addition, the paper also did not rely heavily on newsstand sales because a high proportion of DW readers preferred to get their paper at home, through the (then) low mail rates. Thus, the DW did not have the added expenditure of distributing the paper to newsstands.

For insight into the DW of 1972 Desmond Smith gives his views. He was on the staff of CBS news and visited the Soviet Union several times. He was a frequent contributor...
It is not easy to find the DW office. You walk down New York’s seedy West 19th Street, past the trash bins in front of the Sure Service Company, check the address again with a workman outside the Koenig’s Iron Works, and come to 205 W. 19th Street. A directory in the lobby displays the names of several tenants — none of which is the Daily World. But you take an elevator to the eighth floor and to a door with a sign that reads Long View Publishing Company. Beyond it are the editorial offices of the DW.

In the long desk-cluttered newsroom, typewriters clatter, telephones ring, shirt-sleeved men scan proof sheets. The afternoon deadline is coming up. Now and then someone takes coffee from the machine, or goes to the wooden shelves that line the back wall to check a back issue of The New York Times. At the rear of the newsroom long tables are spilling over with file copies of People’s World, The Militant, The Village Voice, The Southern Patriot, The Wall Street Journal. A tousle-haired woman darts by with a headline proof — DON’T SEAL THE MINE, ANGRY KIN DEMAND — it reads like a slogan chalked on a wall.25

The DW remains the semi-official daily paper of the U.S. Communist Party. Tabloid-size, 12 pages (24 on weekends), it sells for a dime during the week, 15 cents for the weekend edition. The front page is a two-color picture window, designed to arrest the eye; a black banner headline with three or four decks of blue or red subheads, plus a vivid photograph. It takes plenty of "emotional wallop" to sell the party line. The following are typical headlines:

WEST GERMANY DRIFTING AGAIN TO FASCISM
When grouped together on a single page, they provide the reader with an instant guide to "positive thinking." The DW selects the news of the hour and builds each story into a political melodrama or "pseudo-event" (to use Daniel J. Boorstin's phrase).\(^{26}\) For instance:

Selection of a 14-member jury continues in the death trial in Union County Courthouse of 11 young black adults of Plainfield on trumped up murder charges in ghetto outbreak case.\(^{27}\)

and on a subscription ad:

Free Angela Davis -- Read the Daily World for the best coverage of the fight to free all political prisoners.\(^{28}\)

In fact, many headlines and stories on the Angela Davis case referred to her as "Prof. Davis" and "Angela." ("Angela's mother tours festival in Chicago.")

This sense that the DW is the champion of the underdog gives every news event a high coloration. To DW readers, all West German leaders are "monopolists" or "neo-Nazis, New Left and Yippies are "exhibitionist radicals," and Aristotle Onassis is "the dirty old man of Greek fascism."

The center spread is where the World displays its "heavy artillery:" Andrews' cartoons, Ben Levine's political commentary, "The Marxists Say" (a daily quotation from the thoughts of Marx, Engels or Lenin) and letters to the
editor. The rest of the regular features -- Phillip Bonosky's theatre and film criticism, Ben Levin's TV reviews, Bill Morris' labor column and John Morin's sports column: "The View from Left End."

News stories concerning racial unrest, school and campus disruption, Vietnam, are played up. For example, here is an especially critical piece on the Vietnam peace negotiations:

NIXON AND KISSINGER YAK IT UP ABOUT PEACE AND WOMEN

... Leader of a nation which murders women in aggressive war abroad -- and consigns women to the kitchen or low-pay jobs at home -- laughed this week about women organizing for political power.29

Labor news usually gets a page to itself; other news is run in a column headed "Et Cetera." Since the DW has only an occasional correspondent abroad, an important foreign story is often slugged "From combined services" which really means a goulash of Tass, UPI and AP. Compared with the style of today's underground press, the DW is quietly written. It avoids four-letter words and the classified ads solicit old Marxist pamphlets rather than new sex partners.

Nowadays even the House Un-American Activities Committee would have a hard time discovering anything that is evil in the DW. If there is an overall tone, it is blandness. From time to time the paper's general lack of snap will cause a reader to complain. Not long ago, one such
reader, disappointed by the DW's rave review of *Hair*, wrote:

Phrases like "the humor is biting, quick, and ever-present," may be appropriate for the *Daily News* but it is not sufficient for a serious Marxist paper.30

All this raises the matter of readership, and the fact that, as a newspaper must have a personality or "guiding aim" through which it communicates to its readership, so it also must have a cogent idea of the kind of readership it wants to reach. This cogent idea, in the case of the DW, was described by Gerson as "students" and "white-collar workers." But, unfortunately, the DW's guiding aim -- to proselytize for the Communist Party -- has little appeal to that ideal audience. According to Smith writing in *Nation*:

Young people tend to consider the *World* stuffy, old-fashioned. Actually, the readership tends to resemble the old-time Party members who make up much of the *World's* editorial staff. If you read the paper steadily, you form the impression that your are reading the house organ of some fraternal organization . . . whose members share a lot more in common than you do. *World* readers are treated like members of an old-time radical family.31

Who are they, in fact? Joe Brandt, the paper's general manager, said, as quoted by *Nation*:

In the main, our readers are veterans of the American class struggle, people who remember the WPA, the hunger marches of the thirties, people who live on Social Security.32
This kind of reader support is at once the strength and critical weakness of the DW. The personality of the DW -- despite Gerson's wishes -- is not its own to change. If the editors get too far in front of its present readership they will not only destroy the World, they will also rob the loyal band of aging readers of their "property." If the DW's middle-aged and elderly readership has a message for the management committee, it is this: Keep the homely proletarian flame burning bright. As one reader wrote, according to Nation:

Our paper must be a people's daily in the vanguard; it will be a bulwark against reaction. It will fight for unity of all peoples, for their freedom and progress, while being a shield and defender of existing rights. It will ask to awake, arise, and stand to struggle and to win.

Between 35 and 40 people are employed by the DW, of whom about half that number do the actual reporting, writing and editing. Not all get paid; some like Art Shields, the paper's 80-year-old star reporter who lives on Social Security, work free. The two men who provide editorial leadership are Carl Winter (editor since 1966) and John Pittman (co-editor).

Winter was born in Russia in 1907. His parents, both Socialist agitators with a Czarist jail sentence confronting them, came to the United States as political refugees. Winter attended public schools in Cleveland, and engineering school at Western Reserve. In 1929, already a member of
the Communist Party, he moved to New York. In 1934 he visited the Soviet Union and, on behalf of the party, made contacts underground in Germany. In 1936 he ran on the communist ticket for mayor of Cleveland. For the next dozen years he held a succession of party posts in Michigan and California. Indicted under the Smith Act, he served five years in prison. Once out of jail he joined the Worker in New York. In July, 1968 (when the paper reappeared as a daily with the new name) he became co-editor of the DW. Although his journalism experience is extremely limited he clearly "belongs" in the great proletarian tradition. He is both victim and survivor of the McCarthy era, and has the kind of experience with which many readers identify. "Communists, like Christians, thrive on persecution."34

Winter's chief concern has been not so much circulation as the correct political interpretation of the daily news. He has been naturally more interested in encouraging enthusiasm for the Marxist way of life than in upholding the present social order. "What we're interested in," he has said, "is not simply telling the story, but telling it in a way that tries to relate the event to the problems of the reader."

In the Farmington mine disaster, for example, we focused attention on the corporate ownership and profits that resulted in the mine bosses overlooking safety precautions. We are always on the lookout for the interrelationship
between the event and the social condition. If Winter's job is to take care of the "long view," his co-editor, John Pittman, is the workhorse. He sits at a cluttered desk in the middle of the newsroom, correcting copy, answering the telephone, spreading proofs with his free hand. Pittman is a large, solidly-built man, now 65. A remarkably fair-skinned Negro, he gives the impression of a man of action, an executive rather than an intellectual, but one possessed of an assured arrogance, a hint of belligerence and a sharp and watchful cynicism. Pittman was a poor boy, born in Atlanta, in 1906. His first job was as a bellhop in an Atlanta hotel; then office boy in an insurance company. At 26 he was editing The Spokesman, a Negro weekly in San Francisco. That kept him going through the depression. He worked on the communist People's World in San Francisco during World War II, then moved to Chicago and became a columnist on the Chicago Defender, a Negro weekly. Between 1947 and 1955 Pittman was in New York working on the Worker as editor of the Sunday magazine. He then went back to the West Coast to run the foreign desk at the People's World. Finally, he returned to New York in 1968 to join the Daily World. Headache number one, Pittman has said, is money: Most radical newspapers aren't even able to send reporters from one state to another, much less overseas:

There is a great deal of difficulty getting a competent staff. Most radical
newspapers are unable to pay experienced men and women the kind of salaries they expect and deserve.36

Joe Brandt, general manager, walks up and down his narrow office, waving bills. He is 58, but "looks ten years younger" although his hair is a bit gray; a full-faced portly enthusiastic man who appears to be in perpetual motion. Brandt beams with pride when he discusses the DW, which has the best "goddammit" readers in the country. That is because they believe heart and soul in their paper, "goddammit!" Brandt was a professional revolutionary, and very proud of his militant and active resume (organizer, Pennsylvania coal fields; hunger marcher in the early 1930s; CP organizer in the Little Steel Strike, 1936; member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in Spain, 1937; wartime commando in the U.S. Army; jailed under the Smith Act in the early 1950s). He paid the DW's bills, worried over circulation, and tried to figure out how to cover the annual $400,00037 deficit. His salary, less taxes, was $75 a week; he worked a 12-hour day and did not feel a bit exploited. "When you believe in an ideal you have to make sacrifices for it."38

The general manager of the paper had to be, above all, a penny-pincher. News is an unpredictable business. No one can budget for a coal mine disaster that had not yet happened, or student demonstrations that have not broken out. But in calculating expenses, Brandt had several advantages that were denied his counterparts in the bour-
geois press. As previously mentioned, reporters did not turn in expense accounts on the DW. Instead, they received between $5 and $10 a week for carfare and incidental expenses. When they travelled they took with them the paper's subscription list, and were usually put up by a friendly reader. Advertising revenues were negligible. And operating deficits were financed by bank loans. Thus the 80th birthday of Art Shields was a profitable occasion that brought in more than $5,000 in pledges and subscriptions. The average reader, said Joe Brandt, may be no richer than his workmate, but he is a far better contributor to good causes. But, even more worrying than the finances is the DW's unspectacular circulation of 12,000.

Winter said the DW's ace in the hole is the paper's deep commitment to "working-class journalism." But what really sets the Red journalists apart from their New Left brothers is their remarkable dedication to the long view of things. It is their convinced view that, given time, the New Left will recognize that only the working class is the means to social change in America. "A Marxist daily," said Gerson, "with its firm working-class orientation, can help fuse the so-called Old Left and the New Left into a United Left." This, of course, presupposes that the Communist Party has a monopoly on Marxism and organization, but a few years ago the Students for a Democratic Society had challenged this idea. To bring about the kind of fusion Gerson described, the DW must establish a broad
readership among the New Left. It must, in effect, become the newspaper of the movement. And this it has so far failed to do. The gloom can be exaggerated. The DW's future may be full of uncertainty, but in the inner sanctum of the Long View Publishing Company, that is no reason for despair. Such was the past full of uncertainty, yet the DW survived at least, if not prospered.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1. DW, Nov. 5, 1957, p. 5.
5. Ibid., p. 193.
15. Ibid.

24. A sidelight on the DW's financial support as well as circulation figures was its loyal readership among diverse government agencies, the FBI, local police departments and racial organizations. Few John Birch Society bookshops were without a recent copy of America's "only Marxist newspaper."


27. Smith, *op. cit.*

28. DW, July 1, 1971, p. 7.

29. DW, July 6, 1971, p. 11.

30. Smith, *op. cit.*

31. Ibid., p. 632.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p. 633.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid. Top salary on the DW was $90 a week in 1969.

37. It may have been observed by this time that the annual deficit figures given at various locations throughout this thesis do not agree. The explanation is that different sources had different figures. In addition, there was no official financial figures released by the Communist Party.


39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.
CONCLUSION

This study has tried to show how the communist press of the United States operates -- its goals and functions, how it differs from the conventional American press and how the Daily World was coordinated with other aspects and objectives of communism.

First published as the weekly Worker in 1922, the paper evolved from the Cleveland Toiler and Ohio Socialist. At that time, the party had no American English-language daily newspaper, although there existed a number of foreign language communist dailies in the United States.

A campaign for a Daily Worker was launched in 1923 by the Communist Party. Early in 1924, the first issue of the Daily Worker was published out of Chicago. In 1926, the paper moved to New York City and into the same building as the headquarters of the American Communist Party.

Throughout its life, the paper would be characterized by several unique aspects setting it apart from conventional, "bourgeois" American newspapers. There were four major characteristics: (1) an emphasis on subscription and fund-raising drives; (2) the application of traditional commun-
ist press theory; (3) sudden and unexplained editorial flip-flops, reversals or "shifting realities"; and (4) the mental struggle of many communist journalists.

The emphasis on subscription and fund-raising drives sometimes went to extremes. For instance: front-page editorials, "pleading articles" and requests for financial support clumsily included within news stories.

Original communist press theory could only be followed precisely in a communist country. In America, therefore, the Daily World could function successfully only by modifying traditional communist press theory. In so doing, the paper attempted to serve the party on a mass basis by propaganda, social agitation and as a party organizer, critic and controller.

On several occasions the paper was caught with "its party line down," so to speak. As a result, editors were forced to make sudden and unexplained reversals of editorial policy. Unexpected events such as the Soviet-Nazi Pact (1939), Germany's invasion of Russia (1941), Khrushchev's secret speech (1956), and Khrushchev's ouster (1964) only served to reduce the paper's credibility, readership and influence.

One of the most important characteristics of the American-communist press was its adverse effect on many journalists. Excellent writers like Howard Rushmore, James Glaser, Louis Budenz, John Gates and Howard Fast each left the paper and the party in frustration and despair because
they could not cope with the inherent contradictions of communist ideology and the writer's search for universal truth and wisdom.

The Daily World was distinguished by three major chronological periods or turning points. The table on the following page illustrates these periods in terms of circulation figures. From 1924 to 1939, the paper experienced its most popular years. Its circulation, influence and admiration by non-communist readership was at its height. In the wake of the 1939 Soviet-Nazi Pact, circulation and influence dropped drastically. From 1940-1956, the paper fluctuated up and down but it never again enjoyed the popularity it did in the late 1920s and 1930s. The paper's languishing years followed Khrushchev's 1956 secret speech about Stalin's crimes. Since that date, the paper steadily lost ground in terms of readership and influence. A move by some staff members in 1958 toward unshackling the paper from party domination was unsuccessful in the long run, but momentarily readership and admiration increased strikingly. Immediately after this attempt at independence, the party suspended the paper as a daily. A weekly Worker continued until 1968. At that time, the paper returned as a daily with a new appearance and a new name: the Daily World.

The question may arise: "Given the paper's peculiar characteristics, how was it able to survive?" Very briefly and simply, the paper continued to exist mainly because of reader donations and subscriptions, and official support by
DAILY WORKER AND
DAILY WORLD - CIRCULATION FIGURES

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the Communist Party in the United States and abroad.

It is doubtful that the Daily World will ever again achieve the popularity it once enjoyed. However, as long as there is a U.S. Communist Party and as long as communist ideology calls for a mass organ, there will always be a party newspaper, be it known as the Daily World or some other symbolic title.
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