

LABOR ACTION

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Purge Octopus Now Reaches Out For ADA and SP

By MARY BELL

What was foreseen happened last week when Guy Gabrielson, chairman of the Republican National Committee, attacked "socialists" as having "no more place in the official family of the president of the U.S. than have Communists in govern-

ment," in a Lincoln, Neb., speech, and later in Omaha when he characterized Americans for Democratic Action as "a hybrid, nefarious, political organization" of "New Dealers, Fair Dealers, radicals, Socialists and just plain bureaucrats who would like to get back on the payroll."

It was inevitable that the use of undemocratic and totalitarian measures to oust the Stalinists, real agents of a totalitarian power, from political life and labor unions, should be followed by the use of similar measures against genuine radicals and liberals, some of whom participated in or blinked at the suppression of civil liberties in the fight against the Stalinists.

This totalitarian chill that is sweeping the country as part of the cold war does not emanate solely from the Republicans. Senator McCarthy may be putting on a sideshow but he is only burlesquing ideas straight out of the Democratic Party repertoire of

witchhunts, loyalty purges and security checks. The best policy the Republicans have found so far is "neo-tootism" on this also.

The New York Post on March 22 carried the story of a couple of ECA rejectees—ECA is an administration project set up by Congress, and administered by the very State Department now under Republican accusation for being a hotbed of "subversives." One rejectee's job application was turned down because, while he is a time-study expert and industrial engineer, in the '30s he belonged to the Proletarian Party, a tiny non-Stalinist group which believed Russia to be a workers' state. Another rejectee belonged to the Socialist Party in the '30s and once helped the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, started as a united front of socialists, communists and liberals but later taken over by the communists and listed as a communist organization on the attorney general's infamous list.

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Cold-War 'Prosperity': Army of Unemployed Is Near 5 Million

By SUSAN GREEN

It would be hard indeed to convince almost five million workers and their dependents that America today is experiencing great prosperity, for the simple reason that they haven't any prosperity at all—they haven't any jobs.

In February, 1950, the unemployed numbered nearly 4,700,000, almost 1,500,000 above the number a year before. By June-July of this year the five million mark is expected to be reached and even exceeded. This does not include the several million additional workers on part time who want full-time jobs.

Not counting part-time workers, the unemployed now stand at 7 per cent of the total working force—that is, for the whole country. In many communities the percentage runs much higher. There are 40 areas where 12 per cent of the working force is jobless and in distress areas the percentage is from 20 to 27, the textile center of Lawrence, Mass., being in the last category.

The misery is very real and widespread. State unemployment insurance covers only about 2,500,000 of the jobless, averaging a mere pittance of \$21.70 a week. But these form the aristocracy of the unemployed. The rest are not covered at all by unemployment insurance. Of course, those under coverage face the grim time limit when they will be cut off from all benefits. In some localities a little relief work is handed out. Fed-

eral authorities distribute food surpluses here and there, but presumably, as in the case of the unemployed migrant farm laborers of California, "not in quantities to encourage reliance on them." Certainly not in quantities to prevent the several scores of deaths from starvation reported in the press.

Among the miserable must be listed the young people from schools and colleges entering the labor market at the end of the June, 1950, term. What a prospect for them! In 1949 there were some 700,000 fewer jobs than in 1947 and some 700,000 new workers added to the labor force, competing for

the remaining jobs. This 1949 discrepancy of nearly 1,500,000 will be exceeded in 1950. College faculty advisers are warning students to "lower their sights" and grab any opportunity that comes along, be it for a clerk or a machine operator. What price education!

A number of circumstances combine to produce the alarming rise in unemployment.

The CIO's Economic Outlook points out in its last issue that the consuming power of the masses is being curtailed. The per capita income for the last quarter of 1949 was below the same period of 1948, down \$31. The relative shares of the lower and middle-income groups in the national income have declined, while those of the higher-bracket business groups rose. Farm income and farmer purchasing power dropped 15 per cent in 1949 and are expected to go down more in 1950. The demand for goods is limited by the limited purchasing power, and the demand for workers to produce goods is likewise limited.

Recovery of the European countries, and their projection of goods into the world market, has made American products less sought after—and has made "caution" the watchword of the enterprising American businessman. He is trimming his sails—and the jobs he has to offer.

Furthermore there is quite some technological unemployment due to the quantity of labor-saving

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100 Children

United Press dispatch in El Paso (Texas) Times, March 9:

"PHOENIX—Emergency food and medical supplies were ordered rushed Wednesday to a farm labor camp near here where almost 100 children were reported starving.

"Juvenile Court Judge Thomas J. Croaff, who issued the order, said it was 'the worst case of mass destitution I have ever seen.' "Juvenile Officer John E. Thompson reported one family with six children, ranging in age from 17 months to 11 years, have been without food for 10 days. Thompson said, 'From what we have seen so far, there are almost 100 children in a starvation condition.'"

U.S. Imposed New Greek Regime

By CHRIS SIKOKIS

Intervention by the United States last week in the election results of Greece has brought Sophocles Venizelos to power as premier of that country. Venizelos, up to that moment, had agreed to form a coalition between his Liberal Party and two other democratic parties. But when the United States authorities decided otherwise, he dropped his coalition partners and became the premier.

Now to get support for his government he must rely mainly on the votes of the royalist and out-and-out fascist deputies in the parliament. Fifteen deputies of his own party have announced that they will vote against the Venizelos government.

For a clearer explanation of this

confused and complicated picture it is necessary to go back to the elections of three weeks ago. The Populist (royalist) government suffered a terrific setback, receiving only 18 per cent of the total vote. It was the majority party up to election time, having obtained 55 per cent of the vote in the previous election. It was the party that had worked hand in glove with the United States and was responsible for all the policies in Greece since the 1946 elections.

Three center parties (National Progressive Union, Liberal Party, Social-Democratic Party) received more than twice as many votes as the Populist Party this time. It was these three parties that agreed to form a coalition government.

Of the three, the Liberal Party

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Prosperity: 5 Million Jobless --

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machinery installed in recent years. For instance, 18 per cent more cars are turned out in the auto industry with 3 per cent fewer workers. Another instance: the Celanese Corporation obtains the same amount of production with 5,500 workers as formerly with 10,000.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Then, as happens cyclically, the capitalists, while asking the workers to have unwavering confidence in their system, themselves show a lack of confidence by cutting their investment in plant and equipment. This is now evident.

Private investment, of which two-thirds is the part put into the purchase of plant, equipment and inventory for industry, fell 20 per cent from 1948 to 1949. In 1950 it is expected to drop another 13 to 16 per cent according to various estimates. A greater part of the tremendous profits the corporations are grabbing is left in "idle cash" instead of being put to use in industrial expansion. Thus the capitalist class sets in motion a chain reaction of unemployment.

In this context of cause and effect, effect and cause, many a small businessman folds up and with him the jobs he had offered to his workers.

While nearly everybody admits the existence of the above enumerated circumstances, all being well supported by reliable statistics, nobody expects a real break in the economy. The peacetime war budget of the government is still the greatest prop to the economy. The CIO considers further that the even inadequate social and economic legislation, the farm support program, the credit policy of the Federal Reserve, all are elements of support to the economy. But still there is the alarming growth of that army of unemployed.

The U.S. News & World Report opines that "Unemployment above

five million is accepted as a political problem. It is to be necessary by 1951 to do something politically about unemployment. Only idea now in the incubating stage is to expand public works. That costs money."

The implication here is clear—it's going to be quite a job to get the government to open its purse strings.

President Truman, even in his Florida retreat, has heard about the unemployment problem. It is rumored that he expects to send a message to Congress asking for an increase in unemployment insurance pay and a lengthening of the time of coverage—both ur-

gently needed. This, be it realized, is a very controversial subject in Congress.

The AFL, "noting with alarm" the growing numbers of jobless, seems to have taken the unique position—unique for a labor organization—of not bothering the federal government at all. It has come out with the suggestion for local full-employment committees to canvass communities for all employment possibilities. Admittedly such activity may scare up a few jobs, but is this a substitute for an over-all program?

The CIO presents a more comprehensive program. It wants lower prices; wage increases ("wherever possible" is the way the CIO puts it); a farm program beneficial to both farmers and consumers; improved social-security laws; a revised tax system to relieve lower income families; the funneling back of large profits into investment, if not in plant and equipment, then in housing.

This is a fairly good program, and it is hoped that the CIO will press for its acceptance with vigor. In passing, it must be stated that such a program would have an infinitely better chance of fulfillment through an independent labor party than it can have through the Democratic and Republican "friends of labor."

There are, however, a few more items that should be added to the CIO program. The demand for a guaranteed annual wage is firmly based on the incontrovertible fact that workers and their families must eat and pay rent all the year around. The demand for a shorter work week grows from the conviction that labor-saving machinery must lessen labor and not the number of laborers. And, in accordance with the principle that human life is more important than private property, workers should have the right themselves to operate plants that their capitalist owners can't or won't operate.

Finally, it is timely to repeat the socialist teaching that the gnawing insecurity of unemployment will be finally conquered only with the creation by the people of a system of production to serve their needs, in the place of capitalist production for profits—and what profits!

Greek Government --

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had participated in the recent regime in Greece. Its leaders had also worked with the United States government as closely as had the royalists. As a matter of fact, they were the front men in the Greek government, permitting the U.S. to claim that "democrats" were in power in Greece.

NEW CENTER PARTY RISES

But among the center parties that received the most votes in this election was a new group, the National Progressive Union. This is what has surprised and shocked the old-line politicians, the correspondents of the N. Y. Times, and the U.S. intelligence agents.

The National Progressive Union is led by General Plastiras. His party's program called for support of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine and for friendship with Washington and London. All the parties had that in their programs. But Plastiras had a few other points and that it why the people voted for his party.

The NPU called for improved relations with Yugoslavia and Greece's other neighbors. It called for amnesty of all prisoners taken in the civil war who are now on the notorious prison islands. It also called for a smaller army and asked that the policy of insulting Russia at every turn be stopped.

To the people this meant a chance for peace, the return of many of the soldiers and prisoners to their homes, and the end of the danger of Greece becoming an international battlefield for the big powers.

Plastiras' record in 1923—as a colonel he headed the provisional government which drove King Constantine into exile for dragging Greece into war against Turkey—also served him in good stead in this election. The people saw in Plastiras a chance to get rid of the present regime, as he had done in the past. This is the reason for the overnight growth of his movement.

SOLDIER VOTE RIGGED

All the other parties had been screaming that a big vote for Plastiras would mean an end to Marshall aid and the Truman Doctrine; that many in the Plastiras party were Communists (the social-democratic New Leader in this country raised the same howl

in its lead article); that Plastiras would reopen the "royalty" question and bring civil war to Greece.

That this propaganda had some effect on some people who are tired of internal strife and frightened of enslavement by Russia, there is no doubt. Many of these people voted for the other center parties, which also claim to be democratic, and some voted for the Populist Party, which represents alliance with the Western powers.

The rural area vote went mainly to the royalists. Here it was difficult to reach the people who were bombarded for the past four years with the most atrocious propaganda, in areas where no one dares breathe a word against the king, where the fascist gang's rule still dominates.

The soldier vote came in long after the other results had been announced. It was here (and in the rural areas) that the royalists found strength. Every observer claims that this vote was rigged and it is difficult to believe otherwise. There is no war on, and to believe that soldiers, no matter how patriotic, will vote for parties that will keep them in uniform indefinitely—this is to forget everything that man knows about man.

SOCIALIST FRONT GAINS

In addition to the rise of the Plastiras movement, the second significant development in this election was the big vote obtained by the Democratic Front. This group captured the vote in the big cities, the votes of the trade-unionists and the socialists. The Democratic Front, led by John Sofianopoulos and Alexander Svolos, is a peculiar conglomeration of honest people who consider themselves socialists, some revolutionary socialists and many Stalinist fellow-travelers.

The Democratic Front program put special emphasis on working-class rights, amnesty for the prisoners, and peace. The advanced workers who voted considered it the only party worth voting for. To these workers the Plastiras program was nothing more than just a few radical promises with many contradictions and no hope for fulfillment.

There were many other socialist and working-class parties in the election, but the Democratic Front was the only one with peo-

ple who are known throughout the country as socialists and resistance leaders during the last war. The Democratic Front would have obtained more votes, votes that obviously went to Plastiras, but some of its leaders have yet to announce their position on the recent civil war.

The Communist Party, outlawed in Greece, informed its sympathizers through the "Free Greece Radio" (somewhere in the Balkans) to vote for the candidates of the Democratic Front—but NOT to vote for the leaders of the Democratic Front who are running as candidates.

When the elections were over, more than one and a half million votes had been cast. More than two-thirds of these votes had been cast for democratic parties. This is significant when one considers that the Populist (royalist) Party had received 55 per cent of all the votes in the 1946 elections.

The fact that the strength of the Populist Party has now been reduced to 18 per cent (and it would be much lower in an honest count) is even more significant when one considers that all the other reactionary and fascist parties were almost wiped away completely.

U.S. CRACKS WHIP

As soon as the elections were over the democratic parties of the

center issued a statement that they would form a coalition and name Plastiras, the head of the largest party, as premier. The leaders of the three parties, Plastiras, Venizelos and Papandreu, all signed the agreement. The Democratic Front, running a close fifth in the election, was not invited to participate.

But there was a hitch: the United States and Great Britain did not want Plastiras. Not that they have any big fears about Plastiras, but he and his party have some ideas about Greece handling her own affairs, and he may not always accept the advice of the U.S.

So the U.S. convinced Venizelos to break with the coalition and line with the royalists. Venizelos, who retains the leadership of the Liberal Party only because of his father's famous name, is simply a bridge-playing egotist who will jump through the hoop whenever the State Department of the U.S. wants him to.

The people of Greece clearly voted to demand a government free of entanglements, free from the death-grip of the royalist party. Now, the U.S. insists on shackling them again with a right-wing combination that is in no way different from the old one which was repudiated in the election.

Purge Reaches Out --

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The ECA limits employment in the Marshall Plan administration to persons loyal to the United States and its form of government who are not and never have been members of "any organization advocating contrary views."

IRONY FOR ADA

When Gabrielson avowed that "Socialism is just the first step toward Communism," and that "Socialists follow the lead of the British Labor Party in the same way that Communists follow a party line laid down in Moscow," we are certain that he was not concerned with any niceties about the varying stages in the transformation of society in accordance with Marxian theory. He was merely lumping socialists with the totalitarian agents of Stalinist society as the basis for their riddance from government. He was also lumping in the same bag the liberals who stand for the "best" in capitalism and are quite opposed to socialism. By the rule of totalitarian logic, the whole kit and caboodle is "guilty by association."

It is true that the socialists (even those of Norman Thomas' Socialist Party) and liberals are critics, mild or severe, of the capitalist system. But it is also distressingly true that the particular brand of socialists and liberals that he is attacking, that is, members of ADA, belong to an organization that helped into power the administration that launched the

purge against "subversives," and from whom the Republicans are only taking cues. Senators Humphrey of Minnesota and Myers of Pennsylvania are so-called Democrats. The totalitarian mind cannot stand the small degrees of difference. It would reduce political life to dead gray uniformity—which would necessitate a police state to keep opinions alike and loyal only to the existing form of government.

The terrible irony of the situation is that most of the ex-socialists and liberals gravitated to the Democratic Party out of hatred of Stalinism and disillusionment with socialism, which they too identified with the Stalinist perversion. The latter is a major political belief which many of them regrettably share with Senator McCarthy and the attorney general.

The degeneration of Russian society and the degeneration of capitalist society gives rise to new political types: the totalitarian collectivists of the Stalinist variety on the one hand, and the totalitarian liberals on the other. The credo of the latter has been that Stalinism is so vile that any means is legitimate to combat it, even undemocratic measures. In concrete political life, this has meant the flight of certain types of socialists, liberals and labor leaders to the camp of capitalism, in most cases, to the Democratic Party, and the support of the administration that drew up the original "subversive" list, which is a government-by-decree tech-

nique that is completely extralegal.

CHICKENS HOME TO ROOST

Within the labor unions, this trend has meant the ousting of the Stalinists by bureaucratic and other undemocratic practices. The labor bureaucracy is strewn with the bleached bones of ex-socialists, and ex-radicals of all kinds who have pursued this policy.

These people are the real Machiavellians, not the Marxian socialists who have always tried to relate the means to the goal, and understand that democratic ends require democratic means to attain them. The chickens are coming home to roost for the reformists, the compromisers, the advocates of half-measures, the post-powers of socialism. One of the main reasons for the march of reaction in this country is the complete gutlessness of labor leaders, liberals and radicals of all stripes on the matter of civil liberties.

Will they wake up now that the flood threatens to engulf them? We fervently hope so. The tide can be stemmed. The forces exist. The ranks of labor and the people are not corrupted. They can be aroused. All they need is courageous leadership, and they will call a halt to the witchhunt.

A commission of inquiry, such as LABOR ACTION has suggested, into the illegal methods of the FBI, the attorney general's list—a commission which would give open hearings to the victims, which would seek legal redress—could be a beginning.

Prof. Meyer Schapiro

Art Department, Columbia University, on

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