

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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TO COMMUNIST PARTY SUPPORTERS: SOME QUESTIONS ON SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY, AND STALIN'S FALL

Date Set on ISL Appeal Against 'Subversive List'

The Independent Socialist League's hearing in Washington on the "subversive list" will be resumed May 21.

This is the hearing, before an examiner appointed by the Department of Justice itself, to take up the ISL's fight against its arbitrary "listing." It is a necessary step before the fight against the "subversive list" can be taken to the courts.

After seven years of effort, such a department hearing was finally granted the ISL as a by-product of our court victory in the Shachtman passport case. The ISL is the first organization on the list which has succeeded in getting such a hearing.

When the hearing began last July 1955, with Joseph L. Rauh, Jr. as the ISL counsel, blatantly biased rulings on the part of hearing examiner Edward M. Morrissey led Rauh to submit a motion for Morrissey's disqualification from the case. It took Attorney General Brownell till September 2 to rule against the disqualification.

By that time, we were informed, Morrissey was engaged in another case, and the hearing would resume when he was through. For six months we could get no indication of when this would be.

Now, finally, after a sharp exchange of notes between Rauh and Morrissey, a new date has been fixed.

The ISL case against the subversive list is the legal test of the whole "list" system of witchhunting which is most advanced.

Various court decisions, including the Shachtman passport decision itself, have taken swipes at the system; the case of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee got only up to a certain point; the case of the National Lawyers' Guild, which tried to stop its arbitrary listing by Brownell, was sent back to the department for an administrative hearing as a prerequisite for court action.

The ISL case is, therefore, presently the spearhead of the fight against the "list" method of witchhunting non-conformists, not only Stalinists but also socialists.

In fighting its own case, the ISL has consistently taken the position of demanding full civil liberties for all political views, including those of enemies, particularly those of Communist Party members and supporters.

By GORDON HASKELL

This is addressed to you—members, friends and sympathizers of the Communist Party—who, as in all countries, are presently thinking about and discussing the meaning of the 20th Party Congress in Russia.

We want to discuss our ideas on it with you, and we do so as independent socialists, not as apologists for capitalism who merely use anti-Communism as a justification for the status quo.

We think it is fundamental discussion that is needed. Your party has been shaken to its depths because the questions raised by the new disclosures are so very basic.

Your leadership—and this is especially true of William Z. Foster—has tried its best to center the discussion on the "positive achievements" of the congress. That may be as may be; but surely we all recognize that the revelations made at the congress about Stalin have put a question-mark over the fundamental nature of the regime in Russia.

This is what your leaders have been reluctant to discuss. At CP meetings held to explain the congress, many questions have been asked, and the most important of them have been met, time and again, with pleas of ignorance—"the facts are not yet in," and the like.

But the questions do not cease. They may not be voiced in public; loyalty to the party, loyalty to their own past may prevent members from adding to the distress of the organization and its leaders by bringing up these questions in open meetings or in the press. But in the mind and heart of every party member and sympathizer who has sacrificed his energies and devotion because he wanted to advance the highest future of mankind, the questions will not be still.

HERE'S THE PICTURE

We have no "inside" information to put forward. What we want to discuss are matters of public knowledge now, shared by you and us alike. You have no doubts about this information because it has been effectively confirmed by the highest authorities in the Communist Parties.

Whatever further revelations about the nature of Stalin's regime may be issued from Russia or the East European coun-

tries, at least the following picture has now become indisputably clear:

For the past ten, fifteen or twenty years the CPSU and hence Russia has been run by a man who had arbitrary and uncontrollable powers, and who used them in the manner of an absolute despot.

His powers were so extreme that even his closest colleagues and the highest government officers had no court of appeal against his decisions.

His power extended not only to major decisions of state but to complete control over the personal life and fate of everyone in the country, from the humblest worker or farmer to the highest government officer.

During this whole period, a large number of prominent members of the CPSU and government, as well as ~~many in all walks of life, were~~ purged by this despot. Some were exiled for shorter or longer terms to Siberia, others were executed.

All lost the most important possession a person can have in Russian society: the confidence and support of the party in all its ramifications. This meant that they lost professional status, job security and the like, at the very least.

ONE MAN DID IT?

Although the present leaders claim that Stalin was personally responsible for this, it is clear that the "cult of the personality" did not stop with him.

It is impossible, in a society on Russia's scale, for one man to hold all the strings in his hands. He must have subordinates who carry out his will. In every despotism known to history this has meant a whole series of hierarchs, each of whom is supreme with regard to those below him, and helpless with regard to those above, but who are bound to each other and to the top despot by a community of interest in the preservation of their power.

The present leaders admit that this was true, at least, with regard to Beria and others who have been charged with direct personal responsibility in the purges of men now declared innocent of any crime.

The picture of Stalin's Russia thus revealed—not by Hearst, or by capitalist enemies of socialism, but by the present top leadership of the Communist Party and the government of the USSR—is that of an absolute despotism. It now transpires that the top despot was malevolent, capricious, and even insane.

But what, fundamentally, would have been changed, if he had been, as his world movement proclaimed him heretofore, a benevolent universal genius? What would have been changed, not

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Spanish Strikes Still On But Here Franco's Man Gets a Glad Hand

By GODFREY DENIS

The strike wave in Spain continues into the second week. Since its beginning in Pamplona last Tuesday it has spread through city after city in northern Spain. Already reports of gains in a number of areas are coming through.

The Times reported on April 16 that the regime's view of the strikes was that they were directly connected with the underground:

"The civil governor of Barcelona, Felipe Acedo, in a speech to 302 majors of the province, said that more than fifteen years after the end of the civil war, 'the underground movements survive, as has been clearly shown in these days when deplorable incidents have been witnessed that assume extraordinary importance.'"

The article in question also prematurely reported that workers were returning back to work. In the subsequent reports, however, this return to work assumed a different tinge.

Tuesday's story, after reporting that thousands of workers were joining the strike in the San Sebastian area despite the regime's threats of dismissal—a threat which, given the perennial underemployment in Spain, is not to be taken lightly—made the return-to-work reports a little clearer:

"According to reports from Pamplona where workers in thirty-six factories were the first to go on strike last Tuesday, the situation was still tense. The workers were reported to have agreed to go back to work but on two conditions: that they be granted a 30 per cent increase in wages and that authorities release workers who were arrested during the strike."

Those two conditions would represent victories even under a democratic regime. Under Franco's fascism they represent proof that the strikes are massive and solid. The vitality and solidarity of the Spanish working class after years of fascist tyranny is exemplary.

In Barcelona, too, the workers have returned to work in some plants—where the employers have negotiated additional wage increases.

Since strikes are illegal in Spain and official reprisals have been threatened, the reports that representatives of officially controlled syndicates are holding daily meetings with the employers and workers "trying to arrive at a solution" raise a question: Who speaks for the workers, i.e., whom are the syndicates negotiating with?

(Turn to last page)

LEFT OUT

of this issue, because of the unusual number of pages turned over to the question of the Stalinist crisis, are some of our regular articles and features, including: our "London Letter"; a report on the recent Philadelphia Third Camp Conference; more on the ISL's coming hearing in Washington; a couple of book reviews; and Part V of our series "Stalinism Without Stalin," dealing with the Bevanite theory of Russia.

It's going to be on FRIDAY, May 4, in New York
Celebrate May Day with the ISL & YSL

Talk by Shachtman . . . Dancing, Social, Refreshments . . .
Special skit on 20th Congress

AT ADELPHI HALL, 74 FIFTH AVENUE, near 13th Street

LABOR SCOPE

Labor Notes on the Scene in Detroit

By JACK WILSON

Detroit, Apr. 16

The repercussions from the recent Michigan milk farmers' strike confirmed previous impressions that there was much more to this situation than seemed to appear on the surface.

It turns out that the milk farmers are caught, along with all other social forces operating around them, in the feud between Jimmy Hoffa and Walter P. Reuther.

In the bitter aftermath of the strike, it has been revealed that (1) Homer Martin, adviser of the Fair Share Association of dissidents who led the strike, was on the payroll of Hoffa to the tune of \$150 a week since last December; (2) the CIO repeatedly offered real help with only one string attached: get rid of Martin.

As a result, the dissident farm group split wide open this week. A majority of its leaders voted to accept a CIO offer made by Gus Scholle, head of the Michigan CIO, to take \$1000 a month for organizing purposes and otherwise obtain CIO assistance. A minority decided to remain with Martin and Hoffa.

UNREST

Last week, six officials of a Grand Rapids local of the UAW were suspended by Walter P. Reuther for supporting the independent Society of Skilled Trades, an organization seeking to woo the skilled workers away from the UAW. The suspended officials are being brought up on trial of dual-unionism. This is part of a major crackdown coming in the UAW against this organization and its supporters.

Meanwhile, the newspaper of the Society of Skilled Trades carried the sensational story this past week that the UAW had suppressed an entire issue of the pe-

per of its own Wayne County Tool and Die Council, because that paper carried a four-point program, including a demand for an immediate 10 per cent wage increase for skilled workers. The move of the loyal skilled workers was made to satisfy the dissatisfaction among skilled workers in the so-called captive shops.

The blunt move of the UAW leadership to stop all agitation among the skilled workers by clamping down on them is creating more unrest, and making the task of defeating the dual union more difficult.

IMPASSE

The observation that a difficulty with unions is that they can't solve union problems under capitalism received some painful verification in the Detroit area in recent weeks.

Joining Hudson, Midland Steel, and other ghost factories is Motor Products, whose 3200 employees have been notified that this automotive-parts manufacturer is going out of business for higher wages, better working conditions, pensions, etc., disappear.

Nor will the modified GAW help these workers. Their lifetime jobs are evaporating. And they join the growing line of embittered old-time unionists in their 40s and 50s who can't get jobs in the old field they know: auto-plant work.

Vinco Corporation, which employed 600 workers, likewise announced its shut-down at the end of this model. It can't meet competition, and like many other auto-parts plants is folding up.

The big question now is: Can Studebaker-Packard survive this year? Ditto Hudson-Nash.

The failure of the auto industry to have any real spring pick-up is accelerating this whole cruel process.

ISL FUND DRIVE

Quicken the Pace on the Drive!

By ALBERT GATES
Fund Drive Director

After a good showing the previous week, the drive took a rest this week when only three cities in the campaign made any showing at all. A slim total of \$450 was received, bringing the national total over the \$6000 mark or just over 60 per cent of our over-all quota.

This is far from giving us comfort and we trust that those areas which have been holding off turn about face and shoot the payments up much higher than they have averaged thus far.

In the past week New York and Chicago paid in sums to put the latter up near the three-quarter mark and moved New York over the halfway in its local drive. New York sent in \$235 and Chicago \$165. Reading, however, completed its quota in one payment and joined St. Louis and Oregon as the only places that have done it yet.

We are reaching the final weeks in the

FUND DRIVE BOX SCORE

City	Quota	Paid	%
	\$10,000	\$6139.20	61.3
St. Louis	25	60	240
Oregon	50	50	100
Reading	50	50	100
Natl. Office	1,250	1065	85.2
Los Angeles	650	526.45	80.9
Bay Area	400	300	75
Chicago	2,000	1475	73.7
Streator	25	15	60
Newark	400	223	55.7
Cleveland	150	80	53.3
Detroit	350	170.75	48.8
New York	3,800	2069	54.5
Philadelphia	200	77	38.5
Pittsburgh	200	58	29
Seattle	150	20	13.3
Buffalo	150	0	0
Indiana	100	0	0
Akron	25	0	0

Support Your LABOR ACTION

We need every dollar that LABOR ACTION readers can send in. Checks for the ISL Fund Drive should be made out to Albert Gates. **CONTRIBUTE!**

drive and still have almost \$4000 to go to conclude the campaign successfully. That means three weeks from the time of this writing and means an average of over \$1000 a week.

That is a stiff requirement imposed on the drive, but it is the only way we can do the job again this year. If the 15 areas which made no contribution in the past week come through for the next report, an altogether different result would ensue and we would stand an excellent chance of completing the drive without undue delays and hardship. This is it, friends.

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ON THE JIM CROW FRONT

Boycott Weapon Hits Hard for Negro Rights

By BETTY PERKINS

Businessmen in the South tear their hair, and industrialists in the North begin to reconsider about moving their plants southward, as a new form of protest fills the area and includes both the white and Negro population in cities in five states in a wave of boycotts.

Outstanding among the boycotts, of course, is the famous five-month-old bus boycott by 45,000 Montgomery (Ala.) Negroes, whose leader, Martin L. King Jr., has been found guilty of illegal boycott under an old anti-labor law and is now appealing his conviction.

The effectiveness and solidarity of the Montgomery Negroes have drawn support, moral and financial, from all over the world, while their methods have gained the support of many of the churches. This drive against segregation in city transportation still deserves and needs support from those who honestly believe in democracy.

Another boycott of long standing is in Orangeburg, S. C., where 20 Negroes signed a petition asking for desegregated schools last September and suddenly found their bank and wholesale credit cut off. Farmers could not get their usual crop loans until they signed statements denying membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. (Here the racists took a leaf out of the anti-labor book of the T-H "non-Communist affidavit.")

Negroes promptly retaliated by denying their trade to establishments suspected of supporting the White Citizens Councils.

In many parts of the South, the Ford Motor Company, the Falstaff Brewing Company and the Philip Morris Company have seen their business drastically cut by rumors that they aid the cause of Negro equality.

Ford's 50 per cent loss of business in Alabama is due to the civil rights spending of the Fund for the Republic, an independent agency set up by the Ford Foundation.

Philip Morris has suffered because it used pictures of Negroes in its cigarette ads, and the "sin" of Falstaff Brewing was that of buying a lifetime membership in the NAACP for one of its Negro salesmen in expectation of increasing his business.

Philip Morris, also accused of contributing to the NAACP, backed out with the explanation that its only contribution had been to the St. Louis Community Chest which includes the Urban League.

One soft-drink organization was boycotted by each side, first by Jim Crow whites because of rumored contributions to the NAACP, and then by Negroes because of rumors of donations to the WCC. Similar boycotts have appeared in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi—some purely local, some regional, some short, some fairly lengthy.

The problem is becoming such a threat to the South's new prosperity that even politicians are beginning to speak out.

Picket Dominicans In NYC—Tuesday

A picket line for Tuesday, April 24, between 5-6 p.m., at the Dominican consulates, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, N. Y. C., has been called in the name of the Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims to protest the kidnapping of Jesus de Galindez.

De Galindez's active opposition to the Trujillo dictatorship—combined with the known fact that he had received threats, makes the Dominican regime the leading suspect in his recent disappearance in New York City.

De Galindez was the leader of the Basque anti-Franco exiles in this country and in this capacity has worked with the committee for a number of years.

As LABOR ACTION reported last week, it has been revealed that the legal representative in the United States of the Dominican dictatorship is Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., Principled liberals should join this picket line to show that they oppose Trujillo's murderous dictatorship even if some of their leaders do not.

Mississippi State Senator William Alexander says, "We cannot afford boycotts," and Memphis sets up a special Race Relations Committee to prevent and deal with such economic reprisals.

From the anxiety caused by this economic warfare, it is plain that the boycott is a very powerful weapon in the hands of the oppressed.

It was first used by the Land Leaguers of Ireland in the eighteenth century (whose first victim, Capt. Boycott, gave his name to the method); it was used by the American colonists against England, and by the Chinese against the Japanese.

Its power and effectiveness have been tested by struggle, and the economic boycott forms a cogent complement to the NAACP program of legal attack on segregation.

Shachtman Talks On 20th Congress To Packed Hall

New York, Apr. 13

Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Independent Socialist League, addressed an overflow audience of about 200 on the subject "Stalinism Without Stalin: The 20th Congress of the Russian Communist Party," at Adelphi Hall tonight. The meeting, chaired by YSL national chairman Michael Harrington, was jointly sponsored by the ISL and the Young Socialist League.

The turnout for the meeting, between 175 and 200, proved to be larger than had been anticipated, so that some people had to be accommodated in an adjoining room and some others, had to be turned away at the door.

Of interest and significance is the fact that about a dozen adherents of the Labor Youth League were present. Most of these attended the ISL-YSL meeting in response to leaflets which the YSL had been distributing to LYL meetings and Jefferson School lectures during the preceding week.

Comrade Shachtman began his talk by outlining the history of Stalin's crimes and detailing the admissions which Moscow is now making about them. He pointed out that there was absolutely nothing new in what Khrushchev & Co. were saying about Stalin; revolutionary socialist opponents of Stalinism have been indicting Stalin and the Stalin regime for over thirty years. What is new consists of the fact that it is they who now point the accusing finger.

He analyzed the reasons for the anti-Stalin development, explaining that its source is to be found in both the desire of the ruling bureaucracy for a period of "relaxation" and in the pressures of the masses who detest the regime. However, he pointed out, the very nature of the totalitarian bureaucratic-collectivist system inevitably tends back toward one-man rule, and this process has already begun. Shachtman also showed the hollowness of the claims that Khrushchev is introducing democracy. [A section of Shachtman's talk is printed elsewhere in this issue of LABOR ACTION.]

The question and discussion period proved to be one of the highlights of the evening as a result of the fact that a number of the adherents or sympathizers of the Labor Youth League present took the floor to defend their views. Indeed, this part of the meeting was almost entirely devoted to exchanges between them and Shachtman.

These LYLers clearly indicated that despite their belief that Stalinism is "socialism," the latest developments have raised some doubts in their minds. One such LYLer spoke at great length, stating that he had been shocked by the revelations about Stalin, but that he had known all along that there was much in Russian society which was undemocratic and that many innocent people had been murdered by the regime. He said that he had known these things and that it was true that he had kept quiet about them, but that he believed that Russia "was building socialism" and that the large-scale industrial development during the last twenty-five years proved this, as

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THE DISCUSSION IN THE CP CONTINUES—

'We Must Probe How It Can Happen...'

By GEORGE POST

The past weeks have witnessed increased confusion within the American Communist Party, which is heavily involved in the "revelations" of the Russian 20th Party Congress. This atmosphere has allowed the party, or at least significant voices within it, to "re-evaluate" certain aspects of the American Stalinists' line on various questions, in particular those which have long been felt to be mistaken by many both within and around the CP.

Thus, for example, many party writers are "taking a new look at the Negro question," in an attempt to abandon the last remnants of the CP's theory of "self-determination for the Negro people in the black-belt," a theory which always had been identified as being derived from "Stalin's work on the national question."

Abner Berry, who in the past publicly has supported the line without question (although certain CP leaders such as Doxey Wilkerson had not), writing in the West Coast CP paper, the *People's World*, for April 12, declared that since the 20th Party Congress had attacked "doctrinarism," the American CP should re-examine its line on the Negro question.

"Indeed," Berry writes, "there is now a grave doubt as to whether there was a basis for restating in 1946 the old analysis of the Negro people constituting a nation in the 'Black Belt.' And this is written with the full recognition of my own contribution to, and partial responsibility for, the final decision."

In the same fashion, the CP's current "discovery" that it was wrong in not defending the 16 members of the Socialist Workers Party who were convicted in Minneapolis at the beginning of World War II under the Smith Act, enables it to get out from under one of the major accusations against it when it currently opposes this infamous law.

On the Jewish question in particular, the CP press has made a sharp switch, as against the shrill denials of Russian anti-Semitism which had been the CP's task in the past. The Stalinist press is currently, in line with the new line, feeling "a deep sense of indignation, anger and grief over the latest disclosures of violation of socialist principles under the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union."

No less a leader than Eugene Dennis, writing in the *Daily Worker* of April 16 decries the "imprisonment and execution of political and cultural leaders of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union."

Dutifully the American CP has denounced the "Rajk frameup" in Hungary. The *People's World* for April 11 goes so far as to liken it to the frame-ups of Haymarket, the Molly Maguire, Joe Hill, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Rosenbergs and Willie McGee. And, of course, the Kostov "frameup" in Bulgaria is also denounced.

So the new line is implemented—still in typical Stalinist fashion. The Russian party decries Stalin; the American party seconds it; the Russian bureaucracy calls for "criticism and self-criticism"; the American party dutifully engages in same—and finds that it has exactly the same criticisms to make. Because of this puppet-like reaction, the most important thing to observe is not that this goes on, but the way it goes on, what it reveals about the CP from below.

ONE LONG MISTAKE

The letters to the editor in the CP press still remain the most interesting thing about the entire discussion, for

they, in part at any rate, reveal something of what goes on in the minds of the rank-and-file CPers, forced, as the lady said at the Jefferson School, to "learn how to think."

One of the most revealing of these letters is by someone who describes himself as a union man from Philadelphia. He lists a series of mistakes committed by the American CP, mistakes which amount to nothing less than the total CP position on every major question in the past ten years.

In the first place, the Progressive Party was a mistake, for it isolated them from the labor movement.

In the second place, the party exaggerated the threat of war and in so doing utilized mechanical tactics which isolated them from the people.

In the third place, the party had a false estimate of the imminence of economic crisis.

In the fourth place, on McCarthyism, the CP "retreated too far, again leaving the people to find their own way, which they did."

In the fifth place, their line on the Negro question was wrong.

And in the sixth place, on the question of agitation for socialism, he writes, "We just quit."

A reader of the *Daily Worker*, who writes that he was in Hungary during the Rajk trial, demands:

"We must probe how it happens that innocent people are executed under socialism. What happens that persons with doubts remain silent? What happens that people are stampeded into demanding the death penalty for the accused, despite an abhorrence of capital punishment? What about the prosecutor in the case? What of the judge? What of the people like myself, who were led to accept the mere accusation as justice, and ready to shun anyone who dared protest?"

G. S., writing in the *Daily Worker* for April 11, questions the entire procedure of Stalinist "self-criticism."

"Why," he asks, "were criticisms of Stalin made at a secret meeting, the text of which has not even been published in the Soviet Union? Why does not the present Soviet leadership openly declare their own responsibility for past errors? If Beria and his gang were responsible for the break with Yugoslavia why was he not brought to open trial? If the executions in Hungary were frame-ups is it correct to put all the blame on a police chief rather than the party leadership?"

"ABERRATION"?

Thus, the readers of the *Daily Worker* and the *People's World* make, when all their individual contributions are combined, what amounts to nothing less than

a total attack on Stalinism; they question its politics on almost every major question, they question even the nature of the current accusations against Beria, who is accused and convicted without an open trial (even a murderer is entitled to that elementary democratic right,) and they question the present leadership of the Russian bureaucratic class.

But there is still a significant gap between even such a measure of disillusionment and a turn toward revolutionary opposition to Stalinism, on the part of serious rank-and-filers of the movement, especially the youth, who have mistakenly identified their radical sympathies with the Russian totalitarian regime.

This gap is utilized in the pages of the *Daily Worker*, as the party leadership puts up arguments to keep the membership loyal despite the mind-shaking disclosures.

The current discussion of Russian official anti-Semitism is a good case in point, for the party leadership tries to apologize for it by declaring: "in a socialist country like the USSR, where there are no exploiting classes, whatever temporary distortions have occurred in attitudes to nations and peoples, whatever violations of the principles of socialist justice have taken place—these are departures from the principles of socialism. The progress and advance of socialism makes the correction of these aberrations inevitable. And that is what is now taking place in the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the Communist Party of that country."

BASIC EQUATION

The argument is simple: Russia is a socialist society, and a socialist society has mechanisms within it to correct its mistakes; the horrors now being revealed are just mistakes; and the socialist society will correct them.

This may satisfy many American rank-and-file CPers who have not themselves been part of the apparatus, whose life within the party has been a matter of ALP activity and the like; for many of them have a simple equation in their heads which reads: State ownership of the economy = socialism; therefore Russia is socialist; therefore all these things are simply aberrations.

It is the first premise which is fundamental to the CP apologia. Jumping the gap means: to realize that the state ownership of the economy under Stalinist totalitarianism is the social basis of a new type of exploiting society which is as antithetical to socialism as it is to capitalism. It is the type of social system we call bureaucratic collectivism.

Russia is not a socialist society. Socialism means more freedom than capitalism, not less. And this freedom depends not simply on state ownership of means of production, but on working-class "ownership" of the state.

But the "aberrations" that have been revealed mean there is not a particle of actual political power that resides in the hands of the masses of people in Russia. And without this, there can be no socialism.

Shachtman Talks — —

(Continued from page 2)

well as proving that the standard of living of the workers had increased greatly. Moreover, he stated, Khrushchev would introduce democracy.

During the exchange, Shachtman took up the claim that the growth of industry equaled socialism, explaining why this was false. He showed not only that the growth of industry and the exploitation of the masses are not contradictory, as had been claimed by one of the LYers, but that indeed the vast industrial development in Russia took place only through the most extreme exploitation of the Russian workers and peasants by the ruling class.

In a firm but sympathetic manner, Shachtman asked them how they knew that Khrushchev was introducing democracy in Russia and would straighten out all of Stalin's "misdeeds." Wasn't it true, he challengingly inquired, that they were now being asked to believe that the present Russian rulers would institute "collective leadership" and put an end to undemocratic abuses on the same basis that they had previously been expected to think Stalin "the greatest genius of mankind," namely the word of the Russian Stalinist leadership and the leaders of the American CP? Why should you take their word for it, he asked, the word of these people who did not lift a finger to oppose Stalin when he was alive? Demand deeds, not words, he told them.

He pointed out that their leaders had in the past sycophantically endorsed everything Stalin did and were just as sycophantically now endorsing the new line. Why should you believe them now, when you know they have deceived you in the past, he enquired?

He explained to them that because of the attitude of the Communist Party they had been kept in ignorance of the independent socialist movement in this country and knew nothing about it. "Why don't you read our press and find out about us, even if its just in order to be able to oppose us intelligently?" he suggested to them. And in conclusion, he proposed that they ask their leaders to accept the YSL challenge to debate the meaning of the dethronement of Stalin.

IN SAN FRANCISCO—

Schneiderman Says He Doesn't Know...

By CHARLES WALKER

San Francisco, Apr. 6

About 350 Stalinists and their sympathizers, disturbed to varying degrees, attended the CP's only San Francisco meeting devoted to explaining the 20th Congress of the Russian party. It was held tonight with State CP Chairman William Schneiderman doing the explaining. Schneiderman is currently stamping California on this subject.

Schneiderman's approach was to stress the "positive" and more theoretical features of the 20th Congress, as against the more sensational matters like the assault on Stalin's reputation and the revelations of past injustices. The latter, he claimed, were being deliberately pushed by the "State Department" to "divert attention."

For the most part Schneiderman followed the course already laid out by American CP explainers. The congress

What about the role of the other Russian leaders? Schneiderman said he didn't know; wasn't there.

As for the U.S., the CP (he said) should have known better after the "Browder episode"; but even with more information, it would still be debatable as to what action should have been taken, "in the face of anti-Soviet slanders"; perhaps it would not have been mentioned at all.

Written questions submitted to Schneiderman and answered by him indicated

real uneasiness in the local ranks. Schneiderman's replies were evasive.

—Didn't the Rajk confession and the doctors' confessions call for real doubt about Soviet justice?—It calls into question the "methods of review." However, there are no excuses for false and framed-up charges. Don't blame individuals.

—Was the re-evaluation of Stalin taking place in the best manner possible?—This is questionable. Other CPs should have participated.

—When will public opposition to current doctrines be possible in the Soviet Union?—It is now going on [so claimed Schneiderman coolly, without even referring to the armed suppression of the Tiflis demonstration or the unanimity of the 20th Congress]. It was stifled before, but it is to be hoped that wider latitudes of democracy will be opened up as the war recedes.

—Why did the French CP support Mollet in Algeria? Doesn't this aid imperialism?—We lack information. [A frequent reply by Schneiderman.] However, it seems necessary to prevent France from getting a right-wing government and becoming an American puppet. If the French broke from the U.S. and came to an agreement with the Soviet Union on international policy, this would contribute to peaceful solutions of world problems. The French CP would try to influence the French socialists better from within, as far as Algeria is concerned...

(Of course, in the meantime the Algerian people should no doubt hail the Stalinists for arming their oppressors! Note also that in this reply, Schneiderman automatically accepts, as always, the role of the other CPs as auxiliaries of Russian foreign-policy needs, with the right to sell out any fight for freedom to achieve any Moscow slogan.)

—Why was no correction of mistakes made before Stalin's death?—Don't know.

—How do you preserve monolithic unity and still prevent errors?—There is a time for discipline and unity, and there are other times when this is only a pretext for anti-democratic acts. When it's the right time for democracy, use it.

(Of course, the decision as to which time is which... will be made by the little Stalinists.)

—Did you, Schneiderman, discuss your speech with the leadership before giving it?—I wouldn't have dared otherwise.

Schneiderman did his level best to answer the faithful. Most of the audience seemed to be composed of middle-aged and older people who have probably been around the CP for years.

Among the Labor Youth League youth, the response may be different. Schneiderman will probably also hold a meeting on the same subject in the East Bay area, and more dissent may be visible there.

In Philadelphia—Hear Max Shachtman
on
STALINISM WITHOUT STALIN
The Meaning of the 20th Congress
THURS., MAY 3, at 8:30 p.m.
St. James Hotel, Room 304
13th and Walnut
Auspices:
Independent Socialist League

The bureaucracy is caught between the people's hatred below, and the need for a supreme class arbiter

THE RUSSIAN CRISIS AND THE STALIN CULT

By MAX SHACHTMAN

The first thing that has to be grasped, and that has to become an integral and homogeneous part of your thinking about the regime and the situation in Russia, is this: that no regime in the world, certainly not any in existence today, is as hated by its people as is the Stalinist regime.

The exploitation of the people—that is, the amount of surplus labor squeezed out of them as compared to what is granted to them for their labor—the degree of exploitation probably does not have an equal in the 20th century, and very few in the 19th. The facts are absolutely indisputable on this score. Nowhere do the workers get so little for what they turn out, as in Russia, and that has been true now since the rise and consolidation of the Stalinist regime.

The American worker is exploited; so is the Chinese and the Indian; the German and the South African—so also in all the capitalist countries. Any socialist knows that. But in the U. S., in England, even in France, when the worker produces this much he gets that much—half, a third, whatever it is. If he doubles his production, his income goes up 10 per cent, 20 per cent; there's some correspondence, a miserable correspondence, that is, a capitalist one, but there is some correspondence.

The Russian worker has doubled and trebled, quadrupled and quintupled production in the country. Not only does everybody know that but it is the proudest boast of the Stalinist regime. Talk to some hollow-headed intellectuals who follow the Stalinists and they point to that above all. But the standard of living of the Russian workers has kept no significant pace with that expansion.

Roughly speaking, that is, in terms of the degree of exploitation of the Russian working class: let's say its production was this much to start with, and its income was half—I take arbitrary figures only for illustration, you understand—and let's say the production is now increased by that much, as it has been—five and ten and twenty times in certain fields—yet, the standard of living has only increased that much.

No Russian worker needs a book about this. He may not understand that, as he does not in some cases; he may explain it away as proper or as inescapable; but no worker, excepting he be made of solid clay, fails to grasp that on his own skin. In every country workers know that. In Russia they know it most particularly, because there the contrast is so glaring.

LAND WITHOUT EQUAL

That's a thing that does not produce love of a regime. It is not human to believe that it could.

The oppression is unequalled, today. Maybe yesterday it was greater in Germany under Hitler's; but outside of that, it is unequalled.

No country has slave camps like Russia. Other countries have slaves—a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand—but no country numbers its slaves in millions, certainly no modern country. You have to go back to the primitive slime of Boer chauvinism in South Africa to find anything corresponding to what you have in Russia.

How is it possible to doubt it now, if Khrushchev says, "I didn't dare open my mouth, because if I had, it would have been closed permanently and on the spot." Does it need any imagination, does it need any photographs or documents, to understand what a worker felt—a nameless worker? to understand what his conditions must have been if he opened his mouth?

If Mikoyan and all the rest of that scum now tells us that tens of thousands of sterling, impeccable revolutionists of great authority, power and standing were sent to Siberia, to the camps and to their death, not even for opening their mouths but because of the whim or caprice of Stalin or Beria—can you imagine what happened to the nameless worker in the ranks, to the ones who filled the camps?

The one long nightmare of purges—do you think it hit only Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, the other leaders of the Bolsheviks? Do you think it hit only kulaks? The purges hit every family virtually without exception—perhaps not even with the exception of Stalin's family, because already the rumors are spreading that he murdered his own wife—rumors which were presented as fact by a former head of the GPU [Alexander Orlov] a few years ago, whose stories about the regime are now being authenticated by Mikoyan and Khrushchev, and the rest of them.

Scarcely one family escaped the purge in one way or another. What do you think that did to their attitude toward the regime—fill it with love?

THE PEOPLE KNOW

They are lusty for the day of the reckoning, and no one can stop it from being a stern one.

The bulk of the people realize how profoundly great is the responsibility of the Stalin regime for the war. They heard and read in the official press of the "great friendship" between Russia and Germany inaugurated by the infamous pact of September 1939. They know how this friendship was lauded—a friendship "sealed in blood," said *Pravda*—and how they were told that this would save them from the war, and they know how the war came.

The people have ways of knowing. The marvelous thing is how, in a totalitarian country, all sorts of stories spread—untrue ones and also the true one. It is that unstoppable, osmotic process by which people absorb knowledge, even in totalitarian countries.

And they know that the British bourgeoisie in its own interests warned the Stalinists that Hitler was preparing to attack, and he pooh-poohed it.

The Russian people, not only Stalin, and the Russian land suffered agonies because of it. It is sometimes estimated that there were 40 million dead in the Second World War. Not all of these were avoidable under anybody, but the colossal size of that figure is rightly put at the feet of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

CENSUS OF HATRED

That too everybody has felt on his own hide—not as a political idea, not as an abstraction, not as a discussion of the theory of socialism in one country—but on his own hide, in his own home. The "lack of preparation" about which they're speaking so deliciously now: it's only the beginning of what they will say.

There was no country that the Hitlerites went through more easily than Russia, when they attacked: like a hot knife through butter. Even the French did better; the Poles did better with their lances against the Reichswehr tanks.

That's widely known; a people does not forget that.

Widely known also in Russia is the fact that in not one of the other belligerents in the war, not in any other on any side, not on the German side, not on the other side, in no other country except in Russia, did so many people rebel against their own regime during the war. Hundreds of thousands went over to the Nazis, millions even.

These were not big leaders, they were nameless people, humble people. Twenty and more years after the revolution, how deep (ask yourselves) must have been the detestation that these people felt for their own regime that they deserted it in wartime—not only refuse to fight but to take up arms along with the enemy, the invader; and what an invader!—a fascist invader against their own armies, their own country.

Was there another? In France, Doriot

A section from Shachtman's talk on "The 20th Party Congress" at the New York meeting (story on page 2). Somewhat condensed.

assembled fewer people than are in this room for his battalions to fight alongside the Nazis. All the people that Quisling gave the German army from Norway would rattle around in your head. Among the Poles, nobody or next to nobody fought on the side of the Germans; the British, nobody—not one, except Lord Haw-Haw.

THEY SAW

But Ukrainians, White Russians, people in the Crimea, Russians, in hundreds of thousands deserted! Let's say they were abysmal reactionaries, to be cursed and driven out of all civilized society—let's say, let that be; but what does it show about their attitude toward the regime?

And then there were the people who didn't desert, who didn't go over to the other side—the plain soldier, who fought under horrible conditions where Stalin's great "military genius," so much admired by the bootlickers, consisted in pouring human flesh into the pot: "Stuff the tanks with flesh—of that we have plenty."

Those who survived, and pursued the Nazis throughout Eastern Europe, came to the countries, the miserable countries of Eastern Europe, poverty-stricken, backward, underdeveloped; and they saw these economic conditions that they could hardly dream of in "advanced" Russia. In Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, they saw things that didn't exist anywhere in Russia except for the bureaucrats.

And so powerful was the impact of this vision—not propaganda but what they saw with their own eyes—that when they came back, a campaign led up by Kalinin, the late president of the Soviet republic, had to be launched and sustained for months to tell the population, "don't listen to the talk of returned soldiers—some of our returned veterans have been disoriented by the fact that the Poles can get matches without paying for them."

IN THE BUREAUCRACY

Above all, I keep coming back to the contrast, felt and seen and known and understood to one degree or another by everybody, between the conditions of the masses and the exceedingly slow rate at which they improved, when they improved; that on the one side; and on the other side the stupendous growth of industry; the contrast also between the conditions of the masses and the conditions of the bureaucracy.

That's how the situation stands as far as the masses are concerned. But then there's also the bureaucracy itself—that is, the ruling class properly so called—the millions who are the real ruling class.

Oddly enough, it too hated Stalin. Why should it not? I am the head of the steel trust up to Tuesday night, and Saturday morning, for no reason that I can tell, I'm on a cattle car on the way to a concentration camp in Siberia: "There's not much stability in that; there's not much security in that."

If there was hatred among the workers, it was not less true of the bureaucrats. Alas, there is no gratitude in politics. Stalin had raised them to power, these bureaucrats, but that did not make them grateful for it for good.

He raised them to power by killing off all the revolutionists; he raised them to power by establishing a dictatorship over the masses such as they had never suffered in all time going as far back as Ivan the Terrible and further than that. He did that to bring the bureaucracy to power and raise it to the position of a ruling class.

THE NEED OF A RULER

But—and here is the trouble, the secret, the key that unriddles the riddle—the secret is that he could keep this bureaucracy in power only . . . by lifting himself

above this bureaucracy. By him I mean Stalin or his equivalent—him or his successor.

There is the whole key so far as I know it.

The bureaucracy is such—unlike, say, a normal capitalist class—that it must have over itself, it must lift out of its own bowels, a supreme arbiter. If not this one, then that one. It must have one—otherwise, wretched as its existence is, it would have no existence at all; it would be wiped out.

Because inside any ruling class there are always differences—that's normal, that's proper, that's inevitable. It has differences, and in case of differences among us, why is your view better than mine? With all my modesty, which is notorious, I nevertheless consider that my view is at least as valid as yours. Normally, in case of differences you vote.

DEMOCRACY ON TOP?

Let us say, in the words of that remarkable Isaac Deutscher who can be read in the *Reporter*, that democracy has been established for the top bureaucracy already, and that pretty soon it will dribble down—like a leak. It has been established in the top bureaucracy, he says; it is now established, he says, among over 200 people, at the present reckoning.

All right, they have democracy, freedom; they speak, argue, hand out leaflets, just among the bureaucrats. Then comes that fatal hour for all democratic organizations—which so many of us dread, namely, a vote. We vote.

And there is always a chance that my point of view—I find it deplorable but must recognize it—will not receive a majority of the votes. You have a majority, I have a minority; very well, why can't the bureaucrats abide by this result?

I ask in return: why should the minority of these 200 abide by the views of the majority, on what basis should they do this, when the quintessence and heart and nerves and blood of the bureaucratic regime is the violation of the rule of the majority? It is inconceivable that they, whose very existence is a rejection and denial of majority rule, should simply say within their own ranks: "Oops, you boys got the majority—you go."

If there was this preposterous democracy among 200 bureaucrats, and the vote was taken; and let's say that, mostly by intimidation and bribery and a little bit of demagoguery, you got 105 votes to my 95—why should I, the minority, bow to your interests? Do you bow to the wishes of them, the masses, out there? Why should I?

WAY TO SUICIDE

So two courses remain to me. Let's say a third: to bow; and let us say four times out of five I will do it, because as my best friends know I am the congenial type; but the fifth time I have two courses open to me, two only.

One is to appeal to the masses—some of them; the lower ranks in any case—the next 3000, the next 300,000. Now let us examine that course.

The minute I appeal to them I have called upon them to decide problems, basic problems. But that is an impossible situation: if I do it now, and with my clever tricks and arguments and demagoguery and intimidation, I get some more of those people on my side, then you will go and try to get others . . . and where does that lead to?

That way is organized suicide for this totalitarian bureaucracy. It cannot call upon the masses to solve its disputes; it is impossible; it is excluded. They will not do it, absolutely not. Whatever is left of my little political head is ready to be staked on that as absolute dogma.

ONLY ALTERNATIVE

What is the alternative? There is but one: to prevent the masses from deciding political questions and determining the fate of both myself and yourself—the bureaucrats. They must be kept in check, under the regime; and we must be kept in check too, we ourselves, against our tendencies to appeal to the masses.

Therefore we exude from our midst the supreme arbiter: he settles our disputes. It is not that there are no disputes, or that there never were disputes among the bureaucrats under Stalin—no, there were many; but never outside.

There must always be the iron union and discipline of "the Leninist Central Committee with Comrade Stalin as its head"—that language tells you everything if you understand political language. The bureaucracy does not go outside its ranks, but remembers that Comrade Stalin is at its head. Translated into English: in case of serious disputes in the bureaucracy, the head, the supreme arbiter, decides.

That is in the nature of the animal. They have to pay for their unexampled power, which no ruling class on the face

Why the Russian Social System Needed a Stalin in the Kremlin . . .

of the earth enjoys to the same extent as in Russia, by surrendering to a supreme arbiter.

DEIFICATION

And on top of that, if you follow this simple mechanism, this supreme arbiter had to be transformed into a god, in order to make his decisions more or less acceptable to the masses.

Not even the biggest idiot or the biggest tyrant believes that you keep people in check only with the sword. There's something else in addition.

If Stalin simply handed down a decision as Joe Stalin, the well-known "prisoner of the Politburo," then you and the ranks could say: "So—that's his opinion, and I have my opinion." However, the legend has been created that this is not Joe Stalin, but this is God.

Then you have a different situation; then at least you have the possibility of saying to the masses: "I know this may sound preposterous but who can question him—who can question a man who is the greatest genius of all times?—greater than Cal Coolidge. Who can question a man who has made the most supreme contributions to philosophy, greater than Aristotle, greater even than Norman Vincent Peale; whose contributions in art have had no equal; who is a master of surgery (that by the way was not so far from right); who has enriched the Russian language as nobody before him?"

There was one thing that always stuck in my crock, I don't know why, that I can never forget; it is quoted from one of the Russian medical journals: "No one can practice gynecology seriously without having studied Comrade Stalin."

SOURCE OF THE CULT

There was no field in which he was not presented as God in human form; and that was not accidental. It was only in that guise that he could act before the masses as a supreme arbiter. That is, in my judgment, the source—the social source—of the "cult of the individual," not Stalin's mania.

Stalin's mania—I leave this to experts in psychology, of which I am not one—may have been produced by the conditions into which he was lifted; but one thing is certain scientifically from the social point of view: there lies the social source of the "cult of the individual," and there consequently lies the social and political responsibility for creating and maintaining the cult of the individual.

It does not come simply from Stalin; it comes from the innermost nature of the social relations of Stalinist Russia; and the result had to be insecurity for the bureaucracy and well as for the working class.

That's why they hated him, and hated him deeply, but had to have him; and therein lay, and therein lies, their dilemma—the real one, the mighty one, the irresolvable one, the one that really resulted in reducing men; who used to have courage and confidence, to cowards, to silent people, to supine people, to sycophants, to toadies, the like of which we have not known since Oriental despotism many years ago.

ARE THEY COWARDS?

These bureaucrats are not cowards by their nature, so to speak. Four out of five of them are tough people; they showed that in their resistance to the Hitlerites. It wasn't just the Russian worker and peasant who fought; the bureaucracy fought too—just as fascists and fascist officers fought on the other side. They are tough people—people tough enough to keep the masses underfoot—people tough enough to have destroyed a revolutionary movement that no tsar was ever able to destroy.

What turned them into cowards? what if not that? That's the social explanation for it, I believe—not some personal explanation.

And anytime Khrushchev gets up in front of his comrades, his fellow bureaucrats, and narrates the story of these crimes of Stalin, how he murdered people, of his frivolousness in matters of life and death, of his irresponsibility, of his mania, and when he is asked, "Where were you?" and when all he can answer is, "Don't you see, I was a coward"—then I say: No, it is not true. I defend this liar from his lies. It was not simply cowardice that prompted his silence—not at all.

All he can say is, "I was afraid; if I'd opened my mouth, look what would have happened to me, look what happened to the others," but that's not true. If he had opened his mouth, he'd have had to appeal to the masses! And he will never appeal to the masses against the supreme arbiter—certainly not against the su-

preme arbiter that he hopes to be tomorrow.

That's the secret, not his cowardice; because if he were a coward, so was Mikoyan too, so was Molotov too. Molotov among others was one of the people who defied tsarism, which in its day was the most ghastly of ghastly regimes, and went to prison and fought in the underground as a revolutionist—was he simply afraid of Stalin? And this whole mob, this whole crew numbering thousands and tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, numbering millions—were they all simply afraid of Stalin, a madman? It's impossible.

They were afraid to uncover the Achilles heel of their class, and this was their need for the supreme arbiter. They couldn't weaken him without destroying themselves. There's the reason why, and nothing else.

KHRUSHCHEV'S BOAST

Now Khrushchev says he was afraid to open his mouth. That is the boast of the newly fabricated leader of the revolutionary world peoples!

In a moment of crisis (says Khrushchev) when my country, my revolution, my party, my people, my bureaucracy were held by the throat by a maniac, a murderer, I saved my hide by keeping quiet. . . .

That's a recommendation for a father of a family, who knows when to keep his mouth shut in order to protect his home and his kids—I understand, however, even in some movies that is now denied—but for the leader of a party. . . .

I ask Communists who are in this audience, or those who come in contact with Communists, to ask yourselves: You are told every day, are you not—and in itself it is not wrong—you are told every day to take your life in your hands, to take your liberty in your hands, to carry on the struggle for the ideals and ideas to which you are dedicated—in the shops or in the schools; as a teacher, as a student; in the South; in countries with reactionary dictatorships—you are told every day: "Fight—die—it is glorious to die for the fatherland—for your ideals," and so indeed it is.

As the nominal leader of your international movement today, Khrushchev tells you that, directly or indirectly, every day: "Fight, work, educate, struggle—if you die you have cleared a space as a pioneer—don't just consider yourself all the time—life isn't worth that much. . . ."

But as your leader, he and all the leaders say also: "We, however, we saved our hides. . . . Revolutionists by the dozens, comrades of ours, members of our own party were murdered; not only Trotskyists, not only social democrats, not only Polish Bundists, not only Catholic priests, but comrades of ours, personal friends of ours, Stalinists all of them, were murdered; but we kept our mouths shut. . . . that's where we were, that's what we were doing. . . . Consequently we demand of YOU that you consecrate us now as your new leadership, worthy of your confidence and support. . . ."

PETER TO IVAN

They have transformed all social analysis, all social problems, all social solutions into individual defects, personal shortcomings, maladies, madnesses, cowardices.

And now, everything will be straightened out: there will be some personal adjustments—they'll shift Peter to Ivan's place, Ivan to Peter's place; remove a few Beria men and a few Stalin men and rehabilitate the names of the dead here and there—not too many—and therewith lay the ground for the restoration of the old dictatorship.

They will start at first with the 200 "democrats" of Deutscher, whittling it down pretty soon to the 11, and then seven, then the five, and then the three, and then the one; because there is no other path—none.

The very nature of the regime makes the question of the succession the most vital one for the ruling class in Russia. No bureaucrat yields to any other in self-esteem. Recent proof: Khrushchev did not yield to the leader appointed by Stalin, Malenkov. Khrushchev examines the situation objectively, looks at both men, and says: "By all odds, I am the better."

HOW STALIN STARTED

But, some people say, there's been an improvement: still, he didn't kill Malenkov. . . . They don't understand the point yet: they do not and cannot start with that—that's what they must end with but they cannot start with that.

There was also a fight in the days after

Lenin's death, but the difference between the two fights is basic and stupendous to such a degree that it cannot be overstated, I believe.

I remember when Stalin started out against Zinoviev. Zinoviev was one of the big leaders then, but he was widely disliked as bureaucratic, full of chicanery, tricks, mismanagement, all sorts of bad things. He was a great revolutionist in my judgment, but he was also full of all sorts of bad characteristics and his weaknesses often triumphed over his strengths.

Stalin was an unknown, at least to us in the American CP, and to virtually all other Communists outside of Russia; and I remember how we suffered under Zinoviev. Every week another cable told that this leadership was out, that leadership was; so we got to feel less than a strong friendship for him.

Then we begin to hear another voice from Russia—Stalin—and Stalin is making speeches. What do you think he said against Zinoviev when he first broke with him? (It was Zinoviev who broke with Stalin, really, in 1925-26 when Zinoviev went over to Trotsky to form the united opposition bloc and Stalin was left with Bukharin and the others.)

Stalin appeared before the public for the first time as an angel, wings sprouting from his back, mild, humble, quiet, a simple man, not ostentatious, simple military jacket, no marshal, no medals, nothing, not even a briefcase; and he said: "Comrades, it is time to end this leadership by individuals!"

THE NEW WIND BLEW

Look in the old books, and there you will see Khrushchev's speeches, with the speeches about collective leadership as big as a house.

"What we need, comrades," says Stalin, "is collective leadership, which under Zinoviev is impossible, because he rules as one man," or sometimes: "all he wants is a *troika*, a trinity, to rule the party, composed of himself, Kamenev and me, Stalin; and I said no—we want a collective leadership; only a collective leadership is a Leninist leadership."

And: "Zinoviev by this *troika* wants to remove whom from the Political Committee? Bukharin. Impossible to have a leadership of our party without Bukharin. . . ."

And: "This *troika* leading the party means no Trotsky. I have my differences with Trotsky," says Stalin, "but can you conceive of a leadership of our party without Comrade Trotsky in it. . . .?" We were enormously impressed by this in the CP in this country at that time. . . .

Stalin made a speech about Bukharin that I shall never forget. "What does Zinoviev want? Blood," said Stalin, "he wants Bukharin's blood"—there it is in print. The lesson is not to listen to what people say but to watch what they do, and what social springs are moving them.

"We want a collective leadership," said Stalin, and these simple things impressed us hoosiers in the American CP.

I remember that the late William F. Dunne, who was our factional representative in the Executive Committee of the Comintern at that time, wrote us an enthusiastic letter saying that a new wind is blowing in Moscow—Trotsky's pictures are everywhere—we thought that was a sign that it's a collective leadership again. . . .

STALIN'S MATRIX

But this didn't fool the workers, because there were practically no workers in Russia at that time. Well, that's a strong statement, but you must know what was lost in the civil war, the most destructive civil war we have known.

The country was bled dry; the best workers went to their death in the civil war; others perished in starvation; there were famines; cannibalism returned to Russia. At that time of utter stark poverty and wretchedness, the workers were dying like flies either of that or in the civil war.

The working class was well-nigh wiped out. Lenin made bold to say in 1923: you talk about the dictatorship of the proletariat—there is no proletariat in Russia today; what Marx called a proletariat does not exist with us.

Allowing for the exaggeration which Lenin always used to emphasize his point; he was right. And what working class began to establish itself in 1923 was peasants coming into the cities, driven by the starvation on the farm to get a job in the city where there was at least a little rationing for the workers in the factories, to start building them up again.

Then what workers were left, thirdly, were turned into officials: for a new officialdom had to be created; a revolu-

tion needs an officialdom; it needs directors, managers, officeholders of all sorts; and it was the workers, the skilled workers, the intelligent and politically trained workers, that became these.

A NEW CLASS

It was only in that atmosphere that it was possible for Stalin to fool the people; so to speak, to lift the bureaucracy over this non-existent, or semi-existent, or half-existent working class.

And even then it was not easy for Stalin. Trotsky and the other revolutionary oppositionists had nine-tenths of the old guard of Bolshevism with them, and it took years of bitter brutal fighting for Stalin to begin to consolidate the power of the bureaucracy in Russia.

Now the situation is radically different in many ways, but I want to emphasize what is positive about the radical difference.

Today there is a huge industry in Russia the like of which doesn't exist anywhere on the face of the earth except in the U. S., whereas tsarist Russia was almost at the bottom of the list of modern capitalist countries. A big industry—that means a different country, a different agriculture.

You don't have the same worker any more—you don't have the same peasant any more—you don't have a working class of two or three or four million people—you have a working class of 40-50 million people, with their families. They constitute a social weight, a social power, even if they just stood stark still.

The regime does not have any credit for a revolutionary past as did Stalin's when it began. Where are these nobodies from? From the bureaucratic void, from the anonymous bureaucratic mass-nobody—no ideas, no writings, no record, no revolutionary credit.

CONCESSIONS?

This regime must seek to gain the maximum support for itself with a minimum of concessions to the masses, while fighting for time in which to stabilize or restabilize the power of the ruling class.

In that light, one of the most startling things is the triviality of the concessions that have already been made to the masses.

There was an end last November to the abominable abortion law adopted in 1936, which placed Russia at the bottom of the list of backward, bigoted reactionary countries in that field.

The seven-hour day has been promised to the workers. In 1956 they promise the seven-hour day to the Russian working class, and its value may be judged from the fact that the seven-hour day was proclaimed for the working class by Stalin & Co. on the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Russian Revolution in 1927—as a piece of impudent demagoguery with which to combat the Trotskyist opposition.

That is consoling, but only within limits—very strictly defined limits; meanwhile, what is concrete is the promise that the eight-hour day, which stretches over six days in the week, i.e., the 48-hour week, will be cut down by two hours, for a 46-hour week. It is a trivial concession, though it is welcome.

THEIR POWER AT STAKE

I don't have time to go into economic aspects that are more significant than what appears on the surface—the struggle that the Stalinist bureaucracy has to carry out against the inflation in the country; but let that be. It's a concession—two hours off the 48: where does that leave Russia in comparison with the capitalist world?

They promise more housing; less would be impossible. They promise more food at a time when it is hard for the people to get potatoes—as is acknowledged in the Stalinist press.

Freedom for the bureaucrats is promised, and freedom for the artist is promised, freedom for anything they want to do—within the clearly defined and now purged line of the party.

You have surely noticed that in their press they have suddenly turned on the "rotten elements." Who are the rotten elements? the ones who kept their mouths shut while everyone was being murdered?

No—they're the "real Leninists!" The rotten elements are those who ask questions, the ones who think for themselves.

It's an ominous warning: no change in the party regime—there will be none—not while we are in power and enjoying the benefits therefrom. It's precisely their power that is involved—that's what's now at stake, and no one knows it better than the bureaucracy.

To the CP: Some Questions on Socialism,

(Continued from page 11)

from the point of view of the comfort or welfare of his immediate subordinates or even of broader masses of the party and state bureaucracy or the people at large, but from the point of view of the claimed objective of your movement: to establish socialism?

A KEY

Here we come hard up against the problem of the relationship between socialism and democracy.

In our opinion that is the key not only to an understanding of what has been going on in Russia for the past few decades, but the key to the struggle for socialism all over the world.

To start with, what is democracy?

When we say we are fighting for democratic rights, for democracy, in the United States, there is usually little doubt about what we mean. We mean we are for the right of every sane adult citizen to an equal vote; for the right of anyone to form any kind of political or other organization they see fit without government interference, censorship or persecution; for genuine freedom of press, assembly, speech; and that for everyone, regardless of how violently we or the government or the FBI may disagree with him. We are against discrimination on account of race, color or creed (including political creed) in all public affairs.

Many things could be added, but that is essentially it.

Socialists and communists have claimed that even in a given capitalist society where the above-mentioned formal rights may be scrupulously observed, the mass of the people are still discriminated against because they lack the economic equality with which to assert their political equality in substance as well as in form. The conclusion has always been that socialists are for adding economic democracy to political democracy in the form of the socialization of the means of production.

FUNDAMENTAL IDEA

Now, why have socialists and communists always claimed that they are for democracy?

The answer is simple, and has a tradition which goes back over a hundred years to the founders of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels.

Because socialists have always believed that the working class can come to power only by destroying and eliminating the distortions and restrictions on democracy thrown up by the capitalist class; that the working class, far more than any other class in past history which has sought to come to power by means of a social revolution must extend democracy to the utmost in its struggle for power, and once it has come to power, can only rule by democratic means.

This idea which was fundamental to Marx and Engels was not some idealistic dream or soft-headed intellectual prejudice, let alone a clever trick with which to deceive the capitalists until they had been ousted from their control of society. It was based on one fundamental trait in which the working class is different from any class in history which sought to become the leader of a society.

This is the fact that the working class as a class is not and cannot become an

exploiting class; even when in power, it is a majority of the population which must continue to do the work of society, and cannot lay this aside to devote itself to "ruling" in the manner of all historic ruling classes.

AND IN RUSSIA?

Now, long before the recent Khrushchev revelations, it has been commonly accepted by Communist Party people as well as their opponents of all varieties, that democracy in the sense described above did not exist in Russia. They claimed that there was more democracy there for the workers than in any capitalist country. They did not deny, however, that this "democracy" expressed itself in ways completely different from those which we demand and fight for in this country.

For instance: they agreed that there was no opposition party permitted in Russia. They agreed that although all kinds of criticisms of the "inadequacies" and "shortcomings" and "mistakes" of individuals or institutions filled the Russian press, there was no press in Russia which was independent of the Communist Party, which supported a program different from that laid down by the party and government, which supported rival candidates against the lists approved by the party in elections, and the like.

Similarly, it was agreed that no oppositional organizations of any kind existed in the fields of politics, culture, or any others.

Let us review briefly the reasons and explanations given by the Communist Parties for this striking difference between the kind of democracy they advocated in capitalist countries, and the kind of "democracy" they claimed exists in Russia and the "popular democracies" set up after World War II. Let us review them especially in the light of the revelations made by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress.

CLAIMS OF "SCIENCE"

Explanation No. 1: Marxism is a science. A country which is organized and ruled scientifically does not need an opposition party or parties to indulge in the kind of political campaigning we see in this country. There, the people and their leaders sit down and review their problems in the light of Marxist science like a society of physicists. In such a body, factions, partisanship, electioneering on the basis of alternative programs and candidates would be ludicrous and unnecessary.

That Marxism offers a scientific approach to the understanding of social trends, antagonisms, and developments, we would be the last to deny. But to stretch this claim to the assertion that a really smart Marxist can get a perfect answer to every social question out of his Marxist computer is arrant nonsense. That is theology, not science.

In any event, it turns out according to Khrushchev, that whatever Stalin's claims to Marxist "science" may have been, he made some of the most serious blunders imaginable. And the group of "scientists" gathered around him on the Central Committee went right down the line with him in these blunders, as did the leadership of every Communist Party all over the world.

SCIENTISTS AT WORK

Foster and Dennis may not "have the facts" about the latest developments in Russia, but they should have been able to gather, or analyze the facts about an event such as the Hitler-Stalin pact and its consequences, for these were writ large on the pages of history. And every critic inside the Communist Party who resisted the pact and its implications, and who persisted in his views, was expelled (in a country like the United States) or liquidated (in Russia).

Of course, it was possible to give a "reasonable," and even "Marxist," explanation for the Hitler-Stalin pact (we have chosen only one outstanding example from the arsenal of Stalin's colossal blunders) good enough to convince millions... as long as no democratic discussion and opposition was permitted. That is the whole point.

Democracy is just as necessary in a country run by Marxists as in one run by West Point graduates! For democracy is the only social method through which the issues which face a society can be effectively aired; by which alternative arguments and propositions and theories can be sifted and judged by the people in the course of reaching a decision. If the Marxist has an advantage in a great democratic debate, it is only because his

insights and the policies which flow from them are more convincing to the people.

ARGUMENT FROM UNITY

Explanation No. 2: No opposition is needed in Russia, because the whole country is united behind the Communist Party. All the common people feel that this party represents their best interests. It would be pointless to have an opposition in a country which is advancing the interests of the people so consistently and relentlessly.

In the light of the Khrushchev revelation, is there anyone who can still take this "explanation" seriously? Were the thousands who were falsely accused and, though innocent of any crime, framed, railroaded and executed or sent to Siberia, without complaint?

Since this was not some exception, some unusual or accidental miscarriage of justice, but a common, ordinary procedure carried out by the whole hierarchy of the GPU and its successors, and backed by the party leadership, is it possible that no one felt the urge to raise his voice in protest?

Today, suddenly, since the signal has been given from on high, protests against these injustices will ring throughout the land. Meetings will be held demanding that those guilty be brought to justice in turn.

WERE THEY AFRAID?

But the former victims must have known that they were innocent. And their families must have known; and their friends must have had doubts, at the very least.

Isn't it as clear as the nose on your face that the only reason there were no protest committees, no protests and demonstrations, and workers' meetings passing resolutions before this, was that the people were afraid?

In this country, a committee is formed to defend every group of Smith Act victims. It seeks to raise funds for their defense, and to publicize their case as far as possible. Since it is known that people who join such a committee may be exposed to reprisals by the government, it is difficult to get any but the most devoted to join. What in the world could have prevented the relatives and friends of Beria's and Stalin's victims from forming similar committees in Russia, except the sure knowledge that such activity would lead to their instant imprisonment and probable liquidation?

Is it not a fact that anyone who might have tried to form such a committee in those days would have been violating the law, and would have been charged with seeking to undermine the confidence of the workers in the government?

WHY THE TERROR?

And how is it different today? That is the question you should ask yourselves.

Khrushchev may be a fine fellow (even though he didn't have the guts to stand up to Stalin for twenty years, and even though he carried out his bloody commands with alacrity throughout that period), but the people's only guarantee against future injustices is the right to organize freely for any purpose short of organizing an armed rebellion, that is, simple, ordinary democracy.

Ask yourself this question, and if it sounds sensible, ask it of your leaders. If it is true that the Communist Party and the government in Russia enjoy the overwhelming support of the overwhelming majority of the people (99.7 per cent at the last election), why should it be necessary or desirable to illegalize critical and

oppositionist organizations and publications?

Even if only utter crackpots or advocates of capitalist restoration should avail themselves of this right, what harm would there be in it? In fact, how can one demonstrate to anyone but those who are determined to believe in advance that a vast majority of the people really back the government unless its opponents have full freedom with which to seek support against it?

MARTIAL LAW?

Explanation No. 3: Capitalist encirclement.

We raise this "explanation" of why there is no opposition (and therefore no democracy) in Russia because it is usually the last resort of those apologists for the regime who have been driven from every other position. It is the last resort, because in effect it is in flat contradiction to all the other answers given.

They claim that ordinary garden-variety democracy, with all its rights, obligations, inefficiency and frustrations, ordinary democracy such as we demand in this country, is not needed in Russia because they have something better there (rule by "science," or overwhelming unanimity of support). The argument based on "capitalist encirclement," on the other hand, claims that democracy as we know it cannot be permitted in Russia because she is like a city in a state of siege which must be ruled by martial law until the enemy has withdrawn from the gates.

Now, martial law may be necessary in certain situations, but no one in his right senses will claim that it is a preferable form of social organization in the long run. It is needed for the purpose of suppressing social antagonisms in the interest of an enforced and forced unity of will and effort in an extreme situation.

If it lasts too long, even under the best of cases, it breeds arbitrary despotic habits in the authorities, destroys the democratic social structure, and degenerates the society.

ARE THERE CLASSES?

Since it is official dogma that no social antagonisms exist in Russia any longer, a very esoteric argument is needed to explain why external pressure on this happy and homogenous society should require 30 years (during only five of which Russia was actually engaged in warfare) without the essential democratic right of opposition.

The argument has to be esoteric because it has to fly in the face of everything we know (as well as everything the old Marxists have taught) about every other society in the world. For all other societies it is a Marxist truism that the degree of repression, the degree to which democratic rights are denied to the masses, is directly related to the depth, and especially to the intensity, of the social antagonism, the antagonism between the classes, which is tearing the society apart.

Here we are told that no classes exist any longer in Russian society, but that opposition cannot be tolerated because it would play into the hands of the external enemy!

THE "PLOTS" BLOW UP

Although this argument is pretty nonsensical, the Russian rulers have managed to give it an appearance of reality by constantly uncovering "plots" by "foreign agents." Khrushchev now announces that a large number of these "plots" were simply frame-ups against staunch supporters of the regime.

And lest anyone consider that these frame-ups were limited to the immediate area over which Stalin (or that "foreign agent" Beria) had direct authority, it now develops that in every one of the "popular democracies" (which are supposed to be independent, non-satellite regimes) prominent leaders were framed, forced to confess, and executed in exactly the same way and on exactly the same charges as were the direct victims of Stalin. Some of these are now being rehabilitated.

But if all these "plots" turn out to be frame-ups, one of the last justifications for the "encirclement" explanation of the lack of democracy in Russia falls to the ground.

It would appear that the real danger to Russian society was not subversion which originated in the capitalist encirclement, but arbitrary power of the leadership which was not subject to the corrective processes of democracy.

And at this point it is necessary to apply a bit of the Marxist analysis which

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Democracy and Stalin's Fall

The ISL Program in Brief

is now demanded of all the Communist Parties in the world in place of the leadership cult which preceded it.

Such a widespread subversion of that democracy which is an essential aspect of socialism cannot have been the work of one malevolent individual, or even of a handful of such individuals. It must express the same thing which individual dictatorship and totalitarian police rule expresses in every society in which they appear: social antagonism, class conflict.

THE RULING STRATUM

Supporters of the world Communist Parties have much to think over these days, and those who are really serious about devoting themselves to the fight for socialism, come what may, will have to think every one of these questions through to the end before they are through.

In this appeal to your socialist conscience and human reason we cannot go into every one of these problems, to the extent that we have thought them out ourselves. But just consider this possibility, this line of thought and investigation:

If there was one-man, arbitrary political rule in the USSR during the past decade or two, this could not have been possible without the active or passive support of a whole social stratum in Russia.

Khrushchev and Molotov and Mikoyan and their colleagues may not have had the socialist guts to stand up to the old dictator and risk their lives in the process. But unless the dictator represented (well or badly is less important) the social need of a large stratum of Russian society, it is inconceivable that some group of courageous men (and certainly the Russian Bolshevik party which overthrew tsarism did not lack such) did not appear to throw him out.

However painful life may have been for a Khrushchev and many others under the capricious rule of Stalin, a whole stratum of the Russian population has prospered mightily under this dictatorship. Russian factory managers, generals, high government and party officers, writers and artists, and "heroes of labor" draw down incomes which are fifty or a hundred and up to two thousand times those of ordinary workers.

This gap has been increasing steadily during the years rather than getting smaller. However much you may think the standard of living of the masses has risen during the past 30 years, it is clear that the standard of living, let alone the social power, of the party, state and industrial bureaucracies have skyrocketed above the level of the rest of the population.

SOCIAL ANTAGONISMS

Of course, you have seen and accepted all kinds of explanation for this phenomenon over the years. You know that Lenin used to say that no party or government functionary in the workers' state should make more than a skilled worker. Although this view has never been directly attacked by the Stalinist ideologues, it has been given interpretations as strained and weird as those given for the benefit of their capitalist patrons by the hierarchy of the Christian churches to the statement in the New Testament that a camel will get through a needle's eye more easily than a rich man into the Kingdom of Heaven.

A social theory, like one in the natural sciences, recommends itself to the degree that it is able to explain the major phenomena under observation consistently.

We are told that Stalin and others exercised absolute power in Russia for years. It is clear that this would not have been possible had there been effective democracy in the country.

But democracy is suppressed in a society when social antagonisms tend to be-

come intolerable. Then there must be social antagonisms in Russia.

But there is no private property in the means of production; no capitalist class, or nascent or remnant capitalist class, which is seeking to restore capitalism. There is, however, apparently, a stratum of society which is privileged and which wields power as compared with the vast majority of society.

Is this group the industrial working class?

That is a joke. If Khrushchev and other high government and party officials didn't dare lift a finger to stop the vast injustices and suppressions which they admit took place, what chance did the ordinary worker, or all of the workers put together, have?

Everyone knows that in Russia the trade unions and all other workers' organizations are as subject to the rule of one-party, no-opposition, no-arguments-over-basic-policy, as is the rest of society.

Since privilege and power in Russia derive not from the ownership of property, but from the individual's position in the party, state, army or industrial hierarchy, it is clear that these privileges would be threatened if the masses were permitted to discuss, vote and decide freely on all matters pertaining to their social existence.

That is the source of the social antagonism, the class conflict in Russian society.

PROPOSE A TEST

That is why, rather than risk upsetting things too much, the top Russian bureaucracy preferred to suffer the rule of a man who (they now say) was a mad tyrant, rather than appeal to the masses to overthrow him.

That is why, even today, while Khrushchev and his colleagues want to slough off the excesses and arbitrariness of Stalin's rule which made life even for the rich, powerful and comfortable bureaucracy something of a nightmare, they do not propose to introduce democracy into their society, with its essential right to opposition.

Treat this as a very tentative hypothesis, if you will. But see if it does not meet every test of consistency with what is known about the function of dictatorship in every other society; if it does not explain more simply and fully every known aspect of Russian society than its alternatives.

But if this theory has any validity, why is it that it has not only been rejected and denounced by the Communist Party leadership all over the world (who, according to the theory itself, have a vested interest in denouncing it), but also not accepted by millions of ordinary, honest communist workers and intellectuals who have no interest but to seek to fight exploitive capitalism for the purpose of establishing the workers' state which will lead the way to the socialist society of the future?

For a full answer to this question we would have to trace a great deal of history. We cannot do that here. But we can and must point to one important, even dominating reason.

TO DEFEND THE REVOLUTION

The Russian Revolution inspired the workers of the whole world. Here was living proof that the workers, together with their peasant allies, could overthrow a powerful despotism, establish a government of their own choosing, fight off the foreign intervention of a dozen capitalist powers, and proceed to build a society which suited the vast masses rather than a handful of parasitic exploiters.

Many things happened after the death of Lenin and the rise of Stalin, but as the years went by, the Russian state solidified itself and began a vast construction in a territory comprising one-sixth of the earth. It seemed an inspiring sight to many, especially during the '30s when the capitalist world was stagnating in the throes of depression, to view the massive exertions and achievements of the first Five Year Plan and those which followed.

Further, this society was under the constant, bitter, and vicious attack of all the most reactionary forces in capitalist society.

The enemies of the workers in France, Germany, England and the United States were also the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Union. Since these gentlemen are notorious for their light regard for the truth in every conflict with their own workers, why should one believe a word they or their hirings have to say about the workers' fatherland?

In the minds of millions two concepts became firmly implanted: Russia is building a new, better society; whatever its deficiencies or hardships may be, it is working toward a better world. And further, anyone who criticizes or attacks this society or its leaders must be serving the interests of the capitalists who are its enemies and ours.

These themes were perverted from their very cogent limited validity into iron dogmas which were used both inside Russia and throughout the Communist Parties all over the world to discredit every criticism, to stifle every doubt, to suppress every questioning.

They were applied so massively that they became internalized censors in the political personalities of most loyal Communist Party people.

THE THREAT TO FAITH

Doubts about the Moscow Trials in the '30s, about the Nazi-Soviet Pact, about the Communist Party line of "social-fascism" in Germany while Hitler was coming to power, or the line in China when Chiang Kai-shek was permitted to drown the revolution of the late '20s in blood—all doubts about the role of Russia, the Third International or the Communist Party leadership in this or that country were squelched and submerged by two arguments:

If we didn't have Russia on our side, what would we have? We would then be helpless before the might of capitalist imperialism. Russia, its leaders, their actions, their policies and directives to the Communist Parties in other countries must be right. Their critics, even when they pose as socialists, must not only be wrong, they must be agents of the capitalist class.

If we didn't have Russia on our side, what chance would the workers in the world have to preserve peace, to defeat capitalism? We can't give up our faith in Russia, or we would have nothing left to believe in.

Again and again, over the years, revolutionary socialist opponents of Stalinism have heard this refrain from Communist Party people who had been shaken by their arguments, but who were determined to hold on to their faith in the party, the movement and the Workers' Fatherland even at the expense of reason and logic.

NO CYNICS WANTED

Today, the Khrushchev revelations have cast the "Workers' Fatherland" in a light for all-genuine communists which compels a re-evaluation of everything they have believed before.

For the cynical men in the leadership who knew—who must have known—just how much workers' democracy there was in Russia, nothing fundamental will have changed. Their only problem is to cover up their past "mistakes" so that they can continue to play the social role they have been playing all these years.

But to many, reared in the belief that Russia is absolutely essential to the struggle for socialism on a world scale, a loss of faith in the Russian myth may mean an end to their hope for socialism.

We do not appeal to the cynics who have never believed in the possibility of a society run from top to bottom by the common people, and who have demonstrated this by their destruction of democracy in their own movement.

We cannot appeal to those who have always needed the feeling that on their side in the fight for socialism are the heavy battalions of the Russian army, and for whom this solace counts for more than the struggle of humanity, led by the workers, for dignity and freedom.

THINK FOR YOURSELF

We appeal to those for whom the idea of socialism is indissolubly linked with that of democracy; to those who fight for socialism because it is the only struggle which makes social life meaningful today; to those who, like all great socialists from the days of Marx on, believe that socialism is possible because the working class and the common people will not indefinitely tolerate capitalism and will combine to overthrow it in the interests of complete democracy.

Our appeal is simply this: Think these questions over. This time, do not permit your leaders to shut off the discussion and cow the unconvinced with demands for artificial "unity" in the face of the enemy. Think for yourself. Probe every question to the bottom.

That is the immediate task, perhaps the hardest of all, which the fight for socialism demands of you today.

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!

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RENEW NOW!

Franco, Trujillo, Mollet—and Some Liberal Imperialists... Three Picket Lines Against Dulles' Friends

By ELI FISHMAN

The New York unit of the Young Socialist League participated in two picket lines last week, and went out in support of another which did not take place. In two of these instances, the YSL fight against American imperialism ran into an interesting phenomenon: the liberal imperialist.

Last Saturday, Franco's Foreign Minister Artajo arrived in New York. He was feted by the Fair-Dealing governor of New York State in the early afternoon and was then whisked off to Gracie Mansion to receive greetings from the Fair-Dealing mayor of New York.

A picket line was organized quickly by the Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims. The committee had previously sent a wire of protest to Governor Harriman and Mayor Wagner under the signature of chairman Norman Thomas.

The picket line itself was of limited effectiveness because of a New York law prohibiting picketing within 250 feet of a public park. The mayor's mansion is,

Good Meet at Brandeis

YSL National Chairman Michael Harrington addressed a large student audience at Brandeis University on April 10. Harrington appeared in a symposium together with two students at Brandeis on the topic of "Socialism."

The audience of over 175 displayed great interest in discussing the problems of socialism. A large number of students continued the discussion informally with Comrade Harrington for several hours after the meeting ended.

of course, in a park. However, about 40 pickets turned out under the committee's signs to protest against this latest example of American imperialist support of anti-working-class reactionaries and fascists.

There was, of course, no word from either Harriman or Wagner as to why they had made this welcome for the Francoite while Spanish workers were out on strike.

The second case of liberal support of imperialism and reaction came up in the context of the disappearance of Jesus de Galindez, a Basque-Catholic nationalist who had worked with the anti-Franco committee.

Galindez had also been active in opposing the dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. He had realized that this stand put his life in jeopardy, and had written letters and informed the police of his fears. He disappeared in March. Various groups had rallied to demand a full investigation of the Galindez case, stating their opposition to the tyranny in the Dominican Republic.

On Thursday night, a demonstration sponsored by the Dominican Revolutionary Party was scheduled. It was to take place at the Hotel Commodore where Carmine de Sapio's Tammany Hall was having a banquet. One of the honored guests was to be Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., former congressman and lawyer for the Dominican Republic (he is a registered agent of that government). The picket line would, of course, have raised embarrassing questions for the assembled Democrats and liberals, as to why one of their honored leaders is a paid representative of a murderous and dictatorial regime.

YSLers appeared at the Commodore to join the line. There, however, they dis-

covered that it had been called off. The Dominicans had met with De Sapio and had decided to cancel the demonstration. And FDR Jr. was thus able to take his place in the banquet hall without being reminded by a picket line that he is an official supporter of tyranny in the Caribbean.

The third picket line took place at Rockefeller Center, location of the French Government Tourist Office. The YSL and ISL sponsored this demonstration as part of their opposition to Western imperialism.

Signs demanding freedom and the right of self-determination for the Algerian people were paraded along the crowded street for about an hour. This activity followed upon the picket line organized at the United Nations last fall by the New York YSL urging full independence for all of North Africa.

Thus, three picket lines and three cases in point on American imperialism. In two instances—those of Franco's emissary and the abortive demonstration against the Dominican dictatorship—the YSLers encountered that interesting phenomenon, the imperialist Fair-Dealer. Harriman, Wagner and FDR Jr., are, of course, three of the most important liberal names in a relatively liberal city and state. As the YSL met them, they were holding hands with two of the most reactionary dictatorships in the world today.

In the third case, that of Algeria, the issue was perhaps broader. Here the point of attack was American imperialism itself, a policy which has gathered into the camp of the "free world" all the reactionaries and defenders of the status quo in all of the world. The YSL demonstrators called for an anti-imperialist, democratic policy with regard to Algeria (and for Spain too). There was no temporizing the anti-working-class, anti-democratic nature of American policy, or the "compromises" of the American liberals.

Three picket lines—and three cases in point on American imperialism.

THE AIM OF THE YSL

The Young Socialist League is a democratic socialist organization striving to aid in the basic transformation of this society into one where the means of production and distribution shall be collectively owned and democratically managed. The YSL attempts to make the young workers and students, who form its arena of activity, conscious of the need for organization directed against capitalism and Stalinism.

The YSL rejects the concept that state ownership without democratic controls represents socialism; or that socialism can be achieved without political democracy, or through undemocratic means, or is short in any way other than the conscious active participation of the people themselves in the building of the new social order. The YSL orients toward the working class, as the class which is capable of leading society to the establishment of socialism.

—From the Constitution of the YSL

Spanish Strikes — —

(Continued from page 11)

The second question is: How badly have the strikes shaken the regime?

After all, one of the very few items published in the regime's press about the strikes dealt with sanctions to be used against striking workers. Now it appears that (a) in at least one case the workers returned to work after their demand that the arrested workers be released was presumably accepted, and (b) the authorities are negotiating with some representatives of the strikers.

That is to say, *de-facto* they recognize and negotiate with a second Spain. This, in an authoritarian regime is hardly the mark of strength.

In the United States, however, the Franco regime is as firm as ever.

Item: On April 14, Governor Harriman and Mayor Wagner of New York received the Spanish Foreign Minister Don Alberto Artajo at an official reception.

Norman Thomas, chairman of the Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims, sent a wire of protest:

"Must protest your welcoming Franco's foreign minister while Spanish workers risk their lives by striking. We agree with George Meany that American labor must oppose dictatorship in any form whether falangist or Communist and with his support of Spanish workers now striking against starvation wages. Your greeting Franco's emissary is a blow against these workers." The wire was also signed by Carl Rachlin, acting director of the Workers' Defense League.

A picket line was organized by the groups participating in the committee near Gracie Mansion where the reception took place. The New York Young Socialist League participated.

Item: On the same week-end the New York Herald Tribune put out a special sup-

plement on Spain. The supplement could have been written by the Spanish foreign office.

Nowhere in the supplement was there a mention of the fact that Spain was less than a perfect democracy. Prominently featured on the front page was an auto-graphed picture of Franco and an extremely friendly interview with him.

The opening paragraph read: "Spain is making further headway in its recovery from a devastating civil war and the neglect of previous governments, but still must produce more in order to become an even stronger partner in the free world, Gen. Francisco Franco said in an interview here."

Franco is described as "now sixty-three and a much mellowed veteran of a long and bitter fight against communism..."

This particular dictatorship is very much the business of Americans. Any doubt on that score can be removed by the Tribune supplement. Long articles about American bases in Spain, American aid to Spain, and closer U. S.-Spain ties underline the fact that the prop under this dictatorship is a U. S. responsibility.

If Spanish workers risk their lives fighting against Franco's fascism, is it too much to ask that American liberals—so loud and brave in their denunciations of Stalinist dictatorship—should raise their voices against any aid to Franco and should attack the "liberal" politicians, Harriman and Wagner, whom they have backed?

We can imagine the howl of indignation that would rise from the ADA, the Liberal Party, the Committee for Cultural Freedom, et. al, if Harriman and Wagner held a friendly reception in honor of an emissary of the Russian dictatorship. Why are they silent now?

ONE WEEK

has already gone by since the YSL challenged the Labor Youth League to debate "The Meaning of the 20th Party Congress." No reply yet. . . .

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- (2) April 26—
What's Wrong with Capitalism?
- (3) May 10—
Experiments in Socialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries.
- (4) May 17—
Capitalist Imperialism—Yesterday and Today.

For information on place and other details, write:

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