

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

FEBRUARY 22, 1954

FIVE CENTS

SPOT-LIGHT

The Democrats Wail

Democrats in and out of Congress have been complaining bitterly at the vicious attacks made on them by Republican spokesmen over the Lincoln's Birthday weekend. All they have been charged with, so far, is that they turned the government over to known foreign spies and agents on the one hand, and that they betrayed it to its enemies themselves, on the other.

Two-time Republican presidential candidate Dewey told a Hartford audience as long ago as last December 16 that:

"Remember that the words Truman and Democrat mean bungling our country into war and the lack of courage or capacity either to win the war or to win a truce. . . . Whenever anybody mentions the words Truman and Democrat to you, for the rest of your lives remember that these words are synonymous with Americans dying, thousands of miles from home, because they did not have the ammunition to defend themselves."

Senator Jenner of Indiana informed an audience last week that "in 1952 we liberated a homeland from enemy troops."

We offer the Democrats our sincere condolences, even though they put the ISL on the "subversive" list as far back as 1948. We hope and trust that they never live to see the day when they are on the list with us, but we must admit that in the circumstances, neither we nor they can guarantee that this won't come to pass. As their best defense we suggest: they work with us to get the list abolished.

A Democrat Roars

Representative Alfred D. Sieminski, Democrat of New Jersey, has threatened to kill anyone who suggests that his loyalty might be questionable because his stepdaughter was behind the iron curtain for seven years until she broke out on Christmas Day, 1953. He made the threat in a hearing of the House Appropriations subcommittee which dealt with the Treasury Department.

Talking about the Executive Order under which men can be barred from government jobs because they have relatives

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FOR OR AGAINST AMERICAN HISTORY?

How did those VFW vigilante vets in Norwalk, Conn., decide who and what was "subversive"?

Two issues ago we quoted the answer of local Norwalk politician Stanley Stroffolino: he did it by "intuition." Incidentally, Stroffolino later added that "it's more than that. I've been a practicing psychologist and political scientist [i.e., wardheeler] for 25 years. . . ."

Then there was also Suzanne Silvercruys Stevenson, of the Norwalk VFW Auxiliary, who founded the nationwide Minute Women of America. She explained: "For instance, if someone says George Washington wasn't so good after all, or talks against our American history, then you can wonder about them."

ANOTHER KOREA?

U.S. Policy in Indo-China Drifts to War

By GORDON HASKELL

Will Indo-China become another Korea?

This now looms as an immediate, dangerous possibility. But this time the American people are being given ample warning.

They have the opportunity, before American soldiers are engaged in battle, to halt the warmongers in their tracks. The time in which to use that opportunity may be growing short.

The Eisenhower administration, following the policy-line laid down by Truman in Asia, has gotten the United States into a position from which no easy retreat is possible. It has committed this country to hold Indo-China for French imperialism at all costs.

This is part of the general policy of containing Stalinism by military means, in the absence of any political policy which can resist it. And now that it is becoming clear that the time in which France can hold on to the country, even with massive American support, is drawing to a close, the State Department must either find a new policy or it may be pushed to plunge American troops into the war.

No one should be misled by the attempts of Eisenhower and his spokesmen to deny that there is a danger of direct American military involvement. Of course, they would much prefer it if the French could bring the war to a successful conclusion on their own. They would rather not take over the fighting, since a Korean-type war in Indo-China would be (for them) another wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time.

That was true of Korea also, yet it did not prevent the government from getting in to it. There is an insane logic to the government's policy which can drag it into wars which are insane even from its

own over-all point of view. That is why a political attack on the Indo-China war policy must also be an attack on the political policy of which it could be the ultimate, tragic outcome.

DOWN THE DRAIN

For some eight years France has been struggling against a movement for national liberation in Indo-China which has fallen under the leadership and domination of the Stalinists. Despite enormous military aid from the United States and vast superiority of military equipment, the French position is today more precarious in that country than it has been at any time since the first months of the war.

They have lacked the one thing indispensable to the winning of this kind of war: the support of any significant section of the local population. All their airplanes and tanks and Foreign Legionnaires have proved helpless in the face of the stubborn, persistent hostility of the peoples of Indo-China, an hostility which has given the Vietminh the social atmosphere essential for the continuation of organized guerrilla warfare.

The war has killed off the flower of the French officer corps, drained the national treasury, and weakened France in her efforts to compete with a resurgent Western Germany in Europe. The French people have grown sick of this "dirty war" (as they call it), and want to conclude it with some kind of compromise settlement. Only the tiny stratum of French colonials in Indo-China, the powerful economic interests they represent in France, and the American government want to fight the war to "victory."

FRANCE'S ANGLE

The depth of the anxiety with which the French government and almost all strata of the French people are seeking to get out of this war is dramatized by the handling of the Big Four conference by the French press. From beginning to end, the main emphasis of most of the papers has been not on the question of German unity or

(Continued on page 3)

Big Auto Local Denounces Velde Red-Hunt in Detroit

By JACK WILSON

DETROIT, Feb. 14—The first important attempt of the United Auto Workers (CIO) to prevent the forthcoming hearings of the Velde congressional committee from creating a lynch atmosphere here, as it did two years ago, came with a public warning by the powerful Local 174 against the use of any "Gestapo methods" against fellow employees.

In a resolution, the West Side Amalgamated Local pointed out that two years ago some so-called "reds" were forcibly ejected from the plants, in the wave of hysteria whipped up by Detroit's daily papers and the committee's sensationalism.

"This kind of action is not only un-American, but it is a violation of a basic principle of union brotherhood and Christian tolerance," the union said.

What gives this resolution added significance is that it comes from a solid right-wing local, the home local of Walter P. Reuther, UAW and CIO president.

The resolution said that "local members have a constitutional right to work as long as such member has not been found guilty of a breach of the law and such penalty imposed by duly constituted authority."

The local took a heavy swipe at the committee methods: "Neither the House Un-American Activities nor any other investigating committee has the right to invest itself with judicial authority or to conduct its investigations in such a manner as to imply guilt without due process of law."

The local reaffirmed its determination to fight "against Communism through the use of democratic procedures and to defend our democratic rights and institutions against all groups who would destroy them."

STAUNCH WORDS

Harry Southwell, president of the local and a staunch right-winger, added, "It is not yet a crime to belong to any political party in America."

"When you deprive man of his livelihood because he is a member of any political group, you are depriving him of his rights under the Constitution, the very rights you are fighting to defend."

Southwell was one of the CIO leaders here who raised his voice in alarm two years ago at the results of the committee hearings here. In a moving speech before the Wayne County CIO, Southwell warned his fellow unionists at that time that the witchhunt virus would spread unless the union stopped it.

Local 174 represented 30,000 workers on the West Side, and was a Reuther stronghold in his great factional struggle against the broad left-wing caucus in the early post-war period.

Because of the illness of Congressman Kit Clardy of Michigan, who expects to capitalize on the publicity of the hearings here, the opening date of the return engagement has been postponed to March 29. More than 200 persons in Michigan are reported to have been subpoenaed by the committee.

The Sad Case of the Poor Rich:
A Discussion of Income 'Equalization'

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NMU Opposition Publishes Some Dirt

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Racist Frats on Campus: An Exchange

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NMU Opposition to Curran Publishes Some of the Dirt

By BEN HALL

Last week, we reported a split in the top leadership of the National Maritime Union and the eruption of a bitter struggle between its two sections. Neal Hanley, national secretary, and Hulbert B. Warner, vice-president, announced their intention of unseating M. Hedley Stone, NMU treasurer, in the union's coming national elections. When Joe Curran, NMU president, decided to back Stone, the fight broke out in earnest.

Some of the material published by the Hanley-Warner group is now available, five small handbills in all. Nowhere, in these little leaflets, does the group raise or discuss the issues in dispute and we are left in the dark on their interpretation of what they are fighting for. Perhaps NMU members know just what the fight is all about; but no one could discover it simply by reading these circulars.

However, from facts inadvertently cited by Curran in his slashing articles and speeches against them we get a hint of what underlies their opposition.

(1) They oppose Stone whom they accuse of being Jim-Crow.

(2) They are suspicious of and dissatisfied with the Curran leadership's handling of accusations against certain officials charged with running a lucrative membership and job-selling racket.

(3) In the Port of New York, heart of the union, lower officials are restive under a regime which they feel does not permit them freedom of action and democracy.

NO HOLDS BARRED

While the Hanley-Warner literature puts forward no specific platform, it does prove that the fight has already reached a stage where no compromise is possible within the NMU. Curran, in past years, has shown himself to be a man who will tolerate no serious criticism or powerful opposition. To compromise this struggle, outside intervention from the CIO would be necessary.

Hanley and Warner reprint affidavits of two NMU members who admittedly participated in the book-sale racket, statements which accuse leading NMU officials, including one vice-president and the New York port agent, of brain-trusting and organizing the racket. But Hanley and Warner themselves take no responsibility for these accusations; they do not make their own charges; they do not affirm their validity; they simply reprint the accusations without comment.

They do testify categorically to the beginning of a regime of repression. "We are forced to take this method of communicating with you," they write, "as the iron fist of censorship has closed in on the official means of communicating with you, including the *NMU Pilot*." Their letters to the union paper and their reports, they write, have been suppressed.

Their opposition has been broadened from a criticism of Stone to an attack on the whole Curran leadership including, by name, two vice-presidents and the New York agent, whom they lump together as "the combination." They have already opened a direct attack on Curran himself, and not in polite or evasive words.

TEST FOR CIO?

"President Curran," they write, "has set himself up as their [the combination] campaign manager." And "the president is more careless with the truth than disciples of McCarthyism."

And they seem aware of the ruthless character of the group they are combating and of what they can expect from it: "The constitution guarantees the right of every member to run for any office in this union if they are qualified; the combination state that they believe in this principle, but God help you if you run in

opposition to them. They believe in free elections, Moscow-style; that is, you shall have the right to vote, providing they are the only candidates. This group is a very powerful force as they have all the resources of the union at their disposal which they will use to beat down any opposition to them."

At its last convention, the CIO adopted a resolution on "Ethical Practices and Democratic Rights," "emphasizing the determination of the CIO and its affiliated unions to wage war on unethical practices within and without the trade-union movement and to take all necessary steps to emphasize the democratic rights of individual trade-union members." The NMU seems destined to become a test case for the application of these noble principles.

Congress Against Imperialism Mobilizes Aid to Kenya, Guiana

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Feb. 9—Last week a very successful conference was held by the Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism to discuss practical measures which could be taken to aid the struggle in Kenya and Guiana.

There were about 120 delegates and many observers from trade unions, constituency Labor Parties, cooperatives, Independent Labor Party and other interested groups.

First the Conference discussed the resolution which the British Center had prepared, for

(1) Amnesty for all arrested under the Emergency Regulations.

(2) A common electoral role in Kenya.

(3) Application of democracy to local government.

(4) Abolition of the color bar.

(5) Freeing of all unused land, including that in the European Highlands, for African cultivation, and revocation of Crown land ordinances.

(6) Schemes for developing African lands in arid areas to the fullest capacity and extension of credit facilities to African producers; abolition of restrictions on a racial basis to the growth of some crop.

(7) Assistance in developing community projects and cooperative farms on the model of the Indian experiment.

(8) Reopening of independent African schools, and scholarships to overseas universities.

(9) Removal of legal impediments to the development of independent African political organization of free trade unions and consumer and producer cooperatives.

(10) Freedom of the press, and freedom of association.

(11) A plan, like the Colombo Plan for South East Asia, for the economic development of Africa.

DEBATE

All these points were carried unanimously, except the one about the common electoral role. There was the usual difference of opinion. The people who drew up the original basis for discussion wanted equal representation for each community.

The representative of the Indian Socialist Party was strongly against this. He violently attacked the idea of a plural society, and said that the British policy in India had ended with partition of the country, with all the trouble that had brought.

Mbiyu Koinange, of the Kenya African Union, also attacked the idea of a plural society. Joseph Murumbi, of the same organization, said that they had asked for equal representation by each race as a beginning; this was a practical suggestion which was much more likely to be accepted than a common electoral role.

The delegate of the Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers agreed with the former view, saying that if we "reach for the moon, we're more likely to get the stars."

The discussion on Africa broadened to consideration of general anti-imperialist policy. Faragella was a welcome speaker as Secretary of the Egyptian National Committee.

The Way It's Done in Carolina

Union organizers, reports the *Summit County Labor News*, went to Orangeburg, North Carolina, to organize a packing plant and many local workers joined in the campaign. The employer was forbidden by law from threatening reprisals against unionists but the local Chamber of Commerce came to his aid by sending the following letter to the workers:

"Dear.....
"It has been reported to us that you are actively supporting the Union in its attempt to organize the Southland Provision Company. We would not care whether the company is Unionized or not, were it not for the fact that we are afraid that this Union activity will result in Orangeburg losing a payroll of about half a million dollars and about 175 Orangeburg citizens losing their jobs.

"Union activity has already caused Orangeburg to lose one industry this year. The merchants and citizens of Orangeburg

are requesting us to circularize, after the election, the names of those who tried to help the Union. We intend to do this.

"The merchants and citizens of Orangeburg feel that those who help run industry away from Orangeburg and who cause Orangeburg to lose the benefits of large payrolls should not be given any special privileges in the future in the way of job preference, credit, etc. For that reason, if you are not active for the Union, please notify us, so we will not do the injustice of putting your name on the blacklist."

Are you outraged? Of course. Imagine using the power over a man's job to force him to close his mind to unionism!

But the blacklist is not a curious local product of Orangeburg. It has become the policy of our national government, has been for years. Only, it is not called a blacklist; it is called a "loyalty program." It is aimed at intimidating not only union men but political dissenters.

He pointed out that in Africa there were colonies and semi-colonies. Egypt had been fighting for the rights of its people both in the anti-imperialist sphere and in the trade-union sphere. He thought more should be known in the British trade unions about the latter aspects. The resolutions which the Egyptians had passed in 1951 against the occupation in Suez showed that the Egyptians were fighting imperialism and not just British soldiers.

PRACTICAL AID

The Conference next went on to a consideration of the role of the trade unions. An excellent practical speech was made by Dick Beech, ex-Executive Committee member of the Chemical Workers Union. He said that Africa was waking up, and the British unions which had a lot of experience should help. "The white settlers there are doing the same as the bosses here did a few years ago."

Jock Haston, on behalf of the National Council of Labor Colleges, told of the machinery for helping the Africans in the education line about which Dick Beech had talked.

The NCLC had offered courses to Africans but not all of them had finished them. Not all the courses were suitable for Africans, but 47 of the most suitable had been selected and he thought that trade union branches should sponsor them. If each local branch paid for one course at \$3½ each, that would be useful. The NCLC had offered 10 free courses to Africans, and it was up to the unions to select suitable students.

Jock Haston also suggested that members of the Congress should write articles for their trade union and Labor Party journals. Everyone knew how short of copy these often were. It was, above all, necessary to get the trade unions more sympathetic to Africans.

Many other practical proposals were suggested. The trade unions should exert pressure to remove legal prohibitions against unions in colonial countries. Cooperatives could help by bringing Africans over to Soughborough College, and also sending out trained personnel to give advice in the colonies.

The public of this country could help by sending clothing and blankets to the Kikuyu in Kenya. Dr. Soper, the president of the Methodist Congress, had agreed to arrange for the collection and dispatch of what is given.

Finally, a lead could be given for the encouragement of community projects by "raising a fund to buy land, farm equipment, etc. to found a community project as a model scheme. Discussions are taking place as to the possibility of buying a farm in Kenya for development as a community project."

MURUMBI ON KENYA

Before lunch, Murumbi addressed the conference. The colonial governments did not "admit that the basis of the present trouble is economic." The people of this country were being told lies about conditions in the colonies but they were too apathetic to act. The trouble could not be stopped by getting a few African students to make a declaration. "Unless something

is done to meet African demands they will not cooperate to stop the fighting."

The main problem was the land problem. There were 7,000,000 acres in Kenya which were European-owned, but only 1,000,000 were farmed. Only 12 per cent of the food produced on the African highlands was produced by Europeans. The emphasis on land development so far had been on European development, as it had been in India before the British got out. Only an African government had any interest in developing the country for the Africans.

After lunch, L. Burnham, chairman of the People's Progressive Party of Guiana, in the presence of Prime Minister Jagan, addressed the Conference.

He thought it was significant that British Guiana and Kenya were on the same agenda. If the colonies were run according to the Charter of Human Rights this would not have happened. In the mouths of imperialists the English language had assumed a remarkable elasticity. But the English people were too apathetic, and the Guianese were beginning to be impatient with the whole of them, not just Lyttleton and Churchill. "If we want to set up a Communist state, it is our business, not H. M. Government's."

DEMANDS

John McNair, for the Independent Labor Party, said that no ideal can be destroyed by gunboats. Everyone knows that the crisis occurred in Guiana because they tried to form a union to fight against the sugar barons. India is an example of what can be done when freedom is given to a people.

A resolution was passed demanding:

(A) Restoration of the Constitution; the return of legally elected representatives to office; the withdrawal of troops and the revocation of the emergency regulations and any other measures restricting free speech, free assembly and a free press.

(B) The subsequent revision of the constitution so as to enable the people of British Guiana to enjoy full democratic rights.

Altogether it was a successful Conference.

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Another Korea? — —

(Continued from page 1)

rearmament, but on the bearing of every twist and turn of the negotiations on a possible settlement in Indo-China.

The French government recognizes that it has little to offer the Stalinists in exchange for a settlement short of accepting defeat, cutting their losses and getting out of the country. But they are convinced that this fate could be avoided, or at least postponed, if the United States were willing to make a settlement in Indo-China part of a general deal in the Far East. However, such a deal has been made extremely difficult for the State Department by its adamant refusal to recognize the Chinese Stalinist government, or even to negotiate any question with it until a settlement has been negotiated for Korea.

There are numerous indications that the Eisenhower administration would like to retreat from this impossible position and give itself some elbow-room for negotiation in the Far East. But it has helped in the creation of a political atmosphere which has enormously strengthened the position of the rock-ribbed supporters of Chiang Kai-shek and Syngman Rhee in this country.

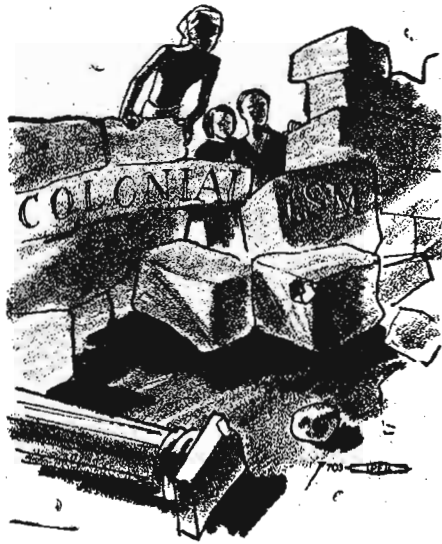
Any suggestion that it might be the course of wisdom to establish normal diplomatic relations with the existing government in China and to admit its existence by letting it into the United Nations is now regarded as "softness" toward Communism, "appeasement" or even "treason."

DILEMMAS

Would the Russian and Chinese Stalinists sell their comrades in Indo-China down the river in exchange for admission of China to the UN? Of course, there is no guarantee that they would but it is entirely possible. At any rate, that is the possibility the French would like Dulles to explore at Berlin or at a possible Far East conference.

The longer the war drags on in Indo-China, the stiffer the terms the Stalinists can demand for ending it. In the meantime, they are scoring tremendous propaganda victories both in Indo-China and in France by repeated offers to arrive at a negotiated settlement in the Asian colony.

For years now, American liberal and even conservative spokesmen have been pointing out that a real victory in Indo-China for the anti-Stalinist forces can be achieved only if the French agree to give the country complete independence



and initiate broad-scale economic reforms for the peasant masses. In the meantime, however, they have accepted the "necessity" of continuing the war with one single argument: What do you want to do there—give the country over to the Stalinists?

The years have passed, and the reforms have not been made. The fact is, of course, that as long as the French are fighting to continue the profitable exploitation of the country by French capitalists, these reforms cannot be made. In the meantime, the military and political situation has continued to deteriorate to the point at which the alternatives are considerably narrowed down.

The time is rapidly approaching when the only questions can be: Do you want to give the country to the Stalinists—or to fight another Korea which might well expand into World War III? And if the example of Korea can teach the liberals in this country anything, it should have taught them that even after three years of bloodshed, after the destruction of much of the wealth of the country, the questions remained the same.

THAT 'NEW LOOK'

The Eisenhower administration is now confronted with an additional problem. Last month they announced a new military perspective for America. Instead of stopping Stalinist expansion by local military actions, this country is to use the threat of massive military retaliation as a deterrent to Stalinist aggression. In

plain words, they have threatened to drop the atom bomb on Moscow (or some other drastic aggressive move) the moment Russia crosses the present borders of Stalinism.

But how are they to apply this strategy in Indo-China? Even without the entry of Chinese "volunteers" into the war, the Vietminh is making a continuation of the war intolerable for the French. By a minimum expenditure of arms, the Chinese can keep the pot boiling there indefinitely. If American troops are sent in to shore up the position of the sagging French, the Chinese can enter the war in the same way they did in Korea.

What is the United States to do on the basis of its present policies? Announce that unless the Vietminh withdraws, they will drop the atom bomb on Moscow or Peiping? Announce that they will send American divisions into Indo-China, but that if the Chinese do the same they will atom-bomb Russia? Who then would be the aggressor, the initiator of World War III, the irresponsible plunger of the peoples of the world into catastrophe?

How could this government hope to get any support from the European allies in a war which was started in this way? How could they even get a vote for such an announcement out of this Congress, cowed and browbeaten though it is by the McCarthys and the Formosa lobby?

FIRST FLOP

The first time the new "retaliatory" American military policy is put to the test, its essential emptiness or irresponsibility is made clear to all. It is not a policy for fighting or containing Stalinism. It is a policy which might conceivably work against an imperialist nation which had no way of expanding, except to invade its neighbors with its own troops. Actually, it is, and can only be in the present circumstances, either a policy of "preventive war" or nothing.

Within the confines of its own self-defeating policies, the roads available to this government are either to make concessions to the Stalinists or to eventually send American troops to Indo-China to shore up the French. Washington has already sent military equipment in large quantities, and now admits to some 200 troops who are functioning as "technical advisors" on how this equipment is to be used. American correspondents on the scene admit freely that American citizens have been used in the direct military airlifts which are supplying French fighting forces. This is a violation, at the very least, of the spirit of the laws which prohibit Americans from fighting for foreign countries.

The French do not want American troops in Indo-China, and they resist the idea that American officers should take over command positions in the war. But the U. S. government has made it clear to them that if they make any kind of deal with the Stalinists, they will endanger any further American military aid in Europe. Thus the ground is laid for forcing American troops on them if it finally turns out that nothing else will prevent the Vietminh from overrunning the whole country.

NO MORE!

One Korea was too much. It is up to the American people, and primarily the labor movement, to stay the hand of the irresponsibles in Washington.

Every effort must be made to dramatize the inevitable consequences of pursuing this policy to its bitter end, and to arouse the people against it.

The demand must be made that the French give every assurance of word and deed that their day in Indo-China is over. The defense of the country must be turned over to its own people, and what military aid is needed be given them only at their own freely expressed request and on their own political terms. If it turns out that it is now too late for a political defeat of Stalinism in Indo-China, French imperialism and its adamant American backers must be made to answer for it.

Any other policy brings the world closer to World War III on the most favorable possible terms for Stalinism. A continuation of this kind of policy in the rest of Asia, Africa and Latin America will simply mean that we will have one Korea or Indo-China after another all over the world. It is time to call a halt now, even though the hour is late.

Read also what the NAACP's magazine has to say about Washington and Indo-China—see page 7.

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!

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

behind the Iron Curtain (it is the same order under which the ISL has been placed on the "subversive" list) Sieminski said:

"This order as is should be wiped off the books of the United States. I think it is vicious, totalitarian, un-American. It shoots from the hip, puts a man out of government service, classifies him disloyal for nothing over which he has control, puts others in judgment of his heart, conscience and oath. That's un-American."

Sieminski went on to say that "if anybody says that because I had a step-daughter behind the Iron Curtain I was a disloyal congressman, that I was a traitor, I challenge him to make that

charge and expect to get out of this room alive."

Easy, brother Sieminski, easy there. If you are as jealous of the reputation of your fellow citizens as you are of your own, you had better get your shootin' irons good and ready. You will have a lot of killing on your hands.

As we don't go for that kind of thing ourselves, we would like to suggest a slightly less impetuous course, but one which is available to Sieminski as a congressman. How about just refusing to vote any appropriations for congressional committees and government agencies till they stop making unsupported "disloyalty" charges against defenseless citizens, and firing others on even flimsier "security" charges than you feel might be made against you?

ONE GAIN

A federal Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the army must either give his commission to a dentist accused of past Communist affiliations, or discharge him from the service.

Dr. Herbert L. Nelson of Marysville, Wash., had instituted a legal action demanding that either the army end his status as a private or discharge him. The court ruled that the doctors' draft law, under which Nelson was inducted, carried the condition that a person with his qualifications be granted the pay and commission of an officer. It ruled that the army was within its rights in refusing Nelson a commission, but it was wrong in making him serve as an enlisted man.

Was Dr. Nelson refused his commission on "security" grounds? Perhaps it was feared he might get into possession of secret messages concealed in the fillings of G-2 men.

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That Myth About Pijade

By HAL DRAPER

Supplementing the three quite long articles of the past three issues in which we have presented the main body of material on the Djilas case and the crisis of the Titoist regime, there is some additional material which we feel will be of enough interest to LABOR ACTION readers to justify a few column features like this one. Among these will be some details on the Titoist Central Committee plenum which purged the pro-democratic heretic and some on the aftermath of the affair.

We first want to put the spotlight on Mosa Pijade and his role in all this.

Why special attention to Mosa Pijade, and who is he?

Pijade has been, right along, just a rung below the Big Four of the regime (Tito, Kardelj, Djilas, Rankovic), and incidentally he has now been publicly moved up to No. 4. He has had the reputation of being perhaps the most serious "theoretician" of the leadership, though we must add (without any implication) that we do not know what, if anything, this reputation is based on, outside of the fact that he translated Marx's *Capital* into Serbo-Croat in his prison days.

In any case, that is not the important thing about Pijade. What is of more interest is another reputation of his: that of being one of the leaders of the regime who was most sincerely and actively pushing for greater and greater democratization.

Right after the bare news broke of the Djilas crackdown, there were immediately accompanying reports that Pijade was at Djilas's side. This was only momentary (it got into the N. Y. *Times's* columns too, as well as in the European press), but since there was not the slightest basis for this report at any time, it can be explained only on the basis of Pijade's reputation as a "pro-democrat" in the regime, nothing else whatsoever.

THE DEMOCRAT

What is this reputation itself based on? This we know very well.

It was Pijade more than any one else in the hierarchy (perhaps because of his command of languages) who took visiting European and American socialists, come to "see for themselves" the "truth about Yugoslavia," into his parlor to convince them that while Titoland is still far from having a "perfect" democracy, it was on the road to genuine socialist democracy and that any existing blemishes were only temporary, etc.

Since 1948 we ourselves have, on at least three occasions, been assaulted by such returned socialist visitors who assured us that, after their conversations in Belgrade, above all with Pijade, they could not possibly have any doubt about the democratic bona fides of the Titoist leadership. It would be difficult to number the similar cases we read about, especially in the European press. They were there—they heard him with their own ears—they were not so naive as not to be able to distinguish good coin from false—one must not be ultimistic, give them a chance, etc. These friends gave their assurances that Pijade, at least, really "agreed with our ideas"—oh, not for the day after tomorrow, of course, but just as fast as practical men could manage. (By the way, Djilas's name never figured in such "inside" dope!)

You see why we have a special interest in Pijade. Well—

At the CC plenum which jumped on Djilas, it was Mosa Pijade who made the most vicious and most typically Stalinist-hack attack on Djilas.

AGAINST DISCUSSION

Nor was this (as one might perhaps have a right to suspect in the absence of other knowledge) in compensation for previous pro-Djilas deviations, say, to cover himself. As we have indeed already partly indicated, in the period just before Djilas's disgrace, when many if not most of the top men were expressing sympathy for Djilas's articles at least in the belief that they had been cleared with the Boss—Pijade was fighting the Djilas-Dedijer tendency and working with Kardelj to mobilize Tito for the crackdown.

Going by the transcript of his remarks at the CC which was publicly released, the first point Pijade made was an attack on the very idea that the plenum should discuss his ideas with Djilas; it was a disciplinary trial, that's all.

Djilas's views and his behavior, said Pijade, are two different things, and "These two things have to be judged and not to be discussed with him. . . . This is the discussion of the plenum on the case of Djilas and not a discussion with Djilas."

He elaborated this attitude. Tito had opened the discussion with a speech and then Djilas had asked the plenum for the floor to present an initial statement; but

Pijade declared that it was a mistake to give Djilas the floor for this statement!

Pijade also added: "We came here to pass judgment on Djilas. However, he came as a debater who wants to give 'direction' to the discussion."

Thus spoke the great pro-democrat. More than that, he proceeded to explain why it was a good thing that none of the leaders had replied to Djilas before organizationally cracking down on him. Listen to this:

" . . . it was a good thing that we did not reply to him. When it was suggested that Kardelj should write an article as a free individual, I spoke up against it. And why? Djilas wrote his articles as a free individual who divorced himself from everything and felt free of any restrictions. Should Kardelj have taken him up as an individual? Would this not have meant that Djilas would have achieved what he wanted, that is, the splitting up of the highest leadership who privately discuss things among themselves, outside the party fold? It was likewise impossible for Kardelj to write articles in the name of the Executive Committee, because all this would have meant a split in the leadership and the realization of Djilas's idea about the transformation of the Communist League into a debating society. Therefore the procedure which we adopted was correct."

That is, first hit him over the head and then explain why he is an enemy of socialism.

This, and not the more hesitant condemnations of some of the minor CC members, was the authentic voice of the Tito leadership at the plenum.

VILIFICATION

Pijade was also outstanding in emphasizing personal defamation. He denounced Djilas for his "enormous conceit." Why conceit? Here's the tone: ". . . he [Djilas] says that Yugoslavia is in the center of world affairs and that the whole world was breathlessly following the struggle of ideas in Yugoslavia. And in the center of all this there is Djilas, the man who has a new idea, a Djilasite idea, to use his own words. And he is not only Djilas but the first Djilasite also. This enormous conceit . . ." etc.

"Political pornography" is the phrase that Pijade slings against Djilas's article in *Nova Misao*.

One of the few political remarks that is recorded from his lips is simply an accusation: Djilas is for "a multi-party or at least a two-party system." That's his crime. "This is sheer bourgeois anarchism"—behold, the theoretician—"which exists in sufficient degree in the coffee houses of Zagreb and Belgrade but does not exist in the Communist League and the working class."

Then comes the kind of passage that could come only from a blown-in-the-bottle Stalinist hack. We have seen that it was Pijade who mostly crudely insisted that the sole task of the plenum was to "judge" Djilas. Tito himself has said in so many words that "The question before us is only whether he [Djilas] is aware or not" of the anti-revolutionary nature of his ideas. Tito, expressing his hope that Djilas would see the error of his ways, was of course asking for a recantation.

Well, in his initial statement at the plenum, Djilas did not really recant as yet (that came in his concluding statement). But it was even before this real recantation that Pijade already anticipated with:

"Djilas has promised to carry out all orders or everything else that is decided upon. Comrades, this is a Stalinist-type of recantation, and in the case of Djilas it is hypocritical and insincere. . . ."

Here is the authentic Stalinist touch. The inquisitor, squeezing the squirming victim on the rack to make him recant, denounces the "Stalinist-type recantation" in advance. . . .

We are looking forward to the next socialist tourist who is going to reveal—"just between you and me"—that Pijade "really agrees with many of our ideas" about socialist democracy.

YOU and SCIENCE**A PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

By CARL DARTON

In a previous column of "scientific" management (Jan. 25) we described the newer "Mental Hygiene" methods used by industry. Considerably older is the sociological study technique. This approach adopts the viewpoint that the factory is a social unit, that factory workers are human beings (!) and that their activities can be studied in a clinical and empirical manner with proven sociological methods. Hence the rise of "Industrial Sociology" and the "Human Relations" movement in industry.

Pioneers in industrial sociology have been Dr. Elton Mayo and his followers at the Industrial Research Department at Harvard University. An early and "classical" study was made at the Western Electric Company Hawthorne plant near Chicago in the early 1930s.

Following is a description of the methods used, from Mayo's book *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, Harvard University Press, 1945.

GUINEA-PIG SETUP

The procedure was to set up an isolated "test room" where a unit production assembly operation was subjected to detailed careful observation including the obvious engineering and industrial devices. We quote from Mayo:

"Their [the researchers'] observation therefore included not only records of industrial and engineering changes but also records of physiological or medical changes, and, in a sense, of social and anthropological. This last took the form of a 'log' that gave as full an account as possible of the actual events of every day, a record that proved most useful to Whitehead when he was remeasuring the recording tapes and recalculating the changes in productive output. He was able to relate eccentricities of the output curve to the actual situation at a given time—that is to say, to the events of a specific day or week.

"The facts are by now well known. Briefly restated, the test room began its inquiry by, first, attempting to secure the active collaboration of the workers. This took some time but was gradually successful, especially after the retirement of the original first and second workers and after the new worker at the second bench had assumed informal leadership of the group. From this point on, the evidence . . . seems to show that the individual workers became a team, wholeheartedly committed to the project. Second, the conditions of work were changed one at a time: rest periods of different numbers and length, shorter working day, shorter working week, food with soup or coffee in the morning break. And the results seemed satisfactory: slowly at first, but later with increasing certainty, the output record (used as an index of well-being) mounted."

SOFT APPROACH

The researchers found that by readjusting conditions and correlating with output the most efficient environment conditions were established. Thus from such experiments the "Human Relations" administrators found that output and profits increased when working teams were organized and the workers were given the illu-

sion that their well-being—always measured by the output records, of course—was being taken care of.

The second phase of the Hawthorne experiments described above was the plant-wide interviewing technique where the workers were given the opportunity to talk freely (?) about their personal problems and adjustments to the work routine. Gradually each worker was guided to give his best performance—the criteria still being improved work output.

This Western Electric experiment was followed by others along the same lines, all directed toward the end of increasing efficiency but all sold with sugar-coated "human relations" verbiage. The titles of the books and papers published by the sociological researchers are suggestive of the approach: "The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization"; "Maladjustment of the Industrial Workers"; "Social Relations in the Factory"; "Adjusting Men to Machines"; "The Changing Culture of a Factory."

Industry owners previous to the past two decades were reluctant to utilize the non-physical sciences to solve their problems. Now they seem to pay off and they fit into the "soft" approach of the times.

There is not much question that the rise of industrial sociology has been due to the peculiar technological and labor conditions of the past twenty years. Ever alert to reduce costs, industry found that the classical method of introducing new machinery was expensive. More efficient utilization of labor by the "human" approach was less costly. Likewise, the other classical means of reducing costs by wage-cutting was impossible due to the general labor scarcity and the growth of the unions. Most industrial owners now concede that they must "learn to live with the unions"—hence the soft approach of the human-relations concept. Large companies found such a program fitted in well with their general promotion of improved public relations.

ITS ECONOMIC BASIS

In selling the "human relations" program to the worker and the public, industry has been aided by the popularization of Freud and the spread of psychological and psychoanalytical techniques. The owners, seeking to promote harmony and cooperation, endeavor to sell their position that most problems are not matters of fundamental issues but rather a misunderstanding of different points of view.

The bosses seek to capitalize on the growth of semantics and the vulgarization of its principles, on the notion that the easy solution of all disputes is "learning to speak each other's language," after which differences merely melt away. (It is always the bosses' viewpoint which should be accepted, however.)

Likewise, advertising has been so successful in American business that industry feels that workers can be sold on harmonious labor relations through the techniques which have developed out of industrial sociology.

Naturally this pseudo-scientific approach to economic problems can last only so long as the "soft" approach itself can last—that is, only so long as class antagonisms are muted by the spell of war prosperity; only so long as the U. S. is relatively the aristocrat of the world.

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A NEW MAGAZINE Presents Itself to the Socialist Public

By H. D.

There is, as everyone knows, plenty of room in this country for a non-party (organizationally unattached) magazine for the exploration of socialist ideas and theory. Indeed, back in 1937 such a magazine was established, the *Marxist Quarterly*, with a very competent roster of editors, overlapping and extending beyond then-existing organizational boundaries—inclusive of Socialist Party, Trotskyist, Lovestoneite and independent writers. This project unfortunately expired after three issues, and later attempts to re-establish something like it on a similar basis came to nothing. And this was a pity. Politically the establishment of the *Marxist Quarterly* represented progress on the left, in a period when the American socialist movement was not yet permeated by moods of despair and pessimism but rather buoyed up by aggressive self-confidence in the power of Marxist ideas, undogmatically conceived.

A new magazine *Dissent* presents itself with primarily the same aim—new socialist thought; and its contrast with the old *Marxist Quarterly* is symptomatic of the times we live in.

The guiding spirit and active director of the new magazine, Irving Howe, together with his co-thinkers and the people he has assembled on the editorial board (Coser, Schapiro, Clement, Orleans, Plastrik), cannot be accused of aiming at a mere lively journalistic review—above all, not at a lively one; they doubtless wish to offer serious and "solid" socialist thinking with an intellectual appeal on a high level. Since the *Dissent* group started advertising its existence nearly a year ago, its appearance has even been awaited with anticipation in some quarters as the answer to the indisputable need for socialist reevaluation and rethinking of new problems in a changed world.

This first issue (a first issue is usually not the worst that a publishing group can manage to do) has a "solid" article in it, a competent survey of the East German workers' rising of June 17 by H. Brand; it has an article by Howe on "Stevenson and the Intellectuals"; a piece by C. Wright Mills which attempts to explain why no conservative ideology has been developed in this country; an article by Lewis Coser arguing that "Government by Secrecy" is bad and that government should keep the people well-informed; mainly personal recollections of George Orwell by the anarchist writer George Woodcock; an article which writes around the problem of the nature of the British Labor government by S. Plastrik; and a book review of Galbraith's *American Capitalism*. These are the featured contents, supplemented by two letters of Rosa Luxemburg and some shorts.

THE DRIFT

What perhaps stands out is the relatively light-weight character of this first offering, especially in view of the aim which alone could justify the magazine's existence and viability. As for the many vital problems of socialist thought in our day which cry out to be grappled with by a serious publication, none is seriously attempted.

For example, Howe's piece on Stevenson has some sagacious psychological insights into the intellectuals' reaction to Stevenson's political personality; but strangely, it specifically counsels against grappling with the significant political problem which the socialist movement faces in connection with the subject of his article: the relation between the labor movement and support to Stevenson and his Fair-Deal-on-the-half-shell. It is only in passing that Howe casually mentions that he is now of the opinion that socialists should have supported Stevenson. This "with considerable hesitation," but "in the absence of any significant socialist movement, it is a problem of tenth-rate importance, almost a matter of personal choice." What is of major importance is "the general attitude one takes toward the dominant political drift of American society, whether one floats along or tries to maintain a sharp fundamental criticism."

In this by-the-way manner Howe discloses that he is in favor of "floating along" with the pro-Stevensonites—with criticism—but that it is not important enough to discuss in his opinion. The manner is as intellectually responsible as the way in which he had announced his

break with the Third Camp anti-war position.

What is strange is not this further step in Howe's political retrogression but the cavalier attitude toward precisely that which such a magazine as his must take seriously if it is to have any meaning: the problems of socialist analysis and policy.

But of course the most vital problem of socialist policy today concerns the war question, the battle for the world between the two imperialist camps. *Dissent* (that is, this introductory issue) does not deal with it.

On the theoretical plane the most basic problem for socialist reevaluation is the meaning for socialists of the Stalinist phenomenon and the related question of socialism and democracy. It is not treated. There is many another problem which might have been an interim substitute for the above, but the long and short of it is that a good many expectant people have a right to be sadly disappointed. Of course, it is to be seen whether the *Dissent* group has what it takes to offer any significant contributions to socialist thinking in any subsequent number.

AN ESTIMATE

However, this raises some questions about the political character and direction of the active directors of the magazine, since at bottom this conditions what they can reasonably be expected to produce. It is here that the contrast with the old *Marxist Quarterly* is most striking.

In a programmatic declaration, the editors declare that "*Dissent* would be meaningless if in dissenting it did not also affirm"—an indisputable statement; and so, affirming its "belief in socialism," it presents its understanding of "socialism" in terms which are presumably meaningful:

"Not the 'socialism' of any splinter or faction or party, but rather the ethos and faith in humanity that for more than 100 years have made men 'socialists.' We share a belief in the dignity of the individual, we share a refusal to countenance one man's gain at the expense of his brother, and we share an intellectual conviction that man can substantially control his condition if he understands it and wills to."

We cannot be so unfair to the editors as to assume that they intended this simply for soap-box agitation; and so it is necessary to note, with as little astonishment as feasible, that here "socialism" is reduced to liberalism at best; to the liberal mood at something less than the best; and to nothing much at all, if one insists on being rigorous. In view of this reduction, it would be superfluous to raise any question about the orientation of the *Dissent* group with regard to the working-class character of socialism.

In all candor, this reviewer freely admits to being "prejudiced" with regard to what is to be expected from the *Dissent* group, "prejudiced," that is, by an opinion about the political direction, the political dynamics, of its active spirits, led by Howe.

This happens to be precisely the reverse of the political dynamics of (to hark back) the old *Marxist Quarterly*, which also was a non-party enterprise. *Dissent* is primarily the child of a group of "ex-es" who are in the process of sliding back from socialism to liberalism, and not the outcome of a forward movement to capture a new terrain for socialist ideas.

We are "prejudiced" not merely by the fact that Howe launched his magazine in the train of a break with the Independent Socialist League, but rather by the fact that both (his break and his magazine) are the outcome of his announced conviction that those who sympathize with his "ethos" must likewise abandon any organized socialist movement, which is to be replaced by such a center for thinkers as his magazine seeks to make itself. The sad fact is that they look to *Dissent* as a substitute for organized socialism, in these days when more than one disheartened ex-radical looks for reasons to desert the organized fight for socialism and retire into less wearing contemplation of an often dismaying world.

As a temporary halfway-house for backsliders from the struggle, its concomitant political devolution away from socialism may be rapid or slow, but such is its political reason for being. It would be a good thing if this estimate were proved wrong, but that is the way it looks.

BOOKS and Ideas Warburg: Germany, Key to Peace

A Liberal on U.S. German Policy: The Intentions Are of the Best

GERMANY, KEY TO PEACE, by James P. Warburg. — Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953, 331 pages, \$4.75.

By GORDON HASKELL

James P. Warburg, the well-known banker—"internationalist," has attempted in this book to make a liberal critique of American foreign policy, particularly as it relates to Germany and Western Europe, since the last war. Conscientious and plodding, *Germany, Key to Peace* could well serve as the handbook for those people who believe that the cold war can be settled by negotiation between the United States and Russia, and that the failure of American policy can be explained on the basis of a series of errors on the part of American policymakers rather than by the fundamental inability of a capitalist America to offer the peoples of the world a really progressive alternative to Stalinism.

Like other liberal critics of American foreign policy since World War II, Warburg is quite aware of the fact that unless the world is to be plunged into another war, Stalinism must be defeated politically. He is an ardent advocate of an expanded Point Four program and other means of economic aid to the rest of the world. He also recognizes the internal political difficulties in getting such a program adopted on a sufficiently large scale to achieve his purposes.

But like his liberal co-thinkers, he is

DAVIDSON APPEALS IN C.O. CASE

The case of conscientious objector Vern Davidson is being appealed to a higher court, and his sentence, which was to have begun December 28, has been postponed.

Davidson, a leading militant of the Socialist Party on the West Coast, faces three years in prison as a draft-act violator as the result of a court's denial of C.O. status to him.

One of the special interests of the case is the fact that Davidson was convicted because he does not believe in a "Supreme Being," since Section 6-J of the draft act provides C.O. exemption only for religious objectors. On this point a statement issued by Davidson said in part:

"I am going to prison because I do not believe in God. . . . The question we bring before the Court of Appeals is this: *Is it not a violation of the Constitution to hold that a man must believe in a Supreme Being before achieving the status of a conscientious objector under a law of the U. S. Congress?*"

The Davidson Defense Committee is appealing for funds to bring the case up through the higher courts. It needs \$1000 for the present appeal process. Its secretary is David McReynolds, 132½ Ashland Avenue, Ocean Park, Calif.; East Coast efforts are being coordinated by Rina Garat, 23 West 93 Street, New York City.

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forced to believe that these difficulties can be overcome by enlightening the business and political leaders of the country, rather than by organizing a social force capable of removing them from power.

Of course, many of his individual criticisms are valid either within the narrow framework in which he operates, or on the basis of a much broader one.

For instance, he points out that once Truman's "containment" policy had been adopted, it was necessary to create an army in Europe which could carry it out. This meant that eventually Germany had to be rearmed. But once Germany was given to understand that her rearmament is vital to American policy, her ruling class was put in a position from which it could drive a hard bargain.

Once that was done, the European Defense Community had to be planned to satisfy the fears of France. This, in turn, made the reunification of Germany impossible, as the Russians could not be expected to give up their part of the country without demanding the abandonment of EDC, and America could not give up EDC without scuttling its whole military policy in Europe, etc., etc.

A SLIP

All of that is true, but what does Warburg propose in its place? First, the economic measures indicated above. Second, a policy of exploiting the national cleavages between Russia and her allies and satellites (not by cloak-and-dagger "subversion" but through reasonable proposals to solve their problems). Third, an initiative for world disarmament.

Warburg's fourth proposal is the only one adopted by the American government to date: that this country's military strategy be based on powerful, mobile forces of retaliation rather than on static defenses. Or as he puts it: "If . . . the hostile forces are uncommitted and so disposed that, in the event of Soviet aggression anywhere, they could strike in a number of unpredictable directions—not necessarily at the point of Soviet attack—then the Kremlin may reasonably be expected to hesitate before launching a major war with an attack upon even the most invitingly undefended frontier."

Now that this policy has become official, it is doubtful that Warburg can draw much comfort from it. It is the most dangerous policy this country could have adopted. Although we are all subject to psychological slips, Warburg commits an amazing one right after he describes this policy:

"The military policy here recommended would—be it clearly understood—promise no nation immunity from invasion in the event of war. It would promise all nations the maximum assurance that a major conflict will take place." (P. 324, my italics—G. H.)

From the whole context of the book, it is clear that Warburg goes for the "retaliation" policy because he feels that it is the only one by which Germany can be kept from playing a major role in America's military plans. His alternatives are pretty well limited by his approach on the whole problem. That they are so unpalatable is an indictment of that approach rather than of his intentions.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Received from New American Library, publishers of Mentor and Signet pocket books:

Published Jan. 30—*Gandhi, His Life and Message for the World*, by Louis Fischer, Signet Key Book, 25¢. *How to Make a Success of Your Marriage*, by Eustace Chesser, Signet Key Book, 25¢.

Published Feb. 24—*The U. S. Political System and How It Works*, by D. C. Coyle, Signet Key Book, 25¢. *The Bhagavad-Gita*, trans. by Swami Prabhavananda & Christopher Isherwood, Mentor, 35¢. *Coming of Age in Samoa* (reissued), by Margaret Mead, Mentor, 35¢. *The Skin*, by Curzio Malaparte, Signet Giant, 35¢. *The Curve and the Tusk*, by Stuart Cloete, Signet Giant, 35¢. *Confessors of the Name*, by Gladys Schmitt, Signet Double, 50¢. *The Waiters*, by William Fisher, Signet, 25¢. *The Big Dry*, by George Garland, Signet, 25¢. *The Tattooed Heart*, by Theodore Keogh, Signet, 25¢. *Those Devils in Baggy Pants* (reissued), by Ross S. Carter, Signet, 25¢. *Death Before Bedtime*, by Edgar Box, Signet, 25¢.

THE SAD CASE OF THE POOR RICH

A Discussion: The Social Meaning of Income 'Equalization'

SHARES OF UPPER INCOME GROUPS IN INCOME AND SAVINGS, by Simon Kuznets.—National Bureau of Economic Research, N. Y., 1953, \$9.00.

By DAVID BROWNSON

Most of our readers probably have come across the theory of pauperization, the *Verelendungstheorie*, and certainly everybody has seen its refutation. It has been the habit of bourgeois economists to refute Marx's supposed "theory of pauperization" of the proletariat by pointing out that real wages have been rising over the past century.

In equally demagogic fashion they have now come up with a theory of pauperization of their own. This time it is for the bourgeoisie that they claim the sad lot of impoverishment, and it is the socialists who reply: "Now, now, it can't be that bad!"

A chorus of voices chanting about a "social revolution" in income distribution recently accompanied the publication of S. Kuznets' book on *Shares of Upper Income Groups in Income and Savings*. Here, for example, is how Will Lissner introduced his review of Kuznets' book in the *N. Y. Times* of May 4, 1953:

"Since [the depression of 1929-32], the well-to-do and the rich have become the economy's 'forgotten men.' While the mass of the population has enjoyed the greatest advance in income and levels of living in history, the upper income groups . . . have suffered a striking and continuing decline, particularly since 1939, in their shares of a growing national output and in their total purchasing power."

Such remarks are propaganda embroideries on the bare results of Kuznets' study. Here we shall be concerned only with the study itself. First, we must examine—as did T. N. Vance in the *New Internationalist* of May-June 1953—whether Kuznets' results can be considered valid. But it is important to go beyond the scientific terrain chosen by the author and point out, in addition, the limitations of his study in the light of Marxist theory.

For propaganda purposes it is advantageous for Kuznets to blur the difference between absolute income levels and the shares of certain income categories in the global national income. Kuznets discusses only the relative shares of the national income, and does not consider what these shares represent in terms of the standard of living [or real income].

The Lion's Share

The income categories whose shares are being determined are of a particular kind. Kuznets arranged the population into a scale from the wealthy down to the poor, sliced off the top 5 per cent of the population, i.e., the wealthiest, and studied—not whether they get poorer or richer, but whether they get an increasing or diminishing part of the cake. Since the cake was growing over the period studied (1919-1946, sometimes 1917-1948), a dwindling share of the national income may have represented the same, a bigger, or an only slightly smaller chunk, in absolute terms.*

The most striking result of Kuznets' study is the supposed drastic decline of the top income-group shares since 1939. Between the two wars, the top 5 per cent of the population managed to keep their share nearly stable, this share being on the average 25-30 per cent of the total national income, truly the lion's share. Between 1939 and 1947-48 their share dropped to 18 per cent, a drop of more than a quarter. It should be noted that this figure concerns incomes per capita before taxes. The decline of the disposable income, after taxes, was still steeper because of the mounting tax rates during the last 15 years.

The 5 per cent with the highest incomes were not hit equally hard by this decline, if we want to speak in terms of "being hit." Between the two wars, the top 1 per cent got the lion's share of the lion's share: 15 per cent of the national income; and they bore the brunt of the decline: from 15 per cent to 8.5 per cent in 1947-48, a drop of almost one half.

Kuznets points out that the richest 5 per cent saw their share diminish mainly because the unemployed of the thirties found jobs and the poor became less poor. The lower 95 per cent of the population did not improve their lot at the expense of the upper 5 per cent. Their income increment comes from the increment of the national income.

*Will Lissner tried to show that the rich are now worse off than they were in 1913, using this argument: the richest 1 per cent of the population had their money income doubled by 1946; consumer prices rose more than twice, namely two-and-a-half times; therefore, the wealthiest became poorer, even in absolute terms. That may be so, but it is not proved by such a comparison. Lissner would have to construct a special price index for the goods bought by the wealthy—not simply to take the average consumer price index—and then examine the results. Also, even in the framework of Lissner's argument, there would be an absolute decline only in the incomes of the top 1 per cent, not of the whole 5 per cent.

This amounts to saying that, to a large extent, the decline of the upper income shares is a corollary of economic prosperity. Kuznets found that always, during the periods of expansion, the shares of upper incomes diminish, and, conversely, during contractions, the shares of upper incomes rise.

What is being considered exceptional is the rate by which the top income shares declined after 1939. There is no parallel decline in past periods of cyclical prosperity, indeed. But isn't this last period of prosperity without equal, too? In any case, it is apparently not possible to have prosperity and at the same time give the upper income classes a constant share of the national income.

Suspicious Statistics

The criticism of Kuznets' study made by T. N. Vance centers mostly around the suspicion that it "ain't necessarily so"—the decline in upper income shares, or at least its degree, may be a fiction.

First—are the tax returns (on which the estimates of top income shares are based) such a reliable source? Vance doubts it. He reasons: The decline in shares coincides with the rise in tax rates, and the rise in tax rates represents the strongest motive for under-reporting incomes. It is of general knowledge what miracles can be performed by the chemistry of tax advisors and of accountants. Personal expenditures become business expenses, income becomes capital gain—who in his right senses would rely on tax returns as a source?

Kuznets replies: "We haven't got anything else! Besides, we can estimate the errors due to under-reporting and make corrections." Kuznets made a number of such corrections but Vance remains unconvinced, since, according to him, "the majority (of factors) . . . are beyond statistical analysis."

Vance's own investigations into the matter lead him to the conclusion that the top incomes reported in the tax returns are probably only two thirds to four fifths of what they are in reality.

Besides, Kuznets himself was sufficiently conscious of some downward bias, since he wrote: "This discussion of the reliability of our estimates must necessarily be incomplete and inconclusive." (P. 435.) But he undertook the study nevertheless. We have to conclude that on the whole he considers his results correct. It is a question of confidence. . . . Along with Vance, we prefer to stick to our suspicions.

Second—there may be an error due to inaccuracies in the national income estimates. Kuznets arrives at his figures for the top incomes, on the one hand, and of total national income, on the other, by independent calculations. Thus, if he should overestimate national income, his ratio for the upper income share would be too low.

Kuznets uses his own estimates for the national income figures, and his method definitely overstates them. By how much—we cannot say.

In sum, a certain downward bias in Kuznets' estimate of the highest incomes is more than likely, and the decline of the upper income shares is not as serious as Kuznets' results suggest. Vance is certainly right in stressing this point.

On the other hand, the downward bias due to under-reporting of incomes is hardly so great as to reverse the results. There always was a decline in upper income shares during past periods of prosperity when the tax burden still was light enough not to be a serious incentive for under-reporting of high incomes; therefore, we have less reason to distrust those past periodic income share declines. The forces which made for a decline then have not disappeared. Some decline is to be expected. Whether the decline will be confirmed as a long-run trend remains to be seen.

Breaking It Down

Within the limits set by the aims of Kuznets' study the book is on the whole a success. But considering the tremendous amount of work that went into it, its results seem rather meager to us. The reason for this disappointment is to be found in Kuznets' basic scientific assumptions. To a Marxist his economic categories are seldom meaningful.

Not that the Marxist is indifferent to a study of income distribution according to size, and size only. But he would also like to break such data down according to his own categories. It is surplus value and variable capital, but especially surplus value, that are mostly being talked about, but practically never reconstructed in numerical terms. Kuznets' inquiry is of some help here, as we shall see, but not too much. He ignores the structural, qualitative differences between different incomes, and that would be essential for any reconstruction of how the surplus value is distributed, how large it is, how it varies with time.

We come across the same trouble in the estimates of the global national income. Productive and unproductive incomes, incomes derived from the surplus value and from the variable capital, are simply "homogenized" into a purely quantitative scale and differentiated only according to the legal title. Where the legal title corresponds more or less to an economic category our purpose is served. This is the case for dividends, rent, interest and entrepreneurial income. But you would vainly try to extract some economically meaningful categories out of the "employee compensation" that lumps together the most disparate elements: managerial salaries, workers' wages, wages earned in production as opposed to those earned by services, salaries of governmental employees, etc.

We would like to know what part of the surplus value is being transformed into income under the legal title of "employee compensation." For socialist theory, this is a burning issue.

We know from elsewhere that this is what is happening to an increasing extent with the passage of capitalism from its "private" and "individualistic" form to subsequent stages. Such a study as Kuznets' contributes more to obscuring this point than to clarifying it.

The irritating category of "employee compensation" puts antagonistic economic categories (portions of surplus value, and wages corresponding to variable capital) into the same basket. (In a way, this is a preparatory step to what "bureaucratic capitalism" of the Stalinist variety has done, namely combining all surplus value and variable capital under the title of "employee compensation," and thus assimilating the worker to his exploiters.)

Throughout most of Kuznets' study one is forced to think only in terms of "rich" and "poor." This contrast, important as it is, is nevertheless secondary for the system of capitalism. For a functional analysis of capitalism we need, first, a break-down of the national income into "productive" and "unproductive" parts (in the Marxist sense); secondly, a break-down of the "productive" sector into capitalist and non-capitalist; and finally, the differentiation of the incomes of the capitalist sector according to whether they can be related to the surplus value or to the variable capital.

Of course, Kuznets wanted to make a contribution "toward an understanding and appraisal of economic processes" (Introduction, p. xxvii)—in the limits of the present days' academic economic doctrine. This is why he devotes a chapter to the savings and consumption ratios and their changes, in the upper income classes. The reviewer in the *Journal of Political Economy* (December 1953), J. B. D. Derksen, thinks that "the results could very well be used to refine our knowledge of the consumption function by distinguishing between higher and lower income groups." This is true, but how much understanding of economic processes can one derive from ever so refined a knowledge of concepts as limited as the "consumption function"?

The Share of Shareholders

Translated into Marxist terms, Kuznets' top 5 per cent of the population represent some of the immediate surplus value as secondary recipients, that is to say, those who render services to the immediate recipients (e.g., tax advisors to the big shareholders). These secondary recipients partly render services to wage earners, too; therefore not all the top incomes come under the heading of surplus value. A fraction of the top incomes represents transfers from incomes originating in the process of production as wages corresponding to the variable capital.

We would need much finer analytical tools than those used by Kuznets if we wanted to approximate what part of the surplus value accrues to the top 5 per cent of the population and how much surplus value goes to the 95 per cent of lower income groups. From the material at hand, we can only surmise that a certain part of the surplus value is contained in the incomes of the top 5 per cent of the population—and whatever broad changes there are in the distribution of the surplus value will probably be reflected in the changes inside this top 5 per cent group, too.

Here, Kuznets' data furnish us at least with useful indications. The share of the top 5 per cent of the population is examined from the point of view of the source of income: what percentage of that share are dividends; what entrepreneurial income, what employee compensation, rent and interest. Over the period 1917-1948 there are two main tendencies:

(1) The percentage of entrepreneurial incomes (non-corporate profits distributed) rises and so does that of the employee compensations, though less.

(2) The percentage of dividends, interest and rents declines. These property incomes are being definitely pushed back by salaries and profits.

From what we know about the conflict of interests between salaried managerial personnel and the shareholders, the fading away of the dividends' share is not in the least surprising. To quote the classic on the subject: "The whole effect of the growth of powers of directors and control has been steadily to diminish the number of things on which a shareholder can count; the number of demands which he can make with any assurance that they must be satisfied." (Berle and Means: *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, p. 277.) Keynes wrote bluntly about the "euthanasia of the rentier," and the decline of the share of dividends, interest and rent in the shares of top incomes, as shown by Kuznets, is an illustration of this point.

Why did the non-corporate profits, too, improve their relative position among the top incomes? Partly, thanks to inflation. Inflation traditionally favors business profits, and it hurts fixed incomes, like those derived from property. In addition, without going to further sources, the safe guess is that during the war and post-war prosperity many more individual enterprises found *Lebensraum* beside the large corporations than earlier.

Social Meaning

To conclude, let us accept the main results of Kuznets' investigation at their face value—and let us imagine that the trend will continue: the shares of the upper income classes in the national income will grow

(Continued on page 7)

NAACP MAGAZINE DENOUNCES

U.S. 'Counter-Revolutionary' Role in Asia

Following are some excerpts from a vigorous article in the current issue (February 1954) of the *Crisis*, the magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, on the role of imperialism in Indo-China. It is especially noteworthy for its outspoken attack on the role of Washington in the Indo-Chinese "dirty war." The author was also the accredited correspondent of the *Crisis* in Korea and recently returned from a 28-month tour of Asia and Europe.—Ed.

By WILLIAM WORTHY Jr.

Nowhere can the reader get a better two-sentence summary of the war's color significance than in the following blunt paragraph from a Bermuda Conference dispatch in the *New York Times* of December 9, 1953:

"The war in Indo-China has cost France the equivalent of more than \$7,000,000,000—surpassing the dollar aid received since World War II from the United States. A continued French struggle there will help to insure United States and British support in Europe and in unruly North Africa."

Yes, the dangled prizes of this "dirty war," this Washington-bankrolled war, this potential colonial prelude to a World War III of color are not limited to resources of Asia. . . .

And what precisely are we backing and who precisely are we fighting in Indo-China—yes, we Americans with our newly upped billion-dollar "ante" for two-thirds of the current year's fighting budget, we with our napalm and our bombers, we with our military advisors and the "keep fighting" orders from our Nixons and diplomats?

According to a sentence that slipped into a sweetness-and-light editorial in the *New York Times* of December 8, 1953, Jawaharlal Nehru told Richard Nixon face to face in New Delhi that the USA is supporting colonialism in Indo-China and Africa.

So much for our allies. And our enemies?

An Associated Press dispatch in the *Tokyo Evening News* of December 20, 1952, quoted a high-ranking French officer as giving out the "generally agreed" estimate that only 20 per cent of the Vietminh guerrillas are absolute Communists. The rest are "taught next to

nothing about the theory of Marxism or Stalinism." They are nationalists who simply want the French and Americans to go home. Like everyone else in Asia they feel that they can handle the Communists "once the national question is settled."

On December 11, 1953, while being interviewed by several CBS correspondents on the Capitol Cloakroom broadcast, Brig. General Carlos P. Romulo of the Philippines was asked the usual loaded half-truth question about "the Communist menace" in Indo-China. In so far as there are any ardent pro-Americans among Asians today, Romulo is certainly to be counted in that small and exclusive circle. Yet even he challenged the questioner, and for the only time during the half-hour broadcast his voice became charged with emotion.

He had visited Indo-China before the war, he said, and had met the nationalist leaders. Among them he had found great admiration for America, and they were anticipating American support for their independence demands. Now, he said, many of these leaders had become Communists, having had to look elsewhere when U. S. support was not forthcoming.

If the Philippines, Romulo continued, had had to prolong after 1946 its struggle for independence from America, no doubt today "I would find myself being called a Communist."

"THEY WANT OUT"

Set a date for Indo-China's full independence, he passionately urged—a definite date, and then support for the elite Communist leadership will begin to drop away. Says Nehru on the same point: "If you support colonial domination and colonialism—apart from doing a wrong thing you encourage and strengthen the very forces [of Communism] you apparently think you are contending against."

By now every newspaper reader knows that after a death toll of 48,000 the French people have become wearier of their seven-year war in Indo-China than even we became of our three-year war in Korea. They want out. But not only did Vice President Nixon tell his "loyal" Vietnamese hosts that the United States wants them to tone down their independence demands and to remain in the French Union (*New York Times*, November 3 and 5, 1953). In a speech at Hanoi on November 4 he also declared firm U. S.

opposition to a negotiated peace and told the Vietnamese and the French that they could not lay down their arms "until victory is completely won." (Yet French Premier Joseph Laniel clearly stated in Parliament that France was not seeking an unconditional surrender and would be happy to find an "honorable and diplomatic solution" to the war). And from the Bermuda Conference came reliable reports that the U. S. is seriously considering extending the "Truman Doctrine" to Indo-China if (like the over-extended British in Greece in 1947) the French give any sign of pulling out.

This, then, is the dangerous pass to which we have been brought by the enormous, the imperial, the war-making power of white America—war-making power in a world that is weary of war and wishes only to be left alone by both Washington and Moscow. These facts about the war (and there are many more—about Foreign Legion brutalities, for example) expose the terrible power of the daily press to lead readers to conclusions about Asian events which not

only Asians but also Westerners on the spot know only too well to be false.

This, then, shows Negroes that many of their domestic "friends" who shout the loudest in and out of government for FEPC are, out of the other side of their mouths, desperately backing atomic foreign policies which have as their sole aim the maintenance of their unduly high American standard of living—even if every last starving Asian and African has to die in our wars fighting for it. What a pity, Voltaire once said, that the good patriot should so often be the enemy of the rest of mankind! . . .

Newly returned to the States, I have one question for myself and my fellow Americans: What are we going to do about all this? Among informed persons of liberal bent there almost seems to be a conspiracy of silence about not only the internal slavery to which our witch-hunters are leading us step by step but also about the slavery's external counterpart: namely, the counter-revolutionary direction of America's policies among the darker peoples. . . .

Frats on Campus —

(Continued from last page)

approval of this racism by the community.

And it is therefore that the "Michigan Plan," which would give the local fraternities a specified period of time in which the frat would either remove such clauses, break with the national organization or be denied campus recognition, deserves the firm support of the student body. For it would create a state of affairs making it difficult to continue discrimination on the campus.

We believe that the final abolition of racist ideas can be accomplished only by a long educational process, when the economic and legal steps necessary have already been taken. Thus, in the South, it is right now not too important to convince the racist sheriff that he should not want to shoot Negroes, what is important is to make sure that he cannot do so and escape the law.

To get back to the campus. The point is not to convince the snobs and racists that their restrictive practices are wrong so much as to make sure that they cannot openly continue such practices with the sanction of the school community. While I would argue for the abolition of frats per se, it is important that the first step be taken—making the frats less of a stronghold of reaction on the campus. I think Gibbons misses the point if he compares with frats the "self-constituted" social groups found at a campus like Antioch where the frats are outlawed. The essential difference is (a)—to use his own words—"Fraternities and their houses are big business, holding millions

of dollars of property throughout the country. . . ." (b) the fact that dormitory clubs on campuses that do not have frats are not based on racial discrimination, and where they are this has to be done in a surreptitious manner, (c) and most important, the frats affect the whole social climate on the campus.

To elaborate on point (c) for a minute: Formalized snobbery, given sanction by the community, makes the campus frat very much of a social factor setting the "tone" on the whole campus. Freshmen worry about "making the frat," and in order to make sure that they receive this particular form of social recognition they therefore copy as closely as possible the habits of the frat men on the campus. (But then this is a part of the argument for abolishing the frats as such.)

Lastly on our correspondent's methodological point: he needn't have gone to the British monarchy for an example. There is a much better and closer one: we are for abolishing capitalism, but while it is still with us, we are very militantly indeed in favor of fighting for reforms ("immediate demands") within its framework. I trust Mr. Gibbons does not find this hard to understand: for our part, we look on the militant fight for the immediate reforms as part and parcel of the over-all effort to organize the movement for the elimination of the system itself. (Incidentally, LABOR ACTION does not advocate that the British crown be made a "people's monarchy" but it is not necessary to discuss the specific case, once the general idea is understood.)

Bogdan DENITCH

The Poor Rich — —

(Continued from page 6)

smaller and smaller. The bourgeois commentators imply that such a trend would somehow basically affect the capitalist structure. Since inequality was the salient characteristic of the capitalist system, a trend toward equalization would mean a basic change. Is it true?

What is true is that socialism implies greater equality. The reverse, however, is not necessarily true: the trend toward equalization is not by itself a harbinger of socialism, nor does it presage some kind of "reformed" or "more just" capitalist system.

At the root of the apparent trend toward equalization is, in our opinion, the tendency of the rate of profit to decline. To simplify: this means that there will be progressively less surplus value to distribute, provided the degree of exploitation cannot be increased. Consequently, the mass of recipients of surplus value will see their share in the total value, that is distributed, grow smaller.*

The decline of shares on a per-capita basis is reinforced by the fact that the number of people deriving their income from the surplus value does not remain constant. Their number increases, therefore the share available to each of them decreases.

Why do we suppose that the number of people deriving their income from the surplus value increases? We assume with Marx that "capital" will try to counteract the decline of surplus value by increasing the degree of exploitation, i.e., by compensating for the declining share of the surplus value at the expense of variable capital. As the process of declining rate of profit advances, this com-

pensation seems to be harder and harder to achieve. More people have to assure what Marx broadly calls "supervision" or "the general costs of exploitation." This is the economic content of "bureaucratization" or the multiplication of unproductive jobs in the process of production.

Thus the trend toward equalization of incomes (i.e., the trend of declining upper income shares) does not imply the death of the capitalist system. What really changes is the make-up of the capitalist class.

What defines the capitalist class is not that its members appropriate to themselves greater shares of the consumable product than other members of the society. The capitalists are not capitalists because they are rich but because they perform a certain economic function. High incomes are as a rule a corollary of capitalist functions but they do not define them. It is conceivable—and Kuznets' book strongly suggests that it is so—that the members of the capitalist class receive declining per-capita shares of the national income while they carry on their capitalist functions.

The change we are witnessing can be best described as a progressive splintering of what was originally the "individual capitalist" (who delegated a minimum of his functions to salaried personnel) into a multi-headed, collective, bureaucratic, "functional capitalist" of the modern corporation and nationalized industries.

What makes the analysis of the process so difficult is the fact that the consumed part of the surplus value is being distributed to the heads of this bureaucratic hydra under the guise of salaries, bonuses, and other "employee compensations." It is important to understand that these are only legal forms of income distribution. Stripped of those external forms, the essential components of "capital" re-emerge in their true relations, the trend toward equalization notwithstanding.

Youth International — —

(Continued from last page)

Morgan Phillips, chairman of the Socialist International, has already noticed the present trend, and either through jealousy or antagonism, his relations with IUSY have become more and more strained.

Previously, the main preoccupation of IUSY was the question of European unity, but here the different national organizations were sharply divided, mainly along the lines of the adult parties. Scandinavia and Britain were against the federalist movement while the youth on the continental mainland favored the idea. As the latter were in the majority, there existed for a long period close cooperation between IUSY and the European Movement, and in particular with its youth section, the European Youth Campaign.

This insidious movement was founded by Paul Henri Spaak with a fund from the American Committee for European Unity providing the main financial backing. Its main line was to stress the cultural affinity and the apparent economic interdependency of Western Europe.

It gave lavish subsidies to various Socialist Youth conferences, and this partly accounted for the enthusiasm of many IUSY leaders! They also arranged many so-called "European Forums." The reactionary nature of these was clearly shown by the attendancy at them: Boy

Scouts, Girl Guides, Catholic, Christian-Democratic and Conservative youth, and so on.

The opposition was particularly vocal from the British Labor League of Youth where both right and left were against the EYC, though for diverging reasons. The right used the usual argument that the great amount of trade with the British Commonwealth prevented any closer unity with the European continent. The left exposed the EYC for the sham it was: an attempt by American imperialism to unite Europe in the hope that this would provide an extra bulwark against Stalinism, together with an attempt by several decadent European intellectuals to establish European culture to be superior to that of the East.

At the same time the LLOY made it quite clear that if the question of a Socialist United States of Europe should arise, then they would be wholeheartedly for it, but of course this was never the idea of EYC or its American sponsors.

Gradually, when the sponsors of EYC noticed that the socialist youth was not being converted to its brand of European chauvinism it withdrew its financial support for IUSY, and its influence inside that organization has been gradually waning ever since. The latest reports are in fact that the EYC has folded up, and now only exists on a much smaller basis, essentially a "rump" committee.

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Youth International Anti-Colonial Policy Wins Wider Support

By ALEX NEWBOLD

LONDON, Feb. 8—The recent December issue of *IUSY Survey*, the official paper of the International Union of Socialist Youth, gives a report on the Executive Committee meeting of IUSY held in London last October. This confirms the recent healthy trend inside the Youth International, and the hope that politically it may be drawn closer to a Third Camp position.

This hope is derived from the greater preoccupation which IUSY has shown with colonial questions; unlike the adult International, it has taken quite a firm stand on colonial freedom. Although the vein in which the resolutions for the EC meeting were couched was hesitant, and obviously framed with an eye on the reaction to be expected from the adult organizations, there was a growing realization displayed of the role of the colonial problem in the struggle for socialism.

There were resolutions on Kenya, Central African Federation and French North Africa which directly condemned the attitude of the present British and French governments, and indirectly the conciliatory attitude of the British Laborites and the French Socialists.

This reaction to European colonialism inside the Youth International has been the consequence of circumstance rather than political understanding of the wider issues involved. It is the result of the great number of students from Asia and Africa who have been studying at European and especially British universities since the war. They have forced IUSY to take a definite stand on colonialism, one way or the other.

If you want to be radical, then anti-colonialism, in an age of capitalist decline and growing national awareness and militancy, is always the safest bet, and this perhaps explains this attitude of otherwise typical social-democrats.

ON EUROPEAN UNITY

IUSY's stand on colonialism has resulted in one most important development: it has so far been successful in building one international in the socialist youth field, whereas at the Rangoon Congress of Asian Socialist Parties, the Asian Socialist Conference was set up with no explicit organizational unity with the predominantly European and Western "Socialist International."

Already the Convention Peoples' Party Youth (Gold Coast) and the Youth Congress of Nigeria have affiliated to IUSY, and it is to be expected that the Indian Socialist Youth will do likewise. If the present trend continues—and it can only do so if the European sections of the Youth International go further over to a consistent Third Camp position, and above all do not accept the present North Atlantic Alliance—then IUSY will be the first of the Socialist Internationals to break out of the European orbit and become truly world-wide.

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Young Socialist CHALLENGE

Organ of the
YOUNG SOCIALIST
LEAGUE

The *Young Socialist Challenge* is published as a weekly section of *Labor Action* but is under the sole editorship of the YSL. Opinions expressed in signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the *Challenge* or the YSL.

Editor: **BOGDAN DENITCH**
Editorial Board:
**BOGDAN DENITCH, HENRY GALE,
MICHAEL HARRINGTON**

Young Socialist League Is Founded

On the weekend of February 12-14, the new Young Socialist League was founded, as a fusion of two anti-war socialist youth groups.

In a very successful and lively unity convention, the delegates of the Socialist Youth League and YPSL unanimously voted to merge their organizations in order to launch the united YSL.

The Young Socialist League comes into being as the most significant socialist youth organization in the country, on a firmly Third Camp and anti-war basis.

Next week's issue will include a special four-page edition of YOUNG SOCIALIST CHALLENGE which will carry a full report on the proceedings and decisions of the unity convention, and also some of the main documents adopted for the YSL.

The YOUNG SOCIALIST CHALLENGE has been established as the organ of the League (published as a section of *LABOR ACTION*), with an editorial board consisting of Bogdan Denitch, Henry Gale and Michael Harrington. The editor is Denitch.

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON DISCRIMINATORY FRATERNITIES Should Racist Frats Be Permitted on Campus?

College Editor Defends Frats

To the Editor:

I would like to take advantage of your offer of opening your columns to readers' views, even though they may be contrary to those of your staff writers. I should like to express myself through this medium in answer to Mr. Bogdan Denitch, whose article "Racist Frats on the Campus" [Feb. 1] I take issue with.

Mr. Denitch approaches the problem with a poor perspective in that he is urging militant reformation of a thing which in itself he says must ultimately go. In taking the position that "they [fraternities] are reactionary and undesirable, but since they are present we must democratize them as much as possible," he launches into it as might an anarchist in presenting his solution for governmental controls.

This parallels, say, your position on the British monarchy as brought out in your London Letters last summer at the time of the Coronation: from the socialist point of view this institution (the monarchy) is reactionary and undesirable, but as long as it exists it must be "democratized" by making it a "people's monarchy." The fact was presumably overlooked that perhaps 90 per cent of the English working people apparently want to maintain the instrument of kingship, however reactionary it may be!

A paradox from the socialist point of view, in that most of its writers admit it to be the most enlightened working class today. I deviate to the seemingly unrelated subject of the British crown because I feel it counteracts the situation which Denitch feels is an outmoded institution on the campus of the American college.

Without saying anything which would stamp me as a class-ridden champion of Greek-letter snobbery let me defend in principle the system by saying that my four years' experience in it has been most satisfying in everything that it purports to embrace. Fraternities are like any other groups or tightly unified organizations, with its undesirable elements. Perhaps the idea of mysticism, secret oaths and ritual and the adoption of an ancient language as a medium of unifying terminology has presented to those within the movement an atmosphere more conducive to racism, snobbery and supposed superiority. But cannot you find all these human failings in practically every collection of individuals who have banded together for various reasons?

Let us face facts, Mr. Denitch: Considering my parallel, if Britain should ever achieve the socialist conception of the Marxian state, I should be the last to take odds on the Windsor's getting a socialist subsidy for the maintenance of Buckingham Palace.

If, however, you claim any understanding of the thing which we have labeled "Joe College" you know as well as I do that there will always be societies which will band together and take pride in re-

maining exclusive of other groups. Whether they call themselves fraternities or just a Friday Evening social club with some fancy three-letter Greek name meeting down at Louies', the reason for their existence will not be transitory with ideologies or social change.

The social forces which tend to make people band together in groups of like interests and similarities cannot be brushed off merely because it violates the Marxist ideal of group equality.

I have at times belonged to four Greek-letter societies, three of which I now maintain active membership in. They have ranged from the secondary-school "snob club" to strictly recognition-and-honor societies basing membership on accomplishment and election. The one which, however, I have participated actively in all of my college years has in its constitution just the sort of thing Mr. Denitch condemns: a restrictive membership clause.

But lo! This fraternity, which was founded because of an existing situation which at the time barred students of a particular creed from most fraternities, now has no legitimate reason for existence in that the original causative factor has been removed. Its members, however, have retained its membership clause because of their desire to maintain the common standard and requisite which makes for mutually enjoyable associations.

Now if this college fraternity, like the other some twenty in the National Interfraternity Conference who retain outward membership requirements based upon race, creed or other associations, would comply with the "democratization" process, does Mr. Denitch sincerely believe that their members would not follow their unwritten laws of tradition, background and, if you please, snobbery? Has not this proved to be the case on campuses where restrictive clauses were thrown out?

These two dozen or so groups in the Interfraternity Conference who set standards for membership (12 Jewish, 2 Catholic, 2 Masonic, 1 Italian and 8 who set eutheic or "Protestant Gentile" re-

quisites) may in time be forced by illogical liberalism on the campus to throw out their freedom of choosing their associations. However, I feel that if they do there is no doubt that they will in actuality practice what they were forced to withdraw nominally and continue it even more militantly as is the natural reaction of intergroup meddling.

With an afterthought I might say that Antioch College, like most of the other schools and colleges that have abolished fraternities, maintains a system of dormitory "clubs" or "sections" which in essence practice the same sort of thing which the social fraternity does. And I would find it hard to envision the Newman Clubs, Hillel, the various Protestant student fellowships and similar organizations being forced to remove restrictive "religious" clauses!

I am writing only because I think that possibly I am closer to the pulse of the problem which your writer apparently feels can be dismissed through a simple application of "constitutional revision." Fraternities and their houses are big-business, holding millions of dollars of property throughout the country, and its members and alumni constitute one of the most closely knit and fervent memberships of any organized body.

They must be viewed thusly, and not through the rose-colored glasses of Marxian idealism in social groupings.

Russell GIBBONS

Comment

With regard to the question of removing restrictive clauses from the constitutions of local fraternities, and whether this would prevent their members from following the unwritten "laws of tradition, background and, if you please, snobbery"—I believe Correspondent Gibbons misses our point. Outlawing, i.e., denying campus recognition to, racist fraternities does not "reform" the frat men involved (just as initially the passage of FEPC does not "reform" the racist employer). It simply removes the social and legal

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