

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

JULY 19, 1954

FIVE CENTS

**How the Steel Bosses Supported
Dave McDonald Against Reuther**

... page 2

No Economic Pickup in Sight

... page 3

The Shame of American Liberalism

... page 6

THE ISSUE IS THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Atomic Workers Fighting The Government Straitjacket

By BEN HALL

Pressure is on to reduce workers in atomic energy plants to second-class citizens. The unions in the field want the same rights as unions everywhere, but the government is maneuvering to take away their right to strike and to entangle them in a web of red tape. The issue, still to be fought out in the open, was foreshadowed in the recently ended strikes at the Oak Ridge and Paducah atom plants.

At the call of the CIO Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers Unions, 4,500 atomic workers left their jobs at the two plants on July 7 and set up strike picket lines. (Another 4,500 workers, represented by the AFL, ignored the strike and continued to work.)

For three months, contract negotiations between both unions and the Union Carbide and Chemical Company, which runs the plant for the government, had dragged out. The CIO wanted a wage increase of 21 cents; the Atomic Energy Labor Panel, which legally possesses only advisory powers, recommended 6 cents, and the strike was on.

But, although wages is its immediate provocation, the strike is linked to deeper issues.

Four days later, the strike was over, not because a negotiated settlement was reached but simply because the men submitted to the threat of a Taft-Hartley injunction. Steps for the injunction were initiated from the first hours of the strike, if not before.

Elwood Swisher, president of the CIO union, told the strikers, "You can either go back voluntarily, which I recommend, or by Taft-Hartley injunction—by being clubbed back by the very government you work for."

The injunction becomes the normal, automatic reflex of the government to any strike in atom plants.

FAKE CRISES

Nor is this the first case. In October 1953 a strike at the plant in Joppy, Illinois, was brought to an end by injunctions. The ozone around atomic plants is charged as much with hysteria as with radioactivity and encourages a full-throated cry of "emergency" whenever a union stirs.

Yet the New York Times raises "the question whether the Atomic Energy Commission was right in the first place in contending that atomic production plants cannot stand a strike. The strike that began last Wednesday reduced some auxiliary operations but the continuous process operations were not interrupted."

All the talk about emergencies reminds us of the words of a man experienced in settling strikes: "I can say in looking back on my own experience, pressures... led me to refer matters to the president and we in the Federal Mediation Service proceeded on the basis that it was a national emergency. I confess that in regard to some of the instances there is now serious doubt in my mind as to the correctness of the label."

The man will have many occasions to forget these words. For he is Cyrus Chang and he is now chairman of the Atomic Energy Labor Relations Board.

And this board mixes into all labor relations in atomic plants. It mediates; it fact-finds; it makes recommendations; it puts pressure on the workers to accept its biddings; and where it fails the injunction looms next. It is a peace-time replica of the War Labor Board.

Irritation with its meddling prompted Tom Fee, international representative of the CIO union, to say as the strike began: "The strike is going to continue. We have had enough of fact-finding. If the president (Continued on page 3)

SPOTLIGHT

Is It Blackmail?

A passport case that has not attracted the attention it deserves is that of ex-Judge William Clark, who was dismissed last year by the State Department as Chief Justice of the U. S. High Commission's Court of Appeals in West Germany. Our impression is that Clark is politically a rightist, and that we would have little sympathy for his views, but that is precisely what has nothing to do with the case.

The case we are discussing arose with Clark's application for a passport to return to Germany as a private citizen. The State Department refused it unless he promised to refrain from expressing his views abroad.

In applying for a passport last January 21, Clark had said that when in Germany he would, "if asked," comment on his removal from the court, on his defense of the rights of Americans in Germany and on discrimination against Jews in Germany. That statement, he declared, motivated the State Department in refusing to let him go back. But the department offered him a passport to other countries, and it offered a passport to Germany if he would refrain from public comments that might be "inimical" to U. S. interests.

Clark's attorney, Morris L. Ernst, has put the issue this way: "May the State Department require a citizen to surrender his constitutional right of freedom of speech as condition to the issuance of a passport?"

This is the same issue that is involved in the passport case of Max Shachtman, national chairman of the ISL, now before the courts.

Dog Bites Dog

Speaking of civil-liberties cases, the most fantastic switcheroo has been the case of Paul Crouch, the professional government stooge who is now bus-

By GORDON HASKELL

This 'Coexistence' Talk— What's It Really About?

Can Stalinist Russia and capitalist America coexist peacefully for an historic period? Does the idea of coexistence offer a platform on which both sides in the cold war can come together and work out the basis for peace in our time?

At the moment, this question is one of the issues which divides the British and American governments, and which creates such a vast gulf between the "neutralist" powers like India on the one hand, and the Eisenhower administration on the other. Within the United States itself, the question of the possibility of peaceful coexistence with Russia is bound to be a political issue of the first order in the period ahead.

Churchill's recent visit to Washington was the occasion for a number of articles in the American press on this question. One of them, written by C. L. Sulzberger, New York Times chief foreign correspondent, starts out by trying to define what "coexistence" means, and specially, what it means to different people who use the word.

When Churchill and Eisenhower used the word "coexistence," says Sulzberger, "they meant peace. They meant a halt in the 'cold war' and recognition that different ideological systems can live together at ease without necessarily clashing."

But Malenkov and all Stalinists, according to Sulzberger, use the word differently. "To a trained Communist, coexistence has the plain implication of armed truce leading toward inevitable conflict. It is a temporary phase before the final showdown, a showdown in which victory is to be gained by communism either through a succession of revolutionary grabs or through outright war. The war would be fought—and coexistence ended, when Moscow judged the proper moment had come."

BRITISH VIEW

It may be that Churchill actually thinks of coexistence as a permanent relationship between Stalinism and capitalism. After all, he represents an empire which is dissolving, and the British have not the slightest chance of regaining their one-time place in the world in the present historic period. The most British nationalists and imperialists can hope for is the stabilization of world affairs at their present state, for that would at least preserve what Britain still has. Any change is likely to be for the worse.

For the British, then, coexistence means making a deal with the Stalinists in order to try to freeze the status quo. Britain would keep Hong Kong and Malaya, preserve her relations with India, Ceylon and Pakistan, keep the influence she has in the Middle East, hang on to her portion of Africa. This would be exchanged for recognition of Stalinist China, some deal for

(Turn to last page)

ily biting the hand that fed him.

As a result of exposure in the press (the Alsops) and by defense lawyers, evidence was piled up to show that Crouch was a liar and had testified falsely in his cases. Attorney General Brownell moved to dump him as a liability before the smell got so thick that it clung to him too. It was announced that the Justice Department was investigating its leading informer, who was meanwhile suspended.

Crouch decided not to hold still for the dump. He denounced Brownell, babbled frantically of a dastardly plot against him in which the nation was at stake, and hinted that the subversives who were out to get him had captured the Justice Department.

The ironical touch came when this aromatic personality appealed to the American Civil Liberties Union to defend him as a civil-liberties case.

According to Crouch, the violation of civil liberties came in when the attorney general announced the investigation before giving him a chance to be heard, thus prejudicing the case. Crouch compared his case with that of the National Lawyers Guild; in this case Brownell had publicly announced that he was going to put the guild on the subversive list, before any hearing.

Now, if Crouch had a real civil-liberties case, we would have no compunction

(Continued on page 4)

We Can All Breathe Easier Now

"Use of this word 'Comrade' by the Disabled American Veterans was defended today by William Vanderhoof, 1952-53 deputy chief of staff of the national organization.

"I've checked this thoroughly and find it was used by the Grand Army of the Republic long before our purchase of Alaska from Russia."

—Newark Evening News, May 28.

A PITTSBURGH PAPER REVEALS THE HIGH STRATEGY—

How the Steel Bosses Support McDonald Against Reuther

By GERRY McDERMOTT

PITTSBURGH, July 8—The most important thing about the new CIO steel contract was the path by which it was reached.

The recently signed agreement gave the Steelworkers in the neighborhood of ten cents an hour, about equally divided between a straight pay raise and a boost in the social insurance and pension program. It represented the first improvement in pensions and social insurance in five years.

The settlement fell far short of what the Steelworkers had asked. This was particularly true with regards to the guaranteed annual wage, which the Steelworkers had asked for but did not receive. Nevertheless, the ten-cent settlement was surprisingly good when it is recalled that the industry is operating at only 70 per cent of capacity and many steel workers are unemployed.

Shrewd observers guessed from the start that Steelworkers' president David J. McDonald would get a good settlement from the steel bosses precisely because he is the most conservative leader to appear in the CIO in many years. A Pittsburgh editor has now provided indisputable evidence that this was the case.

"AMAZING THING"

William Jacobs, associate editor of the Scripps-Howard Pittsburgh Press, took a poll of steel executives. His article, which we quote from the Press of July 4, gives the results of his interviews:

"This year's settlement, according to a number of steel industry negotiators who have been very close to the situation, marks the first time that a great industry has used its economic weight to bring influence to bear on a union political situation.

"Observers were rather startled by the size of the 'package' which was finally agreed upon by the United States Steel Corporation, and other companies, and the union as a basis for peace for another year.

"As one industry man put it: 'You know very well that, in the face of the present economic situation in which the industry finds itself, the settlement was more than was anticipated to be necessary or equitable. We could have taken a strike.'

"So the question arises—why? "After checking with a good many steel industry negotiators, two major reasons emerge. The amazing thing is that all the officials checked, without being told what any of the others had said, advanced identical reasons.

"First, they pointed out, the industry recognized that its social insurance and pension plans were behind the trend, having been frozen, under the contracts, for five years.

"Second, there was a desire to 'support Dave McDonald politically.'

"The first reason is relatively easy to explain. It's true that pensions and insurance programs have been frozen under the contracts for five years. . . .

PARTNER OF STEEL

"The second reason, on the other hand, requires a little more imagination, a trait which the industry demonstrated it possessed.

"These premises were generally recognized: 1—Mr. McDonald is accepted as a partner in the steel industry, even by those who were least willing to make concessions historically in the past.

"2—The industry, having recognized that it will be dealing with unions for a long time to come, reached the conclusion that it had better have a sober, responsible, conservative man running the unions.

"3—While the use of economic weight to influence the course of union politics might raise grave philosophical issues, the alternative might be worse.

"Against whom did Mr. McDonald need support politically?

"First, Walter Reuther, president of the CIO and the United Auto Workers, whom the steel leader has now outgunned in his negotiations. Mr. Reuther's concern over the outcome of the steel negotiations was evidence at the last minute when he telegraphed Mr. McDonald that the entire CIO was behind him.

"Second, against any dissident element

in his own union which might prove to be a disturbing factor in the present relations between the Steelworkers and the industry. There is presently no evidence that any dissident group with any degree of strength exists.

"When the Steelworkers hold their convention this September, Mr. McDonald will be on solid ground. His dealings with the steel industry in the past two years have been markedly successful, thanks, in great part, to an unprecedented recognition of 'partnership' by him and the steel industry."

"WORSE ALTERNATIVE"

This revealing article by a Scripps-Howard editor close to the steel industry raises a number of interesting points.

Whether or not there is "any dissident group with any degree of strength" in the Steelworkers remains to be seen. There are certainly plenty of steel workers and steel union officials, high and low, who are disgusted with McDonald, ten cents or no ten cents. There is no question, however, that the steel bosses have strengthened the hand of their "partner" as a result of the settlement and the avoidance of a strike.

The use of economic weight to influence the course of union politics raises "grave philosophical issues," the steel bosses confessed to editor Jacobs, but "the alternative might be worse." Indeed it does raise grave philosophical issues, and it is not surprising that the steel bosses did not go into what they meant specifically. In reality, they have confessed to tampering in the internal politics of the Steelworkers and the CIO. This is, of course, contrary to their pious speeches about being neutral and bargaining with "whomever the employees select."

What is the "alternative" which "might be worse," by the way? It is nothing else than a more militant union. Faced with that, the corporation executives do not hesitate to interfere with the democratic process in the union movement—and "grave philosophic issues" be damned.

People who think that socialists imply "Machiavellian" schemes to businessmen, which exist only in their own overactive imagination, should ask themselves just what the corporation executives did mean by "grave philosophical issues," if it were not a confession on their part that they were engaged in a "Machiavellian" scheme.

Editor Jacobs is wrong, of course, in his assertion that this is the first time that the industry has used its economic weight to influence union politics. This goes on all the time, although the bosses do not usually have so pliable a tool as McDonald to work with.

THE SOPHISTICATES

As a matter of fact, big steel is quite cynical and sophisticated with regard to taming and corrupting unions. U. S. Steel, as far back as 1937, recognized the union without even a strike, in the belief that the union could be tamed, and that it could be tamed more easily by a little kind treatment.

In the strike of 1952, James Gerard, a large stockholder, bitterly denounced the board of directors for failing to settle with Murray. Gerard, a former ambassador to Germany, had had the chance to observe revolutionary European unions, and he considered Phil Murray a real blessing by comparison, and said so.

McDonald's course is, naturally, fraught with danger for the Steelworkers. In his effort to consolidate his position as head of the union, McDonald has based himself on the most conservative workers, the "company men" and near-company men.

His ideology comes from the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, and from the right wing of that organization at that. One of the keys to understanding McDonald is that he is the main batter-

ing ram of the ACTU against Reuther in the CIO.

McDonald's dependence on his "partners" among the bosses means that a sudden turn on the part of the companies would find the Steelworkers horribly unprepared for strike action. For a while, during the recent negotiations, it looked like that situation had arrived.

The first offer of the company was trifling, and negotiations were temporarily broken off. Apparently, the steel bosses needed to be prodded a bit into their role as "partners" of McDonald.

Dismayed, McDonald had to fall back upon ordinary, common-as-dirt trade-unionism. He declared that the steel workers would not work without a contract. He asked the union policy committee for a strike authorization, and, of course, received it. He even called the company executives—excluding Ben Fairless, of course—a bunch of "vultures."

Fortunately for McDonald, the company decided to play "statesmen"—or was the whole thing just a sham to make the bargaining look real? There are those who believe that such was the case. Whether it really was or was not (and we do not pretend to know), the significant thing is that many steel workers—and others—think so.

STEEL'S STAKE

Steel workers need ask themselves only one question to see the error in McDonald's course. Why do the steel bosses want McDonald rather than some other leader? Isn't it obvious that in the long run they believe he will cost them less than his rivals or potential rivals?

It is true that McDonald avoided a strike this year, but for the long haul, a

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Under the title "This is the limit!," Dikobraz (Prague), June 14, 1953 cited a bizarre case of bureaucratic incompetence:

"A fantastic incident occurred on May 4 in Moravska Trebova. Comrades Kovar and Vasek lost their heads on their way to work. They failed to notice this loss and went straight to the District Nation Committee—they are employed there—and began to work. Mr. Kovar, still without his head, sent a memorandum to all Youth League groups in the district, asking them to send him two copies of their by-laws and two copies of the by-laws of the League itself. Kovar sagely added that copies of both sets of by-laws could be gotten for this purpose from his office. Mr. Vasek counter-signed this memorandum. And round and round it goes."

union which comes to depend upon company generosity will either lose its gains or be eventually forced into a much longer strike in order to prove anew to the company that it is, after all, capable of winning its demands in struggle.

There is another aspect of the whole affair that deserves comment. McDonald gets consideration precisely because of the existence of the more militant Reuther and the memory of the more militant Murray.

Who taught the corporation executives that, as editor Jacobs reports, unions are here to stay and that it is better to have "a sober, responsible, conservative man running the unions"? Didn't the bosses learn this from having dealt with Murray and from observing Reuther? Advocates of class collaboration and of "working everything out around the bargaining table" will point to McDonald's settlement as proof that militancy is not needed to win gains. Actually, the steel settlement indicates exactly the opposite.

McDonald's gains came in the way they did primarily because of the existence of a more militant tendency in the CIO, the UAW tendency. As a matter of fact, the steel settlement proves again that the UAW is still the real pacesetter.

LABOR SCOPE

Red-Baiting Loses Again for the CIO

The CIO has found out once again that simple red-baiting doesn't offer a sure formula for defeating the Stalinists in the trade-union movement.

The current issue of Fortune magazine relates how the Steelworkers union has been beaten in its attempt to oust the Stalinist-led Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers from the Montana area.

In Butte and Anaconda, leaders of the Mine, Mill local decided to switch over to the CIO. They assumed that the 8500 copper miners and smelter workers in the local would follow their lead, in the NLRB election that resulted. The Steelworkers fought the campaign primarily on the "red" issue.

"Yet the battered Mine, Mill (approximately 60,000 members) defeated the powerful (1,250,000 members) Steelworkers. What happened? Why did a rank and file, which is basically non-Communist, decisively support a Communist-line leadership?" asks Fortune.

It mentions three less important reasons preliminarily:

(1) The defecting leaders turned out to have less influence on the membership than they thought.

(2) Mine, Mill got help from the state AFL, which would have felt threatened by a CIO victory.

(3) The Steelworkers expected covert support from the company (Anaconda Copper Mining Co.) but the company played neutral; Butte's sole daily newspaper, company-controlled, kept mum about even the fact that Mine, Mill had been expelled from the CIO as Stalinist-led. The Fortune account doesn't tell why. Presumably the Stalinist union leaders were following the same "easy on-the-company" policy as their confreres in UE.

FIFTY YEARS

"And yet all these reasons were beside the point. The hard fact was that the Communist issue fell flat on its face because charges of 'Red' and radicalism had been hurled at the unions in Montana for fifty years by the copper companies, and the miners had leveraged tin ears. The Steelworkers learned this fact too late. . . .

"Butte Local No. 1 had had a turbulent radical tradition. It was a key local in the old Western Federation of Miners, a founding group of the IWW. The mining companies in 1914 broke the union and kept Butte an open-shop town for over twenty years. The residue of class-consciousness, like the cynicism of the New York longshoreman toward the charge of racketeering, made the Butte miners deaf to the charge of Red.

"For Mine, Mill the victory was crucial. The union had been sagging badly in recent years (except among Mexican miners in the Southwest, where it has aggressively fought race prejudice). Its smashing victory gives it a firm grip on the key Montana locals."

Now the Steelworkers can only hope that, where they couldn't win over the men, the plum will be handed over to them by the government. The Mine-Mill secretary, Maurice Travis, is up before the NLRB on charge of perjury—concealing CP membership. If the board decides against him, the election result can be canceled by a new ballot, in which Mine, Mill would be out of the running, since the NLRB would refuse to recognize it.

"GUATEMALA" TACTIC

As mentioned above, if the neutrality of the company was an indication, then there must have been plenty of room for a solid trade-union militant program on the basis of which the CIO could have asked for the allegiance of the copper miners and smelter workers. Its failure to do so, and its preference for red-baiting as a substitute for trade-unionism, means that Montana saw a reduplication of the sorry mistake often made by the IUE-CIO in its fight against the UE, and by the UAW-CIO in its drives against the UE-FE.

In pursuing such reactionary tactics, no doubt the CIO men think they can pull a sort of "Guatemala": you simply yell "Communist domination" and expect your foes to run like rats. No doubt it sometimes works, but never to the real best interests of either the trade-union movement or of any other people.

There's No Pickup in Sight On the Economic Front

By JACK WILSON

It was just one year ago that big-business and government spokesmen ridiculed warnings by Walter P. Reuther, CIO president, that America faced a recession, whose harbinger would be a drastic reduction in auto production for the last half of 1953.

This week, the same ruling interests dispute again the somber analysis that the CIO makes of current and forthcoming business conditions.

The Joint Congressional Economic Committee declared on July 11 that "the recessionary trend which began last year has been stopped," and that "apprehension must now give way to optimism." Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks added that "a fall spurt may require even optimistic forecasters to revise their figures upwards."

Walter Reuther charges these reports with being misleading and over-optimistic. He makes the flat statement that there is nothing to indicate a "general pickup in economic activity."

"COME SPRING . . ."

It may be recalled that one year ago, business spokesmen were almost unanimous in disagreeing with Reuther and the CIO. Steel spokesmen, for example, scoffed at the "notion" that steel might fall to an 80 per cent rate of production. Auto hucksters denied the downward trend by talking about the year as a whole instead, and meanwhile laid off thousands of workers.

By the winter of 1953 the trade journals, business magazines and public spokesmen admitted a "readjustment," but in every case disputed any statistic about unemployment, until the Department of Labor's notorious *faux pas* on Detroit unemployment forced them to revise their own figures and admit the situation was much worse than previously stated.

Even the *Wall Street Journal* began hedging about steel production and industrial activity, and C. E. Wilson's famous dictum, "Come spring and everything is going to be all right," was conveniently buried after prominent display for a moment.

Steel production hovered around the 70 per cent mark in the so-called peak month of March. It was supposed to be the barometer of the spring pickup, until that happened.

There was no spring pickup, except (by the way) in an industry which was not expected to duplicate 1953 but did, the important construction industry. Its unexpected strength saved the economy this spring from a far more serious decline than economists care to admit.

Now that summer is here, once again the economy faces a similar, although not identical, situation with the summer of 1953, and this is the basis for the sharp difference between the CIO outlook and the Republican viewpoint followed by most newspaper, trade journal and business magazine writers.

STATISTICAL LIARS

Last year, the dispute centered around possible unemployment and industrial activity. Now the argument is over the size of unemployment. Just as, last winter, government spokesmen got caught up in their own cover-up of the extent of unemployment, today any serious analysis of the unemployment situation makes liars out of the professional economists of the Eisenhower administration. By the simple expedient, for example, of not counting the wage earners whose unemployment benefits have been exhausted as among those considered "actively" unemployed and drawing compensation, the unemployment figure remains around 3,400,000 by government statistics. The real figure, as CIO economists can easily demonstrate, is closer to 5,000,000—with major unemployment to grow.

Of course, government spokesmen know that unemployment is going to in-

crease sharply, but they dismiss this as simply a seasonal "summer slump." Newspapers do their part by not printing stories anymore about layoffs, such as have occurred in the past two weeks in auto, steel, rubber, glass, and other basic industries, with the big shutdowns in auto still ahead, as manufacturers begin a hectic race to work out their 1955 models and get them out at least three months earlier than last year.

Meanwhile, as every union leader knows, the current "stagnation" (as Reuther put it) has resulted in hundreds of thousands of workers being permanently unemployed for the whole year of 1954. Detroit today, for example, still has over 140,000 unemployed.

MORE LAYOFFS DUE

The Michigan Employment Security Commission projects for Michigan at least 300,000 unemployed by October, with CIO figures putting the estimate closer to 400,000. Does this forecast a fall pickup? Agricultural implement likewise faces layoffs. Comes fall, the construction boom will level off, and it has been a major source of keeping steel production up to the low mark of 70 per cent of capacity in its rate of production. Only the war scare and the expected steel price increase following steel negotiations put steel into a schedule of 73 per cent of capacity in production during three weeks of June.

As a matter of fact, the National Planning Association recently substantiated Reuther's viewpoint, even if inadvertently, when its report on national production stated that production must be increased by \$25,000,000 a year if the nation is to enjoy full employment.

In another way, this means that the unemployment in basic industry and the decline in industrial activity has cost this country \$25,000,000 worth of wealth which was NOT created in the year 1954, not to speak of the hardships to the unemployed workers. Steel, on which 40 per cent of all manufacturing rests, will produce 25 million tons less this year than in 1953.

It may well be that a sector of the American population will enjoy as good a year in 1954 as 1953, especially stockholders, but over all, the decline in real wealth produced and the chronic character of unemployment suggests a lowering of the standard of living for a vast segment of America, especially when the rate of economic activities is put in the context of a growing population and a labor force expanding 900,000 a year.

What alarms the union leadership is that this situation is not only the current reason for distress of a big section of its membership, but the knowledge that the Washington administration is committed to allowing "natural economic forces" to prevail, without sufficiently planning the kind of "New-Dealish" measures to alleviate the situation.

Atomic Workers Fighting — —

(Continued from page 1)

wants us to go back to work he can order a contract signed."

Special disabilities are piled up for unions in atom plants. A conference of the International Association of Machinists in Chicago in September 1953 heard representatives in atom plants report that union delegates found it difficult to gain access to workers with grievances and had trouble investigating their complaints. In negotiations, unions are at a disadvantage; they cannot get the facts; they have no access to records; they can't bolster their demands with documented arguments; and they find it difficult to argue against unilateral and arbitrary decisions of plant management.

KEY ISSUE

But above all, the right to strike of atomic workers is under challenge. The *New York Times* reports: "The government has taken the position that these workers are employees of private industry. At the same time, they have been told they had no moral right to strike."

One of the main real causes of the July 7 stoppage was the determination of the workers to demonstrate their own right to strike. As the *Times* reported it, "The workers have been told repeatedly that they could not strike these plants and they decided to demonstrate the error of this declaration and assert their own independence."

LONDON LETTER

Hazards of Denationalization: The Tories Are Stuck with It

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, July 8—The Tories are running into serious trouble over their efforts to denationalize road transport. Some weeks ago we reported their troubles with steel. Road transport presents the same problems.

In the first place Labor has undertaken to renationalize these two industries if they return to power. This has deterred many investors, and so in order to sell the lots of trucks, for instance, the government has had to reduce the prices.

This has naturally opened them to the charges that the loss which the government sustains in these transactions represents a feather-bedding of private interests at public expense. About a fortnight ago, there was a public furor because the government sold to private investors a large steel plant, for which they paid twenty-two million pounds, for only twelve million pounds.

In the steel industry the Steel Realization Board has only got tenders for a fraction of the most productive plant. In road transport, the government has only been able to sell 6,000 out of 36,000 vehicles.

Understanding that hard-headed businessmen will not buy the less valuable stock, the government has had to allow both a steel and a road transport board to continue in service to run those parts of these industries which it cannot sell to private firms. At the same time it has pledged that the unsold stock will only represent a small part of the total.

By the act denationalizing transport, the clause putting a 25-mile limit on private road haulage was abolished for transport denationalized. In Parliament yesterday James Callaghan, former Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, made two very serious charges, which the minister did not deny.

He alleged that road haulers were buying single denationalized lorries so that they could obtain a license to operate outside the 25-mile limit, and then using a whole fleet of lorries on one license.

He also asserted that there was a move afoot in the City among "a number of rather fishy gentlemen" for the formation of a number of companies between the Transport Commission and themselves. They would own 49 per cent of the shares, and the commission would run the transport and own 51 per cent. "For sheer, naked greed, I have rarely seen anything like this," Callaghan said.

Allan Lennox-Boyd, the Minister of Transport (notorious for his prewar sup-

port of Franco) said that he had no intention of sanctioning anything which would be a friend of the transport denationalization act. The reason why so few vehicles had been sold was that so far in the past 14 months the government had only offered small lots for sale. In autumn the larger number would be sold.

The government is between the devil and the deep blue sea. Whatever happens, it is going to be left with the residue of the least efficient sections of steel and road transport. It cannot cajole hard-headed businessmen into buying stock for sentimental reasons.

It will therefore have to run all the inefficient parts of these industries at a loss to the fattening beneficiaries of the better groups. That is politically inexpedient.

MINERS MARK TIME

From the industrial front we hear news of the conference of the National Union of Mineworkers at Blackpool. By a large majority it decided not to press for further wage claims unless the talks for new plans flop.

Their three-point plan called for:

(1) Reduction of working day of miners underground from 7½ to 7 hours, and 8½ to 8 hours for surface workers.

(2) Ending of a bonus paid to miners who work a full week. This device was designed to discourage absenteeism. If the miners' claim for bonuses for each complete day's work is accepted they will be paid one and a fifth their present pay, and the deterrent effect of the bonus on absenteeism will disappear.

(3) Sick benefits for miners for six weeks off work. This is because of the great industrial hazards of the pneumoconioses.

It is estimated that were these claims to be met they would cost the National Coal Board \$40,000,000 a year.

The miners are the best paid industrial workers in the country now. There is a bigger demand for coal than there ever has been before. The National Coal Board is wondering whether it can pay the miners more and decrease the demand for coal by putting up its price by about 13 cents a ton. On the other hand, would a price increase in so basic an industry lead to all-around price increases? Furthermore, would more pay for the same work increase the amount of coal produced, or decrease it?

At the conferences of the NUM, Arthur Horner, the secretary, is always in an embarrassing position. He is a well-known Stalinist who is considered by them to be so valuable in his present position that the CP even allows him to batter down its own members' proposals at conference.

It was a movement, not only for wages, but for the right to strike.

And this right is becoming a key issue. At an AFL Metal Trades convention in Cleveland in September, John A. Brownlow, president of the Metal Trades Department, announced that the AFL would sign no more blanket no-strike agreements at atomic plants.

Legally, atomic workers have the right to strike. The plants are owned by the government but are run by private companies. And so, the men employed in the plants are private, not government, employees.

GOVERNMENT MANEUVERS

But if the administration cannot outlaw strikes as matters stand, it can maneuver toward that end. It is now mulling over the problem of changing the workers' technical status. "One of the alternatives to be considered," reports the *Times*, "is to make the workers bona-fide government employees."

"This would give them whatever privileges and security go with government employment in return for which they would yield the right to strike." They would also lose the right to a written and signed contract and their conditions of work would begin to depend upon the arbitrary whim of government committees and boards.

"Although the right of the government worker to join and participate freely in

a union of his own choosing is recognized, the unions are not generally accorded collective bargaining rights," reported the *Monthly Labor Review* of the U. S. Department of Labor in January. And under section 305 of the Taft-Hartley Law, government employees are prohibited from striking.

In New York, the Transit Authority, by the same reasoning that prompts the national administration to turn atomic workers into government employees, decided that it would not sign a contract with the CIO Transport Workers Union on city-owned subway lines. But the union threatened to call a general strike on all subways in defiance of a state law which prohibits government workers from striking. When the union showed its readiness to fight, the Transit Authority changed its mind.

Any attempt by the administration to trick workers out of their rights in the nationally owned atomic plants might prompt a similar showdown.

WEEK by WEEK . . .

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

A sub is only \$2 a year!

Don't miss a single week of
LABOR ACTION
A sub is only \$2.00 a year!

MARXISM for TODAY

Mumford on Modern Art and Politics

Louis Mumford is not a Marxist, of course, and indeed that is why we devote this column to excerpts from his article "Irrational Elements in Art and Politics" (New Republic, Apr. 5-12). What he does in his own way is show how the political life of society is reflected in one prominent phase of modern art, or, as he puts it, "to indicate a possible connection between the disturbing symbols of fashionable modern art, so empty, so valueless and meaningless, so chaotic and random, and the deeply irrational quality taken on by political life today, in which absolute power has become another name for impotence, in which security becomes more terrifyingly absent with every new physical instrument invented to produce it, in which the final destination of our whole civilization could be represented only by such a form as unorganized and meaningless particles floating at random about an otherwise vacant canvas."

The following passages will perhaps suggest Mumford's idea.

—Philip COBEN

Those of us who came to modern art in our youth, with an almost crusading enthusiasm, often defended it against the pained criticisms of the traditionalists by saying that this new art, post-impressionism, cubism, futurism, vorticism, or what not, was an "expression of our age"; and in that very fact we saw the proof of its validity and importance. . . . Painfully we have at last learned that if art was an expression of our civilization, it might express these evils, in symbolic form, quite as readily as it expresses the positive and formative forces that had, in fact, a great contribution to make to man's development. . . .

One part of our art has responded to the formative and rational elements in our civilization and has sought to interpret and translate them; the other part has responded to, has recorded, has intensified the horror and misery and madness of our age, with its code of unrestricted violence and its scientifically contrived technics of demoralization, disintegration, and extermination. . . .

THE NEW CULT

As if the cult of violence were not a sufficient threat to our rationality, indeed to our very humanity, the painting of our time discloses still another danger: the surrender to the accidental and the denial of the possibility of coherence and intelligibility: what one might call the devaluation of all values and emptying out of all meanings. This ultimate expression of the meaningless began in an almost innocent, because still humorous, form, at the end of the First World War, in the cult of Da-daiism: an irreverent commentary on the inflated platitudes of politicians. But by now the cult of the meaningless is a grimly humorless one: the negative responses that its empty splotches and scrawls at first provoke in a perceptive mind will be met, on the part of the devotees, with a fanatic gleam of reproach. Cracks, erosions, smudges, denials of all order or intelligibility, with not even as much capacity for evocative association as a Rohrshach ink-blot—this is the ultimate form and content of the

fashionable art of the last decade. To gaze piously into this ultimate emptiness has become the last word in art appreciation today. The artists who produce these paintings, or the sculptures that correspond to them, are often people of serious talent: sometimes their early work discloses the fact that they were people of original ability, perfectly able as far as technical command of the means goes, to express whatever human thought or feeling the artist of any age might express. But now all their talent, all their energy, is concentrated on only one end: a retreat, not only from the surface world of visible buildings and bodies, but a retreat from any kind of symbol that could, by its very organization, be interpreted as having a connection with organized form: a retreat into the formless, the life-less, the disorganized, the dehumanized, the world of non-significance, as close as possible to blank non-existence.

In these final images the modern artists who seem, however patiently we behold them, to say nothing to us, are in fact saying a great deal. Paintings that we must, in all critical honesty, reject as aesthetic expressions, we must yet accept as despairing confessions of the soul, or as savage political commentary on our present condition arising from the depths of the unconscious. For there is one special quality in these paintings that lowers their standing as works of art: they are too factual, too realistic, they are too faithful reflections of the world we actually live in, the world we are so energetically preparing to suffer death in. These symbols of nothingness, true revelations of our purposeless mechanism and our mechanized purposes, this constant fixation on what is violent, dehumanized, infernal—all this is not pure aesthetic invention, the work of men who have no contacts with the life around them. Just the contrary: their ultimate negation of form and meaning should remind us of the goal of all our irrational plans and mechanisms. What they say should awaken us as no fuller and saner images might. These men, these paintings, these symbols have a terrible message to communicate: their visual nihilism is truer to reality than all the conventional paintings that assure us so smoothly that our familiar world is still there—and will always be there.

THE BLANK WALL

Let us not reproach the artist for telling us this message, which we have not the sensitivity to record or the courage to tell to ourselves: the message that the future, on the terms that it presents itself to us now, has become formless, valueless, meaningless: that in this irrational age, governed by absolute violence and pathological hate, our whole country, our whole civilization, might vanish from the face of the earth as completely as images of any sort have vanished from these pictures: as dismayingly as that little isle in the Pacific vanished from the surface of the ocean under the explosion of the hydrogen bomb. This is the new apocalypse, haunted by more terrible spectres than the traditional Four Horsemen, as they appeared to the innocent eyes of John of Patmos—a revelation that promises neither a new heaven nor a new earth but an end that would nullify and make meaningless the whole long process of human history. Let the painters who have faced this ultimate nothingness, who have found a symbol for it, be understood if not honored: what they tell us is what we are all hiding from ourselves. . . .

In both art and politics we have reached the last blank wall of meaninglessness: the complete negation of all human values and purposes. That is the ABC lesson of the ABC war—the seeming innocent classification that has been given to atomic, biological and chemical genocide. The only intelligible fact that post-abstract painting discloses is that life has become purposeless. The only idea that is conveyed by its lack of form and design is that the next step—and the last one—is chaos: the chaos of a final wasteland in which all order and designs derived from life have returned to aimless dust and rubble. . . .

[In his concluding discussion, Mumford argues that artists have the responsibility to do what they can to "rally the forces of life" against these destructive trends.]

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

about supporting such a point even for a scoundrelly prostitute and professional liar. But we fail to see the parallel with the National Lawyers Guild case. In the latter case, Brownell did not merely announce that he was going to investigate. He announced his verdict in advance. That's as far as the formalities go.

It was a break for the ACLU, however, in any case, in anticipation of the next time that McCarthy accuses it of being subversive. Now it has a sort of testimonial from Crouch.

Et Tu, Freddie?

Speaking of McCarthy, a friend of his has just slipped him the knife. The Scripps-Howard newspaper chain has announced to the country that Joe is a bad man. They're breaking, and won't play any more.

The man chosen to write the indictment was Frederick Woltman, whom they proudly present as "the premier 'Red-baiter' among American newspaper reporters."

As if in fear and trembling, along with the "McCarthy Balance Sheet" in which Woltman Tells All, the N. Y. World-Telegram ran a supplementary story designed to prove that the Daily Worker calls Woltman "Freddie the Fink." It is all planned to pare McCarthy's claws, looking forward to the day when the senator will seek to prove that Woltman is really a paid agent of the Cominform who became a red-baiter many years before McCarthy did but only with the sinister design of stabbing him in the back at the crucial time.

The indictment by Woltman boils down to one charge on which McCarthy is tried and found guilty. There is lots about morality and such sticky talk in Woltman's prose, but none of it counts. It is perfectly clear that McCarthy's unforgivable trespass was when he turned his mud-guns against the Republicans and the Eisenhower administration, and not only against the Democrats and other subversives.

Woltman reveals that he has been a close friend of McCarthy. ("Two or three or more nights a week with mutual friends he'd drop into my apartment at the Hotel Congressional. I got to know the man.") Somehow or other through this whole period of palship, Woltman never realized just how foul Joe's "special brand of reckless, knee-to-the-groin tactics" were. But then he realized that McCarthy "was extending the treason charge to the Republican regime."

Technicality

A wing of the McCarthyites taking a walk—away from Joe. But away from McCarthyism? Let's not be silly.

As if to prove it, the same issue of the World-Telegram, which is the Scripps-Howard New York outlet, which carries an editorial endorsing Woltman's conclusions, also carries another editorial on the Lattimore case. It comments on the Federal Court of Appeals decision which threw out the main count in the government's perjury indictment of Lattimore. This main count was that Lattimore was a "sympathizer" of the Communists. With elementary justice, the court decided that the term "sympathizer" in this case could not be given any juridical meaning.

This is the comment of the brave Scripps-Howard editors who were just telling McCarthy off:

"Communist sympathizer or not, it was Lattimore's effectiveness in helping steer State Department policy which ended in handing China over to the Communists.

"On that count, the Senate internal security subcommittee, after an 18-month investigation, two years ago determined that Lattimore was influential in bringing about a change in U. S. policy . . . favorable to the Chinese Communists."

"Mr. Lattimore may get off, in this case, on a legal technicality. But that won't exonerate him of the finding of the Senate committee—or change his standing with the American people."

So it doesn't even matter if Lattimore was a "Communist sympathizer or not," and that's just a legal technicality; he ought to be put away in jail (except for the legal technicality) because his bad policy was so bad. . . .

McCarthyism marches on, among the new-fledged anti-McCarthyites. If the Scripps-Howard break heralds the personal downfall of Joe, then that salutary event can be the starting-point of a real invigoration of liberal and labor defense of civil liberties, as they take heart; but

such a revival will have to break with the McCarthyism that has triumphed in such large measure even among liberals.

The Tragedy

As this is written, Dulles, who had been sulking in his discontent in Washington, finally broke down and flew to Paris to preside, with Mendès-France and Eden, over the obsequies of French rule in Indochina. They have announced the terms of their proposed deal, and, ignominious as it is for the Westerners, no one is sure that Chou En-lai will concede even so much.

What we want to put in 10-point type at the moment is the following sentence from the Times report of July 14:

"The French want the election [in Vietnam] as late as possible, since if they were held today it is assumed the Vietminh would win."

This has been admitted before, to be sure, but here it is again just as the Western imperialists are bowing the head. In a real sense it is the explanation for the military defeat. It is also an open confession of hypocrisy.

For, after all the propaganda about "saving" Indochina from the Stalinist menace. It admits that the majority of the Vietnamese people themselves would support Ho Chi Minh in an election. The U. S. has been fighting the Vietnamese people, not simply the Stalinists.

The fact itself is the tragedy of Indochina. That the Stalinist totalitarians can win the people (and not simply military victories) is due entirely to the fact that the only alternative to them appears to be French colonialism. They could not hold the people as against an independent, democratic Vietnam freed from Western control. But the U. S. among others has seen to it that it was the Stalinists who won.

Precedent

"One of the conditions [for escaping the stake] was that of stating all they knew of other heretics and apostates, which proved an exceedingly fruitful source of information as, under the general terror, there was little hesitation in denouncing not only friends and acquaintances, but the nearest and dearest kindred—parents and children, and brothers and sisters."

—Lea, Spanish Inquisition, Vol. 1, p. 165.

But They Don't Love Us

As of July 4, 1953, the United States had troops in 40 countries of the world as compared with 39 countries at the height of World War II. Twenty years ago, in 1933, U. S. troops were in only three countries outside of the United States.

The U. S. also has army advisory groups in 34 countries around the world and four major naval fleets.

READ ABOUT SOCIALISM

The Fight for Socialism cloth \$2 paper \$1
by Max Shachtman

Socialism: the Hope of Humanity10
by Max Shachtman

Marxism in the U. S.35
by Leon Trotsky

Plenty for All: The Meaning of Socialism25
by Ernest Erber

The Principles and Program of Independent Socialism10
(LA Special Issue)

Independent Socialist Press
114 West 14 Street, New York City



LABOR ACTION

July 19, 1954 Vol. 18, No. 29

Published weekly by Labor Action Publishing Company, 114 West 14 Street, New York 11, N. Y.—Telephone: WATKINS 4-4222—Re-entered as second-class matter May 24, 1940, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1874.—Subscriptions: \$2 a year; \$1 for 6 months (\$2.25 and \$1.15 for Canadian and Foreign).—Opinions and policies expressed in signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the news of Labor Action, which are given in editorial statements.

Editor: HAL DRAPER

Asst. Ed.: GORDON HASKELL,
BEN HALL

Business Mgr.: L. G. SMITH

Sneak Attack at U. of Michigan: Sequel to the 'FBI Spy' Case

You read about the case of "Love vs. the FBI" in the May 17 issue of *Challenge*, and perhaps remember the story of the University of Michigan coed who confessed how the FBI had recruited her to inform on her boy-friend.

The girl in the case departed from the university when the story broke. But the story goes on.

Two students who had been informed on, and another graduate student—and three professors are now up on loyalty charges for expulsion from the university. No action was taken prior to the vacation, possibly because school authorities feared a mass student protest. The case will be settled over the summer, and at this writing, we have no information as to its outcome. However, there are already some interesting aspects to the case.

WAKING UP

The first is that this politically somnolent campus seemed to be on the verge of waking up and taking a stand on the issues involved. With almost 20,000 students, political activity on the Michigan campus has been more or less confined to a small group of about one hundred students. The Stalinists Labor Youth League is no longer a campus club, and the centers of organized activity have been Students for Democratic Action and, more recently, the Student League for Industrial Democracy. There was a brief flurry of activity as a result of the Green Feather Movement (the anti-McCarthy student group which came to the defense of Robin Hood when he was in danger of being banned at Indiana), but this did not last long.

However, the case of the three professors and the two graduate students seemed to make an impact on the campus. There appeared to be a very real possibility that the student body would participate in a protest movement if the firings and expulsions took place. As a result, decision was postponed. If it is to be adverse, it will be announced in the summer—when the students are away.

The second interesting aspect of the case was the reaction of medical students to the inclusion of one of their professors in the group under attack. Medical students are not generally known for political activity—much less in the interests of civil liberties. Yet in this case a considerable protest emanated from the medics.

TOWARD A CAMPAIGN

The professor under attack was removed from his classroom post. His course was given to another teacher. Yet the suspected lecturer continued to attend his own class "informally," and to speak to the students. As a matter of fact, it was hard to tell who was teaching the course under this system. Some felt that the original teacher was carrying on his class—if under somewhat whimsical conditions.

The fact that the students were ready to fight is heartening. The fact that the university managed to head off any campus reaction by postponing decision is not surprising. What is obviously called for is some kind of campaign in the fall, to point up the case whichever way it goes. Only in this way can student activity frustrate the sneak tactics of the university administration.

IT'S CONFIRMED—

'Thought-Policeman' On the Calif. Campus

Developments in California have recently confirmed the existence of an official university thought-police—a fact that has consistently been reported in *Challenge* and through statements of Young Socialist Leaguers on the West Coast.

The confirmation came in a charge made by the American Civil Liberties Union that William Wadman, "security officer" at the University of California, was playing the role of a "thought-policeman" and that he checks "on the opinions and associations of faculty members."

Comrades of the YSL in California could broaden this accusation, with documentation of spying on students as well as professors. In some cases, police "red squads" have photographed students attending street meetings.

The reaction of the university administration was to admit the charge but contest the ACLU interpretation of it.

University President Sproul, Chancellor Kerr, Richard E. Combs, counsel to the California Un-American Committee, and Wadman, protested:

"The charge that Mr. Wadman is a 'thought-policeman' is irresponsible. . . . There is a world of difference between receipt of information from a properly constituted committee of the State Legislature [Wadman had been working hand-in-glove with the Un-Americans in the

California Legislature—Ed.] and the work of 'thought-policemen' in Fascist and Communist dictatorships."

Indeed, there is a world of difference—if one conceives of a "thought-policeman" in accidental terms such as the type of uniform he wears, the name of the agency to which he reports, and so on. But what substantial difference is there between thought-police and the knowing use of an ideological snooper and a spy by the administration of a university?

Do the teachers at California whose opinions and associations are investigated know that this is not thought-policing but merely patriotism?

The amazing thing about this revelation is not that there are thought-police at California—an eventuality that the least sophisticated could have probably predicted. It is that the president of the university, its chancellor, the counsel of the Un-American Committee and the thought-policeman himself join together in a statement defining what totalitarian methods are and clearing their own Gestapo-man of any undemocratic practice.

In effect, this means that the California authorities have now reached a point where they are willing to make public acknowledgment of a university security system—and defend it on the grounds that it is not incompatible with freedom!

An even more sinister aspect of the case was reported by Ernest Besig, Northern California director of the ACLU. Besig reported that the ACLU has reason to believe that two faculty members have been ousted on the basis of derogatory information. The charges against them were later traced to President Sproul himself. From this, it is obvious that there are very real consequences of the California thought-policeman system—and that it does in truth exist with the connivance of the university administration.

And yet there is no reason to look for civil-libertarianism from the California University Administration. This is the university which pioneered in the oath. This is a university which many leading scholars already shun because of its undemocratic practices. This newest confirmation of the effect of the witch-hunt hysteria thus comes only as a confirmation. Yet it is sad to find out how entirely we have been right. No one can be happy when a university administration openly admits charges which are usually only found in the radical press.

Judgment

An interesting analysis of the American university comes from a judge—a Judge Stein of the Superior Court of New Jersey, writing on the case of A. P. Smith Manufacturing Company vs. Barlow et al. The subject was the legality of corporate gifts to universities:

"I cannot conceive of any greater benefit to corporations in this country than to build, and continue to build, respect for and adherence to a system of free enterprise and democratic government, the serious impairment of either of which may well spell the destruction of all corporate enterprise. Nothing that aids or promotes the growth and service of the American university or college in respect of the matters here discussed can possibly be anything short of direct benefit to every corporation in the land. . . ."

"I hold that the corporate contributions to Princeton and institutions rendering the like public service are, if held within reasonable limitations, a matter of direct benefit to the giving corporations. . . ."

(Quoted from *The Industrial Worker*)

YSL Fund Drive Report: It Was a Good Try But . . .

WE'RE 15 PER CENT SHORT—NOW WE MUST BUILD A PLEDGE SYSTEM

By SCOTT ARDEN
YSL National Secretary

The first national Fund Drive of the Young Socialist League is now officially ended. We have fallen short of our goal by almost \$300.

Of the total quota of \$1500, only 84 per cent, or \$1206.50, has been received by the National Office. Fortunately, however, the situation is not quite as bad as it might seem.

That is, although the drive is officially over, more money is expected to come in. Both New York and Chicago, already over their quotas, have indicated that some collectable pledges are still outstanding and that the N.O. can expect to receive this money within the next few weeks.

Additionally, arrangements have been made with those units that requested an extension of time to the effect that the outstanding balances of their quotas are to be considered pledges payable during the summer and fall.

Berkeley, for example, informs us that they will be able to make up their difference in full between now and September. Our New Haven comrades have

pledged \$20 more which will be paid in the fall—which will put them over their original fund drive quota by 14 per cent.

Los Angeles has indicated that more money will be sent in but has not yet made it clear whether or not they can make up their balance in the form of a unit pledge. We hope to hear from them to this effect in the near future. Our Newark comrades are also yet to be heard from.

Some money is still expected to come in from the "At Large" category, but probably not enough to lift it to the full amount we had originally expected. Reports from Boston indicate that our strength there is less than that required for a full unit by the YSL Constitution and, further, that a serious reorganization job must be undertaken before a functioning self-supporting Boston unit can be re-established. Because of this it would seem unlikely that financial support to the N.O. can be expected from Boston in the near future.

NEXT STEP

All in all the YSL has done a good job on this first Fund Drive. Despite the heavy demands the national organization was forced to make, our units and members, with few exceptions, have come through with every cent available. The number of serious individual sacrifices this has meant (and is still meaning) leaves little room for criticism and much for pride.

The fact remains, however, that even with the money still coming in the form of unit pledges to the N.O., we will fall short of the \$1500 goal. This means that the YSL faces the problem of a financial deficit that, unless overcome, may well cripple the functioning of organization on the national level.

What's the Score?

	Quota	Paid-in	%
Total	\$1500	\$1206.50	84
New York	675	700	104
Chicago	200	202	101
At Large	170	110	64
Newark	50	30	60
Berkeley	100	57	57
New Haven	35	50	50
Los Angeles	200	87.50	44
Boston	70	0	0

Get the Challenge

every week — by subscribing to
Labor Action. A student sub is
only \$1 a year!

THE SHAME OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM

Surveying the Liberal Press on the Guatemala Issue

By HAL DRAPER

The Guatemalan issue is a touchstone. Anyone who wishes can insist on looking at it as just another imbroglio in an already messy world; anyone—but not Americans.

The crime was committed here; the world has been looking in this direction; and American liberals cannot pretend they are not involved. They have not been behind-hand in virtuously denouncing French colonialism and preaching goody-goody sentiments about freedom for somebody else's subjects. It goes without saying: they have not been behind-hand in displaying the crimes committed by Stalinist imperialism.

Outside of the hallowed borders of the U. S., there is scarcely even a venal politician to be found, or a bought and corrupted newspaper, that has seriously defended the U. S. rape of the small Central American country. This may be somewhat of an exaggeration, but in truth the near-unanimity with which the entire non-Stalinist world has expressed its reaction is astonishing. That reaction may vary from appalled indignation to mere disgust, distaste or charges of simple stupidity and tactlessness; but favorable reactions have either been entirely lacking or purely formal and for the record.

So thickly insulated is this country's thinking under its blanket of national-chauvinism and national smugness, so alienated is this entire country from the thinking of the rest of the world, that even on the liberal "left" there has scarcely been a single voice found to rise against a monstrous crime.

One relatively honorable exception has been something of a surprise too. That was the *Reporter* magazine, the fortnightly edited by Max Ascoli. Its editorial page on Guatemala (July 20) starts off with a bang, even though it fades away to a whimper before it is through.

"Maybe we are in a somewhat cynical mood, but in this whole Guatemalan mess we cannot make up our mind which is worse—the blunder or the crime," it starts off.

We find out no more about the "crime," but much about the blunder. Lodge "presented the Soviet government with the best possible precedents for Communism to use in future aggressions. . . . UN members were given to understand that there is nothing particularly wrong if, within their borders, an aggression is mounted against another member . . . a principle of which the Communists can make good use."

Outside the *Reporter*, the only publications that have condemned the crime against Guatemala have been those influenced by the Stalinoids: the independent Stalinist *Monthly Review*, of course; *I. F. Stone's Weekly* had an informative issue; the *Nation*, the organ of the Stalinoid-liberals, unleashed its Del Vayo on the subject.

The 'NR' Approves

But the *New Republic*—to leave the Stalinoid field—presented a quite different picture. In its own peculiar way the *New Republic* endorsed the intervention.

The position was taken in the "Washington Wire" page of the *NR*, a section which is signed "T.R.B." However, there is no "T.R.B.," as is well-known, and the page is probably written by editor-publisher Michael Straight, or certainly with his approval. It was not even the subject of Guatemala that was directly taken up. This Washington-comment page was discussing something else when it remarked also that "the State Department is making a bad blunder over Guatemala."

If this sounds dreadfully critical, it is only an example of a liberal penchant for endorsing an imperialist crime strictly with reluctance—frowning, as it were. For the "blunder" which the *NR* sees is not very discreditable:

"As to Guatemala, anybody who ever read a foreign news dispatch knows that the United States is deeply suspect—rightly or wrongly (and we believe wrongly)—all over the world for alleged 'imperialism,' and for possible intervention behind the United Fruit Company in Guatemala. If these charges aren't true, how much wiser and easier it would be to let the UN investigate. America is innocent and it favors the UN; then why allow our UN ambassador Lodge to create the dangerous precedent of blocking a full inquiry?"

This little innocent blunder is the peccadillo. The *Reporter* had also seen the same kind of blunders; and while the *Reporter* had also declared it a "crime," it had neglected to tell us what the "crime" was. But as mentioned, the *Reporter* was the best of the lot; in the case of the *NR*, we have a simple apologist at work.

The liberal Catholic weekly *Commonweal* presented as miserable a picture. An editorial clearly endorsed the intervention by armed force, though with pious overtones of hoped-for reform.

Like so many other liberals, *Commonweal* too spoke of the "sins" of United Fruit as a thing of the "past," clearly giving it a clean bill of health today. With little evidence of a second thought it completely swallows the story about "Communist domination" of the Arbenz regime, without bothering to prove it. This in turn automatically becomes justification for the intervention, in and of itself.

Then the *Commonweal* liberals write as if the "armed force" was needed to "keep the Communists from violent seizure of power," forgetting momentarily that these Communists were already supposed to be in control of the Arbenz government. As a matter of fact, the editors seem to have tossed the stuff off with a bare look at the press headlines: the Guatemalan revolution of 1944 is repeatedly dated to 1945, and they seem to be under the impression that a Guatemalan CP existed continuously before and after that date.

In view of the run-of-the-mill, unthinking, automatic acceptance by the *Commonweal* editors of the standard press story, it is with uncommon bad grace that they proceed to highly moral and glutinous preachments like the following:

"Because the United States is a rich country . . . it is often hard for us to see things as men in poorer nations do. Yet if we are to achieve peace, it is essential that we be able to suffer with the children of the laborer on the coffee plantation, sweat with the Guatemalan peasant laboring in the heat of the day, taste a little of the land-hunger which he has known for generations. We cannot let our riches insulate us from the world."

All in all, a very good idea for the editors of the *Commonweal* and all other would-be liberal organs: it would be a step to wringing out the national-chauvinism with which their writings drip.

He Didn't Go into Hiding

The CIO's statement and the imperialist whitewashes of the *N. Y. Post's* gentry have already been discussed in previous issues of *LA*. There is another weekly, not infrequently regarded as a liberal organ, which cannot be skipped. The *New Leader*, issue of July 12, comes back to the Guatemalan wars with another article by Daniel James. We have been looking forward to this.

Our readers may remember that this "authority" is the man who conclusively proved as far back as last April that the Arbenz regime was "Communist-dominated." His brilliant proof then was that the Arbenz government was charging existence of a plot to invade its country and overthrow it . . . in other words, exactly what did happen!

As we predicted—it was one of the easiest predictions ever made—Authority Daniel James, instead of hiding out for a while, blandly writes another article in which he never mentions his previous ingenious prognosis.

Naturally, this James, who virtually yelled for U. S. intervention in advance, has few liberalise scruples about hailing the overthrow of Arbenz when the U. S. "reached for a sledgehammer" (as he puts it). "Castillo Armas and his army have fought the good fight—ours as well as theirs—and we should not begrudge them our praise," he says.

What leavens this piece, perhaps, is its incidental

U.S. Ambassador Insisted on Mass Arrests

Edwin A. Lahey, the Guatemala City correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News* and other Knight newspapers, has been sending out dispatches unrivaled for their frank cynicism. *LA* has already quoted his story giving details on U. S. Ambassador Peurifoy's role in overthrowing the Arbenz regime. (Incidentally, the story there told by Lahey has also been verified by an AP dispatch and by the article from Guatemala in the July 9 *U. S. News & World Report*.)

In the June 30 *Chicago Daily News*, a follow-up story by Lahey had itself a good time about the morning after the coup:

"Once they have the joint knocked over, there's an air of anti-climax about a revolution, like Sunday morning in Louisville after the Derby.

"The Communist-tainted government in Guatemala has been forced out, pursuant to the wishes of the State Department. . . .

"Thus ended a revolution that came about because these squares in Guatemala didn't know that left-wing governments had gone out of fashion in the Western Hemisphere, and that sooner or later they were going to get knocked off by Uncle Sam, directly or indirectly.

"There was a long build-up for this. . . . [Finally] The United States, between public denunciations of Guatemala as a 'beachhead for Soviet Communism in the Western Hemisphere,' rushed shipments of arms by air to Honduras and Nicaragua, where we have real-true-bought-and-paid-for friends."

Then Lahey manages to mention that the president of Honduras is the former Honduran counsel for the United Fruit Company.

MORE ABOUT PEURIFOY

A story in *U. S. News* from Guatemala City related Ambassador John Peurifoy's work as "Middleman in a Successful Revolution" with great relish. It refrains

realization that the U. S. has not defeated Stalinism with the crushing of Guatemala: "the Guatemalan events have heightened, not lessened, the danger of Communism" in Latin America. Further: "The Communist cause in those countries [Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, etc.] has not been harmed one iota by the defeat of Guatemalan Communism; on the contrary, it has been provided with new nourishment—'Yankee interventionism' in Guatemala. In death, the Guatemalan party may prove to be a bigger asset to the Kremlin than in life."

Very, very true, but do not wait for this expert's solution to the problem. "If Guatemalan anti-Communism fails to tackle with vigor and intelligence the fundamental political, economic and social problems of Guatemala," he writes, "if the U. S. permits it to fail—then our cause in the Hemisphere is doomed."

Well, then, the poor *New Leader's* cause is doomed. James' anti-Communists already played their hand even while his futile mutterings were being put into print, with their disfranchisement of three-quarters of the people, setting up of concentration camps, suspension of the Agrarian Reform Law, etc.

Sanctimonious Chauvinists

But one of the few liberalistic things that the interventionist liberals can do, after approving the crime, is to gush forth sanctimoniously with the hope that the criminals will reform; thus they distinguish themselves as good people from the bad reactionaries who don't bother to come out foursquare against all future sin.

It is a shameful picture that this American liberalism presents. It is true, perfectly true and bears saying, that many Europeans who are criticizing Washington's Guatemalan adventure were not and are not averse to approving the oppressions of their own nations among the colonial peoples, in Indochina or Malaya or British Guiana or in Africa. As always, it is opposition to the imperialist crimes of the government of one's OWN country that is the touchstone.

But in England, the British crime against British Guiana was denounced by a strong section of the labor movement, on a scale which puts U. S. labor and liberalism to shame. In France, the continuing crimes of French imperialism in Morocco and Tunisia did find critical voices among intellectuals, labor men and radicals on a relatively big scale, not to speak of the popular feeling about the "dirty war" in Indochina.

Is there, in fact, any country, outside of the Iron Curtain itself, where national-chauvinism is so monolithically to be seen as the public reaction? American labor and liberalism is as corrupted by these poisons as the country's right wing, even though it has not been brought as far. It has not been capable of producing an elementary democratic reaction to the crime—if not as a whole, then at least in substantial part.

It is not the Stalinoids of any sort, who do speak out about Guatemala but only because they hold their tongue against Russian totalitarianism, who grace a different picture. It is Independent Socialist internationalism, which is based on the Third Camp standpoint, which inherits the tradition of international democracy, as it carries on the tradition of international socialism.

from any explicit terms making clear Peurifoy's responsibility, but doesn't really need to be more explicit.

One thing this article highlights was Peurifoy's insistence that Diaz (who replaced Arbenz) not only must break with the Stalinists, not only must outlaw the CP—all of which Diaz promised to do, but it was not enough—but that he must arrest Stalinists en masse.

So, when Diaz asked Peurifoy to arrange a cease-fire with the rebels on the basis of his ouster of Arbenz, Peurifoy—

" . . . asked what was being done about the Communist political leaders, who by then were scattering. The junta replied with vague protestations.

"By Monday evening, Mr. Peurifoy was convinced that Diaz was making no effective roundup of the Red leaders. They were fleeing into the hinterland or obtaining asylum in embassies. Some were off fomenting a peasant uprising. No important Communist had been jailed.

"Consequently, the ambassador made only noncommittal reports to Colonel Diaz on the progress of cease-fire efforts. . . ."

Then Col. Monzon took over, and Peurifoy got whatever he wanted.

It should be noted that the UN Security Council had already voted—with the support of the U. S.—for a cease-fire, the cease-fire that Diaz was asking for. The U. S. treated this UN motion, for which it voted, with the same contempt that Moscow's delegates show for anything that gets in the way.

Note also that the above account proves that the Diaz junta certainly had at least broken with the Stalinists. Yet at that same time, headlines and stories in the *U. S. press*, from *Hearst* to the *Times* to the *N. Y. Post*, stated or hinted strongly that the Diaz junta was just another Stalinist subterfuge and was secretly supported by them.

A Classic Marxist Study

Karl Kautsky's FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

\$3.50

LABOR ACTION BOOK SERVICE
114 West 14 Street, New York City

BOOKS and Ideas

Karl Kautsky: Foundations of Christianity

The Bureaucratization of the Church

By BERNARD CRAMER

It is long overdue for us to call LABOR ACTION readers' attention to the republication (last year) of one of the great classics of Marxist historical writing. That was Karl Kautsky's famous *Foundations of Christianity*.*

A former English translation of this work is out of print; it has long been a collector's item. The present edition is not a reprint but a new translation. The book was originally published in German in 1908.

Of course, perhaps not everyone may be deeply interested in the specific subject matter of *Foundations of Christianity*, fascinating though that subject matter is; but in a real sense that is the lesser reason for the importance of the book. It is first and foremost, for the student of Marxism, an immensely rich demonstration of the Marxist historical materialist method in action, in use.

As a matter of fact, the content of the book ranges wider than the title might indicate. It can even be considered three books in one: (1) *The Roman Empire: Its Society and Its Disintegration*; (2) *The Early History of the Jews*; and (3) *The Origins of the Christian Church*.

BEHIND JESUS

These three parts are preceded by a short section, "The Person of Jesus," which in effect poses the problem which the whole book takes up. It underlines the lack of any historical information about the person of Jesus, even about his very existence at the time he was supposed to have lived. (This is not because Kautsky holds that such a man never existed historically. As a matter of fact, toward the end of the book, Kautsky mentions in passing that he does not question this point. The reason which he stresses for his opinion is that Jesus is described as a Galilean . . . and the reader can find out for himself what this has to do with the problem.)

What Kautsky wants to emphasize in this opening section is summarized as follows:

"The factual core of the early Christian reports about Jesus is at best no more than what Tacitus tells us: that in the days of Tiberius a prophet was executed, from whom the sect of Christians took their inspiration. As to what this prophet taught and did, we are not yet able, even today, to say anything definite. Certainly he could not have made the sensation the early Christian reports describe, or Josephus, who relates so many trivialities, would certainly have spoken of it. Jesus' agitation and his execution did not get the slightest attention from his contemporaries. But if Jesus really was an agitator that a sect honored as its champion and guide, the significance of his person must have grown as the sect grew. Now a garland of legends began to form around this person, pious minds weaving into it anything they wished their model had said and done. The more this idealization went on, the more each of the many currents within the sect tried to put into the picture those features that were dearest to it . . . in the process it became an increasingly contradictory picture, whose several features no longer harmonized. . . .

" . . . Thus the clash of social contradictions came to appear within the framework of the Christian Church as a mere dispute over the interpretation of the words of Jesus, and superficial historians think that all the great (and so often bloody) battles that were fought in Christendom under the flag of religion were nothing but battles over words, a sad sign of mankind's stupidity. But wherever a social mass phenomenon is reduced to the mere stupidity of the men involved, this alleged stupidity merely shows lack of understanding on the part of the observer and critic, who has not been able . . . to penetrate to the material conditions and forces that underlie it. . . ."

DETECTIVE WORK

The historical reconstruction that is necessary is a form of detective work, like that of the archeologist. As Kautsky

says at the end of this same introductory section:

"And out of the gospels and the acts of the apostles . . . we cannot learn anything definite as to the life and doctrine of Jesus, but very valuable things about the social character, the ideals and aspirations of the primitive Christian communities. When Bible criticism uncovers the different layers that lie one on top of the other in these writings, it enables us to follow the development of these communities, at least to a certain extent, while the 'heathens' and Jewish sources make possible an insight into the social driving forces that were acting upon primitive Christianity at the same time. So we are able to see and understand it as the product of its time, and that is the basis of any historical knowledge. Individuals can influence society too, and the portrayal of outstanding individuals is indispensable for a complete picture of their time. But in terms of historical epochs, their influence is only transitory, merely the outer ornament which strikes the eye first in a building but says nothing about its foundations. But it is the foundations that determine the character of the structure and its permanence. If we can lay them bare, we have done the most important part toward understanding the whole edifice."

This prospectus for the book is brilliantly carried out.

TWO BOOKS

In "Book Two: Society in the Roman Empire," Kautsky explores the foundations of the world system of which Jesus' Palestine was a small part. It is obvious that Kautsky goes a good deal beyond the discussion that was strictly necessary to provide a background for the rest of the book; that is, it is obvious that Kautsky was absorbed in the subject itself for its own sake; and so this section of the book, as we have mentioned, can be read almost as an independent entity.

And it is still one of the very few analyses of the causes of the decline of the Roman Empire which are worth reading as such, apart from the enormously valuable descriptive material which is available today but which was not then available to Kautsky. However, an even better Marxist analysis of this subject (one, however, which owes a great deal to Kautsky's contribution) is the short study by Professor Walbank.

Following this 125-page "book" on the Roman Empire is another of equal length sketching the early history of the Jews up to and in the time of Jesus. Here again is a "book" which can be read almost independently, although it too plays an essential role in painting the background for the discussion of the rise of the Christian Church. Kautsky offers penetrating discussion of the role of trade, of the Jews as traders, of the origin of their monotheism, the springs of early anti-Semitism, etc.

JESUS AS PUTSCHIST

In "Book Four: The Beginnings of Christianity," all of these threads are united to light up the mysteries which are veiled by official church history. Kautsky first emphasizes the class character of the early Christian communities which were "proletarian organizations," their early ideology of "fierce class hatred against the rich," their primitive form of communism (a communism of consumption, primarily) which was at the same time associated with a certain contempt for labor (which he traces); and their tendencies toward negation of the family.

His hypothesis, as he reconstructs the available evidence on the activities of Jesus, is that Jesus was executed for an attempted *putsch* or revolt. (It was one of many in those times, and was far from being the most serious, hence the lack of any contemporary notice of it.) He puts forward this "conjecture" because it is "the only assumption that makes the allusions in the Gospels intelligible" and because "it is also completely in accordance with the nature of the time and the place."

For example, here is Kautsky's discussion of one Gospel element:

"In the version that has come down to us, Judas betrays Jesus by his kiss, which points him out to the police as the man to arrest. Now that is a senseless way to 'act.' According to the Gospels, Jesus was well known in Jerusalem; he preached in public day in and day out, and was received by the masses with jubilation; and now he is to have been so unknown that he had to be pointed out by Judas to be distinguished from the crowd of his supporters! That would be a good deal like having the Berlin police [of 1908] pay an informer to indicate the person called Bebel.

"It would be an entirely different matter if it was a question of a plotted coup d'etat. In that case there would be something to betray, a secret worth paying for. If the plot and the coup d'etat were eliminated from the story, the account of Judas' treason would be to no purpose. Since the betrayal was obviously too well known among the comrades and the bitterness against the traitor too strong, it would not do for the evangelist to pass over this circumstance. He had to construct a new betrayal out of his imagination, however, and did not succeed very well."

Kautsky continues similarly to show how otherwise-absurd and contradictory elements of the Gospel stories fall into place on the assumption that Jesus, like so many other (and more prominent) prophets and Messiahs of the times, was a rebellious agitator who tried to lead an unsuccessful and rather adventurist *putsch*.

BUREAUCRATIZATION

For the modern reader, no doubt much more than for the reader in 1908, perhaps the most interesting section is that in which Kautsky traces the growth of a counter-revolutionary bureaucracy out of the professional revolutionists of the early church organization. Although this whole discussion will be filled for the modern reader with overtones of analogy with the rise of Stalinism, one must realize of course that Kautsky's historical models were quite otherwise, primarily (as he mentions at one point) the development of the Bonapartist bureaucracy out of the reaction against the French Revolution and of Caesarism out of the death of the Roman Republic.

What Kautsky does try to do consciously, however, is interpret the history and development of the early Christian movement as if he were analyzing the problems and policies of any other socio-political movement of reform or rebellion. It may be said, not without justice, that he is looking at this early church history through the spectacles of his experience of modern socialist organizations and its problems, but this viewpoint is used as a guide, not as a pattern into which the development is to be forced. The differences were great enough, surely.

We cannot here even outline Kautsky's development of this theme of the rise of the bureaucracy in the church. To give an indication of his line of thought, we can quote some summary passages here and there.

RISE OF A CLASS

As a result of the reaction against the early proletarian orientation, he notes, "the old class oppositions [were] duplicated in the Christian community: a new ruling class grew up in it, a new bureaucracy and a new chief, the bishop. . . ."

"Originally there were no officers in the [Christian] community and no distinctions among the comrades. . . . Most of the members of course continued to practice their trades, but those who won especial prestige gave away what they had and devoted themselves entirely to agitation as apostles or prophets. Out of this arose a new class difference.

"Two classes took form now within the Christian community: the ordinary members, whose practical communism extended only to the common meals and charitable institutions that the community carried on: finding jobs, support of widows and orphans and prisoners, sickness insurance, burial fund. But there were also the 'saints' or 'perfect ones,' who carried communism out radically, renouncing all possessions and individual marriage, and giving all they possessed to the community.

"That made a fine impression and, as their mere titles show, these radical elements won a high position in the community. They felt themselves elevated above the ordinary comrades and acted like a select leadership.

"Thus it was radical communism itself that gave birth to a new aristocracy.

"Like any aristocracy it did not limit itself to taking command over the rest of the community; it also tried to exploit it. . . ."

NEW DESPOTISM

Kautsky later discusses various sides of the organizational life of the new movement, including "the maintenance of party discipline, if we may use the term."

The "community bureaucracy headed by the bishop . . . became increasingly independent and powerful." The struggle lay between the bishops on the one hand and on the other hand the militants who continued to carry on agitation as apostles and prophets.

"The unfortunate apostles and prophets were restricted and harried on all sides. Their small-scale enterprises had in the end to succumb to the enormous apparatus of the Christian bureaucracy. They disappeared. The teachers were deprived of their freedom and subordinated to the bishop. Soon nobody dared to speak in the community assembly, the church, without previous permission from the bishop; that is, nobody outside of the community bureaucracy directed by the bishop, the clergy, which set itself more and more apart from the mass of the fellows, the laity, and above them. . . ."

"So long as the church was a democratic organization, it was completely opposed to the essence of the imperial despotism in the Roman Empire; but the episcopal bureaucracy, absolutely ruling and exploiting the people, was quite useful for imperial despotism. . . ."

The totalitarianized church was adopted by the totalitarianized empire as its official religious arm.

"The organization of a proletarian, rebellious communism thus became the staunchest support of despotism and exploitation, a source of new despotism and new exploitation.

"The victorious Christian community was in every respect the exact opposite of that community that had been founded three centuries before by poor fishermen and peasants of Galilee and proletarians of Jerusalem. The crucified Messiah became the firmest support of the decadent and infamous society which the Messianic community had expected him to destroy down to the ground."

We have merely picked around among the riches to be found in this great historical work, scarcely touching the main content of patient assemblage of facts and analysis, in order to spotlight some of the more interesting conclusions by themselves; but surely it is clear that here is a book which not a single socialist can afford to miss.

READ ABOUT INDEPENDENT SOCIALISM!

In four special pamphlet-issues of LABOR ACTION, the basic ideas of Independent Socialism are vividly and simply explained.

No. 1—The Principles and Program of Independent Socialism

No. 2—Independent Socialism and the Third World War

No. 3—The Fair Deal: A Socialist Analysis

No. 4—Socialism and Democracy

No. 5—What is Stalinism?

**Foundations of Christianity*, by Karl Kautsky. Translated by H. F. Mins. 1953. S. A. Russell, N. Y., 401 pages, \$5.50 (original list price).

'Coexistence' Talk

(Continued from page 1)

the partition of Korea and Indochina, recognition of Stalinist conquests in Eastern Europe, with everyone piously pledging no more conquests to come.

A very cozy arrangement, by which Britain would be guaranteed her status as the third greatest power in the world.

STALINIST AIMS

To the Stalinists coexistence means pretty much what Sulzberger says it means.

They made the biggest gains of any of the victors in World War II. The conquest of China has tremendously strengthened the Stalinist part of the world, even though it has created certain very difficult problems for Moscow. The Russian Stalinists have plenty to digest before they need embark on any major new conquests.

At the moment, small wars and political skirmishes on the edges of their empire serve to keep the Americans involved in unpopular wars, to divide the capitalist allies, and to heighten the morale of the world Stalinist movement. But in the Stalinist view such skirmishes in no way lessen the possibility and even desirability of coexistence. They are perfectly willing to make a deal which would guarantee them their conquests of the last war. Just how long such a deal would last would be, after all, a matter of the relations of forces at some future date.

The "neutralist" powers like India, and neutralist political sentiment in both Asia and Europe, are strong for "coexistence." The neutralists see themselves as the potential victims of any war between the two power blocs. Above all, they want to avoid war. And as they see no force in the world which is capable of striving for a solution to the cold war against both war blocs, they naturally tend to the idea that the only hope for peace is a negotiated deal between them—i.e., coexistence.

NOT "INSTANTLY"

Actually, the dominant political grouping in the United States is also for a kind of "coexistence," but they are hard pressed by the "Asia First," "go it alone," and preventive-war element in the Republican Party. Partly as a result of this pres-

sure, and partly as representatives of the most powerful industrial country in the world, the American imperialist policy-makers tend to put a price on coexistence which is so high that to the rest of the world it looks like a rejection of the very idea.

Thus, when Eisenhower took over the government he demanded that Russia prove her right to coexist with the United States not by talking peace, but by "deeds." The deeds demanded were that the Stalinists simply give up a good part of the spoils of the last war and of the diplomatic victories with which that war was concluded.

Further, in a number of speeches both Eisenhower and Dulles said just as plainly as they could that the United States government will seek to roll back the Russians to their own borders, and some of the formations were so loose that the impression was distinctly given that the American government was pronouncing as the goal of its policy the defeat and elimination of Stalinism everywhere in the world. Right after Churchill's recent visit, Eisenhower confirmed this view when he told his press conference, while speaking on coexistence, that "he would say that the hope of the world would be that kind of an existence [coexistence] because certainly we didn't expect to be eliminated and certainly, he thought, it would be silly to say you could eliminate the other instantly. We have got to find a way of living together."

That should be plain enough. The only reason Eisenhower wants coexistence is that he cannot "eliminate" Russian Stalinism "instantly." Of course, in the long run...

WHERE U. S. BALKS

But then, where is the real divisive disagreement with the British over present policy? It stems from the fact that while professing a desire to live peacefully with the Stalinists, at least for the time being, the Eisenhower administration is not willing to make even the minimum concessions which would make such life possible, and is not willing even to discuss making the kind of concessions which would give coexistence the kind of solidity, the feeling of a "permanent" imperialist division of the world, which the British so ardently desire.

There is also the powerful political element in the right wing of the Republican Party which really wants no coexistence at all. They appear to be led by Senator Knowland of California, and to get powerful backing from Admiral Radford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

They believe that American imperialist ambitions can best be served by striking the Chinese Stalinists a series of decisive military blows. This would put Russia on notice of what she is in for, and if the Russians should decide that under the circumstances they have nothing to gain by waiting further... well, we always have the hydrogen bomb!

As they cannot swing the necessary votes in the country for their policy, they have been willing to accept the next best thing, namely, exclusion of Stalinist China from the United Nations, refusal to grant her diplomatic recognition, and an attempt to organize a vast economic boycott against her. This, added to provocative support for Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorship in Formosa, is calculated to keep everyone at such a sharp edge of hostility that no "co-existence" deal can be negotiated.

AGAINST DEALS

In reality, then, coexistence today means an imperialist deal to divide the world between capitalist and Stalinist masters. Opposition to coexistence means opposition to such a deal. But such opposition may be either in the interest of a more aggressive military imperialist policy, or in the interest of freedom and democracy on a world scale.

When independent socialists oppose "coexistence" this does not mean that they are for the speedy launching of a war by "their" imperialist country for the "liberation" of the peoples oppressed by Stalinist imperialism. It does not even mean that they are necessarily against the normalization of diplomatic and commercial relations between the country in which they live and other imperialist nations, be they Stalinist, fascist, or just ordinary garden-variety imperialist.

What it means is that they are against a "coexistence" deal among imperialist states as a "solution" to the problem of peace in our time. They regard the neutralist dependence on coexistence as a dangerous illusion which can only lead, in the long run, to a division of the neutralists between the two imperialist camps when the period of "coexistence" gives way to the period of settling accounts.

The Stalinists are quite right, and so is Eisenhower, when they regard "coexistence" as a necessary and desirable state of affairs only so long as they are not in a position to "eliminate" each other "instantly." The urge toward such elimination is, in the long run, irresistible for these two mutually antagonistic, mutually exclusive and rival-expansive economic and social systems. Thus anyone who really wants peace in the world cannot rely on the desire of this or that political figure for co-existence. He can rely only, if he would be realistic, on the creation of another force which can undermine both imperialist systems, can so weaken them both that they dare not plunge humanity into the atomic hell.

ALTERNATIVE

Neutralism cannot do that. At most, it is a passive force which, by withholding support from one or the other, can delay the time of reckoning by making uncertain the line-up on which each side will be able to count in World War III.

Rather than neutralism, what is needed is an articulate and organized mass movement for the Third Camp which rejects both capitalism and Stalinism in the name of a positive, progressive, dynamic and democratic social order. Such a Third Camp movement would proclaim its intention of liberating the colonel peoples still ruled by capitalism as well as the new colonies of the Stalinist empire. It would not propose to do this by war, but rather by mobilizing the masses inside both war camps to struggle for democracy, freedom and peace against their own rulers.

Thus, to be opposed to a "coexistence" deal as a long-term policy does not mean that one need be either for a policy of war or of isolation. But to oppose "coexistence" in the sense of Third Camp politics is to refuse to sanction the division of the world into imperialist spheres of control and domination. It means to declare a political war against both capitalist and Stalinist imperialisms in the interest of freedom and democracy, which means today, in the interest of socialism.

The ISL Program in Brief

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Get Acquainted!

Independent Socialist League
114 West 14 Street
New York 11, N. Y.

- I want more information about the ideas of Independent Socialism and the ISL.
- I want to join the ISL.

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS

CITY

ZONE STATE

The Handy Way to Subscribe!

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly
114 West 14 Street
New York 11, New York

- Please enter my subscription:
- 1 year at \$2. New
 - 6 months at \$1. Renewal
 - Payment enclosed. Bill me.

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS

CITY

ZONE STATE

Interventionism and Locarno: One Reason U.S. Rejects a Pact

By DAVID ALTER

Among the reasons for the U. S. opposition to Anthony Eden's proposal for a new Locarno-type treaty pledging non-aggression is one which is only rarely hinted at in so many words by supporters of U. S. policy.

It is the fact that the threat of military aggression stems not only from the Stalinist camp.

In this connection there was a very interesting passage in a N. Y. Times editorial (June 24) on "The British Program." It went:

"The second handicap is that Locarno was designed to guard against outright aggression by regular armies. But no 'Locarno' between the free nations and the Communist world could guard against the Communist methods of aggression by subversion, infiltration, civil war and invasion by 'volunteers,' as in Korea and even Indochina. Indeed, such a treaty might only serve to tie the hands of the free nations in resisting such aggression, and thereby merely play into Communist hands."

What the Times is saying here is that where (as in Indochina) Stalinism wins

by political means plus military action by a native Indochinese force—and a case of aggression cannot be made out—such a treaty would tie the hands of the "free nations" and prevent them from engaging in military intervention (i.e., "aggression").

Dulles was pulling toward going to war in Indochina, but Britain's strong refusal to go along was the obstacle. But had a Locarno-type pact been in effect at that time, a pact such as Eden proposed on behalf of Britain and with Churchill's backing, a pact such as the Times editorial discussed above, then the U. S. would have had to violate it openly in order to intervene militarily in Indochina.

In such case, Washington's hands would have been "tied" not only by its British ally's refusal to go along with the adventure but also by a formally signed pact.

Thus, one reason for American opposition to the British "Locarno" proposal is that the U. S. wants to keep a free hand for unilateral military intervention anywhere in the world—which is juridically "aggression." Precisely because the U. S. knows that it cannot rely on any political appeal to the peoples of the world, its dependence on such military threats is all the greater.

"LAST RESORT"

From England, the president of the National Union of Retail Tobacconists, a Mr. Golder, fiercely refutes all that talk about cancer by subversive scientists:

"The comfort and solace which it brought to the fighting forces and the civilian population proved a major contribution to our eventual victories. I would go so far as to say that had it not been for tobacco, we should probably be today an enslaved nation."

A Basic Pamphlet—

SOCIALISM: THE HOPE OF HUMANITY

by Max Shachtman

Read it! 10 cents

Independent Socialist Press
114 West 14 Street, New York City