

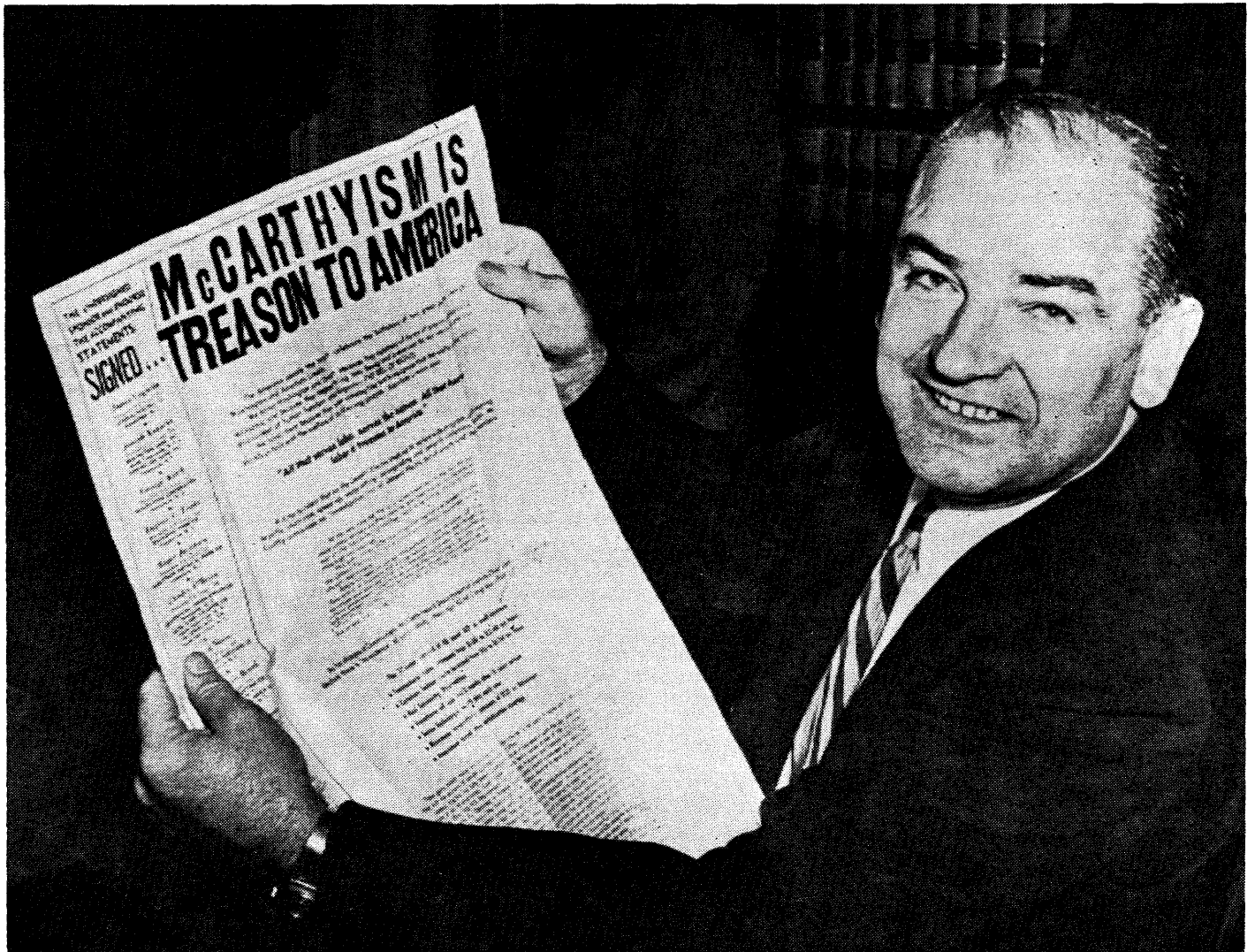
THE **AMERICAN**  
*Socialist*

JULY 1954

25 CENTS

McCarthy Hearings:

**Behind The  
Split In  
The GOP**



**GENEVA:  
WAR OR PEACE?**

**IS THE  
SCHOOL FIGHT WON?**

# CLIPPINGS

**WE WERE** shocked to learn of the death of Ben Probe, a leader in the fight for civil liberties in Detroit. Probe was a pioneer in the organization of the auto union, and held many posts in the CIO. For the last ten years Probe practiced law in Detroit after graduating from the Detroit College of Law. Throughout this time he participated in numerous civil liberties cases, and in the last two years was associated with the work of the Citizens Committee Against the Trucks Law to strike this thought-control measure from the statute books. He was a subscriber and friend of the American Socialist. A staunch fighter for the underdog, he will be sorely missed by progressives everywhere. He is survived by his wife and two children.

**THE LATEST** victim of the witch-hunt in Detroit, John W. Lupa, was fired from his job at the Detroit arsenal as a poor "security risk" on the grounds of alleged association with Ernest Mazey, who in turn is alleged to belong to a "subversive" organization. Lupa volunteered for army service at the age of 18, and since then has had 18 years of active and reserve service in the Army, Navy and Air Force.

The firing was exposed as part of the FBI's insidious practice of recruiting stoolpigeons when Lupa revealed that an FBI agent had offered to get him a job at Packard or Ford if he would become an informer. Charles Lockwood, one of Lupa's attorneys, stated that the case against Lupa was "weaker and more shocking" than the case of Lt. Milo Radulovich, who was dismissed on security grounds and later reinstated by Air Secretary Talbott. Lockwood was counsel for Radulovich, and volunteered his services to Lupa without fee.

**THE** Emergency Civil Liberties Committee located at 421 Seventh Avenue, New York City 1, announced that it is "beginning a series of lawsuits challenging the procedures of the State Department in denying passports to people whose political convictions do not conform to the State Department's ideas." The committee is anxious to publicize this campaign "so that others who wish to do away with restrictions on foreign travel may contribute to the fund, and if they like, discuss with us the possibility of adding their case to the others which will be grouped in this suit." Leonard B. Boudin of New York City is handling the suit.

**CARL SKOGLUND**, 70 years old and suffering from a severe cardiac condition, is being detained at Ellis Island and threatened with deportation to Sweden under the McCarran Act. Skoglund, one-time president of a Minneapolis teamsters local and life-long labor militant, is being persecuted because he rejected an FBI proposition years ago that he turn informer. The government's case is based on Skoglund's membership in the Communist Party in the Twenties, even though he was expelled in 1928.

The Supreme Court put its stamp of approval on this law in the recent Galvan case when it upheld the constitutionality of the McCarran law's anti-alien clause which makes past membership in the Communist Party a ground for the deportation of an alien.

Skoglund's lawyer, Stanley Lowell of the ACLU, is trying to secure his release from detention.

**"FREEDOM** of the press" is taking an awful beating as the metropolitan papers of New York maintain conspiracy of silence concerning a libel suit for \$500,000 against Westbrook Pegler, the notoriously reactionary columnist. Plaintiff in the action is Quentin Reynolds, war correspondent, who is suing Pegler and the Hearst Corporation on the ground that he was slanderously attacked in Pegler's column of November 29, 1949. Although both men are highly prominent and this is one of the largest libel actions in recent years, the press has erected a wall of silence, and the trial has gone virtually unnoticed.

**THE NATIONAL GUARDIAN** printed an important letter in its May 31 issue by Clifford T. MacAvoy, American Labor Party candidate for mayor of New York City in the recent election. MacAvoy takes sharp issue with the policy of the AFL-CIO leaders, and more specifically (although anonymously) against the Communist Party coalition policy, which proposes to support Democratic politicians as an effective method to defeat McCarthyism. MacAvoy states: "Those who want to return to the Truman Doctrine, the Truman Loyalty Oaths, the Truman Smith Act prosecutions, and the Truman use of Taft-Hartley injunctions to break strikes may do so if they wish. Doing

so, however, they will not have chosen an alternative to the Eisenhower-Dewey-McCarthy program of war and fascism—they will merely have chosen other masters . . . in order to carry out the same basic program under another label. . . . I am confident that the majority of members of the ALP, if left to their own judgment, will make the courageous decision to fight on the basis of principle and thus preserve the vital role of the ALP as an independent party dedicated to peace, freedom and abundance."

This letter has created a big stir in the ALP membership, and the Communist Party hatchet-men are currently touring the clubs to do a faction job on MacAvoy, as his position is extremely popular with the rank and file.

Meanwhile, the ALP is up against the question: to be or not to be. If the CP carries through its line, the ALP will be dead as the proverbial dodo as an independent political organization.

**THE** Socialist Party decided to give up running its own election campaigns at its 29th convention held last month in Philadelphia. At the same time, a resolution was adopted pushing merger plans with the Social Democratic Federation, the New Leader crowd, which last month passed a similar resolution on merger with the SP.

Frank P. Zeidler, "socialist" mayor of Milwaukee, announced upon returning from the convention that "the Socialist Party of the U.S. has shifted its emphasis from advocacy of public ownership to preservation of personal liberty." The mayor said there is a great fear in the SP that increased state control would lead to "statism of the Russian variety" or to a government controlled by persons like Senator McCarthy.

Whether socialists should continue working for socialism, or whether the SP now thinks that socialism has become impractical, the mayor did not state.

## The American Socialist

357

JULY 1954 - VOL. 1, No. 7

Published monthly by American Socialist Publications, 863 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Tel.: WAtkins 9-7739. Subscription rates: \$2.50 for one year; \$1.25 for six months. By first class mail: \$3.75 for one year; \$2.00 for six months. Foreign rates: \$3.00 for one year; \$1.75 for six months. Single copy, 25 cents. Application for entry as second class matter is pending.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bert Cochran, George Clarke, Harry Braverman  
BUSINESS MANAGER: Wm. Raleigh

### CONTENTS

BEHIND THE SPLIT IN THE GOP .....	3
GENEVA: WAR OR PEACE? .....	4
IS THE SCHOOL FIGHT WON? by Harry Braverman .....	6
"WE HAVE FOUGHT A THOUSAND YEARS" by Michael Burns .....	11
HEYDAY OF AMERICAN RADICALISM by Bert Cochran .....	16
OPINIONS .....	22
TENSIONS ARE BUILDING UP .....	25
CLARDY FINDS AN OPENING .....	26
BOOK REVIEW .....	28
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR .....	31

## Behind the Split in the GOP

**B**EFORE the Army-McCarthy TV spectacle unrolled in front of a nation's eyes, no one understood the true depth of the split in the ranks of American capitalists. The monied oligarchy has not only thrust the country into an irrational witch-hunt, but has itself become the victim of it. The national anti-communist neurosis has led to the present paroxysm of the Eisenhower administration, and a split right down the middle in the Republican Party.

Before the hearings had properly pinned down the various antics of Schine and Cohn, President Eisenhower was calling Senator McCarthy a usurper seeking "to set himself above the laws," and the senator began talking about "twenty or twenty-one years of treason," and that he hoped to see many presidents come and go. Even the staid and unruffled *N.Y. Times* conceded that the situation was "abnormal."

The newspaper editors got their research staffs busy on the assignment and quickly came up with historical precedents: conflicts between the executive and legislative branches were old hat. As a matter of fact, eighteen presidents, going all the way back to George Washington, scrapped with Congress over jurisdictional rights. As *U.S. News & World Report* snappily informed us: "The whole thing is a new chapter in a contest as old as the nation. Does Congress or the President control federal secrets? It first came up in Washington's time and it has been an issue ever since."

The school of thought that can explain the present split in the Republican Party as a conflict over two abstract interpretations of the U.S. Constitution is of the same scholastic breed that explained the American Civil War as a controversy over "states' rights," or described the British civil war of the seventeenth century as originating from antipathetic readings of certain obscure passages from the Bible.

Generally, there lurk behind high-flown constitutional declamations compelling needs to conceal some very material vested interests. The American slave owners were fighting to keep slavery in 1861, but they had to idealize their struggle by providing it with constitutional and ideological trappings. Similarly, the constitutional explanations on both sides of the present conflict are aimed at concealing rather than clarifying the underlying causes, issues and purposes.

**E**ISENHOWER and McCarthy are not two individuals scrapping for power. It has gone far beyond even a run-of-the-mill intergovernmental contest. The Eisenhower-McCarthy conflict stems from the split in the Republican Party, and that derives in turn from a split in the capitalist class.

Of course, the division in the Republican Party between "isolationists" and "interventionists" is nothing new. It has been in existence for many years. But that is all it was under the Hoovers and Tafts: a division over certain questions of policy. The "isolationists" were never isolationist as the name implies. In foreign affairs, they were Pacific-oriented imperialists as against the Eastern banking fraternity, with its British-Atlantic perspective. In domestic affairs, they were opponents of the New Deal from a stiff-necked conservative standpoint.

But the difficulties of prosecuting the cold war have proven so immense, baffling and unsolvable, that there is caviling, confusion and turmoil in the councils of the high and mighty. Out of the welter of recriminations, charges and countercharges has emerged the new and decisive shift in the political arena: *isolationism of the Hoover-Taft school has in recent years evolved into McCarthyism.*

This change goes far beyond McCarthy's becoming the new leader of the "America First" sector of the cap-

italists. It means that this sector, immensely strengthened and enlarged by a fusion with new rich and powerful sectional ultra-reactionaries, has grown more self-confident and reckless, and is now out to break the traditional system of democratic constitutionalism. What is its precise program? Probably there is no complete agreement as yet among its own leading figures of the exact specifications for their projected police dictatorship, or the exact tactical course to attain it. But they are working in cooperation and with diabolical effectiveness to grind under heel all traces of traditional American liberalism, preparatory to the next decisive lunges toward their end goal of dictatorship.

**T**HE LEADING banking and industrial circles of the East, however, who have always been the policy makers, want to maintain the Republican Party as their authentic spokesman and vehicle of government. They want to develop the witch-hunt "legally," step by step, under the control of their own trusted political lieutenants and time-servers—the Brownell way. That is why they are alarmed at McCarthy's sweeping drive which threatens to get out of hand, to shift political power into the hands of a gang of freebooters, and which may end in the victory of an uncontrolled dictatorial Mafia.

That is why there is a fight going on between two sections of the capitalist class. That is the meaning of the constitutional crisis of American government. That is why the Republican *N.Y. Times* issued this virtually unprecedented warning to the Republican Party leaders: "Many voters are under the impression that it is necessary to throw the Republicans out of office in order to curb Mr. McCarthy. As events turn out this may prove to be true. . . ."

McCarthyism is not only the most militant spearhead of the witch-hunt. It represents a new movement, still in process of formation, whose ultra-reactionary police-dictatorial purposes are already clear, but whose finished strategical and tactical physiognomy is not yet completely established. McCarthy is building a fanatical following; he has fashioned awesome weapons of terror; he enjoys the support

of powerful financial and political interests.

McCarthyism already operates for all practical purposes as a separate party within the Republican Party. It can become the basis for a mass fascist movement in the next social crisis. But the social crisis is not here yet and the time has not arrived for a McCarthy, supported by discontented masses and cheered on by hooligan bands, to stage his "march on Rome."

*The clear and present danger of McCarthyism lies in its role of vanguard of a police state. Let no one get so distracted by the TV performance as to forget that concomitant with*



the Army-McCarthy controversy we have had the Oppenheimer outrage, and that the Eisenhower administration is pushing the most extreme thought-control legislation in American history.

**I**T IS significant that both Democrats and Republicans gave the cold shoulder to Senator Flanders' move to strip McCarthy of his committee chairmanship. McCarthy's Congressional opponents want to curb him, to restrain him. They don't want to crush him. They are also for the witch-hunt and the cold war.

Unfortunately, the labor movement lacks the maturity to utilize the split in the capitalist camp to its own advan-

tage, but continues to cling to the coat-tails of the Democrats. Labor banks on a Democratic victory in November to ameliorate the witch-hunt and halt the trend toward dictatorship. It would be good if it could be done that way. It would be good if the Democrats could stop the terror even to the extent that the Harding administration put an end to the Palmer raids, freed Gene Debs, and brought back an era of "normalcy." But McCarthyism grew out of the cold war. And the cold war is still very much with us, enthusiastically supported by Democrats as well as Republicans. Let us recall that McCarthyism began its lush growth under the Democratic, not the Republican administration.

The big problem of American politics is one of labor, liberal and minority groups growing up to an under-

standing that they cannot rely upon the Democratic Party to save them from the furies of the police state, that they must take the initiative in organizing a broad movement of opposition, that McCarthyism will not be destroyed by lobbying, but by mass action.

Labor is presently tied to the Democratic Party, and to all appearances will continue its alliance for the period ahead. It will take additional, bitter experiences before labor will change its present unsatisfactory political course. But even now labor understands full well the necessity for its own independent action in the economic sphere, and in many political activities as well. Once the lessons of the witch-hunt get hammered home, it will similarly understand the need for independent initiative and action in this crucial matter.

---

## Geneva: War or Peace?

**T**HE GENEVA conference marks a major defeat for the Western imperialist powers.

For six weeks, their representatives labored to cheat the Indochinese revolution out of its victories on the battlefield, and to force through an armistice in violation of the actual relationship of strength. But the attempt at blackmail failed. The Ho Chi Minh forces held their ground. As a consequence, the Laniel government fell, and French imperialism is face to face with catastrophe in the Far East.

George Bidault was running the French end of the Geneva conference. His policy was a combination of treacherous maneuver, intrigue and blackmail—but unfortunately for the French imperialists, he couldn't threaten Ho Chi Minh or his allies with France's own strength, but only with the strength of the Big-Brother Imperialist across the Atlantic. The strategy fell apart like a rotten apple.

Before the Geneva conference even started, France's military position was growing desperate. She appealed to the United States for direct military assistance. For a brief interval, the overlords in Washington were considering intervention in Indochina. That was when Vice-President Nixon sent up his trial balloon, and when Dulles began issuing ominous-sounding warn-

ings and threats. But the British torries, hard-pressed by growing labor militancy and opposition, were scared of getting dragged into another adventure.

The tide was turned, and on April 25, both England and the U.S. gave France a flat "no." Two weeks later the island fortress of Dien Bien Phu fell to the insurgents. Thus, Bidault came to Geneva with two-thirds of his strategy blown from under him before the negotiations properly got under way.

For the next weeks, he played his remaining card of blackmail: Molotov was to be pressured into forcing Ho Chi Minh to accept a purely military cease-fire, which would have meant a *de facto* partition of Indochina. The Bidault proposition, which despite all the newspaper hocus pocus about Anthony Eden's conciliatory diplomacy, was supported by the British as well as the U.S. delegations, was an impudent farce. It has no relation to the military facts.

It proposed to a conquering revolutionary army that it evacuate vast zones in Northern Laos, Tonkin, Annam and Cochin China, and demanded the surrender of the forces of former Prime Minister of Cambodia, Son Noc Ton, who is not a communist, but is allied with Ho Chi Minh, and whose guer-

rillas control the largest part of Cambodia. If Russia did not force its Indo-Chinese and Chinese allies into this capitulation, the argument ran, the war might spread, might become the prelude to the third world war involving the Soviet Union itself.

**BUT THE** Vietminh government has its own army, and has won its wars without the aid of any foreign troops. It enjoys the support of the people. It is doubtful that Molotov could have pressured this government into an unfavorable agreement even if he wanted to. In any case Molotov, in a policy speech on June 8, knocked Bidault's intrigues into a cocked hat by stating that the Soviet Union was backing its allies in the demand for a fundamental political settlement. After that, the first phase of the Geneva conference was over.

Underlying the Soviet decision is the rising strength of the colonial revolution and the fact that it cannot be tricked out of its hard-earned victories. Washington's obdurate opposition and its grim resolve to organize a counter-revolutionary war alliance in the Far East further guaranteed to torpedo any possibility for an agreement at Geneva. For obviously neither China nor the Vietminh could see any purpose in giving up parts of the Indochinese territories to French imperialism when it was being confronted with the organization, under American aegis, of hostile military forces at its borders, and would have to renew the struggle later on under more disadvantageous circumstances.

The curve of history shows the Western powers in continuing retreat in the colonial world. Their superiority in arms has proven insufficient against the revolutionary morale of embattled peoples. The rotting away of imperialism has hamstrung Washington's efforts to forge an effective system of war alliances, while the might of the Soviet bloc punctured Dulles' strategy of "instant retaliation" almost as soon as it was proclaimed.

**WASHINGTON** is therefore confronted with the need for another new look at its original "new look." Its policy is in crisis. There is going on a new agonizing re-appraisal. What is at bottom of the crisis is Washington's inability to reconcile itself to the

existence of revolutionary China and the anti-capitalist states of Eastern Europe, its determination to organize a new Holy Alliance to roll back the revolutionary tide and make the world safe for capitalism.

But the weaknesses of its European allies—themselves torn with class conflicts at home—have forced it to rely increasingly on a peripheral strategy and the ringing of Soviet Russia with naval and air bases. The inability to confine the social pressures of the Near East and create a durable alliance with the Arab bloc forced the State Department to create the dubious substitute of a war pact with non-Arabic Turkey and Pakistan. And now the debacle in Indochina endangers Western rule in Southeast Asia.

Will these developments hasten the drive to a third world war? Will Washington try to break the present stalemate between the capitalist bloc which it heads, and the anti-capitalist bloc under the leadership of Russia and China, by setting off the trigger of world war? Will it try to achieve by a head-on offensive what it seems unable to accomplish by pressure moves, war alliances, threats and small wars?

The very factors which have conspired to produce a deadlock between the two camps are working powerfully to prolong the stalemate. There is the disorganization of the Western war al-

liances, there are the profits being piled up at home with the goad of desperation still lacking. There is, most important of all, the major revolution wrought in the art of war. The possession by both major antagonists of atom and hydrogen bombs, and their respective abilities to deliver them, have stayed the hands of even the most reckless jingoists in the Pentagon, as the possibility of an American victory, or any victory in such a combat, is questioned by the people who know most about the new weapons.

**NEVERTHELESS**, there does seem to be a new policy coming out of the witches' cauldron of the State Department. It is a policy of elbowing aside French imperialism in the Far East, granting formal political independence to the colonial quisling rulers (as the U.S. did in the Philippines and South Korea), and, under the smoke-screen of supporting the independence of these countries from "Russian imperialism," setting up big mercenary armies so that Asians can fight Asians and drown the colonial revolution in its own blood.

Bao Dai, the puppet of French imperialism, will very likely become Washington's puppet in the coming days. His chief of staff announced recently in an address to the combined graduating classes of the Dalat Military School and Thuduc Reserve Officers School that "before the end of the year, progress and development of our national army will hold many surprises for you. You will see on the field of battle numerous divisions entirely Vietnamese under a national command." Another press dispatch reports that "Maj. Gen. John W. O'Daniel, chief of the U.S. Military Aid Mission, is understood to be anxious to have five Vietnamese divisions ready for action by December 1954."

The policy of financing quisling armies and letting "Asians fight Asians"—as Eisenhower tactfully phrased it—will not save the American people from new "little, Korean wars." On the contrary, it makes inevitable that the American people will be thrust into new "Korean adventures" in Asia. It will be well therefore for Americans to emulate British labor, whose vigilance and opposition prevented intervention in Indochina three months ago.



**WHEN THE** Supreme Court finally handed down the historic decision declaring segregation of children in the schools to be unconstitutional, many pointed out that no other decision could have been expected. The court itself underlined that fact by its unanimity.

In truth, the Supreme Court was only setting down—against the will of many of the justices, without doubt—a ratification of a giant revolution of our time. This revolution is a complex skein of many threads. The industrialization of the South, the new militancy of the Negro which has been on the rise for more than thirty years, the stubborn growth and persistent fighting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the North and South, the growing Negro vote in the South, the unionization of the industrial workers with a large percentage of Negroes among them, the immense growth of consciousness, literary outpouring and self-confidence among the Negro people, the conversion of ever-larger strata of whites and white organizations to an anti-discrimination point of view—all of these are part of the revolution.

But perhaps most important of all has been the awakening of the colonial peoples, and their successful anti-imperialist battles, which have placed all imperialism on the defensive, and compelled it to disguise its objectives with “democratic” verbiage.

I shall never forget the elation and vigor with which a militant Negro worker, president of an NAACP branch, discussed with me the colonial revolution when the Chinese Revolution had reached its peak, when MacArthur was being driven back from the Yalu, when Africa and the Middle East were starting to erupt. “I sure pity you poor white folks,” he repeated to me several times, rubbing his hands with glee at his little joke that I was quite ready to share.

Listening to Herman Talmadge, the ignorant ruffian-governor of Georgia, on “Meet the Press” shortly after the Supreme Court decision, one could only marvel at the stultified idiocy of the racist attitude. Talmadge justified segregation by saying: “The Lord made the white people and he put them in Europe, and he made the black people and put them in Africa, and he made the yellow people and put them in Asia. . . . If he had wanted them to mix with one another he wouldn’t have segregated them in the first place.” Aside from the malevolent ignorance, one is struck by the impossibility of U.S. capitalism’s continuing to confront the world with such a line.

**B**EFORE the Negro struggle for the abolition of segregation in education could take effective shape, a long train of preconditions had to be fulfilled. In the first place, the struggle for free compulsory education in the

We call our readers’ attention to a new book: *The Negro and the Schools*, by Harry S. Ashmore. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, No. Car., 1954, \$2.75 cloth, \$1.50 paper.

This book, which was issued just before the Supreme Court decision, is already available in a revised edition containing the text of the decision.

Mr. Ashmore has collected a large amount of background and statistical information. This article is indebted to his book for its completeness and coverage. The book should be read by all who wish to be well informed on the topic.



by Harry Braverman

## Is the School Fight Won?

A brilliant victory has been won, but segregation has not yet been ended in the South, or for that matter in the North, where 75 percent of Negro children still attend segregated schools.

AMERICAN SOCIALIST

South had to be won. While free public schooling in the North was well under way from the time of the early union struggles during the Jackson period, Southern whites were paying for their slavery system. As late as 1900, only Kentucky, of all the Southern states, had compulsory public education.

So far as the Negro was concerned, schooling was practically nonexistent. During slavery, Southern Bourbonism had showed its true colors by making the teaching of Negroes to read or write a crime. Afterward, slight attempts were made in a few states to install nonsegregated education, but the period of Radical Reconstruction was too brief, and was further handicapped by the fact that there was no genuine educational system in the South even for whites. The Freedmen's Bureau established some 4,000 schools, but, being for former slaves, these schools were necessarily all-Negro.

Even in those early years, the issue of segregation, pushed by militant anti-slavery forces, arose in the North. Charles Sumner, the towering radical figure of the anti-slavery battle, fought a case in the city of Boston in 1849. The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled against Sumner. The opposing stands are classic: Sumner argued that segregation "tends to deepen and to perpetuate the odious distinction of caste, founded in a deep-rooted prejudice in public opinion," while to this, Chief Justice Shaw answered in language that may have been original with him but has since become the hackneyed cliché of the race-haters: "If it exists, it is not created by law and probably cannot be changed by law."

Sumner and others kept the issue alive despite this rebuff. In 1855, the Massachusetts legislature repudiated the court and specifically prohibited segregation by statute. And, during Reconstruction, Sumner carried the battle into Congress, sponsoring a bill in 1873 on the issue. The bill was enacted in the Senate after Sumner's death, but was blocked in the House.

In the South, the issue was dead. With the 1877 compromise between Northern capitalists and Southern Bourbons which ended Federal occupation of the South, all Negro rights were trampled under foot. In the North, the Shaw doctrine enunciated by the Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court came to be the pattern, and segregation was successively upheld in Ohio, Indiana, California, New York, etc. Finally, in 1896 came the famous Supreme Court case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*.

**S**TRANGELY enough, this key decision was not made in an education case at all. The courageous Plessy, of one-eighth Negro descent, asked the Supreme Court to invalidate a Louisiana statute requiring separation of races on trains, claiming that his rights under the Fourteenth Amendment were being violated. With Justice Harlan alone dissenting, the court refused. It went further, citing the Massachusetts Shaw decision of 1855 as precedent, to drag education into the case. This kind of side remark is known as an *obiter dictum*, which means a purely gratuitous finding on something that nobody asked the court about.

But precisely at the time when the *Plessy-Shaw* doctrine was being made the supreme rule, the conditions for its overthrow were being prepared in the South. The Popu-

list revolt of farmers spread throughout the Midwest and penetrated deeply into the South, where it took on the peculiar mixture of know-nothing demagoguery and progressive rebellion against Bourbon rule symbolized in such famous Southern gallus-snappers as Tom Watson of Georgia and Pitchfork Ben Tillman of South Carolina.

In the early days of Southern Populism, Negroes sat in the formation conventions of state Populist parties. Negroes still had the vote in some places, and, in this period, over 1,000 Negroes held public office in the South for a short time. Both sides wooed the Negro. But in the end, both Populists and Bourbons were to combine to disfranchise the Negro completely, and place him in the situation of political suppression that was to continue for almost a half-century.

But Populism had a great significance for the eventual destruction of the *Plessy* doctrine, because it initiated the fight for an educational system in the South. As in the North during the Jacksonian period, it was made clear that such "luxuries" as education are not voluntarily donated by reactionary rulers but must be fought for, and this was one of the insistent demands of the Populists. With the beginnings of Southern education on a universal, compulsory basis, the process which eventually would pose the question of Negro education got under way.

After 1900, the South began to see changes which accumulated gradually, and which were later to come in a flood. The early factories, and especially the cotton mills, were built, and a Southern industrial working class formed slowly. The educational system spread throughout the South on a segregated basis, with the Negro getting the leavings. In 1920, only 2 percent of the total attendance in high school grades was made up of Negroes.

Booker T. Washington, the Negro educator whose personal qualities may be taken for granted but who fixed an unfortunate burden of Uncle Tom ideology on the backs of his followers, had sought the establishment of trade and technical schools for Negroes, but this was plainly the vainest attempt at a solution. In the professions, Negroes could make some little future for themselves—that is, a small few could—by serving the Negro clientele, but in the technical trades the doors to industrial jobs were still securely closed by the owners of industry.

**M**EANWHILE, *Plessy* of 1896 continued to rule the roost, and few took note of the fact that the decision permitted *separate* schools only so long as they were *equal in quality*. This was generally recognized as a polite fiction intended to give legal status to an illegal discrimination. If the question were raised, people could well reply: "Of course no one really expects the facilities to be equal. If they were, what would be the purpose of keeping them separate?"

But, with the Great Depression, with the social transformations in America, with the growth of liberal movements and the labor organizations, came the social climate in which the Negro could begin to straighten his back and cast off his load of peonage. And, in this situation, the fight for equality of opportunity embraced a demand for better schooling for the Negro. Here the Negro people began to show their resourcefulness by turning the very

whip that had been used upon them against the courts. They began to clamor for the enforcement of the *Plessy* doctrine, saying: "If you insist that our facilities are to be separate but equal, well then let them be!"

This was the first step in a struggle to smash the *Plessy* doctrine, taking the form of a demand for the literal execution of the bond. The offensive opened in 1935 when a Negro, Donald Murray, applied for admission to the law school of the University of Maryland at Baltimore, and was refused on the basis of Maryland segregation statutes. Murray applied for relief in the state courts, basing himself on the argument that there was no law school for Negroes within the state of Maryland, and thus his treatment did not conform to the *Plessy* doctrine in that it was *unequal* as well as *separate*. Murray won his case, and this jolt upon the eight Supreme Court justices who had voted the *Plessy* doctrine proved to be the thin end of the wedge. A series of cases followed, dealing with Southern graduate and professional schools, and mounting to a determined offensive in the post-World War II period, which gained admission of between one and two thousand Negroes to graduate schools throughout the South.

In the Forties, an attack was begun along this same line in the field of primary and secondary schools, and the courts were forced to interpret the word "equal" in the "separate but equal" doctrine with increasing stringency, as the demands of the Negro people increased in militancy and effectiveness, and as the scandal of American treatment of its own minority—while it hypocritically spoke for freedom abroad—spread in ever-wider circles.

**T**HE SOUTHERN white-supremacists, caught in this nutcracker of their own devising, began to back-pedal, making efforts to improve the picture of Southern Negro education slightly, so as to ward off adverse court decisions and save segregation. The effort was greatest in the states where the Negro population was heaviest, and the Bourbon concern over keeping segregation the strongest. In the case of the graduate schools, Southern states pooled resources in attempts to supply, through regional programs, higher Negro education which couldn't be supplied on a state level except at enormous cost. This move was embraced by some Negro leaders of the Uncle Tom variety as a device to keep university segregation, but it was too little and too late.

The efforts—or promises—in the direction of better Negro facilities were extended to the lower educational levels. But the Southern states are in general too poor, partly as a result of their own racist doctrine which keeps the income of the whites as well as the Negroes down, to do much in this way. As a matter of fact, even the white schools in the South, while above the Negro level in every way, are shamefully below the poor national level; the Southern states are almost without exception at the bottom of the roster of states in value of educational capital equipment, in teachers' salaries, in expenditures per pupil. To lift the school system out of its degraded level in the South while at the same time keeping it segregated and thus providing double facilities in many areas, is an impossible attempt.

Meanwhile, the Negroes, having firmly taken hold of the weapon which had been used against them for so many years, were wielding *Plessy* relentlessly. Some areas, seeking a way to comply with the inevitable court orders for equal schools for both Negro and white—inevitable



once the flood started if for no other reason than that the courts had not the faintest trace of a legal excuse to rule otherwise—tried to solve the dilemma by *lowering the standards in white schools* to the level of the Negro schools! Could there be a more graphic illustration of the manner in which segregation hurts both white and Negro?

All expedients failed, and in the long run *Plessy* was doomed. The new Supreme Court decision ratified this fact.

**T**HE COURT ACTIONS of the Negro people led by the NAACP have quite a special character. In the South of terrorism and intimidation, it takes a high degree of courage to organize NAACP branches, raise funds, inspire young people to brave the organized racists and take their cases to court, and to fight those cases through to conclusion. That was especially true of the first cases of twenty years ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry T. Moore were bombed and killed in their Florida home on Christmas Eve, 1951, for the "crime" of organizing and leading an NAACP branch. In Cairo, Illinois, efforts to attain a nonsegregated school system were met, in the beginning, by hoodlum violence and the arrest of NAACP leaders. In truth, it would be foolish to think of the Supreme Court victory and the cases that led to it as "mere legal actions," to be distinguished from other kinds of action by their "meekness." Court action in our South is far from "meek," and there are maimed, imprisoned and even dead Negroes who would, if they could, testify to that.

The struggles of the Negro in America, and the situation of America in the world prepared the way for the court victory. U.S. capitalism has been placed in an impossible



position in the world, and could not continue its propaganda line in the cold war without this court decision. But it should be noted that U.S. capitalism *was placed* in that position, it did not fall into it. The mere fact of racial atrocity against a whole people was not enough to shame America; that atrocity had to be publicized, the U.S. had to be scandalized with the actions of its ruling class. The worst advice by far that was ever given to the Negro people of this country was that they keep quiet about their indignities and sufferings, keep them a "family matter." For if the capitalists were permitted to keep the matter in the family, their concessions would be very few.

That world opinion played an important, perhaps even the chief role, in the Supreme Court decision, few now deny. The U.S. Attorney General, in filing a 1952 brief with the court favoring an anti-segregation decision, gave this reason flatly:

*It is in the context of the present world struggle . . . that the problem of racial discrimination must be viewed. . . . The existence of discrimination against minority groups in the United States has an adverse effect upon our relations with other countries. Racial discrimination furnishes grist for the Communist propaganda mills, and it raises doubt even among friendly nations as to the intensity of our devotion to the democratic faith.*

In this same brief, the Attorney General also took the unusual step of introducing, as "expert testimony," the opinions of the U.S. Secretary of State:

*The segregation of school children on a racial basis is one of the practices in the United States which has been singled out for hostile foreign comment in the United Nations and elsewhere. Other peoples cannot understand how such a practice can exist in a country which professes to be a staunch supporter of freedom, justice and democracy.*



Shortly before the Supreme Court decision, in January of this year, the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities initiated a global investigation of discriminatory practices in education, to cover discrimination on "any ground—race, religion or sex—condemned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." This is an example of the intensifying pressure. And, as most Americans don't know yet, the situation had gotten to the point where a beating of a

Negro in an obscure Southern village was making bigger headlines in the Asian or European press, especially in India, than a major foreign policy address by the President or his Secretary of State.

**B**UT EVEN in this situation of cold war, the Negro people would not have made this step forward without fighting for it. The contrast between the attitude of the Negro and his leadership in 1896, at the time of *Plessy*, and in 1954, when *Plessy* was smashed, is certainly extreme. The *Plessy* decision was preceded on Sept. 18, 1895, by a speech on the part of Booker T. Washington at the Atlanta Exposition in which, in the name of the Negro people, Washington *asked* for segregation "in all things that are purely social." But the *present* Supreme Court decision was preceded by a period of intense agitation among the Negro people, and in the population as a whole, in which it was made clear, if ever a fact was clear, that if there were continued segregation in any part of American life, it was not with the agreement of the Negro people. This mood, and the militancy which accompanied it, seeped throughout the Negro communities in a thousand different ways during the past two decades. The Negro has moved to the North in great numbers, and within the South he has become more concentrated in the cities. He has come into contact with unions, joined them and fought side by side with white workers, learning both in the North and in the South that victories can be won. The vast labor movement, calling for an end to all forms of discrimination, has given confidence, friendship, and a certain amount of material aid to the Negro.

Fighting his way, losing martyrs in the struggle but continuing to press ahead, the Negro, especially in some sections of the Southern NAACP, has won for ever larger numbers the right to vote, so that in the 1952 elections some 1,350,000 Southern Negroes voted, many for the first time and most for the second time. This voting power, combined with the substantial Negro voting bloc in the North, was used as a bargaining lever between the parties, to make further inroads. The militant process, speeded up by the hiring of Negroes during the labor shortages of the war and postwar periods, intensified by the growing industrial areas of the South, lies beneath the Supreme Court decision of May 17.

**L**EST ANY believe that the struggle is substantially won, even in education, some sober truths must be faced. The first truth is that the Supreme Court decision is not necessarily going to change too much of the actual picture in education if it is left to itself.

The facts show that even supposedly sacred laws can hang powerless unless social forces are present to back them up. Consider for example the federal anti-trust laws. It was in the very period after the Clayton and Sherman laws were put on the statute books that the greatest trustification of American industry took place. Despite innumerable "investigations" and even a few prosecutions, the process has proceeded rapidly in clear contravention of the law, and the only person ever sent to prison under an anti-trust law was Eugene Victor Debs!—for being "in restraint of trade" during a railroad strike.

The Northern experience with school segregation dem-

onstrates very clearly how it is true in this field as well. The only states in which segregation is specifically required by law are 17 Southern states and the District of Columbia. There are 4 other states which permit such segregation by local option, but in 16 Northern states segregation is prohibited by law, and in 11 others there is no special legislation on the matter. Nevertheless, according to an estimate by a conference on Negro education at Howard University in 1952, more than 75 percent of the Negro children living in the North and the West attend virtually all-Negro schools!

It has been made clear by both the Supreme Court, with its decision to take under advisement the question of gradual methods of school integration, and by the recent conference of Southern governors, which declared itself ready to use every means possible to nullify the Supreme Court ruling, that many struggles lie ahead in the achievement of unsegregated education. And, in view of the experience of the North, it is clear that the school fight cannot be won without complete victory in the fight to free housing of racial bars. For the pattern of school segregation has been maintained in the North as a by-product of ghetto-housing for the Negro. Mr. Ashmore, in his timely book, describes Chicago, where the Negro population has increased from 30,000 in 1900 to a full half-million today, as follows:

*More than 90 percent of these Negroes are jammed into eleven square miles of the South Side of Chicago, and in their efforts to break out of their ghetto, they have encountered resistance all the way up the scale to the recent race riots in the suburb of Cicero.*

The manner in which Chicago school segregation is maintained is too clear to require any comment. Mr. Ashmore then goes on to give as an example of communities in which the white supremacists maintain segregation outside the law "Cincinnati, for instance, [which] has maintained separate schools for 50 years under a stated policy which does not recognize their existence." And this is not only true of Northern cities with a Southern ex-

posure like Cincinnati, but extends throughout the North.

In brief, the South can hold back the application of the Supreme Court decision through legal delays, by turning the schools over to fictional "private" agencies, a move which has already been prepared in some states, or by duplicating the Northern pattern if all else fails. And in the South, where housing segregation is even more rigid, where the Negroes who have moved to the cities have been restricted to the decaying hearts of the metropolises while white suburbs bloom around the cities, that policy would work even more efficiently than in the North.

**T**HE SUPREME COURT decision is a great stride forward, and has properly been hailed on every side. But it can only work harm if any assume that the battle is completed. And few, if any, Negroes will believe that, because they live with the facts of discrimination all the time. But the danger is that some of their white friends will become complacent, or that their many millions of supporters abroad will permit themselves to be told that a piece of parchment is a substitute for the complete destruction of all racial barriers in the United States.

Beyond the school lies the world of life and labor which the young Negro must enter when his education is completed. Here the great work of destroying prejudice and discrimination must continue even if the school battle were completely won. For it would be a grim and bitter jest upon the young Negro indeed if, after passing through an unsegregated school, he or she were to hear the bars clang tight upon entering the business of life for which an education is but the preparation.

Beyond the schools lie the factories, the homes, the professions and businesses, the world of clubs and hotels, of resorts, bars and restaurants, of government and of art, of research and industry, of all the things, great and little, to which men and women aspire. Each of these must be made free for all, every barrier which comes from ignorance, bred-in prejudice and special interests must come tumbling down, and until that is accomplished there will not be a free America, and the fight will go on.

## ***AFL Splits in California Primary***

SAN FRANCISCO

**T**HE JUNE 8 primaries in California show in an unusually pointed fashion how the present policy of the labor leaders splits, rather than unites, the union ranks.

Two months before the primaries, the AFL leadership, at a pre-primary convention, endorsed Republican Governor "Goody" Knight for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. The AFL officials justified their elopement with Republican Knight on the basis of his sudden promises for labor reforms. But despite this, the facts against Knight stood out.

"Goody" Knight, as one reporter wrote, "is not a Hoover Republican. He is a Garfield Republican." In 1932 he bought into a Mojave Desert gold mine and is now a top-notch millionaire. When Knight was lieutenant-governor under Earl Warren, he considered Warren "nothing but a New Dealer." Since Warren's accession to the Supreme Court, Knight has made a number of consistent anti-labor appointments in the fields of state employment and finance.

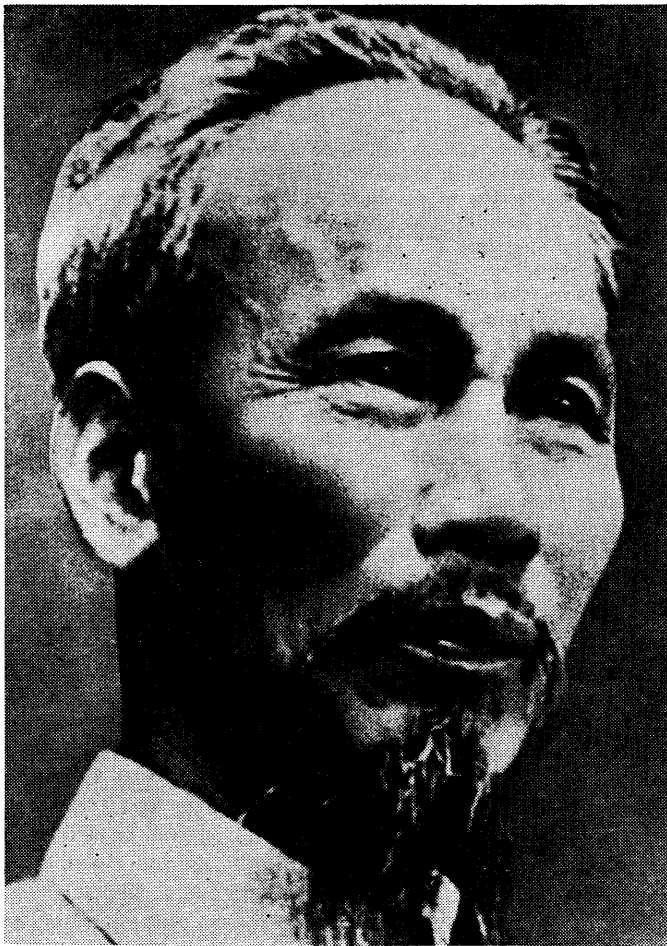
The only result, so far, of any of Knight's promises to labor has been raising the minimum unemployment benefit \$5 a week. In regard to almost everything else he refuses to be pinned down

too close. (One headline: " 'Future Lies Ahead,' Governor Knight Tells Boys.") "Knight," writes Los Angeles *Times* which supports him, "is fundamentally opposed to the official union on most if not all of the principal issues upon which a candidate's attitude is questioned."

The AFL marriage to Knight is only one-half of a double ceremony. The CIO and a minority of the AFL endorsed the Democratic Party candidate, Richard Graves, and are also placed in the uncomfortable position of having to apologize for their bridegroom.

Graves served for twenty years as the executive secretary of the League of California Cities, which is controlled by the real-estate interests and is notoriously anti-labor. He opposed reapportionment of the state Senate according to population and has a miserable record regarding wages, hours and unionization of municipal employees. He has fought in combination with the labor-hating forces to break down local housing authorities. Graves was a Republican for seventeen years, and switched to the Democratic Party only four days before he announced his candidacy for governor.

With the support of the CIO and minority AFL leadership, Graves won in the Democratic primaries. Where does this Graves victory leave California labor? With the unpleasant choice of voting for one or another reactionary anti-labor politician.



HO CHI MINH

**A**FTER EIGHT YEARS of war in Indochina, the French are being pushed into the sea, despite American aid which now reaches 80 percent of total French military expenditures. At Geneva, the goliaths of American, British and French imperialism have been forced to recognize that any solution they have to offer, if it does not grant complete independence to Indochina, can at best be temporary.

The intensity of this struggle is rooted in imperialist policy and the sufferings of the Indochinese people. The Indochinese have said, "We have fought for a thousand years and we will fight another thousand if need be."

The major portion of the material for this article came from two recent books:

*The Struggle for Indochina*, by Ellen J. Hammer. Stanford University Press, Stanford, Cal., 1954, \$5.00.

*Eyewitness in Indochina*, by Joseph R. Starobin. Cameron & Kahn, New York, 1954, \$1.00.

The value of Dr. Hammer's book lies in its full and excellent presentation of the essential history of Indochinese struggles. However, since the author adopts the U.S. State Department attitude of "concern over communism," she winds up with a position directly opposed to the main body of evidence she presents.

Mr. Starobin's journey into Vietminh territory is a highly interesting account. His report of the immense labor that goes into the Indochinese fight against the French gives a further insight into the unconquerable spirit that moves the colonial people.

The people of Indochina, rejecting the Japanese puppet who has become a French puppet, support Vietminh in its struggle against poverty and foreign exploitation.

## "We Have Fought A Thousand Years..."

by Michael Burns

Against this relentless spirit that has already sacrificed close to one million casualties, imperialist greed has pitted itself.

Indochina is a country of about 30 million people fitted with all the trappings of colonial exploitation. It is a country wealthy in natural resources, mineral and agricultural. When the heavy rule of the French was lightened during the Second World War, the Indochinese proved capable of developing many industries that were formerly forbidden, including metallurgical, chemical and pharmaceutical plants. However, despite its large natural resources and the industry of its people, the French have imposed a single-crop culture dominated by the export of rice, rubber, corn, and various minerals. Imports are mainly manufactured products, which the country has never been allowed to produce for itself.

This system, geared not to the needs of the Indochinese but to the needs of imperialism, creates the conditions for famine that the country periodically suffers. In the Thirties, while rice continued to be exported in considerable quantities, untold hundreds of thousands of Indochinese died of starvation. This was repeated again under Franco-Japanese control in 1945.

More than 95 percent of foreign investments in Indochina are owned by the French. The rubber plantations and mines are entirely in French hands. The largest rice fields and agricultural plantations are owned by a small class of native capitalists tied to the French by loans, French citizenship, and mutual interest in keeping the nationalist movement suppressed. To enforce this rule of foreign capital, the French by 1946 had a corps of 14,000 civilian administrators, besides military and naval units.

**I**NDOCHINA has proved to be the most profitable colony in French possession. Investors extract profits of 20 to 25 percent on their investment each year. During the First World War, Indochina accounted for one-half the wartime revenue given to France by her colonies. The profits and savings, in time-honored colonial tradition, are not invested in Indochina but sent back to France.

The amount of "civilization" that the Indochinese have received from France is practically nonexistent, unless one includes death and terror in this category. The public works and roads are built and paid for by the Indochinese. And, under the colonial administration, public

works are not tied in with the economic needs of the country but serve French political and tourist purposes.

The blessings of French "humanity" since 1858, the year when French rule began, never reached about 99 percent of the population—the peasantry. Though the peasant tilled large sections of Indochinese land, he did this mainly in the role of a laborer or *ta dien* (sharecropper), having no land of his own. Among those peasants who had their own land, over 95 percent did not own more than two-tenths of an acre, about as much space as a modest bungalow occupies.

All the feudal impositions that France had eliminated in its 1789 revolution, it threw on the back of the Indochinese peasant. He was subject to the *corvée* (forced labor on public works) and *gabelle* (salt tax). He paid about one-fifth of his annual income to the government. As a sharecropper he gave as high as 70 percent of his crop to the landlord. The French loaned money to the large landowners who reloaned it to the peasants at fantastic interest rates (50 to 100 percent). Starvation was rampant. Dr. Hammer writes:

*The majority of Tonkinese could afford only two meals a day during most of the year. They managed three around harvest time, when they had to work harder than usual, but this came after a period of privation. Almost every year there was a time before the harvest when the peasant could not afford to eat more than once a day. He did not even have enough rice for that, unless he boiled it so long that it became a soup which looked and tasted like a gluey paste.*

To provide the peasant with solace from this insufferable existence, the imperialists had a profitable monopoly on opium and alcohol. Quotas of alcohol were assigned to each village, and if not bought and consumed in a certain length of time the village was punished. The sale of opium has been kept up by the French even after the announced termination date in 1944.

Health fared little better. While in the United States there is a doctor for every 750 inhabitants, and in the Philippines one for 3,200, in Indochina there is one doctor for every 38,000.

In respect to democratic freedoms, the Indochinese were not permitted to form political parties or trade unions, were not allowed to travel among the three regions without permission, and had to have a police visa before they could go to France. Freedom of press and assembly were under censorship.

**T**HE NEED for land reform and simple democracy was and still is the main motivating force for Indochinese struggle against the French and their lackeys. Insurrections have dogged the French from the moment they set foot in the country. In 1884, the Emperor Ham Nghi led a four-year revolt. In 1893 the struggle broke out again. In 1908 the Indochinese attempted to poison the French garrison at Hanoi, an attempt that was repeated a few years later. The guerrilla leader De Tham continued the fight until killed in 1914. In 1916 another uprising took place aimed at expelling the French from Annam. The early Thirties were years of continued revolt involving large masses of Indochinese.

## *The Cloister and the Sword*

Captain Charles Gosselin, a French officer, wrote in 1904:

Our compatriots, not well informed on history, suppose that France came to intervene in Annam solely for the protection of missionaries, or to seek vengeance for acts of hostility committed against them and for persecutions against the Catholic religion. The missionaries, in reality, have only been the pretext for our action against Annam. The loss of India in the eighteenth century, the increasingly rapid extension in the Far East of our perpetual rival England, imposed on us the obligation to set foot in the China Seas, the only alternative being our falling into a state of contemptible inferiority. Annam gave us the opportunity, the massacre of Frenchmen who were there as missionaries gave us the pretext.

An interesting postscript to this bald confession is the fact that Admiral d'Argenlieu, who came to Indochina as French High Commissioner in 1946 to reimpose French rule and defeat the resistance, was a Carmelite monk on military leave. As in the previous century, d'Argenlieu, the "missionary," announced: "France has not come guided by material or financial interests, but by humanity."

The French put down these revolts with as much brutality as they could muster. Thousands were tortured, killed and imprisoned. Never, at any time, was there the pretense of benign rule. The judicial system became the simple tool of arbitrary police methods. Evidence and trial were dispensed with in dealing with suspects. Almost every leader of the resistance movement today, and many of its ranks, are well acquainted with French justice, the stink of French jails, and the brutal prison island of Poulo Condore.

In 1933, the Stalinist and Trotskyist communists in Saigon formed a coalition organized around the newspaper *La Lutte* ("The Struggle"), which led to strikes to improve working conditions, raise wages, and permit a legal trade union movement. Though the coalition only lasted until 1937, certain minimum gains were achieved in Saigon. On the whole, however, French colonial policy in Indochina did not change to any measurable degree.

With the beginning of the Second World War, and the early capitulation of France to the German army, the French in Indochina found themselves in a precarious position.

Japan landed troops in Saigon, took over Hanoi, and made agreements to receive the bulk of Indochinese exports. Cut off from Europe, militarily and economically weak, having no support from the Indochinese, and denouncing the anti-Japanese resistance movement as "bandits," the French mirrored Vichy's role as "collaborators." This fall from grace at the hands of an Asian people gave the French rulers much discomfort, and the Indochinese gained considerable confidence.

**I**N SPITE OF continued military and police repressions, the Indochinese nationalist movement grew. The Vietnam, organized as a united nationalist front with communist leadership, in 1941 undertook a militant campaign against Japanese imperialism, and by 1945 had an army

of 10,000 regulars and countless guerrilla fighters. The French, attempting to maintain their pose as rulers, fought bitterly against the nationalists within the ever-narrowing sphere allowed them by the Japanese. By 1945 there were close to 10,000 Indochinese political prisoners in French jails.

Notwithstanding French opposition, the Allied forces recognized the Vietminh as the only effective fighting force against the Japanese. Under Allied orders, the Vietminh received subsidies, military training, and arms from Chiang Kai-shek. An Allied military mission was parachuted to Vietminh headquarters as an advisory unit.

With the surrender of Japan in August 1945, the Japanese dropped practically all pretense of control over Indochina. To the chagrin of the French, whom the Japanese had disarmed a few months before, a wave of nationalism swept all of Indochina behind the Vietminh. Uniting into it were all classes of Vietnamese who came regardless of politics.

On September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh, the head of the Vietminh government, read the Indochinese Declaration of Independence, which began: "We hold these truths to be self-evident. That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. . . ."

There had been few illusions as to French postwar intentions in regard to Indochinese independence. In March 1945 the "Free French" De Gaulle government issued a declaration on Indochina which described it as a member of the "French Community." A French High Commissioner was to rule. Foreign affairs and defense were to be controlled by the French. The Indochinese were to elect a representative assembly with "discussion powers." And the three regions of Vietnam—Cochin China, Annam and Tonkin—were to continue as separate divisions. The Potsdam agreement had provided for the reoccupation of the country by the British in the south, and the Chinese in the north, after which the French were to resume their position. The French waited impatiently to sink their teeth again into this plum in Southeast Asia.

### ***Defenders of Dien Bien Phu***

A third of the manpower at Dien Bien Phu was composed of German legionnaires, mostly former SS prisoners who were released on condition they join the Legion, who were sent out to "hunt Viets" to atone for having "hunted Frenchmen." [These former Nazis are also reported to be the most militant anti-Vietminh fighters in the "French" army.]

Outside of the officers, there were few Frenchmen at Dien Bien Phu. In addition to the Legion, there were North Africans, professional soldiers, some Thais, and Vietnamese who did not join the massive desertions. . . . The only units consisting of 50 percent Frenchmen were the four battalions of Colonial Parachutists. The other half of these parachutists were *non-Vietnamese* members of the yellow race, officially designated as Indochinese of the Chinese race from the border zone. One would like to know, in this connection, whether these were not actually former Chiang Kai-shek soldiers who had been interned in Indochina.

—Paris *Observateur*,  
May 13, 1954

**I**N THE CRUCIAL six-week period between the surrender of Japan and the landing of British troops in Saigon, the Vietminh had established itself as the dominant force in the country. It had set up People's Committees, shortened working hours, reduced land taxes, and formed coalitions with as many nationalist organizations as were willing to help rule the country.

But the Vietminh did not attain the stage of undertaking a real solution to Indochinese problems. At the outset, it maintained that this was not to be a revolution to solve the agrarian problem. It prohibited the arming of the peasants, the seizure of property and the division of the land. It spoke of "peaceful organization," in order to give a favorable impression to the British and French powers who were soon to enter.

Many facts foredoomed this limited conception. To gain the support of the masses of Indochinese against French imperialism, the Vietminh had to undertake a revolutionary approach to the agrarian problem. And even raising any simple democratic demands ran counter to the aims of French imperialism which is tied to the maintenance of a semi-feudal structure on the land through sympathetic landlords, and government through emperors and mandarins. The entire corroded structure had to be broken through for the success of any democracy at all. Ta Thu Thau, the leader of the Cochin China Trotskyists, became the most popular revolutionary figure in South Indochina because of his espousal of land reform, but he was killed in 1946 under orders of the Stalinist communists in the Vietminh.

Soon after the British landed in September 1945, they began to help the restoration of French rule. On September 22, in Saigon, the French, with British assistance, staged a successful coup d'etat on the unsuspecting Indochinese. During the next two years, the British (under Attlee's Labor Government) poured in about \$70 million of supplies. The French commander, General Leclerc, figured in October 1945 that about a month of "mopping up" operations would suffice for the reconquest of the country. He told his soldiers they were "fighting for the re-establishment of French greatness."

**T**O HO CHI MINH, however, the French gave a different story. In March 1946, they signed an agreement recognizing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a "free state with its own government, parliament, army and finances, forming part of the Indochinese Federation (with Laos and Cambodia) and the French Union." And they also pledged to determine by referendum the union of the three regions of Cochin China, Annam and Tonkin. By 1952, the agreement said, there were to be no French troops in Indochina, with the possible exception of those guarding French naval bases.

The agreement was nothing more than a diplomatic diversion. Arrests, executions, bombing, burning and strafing were stepped up in Cochin China. The French jailed the elected nationalist prime minister of Cambodia because he "threatened the security of Allied forces and he was working against Cambodian interests." In short order they reinstated the old "divide and conquer" methods. They set up an "independent Republic" in the Moi region in south Annam. In June 1946, they recog-

nized the "Free Republic" of Cochin China, with a legislature and president appointed by the French. The situation was so scandalous that the puppet president of the "Free Republic," Dr. Thinh, told his friends, "I am being asked to play a farce, and even after the Cabinet changes, the farce will continue," and then proceeded to hang himself. The French threw in four times as many administrators into "free" Indochina as they had in 1939.

In July 1946, Ho Chi Minh went to France for the Fontainebleau Conference. The conference resolved nothing, since the French offered nothing. Just the same, Ho remained in France and, on September 14, 1946, signed an empty agreement confined to further concessions to the French in the name of peace. Ho had begged Moutet, "Don't leave me this way. Give me some weapon against the extremists. You will not regret it." Later, Ho stated: "We decided to facilitate the revival of French economic and cultural interests in Vietnam in return for a promise that democratic liberties will be applied in Cochin China." He called the agreement "better than nothing."

**T**HE MARCH 6, 1946, agreement had caused quite a stir, since one of its provisions was to allow the French to come back into northern Indochina with Vietnamese agreement. Ho Chi Minh was forced to protest in self-defense, "You know that I would rather die than sell our country. I swear to you that I have not sold you out." Independence, Ho insisted, was just deferred until 1952.

As a matter of fact, he had made a grave error. Once allowed to enter Hanoi, the French began the reconquest of Indochina untrammelled by the need for any further diplomatic maneuvers. On November 23, 1946 (two months after the Fontainebleau Conference), the French delivered a full-scale air bombardment and artillery attack on the northern part of Haiphong where frequent clashes had occurred on what was nominally Vietnam territory. The Indochinese quarter was completely destroyed and according to conservative estimates more than 6,000 Vietnamese were killed. Soon after the bombardment of Haiphong, the French, in a further open breach of all agreements, landed troops at Tourane.

In December, Admiral d'Argenlieu stated: "France does not intend in the present state of evolution of the Indochinese peoples to give them unconditional and total independence, which would only be a fiction gravely prejudicial to the interests of the two parties." This was reinforced by the demand that the Vietminh militia, the main armed force of the Vietnam republic, immediately disarm. The war had begun.

Fighting broke out at Hanoi, where the French killed thousands of civilians, and spread rapidly throughout the country. The French laid the blame to "extremists" among the nationalists. The obviousness of this falsehood is easily seen. From the coup in Saigon to the bombing of Haiphong, French policy showed itself to be satisfied with nothing less than the complete subjection of all Indochinese to French imperialist rule.

In March 1947, Ho Chi Minh pleaded: "Once again, we declare solemnly that the Vietnamese people desire only unity and independence in the French Union, and we pledge ourselves to respect French economic and cul-



BAO DAI

tural interests. . . . If France would but say the word to cease hostilities immediately, so many lives and so much property would be saved and friendship and confidence would be regained."

The French government responded with a vote for war against the Indochinese.

It is interesting to note that among those voting for war credits were the French Communist Party members of the Cabinet. Maurice Thorez, head of the French CP and Vice-Premier of France, countersigned the formal order for military action against the Vietnamese. Dr. Hammer, in her excellent historical study, summarizes the position of the French CP very well: "They were key members of the government which appointed and supported Admiral d'Argenlieu, which permitted the failure of the Fontainebleau Conference and the attack at Haiphong, and which refused to negotiate with Ho Chi Minh after December 19, 1946. Although then the largest party in France, the Communists did not lift a hand in defense of Vietnamese independence . . . and when they left the government in 1947, it was on a domestic issue unconnected with the Vietnamese question."

The French Communist Party campaigning on a French nationalistic platform, stated that it did not want to see France reduced to "its own small metropolitan territory," and warned, "Are we, after having lost Syria and Lebanon yesterday, to lose Indochina tomorrow, North Africa the day after?" (*L'Humanité*, July 24, 1946)

**D**ESPITE a rather frenzied search, it took the French until 1948 before they could organize a puppet government in opposition to the Vietminh. The Ha Long Bay agreement was signed June 1948 with Bao Dai who was to be reinstated as Emperor of a new Vietnam "independent" state. In actuality, Bao Dai remained under French rule and the Indochinese people showed no interest in the agreement. When the French in Saigon attempted to organize a demonstration in favor of the Ha Long Bay agreement they were forced to implement it with an executive order: "All officials and regular or daily employees of the regional services of Saigon and

Cholon must attend. . . . They will get their pay for the working day if they are present.”

“Independence” and “self-rule” soon proved to be in the old pattern of French colonialism. Elections held in Cochinchina in April 1949 only permitted 5,000 picked Vietnamese to vote. Out of these only 700 voted, the rest stayed away to prevent being identified as supporters of the French puppet regime.

The French together with wealthy Indochinese participated in a lucrative business in trading Vietnam piastres on the money market. Profiteering and corruption became the *modus operandi* of the new regime. As late as 1953, a French Parliamentary Mission of Inquiry sadly disclosed: “It is grave that after eight years of *laissez-aller* and of anarchy, the presence in Indochina of a resident Minister has not been able to put an end to these daily scandals. . . .”

The masses of Indochinese living in French occupied territory have kept a safe distance from the stench of the Bao Dai government. The largest numerical element are known as *trum chan* or *attentistes* (those who watch and wait). It is well known to everyone that were the French to leave, the Vietminh would become the government of the country without a struggle. In a secret report of 1950, French General Revers wrote that Bao Dai headed “a government composed of 20 representatives of phantom parties, the best organized of which would have difficulty in rallying 25 adherents.”

In contrast to Bao Dai, the Vietminh is actively supported by many diverse elements, conservatives, radicals, former members of the Bao Dai court, all types of nationalists, and the majority of two million Catholics. People’s Committees were set up by the Vietminh to replace the mandarins at all levels: region, province, city, prefecture, village. In 1946 the Vietminh conducted the first general representative election ever held throughout the country. Almost half of the successful candidates did not belong to any party. It banned prostitution, gambling, and the use of opium. It passed legislation protecting workers, women and children, and abolished the head tax. It has taught thirteen million Indochinese to read and write.

In the field of agriculture, after the 1945 famine, the Vietminh claimed to have increased the area of rice paddies 150 percent, quintupled the potato crop and quadrupled the corn yield. To bear out this claim there is the fact that by the spring of 1946 the famine was stopped. After the victory of the Chinese revolution the Lao Dong (Labor) party emerged as the Communist Party of the Vietminh coalition, and claimed the allegiance of most of the guiding members of the resistance. This break with the old policy of “respectability” for the Vietminh movement also marked a change in its attitude toward land reform. Vietminh agrarian policy was formulated in December 1953 for the division of land “belonging to those landholders who had fled the Republic or who had collaborated with the French as well as the land which was owned by French companies. Communal lands and properties belonging to religious bodies were to be distributed too.” In many areas this has already gone into effect and has included the division of practically all of the large estates.

**T**HERE CAN BE no doubt that a thoroughgoing social, political and economic revolution is under way in Vietminh territory. In fact, the similarity to the progress of the Chinese revolution is striking.

The Cambodian Prime Minister Yem Sambour, in 1950, showed in a remark how some among even the Indochinese “upper” classes have moved left: “But then, of course, the transition to communism is less difficult for an Asiatic, even for members of the upper classes. Perhaps we have less to lose. In any case the prospect does not alarm us. There are times when one feels that perhaps it would be even better to be a little poorer, if at the same time one could be a little freer.” The French soon threw him into prison.

**T**HE EFFECTS OF WAR on Indochina have been very deep. There has been a sharp drop in an already low standard of living. Indochina now imports twice as much as it exports, whereas before it had been the opposite. Indochinese casualties have been immense. The French have destroyed the countryside. The Vietminh has existed throughout this period of war on bare, minimum rations. Its slogan has been “When the enemy comes, grab a gun; when the enemy leaves, grab a hoe.”

And the French people, too, are being slowly bled for their imperialist masters, having suffered close to 100,000 casualties. The French, on the whole, have condemned this as “the dirty war.”

Servan-Schreiber, an influential French journalist, laid the course of imperialist policy in Indochina to the “natural tendency of the military proconsulate to perpetuate itself” and to “certain French political groups who have found in the war the principal source of their revenues . . . through exchange operations, supplies to the expeditionary corps, and war damages. . . .”

“The truth is, that the facts now known seem to add up to a lucid plan worked out step by step to eliminate any possibility of negotiations in Indochina in order to assure the prolongation without limit of the hostilities and of the military occupation.”

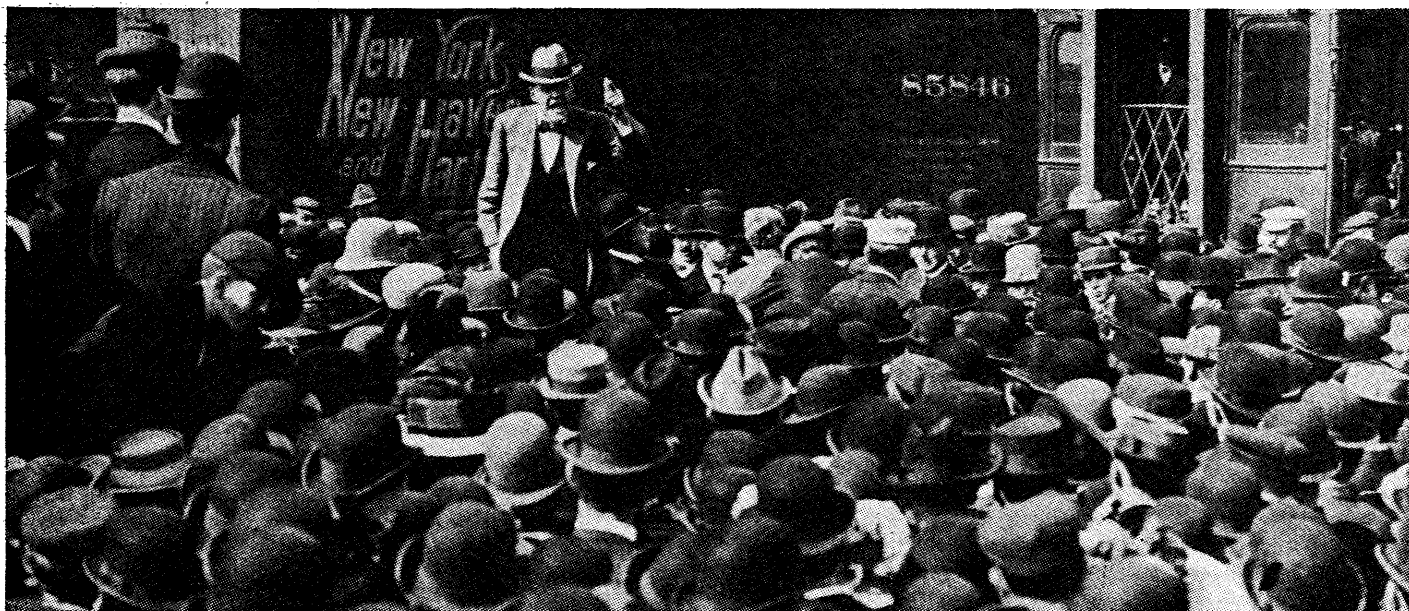
It is these purposes, and these imperialist elements, rotten to the core, that the American government is fighting to preserve. The shame of French imperialism in Indochina is to be blotted with American blood. “We are the last French colonialists in Indochina,” an American diplomat jokingly said.

American intervention, if it ever begins, will not end with Indochina. The battle of the colonial people against imperialism has already flared like a hot flame through Asia and Africa. Nationalist movements have begun to fight in Tunisia and Morocco. The guerrilla war in Malaya has gone on for six years. These struggles, and many others smoldering just below the surface, are part of the broad sweep to freedom of our generation.

---

It would shock and astound you if you knew how near we were to active participation in the Indochina war just a few weeks ago. When the final story is written it will be seen that America actually took the leap but turned back in mid-air.

U.S. Senator Smathers, May 25, 1954



Eugene V. Debs addresses a rally during his presidential tour on the "Red Special."

From militant socialism to milk-and-water reformism: The rise and decline of the pre-World War I Socialist Party.

# Heyday of American Radicalism

by Bert Cochran

*In the June issue of American Socialist, Bert Cochran described the foundation of the Socialist Party in 1901, its early growth and the differentiation of the right and left within it. In this article, he concludes his account and analysis of the pre-war socialist movement.*

**T**HE ORGANIZATIONAL weakness of the left was a reflection of its ideological confusion and resultant inability to weld its disparate forces into one fighting phalanx. By 1905, most leading left-wing Socialists had tired of trying to reform the corrupt AFL, and launched the IWW. Every officer elected at the founding conference of the IWW, and almost all the leading participants, were members of the Socialist Party. The left never formally endorsed the IWW, holding to the SP theory that the party had no right to tell the unions what to do. But its commitment to industrial unionism, coupled with its condemnation of efforts to reform the AFL, signified for practical purposes that it had cast its lot with the IWW.

This question has been discussed by many left-wing writers from the point of view of whether the Socialists were well-advised to launch an independent industrial

union or would have fared better by continuing to work within the existing AFL organizations. But more was involved than the question of trade union tactics.

To all left wingers of the time, industrial unionism meant more than an effective industrial form of union organization; it was synonymous with an organization standing for class struggle and anti-capitalism. In line with this ultra-left concept, the IWW was built as a revolutionary union in the fullest sense of the term. It was further weighed down by its syndicalist bias, even before the anarcho-syndicalists took over in 1908. The whole left wing went off the correct course in this instance by its lack of understanding of the capitalist state and the road to power. Marx had solved this problem theoretically after the experiences of the Paris Commune in 1871. But his solution was not understood in the United States at the time, and never grasped by either Haywood, Debs or the others.

The semi-syndicalist program accepted by the left wing was given its most reasoned explanation several years later in the pamphlet, "Industrial Socialism," by William Haywood and Frank Bohn, the theoretical godfather of which could well be considered Daniel De Leon. The Industrial



Socialists argued that since the source of the capitalists' power was their control of industry, the fight to break that control must be waged in the shops. It was far more important for the Socialist Party to aid in the economic organization of the workers than to devote its energies to "winning middle-class votes for socialism." When workers were organized in their shops, they would inevitably vote Socialist, and not before. The only form of working-class economic organization that met the requirements of a trustified economy was the industrial union, and the major weapon of struggle would be the general strike in industry, the community and, ultimately, the nation. Socialism was not government ownership, as the right wingers preached, but industrial democracy, administered by the rank and file. Socialism was not going to be achieved by the gradual socialization of the economy through government ownership, but by the industrial unions uniting the workers for their struggle against capitalism, and these same industrial unions would then become the framework of the future society.

**I**N VIEW of this program, left-wing Socialists were faced with the dilemma of discovering a role for their own organization, the Socialist Party. After some effort, they found that the SP still had a number of important functions to fulfill. It would have to win elections to prevent use of the police, courts and the military against the workers, and municipal victories would enable Socialists to use the social services in the interests of the working class. Secondly, the party was assigned the task of educating the working class in the principles of scientific socialism. But, they warned, it must never be forgotten that the party existed to aid the industrial union and not vice versa.

Debs never accepted this syndicalist program. He had a far more correct understanding of the nature of the struggle for socialism, but because of his abdication as a political leader, his viewpoint had little support in the party, and the membership polarized itself around the two main tendencies of reformism and syndicalism.

By 1908 the American proletariat as organized in the Socialist Party was led by two lawyers, two editors, one affluent merchant, one millionaire reformer and one minister of the gospel. All militancy seemed to have left the party, and membership enrollment was sagging. Momentarily, the stagnation came to a halt with the elections. Debs conducted one of his most memorable campaigns that year. A railroad train, the "Red Special," was chartered, consisting of a locomotive, an observation coach, a sleeper, and a baggage car packed with literature. For 65 straight days Debs addressed enormous crowds in 33 states, appealing everywhere for a million votes. The national office printed and distributed a quarter-million copies of eight pamphlets giving the Socialist position on questions of the day. State and local organizations printed and disposed of at least ten million additional pieces of literature. The enthusiasm engendered by the campaign was phenomenal, and in a few months membership again jumped from 30,000 to 46,000. Even the *Chicago Tribune* conceded a million votes to the Socialist Party. But when the vote was counted, the SP found it had increased its vote over 1904 by an insignificant 13,000, polling a total of 421,000 votes.

All leaders were badly shaken with what was considered the poor showing, and the feeling grew that the party could not remain suspended between its two extreme poles. The left wing demanded that the party stop pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of political office and return to its true role as the organization of the working class. But the center decided that the time had arrived to firmly cement its alliance with the right wing, to eliminate the left extremists who were frightening away potential middle-class supporters, and to build an organization which could out-reform the Bryan democracy.

**U**NDER THE consolidated right-wing leadership, the SP proceeded to drop overboard its remaining socialist pretensions, and gave shrill expression to the many opportunistic conceptions that afflicted the party from its early days. The SP had always been strongly infected by the prejudices rampant in middle-class America. In a country where the working class was composed of such a large proportion of foreign-born, the party was singularly unconcerned with the problem. The only official statement on the rights of the foreign-born was passed by the National Committee in 1907, and the party never did one single thing to implement this pious expression.

The immigration controversy, which began about this time and continued for five years, showed that the leaders, in their anxiety to get together with the AFL bureaucrats, didn't want any immigrants in the country, much less in the party. At one point, the attacks on Chinese and Japanese immigration grew so virulent in the West Coast Socialist press that the Japanese Socialist Party protested. The 1907 National Executive Committee meeting adopted a resolution opposing "Asiatic immigration." After the disgraceful debates on this question at the 1910 convention, Debs issued a bitter public denunciation:

*If socialism, international revolutionary socialism, does not stand staunchly, unflinchingly and uncompromisingly for the working class and for the exploited and oppressed masses of all lands, then it stands for none, and its claim is a false pretence and its profession a delusion and a snare. Upon this vital proposition I would take my stand against the world and no specious argument of subtle and sophisticated defenders of Civic Federation unionism could move me to turn my back upon the oppressed.*

The party record on the Negro question was scarcely more satisfactory. There were three Negro delegates to the founding convention. At the insistence of one of them, a resolution was passed declaring the party's sympathy for the Negro and urging him to join the party and vote his way to emancipation. This was the only resolution for Negro rights adopted by a national body from 1901 to 1912. There is no record that the party ever actually opposed discrimination or terrorism against Negroes throughout this decade. In 1906, when President Roosevelt dismissed without trial three companies of Negro troops in connection with a riot, a member of the National Committee moved that Roosevelt's action be condemned. The right and center representatives objected to this "attempt to inject the Negro question into the Socialist Party." The left also objected because the army was a "capitalist tool" and socialists were not interested in army justice. The motion was defeated.

**T**HE RIGHT-WING position on the Negro was one of blatant chauvinism. But even the left wing had little understanding of the question. Debs, who was the most advanced on this, opposed all discrimination and toured the South calling on the Negro to reject the false doctrines of meekness and humility. His position was that only through the organized struggle in the labor and socialist movement would the Negro win equality. But he thought that it all boiled down to the "labor question," and neither he nor left wingers ever attempted to mobilize the party in the fight for Negro rights. This blindness is all the stranger as there was a resurgence of Negro activity in this period, the first important expression of which was the Niagara movement of 1905, headed by W. E. B. Dubois. The new movement broke with the Booker T. Washington philosophy and issued a ringing call for full Negro equality, leading several years later to the setting up of the NAACP. But because of the middle-class character of the movement, its significance was lost on Debs and the left wing.

The attitude of most SP leaders toward the question of equal rights for women bore a striking resemblance to their approach to Negro equality. Women were told that the "woman question" was part of the "labor question," and that capitalism, by forcing women to work, paying their husbands low wages, and causing unemployment, bad housing, starvation, divorce, suicide and a high death rate, was breaking up the home; that once the need to supplement the husband's earnings was eliminated, "ninety-nine women out of every hundred would choose the lot of wife and mother."

Since women did not have the vote at the time, their role was to create "a sentiment" in favor of the cooperative commonwealth. In 1904, the *Worker* pointed out that too many men in the party "look with disapprobation or with irritating contempt on any participation by women in the affairs of our movement." The reason for this attitude, said the *Worker*, was that women were considered inferior to men in their organizational ability, were uninterested in improving their position and were "dominated by narrow views." The *Worker* conceded that all these charges were justified and that "most thoughtful women will admit their truth." Nevertheless, the *Worker* felt that when women, despite these handicaps, attempted to make some contribution to the socialist cause, the men should not discourage them.

**O**F THE 41,000 dues-paying members in 1909, only 2,000 were women. Most party members obviously had not considered it worth their time to recruit their own wives and daughters. Nevertheless, no thanks to its own efforts, the SP had a galaxy of highly talented women spokesmen and leaders—Mary Marcy, Kate Sadler Greenhalgh, Rose Pastor Stokes, Anita Whitney, Margaret Prevey, Jeannette Pearl, Mother Jones, Ella Reeve Bloor—and under their unrelenting pressure, a Woman's Committee was finally set up in 1908, and the party began to devote some attention to the subject of equal rights for women.

The housebreaking of the Socialist Party under its right-wing leadership earned it a lot of respectful approbation from reformers and polite society. The *Nation*, which in

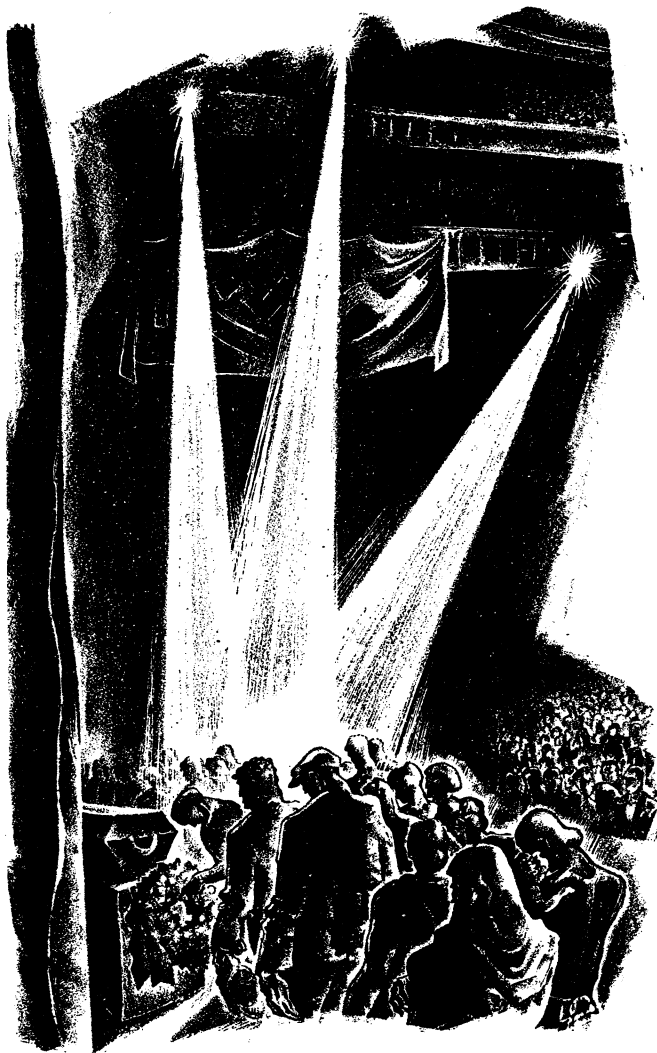
previous years had bitterly condemned the Socialist Party, now noted with satisfaction that "parlor socialism" was replacing "revolutionary socialism." The *American Magazine* accepted an article from Berger and referred to him as "the sanest and most influential socialist in the country who commands respect everywhere." But this warm appreciation from the genteel sectors of society notwithstanding, the party continued to stagnate and slump badly. Although about 150,000 people were recruited between 1905 and 1909, party membership in the latter year stood at 41,000.

During 1909 and the first months of 1910 the party press was flooded with articles and letters demanding to know "What's the matter with the Socialist Party." The answers and remedies were legion. One National Committeeman even suggested abolition of both the National and National Executive committees and the transaction of all business by means of referendums as a way to invigorate the party. The right-wing leaders attributed the difficulties to a lack of imagination in the distribution of literature, and put the blame on the membership's "lack of confidence" in its leadership and in itself. This discussion would have died of anemia but for the fact that the left wing, reactivated and better organized at this time, entered the lists, and began its most aggressive and sustained attack since the formation of the party.

The growing strength and assurance of the left wing rested on the constantly rising swell of progressivism and radicalism after the 1907 depression. The left wingers' original enthusiasm for the IWW, which had been dampened by the lack of progress and internal bickerings after 1905, rose again with the sensational IWW victory at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania in 1909, and its aggressive round of organizing and strike activities that followed. The *International Socialist Review* heralded the IWW as "the best available rallying point for socialists on the economic field and it is on that field that the main battle must be fought and won before capitalism will end."

**T**HE LEFT WING thus renewed the battle with the reformists on the same ideological ground that it had marked out in 1904-05, even though the leadership of the depleted IWW had by this time been taken over by the anarcho-syndicalists. The right wing, it goes without saying, was vitriolic in its hatred of the IWW and all its works. But the conflict between the right and left was not as muddled as might appear. Because the division between the two camps was basically not over the tactic of the superiority of building an independent industrial union movement *versus* working for industrial unionism inside the AFL; and certainly not a debate between Marxism vs. syndicalism. In distorted form, it was actually the division between the reformist doctrine of a peaceful and painless transition through the Victor Berger brand of political action *versus* the revolutionary doctrine of transition through militant conflict, or, as it is sometimes simplified, reform *versus* revolution.

In this battle that raged up and down the Socialist Party from 1910 to 1912, the left wing was fortified with an effective publication of its own. The *International Socialist Review* owned by Charles H. Kerr & Co., one of the two major socialist publishing houses, was taken over



A martyr of the Paterson strike is commemorated at the 1916 Madison Square Garden pageant organized by John Reed and others for the strikers, who were led by the IWW.

by the Haywood-Mary Marcy group of left wingers when Charles H. Kerr came over to the left in 1908. The *Review*, which had a circulation of 4,000 under A. M. Simons, its previous editor, soon tripled its sales as a militant left-wing monthly which was in the thick of every important class battle. By 1911 it was selling 40,000 copies a month.

The *Review* had two prescriptions to end party lethargy: 1) Put the party in the forefront of the fight for industrial unionism and all other economic struggles of the workers; 2) Instruct members who won political office that their major job was "to hamper the ruling class in the war it will be waging on the revolutionary unions." To the Massachusetts Socialists, who had seen their vote drop to less than a third of what it had been in 1902, they said: "You are too tame, the spirit of '76 has departed from you. You submit, you don't fight, the capitalists are not afraid of you and therefore your proletarian army is not recruited."

The left wing began pounding away on the theme that valuable reforms could not be won by watering down the socialist program, but as by-products of militant struggle, and pointed out that in Cleveland, Ohio, where the party

followed the left wing, more favorable labor legislation had been passed than in Milwaukee. They began a barrage against the arrogance of the party intellectuals toward the working-class members of the party, and some even proposed to limit party membership to workers. The Socialist Party, the left thundered, must be a working-class political organization, whose aim was to educate and organize the proletariat for the winning of political power. It was the political expression of the class struggle, not of Christian brotherhood, or "good government."

**I**T IS A FACT to be noted that the Socialist Party reached the zenith of its prestige and power between 1910 and 1912, the very years that the left wing was at the height of its activity and influence, and that the party declined disastrously after 1912 when the left wing was decapitated. This rise is especially noteworthy as American elections in this period saw a growing number of reform candidates in the field, culminating in Theodore Roosevelt's Progressivism and Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom. But, whereas the competition of the reformers cut deeply into the Socialist vote in 1906 and 1908, the far greater competition of Roosevelt and Wilson proved insufficient to stem the Socialist advance.

Under the lash of the left wing, SP participation and leadership in strike struggles hit a new high, climaxed by the impressive work during the Lawrence strike of 1911. By 1912, Socialists had the official support of such leading AFL unions as the Brewery, Bakery, Garment, Hatters, Fur Workers, Machinists, Journeymen Tailors and Western Federation of Miners, not to mention great segments of support in many other unions. There were over 100 Socialist delegates at the 1912 AFL convention and they put up a most impressive fight. A resolution for industrial unionism introduced by the miners' union was defeated on a roll call, 11,000 to 6,000. The Socialist candidate for president of the AFL, Max Hayes of the Typographers, polled 5,000 votes to Gompers' 12,000. The *New York Call* was elated at the Socialists' strong showing and concluded that "it was the most encouraging convention the AFL has yet had."

The renewed militancy of the revolutionary socialists beginning in the fall of 1909 brought an immediate spurt in party recruiting. Membership, which stood at 41,000 in 1909, jumped to 58,000 in 1910, 84,000 in 1911, and to 150,000, the all-time high, at the May 1912 party convention. That year, Debs polled 900,000 votes, more than double the vote of the previous election. Colonel Harvey, editor of *Harper's Weekly*, one of the main figures responsible for pushing Woodrow Wilson into the political limelight, estimated that without the competition of Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party, Debs would have received an additional half-million votes. The *New York Call* announced that "power is in sight."

**B**UT RATHER than being thrust into power, the SP was thrust into a new showdown fight between its two antipathetic factions. The more influential the party grew, the more each faction found it impossible to live with its rival. By 1909, the right-wing leaders were openly inviting all elements who did not agree with their "one-step-at-a-time" brand of socialism to clear out of the party. The

exhortations were not limited to moral sermons. Hillquit, whose specialty was small-time parliamentary manipulations and trick "jobs," developed, in alliance with the Wisconsin crew, a pattern of expulsions, formation of dual state and local organizations, and other organizational devices designed to discourage left wingers from remaining in the party. These tactics were quite successful in many cases, and probably thousands of Socialists quit the organization in disgust.

The resolution accompanying the resignation of the entire Third Ward branch of Local Denver, Colorado, in 1909 bears quotation, as it illustrates the disillusionment and contempt of many left wingers toward the organization they had worked so hard to build. The resolution charged that the SP was no longer a revolutionary working-class organization but had become "a stamping ground for faddists, careerists and notoriety seekers." Proletarian leadership had been replaced by a

*cockroach element, composed of preachers without pulpits, lawyers without clients, doctors without patients, storekeepers without customers, disgruntled political coyotes and other riff-raff. In their mad scramble for votes, these muddle-headed marauders of the middle class have seen fit to foist upon the Socialist Party such infamies as "craft unionism," "anti-immigration," "state autonomy," and a series of ludicrous and illogical "immediate demands." [A small minority of left extremists were opposed to immediate demands.] Therefore, we fifty-five proletarian members do reaffirm our allegiance to the principles of scientific socialism and to the cause of our class, and do hereby withdraw from the organization falsely called "The Socialist Party of the United States."*

**B**Y 1910, William D. Haywood, who had a national reputation as an indomitable revolutionary labor leader, emerged as the most important spokesman of the left wing in the SP. He ran for delegate to the International Socialist Congress that year. Of the eight elected, Berger came in first with almost 10,000 votes and Haywood immediately behind him with just 200 votes less. This represented a big left-wing victory. The following year, Haywood accepted nomination to the National Executive Committee. He issued a public statement outlining his views, saying he did not want anyone to vote for him without understanding his position. The executive committee, wrote Haywood, must abandon its practice of acting as a supreme court in all local matters. It must also cease appropriating the power to legislate in party affairs. The role of the committee should be to guide the propaganda work of the party directed to educating the working class in political and industrial solidarity.

Hillquit immediately opened an attack on Haywood's candidacy. In a widely reprinted letter to the *New York Call*, he charged that Haywood's pamphlet on industrial socialism was anarchistic, and pontificated that socialists favored change exclusively "by regular and lawful methods." The Hillquit-Haywood exchange precipitated a year-long discussion on the question of force and violence, kept alive by the right wing because of its hysteria over the McNamara confessions and its determination to break the back of the left-wing opposition. The battle to keep Haywood off the executive committee raged with an unprecedented fury, but when the votes were counted, "Big



BIG BILL HAYWOOD

Bill" Haywood had come in third, 2,000 votes ahead of Hillquit. The faction fires continued to smolder throughout the year, and with the approach of the May 1912 convention, the attacks on Haywood and the revolutionary socialists reached new intensity as the reformist leaders decided to bring things to a head this time. The left wingers were also eager for a reckoning, as they were convinced that "winning tactics" had been discovered in the Lawrence strike. The *International Socialist Review* called upon all revolutionists who had left the party in disgust, or who hesitated to join what they considered a "vote-getting" outfit, to enroll at once so that the party might be set on the road of revolutionary socialism.

**T**HE TENSION was overwhelming at the 1912 convention as everyone anticipated big fireworks. The left-wing delegation handled itself well and won a few of the preliminary skirmishes and contests. Then the right wing threw its roundhouse punch, that the constitution be amended to read: "Any member of the party who opposes political action or advocates crime, sabotage, or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class to aid in its emancipation should be expelled from membership in the party." When a delegate from Pennsylvania moved to delete the entire section as it was open to numerous interpretations, his remarks were interrupted and a shout went up from the right-wing sections: "The syndicalists must go!"

The left wing thus found itself under attack on an issue almost impossible to explain to the primarily middle-class delegations which made up the SP convention. Under the most propitious circumstances it would have been difficult to convince a group of small business men and professionals of the tactical wisdom of syndicalist practice and how the class struggle sometimes erupts in violence; and after the McNamara case and the loss of the Los Angeles election, the circumstances were anything but propitious. The roll call at the conclusion of the hectic

debate showed the left-wing motion defeated 191 to 90. Flushed with victory, the right moved on to try to eliminate Debs as the presidential candidate. But here they were frustrated by the enormous popularity of the man. Even so, they mustered 40 percent of the vote in opposition to Debs and saddled him with a running mate from the extreme right.

The capitalist press greeted the right-wing victory with a paean of praise. The left wing tried to roll with the punch and advised its supporters to ignore the amendment as preposterous. But Hillquit and Berger meant business on smashing the opposition. The Rand School gang engineered a move later that year to recall Haywood from the National Committee on the ground that he violated the SP constitution in a speech he made November 1912 at the Harlem Casino in New York. The balloting on the issue closed February of the following year, and with about a quarter of the membership participating, Haywood was recalled by a vote of 22,000 to 11,000.

Once again the jackal press rang with congratulatory editorials. The N. Y. *World* announced that Socialists could now "honestly appeal to public opinion as a party that recognized the rules of orderly government and rejects the theory that the lawless shall gain power by intimidation and terrorism." But this enthusiasm was not shared by the rank and file. After Haywood's recall and his refusal to renew his party membership, the rolls declined precipitously. Thousands of left wingers dropped out at once. Within four months, enrollment had dropped another 40,000. As a matter of fact, party influence declined drastically all along the line, and the SP never again remotely reached the point of strength attained at the time of the 1912 convention. The 1916 SP vote was a third less than Debs polled in 1912 and Socialist influence in the AFL had virtually disappeared. As for the left wing, it was five years before it was able to recover from the heavy blow and reconstitute itself as a force inside the party. The momentum the organization possessed was just sufficient, however, to maintain it as the socialist leader in the field until it was displaced by the rising communist movement after the SP split in 1919.

#### GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

UNEMPLOYMENT haunted every phase of the Michigan State CIO Convention held here June 7-10. Some of the largest locals of the United Auto Workers couldn't attend because their membership had so dwindled that they lacked sufficient funds to send delegates.

The major rallying point of the progressive opposition to Reuther was the 30-hour week at 40 hours pay. Walter Quillico of the Ford local, who ran against August Scholle for state CIO presidency, presented the case for the demand. He received 160 votes in a convention of 800, and his militant approach was exemplified by his proposal that the convention listen to the sentiments of the rank and file, and stage mass demonstrations "to penetrate the iron curtain around legislative halls."

Pat Quinn, vice-president of Dodge Local 3, in speaking on the weak administration resolution on unemployment (legislative proposals plus dependence on the Democrats), said he was "for everything in this resolution, but when we adopt it I will still be going back to my local without any jobs for my 22,000 unemployed members." In a moving 30-minute speech, he described foreclosures, hospital bills, relief problems, men with more than 30 years' seniority seeking new jobs.

Quinn told of the union conferences which sent him home

IN THE twelve years described here, the Socialist Party achieved great things and raised socialism to the heights of an impressive national movement. In common with socialist parties throughout Western Europe in this period, it divided into revolutionary and reform wings which, in the American instance, battled it out with fiercer determination than anywhere else in the Western world, and kept the organization in a state of constant strife and civil war. While the right wing was even worse, or at least more outspoken than its counterparts in the European parties, the left wing was marred by its lack of clarity on many questions and its syndicalist errors. This was the second time in American labor history that socialism was detoured by syndicalist or anarcho-syndicalist doctrines, a trend undoubtedly to be explained by the unusual corruption of American politics, the existence of large numbers of foreign-born workers without citizenship rights, and the unrestrained ferocity and violence of the ruling class in resisting labor organization.

But the syndicalist errors of the left wing should not blind one to its great virtues and superb accomplishments. The American left wing was probably stronger, more militant and more effective than most of the left forces in Western Europe. Its relative strength derived, peculiarly enough, from American backwardness, and specifically, from the ultra-reactionary, craft-exclusive character of the Gompers AFL leadership. Whereas in Germany, Italy and England, the reformists were provided with a solid base by the trade union bureaucracy, in America the Gompers machine remained obdurate opponents of socialism. The right wing was thus weakened in relation to its rival, even though it had some strength in a number of AFL unions, and the oppositionist currents in the trade unions were able the more easily to be corralled behind left-wing leadership.

IT WAS the struggles and accomplishments of the left wing—with their sweep and heroism, as well as faults and shortcomings—that paved the way for the new movement which emerged after the First World War and the massive labor advances of the Thirties.

empty-handed, and said he was going to keep on fighting this problem until he had made a "pest" of himself. He proposed a special emergency convention of the UAW to organize action by both employed and unemployed, and to press the 30-hour demand.

The chief fight at the convention took place over an administration proposal to increase its share of the dues dollar by one cent per capita. To this, Russell Leach, president of UAW Local 155, protested that "further financial burdens will destroy our local unions," which he called the "heart of the union movement."

The convention divided almost equally on the show of hands, but the chairman called the motion carried and refused a roll call vote, whereupon the convention could not be brought back to order for an hour. In the caucuses that evening there was talk of a walkout if the roll call were not granted, and the next day, a count of delegates showed more than the required 40 percent for the roll call. In the count of votes, the dues change proposed by the administration carried, with the help of some "blue-sky" proxies from locals not attending, by a vote of 2,576 to 2,320. By this narrow margin, the Scholle-Reuther leadership weathered the first organizational crisis resulting from unemployment.

The following three articles continue the discussion on McCarthyism begun in our May issue. Arthur K. Davis is a sociology professor at a large Eastern university, Robert Henderson is a Milwaukee industrial worker and active unionist who participated in the recent McCarthy recall petition drive, and the third article was contributed by a Midwest reader and supporter of the American Socialist.

## Must Reject Anti-Communism

by Arthur K. Davis

**I**N RECENT MONTHS, a definitive analysis of McCarthyism has been rounded out in the *American Socialist*, the *Monthly Review* and to a lesser extent in the *Nation*. The Left is showing healthy signs of rethinking its theory and practice. There seems little to add, except by way of summary, to the objective analysis already available. But the matter of tactics needs more discussion.

McCarthyism is in part a factional struggle for power within the ruling capitalist elite—the newer economic regions and groups against the older. In part it is a capitalist weapon against social reform and revolution. And finally it is Joe McCarthy's bid for power. All three aspects use the key ideology of anti-communism, which in effect means anti-change. The main concern of progressives is with the second aspect, to which the term "McCarthyism" will henceforth be restricted herein.

McCarthyism is not fascism. When capitalist authorities can no longer rule by ordinary methods they resort to fascism—state capitalism based on mass violence against opponents, large-scale scapegoating or divide-and-rule, and war. Fascist violence has been developed by the United States only on the outer fringes of its realm, notably in Korea. At home such drastic methods have thus far been unnecessary. Capitalist politicians can rely instead on the fraud of anti-communism.

During the last two decades, a horror stereotype of communism has been successfully built up in the public mind. Communism has been presented as the polar opposite of every traditional American virtue—as treasonous, totalitarian, conspiratorial, foreign. By means of the vaguely defined "communist front" device, any movement disapproved by the authorities can be linked to the communist stereotype, and its supporters can be labeled dupes or traitors. *Change=Russia=Communism* is the master formula of reaction. It has been implemented by the government chiefly through spy and conspiracy trials, McCarthyite inquisitions, loyalty purges and FBI intimidation. Red-baiting everywhere has reinforced this reaction.

As long as most organized groups accept the anti-communist formula, and as long as living standards are not severely reduced by depression and/or war, American fascism should not materialize. Before long, of course, the deepening depression should intensify mass discontent to the point where people will demand a positive social program. (War would probably delay this development.)



Anti-communism won't put pork chops on the table. We can then re-assess the prospects for full-blown fascism.

Meanwhile, McCarthyism will continue to be the spearhead of reaction goading the State toward wider repression. This much seems assured because McCarthyism can probably counter unorganized economic discontent until the depression becomes general, and because the intensifying factional conflict within the ruling elite is now conducted on McCarthyite terms. Whether Joe wins or loses his personal bid for power is hardly important, although I think present conditions favor him more than his critics. As long as the major power elements accept the anti-communist premise, Joe's opponents can only win by trying to out-McCarthy McCarthy. Is not this precisely the Brownell policy?

What are the best tactics to adopt against McCarthyism? A final answer is not yet clear. But no effective opposition is possible without completely rejecting the anti-communist formula. A program combining social change and anti-communism is a contradiction in terms. It would be a sitting duck for the McCarthyite charge of "soft on communism" or else it would be fascism.

**I** BELIEVE that progressives should aim next at a new farmer-labor party with such planks as these: the ending of imperialism and foreign military adventures, full employment by peacetime planning, nationalization of depressed industries, tax relief for the masses and wider social security. Doubtless a new party cannot materialize until deprivation has shaken farm and labor groups considerably more than it has yet.

Looking to the Democratic Party as a popular vehicle against McCarthyism seems to me an illusion. The Democrats started the witch-hunt and the cold war. They supported reactionary regimes everywhere. They intervened in Korea. Since World War II, their "liberal" domestic planks have been empty promises. There is some force in the Communist Party draft statement that the masses are still in the Democratic Party and that contact with them must be maintained. This argument might be decisive if progressives were numerous enough to affect the Democratic Party by joining it. The sad fate of European labor parties which have accepted junior partnerships in Rightist coalitions—and under much more favorable conditions—should warn us from that pitfall.

Progressive tactics should be formulated in terms of class instead of the two traditional parties, which are both capitalist and which obscure class lines by cutting across

them. A new farmer-labor party will sharpen those lines. Such a party must accept socialist participation and reject the anti-communist formula, and eventually (sooner rather than later) it will lead to socialism, but it need not necessarily declare for immediate socialism before winning a national election.

Though analogies prove nothing, they sometimes enlighten. Let us consider one. The last American revolution—the victory of industrial free capitalism over agrarian slave capitalism—required a new party, the Republican. This party sharpened existing class lines, legally won power, and successfully defeated the counter-revolutionary civil war started by the disgruntled slaveowners. The Left of those days, the Abolitionists, had twice campaigned unsuccessfully (1840, 1848) on radical abolitionist platforms. In 1856 they entered the new Republican Party, a broad coalition not itself abolitionist but which adopted limited aims making abolition eventually inevitable. The key plank was the restriction of slavery to its existing area—and slavery could not survive without expanding.

The emergence of a vigorous farmer-labor party would break the spell of McCarthyism, which rests on the negative incantation of anti-communism. It would also precipitate the issue of overt fascism. It is quite conceivable that the United States will run the entire gamut of McCarthyism, war and fascism. If there is anything around after that, it might then become a question whether socialism will come from within or from without.

The great historical fact of the twentieth century is the global transition from capitalism to socialism. If the rest of the world successfully completes this transition first, what happens in or to America may be of very little importance from the standpoint of human history.

## Candidate for Fuehrer

by Robert Henderson

**I**T WOULD BE an error to underestimate McCarthy's genius for politics and his talent for gauging the temper of the times. Graduating from law school in the heyday of the New Deal, he made his first venture into politics as a Democrat. An associate of that period says McCarthy was even a fervent supporter of Roosevelt. The Republican sweep of Wisconsin in 1938 made success as a Democrat seem unlikely. McCarthy then quietly switched parties, and later managed to win election as a circuit judge. The combination of his extreme ambition, attractive war record (later shown to be somewhat synthetic) and obscurity made him the choice of the Tom Coleman machine to beat Bob LaFollette, Jr. in 1946. At this point in his career, McCarthy could be regarded as just another capitalist politician who happened to be available when the bosses needed a candidate.

For some years, McCarthy functioned much as a machine hack might be expected. He ran errands and carried out his assignments in routine fashion. He often seemed to get the more distasteful chores. In 1948, for example, he executed the politically dangerous job of smearing Douglas MacArthur, who was running as a "favorite son" in the Wisconsin presidential primaries. (The smear was successful.)

Since the beginning of the anti-communist "crusade," McCarthy's relations with the machine have changed. He is no longer an errand boy for the state party bosses and local capitalists. Today McCarthy is accepted as the ideological leader of the state GOP organization. At the recent convention of state Young Republicans, the chairman read out of the organization all "liberals and those who oppose Senator McCarthy." A resolution praising McCarthy was carried by a 4 to 1 margin and other resolutions were defeated simply because their authors were anti-McCarthy. One delegate wrote later, "I was shocked to realize that our group was attending the rally of the new McCarthy party." McCarthy's hold on the adult organization is at least as strong. Only the dwindling LaFollette wing openly opposes him.

In recent years, McCarthy has been far more concerned with winning support outside his home state than in it. He has often voted in opposition to the platform of the state organization, and has shown but little energy in backing projects of special interest to Wisconsin. One of the striking differences between McCarthy and other senators is his indifference to the interests of his home state and his success in getting away with it.

Until the current "Joe Must Go" drive began to make headway, McCarthy was an infrequent visitor to Wisconsin. One of the measures of his concern with this movement is the fact that lately he has spent several weekends in the state. While most observers think McCarthy would win a recall election if one were held, he apparently feels that success of the signature campaign would be a black eye for him. So the recall movement is meeting a variety of harassing attacks. Threats were made against LeRoy Gore, the Sauk City editor who began the campaign. The McCarthyite district attorney has launched an investigation into the recall movement making veiled charges of violations of state laws. A McCarthyite has boasted that when the recall petitions are filed they will "know how many communists there are in the state." When a Republican state senator joined the recall movement, the Republican ward clubs in his district promptly started a drive to recall him. As a result of all this and the general witch-hunt, a surprising number of people are afraid to sign the petitions.

**T**O SUM UP, McCarthy has a secure base in the Wisconsin Republican Party, and in the last period he has been consciously driving for national leadership. His ambition is apparently boundless and he has no scruples as to the means of getting his objective. He had to violate the Wisconsin constitution to run for the Senate, and there is no reason to believe that he has any more respect for the United States constitution.

McCarthyism should be regarded as an embryonic fascist movement needing only the social crisis to fully develop those features now lacking. McCarthy is a candidate, and probably a conscious one, for the role of Fuehrer.

When the times call for social demagoguery, McCarthy will undoubtedly attempt to fill the need. His past record indicates that he is flexible enough to meet any such test. McCarthy already has cordial relations with white supremacists and anti-Semites through some of his Texas millionaire supporters. At present he judges open anti-

Semitism premature, but we should not let his employment of Roy Cohn hide the anti-Semitic aspects of some of his investigations.

Can the capitalists stop McCarthy? Perhaps one can imagine such a hypothetical development, but the fact is that none of the numerous efforts to stop him have even slowed him down for long. While it is true that the bulk of the capitalist class sees no need for him except as a chief witch-hunter, a substantial minority has apparently decided to back him all the way.

A final point. It is incorrect to say that the social crisis necessary for the success of a fascist movement must come before the outbreak of war. It is more likely that such a crisis would come in the course of the war.

## A Variety of Taftism

by H. Butler

**A**N IMPORTANT CLUE to the nature of McCarthyism can be found by going back to the last Republican national convention. At that time, a bitter struggle took place between the concentrated Dewey-Eisenhower-Wall Street group and the rest of the party led by Taft. Taft, a far more responsible politician than McCarthy, had mobilized an imposing force by dint of strenuous effort. But when the Wall Street juggernaut got into action, his backing was scattered to the four winds.

McCarthyism is a virulent and ignorant variety of Taftism. For this reason, you will find that his support consists of much of the old Taft group. Conservatism-isolationism is a broad and dispersed movement compared to the centralized power of the Wall Street group. In general it believes in open-shopism, America First, and an end to "New Deal creeping socialism."

The witch-hunt was not produced by conservatism. It results from the critical international position of American capitalism, which is the only stable prop of a world in revolutionary transition. The witch-hunt and American intervention on every point on the globe go hand in hand. This climate has been ideal for the conservative and reactionary elements. They have indulged themselves in an orgy of witch-hunting, while the Deweys and the Eisenhowers have stood benignly by.

But McCarthyite conservatism is irresponsible. In its most extreme form it opposes the United Nations, General Marshall, and charges the Democratic Party with "twenty years of treason." By its carping and backbiting, it is a constant thorn in the side of the executive arm, the State Department, the army, etc. There is no doubt that the executive is wresting more and more real power from the hands of Congress. One of McCarthy's battle cries is in defense of the prerogatives of the legislative branch. He then proceeds, of course, to usurp the functions of the judiciary. Yet the conservative attack against the "bureaucrats" should cause us no undue concern. Remember that the administration would like nothing better than the chance to send troops, say to Indochina, without having to get Congressional approval.

McCarthy has had powerful public support. But this backing is essentially passive. When General Lawton cooperated with his committee, it was through mutual conservative principles. The formation of fascist-action officer groups in the army would be an entirely different story.

The support of millions of conservative farmers, business men, and even Cadillac-driving Texas oil millionaires is one thing. A mass movement of millions of distraught, pauperized, middle-class elements would be something else again. The difference between fascism and conservatism is the difference between social stability and social crisis. The dynamic of these two movements is not similar.

That is why it is bad policy, and only courts disorientation, to confuse McCarthyism with fascism. This includes the "if," "and" and "but" varieties. To say that McCarthy is not "yet" a fascist, has the same value as saying that Herbert Hoover is not yet a socialist.

McCarthyism in "power" is not a realistic perspective. But such a highly improbable event would not be "Bonapartism"; it would be a recrudescence of an even more wooden-headed variety of Hooverism. It would open the road to class struggle and development, and not class defeat.

**Y**ET THE STRUGGLE that the Eisenhower-Wall Street group has been forced finally to launch against McCarthy has already had certain undeniable effects. Objectively speaking, it has tended to break the hypnosis of the witch-hunt. That's one of the reasons it was delayed so long. This favorable development, due to the contradictions of American politics, has taken place without the intervention of the Left. The question is, how can we intervene in an intelligent manner?

If we play with the idea that McCarthy is a fascist or a potential fascist, we seriously undermine our effectiveness from the very first. In all left-wing propaganda, we must clearly distinguish who the main enemy of the American people is.

The last time the House Un-American Activities Committee was here in Detroit, Reuther utilized the hysteria it engendered to clamp a receivership on Local 600. This time he issued a blast against the committee. The local papers (anti-McCarthy, of course) which last time helped bring the hysteria to a fever pitch, wrote embarrassed editorials this time. Obviously, the need to combat McCarthy has opened up serious gaps in the witch-hunt psychology that can be taken advantage of. We can, for example, popularize Bishop Oxnham's charge that this nefarious House committee has the files of two million Americans. We can bring the entire witch-hunt into question.

McCarthy's ill-advised venture against the army has cost him many of his previous supporters. He now stands isolated on his own committee. A terrific barrage of publicity has been leveled against him. His own party now holds him at arm's length. It is sheer folly to magnify his importance at this time.

I, for one, am not at all disturbed by McCarthy's actions that came at a time when Dulles was straining at the bit to organize intervention in Indochina. "Respectable" people like President Eisenhower have "deplored" the "disgrace" of the Army-McCarthy hearings. Not being respectable, all I can say is: "good show." Let the people learn what their leaders really are like.

For these reasons we should never allow ourselves to be diverted for one moment from concentrating our exposure against the chief culprits—the Eisenhower-Dulles-Brownell-Wall Street artisans of the police state and the third world war.



# Tensions Are Building Up

---

*It is part of the program of activity of the American Socialist to conduct lecture tours as often as possible, so that readers of the magazine may meet the editors, discuss with other readers, and listen to socialist views on current problems at first hand. Our first lecture tour, just concluded, was a brief one, covering only part of the*

*Midwest. Readers will be notified of all future lectures in their areas, and will be given sufficient notice so that they can prepare to attend and to bring others.*

*As a by-product of his brief tour, Bert Cochran, one of our editors, here presents some of his observations of the labor movement.*

---

**D**UE TO the press of work, I confined my Midwest tour to only four cities, Detroit, Flint, Chicago and Milwaukee. I addressed pretty fair meetings in Flint and Milwaukee and excellent ones in Detroit and Chicago. Our supporters are holding up in splendid fashion in these difficult times. These are associates of whom we can be proud. Their will to struggle has not been affected by the witch-hunt, and everywhere they are plugging along, doing everything within their power for the advancement of the cause.

The Midwest wears a deceptive garb of peace and tranquillity. Most of the cities have grown considerably in the war and postwar years, and in Detroit, and especially in Flint, there is a large amount of building still going on. The bars are crowded with friendly working people, with apparently plenty of money to spend, and when the street-cars fill up at the change of shifts in the late afternoon, the people still seem easy-going and relaxed.

But the tensions are building up in America so rapidly, one does not have to probe too deeply beneath the deceptive facade of the hustle and

bustle of urban life to discover them. While I was in Milwaukee, the headlines shrieked that Herbert Kohler, president of the Kohler Plumbing and Fixture Co., testified before the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board that he had plenty of guns and tear gas in his plant and was in favor of using the stuff on his striking workers. Just as in 1934, 3,500 Kohler workers are fighting a desperate battle to keep their union against this brutal open shop czar (a cousin of Wisconsin's governor). It has been quite a few years since we have witnessed industrial warfare of this kind.

Meanwhile, the "Joe Must Go" movement certainly stimulated a lot of thinking about the McCarthy problem. I was informed that since the movement started, discussions have increased tremendously in the plants. I myself heard a lot of animated talk around the hotel lobby and in eating places. During one lunch hour, a group of salesmen and neighborhood business men were carrying on pro and con about McCarthy with all of the grim determination and loud assertiveness that heretofore has been reserved for baseball talk. A cop finally broke the tension of this discussion by an-

nouncing to us that "Reilly joined the army and is now living the life of Schine."

**I** AVAILED myself of the opportunity of my stay in Detroit to visit with a few union officials of my acquaintance. I was closely associated with these union men in past struggles, and although our paths diverged years ago, we have maintained friendly personal relationships. These men are all well established in the union today and their thinking reflects more the slant of top CIO policy-makers than their past radicalism. But the specter of unemployment is something they cannot wave away, as it confronts them every hour of the day in their local situations, and has had a shattering effect on some of them. While I was sitting in the office of one of these local union presidents, the phone rang nine or ten times in the course of an hour, with unemployed workers on the other end wanting to know when they are going back to work.

As it was explained to me, the UAW is actually doing very little about the unemployment situation. Some of the officials, in their bewilderment and fright, are succumbing to tactics of capitulation, as in the case of Vice-President Gosser, who agreed to a wage cut in the Kaiser-Willys plants in Toledo.

One has to have experienced the specialized atmosphere and difficulties of a big union, the strong tradition of narrow-minded opportunism and small-time politics, and the inertia of the membership over long periods of time, to be able to understand the mentality of the labor bureaucracy, and how it can organize retreats and capitulations, with the righteous conviction, or rationalization, that it is thereby serving the best interests of the union. Of course most union officials maintain discreet silence in these matters, but one bull in a china shop has actually blurted out what is in the minds of some of the union leaders. Pete Horwatt, president of Budd Local 306, wrote in his column of the May 20 issue of his local paper: "From a high of over 8,000 members, our membership is down to approximately 4,500 members. The prospects for many of these members returning in the very near future is extremely dim. . . . It will do our members no

earthly good to have the best working conditions, the best relief periods and the best wages in town if all of the work is sublet to other companies. . . . Although I know that I will be criticized for writing this article and inferring that we'll have to do more work, I say frankly that the handwriting is on the wall."

**D**ESPITE the unemployment which is affecting all of them in Detroit, the union officials I visited were not only very well dressed, with offices considerably improved in furnishings and appearance since my time, but they were well poised, self-confident and optimistic.

"Where are you going," I asked one of them, "or where do you think you are going?"

"Things are going to work out all right," he explained to me. "We're going to make a killing in November. The Democrats are going to get a majority in the House. The Big Boys are going to get scared that if they don't give a little, we'll have a left-Roosevelt government. We'll get five billion dollars for hospitals and schools in public works, and unemployment will even off."

I told him I thought it was a somewhat idealized picture of things to come. I thought the Democrats might very well have a victory in November, and there very well could be a public works program that would take up the slack in employment, but that I didn't think it would be for hospitals and schools, but for bombs and guns—and that would represent a big cut in the workingman's living standards. We tossed that around for a while, and finally closed the discussion when he jocularly asked me that if I was so smart, why wasn't I rich.

I discussed with another official the guaranteed annual wage.

"We'll get it," he assured me.

"What makes you so sure?" I asked.

"We'll get it." He was quite positive. He thought Reuther had a nibble from the corporations.

"What are you going to get?" I continued.

"Well, it's chiefly a 7 to 10 cent an hour fund deal, like the pension fund, wrapped around with a darn good slogan. What happens in such a situation," he went on, "is that once you reach an agreement with the compan-

ies, they then join with you in getting the unemployment benefits raised in the legislatures, so that their liabilities are reduced to minor proportions, and the load is pushed on to the shoulders of the general public."

The CIO unions have accomplished a lot of things since the new union movement was launched almost twenty years ago. They have raised the living standards of the auto workers to one of the highest in the land. Can they

continue making progress, or even holding their own, by the old methods and ideas? Not in the era of Korean and Indochinese wars, of McCarthyism, of the atom and hydrogen bombs. The old methods are outlived. And even these self-assured officials dropped their cocky talk and gave vent to uneasiness and a whole lot of questioning when we got on to the broader matters facing the labor movement in the days ahead.

## Clardy Finds An Opening

*Our June issue carried a report on how the House Un-American Activities Committee fell flat on its face in Detroit. Unfortunately, this committee (headed by Congressman Kit Clardy for the Michigan show) was able to whip up considerable hysteria in Flint.*

### FLINT

**I**N mid-May the House Un-American Activities Committee went to town in Flint. Within three days it turned this industrial community into a nest of hate, hysteria and vigilante action. Scores of workers named by FBI informants were driven from their jobs in four General Motors plants by mobs of irate workers, many of them led and abetted by officers of the local unions. Homes of alleged communists were bombarded by stones and pails of paint. Before the hysteria subsided, the General Motors Corporation fired several workers for falsification of their employment records.

The success of the Clardy committee in Flint after its abject defeat in Detroit caught the labor movement by surprise. For well over a year, the union leadership had campaigned against Congressman Clardy as an anti-

labor Republican from the Flint district. They hoped thereby to destroy Clardy's effectiveness as a witch-hunter, and his attempt to use the hearings as a catapult for reelection.

Unfortunately, the union policy failed completely in the context of special circumstances encountered in Flint. Its main weakness was the absence of a categorical declaration to defend all workers who use the Fifth Amendment, regardless of their political beliefs.

It is now apparent that many in Flint consider a person who uses the Fifth Amendment guilty of "subversive" activity, and even identify the receipt of a subpoena with "subversion" and Communist Party membership. Two subpoenaed workers who had not even testified were forcibly ejected from the plants. One worker had quit the Communist Party in 1949, while the other publicly declared he had never been a member of any political party.

The special circumstance setting Flint apart from Detroit at present is the high rate of employment enjoyed by GM workers. The attention of the entire community was forcibly focused on the sham problem of communism,



AMMUNITION UAW-CIO

undiverted by an immediate economic problem. This was emphasized by the monopoly in the news medium. The *Flint Journal*, sole daily newspaper, printed names, addresses and places of employment of subpoenaed workers as front page news for a week. Pictures of ousted workers with ripped shirts vied with hysterical articles. None too subtle appeals to anti-Semitic prejudices were sandwiched in between snide references to "intellectuals" and "New York colonizers."

**E**QUALLY damaging was the placing of an administratorship over the Chevrolet local union by the UAW International Executive Board on the eve of the hearings. As the Chevrolet local was the main target of the Clardy committee, the administratorship appeared to give union sanction to the witch-hunters.

In short order, the labor movement found itself thoroughly embroiled in the red scare. The conservative Buick local leaders besmirched themselves with a headline declaration that they would refuse to defend workers tossed out of the plant. This did not prevent their local opposition from attempting to smear these Buick officials for being too soft on "communists."

When several defendants testified during the hearings to altering their employment records (which is a common practice to escape the employer's blacklist) this understandable act was blown up by the Clardy committee, the press and GM into a full-fledged "conspiracy." It was clear from the hearings that the GM Security Force had this information years before, but refrained from any move until it could artificially provoke a scare. By the firings, suspensions and general hysteria, GM acted to ensure Clardy's reelection, just as in 1952 the corporations used the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings in Detroit to elect Charles Potter to the U.S. Senate.

**T**HE WITCH-HUNTERS were after the union more than the isolated witnesses. Beatrice Churchill, FBI informant, was repeatedly asked leading questions in an attempt to identify the Chevrolet local union as a hotbed of communist activity. Only when it became apparent that this attack had gone too far and would arouse broad labor opposition was this

## Flint Chevrolet Local Under Attack

**F**LINT LABOR was stunned when the CIO United Auto Workers' International Executive Board announced that it was pressing charges of "anti-union activity" against 14 leading officers of Chevrolet Local 659, including the president, the entire shop bargaining committee, and publicity committee. The attack, coming at the time of the Clardy committee hearings in Flint, is similar to Walter Reuther's 1951 assault on Ford Local 600 after hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee. All but two of the accused are members of an opposition caucus to Reuther.

The charges center around articles published in the Chevrolet *Searchlight* which criticized the International Union's Review Board for rejecting and stalling workers' grievances. The Chevrolet shop committee published several pages of rejected grievances. It had suggested to GM director Livingstone that he reverse the stand of the board, and publicized the matter after he failed to respond.

The Chevrolet position got a big response from many GM locals. The umpire system piles up a huge backlog of grievances and forces workers to wait from six months to a year for a ruling. In addition, Reuther's Review Board acts as a screening committee and arbitrarily tosses hundreds of grievances into the waste basket. This type of bargaining, which the workers call "collective begging," has pushed working conditions back to pre-war days in the GM plants.

Bert Boone, one of the indicted Chevrolet committeemen, has described in a letter the kind of treatment that workers are given by Reuther's Review Board:

"I have experienced appearance be-

fore this committee, and to state the case mildly, it is my opinion workers aren't welcome, especially those who are so bold as to protest the boss' action. Their attitude is contemptible. They seemingly owe no responsibility or allegiance to anyone except the rotten political machine of which they evidently are part and parcel.

"It is difficult for me to understand how people who call themselves men can stomach such treatment as the 'Meat Cleaver Committee' deals out to the very victims who pay their unwarranted exorbitant salaries. . . ."

Reuther has attempted to cover up the factional nature of his charges by throwing a cloud of talk about "financial irregularities" over them. Without putting this in the formal charges, he has spoken of the squandering of union funds. It is the policy of local unions to pay committeemen for "lost time" from work to write grievances. Where these payments have become excessive, Reuther himself is as much responsible as anybody else, having encouraged this trend to help grease his way to power in the union. His criticism of Chevrolet in this respect could be applied with equal justification to a hundred locals dominated by the administration. Moreover, Reuther failed to bring charges against the financial secretary of the local, who is a Reuther supporter!

Reuther's determination to maintain his AFL-type bargaining structure in GM and to terrorize any opposition threatens the remaining autonomous rights of all locals. This action by the International is especially contemptible and ominous since Chevrolet is known throughout the UAW as one of the most militant and effective locals in the country.

dropped. Emil Mazey, International Secretary-Treasurer, felt it necessary to declare that the issue of communism had nothing to do with the administratorship over Chevrolet and wound up calling Clardy a "bumble-headed politician."

When the hysteria grew more vicious, the UAW took a full page ad which cited the role of the vigilante Flint Alliance in the 1937 sitdown strikes and flatly charged that the same forces were operating in the 1954 witch-hunt. The *Flint Journal*, a GM mouthpiece, thereupon ominously warned Messrs. Reuther, Mazey, Livingstone, and Gosser (the four top officers of the UAW-CIO) "not to resurrect memories of those troublous days," and pointedly declared that the rank

and file don't think the same of the union as they did fifteen years ago.

This report would be incomplete without indicating the extent of the opposition. By and large, the union officials took a straightforward union stand. While many lesser officers were swept up in the mad swirl, hundreds stood their ground. The older workers in Fisher Body and Chevrolet who lived through the 1937 experience tried to act as a counter-balance. Temporarily they were overwhelmed by the greater numbers of younger, more inexperienced workers. With help from the union they can quickly regain lost ground, if the union leaders take a firm, consistent stand on the issue. Equivocation, half-way measures and silence can be disastrous.



## BOOK REVIEW

### *Was It Planned That Way?*

*The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor*, by Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald, USN, Retired. Devin-Adair Company, New York, 1954, \$3.50.

ON December 7, 1941, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor took a toll of 4,575 casualties; two battleships were totally destroyed; two battleships were sunk; four battleships were severely damaged. Destroyers, cruisers and auxiliary vessels were heavily damaged or destroyed.

The immediate result of this military catastrophe was the entry of the United States into World War II. It is Admiral Theobald's contention, echoing what is now an old charge, that Roosevelt planned it that way. The motive was the need to overcome the stubborn isolationism of the American people; the proof offered is a documented record of the withholding of vital information from the Pearl Harbor naval and army command.

Unlike two previous books on this subject, one by the liberal historian Charles A. Beard, and the other by archreactionary Charles Tansill, no attempt is made to deal with either the political or moral justification of Roosevelt's diplomatic and military course. The admiral's work has the ostensible aim of clearing the reputations of Admiral Kimmel and General Short who, he claims, were the scapegoats blamed after eight investigations of the Pearl Harbor disaster for the lack of preparation for the attack.

But the fact is that the Midwestern, ultra-reactionary "isolationist" wing of the Republican Party is using this book and the Pearl Harbor scandal in their political campaigns against the Democrats and against those Republicans who supported Roosevelt's foreign policy. I certainly do not intend to become a partisan in this controversy in this review, since neither the Rooseveltian claim that entry into World War II was necessary to defeat totalitarianism, nor the isolationists' pose as defenders of the peace, are valid. It was the Democrats who propped up the rule of the Japanese warlords after the defeat of Japan, and reinstated the rule of the Krupps and a host of Nazi figures in Germany, and these same "isolationists" who would smear Roosevelt as being solely responsible for World War II were the loudest proponents of atom-bombing China during the Korean War.

It is, however, a commentary upon the present apathy of the American labor and liberal movements that this and previous

revelations of the deliberate plot leading to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor have not produced a great wave of indignation and protest from the masses and their organizations. What should have become the basis for a political uprising against secret diplomacy and war-making powers of the presidency, has instead become a mere instrument in the hands of one clique of capitalists against another.

**T**HEOBALD marshals incontrovertible facts to substantiate his charge: first, the Commander-in-Chief in the White House had ample information that the Japanese were planning an attack precisely at Pearl Harbor, well in advance of the attack. But this information was withheld from the Pearl Harbor command. All other military and naval outposts were informed. It is justifiable to deduce that the decoded messages containing information that Japan was preparing to bomb Oahu were not relayed to Pearl Harbor lest the commanders deploy the fleet and thereby warn Japan that her plans were known.

Secondly, the Pacific Fleet was kept in Hawaii by the President's order, against naval advice. This, says Theobald, "could serve only one possible purpose, an invitation to a surprise Japanese attack."

One message, decoded by the American intelligence which had broken the Japanese code with a machine known as Magic, instructed Japanese agents in Hawaii to inform Tokyo daily of the exact location of the fleet in the harbor. This followed a previous message requesting information on fleet movements out of the harbor. It would not have been illogical to assume that the later message indicated at least a plan to attack the Pearl Harbor fleet in the harbor, where it was arrayed like so many sitting ducks.

The evidence is overwhelming, in this book's succinct listing of facts, that Roosevelt knew what was coming. That he did nothing to alert the fleet could only mean he was eager that Japan strike first.

In Charles A. Beard's book describing the diplomatic steps preparatory to provoking Japan into war, the political means and aims underlying Roosevelt's military moves were fully documented. First Japan was ringed with an iron economic blockade; then in diplomatic negotiations Japan was required to give up all efforts toward imperialist expansion and to surrender her claims on Far Eastern trade and influence to U.S. imperialism. Then, having pushed Japan's warlords to the wall, the enticing target of Pearl Harbor was offered them, inciting the hungry beast to turn and fight.

With a third world war threatening the destruction of civilization, the story of Pearl Harbor should warn all those who would fight for peace. There is terrible danger implicit in the system of government which makes it possible for a president to prepare and plan a war, to plot the destruction of thousands of Americans, in order to arouse a war fever and carry out his warmaking program.

J. G.

### *The Generals Picked Eddie*

*The Execution of Private Slovik*, by William Bradford Huie. Paper-bound edition, New American Library, New York, 1954, 35 cents.

**P**RIVATE Eddie Slovik was the only American soldier to be executed for the crime of desertion on the field of battle since 1864. Militarily such an act is considered *per se* to be an admission of cowardice, and retribution is expected. As expressed by the military, "an able-bodied American who will not fight for his country has no right to live." But of the thousands of cases of desertion since the Civil War, why was Eddie Slovik the only one executed for this crime? About 40,000 soldiers deserted or "bugged out" during World War II, 2,864 were sentenced to 20 years to death, 49 death sentences were approved, but only Eddie Slovik was shot. Why?

William Bradford Huie poses these questions in a warm and sympathetic manner, in an otherwise grim portrayal of the life of Eddie Slovik. Bringing forth the facts from the archives, the personal recollections of people connected with the man, and most powerfully from Slovik's own letters, the author recreates this compelling human tragedy with a chilling effectiveness which finds the reader bound to the book, and aghast and drooping at the finish.

The unfortunate life of Eddie Slovik is a drama of calamities not unfamiliar to many in our society today, punctured briefly with the light of a near-successful struggle, only to have the final crushing blow destroy all that was worked for and achieved. Slovik's wife said: "He was the unluckiest kid that ever lived."

Eddie Slovik was indeed a tragic figure because of the circumstances that governed his life. Born in a substandard neighborhood in Detroit in 1920, Eddie started to have trouble with the law at an early age. This was at the depth of the depression. His father, a punch press operator at Briggs, wasn't working; both parents were drinking heavily, and Eddie probably began his petty thefts when he was ten or eleven, by stealing bread from his first employer, a baker. At twelve he was first booked, for breaking and entering a brass foundry with a group of his pals.

Between '32 and '37, numerous offenses occurred including petty theft, breaking and entering and disturbing the peace. In 1937, 2 months shy of eighteen, he was sent to Jackson Prison on a term of 6 months to 10 years for embezzlement. The crime was pocketing change, candy, gum and cigarettes from the drug store he was working in. The total amount was a little over \$50 over a 6-month period. Eddie was a model prisoner, and after serving almost a year was paroled, but in little more than 15 months he was again sent up, this time for getting beered-up with a group of buddies and taking a car for a "joy ride." After almost 3 years, in April 1942, Eddie was paroled.

Detroit in 1942 was different from the Detroit of 1939. No longer suffering from the depression, Detroit was now bustling with wartime prosperity, jobs were plentiful, wages high, and there was the chance for anyone who did not have to go into the service, and who wanted to go straight, to get ahead and make up for things he'd missed. The Detroit of 1942 provided Eddie with a job and a new chance in life. He was classified 4F because of his prison record.

**E**DDIE soon met and married Antoinette Wisniewski, the bookkeeper in the office where he worked. The year that followed was an extremely happy one for Eddie and Antoinette. Eddie got a better job, bought a second-hand car on which they made monthly payments, and bought new bedroom furniture for their two-room basement flat. They both worked feverishly to add to their small possessions, to buy some more furniture, get a larger apartment and eventually to make a payment on a home of their own. They were happy to have their lives revolve around each other. The war to them was remote, the visible effect was the economic boom.

On November 7, 1943, their first wedding anniversary, they moved into a new and larger apartment, heavily in debt on the furniture they bought to furnish it. That evening Eddie received word that he had been reclassified to 1A. Antoinette was already pregnant.

The author uses Eddie's letters to his wife while in the service, which averaged approximately one a day, to show the one strong emotional tie in his life, and give an accurate picture of the man, and the feelings indicative of the average American, forced to soldier. "I think I'm going to have a lot of trouble. Army life don't agree with me. . . . The food is terrible; the work is tough. . . . It reminds me of jail cause that's just the way they treat us. . . ."

Eddie tried to get a hardship discharge from the army, since Antoinette had had a miscarriage, after which she had a series of epileptic seizures, as many as seven strokes in one day, and she was unable to work. Though repeated attempts were made to secure the discharge and welfare aid for his wife, all failed. Antoinette recalls: ". . . a Red Cross representative called on me—a woman, strictly out for blood. . . . Her suggestion was that I not pay all the rent, and thus have more money left from the allotment for food. . . . she calmly told me to dispose of my furniture and move into one room. . . . When things got real tough, I tried everything, and got doors slammed in my face. . . ." Though Eddie's dependency discharge was submitted through channels, and Eddie's commanding officer was willing to approve it, it never came through and Eddie was sent overseas. The furniture store was worried about its delinquent payments, the landlord wanted the rent caught up, and his wife was, in effect, a cripple.

Slovik reached Europe in August and was assigned to G Company, 109th In-

fantry, and joined the unit on October 8 in Belgium, where it was engaged in the bloody battle of the Hurtgne Forest. One hour after joining the unit, Slovik deserted. The next day he voluntarily surrendered to officers of his unit, confessed to desertion and signed a statement to that effect. At this time, and in fact all during the war, soldiers disappeared, got separated from their units to return later, and nothing was done in most of these cases. At this very time, Slovik's unit was plagued by desertions, there was an epidemic of "combat fatigue," and there were thousands of men seeking court-martial and confinement to avoid combat. But Slovik was different. He deserted, gave himself up to the officers, signed a confession, and later refused to make a deal whereby he could escape court-martial by going into the line.

Seeing Slovik as a determined and calculating deserter, the General Court-Martial sentenced him to be shot to death with musketry. But no one expected this sentence to be carried out. In all other cases of this kind, when the sentence was reviewed at higher levels, the death sentence was reduced to a prison term, which usually meant being released shortly after the war ended. No one on the board which sentenced Slovik expected the sentence to be carried out.

But if Slovik was to be made an example, certainly no better man could be found, in the opinion of the brass that judged him. The man had practically no

The true-to-life film "Salt of the Earth," depicting the hard but victorious strike of Mexican-American metal miners against the New Jersey Zinc Co. plant at Bayard, N.M., came to Detroit for private showings to union people and their friends, as well as some enemies, and made a universal hit.

As a document, the film was acclaimed even by American Legionnaires, who were threatening to picket it, as they did Charlie Chaplin's "Limelight," if shown publicly in local movie houses. The Chaplin film ran seven weeks despite the pickets.

It shows in simple, graphic and deeply moving fashion the impact on strikers and their families of starvation, withdrawal of company medical services, and exercise of the full power of the law on the company side through beating-up of strike leaders, mass arrest of their picketing wives, and evictions, coupled with stoolpigeons, company bribery of unionists, and denial of further credit at the company store.

"Just like General Motors in the old days," said a CIO man who had fought through the GM sitdown strike of early '37.

"Old Henry Ford couldn't teach that company nothing," declared a local (UAW-CIO) committeeman.

—*Voice of Local 212, Briggs-Chrysler union paper in Detroit, May 1954.*

family, and had a criminal record. The highest reviewing authority at Paris rejected clemency, the concluding statement on the endorsement reading: "His unfavorable civilian record indicated that he is not a worthy subject of clemency." General Eisenhower signed the final order for his execution, and the date was set for January 31, 1945, to be carried out in the unit area from which he deserted.

**I**F SLOVIK deserted because of weakness of character, because of inability to stand up under the strain of deadly combat, because he was a coward, he did not evidence any such weakness or cowardice in going to his death. In fact he seems to have been the only man who remained calm and unshaken by the execution scene, and there were many observers present. The firing squad was chosen of men from throughout the unit who were expert shots, yet their nervousness was evidenced by the fact that not one bullet entered the heart though they were only twenty paces from the victim. Some bullets entered the arm and neck far from the vital target. While being led to the post where he was to be shot, Eddie commented:

"I'm okay. They're not shooting me for deserting the United States Army. Thousands of guys have done that. They just need to make an example out of somebody and I'm it because I'm an ex-con. I use to steal things when I was a kid, and that's what they are shooting me for. They're shooting me for bread and chewing gum I stole when I was twelve years old."

The men at the execution commented later: "If he was a coward he certainly didn't show it today." "Slovik was the bravest man in the garden that morning." "Slovik had nerve. I can't understand why a man who had the guts to face a firing squad like that wouldn't stay on the line with the rest of us." But it really wasn't a matter of guts as much as understanding. Eddie Slovik didn't know why he should have to fight, why his life had to be disrupted, or why the excessive demands on heart, home and family had to be made. Why? "Darling, why couldn't THEY leave us alone? . . . Just when I had everything I had dreamed of, THEY have got to take me away from it. . . . Why do THEY make us suffer so?"

Eddie Slovik's wife never knew what happened to her husband until Mr. Huie, gathering material for this book, interviewed her. It was a "military secret." Nobody in the little mining town of Saint Marie-Aux-Mines, where the execution took place, knew what the group of American soldiers was there for. The people whose courtyard was chosen were moved out days in advance.

Eddie Slovik, like the soldiers who refused to return from Korea, is a sign of the opposition to war which in our age has become a crime, punishable by death. These men are representative of the millions who feel opposition to having their lives torn asunder in war for reasons which they cannot comprehend or accept.

E. S.

## Secluded Vastness

*The Peoples of the Soviet Far East*, by Walter Kolarz. Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1954, \$4.50.

**WALTER KOLARZ**, a newspaper correspondent and scholar, has written an informative and valuable book concerning a section of the world about which there is little information and where few outside visitors have been permitted to travel. He has relied almost exclusively on published Soviet materials. He includes in his study of the Far East all territories east of Lake Baikal, covering the "Autonomous Republics" of Yakutia and Buryat-Mongolia, the vast Pacific areas from the Bering Straits to Vladivostok, as well as the former Republic of Tuva and the Mongol People's Republic.

Soviet colonization of the Far East has in all cases followed in the footsteps of its Czarist predecessors for the simple reason that the 1917 Russian Revolution, while changing fundamentally the character of social relations and government, was powerless to alter the geographical foundations of the country. But the Soviet regime proved a far more aggressive organizer and builder of its frontier lands, and imposed a far more centralized and effective governmental machinery over these distant nationalities and peoples.

In the first years after the revolution, there was a genuine attempt on Moscow's part to practice an internationalist policy, and to permit the widest scope to the cultural aspirations of the various nationalities. While this policy was discarded already in the Twenties, it remained for the purges of 1937 to finally enthrone a Great-Russian nationalist policy and chain the different nationalities as subject peoples. Just as in Moscow, the Far Eastern territories had their show trials, and the condemnation and execution of practically all the leading administrative and military officials.

Kolarz states: "To consolidate the position of the party, so badly shaken by the purges, the government found it necessary to strengthen the power of the NKVD. The full extent of the NKVD rule in the Far East was disclosed by the (secret) Soviet Economic Plan for 1941. . . . It showed that the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs was a much more important organizer of certain industrial activities than the ministries nominally responsible for them."

**T**HE displacement of internationalism by nationalism and the growing fear of war with Japan led Moscow to abandon its policy of unrestricted colonization. This brought it into continual conflict with many of the non-European nationalities and led to many outbursts of violence on the part of the European settlers against the Orientals. After 1937, in the wake of official hysteria about Japanese spies, little Soviet

Korea on the Pacific was abandoned, and the Korean people were transplanted into the Siberian interior. The important Chinese minority in Vladivostok was likewise dispersed, and the former famous Chinese Theatre, originally founded by Chinese merchants at the end of the nineteenth century, was closed. Even the Far Eastern University, once the pride of Asian revolutionists, was disbanded.

The final fruits of this nationalist policy were seen at the conclusion of the Second World War when Russia annexed Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands under the terms of the Yalta agreement, expelled a good part of the Japanese population and inaugurated an intensive program of Russian colonization.



The author, in his constant anxiety to demonstrate the superiority of Western democracy to the Soviet regime, tries to contrast unfavorably the Kremlin's policies toward the Oriental peoples with the treatment which the United States and Canada meted out to the Japanese of Hawaii and North America after the Pearl Harbor attack. It is a very poor illustration. If America's brutal uprooting of the Japanese-American population on the West Coast has to serve as the example of its superiority over Soviet culture, then it will surely earn no laurels from the historians of the future, even though the author is quite correct in stating that the Japanese-Americans were able to bring their plight to public attention, while nothing of the kind was possible in the Soviet Union.

The book contains a good account of the origins and evolution of Outer Mongolia, or, as it is officially designated, the Mongol People's Republic, a country as big as France, Spain, Portugal, Great Britain and Ireland put together. In the early years after the revolution, Mongolia was oriented more toward the Chinese revolution than the Russian. At the congress of revolutionary organizations of the Far East, held in Moscow in 1922, Zinoviev stated on behalf of the Russian Communist Party: "I consider that the final settlement of the Mongol problem will only be possible at the moment when the Chinese themselves have liberated themselves

from the yoke of their oppressors. . . . Only then will the Chinese people be in a position to say that its fate is in its own hands. Only then will it be possible to put the Mongol question on a new basis whereby it is a matter of course that its final settlement will depend on the liberation movement in Mongolia itself."

But Stalin did not abide by this pledge. He "settled" the Mongol question to his own advantage unilaterally, and in 1945 hastened to conclude an agreement with Chiang Kai-shek to close the matter of Russian suzerainty over Mongolia. Mr. Kolarz is probably not wrong in stating that "One day the Chinese may ask whether it is logical that the Asiatic Mongols should be ruled from European Moscow, rather than from the much nearer Asiatic Peking."

**T**HE CHAUVINISM of Moscow's policy, the harshness of its rule, and the introduction of a system of convict labor in sections of the Far East, are one part of the story. But there is another side reflecting the considerable achievements of the Soviet regime in building up a backward region, in industrialization, in introducing the Western heritage. Starting from negligible numbers, the population was built up to over 4 million. New industries and cities have been created. Health services, hospitals and maternity homes introduced. Schools, libraries, reading rooms, theatres and newspapers increased many times over, and illiteracy all but wiped out. As a matter of fact, this represented one of the most important historic tasks of the Stalin regime: to transplant the heritage of the European West into the backward East. The Stalin regime accomplished much in this respect, although with great harshness, brutality and unnecessarily high costs.

Kolarz, in common with practically all capitalist analysts, proceeds from the viewpoint that Soviet Russia is practicing imperialism in the Far East. The data he himself records effectively demonstrate the superficiality of such a definition. It is true that Russia, like all the great powers, is expansionist. Moreover, because of its nationalist bias, it subjects non-Russian nationalities to a double oppression. On these two counts, the Kremlin duplicates the colonial activities of the Western imperialist powers. But unlike Britain, France, or the United States, Russia is an anti-capitalist power, and hence introduces everywhere it goes its own collectivist system and social relations.

To designate the expansionism of monopoly capitalist states, and of collectivist states that overthrow capitalism both by one and the same term—imperialism—is confusing at the very least. It unjustifiably blurs the difference between Soviet Russia's role in Mongolia, or Poland, as against Britain's role in Kenya, or France's role in Indochina. But the author requires such confusion for his concluding call upon "the entire Christian world" to help introduce "a new spiritual revolution" into Russia.

B. C.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## "Keen . . . Exceptionally Good"

Since February I have been receiving your excellent magazine on a trial subscription and I wish to continue receiving it. Your keen analysis of McCarthyism and your coverage of world events is exceptionally good. Some of your material I shall be able to use in my lectures . . . to graduate students. I enclose \$2 as renewal, and wish you all success in your work of enlightenment.

E. T. *San Clemente, Cal.*

This is just a brief note to say that your magazine gets better and better all the time. Bert Cochran is particularly good. You are one of the two or three American left papers that's literate and that has something to say.

D. N. *Portland, Ore.*

I enclose one dollar, for which please send me the *American Socialist* for six months under the terms of your special offer.

I am delighted with your journal. It looks like the real thing, a genuinely socialist monthly. It avoids the rigidity of the SLP, the vagueness of the Thomasites and the deviousness of the CP line. What can be done to unite the genuine socialists for effective action? And in such a way as to have a cohesive party without rigid discipline on the one hand or fuzzy edges on the other?

I mean a socialist party in which the members are agreed upon the fundamentals of socialism (otherwise it wouldn't be the organization for them) and really want it; but may differ from one another on all manner of details: no rigid mold of conformity.

J. F. *Berkeley, Cal.*

## Sends Thirteen Names

I have found your publication one of the most important in the United States today, chiefly because you speak honestly, realistically, and without ideological jargon and discipleship.

Many of my friends are on the verge of purchasing subscriptions. Therefore, I am requesting you to send sample copies to the following people, which I am sure will result in subscriptions.

J. F. *Chicago, Ill.*

[A list of thirteen names was included. Several letters were received on our sample copy offer, another subscriber sending in a list of nine names.]

I would like to add a postscript to your unemployment articles on how the unemployment situation is being "resolved" in Youngstown. Operating at 70 percent capacity, none of the steel plants expect to

hire any new help. The many thousands of steel workers who have been laid off will never be called back unless the "blessings of war" allow the steel barons to shift to increased and more profitable production.

In sweet innocence, the steel corporations here are telling the June high school graduates that the union is responsible for their inability to find work. "Our union contracts call for our own workers to be given employment before new persons can be hired," says Edward Evans, personnel supervisor for U.S. Steel, Youngstown District.

This attempt to turn young people against the unions should be exposed by the union movement. Thirty hours work at forty hours pay can help provide jobs for the laid-off workers and the graduating youth. Some of the locals here have taken a strong position for this demand, and the corporations will fight tooth and nail against it.

L. B. *Youngstown, Ohio*

## No Future in Shining Democratic Shoes

Read with interest your March publication, the first of your magazine that I've seen. Informative and readable, it will pass muster.

Of the articles the one on "Coalition or Independence" was the most impressive to me. Not the least being its fairness in presenting the other side's viewpoint honestly; something left wing publications aren't notorious for accomplishing. I also see no future to shining Democratic shoes, what's the difference in McCarran or McCarthy? Either the left wing is able to float its own national party, a composite of left wing groups, or fascism wins by default here.

Personally believe it is much later than anyone appears willing to admit. McCarthy will be struck no mortal blow in the Washington Circus going on at present; this will further intimidate the already demoralized liberals. The fascists will sweep through the Democratic ADA strawmen like a dose of salts through a widow woman.

By nature I'd rather go down fighting than buy a little time via abject surrender. (When future labor historians analyze this age I suspect they'll say the left missed the boat during the Depression Thirties, thru supporting reformists instead of initiating a program of their own.)

Have some personal experiences with the police state. Although neither past nor present member of the CP, or any other listed subversive organization, I was screened from the ships for months. Reinstated now, but expect to be screened again. No independent labor viewpoint is tolerated by the McCarthyites heading trade unions today, they outdo Wisconsin's Joe in their red baiting!

R. C. *Seattle*

The analysis and reporting of the last four issues of the *American Socialist*, especially the one "Can We Avoid a Third World War," are a timely warning. I also hope they will help in finding a solution for conditions as they exist today.

What is needed is a sane, practical domestic policy so that each nation can correct its own problems. Here is where almost all the trouble starts, and the record shows outgrown parties are missing out. . . . Why not find out where the past dominant parties are weak in solving present day conditions as they arise? Here are at least four points, all intended to correct abuses of man-made laws and errors. . . .

- A program to encourage present generations to work for the preservation of natural resources in their home localities, as soil erosion, etc.

- Profiteering in the necessities of life is a step backward and should be eliminated.

- All natural resources to be taken over by co-operative enterprises for the benefit of all.

- An adequate retirement plan.

Let's have a discussion from now till the next election on what is a timely policy to pursue. Enclosed find \$2 for my one-year renewal. Yours for a world federation.

F. C. R. *Ephraim, Wis.*

## "What're You Gonna Do?"

So far every friend I have visited has renewed his subscription to the *American Socialist* for one year. I expect few, if any, refusals. Their comments about the magazine were all good. And when asked pointedly if they had any criticism at all, they said they had none. So what're you gonna do!

F. S. *Buffalo*

I am so impressed with your magazine that I have decided to become your local agent, if that is satisfactory with you. I have already had a very good response from my shopmates whom I have solicited for subscriptions. I particularly want to call to the attention of all readers in *Pontiac* that the magazine can be obtained locally at the newsstand at Saginaw and Huron.

D. L. *Pontiac, Mich.*

**TELL  
A FRIEND**

Or Send Us  
His Name

Sample Copies  
of

**THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST**

Sent on Request

863 BROADWAY

N. Y. 3

# Our Readers Help With Subs and Names

**O**UR DRIVE for renewals of our many six-month introductory subscriptions is proceeding very well. The rate of renewals coming in from all over the country is running about 80 percent; some places show as high as 100 percent.

There are several facts which make this an excellent, even an amazing record, in our opinion. First of all, it is normal to expect that a considerable number of subscribers would fail to renew without any special reason, and because of this fact alone, the AMERICAN SOCIALIST would not have any right to expect more than about 75 percent renewals.

Second, those whose subscriptions expired last month had never seen a copy of the magazine, by and large, before subscribing, since we began publication in January. Thus they didn't know what they were going to get and many of them might have been expected to cancel, having sent in their original subscriptions on the basis of misunderstanding. This has not occurred.

In fact, our most surprising result has come among those who sent in subscriptions solely as a result of seeing our advertising in other periodicals and thus knew practically nothing about us but our name. These subscribers have renewed, thus far, almost unanimously.

**A**NOTHER interesting feature of recent weeks in our circulation drive has been the enthusiasm of many new readers to spread the magazine. In our last issue, we inserted a little notice saying "Tell a friend, or send us his name and address and we will send him a sample copy." This brought responses from a number of readers who have

just subscribed, including one letter which included 13 names and another which included nine.

This encourages us to make a special appeal to all readers to secure subscriptions from their friends for us, or to send us their names and addresses so that we may introduce the magazine to them via a sample copy.

Remember that we need plenty of names of people who will be interested in the left-wing viewpoint, and the only place we can get them is from our readers. Our subscription list has been growing at a gratifying rate, and the praise and encouragement we have received from many readers are gratifying also. But we can't make the AMERICAN SOCIALIST grow as it should without a lot of help from our readers, as we do not have any high-powered Wall Street agencies running drives for us like the Big Business magazines have. Nor can your friend receive the benefit of the information and analysis that our contributors and editors prepare so painstakingly every month if you do not put us in touch with them.

**F**INALLY, there is a new batch of introductory subscriptions running out with the next issue. A number of those readers renewed well in advance, which gives us confidence that the next sheaf of renewals will run at just as good a rate as the last. If your subscription is expiring, you will find a notice in this issue. Please renew at once, as that makes our work a good deal easier. You may use the blank on this page, which features our special renewal rate of \$2 for one year, or just write your name and address on a slip of paper if you don't want to tear up your magazine.

## DON'T WAIT

**RETURN THIS WITHOUT  
DELAY. CAN BE USED FOR  
NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS  
OR FOR RENEWALS.**



## *The American Socialist*

A monthly publication • 863 Broadway • New York 3, N. Y.

- |                          |                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SPECIAL ONE-YEAR RENEWAL | \$2.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Six-month subscription   | 1.25   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | One-year subscription    | 2.50   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Two-year subscription    | 4.50   |

Date .....

Name .....

Street .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....