

# STUDENT SOCIALIST

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STUDENT-YOUTH SECTION of LABOR ACTION

FIVE CENTS

## AT QUEENS COLLEGE

### Witch-hunt Grabs Liberal In Lenz Demotion Case

By ARTHUR HART

Another case of violation of academic freedom has given a new turn to the "cold war on the campus." It is difficult to perceive how even the *New Leader*, which up to now has been able to sense no threat to traditional American freedoms from the witch-hunt, will be able to ignore the dangers inherent in this new incident. For it involves neither a socialist (as at Olivet College) nor a teacher of suspected Stalinist sympathies (the University of Washington), nor even a non-signer of a loyalty oath as in the University of California case. The victim is this time a liberal, with more than a few "friends in high places" who was certainly entitled, if anyone could be, to consider himself "safe" from the direct blows of the anti-red witch-hunt.

It was announced last week that Dr. Harold Lenz, a teacher at Queens College (a division of the free City College of New York City) since 1938 and its dean of students for the past five years, is soon to be demoted from his position as dean of students, and re-assigned to a regular teaching position on the faculty. Though higher education officials attempted to explain the action as having been motivated by purely "administrative considerations," no one knowing the background of facts can take this explanation seriously. There can be no doubt that Dr. Lenz was "gotten" because of his political views, and his specifically liberal views in particular.

Both Lenz' anti-Stalinist position and his "influential connections" are public knowledge. A vice chairman of the New York

State Liberal Party, an official of the American Civil Liberties Union and vice chairman of the New York City Americans for Democratic Action, Dr. Lenz is reported to have belonged to the same chapter of ADA as Senator Lehman, Representative F. D. Roosevelt Jr., a New York City Councilman, and the Manhattan Borough President. None of these connections seem to have prevented his dismissal, but they probably caused the circumlocutions reasons given for the official action. Presumably Dr. Lenz was "not the right person in the point of professional training" for his present position. It was hardly possible, under the circumstances, to charge the dean with being a "red."

#### REACTION "GOT" LENZ

Yet it was Lenz' views, and his courageous defense of them, which brought the enemies who have for years been demanding this very move. According to Lenz himself, he had been warned by the college president "not to associate with politics" because the college was under pressure, and might meet unnecessary difficulties in having its budget approved if Lenz continued his public political activity. The sources of the pressure, as it has been for several years, stemmed from the local American Legion and Catholic War Veterans.

The reasons for their enmity toward Lenz dates back to 1947 when the new dean defended the right of any student organization, and in particular that of the Stalinist American Youth for Democracy, to be granted a charter un-

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## Stalinist Plans Thwarted At Madison Student Meet

By GEORGE RAWLINGS and  
DORA MILLER

What appears to be another attempt by the Stalinists to organize American students into a front organization to serve the interest of the Russian war bloc has apparently met with serious difficulties at its inception. The Conference on Peace, Equality and Academic Freedom held at Madison, Wisconsin, the weekend of April 25th was conceived of, organized by and executed by the Stalinists. They made serious attempts to get a few individual, organizationally affiliated, liberals to lend their names as sponsors (along with their organization "for identification purposes only"). But this attempt to interest liberals was sporadic and on the whole it was only the Stalinoid groups who received any or ample notification of the meeting.

The conference itself was attended by varying grades of Stalinists from many different college campuses in the Midwest (such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Antioch, Chicago, etc.), East (Brooklyn, City College, MIT, Brandeis) and small contingents from the more western states. They ranged in political outlook from hard-core Stalinists (Labor Youth League and Young Progressives of America), the usual confused and well-meaning students who found themselves attracted to the strong emotional appeal which the Stalinist's peace, equality and freedom proposals carry, and a minority of mature liberals. (The latter consisted perhaps 30 or 50 out of an attendance of 175-200.)

The Chicago delegation was by far the most representative group, since a comparatively

large number of liberals and a few socialists (unaffiliated and Socialist Youth League) decided to attend. It was the hope of these students that the same type of representation might be present from other campuses.

But the meeting proved to be not much better than most other straight Stalinist fronts. The speakers (DuBois, Rev. Porter and the "unexpected and unannounced" Halstead Holeman, officer of the Stalinist-controlled International Union of Students) all presented either the Stalinist line itself or positions totally agreeable to the Stalinists.

#### THE CRY OF "UNITY"

In typical Stalinist fashion, the cry of "unity" was raised in an effort to submerge all political differences in a way acceptable only to the Stalinists. It became quite clear that the unity that was being talked about was that unity which would be solely on the Stalinists' terms. The Stalinists showed their hand early in the conference. When the chairman called for four volunteers to speak on "four different roads to peace" at a panel discussion to be held on Sunday afternoon, among the volunteers was someone who offered to espouse "socialism as the only road to peace" (this later turned out to be a Cannonite position) and someone who offered to defend the "Third Camp" position. Immediately the Stalinists brought up a resolution which excluded "all proposals which will endanger unity by offering not concrete plans for peace that we all can agree on but dissident world views and philosophical analysis." Despite the attempts on the part of a few to develop the point that unity could not be achieved by the submergence of basic differences or by the avoidance of concrete analysis, this resolution, aimed at excluding all anti-Stalinist speakers from the panel discussion was passed with only five dissenting votes.

The panel discussion consequently offered four speakers. One spoke on the American Friends Service Committee Proposals for Peace which are thoroughly acceptable to the Stalinists (as they are based on the slogan of "co-existence"), the second offered a "religious" approach to the problem which was essentially the same, the third supposedly defended the position of the United World Federalists (this speaker sounded much like the other two).

The fourth speaker held forth on the success of the Peaceful Alternatives groups, Peace Forums and the like on the campuses, making sure to include only a discussion of the Stalinist controlled groups, and of course making no mention of the activities of the student anti-war groups centered around the magazine *Anvil*. Thus the Stalinists avoided discussing any basic issues—and only granted space on the panel to those representing positions that essentially were the same as the current Stalinist line of "co-existence."

On Saturday afternoon, the conference broke up into three-workshops—on Peace, Equality, and Academic Freedom. The workshop on peace was the most significant and interesting, for most of the political elements at the conference participated in it. The tone of the workshop was set by the chairman appointed by the

sponsors' committee who began by making a long statement on the need for top-level Big Five negotiations, "co-existence" and the other Stalinist slogans. Aware of the existence of liberal and socialist elements in the workshop, the chairman attempted to rule out all discussion where it "was obvious to him that only a small minority opposed the resolution on the floor." This attempt at the denial of simple democratic rights failed, as it was so crude that even the Stalinoid liberals and Sweezyites present were unable to go along with it. However, after several hours of debate, marked by continuous attempts by the chairman to stifle discussion, and ended by a statement by a leading member of the Stalinist Labor Youth League that "there was obviously a well-organized group present who had come with the purpose of wrecking the conference," the complete set of proposals acceptable to the Stalinists and not to the anti-Stalinists were adopted.

#### SEVERAL RESOLUTIONS

A group of individuals representing liberal and non-communist viewpoints gathered together after the workshops and discussed late into the night their ideas in an attempt to evaluate their role in the conference. They finally came to the joint conclusion that if in the final plenary session to be held Sunday no resolutions were passed which would distinguish this group from a Stalinist front organization (i.e., any criticism of the USSR at all, or any deviations from the latest CP line) and if the continuations committee (i.e., executive committee) was not strictly limited in its powers and in its duration, they would be forced to walk out of the conference and present their reasons for doing so. In order to facilitate the possibility of a "compromise" the group drew up several resolutions which they thought presented their viewpoints in a mild manner and yet which carefully laid partial blame for the present world crisis on both the United States and the USSR.

This caucus negotiated with the sponsors' committee and received one important concession. The head of the Independent Students' League, a liberal, was appointed as chairman of Sunday's plenary session. The caucus also agreed to propose from the floor a number of resolutions which if passed would clearly indicate that the conference was not a mouthpiece of Soviet imperialism.

At Sunday's session, the anti-Stalinist caucus proposed a resolution calling for the support of the democratic movements among the colonial peoples, which at the same time accused both the United States and China of imperialism. This resolution was thoroughly emasculated when the statement concerning Chinese imperialism was deleted.

At the same session, a resolution which would have called for disarmament by all nations was defeated, and only after much parliamentary wrangling could a resolution be passed which called for the United States to propose a multilateral disarmaments treaty on terms acceptable to Russia. In addition other proposals to prevent the organization from being set up as a permanent organization which could go over the head of

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## Prepared by U. of C. Students Who Withdrew Statement on Madison Conference

The following was written by the group which withdrew from the Madison conference because its members could not agree, in many ways, with the resolutions of the conference, nor with the methods used in arriving at them. It is a brief account of what happened, what members of the group learned, and what they now suggest for the future.

#### WHAT HAPPENED

To begin with, the publicity for the conference was poor; large groups of liberal students (even on this campus) were notified of the conference only a short time before it was held—and apparently this campus was almost unique in sending liberal representatives to Madison. Tremendous technical botches occurred from the beginning—in meeting facilities, housing, group procedures, and general planning, most of which had to be done at the last minute. No real discussion of problems began until about 4 p.m., Saturday; the workshop lasted until about 11 p.m. that evening. In this period a vast range of controversial issues was to be covered. The workshops did not succeed in obtaining genuine consensus. In some cases the workshop process broke down in confusion and the problem of formulating resolutions was dumped in the lap of a small committee. (Some members of this committee were appointed, some elected by delegations Friday night, and some elected from each workshop during the last hectic minutes of their sessions.)

In the plenary Sunday, only 45 minutes were available for acting on each of four large sets of resolutions—peace, equality, academic freedom, and continuations. Consequently discussion had to be

severely limited, and the plenary became a mere show of voting strength.

#### CRITICISM OF USSR NULLED

Resolutions were passed to which we could not subscribe, and we witnessed the deletion from all resolutions of any criticisms or implication of criticism of the USSR whatsoever. Thus, in the plenary the proposed (and many adopted) resolutions were characterized by an extremist slant which we could not accept. For example, in the resolutions on peace, a statement which referred to mistakes and misunderstandings on the part of both the U. S. and USSR was deleted; attempts to alter portions of the Equality and Peace resolutions in a less partisan direction were defeated. Another case was the plank,

"We propose student pressure on college organizations to offer courses in Negro history and inter-racial problems as electives, throughout the nation."—which many of us felt to be itself discriminatory and a mere propaganda phrase. Again, a resolution recommending "support for the efforts of these nations to attain their national self-determination free from all foreign influences, such as France's in Tunisia, America's in Puerto Rico, and China's in Tibet" was struck.

When time ran out on the peace resolutions, action was pending on statements such as "the only topic to be discussed in the (Korean) truce should be the cessation of fighting, with no American (sic) restrictions on subsequent events."

It is difficult to describe compactly the tone of the resolutions as a whole. They would prove unmistakably biased to liberal non-communists. And it is our view that an effective conference of this

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# Lenz Demotion at Queens

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der the Board of Education by-laws. The neighborhood and community papers featured the story under such headlines as "Dean Defends Campus Reds."

Undaunted, Lenz appeared before the Board of Higher Education to oppose a new by-law banning "subversive" groups from the campus. And again last summer, Lenz appeared as the official representative of the ACLU to testify against a new Board of Education rule depriving organizations deemed "subversive" from using school buildings as meeting places. In all of these actions, Lenz was moved not out of sympathy for Stalinism, which he frequently vociferously attacked, but from a basic civil libertarian position. On the campus and in the community he believed in the principle of defending the free market-place of ideas as a basic democratic and liberal institution.

Such ideas and actions, however, were not calculated to disarm the professional patriots in the community whose forces are exceptionally strong in Queens, organized in veterans, nationality (Irish) and professional groups. Normally the only Republican borough of N. Y. City, this suburban neighbor of wealthy Long Island contains a substantial number of old Christian Fronters, as well as its share of politicians seeking to capitalize on any popular prejudice. The current Republican representatives from Queens once described it as "an American, Godfearing community" and stated that "those who don't see

eye to eye with us have no place in our midst."

## SPREAD DISAFFECTION

It is people such as this who for years have spread disaffection with the City's free college, and particularly with its educationally liberal administration. Undifferentiated charges of "red influence" were made with respect to faculty, administration and student body. The fact, of course, is that while extremely progressive in its over-all policy (emphasizing discussion classes rather than lectures, integrated curriculum and close faculty-student relations) it has never by any stretch of the imagination, been possible to charge the college administration with political radicalism. And while, as at all city colleges, Stalinism had been a strong organized movement during the thirties and forties it has practically disappeared today (together with politics of almost all kinds).

Nevertheless, in its tradition and general influence, Queens College still remains a target for the self-appointed protectors of this "God-fearing" community. In recent years they have sought to work quietly through exerting pressure on official bodies, in addition to carrying on their regular public campaigns. And it was apparently this kind of quiet work which finally resulted in the dismissal of Dr. Lenz.

Coming at this time, in the midst of an anti-red hysteria, Lenz' academic demotion, involving as it does public censure of a prominent liberal cannot be taken as an ordinary case of conservative in-

fluence. As Mark Starr, Queens County chairman of the Liberal Party stated, the act is a "part of a recent pattern of reactionary attacks on academic freedom." What is involved, indeed, is not the particular views of Lenz, but the very right of teachers and school administrators to hold, express and defend publicly any kind of political views at all. As LABOR ACTION argued when it was only Stalinists and socialists who were victims: this will eventually be extended to non-Stalinists as well. Unfortunately, while Dr. Lenz understood this clearly, some of his liberal colleagues did not. Perhaps they will learn from this experience.

There is, however, a necessary job to do now. Lenz' demotion has created a great deal more com-

motion than was probably expected. The New York Post, in addition to giving full news coverage, has editorially denounced the school officials responsible, and demanded the reinstatement of Lenz as dean. And it is reported that Queens College students are planning a post-card campaign demanding reconsideration of the action by the Board of Higher Education. The arousal of community sentiment in opposition to the force raised by the local bigots is necessary. Anything the students can do to stimulate this opposition will be useful, if not in restoring Dr. Lenz, perhaps in preventing a recurrence of this incident. The Liberal Party of Queens, as a significant force in the community, has a particular responsibility to mobilize what-

ever support it can behind Lenz.

But in addition to the purely local campaign, it is necessary to circularize student and faculty groups throughout the nation with the facts behind this case and attempt to elicit national support. The services of the Academic Freedom Committee of the National Students Association should most certainly be invoked. In addition, the new organization of American University Students for Academic Freedom should be informed of all facts so that it may undertake to report them to its affiliated bodies.

Queens College students have moved to the foreground of the academic freedom picture. If they acquit themselves well it will make it easier for their successors.

# UC Madison Statement

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type must appeal to such elements of the U. S. student population.

Realizing the nature of the situation, the group withdrew, presenting statements of our reasons for doing so, and left the hall to deliberate on the proper course of action. Meanwhile proceedings in the hall degenerated into near-chaos. The withdrawing members then returned and communicated the ideas they had arrived at: basically, that the conference had failed to provide a satisfactory means of working out differences, and that a new conference should be called, and that the resolutions already passed should meanwhile have no official status. It proved impossible to obtain agreement on the basis of these proposals, and we therefore again withdrew.

## WHAT WE LEARNED

1. The conference did not succeed in attracting a sizable proportion of liberal, non-communist students.

2. Student unity on basic issues is an exceedingly hard thing to achieve; if it is possible at all, it requires a thorough meeting of minds which is hardly achieved in two or three days, especially in a setting largely characterized by utter disorganization and gross mismanagement.

3. Certain practical steps can be decided on, if a true rather than verbal and superficial unity can be obtained on them; and work on such steps can be undertaken in cooperation with many of the people who attended the Madison conference. It should be noted that upon our final departure we stressed this point very strongly indeed. (See below.)

# Student Meeting

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The National Students' Association in dealing with the International Union of Students were defeated.

When the Plenary session turned out to be no less Stalinist dominated than the workshops, the anti-Stalinist group decided it had no choice but to withdraw, since they could in no way subscribe either to many of the specific resolutions nor certainly to the general tone of the resolutions. One member of the group read a statement explaining briefly the reasons for the move, which was endorsed by one of the sponsoring groups—the unitarians. It read as follows:

"Having in good faith answered the appeal to co-operate in forming an organization which would enable individuals of different political and ideological orientations to function together to fight for the common goals of Peace, Academic Freedom and Equality, based on a minimal program acceptable to all and organized along the most democratic lines; we find ourselves faced with a tightly organized, unrepresentative body whose program is not acceptable to us and whose function will be, in our opinion, to subvert the genuine desire for Peace, Equality and Academic Freedom on the part of American college students into those channels which will best serve the interests of Soviet imperialism."

Following this action the withdrawing members met to discuss further action, and also to reply to questions by those wishing to find grounds for a reconciliation, as to the conditions upon which they would return. The group stated that they could not return unless: (1) All the resolutions passed were scrapped; (2) a new conference was called soon, and (3) that the continuations committee which was set up would have power ONLY to call this new conference and would have representatives on it of this withdrawing group. But after much confusion on the floor of the general session this plan and a compromise plan were both defeated and the group withdrew for the final time.

The following day those mem-

bers of the withdrawing "liberal caucus" who attend the University of Chicago met again to reiterate and amplify the reasons for their withdrawal. After much discussion they issued a statement which was published in the Chicago Maroon.

(The statement referred to is printed elsewhere on this page.—Ed.)

The conference has had several desirable results. It has shown many liberals what "unity" with Stalinism really means in practice. Since the conference some of the original sponsors, including the Unitarian and Methodist groups and the chairwomen of the Peace Forum on the University of Wisconsin campus, have publicly withdrawn their support from the conference. It is reported that similar action on the part of the non-Stalinist sponsors of the conference on other campuses has taken place as well.

Though the conference was disillusioning to some of the liberals there, it has had the beneficial result of bringing together on the Chicago campus those individuals who are honestly interested in the issues of peace, academic freedom and equality but who feel that these aims can only be furthered by a conference more truly democratic and representative than was the one at Madison. They recognized that in a sense they were responsible for the kind of debacle that occurred in Madison, not because they went there in bad faith, nor because they were "wreckers," but because they themselves have not before taken the initiative in gathering the American students together in this struggle. The most hopeful result of the weekend was the proposal emanating from this group for a broad and democratic conference to be called sometime this summer to discuss the issues of freedom, equality and peace. Such a conference, which would last a longer time, be better planned, and at which a more representative group of students would be present could more honestly and seriously discuss and thrash out both their differences and their common interests and goals.

## WHAT WE SUGGEST

1. A new organizing committee should be established (on which liberal opinion is significantly represented) to plan a new conference with the aim of involving a broad segment of the American student population.

2. The new conference should be organized with proper attention to and competent handling of:

(a) National publicity.

(b) Arrangements for meeting and housing facilities (the business-like procedure of obtaining written contracts is recommended).

(c) Arrangements for satisfactory workshop sessions lasting over a period of a week or ten days. Many of the principles of group dynamics are well known, and should be made use of in planning this phase of the new conference. Likewise, Roberts' Rules of Order is well known and easily accessible, and should be the basis of proceedings in groups whose size prohibits hit-or-miss transaction of business.

3. Action should be undertaken immediately on this campus to:

(a) Hold periodic meetings (perhaps monthly) similar in their broad composition to that held here Sunday, April 20, as a preliminary to this conference, to discuss and coordinate local action on equality, academic freedom, and peace.

(b) Undertake such concrete projects as seem desirable for which a need was discovered during the Madison conference—e.g., a handbook giving information and suggestions to students and faculty members faced with violations of academic freedom (etc.).

# SYL Co-Sponsors Summer School

Among all of the student anti-war clubs in the country, Focal Point of Yale has been one of the most successful. Now, under its initiative, four other anti-war organizations have joined together to sponsor a New England Anti-War Summer School.

In addition to the Socialist Youth League, the college section of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Peace Section, New England Region of the American Friends Service Committee, and the Young Socialists (formerly YPSL) have joined together in sponsoring this project.

An attractive brochure, which gives the complete schedule of lectures and discussions, is available by writing Focal Point at the address below. It is from this brochure that we select points of greatest interest to Student Socialist readers.

The regular faculty of the school includes A. J. Muste, executive secretary of the F.O.R., Dr. Eddy Asirvatham, prominent Indian pacifist, and Hal Draper, editor of LABOR ACTION. Other possible faculty members are Dr. Mumford Sibley, Dr. William Neumann and Lewis Coser. A highly varied and interesting program of lectures, followed in each case by time for discussion cover a whole series of topics from "The Third Camp in Asia" to "War and Recent Christian Philosophy." Both theoretical questions (like the Economic Tensions of Capital-

ism) and practical political ones (Co-operation with Stalinists) are on the agenda. Finally, there is time assigned for an Organizational Institute, where future plans can be discussed for building a New England Anti-War Federation.

And in addition to everything else there will still be time for folk dancing, frivolity and fishing [anglers take note]. The surroundings will be rural but far from primitive, and will provide the ideal setting for a wonderful week's vacation.

The week of September 8th to 13th is the time set for the school,

which is scheduled to begin on a Monday morning, and end the following Saturday afternoon.

The first meal will be served at 5 p.m. Sunday, September 7th and everyone is urged to try and arrive before the beginning of classes the next morning. The cost, which includes tuition, room and board is only \$30, and it is announced that some scholarship aid is available from the A.F.S.C. But reservations, accompanied by a five dollar deposit, must be sent to Focal Point by June 5th. Any interested persons should fill out the blank below and mail it in as soon as possible.

FOCAL POINT, 1987 Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut

I want to register for the New England Anti-War Summer School.

Enclosed is my registration fee of five dollars (\$5.00).

Name .....

Present Address .....

Summer Address .....

# "Released Time" Decision: A Step Backward

By RALPH STILES

The changing relationships between religion, government, and the educational system in an American society under the pressure of the "cold war" are reflected in the Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the "released time" program. Highest legal sanction has been given, for the time being, to a plan which provides another indication of the type of struggle the U. S. will wage against Stalinism in the ideological sphere.

The New York City "released time" program is significant in that, according to *U. S. News and World Report* of May 9, it "is expected to be a model for similar programs elsewhere." Under the plan, pupils may be excused from classes one hour weekly for religious instruction away from school property. The pupil is released on written request of his parents. Those not released stay in the classrooms. The churches make weekly reports to the schools, sending a list of children who have been excused but who have not reported for religious instruction.

A majority of the Supreme Court, in an opinion written by Justice Douglas, now feels that "when the state encourages religious instruction or cooperates with religious authorities by adjusting the schedule of public events to sectarian needs, it follows the best of our traditions."

## ARGUMENT DISPOSED OF

The three dissenting opinions of Justices Black, Jackson and Frankfurter easily dispose of the Douglas argument. The latter's case rests on the claim that "this 'released time' program involves neither religious instruction in public school classrooms nor the expenditure of public funds. . . . The case is therefore unlike *McCullum v. Board of Education*, which involved a 'released time' program from Illinois. In that case the classrooms were turned over to religious instructors."

In his dissenting remarks, Justice Black, who wrote the majority opinion in the *McCullum* case in 1948, points out that the court intended in the latter decision to make it "categorically clear" that "released time" was unconstitu-

tional even if the religious instruction were to be given off public school premises; that, on or off, the effect is to 'manipulate the compelled classroom hours of its [Illinois] compulsory school machinery so as to channel children into sectarian classes.'

As the program now operates, the teacher receives attendance reports from the religious officials and the public school truant officer is used whenever necessary. Normal classroom activities cease while the released students are away; those who remain spend a purposeless hour so that the others will not fall behind in their work. According to the new interpretation of the court, the principle of the separation of church and state allows such practices.

## RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

This case is but one instance of a widely organized and long-standing campaign for the introduction of religion into the public schools and colleges. Late last year, for another example that will most likely set a national pattern in the coming years, the New York State Board of Re-

gents recommended that every school day begin with a non-denominational prayer.

The Regents said they "were convinced that the fundamental American belief in and dependence on God were the best security against the dangers of these difficult days." Furthermore, they felt that "our children will find all their studies brought into focus and accord [and], respect for lawful authority and obedience to law will be the natural concomitant of their growth."

On the college level the advocates of a religious revival run the gamut from such as William F. Buckley, Jr., ex-Yale student of note, to Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University. The former, in his book, *God and Man at Yale* (see LABOR ACTION, Jan. 14, 1952), crudely alleges that the atmosphere predominating in Yale's religion department implies that religion is "at best, a useful superstition," while many teachers look on it as "distinctly harmful benightedness." His Catholic viewpoint is to be compared with the recent Yale board report which stated that religious life on the campus was never more satisfactory.

Dr. Conant of Harvard, on April 7, 1952, made a commendable speech attacking the growth of private schools in this country, rightfully claiming that such a development is dangerous to a democratic society. Dr. Conant, however, is representative of those who favor more emphasis upon religion at the present time but desire to follow traditional American methods of bringing this about.

## A MIGHTY BULWARK

To this end, he announced this past February a plan for "revitalizing" the Harvard Divinity School "for the general purpose of strengthening religious education in the United States." At a time when many liberal arts colleges are in dire financial straits, a Harvard alumni committee made up predominantly of Wall Street bankers and lawyers is organizing a five million dollars fund-raising drive for the Divinity School since, in their own words, "a strong ministry is one of the bulwarks of America."

The drive for increased religious education is an attempt, so its sponsors say, to recover "moral and spiritual values." Whatever their subjective intentions may be, one point has to be re-emphasized today when religion is on the rebound among certain intellectual circles: in the present historical epoch the main function of political significance of organized religion in a capitalist society is to support the status quo.

This objective consequence is brought about in two interconnected ways. First, the internationalization of religious ethics tends to produce a "respect for lawful authority." Secondly, and more important, religious philosophy tends to focus the individu-

al's search for the solution of social problems toward a supernatural realm instead of on the social structure of society.

It is important to note that the groups who are demanding the inclusion of religious courses in the regular curriculum of the public schools and colleges do not desire to have this material treated in the same fashion as all other such materials are handled: critical evaluation and analysis—open to possible rejection. To the contrary, indoctrination is desired. It is a plan, as Professor Sidney Hook has written, "to use the schools in order to reach those who cannot be drawn, by their own inner compulsion or by the promise of eternity, to ecclesiastical authority. . . ."

The increasing penetration of religion into the educational system marks one aspect of the ideological "adjustments" going on presently in American society. To return to the Supreme Court decision, the argument of the majority reveals a changing relationship between the state and church.

## THE FIRST AMENDMENT

It was only four years ago that a majority of the judges could agree, in their opinion in the *McCullum* case, that the ban of the First Amendment meant that "neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions or prefer one religion over another."

If the present majority opinion is any portent of future decisions, then the belief that "only by wholly isolating the state from the religious sphere and compelling it to be completely neutral [so], that the freedom of each and every denomination and of all nonbelievers can be maintained" (Justice Black) appears ready to join several other principles of American liberalism which have fallen by the wayside under the pressures of the cold war.

In this instance, as in the civil liberties decisions which have been discussed in previous issues of LABOR ACTION, the Supreme Court shows itself not to be so "above" the basic forces and needs of the social system over which it augustly presides. "What decided the case," writes liberal columnist Max Lerner, "was not logic—or even social experience. What decided it was a climate of opinion which has witnessed a 'return to religion.'"

While there may be some revival of religious feeling among some sections of the population in reaction to the present political crisis, the actions and pressures of the government in this field only serve to reinforce such tendencies with religion coming more and more to the forefront as an instrument of social control. As Lerner remarks, "If you are looking for proof of coercion, you will not find it in the formal use of power, but in all the pressures that push for social conformism, for toeing the line as everyone else does."

## Success of Fund Drive in '52 Shows Right Way to Build SYL

By DON HARRIS

While final returns are not yet in, pending completion of this year's fund drive, it is apparent that the SYL has scored a real success in completing its quota of \$1500. Not only has it reached its goal, but as in previous years, it has already gone over the top by more than \$200, with possibly as much more in additional money still to come in from "deadline beaters."

Compared with the figures of previous years this is more than double the amount ever raised by the national SYL. Against this fact must be balanced two considerations detracting somewhat from this apparently remarkable accomplishment. The first is that about \$200 of this year's quota came from dual members of the ISL who in previous years gave smaller proportions of their fund drive pledges to the youth, and the second is related to the fact that a larger proportion of SYLers than previously are working youth, who can usually afford to give more generously than most students.

## LOYALTY AND DEVOTION

Yet despite these favorable circumstances our fund drive showing remains a real achievement, a tribute to the loyalty and devotion to the socialist ideas of the SYL's entire membership. It represents also a measure of the hard work, energy and imagination of our local fund drive directors who were faced with the often difficult task of soliciting funds not only from members, but from the friends, sympathizers and contacts of the organization. The success with which these efforts were met varied, but when pursued persistently demonstrated that the SYL has a real circle of sympathizers

to whom appeals for money can be made successfully. Thus over \$80 of the Chicago SYL's quota came from friends and sympathizers.

Our accomplishment also reflects a distinctly different approach to the problem of finances than that held by almost every other youth organization in America. It is almost always characteristic of youth organizations, and particularly their "professional" leadership, to look for financial support to some other source—whether it be to the parent organization, or an independent foundation, institution or private donor. Young people tend to expect to have money spent on them, and because they are potential recruits to larger adult movements, these expectations are frequently fulfilled. Their officers' salaries are paid, their publications are subsidized, or their incidental expenses are met indirectly through the provision of free meeting places, offices, supplies, etc.

This is not necessarily in itself wrong, but it frequently has bad results. Particularly in political or semi-political movements it makes the organization dependent upon outside, and very frequently more conservative direction. This in turn prevents the free development of political differences and their solution in a normal and democratic manner, unconfounded by "practical" considerations such as the necessity to bend one's political line in order to retain the all important "youth subsidy."

## STAND ON OWN FEET

A socialist youth movement, and particularly our own, should establish patterns of behaviour which differ from these in two important respects. In the

first place, as an independent group, the SYL should try to rely on its own resources as much as possible in building its organization. It should develop self-reliance and self-initiative. Naturally, this does not mean "competing" with the adult movement in any respect; it does mean learning not to "lean on" or depend upon our parent organization the ISL when this is not necessary. This, not in the sense of "asserting our independence," but of "standing on our own feet." As a training ground for adult political life, it is the function of the SYL to develop its membership to the point of organizational as well as political maturity. The SYL has to develop its own speakers, writers and experienced organizers. It needs its own pamphlets, bulletins and literature. And for its institutions and activities it must raise the necessary money. This is what a dues system makes possible, and this is what our fund drive accomplishes: the financing of SYL activities by the SYL itself.

In the second place, our youth movement has to assume a different attitude toward the political movement of which we are a part. Particularly, as more of our members begin working, and receiving larger incomes, their financial responsibility toward maintaining the press and staff of the ISL increases proportionately. In principle the SYL has recognized this responsibility by sharing its receipts from the fund drive with the ISL. In this way also the present fund drive demonstrates the increased responsibility which we have accepted and tried to discharge.

It can be no secret that at the beginning, there were more than a few sceptics who could not believe that the SYL would complete its fund drive goal. Yet we have confounded the sceptics and amazed the disbelievers. Inasmuch as the SYL has sustained no rapid growth in the past year, there was, perhaps, little basis for believing in the possibility of success. Yet in actuality, our showing this year does reflect more or less accurately the strengthening we have experienced—the gain in maturity, vitality, and to a much lesser extent, in size. Our fund drive was in all respects a success, and by no means an unimportant one. With it behind us we have every reason to look toward the future with some modest degree of confidence in our forces.

## Labor Action FORUM • New York

• Wednesday, May 21

Gordon Haskell

Aneurin Bevan's "In Place of Fear"

• Thursday, May 22

Margaret Bell

"Issues in the Steel Seizure"

LABOR ACTION HALL

114 W. 14th St.—Third Floor

New York 11, N. Y.

## SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE

114 W. 14th St.  
New York 11, N. Y.

- I want more information about the Socialist Youth League.  
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