

# LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

**The Triangle of Guilt in Palestine**

... page 2

**French Farmers on the Move**

... page 3

**GPU Prepares Its Alibi on Jacson**

... page 6

**New Crime: Guilt-by-Accusation**

... page 8

NOVEMBER 2, 1953

FIVE CENTS

## CASE NO. 2 UNDER WAY— State Department Denies Passport to Max Shachtman

After an unexplained delay of over eight months, the State Department's Passport Division has finally informed Max Shachtman that it "tentatively disapproves" of his application for a passport in order to travel abroad. Max Shachtman is the national chairman of the Independent Socialist League.

While this decision by the government agency, which has often been under heavy attack for its autocratic and reactionary passport policy, will mark the beginning of another fight against its policy, it also marks the end of a first stage which has not been without its fantastic features.

Here is an outline of the story of Max Shachtman and his passport application, and of the official motivations given for its refusal by Ruth B. Shipley, the Passport Office's director, who—in supplement to the McCarran Act's effort to keep "subversives" out of the U. S.—considers it her job to keep "subversives" in the U. S. (The government's going policy seems to be: To each his own.)

Shachtman made his passport application in New York City on February 10, 1953, in due form. Two and a half months later, nothing had still been heard from the Cerberus at the harbor gates.

On April 30, therefore, Shachtman wrote a polite note to Mrs. Shipley giving the facts about his passport application and stating:

"I have not received the passport nor any communication about it from your office. I would appreciate information from you as to what is being done about the application."

In order to avoid all misunderstanding, and incidentally thereby also save the Passport Division and all taxpayers the costs of useless investigations—Shachtman sent this communication on the letterhead of the Independent Socialist League.

Nearly three months later, the nation's concierge had not yet spoken.

In mid-July, Shachtman's attorney, Joseph Rauh of Washington, D. C., phoned the Passport Division to inquire about the reasons for this silence. On this call he held converse with a Mr. Ashley G. Nicholas of the division office. It was as a result of this conversation that Shachtman submitted the affidavit to be quoted below. Since the content of this affidavit would otherwise

(Continued on page 6)

## Halley Campaign Weak on Differentiation from Dems

By SAM TAYLOR

The New York City mayoralty campaign enters its final week with the result still in doubt. Despite the heated accusations of the campaign oratory, there has been a lack of widespread interest. The word apathy is most often used to describe the general attitude toward the election, and apathy is the ingredient that can hurt the Liberal Party the most.

A victory for the Liberal Party's candidate, Rudolph Halley, depends upon awakening a sense of participation in New York City politics especially among the ranks of voters who have made New York a Democratic Party stronghold. There has to be awakened a hostility toward the two old parties and a feeling that the Halley candidacy offers a new type of solution to the city's problems. This the Liberal Party has not done. It has competed on the usual plane

of promising more and better of everything and being against corruption and sin.

The campaign to date has taken on the appearance of a game of "cops and robbers" and a guessing game about "Mr. X." The Halley campaign is once again dominated by crime, corruption and good government oratory: Halley the crimebuster is going to drive the crooks and their corrupt politicians out of office. After two campaigns it seems safe to say that this is the only type of campaign he is capable of conducting.

While all the press releases about a political program have been dutifully sent out to the press, they have been placed in a secondary role because Halley himself has placed the emphasis elsewhere.

The problems besetting New York City do not stem from the fact that the Democratic and Republican machines have close ties with the underworld and shady characters; nor is this the reason why they cannot and do not possess programs

(Continued on page 5)

**In New York City — Vote**  
for the Liberal Party's candidate for mayor, Rudolph Halley, and the other independent candidates of the Liberal Party. The New York ISL recommends this vote in order to strengthen the Liberal Party as a labor-based third party independent of the two old capitalist parties. Cast your ballot on November 3.

## U.S. and France Both Bogging Down in The Indo-China Mess

By GORDON HASKELL

Recent developments in the politics of the war in Indo-China cast a brilliant light on the imperialist nature of the struggle there.

After seven years of fighting against the Stalinist-dominated independence movement, the French have got no farther than when they started. They have suffered 75,000 casualties, have spent over \$4 billion on the military struggle, and still control only the major cities in the area. The forces of the Vietminh are no closer to destruction than when the war began.

And more important than any other aspect of the war: the French have not been able to establish any serious base of support among the peoples of the country.

This was strikingly illustrated when the Vietnam National Congress, a body hand-picked by Bao Dai, French-supported ruler of the country, voted two weeks ago to reject participation of their country in the so-called French Union "in its present form." The Congress went on to demand that it be set up as a constitutional convention which would define and limit the powers of Bao Dai to negotiate any treaty with the French.

### PUPPETS COME ALIVE

The French Union is just a fancy name for the French empire. It is designed to give the most rebellious parts of the empire the feeling that they have some degree of independence, while keeping all vital decision-making powers in the hands of the French government.

The present negotiations in Paris with the three states of Indo-China, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, have been inaugurated for the purpose of quieting the most open expressions of hostility of these countries toward France, and of giving the war a "popular" basis. But the action of the Vietnam National Congress has exposed the whole farce for what it is.

The past year has been one of many signs that the French puppets in Indo-China have acquired a will of their own, and will no longer dance to the strings pulled by their masters. On June 15 of this year, the king of Cambodia went into exile in protest against French refusal to give independence to his country. More recently, one of the top officials of Laos made a speech in which he suggested that his country would not participate in the fight against the Stalinists, if these, in

turn, would not conduct military operations on the territory of Laos.

The ship of French rule in Indo-China is coming apart at the seams.

The French government has tried to make it appear that the war in Indo-China is being fought on behalf of the "West" against Stalinism, and that France is sacrificing herself in the general cause. Actually, this is another propaganda camouflage for France's real imperialist interests in Indo-China.

The French have ruled, and continue to rule, in Indo-China in traditional imperialist fashion. Frenchmen staff all the important government offices. They have complete control of the army. They dominate all important sectors of the economy. The people of the country continue to suffer under the humiliation and drastic economic exploitation of foreign rule.

The desire for independence is universal in all classes of Indo-Chinese society, except for a tiny stratum of "collaborators" or stooges and quislings who have earned the contempt and hatred of their countrymen by being the willing tools of the foreigner.

### U. S. ROLE

But as the war has dragged on, it has become increasingly obvious to all but the arrogant Frenchmen who have the most direct stake in the economy of Indo-China that France is in a hopeless position in that country. They have not been able to break the will of the people for complete independence. They are increasingly aware of the fact that no matter what may be the outcome of the war with the Stalinists, the days of French rule in the colony are numbered.

The political groupings in France itself which want to cut their losses and get out of this impossible situation are growing apace. Today France is restrained from pulling out of Indo-China not so much by hope of maintaining its rule there, as by the feeling that admission of total defeat in that colony will

(Turn to last page)

**THIS** is the Saturday for our  
**Halloween**  
**Witches' Sabbath**

Oct. 31 — 9 p.m. at Labor Action Hall

—only 3rd-floor underground in the U. S., exclusively at 114 West 14 Street, N. Y. C.!

# Israeli's Wanton Blood-Raid, Arab Provocations, and Dulles' Foul Hypocrisy Make a Triangle of Guilt in Palestine

By AL FINDLEY

Once again the "Palestine question" has exploded onto the front pages of the newspapers and to the top point on the agenda of the UN.

The immediate background includes charges by Egypt and Syria concerning truce violations by Israel, climaxed by the attack on the Arab village of Kibya.

**After the murder of three Jews, including a woman and a child, in a border village, an armed group of Jews attacked three Jordanian villages, and in Kibya killed 46 people, indiscriminately sparing neither women nor children.**

The Big Three powers thereupon brought charges in the Security Council of the UN. While the wording of the question was a little ambiguous, it was clear that it was Israel that was being brought to the bar. This did not satisfy the Arab delegate, who insisted that the agenda explicitly condemn Israel in advance.

Russia's Vishinsky supported the Arab demand, but did not play any role in further discussion of the agenda. He allowed the Western powers to carry the ball. Vishinsky's stand, however, did not prevent Jewish Stalinists in Israel and elsewhere from making considerable capital out of the action of the Western powers.

As finally agreed upon, the Security Council agenda was a compromise. Under the general heading of the Palestine question, Kibya was specifically mentioned.

There can be no doubt that the present bloody events were preceded by hundreds of border violations, some of which took the form of pitched battles. It can be readily conceded that the Israelis had plenty of provocation. In the last few years, some hundreds of Israelis have been killed by the incursions of small armed Arab bands and hundreds more have been injured.

Had Israeli retaliation taken the form of an attack on a military post or a similar action, the result might still have been political intervention by the Western powers, but there would have been an entirely different effect on popular opinion both in the world at large and among the Arab people. As it was, the wanton murder of women and children as a form of reprisal was one which only alienated even friends of Israel.

Ben-Gurion's attempt to place the blame on "irregulars" rather than on the Israeli army will not be accepted by anybody. The world is long accustomed to such spurious "irregulars" as the Chinese Stalinist "volunteers" in Korea. Neither will anybody believe that the Arab incursions have been by "irregulars" rather than by elements of the Arab armed forces.

## DULLES GETS MORAL

With regard to the charges and countercharges between Israel and Jordan and the other Arab states, an impartial observer may well agree that both sides have justified the charges against each other. Whether the scales dip heavily to one side or the other may be open to debate. But what is not debatable is that the attitude taken by the U. S., Britain and France in this situation is one of complete and rank hypocrisy.

These sanctimonious governments are in no position to call for sanctions against a small power—France, which has just defied the UN by boycotting any discussion of the Tunisian crimes it has committed; the U. S., which also voted to keep Tunisia off the Security Council agenda, and which will not recognize UN authority to define self-government; Britain, which has just suppressed the government of British Guiana. . . .

The action by Secretary of State Dulles in withholding economic aid from Israel is such a moral force that it exposes all the pretense of U. S. foreign policy.

We have been told by all official voices

that U. S. aid to other countries is an unprecedented generous gift by a self-sacrificing power without any thought of controlling other countries' actions. Dulles has now moved to use this economic aid to punish Israel, by withholding aid, exploding this myth.

Washington has more than once disclaimed any connection between its aid and its approval of the policies of the recipients. This argument was used to justify aid to South Africa despite its racial policy.

## ISRAEL AND FRANCO

**Above all, Washington's punishment of Israel by withholding aid sheds a new lurid light on the politics behind the U. S. deal with the fascist butcher of Spain, Franco.**

If there is anyone in the country who thinks that Dulles' action was really motivated or justified by the Israeli outrage, then he must likewise come to an inescapable conclusion: that the years-

long mass-scale outrages committed by the Franco fascist government in a one-sided slaughter of workers and anti-fascists do not touch the hearts of the U. S. "defenders of democracy" as much as one action by the Israelis in a situation of mutual provocation.

Dulles and the administration have acted as hypocritical liars in one case or the other: their anti-Israel step is a condemnation of their Franco policy, and their Franco policy is a mockery of the high moral pose they have struck in the Palestine question.

**This is how the U. S. government has entangled itself in its net of diplomatic deception. Genuine democrats and socialists can condemn the Israeli raid, as well as the Arab provocations; but Franco's allies in Washington cannot.**

## INSTRUMENT OF U. S. POLICY

As a matter of fact, the Kibya affair was not even officially offered by Dulles as his justification. He claimed that the decision had been taken beforehand.

The real reason for suspension of aid to Israel was not the latter's defiance of the UN. A list longer than this page could be compiled of cases where defiance of the UN did not result in stoppage of funds.

**The real reason lies deeper in the policy of the U. S. government. It is the unjustified anger of a giant power against the refusal of a small nation to obey its**

wishes. A N. Y. Times report hinted at this when it mentioned that State Department displeasure with Israel has been building up. It mentioned, in this connection, the question of Israel's moving its capital to Jerusalem and other "irritations." The State Department has been vacillating between wooing Israel or the Arab states and this only increases its truculence.

The diplomats may well be able to patch up some kind of temporary settlement. Even if raids are, temporarily halted, even if an acceptable compromise on the Syrian water problem is worked out, new violations and new conflicts are certain to follow unless a real peace rather than a shaky truce is brought into being.

Peace will not come as a result of UN action or even by pressure from Washington and London. More than that is necessary.

**Unfortunately it is not only the feudal rulers of the Arab states who oppose peace. Many of the Arab peoples, especially the Arab nationalists, are even more opposed to peace than their rulers. Among the Jews of Israel, peace is acceptable but only on complete acceptance of their own terms.**

Before peace can come to the troubled Near East, recognition of their joint interests must lead to a real popular movement for peace among the peoples on both sides, even if against their governments.

## Trade-Unionists and Liberals Condemn Radulovich Decision at Detroit Rally

By M. J. HARDWICK

DETROIT, Oct. 25—During the past week the Radulovich case drew much critical editorial comment and, according to a spokesman for the Edward R. Murrow TV program, the greatest and most favorable interest of any TV program that noted commentator has produced.

**Yet on Friday, C. E. Wilson, head of the Department of Defense and top governmental spokesman on military policy matters, sandbagged Lt. Radulovich by a public statement issued at Ann Arbor, Michigan, reiterating the charge that Radulovich is a so-called poor security risk, and stating that the decision to dismiss him from the service will stand.**

These developments served as the background for a public rally on civil liberties held here last Friday night by the Michigan Citizen's Committee Against the Trucks Act, the notorious anti-civil-liberties legislation passed unanimously in this state after Detroit's "red hearings," last year.

Around 400 persons gathered at the Central Methodist Church to hear prominent Michigan figures criticize the Trucks Act and blast C. E. Wilson's brutal verdict in the Radulovich case.

**Charles Lockwood, prominent Detroit attorney and defense counsel for Radulovich, denounced the decision as "infamous" and pointed out that Wilson was supposed to be the highest court of appeal in this case: "Why, there isn't any point in appealing now. Wilson, sitting as Supreme Court, already has rendered the verdict."**

## MAZEY SPEAKS UP

Emil Mazey, UAW-CIO secretary-treasurer, gave the highlight speech of the evening, with a vigorous defense of civil liberties for all persons, minority political parties, including the Stalinists in that category. He warned the audience that the American people had a lot more to fear from the men who own the bulk of the huge industries than from the handful of Stalinists left in America. The road to social progress is blocked by the owners of the mines, mills and factories. They are seeking to enslave the labor movement.

As for the Stalinists in the crowd—and there were some including Nat Ganley, Stalinist commissar in Michigan, who is about to go on trial under the Smith Act—Mazey reminded them of their approval of the Smith Act when it was

used against the Minneapolis Trotskyist defendants, and told the Stalinists that their record in the labor movement, their political irresponsibility during the war, made it quite difficult to arouse any sympathy in their behalf in the union movement.

**Mazey's speech was in line with the excellent resolution the CIO passed two years ago at its convention held in New York City. It was a remarkable address, for this is the first time in recent times that a prominent and official spokesman for a major CIO union took up a genuine and vigorous defense of civil liberties.**

## MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

Jerry Raymond of the MESA, the independent union, also made a hard-hitting plea for a struggle to defend all civil liberties. He was very effective in ridiculing the liberals who now are for fighting for civil liberties because "they are going after me next." He pointed out that fighting for civil liberties signified fighting for the rights of the other person, and must be a matter of principle. "I'm far more afraid of two Senator McCarthys or MacCarrons than I am of ten Nat Ganleys. We whipped the Ganleys long before McCarthy was around, by democratic struggle within the unions," he emphasized.

Rev. Paul Taylor, Rev. Robert Bradby and Preston Slosson, widely known Michigan political science professor, were other speakers at the affair, whose director was Ernest Mazey.

**In the Radulovich case, Attorney Lockwood says he is now going to civil court to get relief, but that hardly seems like an effective course of action, though it may be very necessary. The Wilson ruling was quite a shock to Lockwood and to many persons in the audience at the meeting. Wilson's "get tough" policy indicated**

little hope through army channels for anyone on their blacklist.

## RADULOVICH'S CRIME

Wilson's hints that there is more to the case than was made public at present are a vicious bit of McCarthyism, for everyone in Detroit who knows the case from A to Z recognizes that all that's involved now is the prestige of the air corps and military regulations. Even Wilson had to admit again that there was no question of loyalty. There is only the fact that Radulovich refuses to repudiate and disown his family. Investigation and testimony from the Hudson local, where Radulovich's father works, exposed the fakery of army claims and allegations against the father, who has an excellent record with 26 years seniority!

As a matter of fact, the only "crime" that Radulovich has committed—and this is unforgivable to the brass—was his refusal to take the smear of "poor security" risk quietly and thankfully, and let the air corps go about its destruction of peoples' reputations and character without public knowledge or fear of exposure. The bitter blowup of the colonel in charge of the phony hearing held at Selfridge field was a good indication of how the brass feels toward Radulovich or anyone else who dares question the ways of militarism.

**Nor are the military likely to be pleased with some of the facts that Mazey brought out in his speech on army justice. Mazey pointed out that the Veterans Department of the UAW-CIO has already been able to change 500 dishonorable discharges to honorable ones, after making appeals on behalf of ex-GIs who were victims of the notorious courts-martial system in the armed forces.**

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# New Mass Struggles in France: Now the Farmers Are on the Move

By A. GIACOMETTI

PARIS, Oct. 23—Now, after the workers, the farmers have started moving. In August, 100,000 winegrowers interrupted traffic on the national highways in southwestern France as a protest against another one of Laniel's "economy measures." This time the government had decided to economize by cutting its subsidy to the wine crop.

Since then, the price of grains, meat, oil-plants and, to some extent, milk, has also been falling, and the protest movement has spread to other branches of agriculture.

In early October the farmers' unions of the Southwest decided to react against falling meat prices by stopping deliveries of cattle to the markets for a week. A milk delivery strike was also threatened if their demands were ignored.

To make their point clearer, the farmers' unions decided on October 12 to put up barricades on the national highways. This action was followed in 14 departments, especially in central France.

On October 15 the largest of the farmers' unions, the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles (FNSEA) declared itself in sympathy with all local protest movements past, present and future; decided that the steps taken so far by the government were inadequate; and called a delivery strike of several important agricultural products to begin on October 17.

On October 20 the farmers in northern France called a three-day produce delivery strike. Two days later the FNSEA gave what amounts to an ultimatum to Laniel, demanding the stabilization of the prices of various products, especially meat, at 5 per cent to 20 per cent above the current levels without a rise in consumers' prices. Also it is demanding a guaranteed "minimum wage" for small farmers.

In case of refusal, the FNSEA is considering blocking traffic on all national highways, a nation-wide withdrawal of bank accounts and strikes of the local administrations.

Politically this movement is of considerable significance. The farmers who are organizing the most violent protests do not seem to be at all the radical ones but those who until now had supported reactionary politicians such as Pinay and Laniel. In August, most of these farmers had expressed violently hostile feelings against the strikers who, according to them, had been "coddled too long by the welfare state." Elsewhere, when the strikes stopped the manure shipments which are needed for the summer planting, some farmers were asking for "machine-guns to put the strike down."

Today, in the same departments, these farmers are blocking traffic on the highways, calling delivery strikes, threatening to withdraw their bank accounts and, more important, uniting with the labor unions on the basis of a common program, a program directed against what used to be their government.

## Stirred to Protest

So the bourgeois press writes with alarm: "We usually consider the farmers to be a bulwark of order, whereas the workers are considered to be the revolutionary element. It appears, though, that the farmers are as ready to use direct methods [as the workers] when their interests are at stake. If they don't do it more often, it seems to be less because of their civic discipline than because it has been generally easy for them to obtain satisfaction by other means."

What happened to cause this profound change in the farmers' attitudes?

First of all, the government, after finding out that it could not "economize" by cutting into the benefits of the state employees, decided it would "economize" by cutting some of the agricultural subsidies. This means that the French farmers would have to compete on the world market on their own—

which, under the present circumstances, they cannot do.

Before the war French agriculture had been protected against the competition of American and Russian grains. Only a few rich regions developed and mechanized—those regions where agriculture was practiced on something approaching an industrial scale to begin with, as in the North and in the Paris region. In the rest of France, agricultural production declined or stagnated. In southwest and central France, for instance, where some of the most violent manifestations are taking place, the average wheat production is lower today than it was at the turn of the century. This, incidentally, has nothing to do with productivity of the soil, for experts have shown that similar soils can produce nine times as much.

## Linked with Workers

These are not the only problems that plague French farmers. There is the high cost of farm machinery and chemical manure, caused by the backwardness of French industry. There also is the excessive subdivision of land, created by widespread unemployment; the farmer's sons, instead of moving into the city, as they would in a period of full employment, to become industrial workers, are staying on the land and dividing the inherited fields into ever-smaller parcels.

But the end of the government's subsidies is not the only factor that caused prices to drop. They have also fallen because of general underconsumption of food, caused by low wages and high consumers' prices, by unemployment and by the failure of industry to expand. In brief, the problems of the French farmer are intimately linked to those of the worker and to the general economic situation.

By and large, the farmers have begun to understand this. Recently, for instance, representatives of the Confédération Generale de

l'Agriculture (CGA) met with delegates from the CFTC and FO (the Catholic and reformist trade-union federations) and decided to act together on the following demands:

(1) Satisfaction of the essential needs of the population through a guaranteed minimum wage for wage earners as well as for small farmers.

(2) An increase of employment in order to create new outlets for agricultural production.

(3) A reform of the distribution system to eliminate the middlemen, of which consumers and producers are both the victims today.

A short digression is necessary to remind American readers what French farmers' unions are like.

The head-organization which includes all others, the CGA, was formed in 1944 by a group of socialist deputies in place of a multitude of small unions that had existed before the war. It includes seven affiliates: the co-ops, the mutual-aid societies, the farm credit associations, the federation of agricultural technicians, the farm laborers' association (Stalinist), the farm laborers' association (Catholic) and the FNSEA.

There are three political factions: the "left," which is largely socialist with a Stalinist minority; the "center," which is constituted by MRP elements holding the balance, and the "right" which is as reactionary as they come.

## Toward Common Action

The FNSEA has been dominated by the right since 1950. It is by itself almost as big as the six other organizations taken together, being the direct representative of all farmers excepting absentee landowners and farm laborers. It has been further strengthened by the adherence of specialized organizations (wine growers, wheat growers, dairy farmers, sugar beet growers, etc.) which are generally controlled by reactionary elements and are represented in the FNSEA out of proportion to their real strength.

The administration of the CGA, on the other hand, as well as some of the smaller organizations, is controlled by the socialists. The

CGA with all its affiliates has two million members, which represents about 80 per cent of the French farmers.

What is happening now is that the vast majority of farmers, even in the FNSEA, is moving toward common action with the labor unions, as the CGA did with CFTC and FO. Also farmers have begun to contact labor organizations to organize joint buying and distributing co-ops. The result of this trend may well be a force sufficiently formidable to put any number of socialist governments in power.

## Need Radical Steps

How is the government reacting to all this? Aside from some small secondary concessions, it has promised to draw up a four-year plan (1954-57). To understand the meaning of this, it is necessary to know that the objectives of the Monnet plan (1946-50) were reached only in 1952; that in December 1951 it was decided to establish another plan; that the first working party for this plan met only in January 1953; that the time span of the plan was changed accordingly from 1952-56 to 1953-57, whereas the plan the government is talking about today is a 1954-57 plan.

Naturally nothing will come of it as long as this kind of government is in power. At best, a few subsidies will be restored and the army will be ordered to buy more meat: measures which will solve nothing.

Any government that will want to tackle the real problems will have to take very different measures: mechanization of agriculture, cooperative use of machinery, consolidation of the small land parcels, cooperative buying and cooperative markets, planning of crops, technical assistance—these are the type of measures the situation requires.

But the problems of French agriculture are inextricably connected with the problems of the economy as a whole. Therefore measures such as these imply profound structural changes which only a socialist government based on the independent labor and farmers' unions will be capable of undertaking.

Labor Action FORUM

New York City

FRIDAY, NOV. 6, at 8:30 p.m.

Max Shachtman

discusses and evaluates the history and ideas of the Trotskyist movement in America on its 25th anniversary

25 Years of the  
American Trotskyist Movement

LABOR ACTION HALL

114 West 14 Street, New York City

Auspices: Independent Socialist League and Socialist Youth League  
(Note: No Forum on Thursday, November 5)

# MARXISM *for* TODAY

## IV—Two Meanings of 'Workers Government'

By HAL DRAPER

What are the two different meanings that the term "workers' government" has received in the Marxist movement, as mentioned at the end of last week's column? The first is the meaning which Comrade Jack Walker used in the apparent confidence that it is the *only* possible sense of the term; and to be sure, it has been common in Marxist literature.

This first meaning is: *A workers' government is the government of a workers' state (and only that).* There can be no talk of a workers' government without a workers' state. If one refers to a workers' government, then one implies that there exists also a workers' state. (Therefore when Comrade Walker heard the British Labor government called a "workers' government," he assumed that this meant also that a workers' state had been set up in Britain.)

The second is rather less simplistic. It became important particularly in the discussions of this question in the Communist International in 1922 (at the 4th Congress), based upon the presentation by Zinoviev.

**We will devote the rest of this column to making available the explanation of the term "workers' government" which was adopted by that congress in its "Resolution on Tactics." We will then have to discuss briefly why the thinking in the Comintern took this approach, what parts of it are relevant to us today, and how the latter applies to the problem of the British Labor Government of our own times.**

While much of the quotation below is obsolete and colored by the times, or incorrectly slanted by Zinoviev, it is the source of a kernel-idea which is very important.

### The 1922 Discussion of 'Workers Governments'

"As a propaganda slogan, the workers' government (and eventually the workers' and peasants' government) is to be generally applied. But as an actual political slogan the workers' government is most important only in those countries where bourgeois society is particularly very unstable and where the balance of power between the workers' parties and the bourgeoisie makes the decision on the question of government a practical necessity. In those countries the slogan of the workers' government is an unavoidable consequence of united-front tactics.

"The parties of the Second International in these countries endeavor to 'save' the situation by propagating and bringing about a coalition between the bourgeoisie and the social-democrats. The recent attempts of some of the parties of the Second International (for instance in Germany) to refuse to participate openly in such a coalition government, and at the same time to tacitly carry on a coalition policy, are nothing but a maneuver to keep the indignant masses quiet and to deceive them in the most cunning and shameful way.

"To such an open or disguised bourgeois-social-democratic coalition, the Communists counterpose a united front of the workers, a coalition of all workers' parties on the economic and political field for the struggle against the bourgeois power and for the ultimate overthrow of the latter. Through the united struggle of all the workers against the bourgeoisie, the entire state machinery is to come into the hands of the workers' government, thus consolidating the chief fortifications of the working class.

"The most elementary tasks of a workers' government must consist in arming the proletariat, in disarming the bourgeois counter-revolutionary organizations, in introducing control of production, in putting the chief burden of taxation on the shoulders of the rich and in breaking down the resistance of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

"Such a workers' government is possible only if it arises out of the struggle of the masses, and if it is based on the support of active workers' organizations involving the lowest strata of the oppressed working masses. A workers' government which is the outcome of parliamentary groupings, that is, which is of purely parliamentary origin, may likewise become the cause of a revival of the revolutionary labor movement.

"It is self-evident that the formation of a real workers' government and the continued existence of such a government whose policy is revolutionary, must lead to a bitter struggle and eventually to civil war with the bourgeoisie. The very attempt of the proletariat to establish such a government is bound to meet immediately with the most stubborn resistance on the part of the bourgeoisie. Therefore the slogan of the workers' government is likely to unite the proletariat and initiate revolutionary struggles.

"Under certain circumstances the Communists must be prepared to form a government jointly with the non-Communist workers' parties and organizations. But they can do this only in case there is the assurance that this workers' government will in good earnest carry on the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the above-mentioned sense.

"Moreover the Communists can participate in such a government only on the following conditions: (1) That participation in such a government must first have the consent of the Comintern. (2) That the Communist representatives participating in such a government be under strict control of their party. (3) That the said Communist members of the workers' government be in close contact with the revolutionary organizations of the working masses. (4) That the Communist Party maintains its own character and complete independence in its agitational work.

"With all its advantages, the slogan of the workers' government has its perils just as does the slogan of united front. In order to avoid such perils the Communist Parties must bear in mind that every bourgeois government is at the same time a capitalist government but that not every workers' government is a really proletarian, i.e., a revolutionary instrument of the proletarian power.

"The Communist International must anticipate the following possibilities:

- "(1) A Liberal Workers' Government, such as existed in Australia and is likely to be formed in Great Britain in the near future.
- "(2) A Social-Democratic 'Workers' Government' (Germany).
- "(3) A Workers' and Peasants' Government—such a possibility exists in the Balkans, in Czechoslovakia, etc.
- "(4) A Workers' Government in which Communists participate.
- "(5) A real proletarian Workers' Government, which the Communist Party alone can embody in a pure form.

"The first two types are not revolutionary workers' governments, but a disguised coalition between the bourgeoisie and anti-revolutionary groups. Such workers' governments are tolerated, at critical moments, by the weakened bourgeoisie, in order to dupe the workers as to the true class character of the state, or with the aid of the corrupt leaders to divert the revolutionary onslaught of the proletariat and gain time.

"The Communists cannot take part in such governments. On the contrary they must ruthlessly expose their true character to the masses. In this period of capitalist decline, when the main task is to win the majority of the proletarians for the proletarian revolution, such governments may serve as means to precipitate the destruction of bourgeois power.

"The Communists are willing to make common cause also with those workers who have not yet recognized the necessity for proletarian dictatorship, with Social-Democrats, Christian Socialists, non-party and Syndicalist workers. Thus, the Communists are prepared, under certain conditions and with certain guarantees to support a non-Communist workers' government. At the same time, the Communists say to the masses quite openly that it is impossible to establish a real workers' government without a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie.

"The other two types of workers' government (workers' and peasants' government and a workers' government with participation of Communists) are not proletarian

## LONDON LETTER

# British 'White Paper' on Guiana Doesn't Make Case

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Oct. 20—The Colonial Office has completely exposed itself with the publication of its White Paper on British Guiana. This document sets forth the reasons for which the state of emergency was declared in Guiana and the constitution suspended.

**Even the Manchester Guardian, hardly a revolutionary paper, admits that the Colonial Office's document does "not show that the PPP [People's Progressive Party of Guiana] is a revolutionary party, with the intention of breaking the constitution."**

The White Paper is divided into five parts: Introduction, Activities of Guianese Ministers, Economic Consequences, Danger of Violence, PPP Leaders and Communism, and, finally, Action of the Government.

The Introduction deals with the elections under the new constitution last April, at which 18 out of 24 seats went to the PPP. Naturally the leaders of this party did not feel the constitution to be genuine; it seems hardly surprising in view of the following sections:

**Section 7: "The Governor can act without consultation of the Executive Committee, or against it."**

**Section 77: "The Governor can enact legislation not passed by the legislature."**

**Section 87: "The Governor can appoint and dismiss ministers."**

### CHARGES

The White Paper's account of the activities of the PPP ministers is by far the longest; it includes among their offenses the following: "Fomenting of strikes for political ends; attempting to oust established trade unions by legislative action; removal of the ban on the entry of West Indian Communists; introduction of a bill to repeal the Undesirable Publications Ordinance and the flooding of the territory with Communist literature; misuse of rights of appointment to boards and committees; spread of racial hatred; plan to secularize church schools and to rewrite textbooks to give them a political bias; neglect of administrative duties; undermining of the loyalty of the police; attempts to gain control of the public service; and threats of violence."

Even if all these charges were strictly true, in the worst interpretation given in the White Paper, they would be no worse than what happens in many another country. But in point of fact, many of the charges refer to positively democratic actions by the PPP government. Why, for example, should Communists (or alleged Communists) from the West Indies not be admitted to Guiana?

The only serious charge which is true according to my informants is the spreading of racial antagonism. For rather chauvinistic reasons, Jagan has often equated anti-imperialism with anti-white feeling, despite his American wife. Otherwise, the other charges are summed up merely by saying that the new government of Guiana wanted to establish a system of society whose values would be in accordance with its program.

### CLERICAL ROLE

The White Paper, in drawing attention to the PPP government's dislike of the YMCA, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, etc., and in insisting on the importance of maintaining the 260 church schools (out of 277 schools), has demonstrated clearly the role of religious organizations in supporting imperialism in Guiana. It is also significant that the governor frowns upon the rewriting of history books—a much-needed revision which General Naguib has initiated in another part of the world.

The governor took a rather poor view of the attempt of the Guiana Industrial

**dictatorships, nor are they historically inevitable transition forms of government toward proletarian dictatorship, but where they are formed they may serve as starting points for the struggle for a proletarian dictatorship. Only the workers' government which consists of Communists can be the true embodiment of the dictatorship of the proletariat."**

(Next week: The Idea of a "Transitional" Workers' Government.)

Workers Union to replace the Manpower Citizens Association. This latter group, however, is a relatively conservative union, latterly a boss's union, which has been losing membership since 1948, when it was 8500-strong; in March 1953 it had only 3600. It has failed to support two strikes designed to increase the standard of living of the workers, and has lost much of their sympathy.

Among the charges laid against the PPP is the accusation that, in June 1953, it refused to sponsor a loyal vote to the queen in the House of Assembly, although when the vote was moved by John Carter, leader of the five-man opposition, it was passed unanimously. Also the PPP has created Malaya and Kenya Committees, pledging their support for the Communists and Mau Mau. [Jagan has stated that the PPP does not support the Mau Mau, since it is a terrorist organization, but opposes British imperialism in Kenya and the policies of the colonial government in the colony.—Ed.]

### SELF-REFUTED

**What is really worrying the Colonial Office is the decline in business in Guiana. In the past five years, \$28 million has been invested there, 35 per cent of this coming from the United Kingdom; Guiana was a signatory to the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement of 1951, and its rice finds a ready market in Britain; bauxite is an important strategic material, much of which is imported into the U. S. The Chamber of Commerce reports a 9½ per cent drop in trade since 1951. Building has decreased, and the Colonial Office is surprised that small savings of \$16 million (in Guiana dollars) have gone down since the arrival of the troops.**

The Colonial Office says it has evidence that at a meeting attended by Dr. Jagan, plans were made to set fire to property and residences of government officials, and that gasoline was purchased to prepare for this. But it blithely admits, even as far as its own story goes, that this would occur only if (1) the governor refused joint sessions to discuss labor relations; (2) the ministers were arrested for sedition; (3) the constitution were revoked.

The White Paper, then, is charging that the PPP was prepared to use "violence" if the British rulers of the country took steps to negate the democratic mandate of the Guianese people.

### A Marxist Classic

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## LABOR ACTION

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# From the STALINIST JUNGLE

## Campaign —

(Continued from page 1)

capable of meeting the needs of the people. It is because they are capitalist political machines serving the needs of business and real estate interests. The close ties between the two machines are more important from this angle than their partnership in the corruption and racketeering at the Yonkers raceway.

The job of spotlighting the corruption of the Republicans and Democrats has to be done, and also the job of explaining why they never carry out their campaign promises. But it also is necessary to have a dynamic program too, and on this score, Halley's program is a modest one. In fact, aside from the more emphatic assurances of honesty and efficiency, it is fundamentally similar to Robert Wagner's program on the Democratic side. But on his own ground, Wagner has the advantage of being the "official" Fair Deal candidate.

There is an argument for an increase in state aid since the city is being discriminated against by the Dewey administration in Albany, and there is an argument for efficiency in government operation, as well as for the proposed small increase in the rate of real-estate taxes. But these are comparative drops in the bucket when placed against the real needs of the city. There is one source of a big increase in taxes on those most capable of paying: real estate.

Profit-making real estate in the city is assessed at depression-level valuations. There should be a reassessment of these properties in accordance with today's prices and today's profits. A general increase in the tax rate would hit hard at the small home-owner and co-op house tenant, but reassessment would permit a formula to tax the big real-estate interests.

The Liberal Party mentions this in its 1953 municipal program "For Our City," but it has scarcely seen the light of day in the campaign. And if Halley referred to it at all, it must have been mumbled in the dead of the night. This and a tax on Wall Street, the stock transfer tax, could provide the basis of an expanded low-cost housing plan and the recapture of the subway system. The stock transfer tax has not been mentioned at all by Halley, though Wagner has it in his program as window dressing. It is no wonder that modesty pervades Halley's campaign on this score.

### BROADER PROBLEM

Where Halley has placed the emphasis is on efficiency and economy, but here the results are limited. Halley is making a direct appeal to the "independent" Republican vote with his talk of economy. He is promising more work and services for less help, but this type of campaigning should be left to the Republicans since they are more effective at it, and anyone who is moved by this argument will probably vote Republican any way. The need is for more services and efficient use of the present staffs to increase the output of a particular department or the transit system, rather than Republican-type "economies."

But the problems facing the city are not solvable in the geographic area of the city alone, and it is one that faces all cities in the country. Even the relatively modest program of the Liberal Party has to be dealt with on a national level because the high level of taxation by the federal government, of which a giant part goes into the war economy, limits the program for housing, schools, transportation, health services and hospitals even in this richest of all nations.

Although it states the problem, the Liberal Party has not developed a program to meet this situation, other than calling for a conference of federal, state and city officials. And of course, it has not discussed the city election in these terms. The fight for decent living conditions in the city has to be fought out on a national scale, and really shows the need for labor-based third parties in other parts of the country to be banded together into a labor party.

The lack of emphasis on the Liberal Party's program is an attempt to appeal to all sorts of people of various political background. This can only mean a watered-down campaign to find the common denominator — "good clean government," meaning all things to all men — just as all the candidates claim to be the "real liberal." The Liberal Party should have grown beyond the stage where it pretends to be performing a service for the city when it runs candidates who are not Liberal Party members. It will really perform a service when its candidates are outspoken Liberal Party members ready to speak out with a militant program, differentiating themselves from the two capitalist parties.

## Frank Satire on the Critic's Dilemma Under Stalinist 'Culture'

It may come as a surprise to some who believe that the Stalinist "people's democracies" are already small editions of Russia's almost-complete totalitarianism to find that satirical attacks on the official atmosphere of cultural conformity are still published now and then, in the guise of "criticism and self-criticism."

From the following example, the atmosphere of totalitarianism can be almost physically smelled. If it, and other pieces like it, get by the censor, it is as the artistic equivalent of those other types of articles in the controlled press where a critic is given free rein to criticize a "shortcoming" in the local water fountain or the defective quality of cigarettes, etc.

Pousmourny's Dilemma was written by Jiri Marek, Czech critic, author and State Prize winner and published as a "short story" in the Prague weekly Literarni Noviny (June 20).

### Pousmourny's Dilemma

When the critic Pousmourny awoke, he didn't feel at all well. His sleep had been disturbed by a nightmare; that is, by the fact that he had to criticize a new book of poems by a new poet. It is neither fish nor flesh, he pondered. It doesn't belong to any group. The poet is not under the wing of any great artist; he is simply something halfbaked, halfcooked. And I had to have the bad luck to write about his work!

"You are a critic; we are awaiting your word!" said the editor. "Our readers are sending libellous letters saying that we do not print criticisms. Prove that you're worth your salt and take a firm stand!"

Does he think it as simple as that? said the annoyed critic, combing his sparse hair and blinking at his image in the mirror. Criticism itself is difficult enough, and now, to take a firm stand as well! If I condemn him, there will be a thunderstorm. If I praise him, hail will fall. Oh why did I not choose another occupation!

Criticism, he grumbled (putting on his pants), can be written something like this: "The remarkable success of a young author is marred by formalistic imperfections which, however, are redeemed by several excellent ideas—which of course are not yet fully developed. . . ." That's the way to write criticism. One can write one hour, two. But to take a firm stand? That means to lay the cards on the table! And then what?

In the old days, he pondered (taking a bite from his morning roll and drinking his coffee), the situation was clear. There were papers which praised everything, and there were papers with the opposite point of view. It was easy to write then. But today there is such uncontrolled freedom. What am I saying? Freedom? Anarchy it is, anarchy! Write something, and you are in for it.

### 'RESEARCH' WORK

He reached for the telephone. "Are you there, Bobby? Look here, you recently visited some plant. Are the workers interested in modern poems? What do you say? That you are busy? I see. Inventory. I understand. Sorry!"

My phone bill will be higher than my salary, he thought sorrowfully, and dialed another number. He finally contacted a friend who had spent two days in a factory half a year ago, but he didn't get a satisfactory answer.

"Some read poems, and some don't," said the friend. And the critic slammed the receiver down. Then he called a girl friend. While he hadn't seen her for a long time, he knew she had a tender soul.

First she told him off and accused him of two-timing her. In answer to his question as to whether she read poems, she replied that sweet words were not enough! Finally she hinted that she might sue him, and hung up.

The critic rubbed his nose—a sure sign of deep concentration. He called the office:

"Find out immediately where the poet is from. All about his family. No, I am quite sane. This is important, Comrade. Let's assume that he comes from a worker's family. Do you understand now? Call me back!"

Two hours later the office called. They had failed to find out anything, and the boss wanted the review. "Tell the boss he is

nuts; I am not ready with the research, with the polling of opinions. This is important, you understand. Criticism is not a dead thing. It comes from the roots of the masses. . . ."

Bored and rather desperate, he began to leaf through the fatal book of poems. He had lots of experience and knew that there couldn't possibly be anything else there than in other poetry: joy, women, machines. Sometimes there was more of joy and machines, sometimes more of joy and women. If only some poet would write something sad. One could take a firm stand there! The poet could, in fact, be torn to pieces! "He failed to grasp the tune of the times; he is far from natural optimism. . . ." On the other hand, could it be something new which should be praised? The critic was sad.

In the afternoon he went for a walk. At first he was afraid that they would call him from the office. But he longed to be among people. He went to a coffee house. The coffee was weak. Hell, he thought, if one could only criticize the black coffee. There one could take a firm stand! First the coffee house manager would get his due, then the distributors, and even the Ministry would not escape unscathed. But to write about poems, not knowing if they are good or bad. . . .

An acquaintance entered. A certain Zoula, such a busy-body. And just when a man wants to be alone he has to choose my table, the critic thought.

"So what are you doing? Writing a review? That's hard work. About poetry, too! I didn't read them, but I think I heard someone talk about them at the Ministry. Sure, I remember now!"

Critic Pousmourny cheered up.

"You are my savior; you are an angel. Quick, tell me what they said. It's important for my point of view."

"They didn't say anything special. Just some commonplace talk."

"Waiter, bring my friend a vermouth. Loosen up, talk!"

### HE TAKES A STAND

Sipping the vermouth, the friend thought long and deeply. On his second drink, he remembered that the Minister had joined in the discussion, just in passing of course, but he had listened.

"Here we are at the crux of the matter," said the critic. "What did he say? What did he say?"

"You know Ministers. They're always busy. He was just passing and sort of looked in and made a gesture—like that."

"Oh, I see. A gesture. What did it mean? Was it positive? Negative? The latter, I'll bet."

"Wait, I think it was . . . positive."

The critic took a deep breath. Suddenly he saw a whole fireworks of words: a new book of unusual talent, promising further development, showing a wealth of invention and correct thematic line, tight pictures erupting from the soul, and marvelous emotion. He smiled, thinking: Now I'll show them a firm stand! Now I am going to lead the way!

He hurried home. . . . His typewriter began to chatter. It sounded more like a machine gun, like the roar of motors. The critic wrote full blast. The phone rang. The critic, annoyed, lifted the receiver; but immediately became very polite. The editor-in-chief was calling.

"Have you something? You know what the Minister said about the poems? No, not that Minister, the other. Don't you know? He said they were no good!"

The critic put down the receiver. His hand was shaking, his brow wet. This is the end! Ministers, and they are not united in their opinion! How am I to take a firm stand?

The typewriter resumed its chattering. More slowly, but at the normal tempo. And the critic Pousmourny wrote his usual review. He wrote that the work unquestionably showed talent, marred by considerable inadequacies in expression; that the author had attempted to describe contemporary life, but that he had not quite succeeded; and that the work was new not only in what it said, but also by what it had omitted—that it was typical. . . .

Tired, he stretched out on the bed. His task completed, he felt as if a burden had been lifted. Man should not attempt the impossible, he murmured. One should stick to tested methods. Especially a critic. But no firm stand, gentlemen! Besides, how would I do it?

## Tangled Cloaks and Rusty Daggers

The following dispatch from Berlin appeared in the Pittsburgh Press for October 11, signed by John P. Leacacos of the North American Newspaper Alliance.

BERLIN, Oct. 10—A realistic size-up of the sources of information concerning possibilities of revolution for liberation of East Germany reveals one astonishing fact to outsiders:

Intelligence agencies and/or cloak-and-dagger boys of all nationalities here are apparently more interested in figuratively cutting each other's throats than in promoting uprisings against East German Reds.

Persons who ought to know estimate

that as many as 50 organizations interested in the Soviet Zone have offices here in West Berlin. About 10 or 15 are American, British and French and the rest West German.

The British (who seem to get most of the few Soviet defectors, incidentally) and the French complain morosely about the Americans. The Yanks, it's charged, spirit key refugees to secret hideouts, decline to share information and, in general, with more cash to spend, try to hog the whole intelligence picture.

The Americans smile primly and save their bitterest taunts for each other. Sometimes it looks as if an American agency gets as much kick out of putting one over on a rival American outfit as it does out of beating the friendly foreigners to the steadily slimmer refugee pickings.

All the Allies unite in one matter: beefing about the Germans. Feeling their oats more and more day by day, the Germans get the lion's share of what comes across the Red borders, according to western sources.

In turn the Germans complain the

Allied agencies are all "take" and no "give." This means the following:

The contractual agreements restoring 98 per cent of German sovereignty (as soon as everybody ratifies the European army treaty) in effect obligates the United States to hand over intelligence reports to the Germans. But now the Germans want assistance (meaning money) from the Americans to help organize resistance groups in the East Zone and to co-ordinate intelligence activities in a nice, orderly German style.

"You Americans," cried one interested party, "are sitting here with 1000 agents in the powerhouse of West Berlin without building any revolutionary conduits to the East!"

In the last two years United States organizations here have failed to give anti-Red groups any advice about what to do, Germans charge. Risking their necks to obtain intelligence for the Americans — without aid in matters closer to German interests—is strictly one-way traffic and unfair, they add.

Perhaps a portion of the German complaint is valid, experts admit.

### Read the

### NEW INTERNATIONAL

America's leading Marxist review

# When Trotsky's Assassin Gets Out: The GPU Is Still Preparing Its Alibi

The Stalinists have let out another clue pointing to their plans in preparation for the release from jail of Jacson-Mornard, Leon Trotsky's assassin, who is due to be let out of his Mexican prison shortly, after serving 12 years of his sentence.

It is well known that Jacson's release will constitute a grave problem for the international GPU machinery. Few people nowadays doubt that his role was that of an agent for the GPU, and that the crime was Stalin's. Much evidence has accumulated, also, to indicate that this international political-crime ring has reason to fear the unsealing of his lips. As long as he lives, he will be a sword over their head. It is not their habit to let such threats continue to exist.

In accordance with their standard procedure, therefore, there has been more than one indication that his murder is already being prepared for. Part of the preparation consists of laying down an alibi in advance: Jacson is going to be murdered "out of revenge" by . . . the Trotskyists.

The obvious fact that the Trotskyists, and all other anti-Stalinists, have the greatest interest in seeing Jacson live—and talk sooner or later—is immaterial to this new stage of the plot.

## PLANTED LIE

The latest development is the planting of the prefabricated GPU story in a prominent Mexican periodical, *Atisbos*. The character of this periodical is well suited to their aims. On the one hand, it is run by a well-known clerical who generally represents the reactionary Catholic viewpoint. On the other hand—in an unholy combination which is not as peculiar in Mexico as it may sound—the political sec-

tions of *Atisbos* are written by Stalinists.

Thus the following item appeared on May 21, 1953 in *Atisbos* in the section headed "Calidoscopic Metropolitano," which is run by Arturo Jose Ortiz and Emma Gonzalez. The italics are added:

"Jacques Mornard, the Catalan who on August 15, 1940, assassinated Leon Trotsky, the ex-commissar of the Red Army and ex-commissar of Foreign Relations, will soon have served his sentence and therefore in a little while he will be able to walk out into the street a completely free man.

"But we can reveal to you that Mornard will not leave the impregnable cell he occupies in the penitentiary, since his enjoyment of liberty would not last very long. Over him hangs the extremely grave threat of world Trotskyism which has condemned him to death.

"In Mexico the Trotskyist groups under the ideological command of Rodrigo Garcia Treviño, mainly those functioning in the Consolidada, the Artes Graficos Comerciales, Telefonistas and the Preparatoria, have sworn that as soon as Jacques Mornard goes free, they will take his life.

"But Jacques is a cautious and prudent man. In view of the close vigilance which his enemies of today—since Mornard was an outstanding Trotskyist militant—have exercised about every person who visited him in the penitentiary, he has decided not to receive a single visit, keeping to his own cell.

"For all of the foregoing, we bet dollars to doughnuts that Mornard, by committing some minor offense, will succeed in getting himself arrested again, thus continuing his imprisonment indefinitely, out of fear of suffering the penalty which the Trotskyists are preparing for him, in accordance with the law of an eye-for-an-eye. . . ."

When Jacson was taken, following the murder, he had his tale all written out in his pocket, posing as a disgruntled Trotskyist, in order that the Stalinists might be able to yell that the crime was

an "internal" Trotskyist affair. This is the absurd tale which the planted story in *Atisbos* purports to accept.

## THE HACKS SLIPPED

But there is a slip-up in the story.

On his arrest, Jacson-Mornard told contradictory stories about his nationality, one being the claim that he was of Belgian descent. But it was not until comparatively recently that the truth about his past has been unearthed, through researches conducted especially in Europe. It was found that his real name is Ramon Mercader, that his mother (to whom it was known he was greatly attached even before the details were dug up) was a Stalinist militant and GPU operative, that he had worked with his mother before, and that both are of Catalan birth.

The new evidence that he is Catalan is inextricably bound up with the evidence that he is a Stalinist GPU tool. By referring to him as "a Catalan," the *Atisbos* story is assuming that his own story was a lie, and that the new evidence is acceptable. Yet at the same time the Stalinist hacks who wrote the story continue to present him as formerly "an outstanding Trotskyist militant," etc.!

Thus the GPU-planted article in *Atisbos* contains its own exposé.

In "predicting" that the assassin will seek to stay in jail even after his term is up, the Stalinists may be suggesting to him that this will be a safer course than going out into the world where he might be induced to talk. It is not impossible to interpret it as the offer of a deal: "Stay in jail one way or the other, where no one can get at you to persuade you to open up, and we won't have to get rid of you. . . ."

## PREVIOUS INCIDENT

The *Atisbos* episode follows another recent incident, revealed in LABOR ACTION last August 3, when a very crude attempt was made in Mexico City to involve Natalia Trotsky in a compromising scheme.

At that time Natalia was visited in her home in Coyoacan by a Mexican woman who claimed that her husband was in a cell adjacent to Jacson's; that he was to be freed in a few days and wanted to see Natalia to give her certain information about Jacson. When Natalia replied that any information he had to convey would have to be written down in a letter and sent, the woman proposed that Trotsky's widow visit the man in jail to receive the information! (While not awfully clever, it would have been a very nice shouting-point if the Stalinist mouthpieces of the GPU were able to say, later, that Natalia Trotsky had paid a "mysterious" visit to Jacson's cell under the "pretense" of visiting an adjacent cell, especially if the man in that cell thereupon testified that he knew nothing about it. . . .)

The same woman came back a few days later and spoke to someone else in the house, Natalia not being available this time. She showed a typewritten letter from her "husband," conveying the idea that he had a great admiration for Leon Trotsky and would like to perform a great service for his widow; he, like everyone else in the jail, hated Jacson, etc.

When it was pointed out to the woman that, if the "service" was supposed to be the killing of Jacson, this would be of the greatest benefit to the Stalinists and a great blow at any hopes of hearing Jacson spill his real story, the woman burned the letter immediately and on the spot.

That ended the incident, but it was obviously one attempt to prepare the ground for a GPU murder of the assassin. While, on his release, Jacson-Mornard-Mercader may simply "disappear," it is clear that the GPU operatives are turning over various plans to get rid of him in such manner that their own crime may be pinned on some fantastic "Trotskyist revenge plot"—or, at least, to fix it so that the Stalinist propaganda mill will take the opportunity to blare this to the world and their own dupes.

# Shachtman Passport Case — —

(Continued from page 1)

be inexplicable, if not indeed weird, it is necessary to report its origins.

Attorney Rauh protested to Nicholas that no provisions against the granting of passports applied to Shachtman; that Shachtman had a long record as an anti-Stalinist, etc.

But Ashley G. Nicholas was not impressed, for he had been reading the newspapers. To Rauh's explanation that Shachtman had long been an anti-Stalinist, his reply was: *Yes, but Stalin is dead!*

Rauh thereupon proceeded to explain that the death of this individual had nothing to do with Shachtman's anti-Stalinism. Nicholas wound up: *OK, have Shachtman send in an affidavit to that effect!*

## AFFIDAVIT

And so it was that, determined to go to the bitter end through the procedures laid down by the keepers of the ocean lanes, Shachtman actually submitted an affidavit to assure Mr. Nicholas and Mrs. Shipley that the death of Stalin had not impaired his anti-Stalinism! We quote the document as being not without interest for archivists:

"MAX SHACHTMAN, having been duly sworn, deposes and says that:

"(1) I am the national chairman of the Independent Socialist League.

"(2) I am, and my association is, opposed to all forms of dictatorship and totalitarianism. For years we have been anti-Stalinist. Our opposition to Stalinism is directed, not only at the man, but even more at the system. The death of Stalin in no way affected our opposition to the Russian dictatorship.

"(3) Attached hereto and made a part of this affidavit is a photostatic copy of a joint statement dated on or about October 17, 1949 by three Socialist organizations of the United States opposing Stalinism. This statement was translated into Chinese for the State Department and leaflets containing the text

were dropped over Stalinist China during the early part of 1950.

"(4) The Independent Socialist League has filed with the attorney general a protest and notice of appeal of its listing on the attorney general's list of Subversive Organizations."

## DEMANDS ACTION

Together with this affidavit, Shachtman also sent another letter, July 17, pressing the matter further and pointing out the relevant sections of the regulations—all of which should be borne in mind when reading the final decision communicated by Mrs. Shipley. The letter of July 17, addressed to Mrs. Shipley, read, after a short summary of the attempt to get a passport during the elapsed five months:

"Regulations of the Secretary of State, Sections 51.135-51.143 refer to the denial of passports to persons 'who support the world Communist movement' and to persons 'going abroad to engage in activities which would violate the laws of the United States, or which if carried on in the United States would violate such laws designed to protect the security of the United States.' I am in neither category, but, since our organization, the Independent Socialist League, is admittedly anti-capitalist, I can draw no conclusion other than that you are treating this case under those sections.

"Your refusal to make a decision on my passport application cannot deny me the procedural rights accorded American citizens under regulations ss. 51.135-51.143. I therefore request either:

"(a) A passport; or  
 "(b) The right to appear in person before a Hearing Officer of the Passport Division; or

"(c) A decision in writing stating the reasons why my passport is not being granted.

"I intend, if I do not receive a reply to this letter promptly, to appeal to the Board of Passports Appeals of the Department of State, which was established

by Section 51.139 of the above-mentioned regulations, and, if necessary, to the courts.

"I also enclose an affidavit requested by your Mr. Ashley G. Nicholas to expedite a decision by your Division.

"I request a prompt reply to this letter."

## HOT WIRES

. . . July went by, and the warden of the nation's ramparts was wordless. August passed, and the custodian of the passport curtain continued quiet. September slunk away, and the sentinel of the seas stayed silent and speechless.

Then in October came a flurry of action:

(Telegram—Oct. 8)

"BOARD OF PASSPORT APPEALS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE: REFER MY LETTER JULY 17, 1953 TO MRS. SHIPLEY. NO RESPONSE RECEIVED THERETO. THIS TELEGRAM CONSTITUTES MY APPEAL FROM ARBITRARY ACTION PASSPORT DIVISION IN REFUSING ALL REQUESTS IN SAID LETTER. REQUEST IMMEDIATE HEARING ON APPEAL.—(s) MAX SHACHTMAN."

(Telegram—Oct. 9)

"MAX SHACHTMAN: HEARING WILL BE GRANTED AT YOUR CONVENIENCE. ADVISE DEPARTMENT WHEN DESIRED.—(s) R. B. SHIPLEY."

(Telegram—Oct. 15)

"R. B. SHIPLEY: REGULATION 51.137 REQUIRES NOTIFICATION IN WRITING OF REASONS FOR TENTATIVE DISAPPROVAL OF PASSPORT APPLICATION. REQUEST SUCH REASONS IMMEDIATELY. FURTHER REQUEST INFORMATION WHETHER HEARING WILL BE BEFORE HEARING OFFICER OF PASSPORT DIVISION OR BOARD OF PASSPORT APPEALS. UPON RECEIPT OF SAME WILL NOTIFY

YOU DESIRED DATE OF HEARING.—(s) MAX SHACHTMAN."

It will be noted that in its telegram of October 9, the Passport Division had asked Shachtman to set a date for a "hearing" when it had not yet even informed him that the application had been denied, let alone given any reasons for denial. But finally, on October 22, the Passport Division broke down and confessed that it said no. A letter from Mrs. Shipley on that date stated that the hearing would be before the division's Hearing Officer and added the following news:

"The department has received information that you are the National Chairman of the Independent Socialists [sic] League which it is understood has been classified by the Attorney General as both subversive and Communist although it appears that the organization has no direct connection with the Communist International. However, the Department has been advised that the publication of the Independent Socialists [sic] League, the *New International*, describes itself as an 'organ of revolutionary Marxism.' In the circumstances the Department feels that your travel abroad on behalf of the organization would be contrary to the best interests of the United States and tentatively disapproves your application for a passport.

"Sincerely yours,  
 "For the Secretary of State,  
 "R. B. SHIPLEY."

## ISSUE IS POSED

And so it appears that the Passport Division laboriously discovered that Shachtman was national chairman of the ISL, after no doubt carefully investigating the letterhead on which his correspondence was sent and equally carefully perusing his affidavit; and that Mrs. Shipley's office also finally wrested from the attorney general the information that the ISL was on the subversive list.

But, as quoted in Shachtman's letter,

(Continued on page 7)

# PRESS AGENTS OF THE PENTAGON: THE MILITARY PROPAGANDA MILL—Part 2

## THE NETWORK OF MILITARY PROPAGANDA

The actual work of the Military Establishment's publicity staff cannot be estimated by the dollars appropriated or by the numbers of persons employed. A look at the system itself reveals that a great deal of newspaper, radio, television and motion picture co-operation provides much more publicity than the Armed Forces themselves prepare or pay for. The system also reveals something of the extent of the publicity operations.

The system includes first of all the centralized or unified Office of Public Information with its various departments or branches described earlier. . . .

In the Pentagon is a pressroom that operates twenty-four hours a day. There are forty telephones operating continuously in the pressroom. Situated directly across from the pressroom is a press corps of approximately forty correspondents who represent the newspapers, radio and other channels of public information. This press corps is not paid for by the government but by the news agencies whose purpose is the reporting of legitimate news. Even legitimate news is sometimes slanted in the military press releases, and of course such a press corps provides a convenient way of publicizing policy and ideas the military wants to promote. . . .

In addition to press releases and conferences, a mat service has been provided for almost 1,000 small newspapers that cannot afford to maintain representatives in Washington or any pictorial services, etc. . . .

Each of the Armed Forces maintains a separate news service outside the Pentagon. The Navy, for example, maintains journalists on the individual ships as well as staffs at the various fleet commands, overseas bases, and naval districts. . . .

The Army and Air Force have similar extensive press publicity systems. Most of the Army generals have public relations employees attached to their staffs.

### Headstuffing as 'Public Service'

Another illustration of the tremendous public relations activity of the Military Establishment is the work of the Pictorial Branch. Before the Korean War began, this Branch provided between 10,000 and 19,000 photographic prints a month to newspapers, TV stations, and newsreels. When the Korean war started this jumped to 50,000 prints of still pictures alone.<sup>1</sup> In one year's time this branch helped private motion pictures whose production costs "would add up to about \$30 million."

In describing the work on these motion pictures, a spokesman for the Defense Department said: "The impression they convey must be a correct one because much of the attitude of the public toward the Army, Navy, and Air Force and the desirability of being in the service and maintaining *esprit de corps*, pride in the service, and pride in serving the country revolves around these pictures which have a very great influence on the public. It is stuff that we simply couldn't buy, and it is priceless."

He added, "The same is true of newsreels and TV. We get about \$5 million of free time through our radio and TV shows which we produce ourselves in addition to cooperating with the commercial agencies and the commercial chains."<sup>2</sup> One indication of the activity of the Radio and TV Branch is the full cooperation of major radio and TV networks which they get on special occasions. . . .

In January 1948, *Variety* stated that the military is now "Radio's No. 1 music sponsor," playing "a \$6,000,000 parlay at cut-rate." The \$6,000,000 figure is *Variety's* estimate of what the various military shows would cost on a radio time-and-talent basis. The networks and agencies write off their contributions as "public service" except for agency executive expense accounts which the government foots.

### Hollywood in Brass

The military's Office of Public Information maintains a staff of both still and motion picture photographers.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the Office of Public Information sometimes calls upon the Army's Signal Corps to produce films.

The Signal Corps Photographic Center in Long

## Passport Case — —

(Continued from page 6)

the passport regulations do not recognize the attorney general's list as a legal bar against the granting of a passport. And Mrs. Shipley will have to explain, before a board of appeals or before a court, what authority she has to write regulations to this effect.

Mrs. Shipley will also have to explain what part of the passport regulations bar "revolutionary Marxists" who have no connection (direct or indirect) with the "world Communist movement" from getting a passport. (Incidentally, her 8-month-long painstaking investigation apparently did not disclose that the subtitle "organ of revolutionary Marxism" has not been part of the *New Internationalist's* format since some time before Shachtman ever applied for a passport, though this has bearing mainly on the efficiency of her office.)

In any case, the Passport Division has itself bound up the case of Max Shachtman's passport with the ISL's case against the government's notorious "subversive list," and on this sector also the dispensation of justice in the United States will get a second test. The State Department's passport curtain is going to get a going-over.

*This is the second installment of the first detailed and factual survey made of a little known department of the U. S. military establishment—its propaganda activities, the vast ramifying network of agencies and agents whose sole function is to inundate the public with the military point of view.*

*This series is made up of the main portions of a pamphlet just published by the National Council Against Conscription, written by John M. Swomley Jr. and entitled "Press Agents of the Pentagon." The NCAC is an organization founded and supported by prominent liberals for the purpose of combating the growth of militarism, in particular fighting against universal military training and conscription.—Ed.*

Island City, New York is a little Hollywood, judging from a *New York Times* feature story describing it. The story told of "fugitives from Hollywood" who as civilian actors in Army uniform get "a minimum rate of \$45 a day and \$155 a week." They are assisted by about 150 to 200 real soldiers.

"The idea may have originated with the Information and Education section at the Pentagon building (and . . . civilian writers of Civil Service status put the idea into words in their Long Island cubicles. They're thoroughly professional and experienced in Army methods. The casting director, John Kandel, then receives the schedule."

At the Center is the largest motion-picture studio in the East, built at a cost of \$10,000,000 and bought from Paramount Pictures by the Army in 1942.<sup>4</sup> The center was described as a place "where many of the best-known films were made during World War II."

An illustration of a film privately produced but which was aided by the Defense Department was the Coronet Films project "Are You Ready for Service?" This was shown in high schools throughout the nation and widely condemned by religious groups as an effort to propagandize for Universal Military Training, then pending in Congress. It was also criticized for its indoctrination of high school students with warlike and military attitudes.

The Director of the Pentagon's Office of Public Information cited the *Saturday Evening Post* which "in the last year carried 57 articles" on military subjects, as one indication of cooperation with magazines.<sup>5</sup>

### Organizing 'Patriotism'

In return for articles and materials of a military nature, the Armed Forces get free help from the magazine publishers. A Pentagon spokesman said: "In appreciation for this service . . . the magazines of the country have contributed millions of dollars of free space in recent months to promote such defense necessities as the blood program."

He also mentioned the centralized effort to provide speakers for Rotary Clubs, conventions, chambers of commerce, and similar groups throughout the nation. He stated that "we try to use prominent Reserve officers who still have some interest in helping along." The travel expenses of such speakers are provided.

When a Senator questioned this use of public money by saying that one entertaining speaker might produce a hundred requests for similar engagements, the Director replied: "It is a constant problem with us trying to keep it down, but this does not 'win friends and influence people.'"<sup>6</sup>

From the Pentagon also hundreds of exhibits are transported "to county, State and National Fairs and to large industrial, professional, educational and civil conventions throughout the nation" where they are "viewed by millions of people."<sup>7</sup>

Still another activity of the Public Information Office is that of the Industrial Services Branch which has "stimulated patriotism among the workers, organized tours of returning war-heroes, and in many other ways bolstered morale at home, particularly on the labor front."<sup>8</sup>

The Special Events Branch not only promotes the annual Armed Forces Day, including "organizing community observance in several thousand communities in all parts of the Nation," but it also arranges for "such matters as community fly-overs, Armed Forces exhibits, parades, appearances of Armed Forces bands, etc."<sup>9</sup>

In all of these activities the cooperation of local communities, business and labor organizations, book and magazine publishers, radio, TV and movie industries, newspapers, result in literally millions of dollars of free military publicity.

### Militarists as Educators

Another important aspect of military publicity is the propaganda directed at men in the Armed Forces, including their wives and children. This program is not primarily a task of the Pentagon's Office of Public Information, for other Pentagon offices take primary responsibility, but it does reflect the publicity-conscious attitude of the military's top staff. The Army's stated objective is "to provide all Army personnel with the

facts necessary for an understanding of their responsibilities as soldiers and citizens."<sup>10</sup>

The Army clearly assumes that it must educate men not only to be good soldiers but to be the Army concept of good citizens. It does not believe that the civilian schools, churches and other institutions do the proper kind of job. In fact, this is one of the important reasons, if not the major reason, the Army wants Universal Military Training. Anna Rosenberg, while Assistant Secretary of Defense, said of UMT: "A large part of the training as envisaged by the Commission, and by the Department of Defense, is citizenship training, literacy training, training in morale, and training in the type of things that young people ought to have. . . ."<sup>11</sup>

An Albany, New York, newspaper, in discussing the program directed at soldiers, began a news story: "American fighting men must be morally and psychologically armed by understanding the human freedom they may be called on to defend, Brig. Gen. Charles T. Lanham, director of the War Department Information and Education Division, told the Albany Army Advisory Committee last night. He said the work of his division was to give soldiers citizenship training as well as training for war."<sup>12</sup>

Gen. Mark Clark, Chief of Army Field Forces, in a letter to Army commanders commenting on the Army's education program, said, in the words of the news correspondent: "Not only will a good program tell the men why they have to fight but why they must be sent to overseas garrisons to perform essential occupation duties."

"In addition," said General Clark "the program must instill in our soldiers a full appreciation of the blessings they enjoy by living under our democratic system, and of their responsibility of citizenship to preserve these blessings for this and future generations."<sup>13</sup>

During the 80th Congress a House Committee on Executive Expenditures, aided by some members of the Committee on Education and Labor, accused the Army of political education of American troops. The report of the Committee stated:

"There is a legitimate question as to the necessity or desirability of the Army requiring compulsory attendance of our soldiers at discussions conducted by officers on controversial political questions. We were completely surprised at the revelation through this investigation that the Army was engaging in this sort of activity. This is a fundamental question worthy of the serious attention of the Congress as a whole."

### Against Army Indoctrination

" . . . The Army should avoid attempting to indoctrinate the men in the service on controversial political questions. Officers are required to refrain from political activities; it would be inconsistent to permit the Army to 'politically' educate the men. Your committee is of the firm opinion and recommends that the Army should desist from writing or causing to be written or circulated articles on subjects not of a military character and which are or may be of a controversial, political nature."

"We were told that in selecting topics for these Army Talks, close attention is given to subjects in which the general public is currently interested. This being the case and in the event legislative authority is received for a continuance of these compulsory discussion hour sessions in the Army, we see less difficulty and at the same time a savings to be effected, in using as a basis for such discussions outstanding editorials from our free American press, pro and con articles written by recognized American writers and which are abundantly available, and numerous other basic informational publications; provided that the Army makes it clear that it neither accepts nor rejects and does not favor or disfavor any opinion, idea, view, or conclusion expressed in such publications. Such a plan of operation entails full freedom on the part of all participants to dispute or disagree with any or all statements of such non-military writers and may reasonably be expected to result in a healthier discussion of questions. If our soldiers need guidance in the ways of good citizenship, we think this is the American way."<sup>14</sup>

Not only does the Army have its official indoctrination program which reaches the men while they are on duty but other programs as well. One way of reaching men and their families with the military point of view is through the Army newspaper. There are 146 Army newspapers published in the United States, 22 in Europe, and 84 in Korea. All Army newspaper editors are aided by the Armed Forces Press Service which provides news, feature stories, photographic material, cartoons and comics in several forms for easy reproduction.

One newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes*, has a European edition and a Pacific edition. The latter comes in three versions, one of which is for Korea. It has a circulation of 186,000 in the Pacific area, with 72,000 in Korea. Fifty-five thousand papers are sold daily in the European command.<sup>15</sup>

(Next week: The Aims of the Military Propaganda Mill.)

1. Public Hearings, 1952, Senate Appropriations Committee, p. 1762.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 1762.

3. Senate Hearings, Defense Dept. appropriation, 1953, p. 1768.

4. *N. Y. Times*, March 3, 1949.

5. Senate Hearings, Defense Dept. appropriation, 1953, p. 1771.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 1767.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 1185, 1186.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 1290.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 1291.

10. *N. Y. Times*, May 14, 1951.

11. House Armed Services Comm. Hearings on UMT, January 1952, p. 2418-4.

12. *Kriegerbocker News*, Sept. 16, 1947.

13. *N. Y. Times*, May 14, 1951.

14. *Army and Navy Journal*, Aug. 14, 1948.

15. *N. Y. Times*, Jan. 3, 1952.

# The 'Crime of Being Accused' Is Made Official by the NLRB!

By BEN HALL

A new square has been stitched into the patch-quilt of guilt by accusation, this time by the National Labor Relations Board.

The problem: how to penalize union officials for membership in the Communist Party when there is no proof of their membership.

The solution is found in that new principle of punishment which now lives in shadowy areas outside the fringes of law. A new NLRB ruling reinterprets and applies the Taft-Hartley Law in a singular manner.

Behind the problem is the fact that the affidavit provisions of the law provide that the officers of all unions must take an anti-Communist oath before their unions can obtain Board certification as the collective-bargaining agency in any plant. To the utter amazement of no one at all, men who allegedly are CP members or sympathizers have signed such oaths and their unions have gone on as before, utilizing all the machinery of the NLRB.

The Department of Justice has hundreds of such cases of suspected "perjury" under investigation, and despite all the efforts of its staff and a generous budget, has been able to obtain indictments only in a trifling dozen cases. And it has gotten thus far, to our knowledge, only one conviction, which has been temporarily upset by a higher court.

## NEW CATEGORY

The Department discovers one of the annoying and (to it) irritating features of democracy: not only is it permitted to accuse and indict but the accused is permitted to defend himself and challenge its accusations.

Time passes: no convictions; unions can win NLRB certification merely because they enjoy the support of the majority of the workers even though their officials are under indictment—an admit-

tedly inconvenient process if not a reflection on the loyalty of workers who refuse to cringe in respect before an accusing department which represents the government, which represents The People, which represents truth and justice.

But ingenious men can wave all this aside. They simply create a new category of offense: the crime of being guilty of being accused of a crime.

The new NLRB ruling provides that unions whose officers are under indictment (not guilty, take note) are barred from certification and are denied the right to participate in NLRB elections.

In announcing this new policy, the board, out of a last lingering respect for democratic traditions, states (and not in satire!) that it draws "no inference of guilt from the issuance of indictments." No, it simply acts as though it did draw the inference.

## SLIGHT DIFFICULTY

Thus we are introduced to a fine line of distinction for discriminating intellects. If the Department of Justice indicts a man for a crime, the board does not thereupon conclude that he is guilty. That could be construed as downright bias. It simply declares him guilty of having been accused!

Such a ruling is absolutely necessary, the board explains, to avoid the "irreparable consequences" of confusion and disorder that might follow the decertification of a union which had been certified before the conviction of one of its officers. One aspect of this matter seems to have escaped its attention. Suppose the indicted official were found innocent?

In the interim between his indictment and his exoneration, a union organizing campaign might be demoralized and a union destroyed. But perhaps such an "irreparable consequence" does not matter; for, even if declared innocent of any crime, how could he ever clear himself of

having been accused?

But, it will be argued, there is a Taft-Hartley Law; Communists will try to evade its affidavit sections, by deception if necessary; something must be done. . . . It is difficult to see what such arguments are intended to prove.

A law which penalizes political beliefs and forces people to hide their views or affiliations can be enforced only by setting in motion a chain of repressions which endanger everyone's democratic rights. In this case, what is undermined is the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty. If the system of enforcement devised by the NLRB is "necessary," then the law it would enforce is dangerous and undemocratic.

## REASSURANCE

In the same mood, *Business Week*, on October 24, advises employers in a feature entitled, "When Can You Fire a Red?"

The magazine, of course, is not interested in any "scientific" definition of a "red." It variously refers to them as "disloyal private employees," "subversives," "pro-Communists," and "questionable workers."

It is now happy to inform employers who have been puzzled by the problem of dealing with such undesirables that they may simply fire them with the assurance that the NLRB and arbitrators, in the light of present "public opinion," will uphold their actions.

And they need not worry about slight errors in judgment; they need not actually fire a "red" for being a red. "Most employers know that if they keep 'careful books' on questionable workers, they can find legitimate grounds for firing them."

But if their taste runs to denunciations of "subversives," they need only remember that "a defamation action is too expensive for most employees. . . ."

# Indo-China Mess

(Continued from page 1)

fan the flames of resistance in the rest of the French colonies—and by powerful pressure from the American ally.

In this situation, the United States is playing a role which is typical of its politics in many parts of the world.

The United States and individual American capitalists have few if any direct economic interests in Indo-China. As far as is known, there are no powerful groups either in the American government or in the business world who seek to take over the role the French have played in that colony. What is involved, as far as the American government is concerned, are the political and strategic stakes of the cold war.

During the past year the French government has claimed that the war in Indo-China is such a drain on its military and economic resources that it cannot participate fully in the rearmament of Europe or in the projected European Defense Community as long as it is being bled white in Asia. The American government has decided to come to the rescue. It has promised to give France close to 700 million during this fiscal year, in exchange for a promise by the French to prosecute the war against the Vietminh more vigorously.

It is true that the American government does not view the struggle in Indo-China in purely military terms. The Americans have been urging the French to go farther in developing native Indo-Chinese military forces than they have done in the past, to give the people of the country a greater feeling that they too have a stake in the struggle against the Stalinists. The Americans have even urged "political reforms," and it can be assumed that the present attempt of the French to negotiate new treaties with the governments of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are in part, at least, a response to this American pressure.

## UNSATISFIED

The trouble is that the demand for national self-determination and national independence in Asia cannot be satisfied by "reforms" which leave the foreigner in the political and economic saddle.

There may be many people in Indo-China who welcome an increase in the number of armed Indo-Chinese proposed by the Americans. But it is quite clear that they have no intention of simply increasing the native machinegun fodder in the interest of continued French rule of the colony. If their people are to take over the physical burden of the fight against the Stalinists, they want to do it on their own behalf and not for their masters.

There is no way in this world in which the American government can change this situation. They could double and quadruple the money they are willing to throw into the fight, but that will not win the loyalty of the people of the country for the French or American cause.

As long as the Stalinists fight for independence, they will continue to recruit thousands of the peoples for their armies, and their soldiers will fight with a will which can be matched neither by the French themselves nor by the Indo-Chinese recruited into their service.

Although no Chinese troops have been involved in the fighting in Indo-China, it is clear that the military supplies of the Vietminh Stalinist forces come from that country. Bedeviled by a war which they are convinced they cannot win, the French are now turning to the idea of negotiating a settlement with China in which the Chinese Stalinists would abandon the forces of the Vietminh in exchange for . . . some as yet vague and unstipulated consideration.

## BARGAIN?

The French government is therefore anxious for a political conference the purpose of which would be to settle the cold war in Asia. They would like, in some way, to tie the settlement of the war in Korea in with their own struggle in Indo-China. But their American allies want no part of such a deal.

For it is perfectly plain that the French have nothing to bargain with—in Indo-China itself. Hence it takes no great political insight to discover that what they have in mind is to trade something else in Asia, something in which France has no direct interest, for peace in Indo-China. That something could only be in the nature

of admitting China to the UN, or turning Formosa over to the Stalinists, or letting them take over the whole of Korea, or any combination of these.

They are no doubt thinking that if the Americans would sell Chiang Kai-shek down the river, the Chinese might be willing to do the same for Ho Chi Minh. And considering the Stalinist record in such matters, the French calculation is far from being a total fantasy.

It cannot be said that the Americans are shocked by the cynicism of such an approach, for the State Department is an old hand at making that kind of deals. But they do not care to pay the price.

Thus the French are forced to continue to revolve in the old vicious circle: if they don't give the Indo-Chinese their independence, they cannot beat the Stalinists. If they cannot win the war, Indo-China is more of a liability than an asset to them. But if they give the Indo-Chinese their independence, there is no point to their continuing the war. Only the Americans have the lavish resources with which to continue a purely military contest indefinitely, even though it is clear that no political victory can ever be won by it.

## THE HARD WAY OUT

Is there any solution to the problem except to turn the country over to the new subjugation and exploitation by totalitarian Stalinism? Of course there is. But this would be a democratic and not an imperialist solution, and neither the French nor the American ruling economic and governmental circles are capable of conceiving it, let alone carrying it out.

The solution is exceptionally simple, once one abandons the imperialist standpoint, and approaches the problem from the point of view of democracy.

The vast majority of the peoples of Indo-China are for independence, not for Stalinism. The Stalinists are able to exploit this sentiment, because no one else represents it as consistently and vigorously as they appear to do. The answer is this: Give immediate, complete and unconditional independence to the states of Indo-China.

Ask them, through their representa-

## The ISL Program in Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a worldwide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!

## WEEK by WEEK . . .

LABOR ACTION screens and analyzes the week's news, discusses the current problems of labor and socialism, gives you information you can't find anywhere else.

A sub is only \$2 a year!

tive political bodies, how they want to take over and reorganize the economic and political power which has been held by the French up till now, and then let them do it. Ask them how they propose to defend themselves from the military threat of Stalinism, and then give them the facilities with which to do it. Once they know that they have their own country, in every sense of the word, and that whatever military facilities and personnel they may want to help them to organize their defense is also under their complete control, it should not be difficult to reach agreement on how to defeat the Stalinists.

And for the first time since the war started, the political conditions for defeating the Stalinists would be present.

Would this solution be an absolute guarantee against an eventual Stalinist victory in Indo-China? Of course not. There are no absolute guarantees in this world. Once independence had been granted, if no social force were to arise in the country which could contest with the Stalinists for the support and allegiance of the masses on the battlefield of social policy (land reform, trade-union rights for the workers and the like) the latter might still be victorious. But this is the only way in which a solution is possible.

It is obvious that neither the present French nor the American government will propose or carry out such a program in Indo-China. They talk about democracy and freedom, but these become translated into concrete policies only when nothing serious is at stake.

But it is not the governments alone which bear responsibility for policy. The labor and liberal forces in this country, the socialists in France have their responsibility too. That is to oppose their governments in the name of that democracy which is a real and serious matter to them.