

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

DECEMBER 24, 1951

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The Price-Index Mystery

The Department of Labor's index of prices (and the cost of living) is well known especially because it is the official basis for escalator-clause provisions in union contracts. It is often referred to as if it were a reliable measure of what is happening to real wages—especially when the employers or government officials are arguing against wage increases.

The trade-union movement has often pointed out that it cannot be trusted. Here is another interesting proof, contributed by the United Packinghouse Workers (CIO).

The Department of Labor's index is supposed to be an average for 34 large cities. It is not so well known that there is another government agency which also computes the price level. This is the Department of Agriculture, which issues a monthly index of prices paid by farmers.

Comparison of the two for the period from 1939 to September 1951 leads to a mystery. The Department of Labor figures show that prices for city consumers went up 87.6 per cent. The Department of Agriculture figures states that prices for farmers went up by 121.5 per cent!

There is no earthly way of accounting for this wide spread by the difference between consumers' prices on the farms and in the cities.

Say the Packinghouse Workers: "We think the explanation is this: The Department of Agriculture does a more accurate and realistic job in measuring price changes of this kind than the Department of Labor. We are convinced that actually consumer prices for city folks have gone up over 121 per cent—at least—just as they have for farmers."

**Nations in Western Bloc
Balk at Washington's Pressures—**

U.S. Control in UN Runs into Snags

By GORDON HASKELL

The sessions of the United Nations, if nothing else, constitute a good sounding-board for the propaganda efforts of the various nations; and to the peoples of the world, who look to it anxiously for signs of peace or war, it also furnishes a fair testing-ground of the moods of the various governments and of the importance which they ascribe to the issues which are presented before this body.

In the early sessions of the UN Vishinsky, the chief Stalinist delegate, charged that the United States commanded a "mechanical majority" of the nations. This session has demonstrated that on many questions the U. S. delegation cannot get a majority at all as long as it does not go in for serious arm-twisting.

The Arab states, Israel, the governments of Southeast Asia, the Scandinavian countries, and even the Latin Americans often refuse to vote on the U. S. side. On occasion they vote with the Stalinist bloc, abstain, or seek to put forward compromise proposals against those of both the Russians and the Americans. Even Britain and the Commonwealth countries cannot be counted on to go down the line at all times, and the same is true of the rest of the governments closely associated

with the United States in the cold war.

Of course, when the United States delegation decides that a particular issue is crucial to American interests and applies full pressure which it has at its command, it has been able to muster a majority every time, or at least almost every time. There are few nations outside the solid Stalinist bloc who are willing to risk the economic and political sanctions which the American government is able to apply.

LESSON ON ARM-TWISTING

And this government has not hesitated to threaten the application of such sanctions when it felt that the vote of this or that delegation was vital to passing some measure which it considered a "must." The outstanding example of this was the UN vote declaring China an aggressor.

Nevertheless, there have been signs of independence on the part of many governments, at least on the less vital issues.

One reason for this lies, no doubt, in the realization by the Americans that when they apply the full pressure they may get the necessary votes, but at the same time they also incur the deep resentment not only of the governments involved but of many others. This lesson has been learned.

(Turn to last page)

Liberal Party Heads Hint Uneasiness about Halley

By PETER WHITNEY

NEW YORK, Dec. 11—Will he love us and leave us?

This was plainly the question posed by Liberal Party Chairman, Adolf A. Berle, at the victory luncheon in celebration of Rudolph Halley's election as the Liberal Party candidate for president of the City Council. Over 1500 Liberal Party supporters and activists in attendance at the affair, held on December 8 at the Hotel Commodore, were properly jubilant at the terrific victory of the Liberal Party, but their joy was somewhat tempered by the sober prospect of how Halley might behave in the future.

There was a curiously gloomy note running throughout the gathering and emphasized to different degrees by the speakers. It cast a chill and dampened the enthusiasm of the celebrants to be constantly reminded that, after all, we don't actually know if Halley is really our man or not. A big question mark hovers over Halley in that regard, and the Liberal Party leadership is not only acutely aware of it but gave voice to it. The ranks can't say they haven't been warned.

At the same time the leadership must justify its policy of se-

lecting Halley as the party's candidate rather than an authentic and outstanding Liberal Party leader, about whom there could be no such doubt as to his platform, program, or future political alliances. Given their failure to run such a candidate, the Liberal Party leadership found it necessary to begin preparing their membership for another hit-and-run candidate scarcely a month after his election.

Chairman Berle, who has helped to father every deal between the Liberals and the Republicans or Democrats, announced that he had "personally resolved that the Liberal Party will no longer be pushed into support of any candidate who fronts for someone else." He was tired of "making careers for candidates who didn't even bother to say 'thank you afterward.'" Such statements were warmly applauded by the audience, who interpreted this liberalism to mean an end to deals with other parties.

(Turn to last page)

their acute realization that the membership wants a bolder line from them.

SELF-CONFIDENT

The party membership is still smarting from the blows inflicted on them by those who refused to burn their political bridges behind them. The pattern has repeated itself *ad nauseam*: elect the candidate and then he spurns the party. After all, there are a limited number of cheeks that the Liberal Party can turn.

The Liberals are particularly incensed about Roosevelt Jr., who was elected congressman by their singlehanded efforts over the opposition of the Democratic machine in New York, and who has since given them an icy-cold shoulder. To a lesser degree, the pattern holds for other victorious candidates, and it has raised considerable questioning inside the party.

The speeches made at the Halley celebration meeting reflected the growing sentiment inside the ranks of the membership for independent candidates, and the more militant and aggressive tone of the leadership echoed the mood within the ranks. They revealed the growing self-confidence of the party leadership as a result of the victory, and

Corruption: the Social Climate

IS CORRUPTION AN OVERHEAD COST OF DEMOCRACY?

Revelations of corruption in government roll merrily on as it continues to be the major current political issue of the day. The latest move is the administration's choice of Judge Thomas F. Murphy to head its clean-up squad of graft in government. New York has moved into the spots again with the unleashing of 65 special agents to investigate thousands of alleged tax frauds in the city.

The flames of scandal crackle and roar round President Truman's head, having singed his assistant attorney general and his attorney general, his cabinet members and his Supreme Court appointee, his resigned Democratic National Committee chairman and the latter's replacement. All, all stand revealed as tainted by the fast buck.

The names of the Internal Revenue chief counsel and General Services administrator are linked with fraud through the allegations of a former Capone lawyer ("Alphonse Capone was one of the most honorable men I ever met").

Editorialists ring the changes on the theme of corruption in government. "What has happened to

our American way of life? . . . American ethics and morality are in a slump . . . we need honesty in government" . . . etc., etc., etc.

Whatever the public protestations of outrage, disgust and repudiation, there is a general cynicism of many of the antics and sideshow techniques employed. The probes so quickly and frequently become the probed, the investigators become the investigated, it's a game of ring-around-the-rosy.

Much of the furor is motivated by the Republican outs who've been thirsting for the presidency for twenty years. And there is no question but that Truman's belated moves to clean house are a result of cumulative pressures and an eye to the 1952 elections.

The New York Times, in its editorial of last Sunday takes the "bold" view that the government can no longer afford even "honest graft," in its own expression. It quotes a long-dead Tammany leader—"I seen my opportunities and I took 'em"—to sum up "honest graft." Truman, the Times chides, "didn't do all he might have done to discourage it." Aside from domestic implications, the Times is fearful of the relations of the United States abroad, inasmuch as it has assumed the lead-

(Turn to last page)

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at the

WOMEN'S TRADE

UNION LEAGUE

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(near 34th Street)

Catholic Attack on UAW Lets a Cat out of Bag

By WALTER JASON
DETROIT, Dec. 16—For the fourth time within a year the leadership of the United Auto Workers (CIO) has been attacked publicly by an important spokesman in Catholic circles.

Unlike previous "incidents," which centered around charges that the UAW had too much "socialism" in its publications or similar nonsense, this attack, by Father Coogan, head of the Department of Sociology of the University of Detroit, contained other and more significant criticisms.

Coogan used the defeat of the UAW-CIO in the recent Burroughs Adding Machine Company election as the event on which to hang his hat. He chided the Michigan Catholic for suggesting that maybe the Burroughs workers made a mistake in not voting for the UAW-CIO, even if Burroughs represents paternalism of management on its cleverest level.

BIT OF A SHOCK

In explaining why the workers at Burroughs made a wise choice, Fr. Coogan lists his complaints against the UAW-CIO, and these are really significant:

"The UAW is a giant union of all races and tribes under heaven, with all degrees of education and social-mindedness. With them the only thing constant is change." Coming from a man professing to believe in the brotherhood of man, this statement was a bit of a shock to Catholic unionists.

Fr. Coogan also says: "Even sympathetic criticism of union management from so competent a source as ACTU [Association of Catholic Trade Unions] has recently been bitterly resented, as amateurish economic torism."

But the punch line is the following sentence: "And it is notorious that even the admonitions of clergymen sympathetic to labor have had a very poor market among union leaders."

If only the CIO convention and the UAW-CIO leadership would drop its objections to Franco Spain as a totalitarian regime!

The publication of Coogan's views in the Detroit Free Press letter-to-the-editor column created a bit of a stir in UAW circles. His views were originally published in the Catholic magazine America.

IT'S AN ADMISSION

Naturally Fr. Coogan was guilty of an indiscretion, and his remarks are quite embarrassing to groups like ACTU. For the Catholic Church as an organization professes NOT to interfere with unions. The wing of the Catholic hierarchy in Michigan represented by people around Bishop Haas claims only to aid the local union movement, never to try to dictate to it.

Coogan's statement is an open admission that the clergy has tried to dictate to the union leaders... without too much success, it seems.

Unquestionably, behind this public attack is the grave difference of opinion between the UAW-CIO leaders and the Catholic hierarchy on the matter of the overseas work and policies of the CIO. Victor Reuther, as CIO representative in Europe, has made no bones about the fact that only the Social-Democracy offers any hope of building a working-class opposition to Stalinism. The reactionary role of the clerical parties and ministers in fighting Stalinism, their impos-

tion to rally masses, is too well-known among union leaders to make any other policy possible for the CIO. But this is precisely what the Catholic hierarchy objects to. If only the CIO could be lined up behind the Adenauers instead of the Schumachers—what a diplomatic victory for the Vatican!

Coogan's criticism doesn't make sense from any angle except that of the international scene. For certainly in America the UAW-CIO leaders have proven themselves in recent times to be very responsible citizens who are conscious of their patriotic duties. The UAW leadership has called off three strikes, for example.

And only this past week it showed that no union in America held its contracts more sacred than the UAW-CIO.

When the Ford Company in nearby Windsor fired 26 union militants, including 9 chief stewards and four committeemen, the whole plant was shut down and the local union prepared for a long-overdue showdown with management.

However, Walter P. Reuther and Emil Mazey announced that the UAW would not tolerate an unauthorized strike, and recommended strongly that the local union take the matter up through grievance procedure. The discharges are going to be settled by an arbitrator! Since the Ford management announced that they fired the men under an umpire's ruling relating to the responsibilities of union officials to prevent walkouts, the results of the arbitration hardly look promising!

It doesn't seem likely that Father Coogan finds too much "militancy" as the basis of his criticisms.

And more recently another significant incident took place in Boston. ILA members on Boston piers refused to cross a picket line (only two pickets!) of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association (CIO) against the Isthmian Lines freighter, Steel Flyer. The MEBA was protesting against the cancellation of its contracts by the Isthmian lines and the transfer of its fleet to a bureaucratic paper union set up by the AFL Seafarers International Union, a union which began as an office and a paid official whose exclusive task was to raid the MEBA.

ILA members, affiliated to the AFL, refused to cross the picket line of a legitimate CIO union. Two of these longshoremen were kidnapped from their homes by thugs at 2 a.m. one morning and

ment on demands is reached with the companies. But it will not have the right to call off the strike for anything short of this.

UNION STRATEGY

In other words, if the Truman administration comes forward with new proposals for "discussions" and "investigations" these interesting suggestions will have to come before the convention which alone will have the right to act upon them, after the strike is already in force.

The Murray officialdom of the Steel Workers Union has itself doubtless worked out this strategy without being forced or pressed by any rank-and-file movement from below. At least that is how it appears. The union leadership seems, therefore, to have deliberately decided for a strike, even if only a brief one, and to have tied its own hands by momentarily surrendering the power to postpone it.

At this juncture, only the Truman administration could or would be concerned with dodging the issues posed in the steel negotiations by shunting them into the endless process of investigation. The steel companies have already made their position clear and await the next move. The action of the union in setting a strike date and at the same time taking precautions against a premature cancellation of the strike call is not only an answer to the challenge of the steel monopolies but also a rebuke to Truman and a criticism in advance of administration failure to take a strong stand on behalf of the union. Thus, the Steel Workers Union expresses its own lack of confidence in the Democratic Party regime it helped elect.

CHOICES FOR TRUMAN

Naturally, the union "deplores" the necessity of striking and reiterates its desire for increased and sustained steel production for

LABOR SCOPE

THE POTENTIAL IN AFL LONGSHOREMEN

The affairs of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) are not as well known to the labor public as are the internal workings of the more democratic unions (like the United Automobile Workers Union). We cannot boast of any "exclusive" inside information. But a few incidents of recent months, some widely publicized and some hardly reported at all, would indicate that the membership of this union, if freed of its bureaucratic top officialdom and given a real chance to express itself, could easily take its place in the very forefront of the American labor movement.

These are the actions of union-conscious dock workers who are forced to act without and against their own leadership. If the Ryan regime topples and a leadership more responsive to the ranks takes its place, the longshoremen will show what a reoriented ILA can do.

IN BOSTON

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Quo Vadis On New Year's Eve??

USHER

1952

IN

PERSONALLY!

at the New York ISL's
NEW YEAR'S
EVE
Celebration
and
Dance

at the
WOMEN'S TRADE
UNION LEAGUE
247 Lexington Ave.
(near 34th Street)

Hindsight on Collier's War

In a "Postscript to Collier's World War III," the Nation presents replies from some of the contributors to that notorious issue on the criticisms leveled against it.

Of those who responded, only Walter Reuther in any way clearly dissociates himself from the project. In hindsight. (No reply from Koestler.) The uneasiness of the others, some of them touted as liberals, is reflected in the queasy defensiveness or ambiguity of their replies, but that is all.

Reuther explains that he was "reluctant at first to do the article and raised specific questions as to the tone and effect of the whole issue" but was satisfied by Collier's editor and the précis of the editorial which he saw (which disclaimed any notion of preventive war). He admits, however, that "the issue did not do what I expected it to, and I am forced to agree with many of the criticisms brought against it..."

Robert E. Sherwood, who in any case bears the major responsibility for the slant of the issue (he wrote the main piece), attempts to justify himself by the fact that in 1935 he wrote the play "Idiot's Delight" which also tried to call attention to the "dreadful implications" of war. A comparison between "Idiot's Delight" and Collier's special issue would make an instructive commentary—on Robert E. Sherwood.

Stuart Chase, who restored capitalism in post-war Russia for Collier's, snidely opines that

"it is too early to tell" whether the issue had the effect hoped for because "Collier's was not talking to the intellectuals or the liberals, but to the people." In view of the nature of the criticisms, the relevance of the distinction remains somewhat mysterious.

At the same time, the Nation prints an anti-Collier's protest by four noted British writers, on behalf of 400 others, A. E. Coppard, Naomi Mitchison, Alex Comfort, John Cousins. What they say of its international effect has been seconded by many other reports:

"If you [Collier's] aimed to produce an effect, you have certainly done it. We cannot recall any previous publication which has caused such widespread alarm and indignation. . . . If that has been the effect in this country, and we can assure you that it has been, what do you imagine has been the effect in Russia, where you have already been widely quoted? If your idea was to separate the Russian people from the Communist government, it is unfortunate that you should have chosen as your weapon a mixture of arrogance and threat which seems to confirm practically every allegation of warmongering that the Communists have made against America and which can only generate a state of indignation in every Russian, whatever his private view of the Kremlin."

Moscow's Exploitation of Poland Brings on Food Crisis for Regime

By A. RUDZIENSKI

Following his return from Moscow, the economic dictator of Poland, Minc, spoke in an "activists' meeting" of the Stalinist party and delivered all of his instructions to the Kremlin. Russia's war policy requires an accelerated tempo in the rearmament of Poland because it is the most important satellite country in the Russian colonial zone from both the political and industrial angle.

Therefore the Kremlin has ordered a faster tempo in Polish heavy industry, especially in steel, iron, copper, auto, etc.

In the third quarter of the year, according to Minc, the plan for heavy industry was fulfilled only by 95 per cent (in the second quarter it was 102 per cent); in the enterprises under the Commerce Ministry, the plan was fulfilled only by 75 per cent (93 per cent in the second quarter). Light industry fulfilled 95 per cent, as against 105 per cent in the second quarter.

The rate of investment has surpassed the productive capacity of the country and has provoked mass passive resistance. The situation is much worse in agriculture because of failure in the grain and potato crop and in the production of meat. This is probably the first time in the economic history of the country that Poland has suffered a food crisis on a big scale, and this is so because of Russia's colonial policy and war policy.

KREMLIN'S REMEDY

The Stalinist bureaucracy is talking about the disproportion between the "socialist" industry and private agriculture, and points to "collectivization" as the remedy. It blames the "sabotage of the kulaks" for the crisis in the food supply and decrees new norms for the peasants in grain and potatoes. But the peasants know very well that the bureaucracy is their enemy and they let production decline in spite of all the pressure. The wave of passive resistance extends all over the country. The food crisis is so serious that the regime was obliged to import 100 million tons of potatoes from East Germany.

The only remedy which the bureaucracy knows is to tighten the screw with greater police pressure and to issue new draconic decrees against the workers and peasants and the political opposition. Military tribunals hand out death sentences against the "enemies of the people."

In fact, however, the cause of the present crisis is Russia's economic policy for war preparation and rearmament, and the consequent speeded-up tempo of capital accumulation and heavy industry, which in turn provokes the crisis in consumption, in light industry and in agriculture.

The Russian pressure on the Polish bureaucracy is the underlying cause of schisms and internal struggles and it is behind the first "Polish purges." Gomulka, the former general secretary of the government party and ex-"leader of the popular democracy," is in prison awaiting his sentence. His gray eminence, Bierut, the "president" of Poland and former NKVD officer, gathers more and more power into his own hands

and is busily proving to Stalin that he is the Kremlin's best hangerman and most faithful watchdog. It looks as if he has forged ahead of Rokossovsky in Stalin's favors.

Peron's Election: A Victory for Bonapartism

By JUAN REY

SANTIAGO, December 12—The Argentine elections have confirmed the fact that the opposition is quite strong. The strongest opposition party, the Radical Party, got as much as 50 per cent of the total number of votes won by Peron.

It is true that all the opposition parties, except the Stalinists, voted for the Radical Party, but it is also true that Peron's totalitarian terror was such that to vote for the opposition required great courage and sacrifice. The size of the opposition's vote showed its strength and vigor in the political struggle against Peronist bonapartism.

The elections are also the proof that the totalitarian regime cannot be defeated at the ballot box and cannot be defeated by the democratic center. Peron will govern Argentina for another six years; and this is a blow not only to bourgeois democracy but also to the independent working-class movement.

But from the point of view of the international situation and of the international policy of the Latin American workers, Peron's triumph has also another political meaning.

The Latin American workers, in their majority, are under the

influence of the nationalist petty bourgeoisie, because the problems of the democratic revolution and national independence are not yet exhausted. While the wars of independence against the Spanish yoke gave the native elements liberation from Spain, it did not give them full economic and national independence, because the place of the Spaniards was taken by British and European imperialism, which was interested in keeping Latin America divided and Balkanized.

They operate with the demagogic social and national slogan of "Justicialismo" (equality and justice), national liberation and economic independence, their myth of a "national revolution," etc. Thus the Stalinists (as well as the Fourth International's "official Trotskyists") support Peronism and other dictators as the bearer of the "democratic revolution" and of the anti-imperialist struggle against Yankee domination.

NO AID TO PERON!
We here know that in our historical period the problems of the democratic revolution can be solved only by the socialist revolution, that is, a revolution under the leadership of the working class and with a proletarian program. We therefore oppose the line of Stalinist and Fourth Internationalist policy and oppose Peronism and Vargasism [Varga is the president of Brazil].

From this point of view—such are the tangled international threads in the situation—Peron's triumph is also a blow to American imperialism, a setback for its cynical "bad neighbor" policy in Latin America. But, since we cannot surrender our anti-Peronist position, we do not wish to exploit this international contradiction for the benefit of the Yankee monopolies. Our position is therefore complicated, but this complication corresponds to the entangled international situation.

But in the face of the cynical squeeze on Latin America by the U. S. monopoly capital for its own war aims, we must emphasize that our fight against Peronism is not from the standpoint of the U. S. bourgeoisie but from the standpoint of the workers' interests and socialism. Washington and Wall Street oppose Peron because he is to a degree an obstacle in their way, but they oppose Peron because they want to facilitate their imperialist penetration of Argentina and exploit the Argentine people.

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Churchill Has Second Thoughts on Tory Line

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Dec. 12—An extraordinary confirmation of Aneurin Bevan's prophecies which led to his resignation last year has come from no less an authority than Winston Churchill himself. In Parliament last week, he admitted that Britain would be 100 million pounds behind in rearmament this year—and this was the first of three years in which 4700 million pounds was being spent.

This was, of course, a serious blow to the right-wing Labor Party leaders, who hastened to deny that there had ever been any principled differences between Bevan and the rest of the party.

Further news here is of the visit of the West German Chancellor, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, to London, where he has had an audience with Churchill, Anthony Eden and the king. Adenauer is known to have assured the British leaders of the willingness of West Germany to contribute to a European army without forming a German national army.

But it is widely believed that his visit was to prepare the British this assurance, which is not itself new for him. There is the question of the size and strength of the German contribution and the payment of reparations. But perhaps the main significance of Adenauer's visit was to prepare the British people for greater cooperation with West Germany in the cold war—a "good will" visit, it's called.

The question of a European army has occupied much of the newspapers this week but not, unfortunately, their readers. About a year ago, Churchill, then in opposition, was tempted by his strong historic sense into proposing a European army and also European economic integration. Since that time, and now in power, he has thought better of going so far. Not the least consideration is the fact that the whole British economy is dependent upon export to the empire markets; for instance, Britain traded \$1 billion each way with Australia last year. But her main exports are manufactured goods, in which Europe would be able to undercut her in these markets. It would be quite suicidal for capitalist Britain to become economically integrated with Europe.

When the BBC finally got permission to broadcast this interview to Moscow, it was jammed every time.

Postscript on Algeria [see item in LABOR ACTION for Dec. 10]: From Paris it is reported that the French government has arrested 3000 Arabs gathered in honor of the Moslem delegations by the MTLD [Algerian independence movement] after the Ministry of the Interior had banned the meeting. The police said they just wanted to check their identity papers!

In the welter of the economic cross-currents besetting his regime, Churchill has bethought himself of this now, and has tried to save his conscience by stating that "we will march with the European army but we will not join it."

RUSSIAN JOKER

Meanwhile, another quarter-million veterans are being conscripted for a fortnight's service this summer, and another quarter-million men are being trained in regular military establishments. And Churchill has remarked soberly that the "establishment of American air bases in East Anglia might throw the brunt of the war on us if it came." Atlee denied that his government had agreed to bases for the delivery of atom bombs.

Leaving government affairs for the while, an amusing incident occurred with the visit of Mrs. Marshkina, deputy mayor of Stalingrad. The British Broadcasting Company asked her for an interview. This was finally granted after a delay of 16 days, with the questions having been submitted about her opinion of Britain and also some questions about Russia. The "British-Soviet Friendship Society" permitted the interview to take place on condition that it be not broadcast "overseas" (that is, to Russia).

In her broadcast recording her typewritten answers, she said that no women had to go to work for economic reasons in Russia, and that not only do women not have to do heavy work there, neither do men—it's all done by machines!

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These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a world-wide 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.

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YOU and SCIENCE

CIVIL DEFENSE THROUGH DISPERSAL

By CARL DARTON

Today as never before, developments in science and technology are imposed rapidly, with terrific impact, upon all aspects of living. As expressed in the jargon of the professional sociologists, "cultural lag" in this respect is quickly disappearing. This is no more evident than in the field of war and destruction, which, to put it mildly, has become the dominant "cultural" activity of our age.

Even here, however, the transfer is not immediate and any innovation in the technology of war requires a period of adjustment by potential opponents so that they may assess and more fully utilize the new techniques for both offense and defense. Today the "Bomb," meaning not only the utilization of atomic energy for strategic and tactical warfare but implying also the new "fantastic" radiological and biological weapons, calls for just such a period of adjustment and indecision as to the balance of power between imperialist nations. With the rapid advances in the effectiveness of such weapons any government would be rash indeed to prematurely precipitate a world war unless it felt it had the advantage over its opponent in their use.

We shall not concern ourselves here with the purely military preparation for destruction but rather, as socialists, consider mainly the social effects of modern warfare under the whip of technological change. Particularly interesting is civilian activity (since preparation for war today means not only attention to offensive but also defensive measures). Above all, this means home defense, since in the total war of today whole populations participate and all industrial areas are literally the front line.

While the weapons of today present this as a reality, no country, certainly not the United States, is prepared for civilian defense. As we have pointed out before, this country has only begun to assess, but only inadequately to prepare itself for, atomic home defense. In fact, it is doubtful whether it can ever realistically adjust itself socially, economically and politically for satisfactory protection against atomic bombing of its cities. Perhaps it is the unconscious realization of this which explains the general apathy to civil defense on the part of the American people.

Understanding the Dispersal Issue

Hal Draper recently gave a political analysis of the recent notorious Collier's issue on World War III. As will be shown later the Collier's issue is part of the effort to prepare the American people for atomic warfare and arouse them from their present lethargy in this regard. As far as observed by this writer, it was pretty much of a dud and was largely received as just another bit of science fiction. No one, certainly not socialists, should delude themselves, however, that "it can't happen here."

In any event the major dilemma on home defense facing the ruling class and government bureaucracy in America is whether to continue business pretty much as usual now and minimize by "bucket brigades" and psychological preparation the expected panic after widespread bombing, or to plan now the only effective defense—dispersal. In other words, should it accept the major economic and social adjustments involved in decentralization now, or attempt to ride out the crises if and when the bombing occurs?

Undoubtedly what will emerge in the coming period, providing full-scale war is averted, will be a muddled combination of both solutions. Accordingly we should endeavor to understand the political and social implications of dispersal as well as the physical and psychological conditioning of our people for defense from atomic bombs. It is to the interest of all socialists to understand the effect of the dispersal movement on American society as well as the emotional response of the people to having their own soil as a battleground for the first time in nearly one hundred years.

Much of the material for this proposed analysis is available in the recent September issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, "Defense through Decentralization—A Symposium on Dispersal," and Air War and Emotional Stress by Irvin L. Janis (McGraw-Hill, 1951). This latter is a psychological study of bombing and civilian defense based on official government investigations, like the U. S. Strategic Bombing Surveys in Japan, Germany and other parts of Europe. Subsequent columns will discuss these.

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READING from LEFT to RIGHT

BUTE TOWN by George Leather. New Statesman and Nation (London), Nov. 10.

Bute Town is a waterfront area just south of Cardiff, Wales. This is a colored area similar to the Negro slums of our Northern cities. Here segregation, poverty, poor housing, and filth result in the familiar Jim Crow pattern—the "Color Bar"—in Britain:

"... The colored population of the district lives its self-contained life in this small cluster of a dozen streets, separated by several blocks from its European neighbors—Spaniards, Norwegians, and so on. In this group of streets about three-quarters of the population is colored, and most of those who are not colored are the wives of colored men.

"... The problem here, therefore, is that of a self-contained colored minority, living on the fringe of a great commercial city, and separated from it with a completeness which is not found anywhere else in Britain. And these colored people depend on white businessmen for their employment.

"... A recent survey in Cardiff disclosed that of a small sample of employers who were questioned, 60 per cent had never employed colored labor, and of those a further 50 per cent said they never would. In my own experience here, employers are violent in their protestations that they personally have no color prejudice; if they do not employ colored labor, their reasons are purely those of business ... and

then they go on to maintain that the white applicant for a post is usually better qualified than the colored."

The Bute Town colored do not have a high regard for labor unions. As seamen and dockworkers they have always been the last hired and first fired. Evidently this feeling of distrust extends to the British Labor Party for George Leather reports:

"Of more significance is the political attitude here. I was interested, though not surprised, by the large local circulation of the Daily Worker and the presence, in the front rooms of terraced houses, of Marxist handbooks. But of course one should expect this. To the man who accepts Lenin and Stalin on Imperialism the Color Bar is not only comprehensible but inevitable. And yet I think it is only the colonial aspect of Communist policy which attracts him; he may accept the rest of the policy without serious reflection, but his main reason for being a Communist is that all the other parties—and also the unions—have done nothing to help him, that elsewhere in the Commonwealth there are sinister developments for colored people, and that the Soviet Union (so he is told) is the only country which treats all races on a basis of equality."

The author concludes his article with a plea for his fellow Britons not to be complacent about the situation in Bute Town even though they "do not normally regard the Color Bar as one of our domestic problems."

WORLD POLITICS

JAPANESE GROUPS RESOLVE TO FIGHT REMILITARIZATION

On August 15, the sixth anniversary of Japan's surrender in the Second World War, a number of substantial Japanese labor, liberal and religious organizations met in an "All-Japan Conference of the National Congress of Japan for Promoting Peace." An FOR news release presents the following information:

The main resolution that came out of the congress was a vigorous stand against the Japanese Treaty and against Japanese rearmament.

Outstanding among the groups present were the Socialist Party of Japan and the General Council of Japanese Labor Unions. In addition to the latter federation, the National Railway Workers Union was also represented as a result of the fact that the membership at a national convention had reversed the leaders' decision to favor a "patriotic labor movement" and approval of rearmament.

Present also were 23 other national trade unions, including the Communications Workers, the Electricians, the Chemical Workers, etc., and the Teachers Union; and the Labor-Farmer Party.

Among the religious groups were the Japan Christian Peace Association; the Fellowship of Reconciliation; the Buddhists Peace Council and a number of other Buddhist groups. A number of women's organizations such as the YWCA and the Association of University Women support the same position.

It will be noted that the resolution is colored by pacifism and "neutrality" for the most part, rather than a radical social viewpoint, as might be expected from the composition of the congress; but it reflects the desire of mass sections of the people to stop the rebirth of Japanese militarism, now fostered by the U. S. and to keep Japan out of the looming world war.

Following is the text of the main resolution adopted.

"Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration on August 15, 1945, though it was a bitter cup. It was the penalty for her sins committed under the dictatorship of militarism.

"Since that date the deterioration of the world situation has impressed upon us even more deeply the conviction that armed force and military strategem can-

not secure the peace and safety of mankind.

"Liberation by armed force will do no good but may destroy civilization. Millions of corpses in Korea bear witness to this fact. The peoples of the world have begun to harbor a distrust of the two Great Camps opposed to each other with such enormous force of arms. In consequence, a third power based on the principle of non-aggression is rising in the world, especially in Asia. Therefore, we are determined to defend our Constitution. We will reject rearmament, and refuse to support any military pact between Japan and any foreign power."

"We will not jeopardize the strict neutrality of our country and we will work for an over-all peace treaty to be concluded with all the belligerent powers. It is obvious that the draft peace treaty which is going to be signed at the peace conference in San Francisco is, contrary to Japanese desire, intended to pave the way for a military pact between Japan and the United States in anticipation of possible enemies. This is anything but a way to world peace, nay, we should rather say it is preparation for another war.

"Once such a treaty is concluded, Japan will be isolated from Asia; its national finance will be oppressed by military expenses; its industry will shrink; its foreign trade will be brought to a standstill, the common life will be one of extreme hardship. Thus the danger of violent revolution or another tragedy like Korea may be caused.

"Of course there are many difficulties in store for us in the future, but we intend to abide by justice and non-violence, we will never resort to violence in response to oppression but will practise indomitable resistance with justice and love as our weapons until terrorism see the error of its way and turns from its own evils.

"The revived Japan we hope to establish, though unarmed, will not be an enervated vacuum area but rather a place filled with love of mankind, where social justice will be set up with close networks of mutual aid, which will form a strong center for fostering the growth of world peace. As the first step toward such a goal, representatives of religious groups, Christian and Buddhist, labor

Youth and Student Corner

Cold War on Academic Freedom at LACC

By GERALD CARR

Los Angeles City College, the third largest campus in the Los Angeles area after USC and UCLA, has, together with the newly created Los Angeles State College, about 13,000 students. The lower-income groups and racial minorities are better represented in its enrollment than at other schools in the city. The dark side of the picture is due to the repressive and authoritarian administration which systematically suppresses all independent opinions to the left of the NAM, forbids any student political activity under penalty of expulsion (even such non-partisan activity as forums, debates, and symposiums), and demands intellectual conformity from the faculty. Harry Gideonse of Brooklyn College ill-fame may well be envious of the academic power exerted by Vice-President Milham and his confederates.

Recent events vividly illustrate the intellectual "reign of terror" at LACC. Readers of LABOR ACTION will recall that last spring fascist hoodlums, with Milham's blessing and exhortations, broke up an off-campus meeting sponsored by the Socialist Youth League. A few weeks later after a successful and orderly street meeting in the same area by socialist youth groups, Milham moved among the students and tried vainly to provoke a riot. Then he called the police. At the police station Milham blustered and finally backed down when confronted by SYL demands that he file charges so that the young socialists might demolish his case in court. The Los Angeles newspapers obliged the reactionary administration of the college with distorted accounts of the ideas expressed at the meeting and with sensational headlines about a "socialist riot."

The Effects of Thought-Control

The latest attack on campus freedom is against a professor at LACC. Academic freedom rather than student political activity is the issue here.

The professor is accused of disseminating "subversive" ideas in the classroom and is under investigation. The general opinion on campus is that the erring instructor will somehow be eased out of his job unless strong student support can be mustered to force the authorities to reconsider.

Actually, the students in the professor's classes and those who have been in his classes speak well of his ability to teach and are opposed to his dismissal. But even this welcome tendency to defend academic rights can scarcely succeed without a cohesive, organized campaign which will attempt to stand like a solid phalanx against arbitrary restrictions on dissident views.

It is reported that the professor has expressed pro-Stalinist views. Whether such reports are true or not is irrelevant to the issue, as all genuine democrats and socialists should agree. One student who supports the professor told me that the latter had expressed the opinion that the present cold war is a bad thing, that American freedom is in danger from our own government, and other dangerous ideas. Regardless of his actual views or statements one must defend his right to utter them.

The typical instructor at this campus is afraid to say anything, that even the Fair Dealers professed to champion not so long ago. The intellectual atmosphere here is almost sterile, with lifeless pedantry or phony objectivity characterizing the classroom and political apathy among the students the rule.

In such a stultifying framework one can expect neither cultural diffusion nor creative research. At best the student can master the

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(Note change): no session on December 23)

December 30 DEMOCRACY AND THE NEW SOCIETY Hal Draper
January 6 THE WAR WE NEEDN'T HAVE Julie Falk
January 13 WHERE TO BEGIN Jack Maxwell

At LABOR ACTION HALL, 114 West 14 Street, New York City

factual data in his texts without enhancing his critical faculties. Cynicism is rampant among the students. The new criterion for an education is described to be the hurdles toward a final letter of recommendation, an introduction to the business community. The traditional "ferment of ideas" in the American college is an alien concept to the reactionary campus authorities. You may say whatever you like providing you don't step on somebody's toes—i.e., somebody who "counts."

A final example of the situation at LACC will suffice to point up my case. Just before this was written, a young man close to the campus here went to a nearby bookstore to collect money for fifteen Avails (student anti-war quarterly) sold by the dealer on consignment. The dealer nervously stated that a campus spokesman had berated him for selling the magazine. In his own words, "There is very little freedom left." Of course, his main fear is that his position as seller of textbooks may be jeopardized. But economic boycott is a potent weapon at the disposal of the reactionaries.

Only a determined student body aided by a courageous segment of the faculty can defeat the drive against independent thought at LACC or elsewhere. Democracy, and its foundations, is increasingly a casualty of the war preparations in the imperialist struggle of capitalist America and Stalinist Russia. Thought-control is as necessary to Wall Street and the Pentagon as is control over the country's economy, manpower, and strategic materials. The economic interests which largely dominate the school boards and boards of trustees are tuned in close harmony with the objective needs of the Truman administration's military planning as well as with Truman's conservative critics among the corporation executives. The Stalinists cleverly exploit this conspiracy against freedom in the cold war atmosphere.

The LACC episodes are symptomatic of a national trend on the campus and is largely a reflection of the political-economic arena of an embattled imperialist power and of a concomitant decadent culture. Capitalism's last major stronghold tends to abandon its traditional capitalist democracy in the battle for the survival of an outmoded economic system.

The campus is not the only or even the major victim of prolonged cold-war (or hot-war) necessity, but it is also not the least in importance. If education is not to become completely stereotyped and "safe," the students and instructors must fight vigorously for their rights. Such a fight requires more than good intentions. It demands inevitably a minimum of collective effort, of organizational solidarity.

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THE ISSUE IN THE SUDAN

The Sudanese People Want Their Say

By PHILIP COBEN

In discussions of the conflict between Britain and Egypt over control of the Suez Canal zone, the issue of the Sudan has been pretty much treated in the American press in the same way as the Sudan has traditionally been treated by both the British and Egyptian governments—as a pawn in a power struggle. But the people of the Sudan have their own desires, their own interests, their own political movements and their own demands.

For the most part the American press has reflected the British line on the Sudan, as on the whole Egyptian question: Nahas Pasha wants to grab the Sudan as he wants to grab the canal zone and the British stand in his way, defending Sudanese self-determination. One of Egypt's shrewd moves was to puncture this picture by proposing a plebiscite through which the Sudanese could decide their own fate. To be sure, up to this time at least, Egypt's demand has been for "unity of the Nile Valley"—that is, subjection of the Sudan to Cairo—while Britain's phrases about self-determination for the Sudan have been qualified by that standby of imperialism: self-determination "ultimately." The Sudanese are not looking to either power to do them good.

What do the Sudanese people want?
The answer to this has been made pretty plain by the Sudanese people themselves, but it must first be understood that the Sudan is not a real unity but a geographic, economic, religious and political duality. Its present unity is the result of imperialist conquest. Let us recall this first.

Conquest of the Sudan

Up to the end of the 18th century, the Sudan escaped the attentions of expanding imperialisms, but its independence did not long outlast the century. When Mohammed Ali Pasha became the ruler of Egypt—virtually independent but nominally under the suzerainty of the Turks—he gave the country's economics and politics a considerable dynamism. In 1820 he invaded the Sudan, established himself at Khartoum and occupied the land. In the next 60 years the Sudan was an object of bitter oppression and exploitation by Egypt. British interests shared in the spoils, as a result of considerable British influence in Cairo. It was British nationals who were named to the governorship of the Sudan on behalf of Egypt.

In 1881 the Sudanese successfully revolted—the Mahdi rebellion. They rose under Mohammed Ahmed el Mahdi against both Egypt and its British governor and kicked them both out after a long campaign in which they retook Khartoum.

The Sudan's independence lasted till 1898. Two years before that, following the death of the Mahdi and the failure of effective leaders to succeed him, the British General Kitchener invaded with British troops. It took two years for him to beat down the people's desperate resistance (at the battle of Omdurman, 30,000 Sudanese were slaughtered) but he finally conquered.

It was this British conquest (carried through, as before, in the name of the king of Egypt) which was the basis for the Condominium Agreement of 1899, later confirmed by the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, by which the Sudan was administered jointly by Egypt and Britain; the British nominated the governor-general and the king of Egypt appointed him.

Until 1924, Egypt continued to share in the

administration also; but following the assassination of the governor-general by an Egyptian and the instigation of a rebellion of Sudanese soldiers by Egyptian officers, the Egyptian officials were expelled. The British, in practice if not in theory, were henceforth virtually the sole rulers.

"After the Second World War," relates Leon Szur, "the Egyptian government renewed its demands for control of the Sudan and this was the main subject of the negotiations which resulted in the Bevin-Sidky Pasha Agreement of 1946. The principal section, which dealt with the future status of the Sudan, was sufficiently vague to enable Sidky Pasha to claim that it implied the incorporation of the Sudan into Egypt. This interpretation evoked such resentment in the Sudan that the British government found it necessary to repudiate Sidky Pasha's claims, the negotiations broke down, and Sidky Pasha resigned.

The Two Sudans

"Further conflicts arose between the Condominium powers over the question of constitutional reforms—the Egyptians demanding greater participation in the ruling of the country while the British ostensibly defended Sudanese rights. In June 1948 the governor-general published an ordinance setting up a Legislative Assembly and an Executive Council.

"The Legislative Assembly consisted of ten members elected by direct ballot in the towns, 42 elected by electoral colleges, 13 by tribal councils in the South, and 10 nominated by the governor-general. The Executive Council is divided equally between members nominated by the governor-general and members selected from the Assembly. The main ministries are in the hands of officials, and, of course, the governor-general has the veto."

Two Sudans were thus united in this process of conquest.

The Sudan as a whole begins where the Nile ceases to be navigable, at the second cataract, and stretches south to the lakes which form the source of the Nile in the Congo and Uganda. This immense territory is naturally divided into a North and a South Sudan by climate and geography in the first place: the Sudan of the North which is desert country and is related to Egypt by its economic geography; and the Sudan of the South which is savannah country. The first, about one third of the territory, is inhabited by Arabs and Berbers ethnically connected with the Egyptians. The remaining two-thirds of the South is peopled by Sudanese and Bantu Negroes, as are the African countries to the south of it.

This is the underlying basis of the political division—that is, of the political orientation of the two sections.

The contending forces are:

Private Property, Profits . . . and Parity

By L. G. SMITH

The American Farm Bureau Federation has been meeting in convention in Chicago. As usual this body, which is the most conservative (if not reactionary) farmers' organization, has laid prime stress on combating "socialism" and "bureaucratic controls" as the chief dangers to be battled.

By "socialism" the Farm Bureau Federation means the various government programs applied to the farmers, most of which had their origins in the great depression of the '30s. They mean the subsidized crop-control programs, payments for conservation measures, and the price-support measures. Above all, of course, they are warring against any kind of price control on farm products in a period in which it appears the sellers' market and inflationary tendencies will predominate for most farm products.

Of course, none of these programs have any connection with socialism. They are pure-and-simple capitalist measures which are directed toward guaranteeing the prosperity of one of the least stable areas of the private-property, private-profit economy.

As spokesmen for the vast majority of American farmers, the Farm Bureau Federation is a joke. Actually, the

(1) The National Front, dominated by the Ashigga Party, whose leadership consists mainly of people of Egyptian descent and which in a general way favors federation with (not domination by) Egypt. Its public program is for a federation of equal states with Egypt, but it is by no means a mere creature of Cairo politics, especially if one looks beyond the leadership of the Ashigga Party. The general secretary of the National Front recently strongly criticized the Nahas Pasha constitution for the Sudan and arbitrary Egyptian actions.

(2) The Independence Front, dominated by the Umma Party. It stands for full self-determination for the Sudan and aims at complete self-government. At the beginning of 1951 its General Council adopted a resolution announcing that the movement would not participate in any further elections except on the basis of full self-government.

It is the Independence forces which speak for the majority of the Sudanese, according to observers. The National Front boycotted the elections of November 1948, and the present Legislative Assembly follows the Independence Front. The general secretary of the Umma Party is the present leader of the Assembly.

Self-Determination

In sum, then, a strong minority, based on the North, is "pro-Egyptian" in the sense described; but there is no substantial sentiment anywhere for continuation of British rule. (An exception may be some tribal chiefs in the South.) When Egypt repudiated the treaty with Britain, the Umma Party seized the occasion to proclaim the end of the condominium and the return of sovereignty to the Sudanese people. They now state that their aim is a Constituent Assembly and self-determination by next year.

A socialist, therefore, has to look at the Sudan problem not from the viewpoint of the various contenders for outside domination—West, East or Middle East—but from the viewpoint of the Sudanese people and their democratic right to self-determination.

It is clear, if not well known to readers of the American press, that this is no artificial demand but one that arises from the aspirations of the people themselves, who have long been organized politically to fight for it. National independence for the Sudan is an issue which is not a mere adjunct of the British-Egyptian conflict but is an integral part of the movement throughout Africa for freedom from imperialism.

A democratically elected Constituent Assembly and self-determination is the due of the Sudanese people. Such a solution also includes the right to self-determination by both parts of the Sudan, for it is not at all improbable that the North may prefer a form of unity with Egypt while the South takes its independence, oriented toward the African rather than the Arab world.

FBF speaks only for a certain section of the very largest farmers, and even more for the millers, processors and middlemen of the American food industry. Although farmers as a whole still tend to be one of the more conservative groups in America, the vast majority of them find it very convenient to forget their general prejudice in favor of "free enterprise" when price support and other measures are involved. As with other businessmen, big and small, their philosophy is one thing but the realities of practical life are something quite different; and when the two clash, it is the realities which count.

Right now, when the market for farm products is good and when prices are generally above support levels, they may grumble about government controls. As soon as prices begin to sag, however, they become convinced that price support is one of the basic principles of democratic society and the American Way of Life. And most farmers remember the '20s and '30s, and even the late '40s, far too well to let their grumbling get the better of their common sense.

The FBF can pass as many resolutions as it wants. The farmers remain for price support. And if that is socialism, they propose to continue to make the best of it in the future, as they have done in the past.

New Hope for Solution In Tresca Murder Case

NEW YORK, Dec. 17—New evidence which may throw light on the identity of the slayers of Carlo Tresca, anti-fascist editor here, is being weighed by the district attorney's office, the Tresca Memorial Committee disclosed this week in announcing plans for commemorating Tresca's death.

"We happen to know," said Norman Thomas, the committee's chairman, "that a newly found witness has lately been questioned by one of District Attorney Frank S. Hogan's staff in connection with that crime. And we know something of the kind of information he gave. Our hope is that it will fit in with the other accumulated pieces in the jigsaw puzzle of the Tresca case. We continue to believe that the killers of our comrade and friend eventually will be ferreted out, perhaps soon.

"Though nearly nine years have passed since Carlo was shot down on January 11, 1943, other murder mysteries have been solved after much longer periods. Individuals with knowledge of crimes who have long remained silent find occasion or freedom to talk about them with the passage of time.

"Another reason for our being hopeful now is the recent appointment of Conrad H. Rothengast as Chief Inspector of Police. We remember that he was actively interested in the Tresca case in the months following that crime—and notably in days of conflict between the Police Department and the district attorney's office over the premature arrest of Carmine Galante, the first suspect, ordered 'by some

one outside the department.' High police officials had wanted Galante left free, but failed to discover his associates.

"In the effort now headed by the new chief inspector to redeem the reputation of the Police Department, it is logical to expect that an intensive recheck will be made of the evidence in outstanding, unsolved murder mysteries, and that any still pending leads in them will be explored."

TRIBUTE PLANNED

Friends of Tresca will pay tribute to him at a flower-laying ceremony at the scene of his murder, northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 16th Street, on Saturday, January 12, at 1 p.m. Speakers will include Rose Pesotta, author and for ten years a vice-president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Jacob Baker, business consultant; Samuel H. Friedman, member of the Socialist Party's national executive committee; and one Italian speaker. If the weather is unfavorable, the speaking will be held in Rand School Auditorium, 7 East 16th Street.

The murder scene is in the shadow of the office at 96 Fifth Avenue, where Tresca edited his Italian fortnightly journal, *Il Martello* (The Hammer). He was shot in the wartime dimout, the gunman escaping in a Ford sedan, which was found that night at 18th Street and Seventh Avenue. A year ago the suspect Galante, whom two parole officers declared they saw enter that same automobile (identified by its number) an hour and a half before the crime, was questioned at length by the district attorney's office in connection with a basement dice-game raid in 18th Street, a few doors west of the spot where the escape-car was found.

THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY on the HOME FRONT

ADA Announces Campaign Against Smith Act; AFL Whitewashes It

It does this column good to report that Americans for Democratic Action have announced the launching of a campaign to repeal the Smith Act—the gag law on the basis of which the prosecution of the CP leaders took place. ADA opens the drive, it says, because the act "permits the persecution of men for what they think and say rather than for what they do."

The ADA's national chairman, Francis Biddle, stated that "drastic protection against acts of espionage and sabotage is necessary" but that the Smith Act is not the answer.

One has perhaps a right to interpret Biddle's pronouncement as self-criticism. Ironically, Biddle happens to have been the U. S. attorney general (under Roosevelt) when the Smith Act was used for the first time for muzzling purposes—in the Minneapolis case against the Socialist Workers Party. That case, prosecuted by Biddle's office, did indeed persecute the defendants for "what they think and say rather than for what they do."

On the other side of the ledger, while we're on the Smith Act, is a communication sent out by AFL President William Green to all his affiliates, in which Green gives a shameful OK to the witchhunt law. Green's letter purports to "warn" against a Stalinist-front "Trade Union Committee for Repeal of the Smith Act" but it is evidently not merely the Stalinist character of the front that exercises him.

His letter (according to an AFL organ) said that "By hooking up the Smith Act with the Taft-Hartley Act, the Communists are trying to put over the idea that it is an anti-labor law. It is not. The Smith Act provides penalties for those who advocate

happening to the pattern of American democracy: a step forward in race relations canceled out by the gathering strength of thought-control restrictions.

REASONABLE ABUSE

In New York City, the United Parents Association has come out against the notorious resolution of the Board of Education which prohibits the use of school facilities by organizations which are stamped "subversive" by the Justice Department or the state Regents or "which the Board of Education or Superintendent of Schools has reason to believe" to be so.

"Reason to believe" falls in the same family with Truman's formula of "reasonable doubt" of loyalty, etc. One characteristic of all of these "reasonable" formulas is that the "reasonable" agency involved is not required to put its "reasons" before the public, the accused, or anyone else. When the United Parents Association says that this opens the way to a "dangerous abuse of power," they underestimate the case. The passage of such a regulation is already a dangerous abuse.

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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

Questions on Marxism and History

To the Editor:

I am a student here at the University of Pennsylvania. Last summer one of my classmates introduced me to your paper and to some back issues of your magazine which I have been enjoying very much. This term I am taking a course in sociology the professor of which conducts a constant barrage against Marxism. I have a feeling that much of what he says is not true but I do not as yet know enough to handle his material. Could you possibly help me on the following points made by him?

(1) If the mode of production determines the type of state, how account for the fact that the slave economies of Greece and Rome had throughout their histories such different types as hereditary monarchy, democratic republic, dictatorship, elected royalty and absolute monarchy — this last type, by the way, Marx says, at one place, is most characteristic of feudalism and, at another place, is also found in capitalism. In the U. S. up to 1861 one type of state rested upon both a free and a slave economy.

(2) The method of making goods was essentially the same during both the period of classical antiquity and that of the Middle Ages, and yet class relations were different.

(3) How can we expect the proletariat as the exploited class to build a new order, when it was not the ancient slave who became the feudal lord, nor the serf and journeyman who became the capitalist. There were, he admits, class struggles but the exploited did not become the leaders of the successive social orders. Also, na-

derstanding history.

There are no such Marxist formulas as the professor's "stumpers" suggest.

For example, the mode of production determines the type of state; and by "type of state" he obviously means the political form of the state (monarchy, democratic republic, dictatorship, etc.). On the contrary, according to Marxism, the mode of production fundamentally determines the nature of the social system. Under whatever varying political forms, the state acts as the protector and "executive committee" of the ruling class in the given social system. Even this historical generalization ("formula," if you wish) would have to be further concretized by a specific study of a given social system, but it has little in common with the professor's vulgarization.

Incidentally, for discussion by Engels of the degree of autonomy of the political and ideological superstructure of society, see his letters on historical materialism (reprinted in the appendix to Sidney Hook's *Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx*). It is a typically professorial caricature to represent Marxism as trying to establish an automatic and one-to-one correspondence between the social-economic foundation and the political and ideological forms.

Much the same comment would apply to the other questions, as that J. C.'s professor read somewhere that according to Marx "economic factors determine the course of history," and that either his reading or understanding stopped not much beyond that point. Judging by the questions submitted, he first reduces Marxism to a caricature and then "refutes" it. But Marxism is not a series of handy formulas; it is a method of investigating and un-

derstanding history. There are no such Marxist formulas as the professor's "stumpers" suggest. For example, the mode of production determines the type of state; and by "type of state" he obviously means the political form of the state (monarchy, democratic republic, dictatorship, etc.). On the contrary, according to Marxism, the mode of production fundamentally determines the nature of the social system. Under whatever varying political forms, the state acts as the protector and "executive committee" of the ruling class in the given social system. Even this historical generalization ("formula," if you wish) would have to be further concretized by a specific study of a given social system, but it has little in common with the professor's vulgarization.

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of all kinds of non-economic forces at work, including historical "accidents."

There is no Marxist formula that in every social system it is the lowest exploited class which becomes the representative of the new social system. Just the contrary: Marxists have emphasized that for the first time under capitalism it is possible for the "lowest" class, the working class, to play this role. Before capitalism, Marxists point out, the transmission belt of social change was also the class struggle; but under feudalism it was in the first place the class struggle of the rising bourgeoisie against the feudal lords which pointed to the social system which was to replace the old regime.

There is no Marxist formula that primitive communism evolved into ancient slavery in all times and places directly and with no intermediaries. This kind of nonsense is usefully invented only to make possible a cheap "refutation." Little enough is known about the details and forms of this transition, but there can be little doubt that it was a tortuous process with many twists and turns, false starts and historical blind alleys.

The main point to be made here is that the Marxist method of historical materialism has to be applied but it does not yield penny-in-the-slot results—nor is it like laying a ruler down and reading off the answer. History is not that simple; Marxism is indispensable to understand its complexity, especially in its fundamental lines of development, but it is only an indispensable guide to concrete historical investigation. This is what Marx himself did in his own historical writings, which you ought to read.—Ed.

Preparing Ranks for Halley Defection —

(Continued from page 1)

Berle posed a challenging question: "What good is it to drive rotten politicians out of City Hall only to find them back in power via the federal route?" The reference, of course, was to O'Dwyer, whose resignation as mayor of New York paved the way for his ambassadorship to Mexico, but the same question can be directed to hosts of others. What good indeed to ask such questions, when the same Berle would draw back in horror at any thought of a break with the national Democratic Party machine?

"NEVER AGAIN"

In speeches before Liberal Party clubs, Berle has been letting his hair down even further and has given utterance to some very radical-sounding phraseology. He stated his disapproval of some of the deals made in the past, particularly the deal dictated by Lehman whereby Lehman would agree to accept Liberal support only if they also supported the Democratic candidates for New York governor and New York City mayor. Thus the Liberals found themselves supporting Boss Flynn's mouthpiece Walter Lynch, who distinguished himself by voting for the Franco loan, and yelling with Tammany Hall for the same candidate.

Never again, said Berle; in fact, he confessed that he was "so out-

raged that he almost resigned from the party." While anyone has a right to take this statement with a bushel of salt, coming from an old hand at deals, it is interesting and instructive that the party leaders feel called upon to make this type of confession to a more aroused and demanding membership.

Furthermore, in speeches before smaller audiences, Berle has stated that he "would break with the national Democratic ticket in the presidential election"—unless of course, they run the proper candidates. He went so far as to express the hope that Norman Thomas would be running should that eventuality occur! And he vouched that he knew many Liberals who would vote with him for Thomas. Radical talk indeed!

POINTED REMARKS

Berle was more cautious in his language at the Halley celebration luncheon and contented himself with more veiled hints that "the task of taking over the city government will depend on the Liberal Party putting up the men dedicated to that cause, and cannot be dependent upon one personality." The party had "made" one candidate, and he hinted that if that one didn't play ball the party could find or produce others who would.

Alex Rose, Liberal vice-chairman and president of the Matters Un-

ion, delivered a witty and politically pointed speech, with several not-so-veiled asides to Halley. He pointed out that "Halley will need additional votes in the future, but these should not be won at the expense of the old voters"—as some unmentioned persons had done in the past by alienating Liberal votes. Rose came out for "free enterprise in politics and an end to the monopoly of two parties." Actually, however, he pointed out that the two parties functioned as one party, and that there was a need for a third party in order to have at least a two-party system.

David Dubinsky, Liberal vice-chairman and president of the Ladies Garent Workers Union, got a sympathetic laugh when he confessed that after years of moral victories at the polls, it was a pleasant sensation to be enjoying an actual victory, "a miracle." He too chided those who had placed "party regularity above liberalism, even though elected to office by liberalism." He hinted that perhaps even with Halley, party regularity may come above his obligation to the Liberals, but whatever might happen, nobody could go wrong by clinging to the Liberal Party.

Dubinsky declared that "the Liberal Party line alone had elected Halley, and that no new lines are needed"—referring to the City Fusion and Independent lines created mainly by the Liberal Party

activists. He gave public acknowledgment to the existence of the demand for independent candidates within the party by insisting that they must recognize that special factors existed in Halley's case and might not exist in other cases. A veiled warning: Take it easy, boys, don't crowd us.

NO BRIDGES BURNED

Despite the repeated needling and the fairly open questioning as to what his future political alliance will be, Halley in his speech gave the Liberals no encouragement whatsoever. He gave them full credit for his victory, repeated what his cleanup and reform program will consist of, and especially boasted that as a symbol of how the city must economize, he will personally not vote to spend more than \$50 to entertain any visitor to New York.

Insofar as he did answer the questions, posed by the preceding speakers, it was to rebuff them. He begged the Liberals "not to distract me from my job," and to leave him alone to do his job as president of the City Council as well as he could. Then the future could take care of itself. That was as far as he committed himself; which is to say, that he is not committed at all. Halley would be a fool not to appreciate the dilemma of the Democratic Party leadership in this city and their eager search for an "independent Democrat" (like himself perhaps?) to refurbish their prestige and power. In the meantime, he is holding himself aloof and certainly will not burn his political bridges behind him.

After the luncheon, there was much good-natured joshing among the Liberal Party members about their being all prepared now for the knife and the doublecross. As one member put it, nobody can now say it will come as a surprise; and as another put it, the only question is when will it happen. There is understandable resentment that all of the energy and political capital and potentiality of the party spent in the last campaign may once again not redound to the party's benefit.

In spite of this kind of half-serious, half-jocular talk under the impress of the speeches, it is of course no foregone conclusion that Halley will follow in FDR Jr.'s footsteps. For one thing, that would depend upon the city Democratic politicians as much as on Halley, and on the strength behind Liberal Party pressure on Halley as well, and on any num-

ber of other unpredictable short-range factors. The point is that among these factors is not any desire on Halley's part to tie his political career up with the Liberal Party. This is why the Liberal chiefs made their rather unusual speeches at this affair.

CHALLENGE BY ROSE

Another consequence of the Halley victory has been the more outspoken criticism by the Liberals of the sections of the labor movement in New York—and elsewhere—still tied to the Democratic and Republican machines. Alex Rose, in an issue of his union's paper widely distributed in the ranks of the Liberal Party, castigates in the sharpest language the local AFL and CIO Councils which supported Tammany's candidate and their brethren on a national scale.

Of the latter, he writes: "The heads of central labor bodies across the land still play the game the old way, by way of promises of 'favors' from local bosses, by personal maneuvering with old-line politicians. They show no confidence in their own latent strength. They are either too lazy or too uncomprehending to assert the political power and influence that is in the grasp of their membership. With tragic consequences to the best interests of labor . . . they fail to mobilize all of labor's political potentialities."

The labor leadership within the Liberal Party has been most circumspect in its attacks on the rest of the labor movement still outside the Liberal Party ranks, and such strong condemnation was undoubtedly inspired by their victory and their growing inroads. We can expect steady pressure on the recalcitrant leadership to enter the ranks of the Liberal Party and to strengthen its labor and union base.

Rose throws down a challenge to them:

"No labor man would ever permit himself to scab in a strike. None of us would forgive or condone scabbing in an economic contest. We must not condone, we must not forgive, we must not permit scabbing in the political contests that are still before us. We have a wonderful set of ethics and morals when it comes to economic action. The same high morals and ethics must also become the climate of labor's being in political action."

It will be interesting to see just whom Rose will consider a political scab in the elections to come.

The Climate of Corruption —

(Continued from page 1)

ership of the Western bloc. The revelations are assuredly scripted for Radio Moscow and not the Voice of America.

The New York Post, particularly its essayist and moralist, Max Lerner, points to some of the obvious causes of corruption—the twenty-year rule of the Democrats, power, money and sloth, the American credo of success. Lerner further emphasizes, in a kind of counterattack on the Republicans and the capital they are making out of the scandals, that good men have been replaced by mediocre men under Truman because the "McCarthyites" have "managed to scare away most of the men with courage and conviction and passion."

This latter argument, too, is a subordinate one and not quite properly placed. The drift of the Liberals with ideas and ideals away from government, the men who flocked there in the early days of the New Deal, began long before McCarthyism. It took place even under FDR when the New Deal slipped into the War Deal. And certainly the advent of the Truman administration was marked by government by "cronyocracy." All this even apart from the fact that the "loyalty purges," the forerunners of McCarthyism, were initiated by Truman himself.

HALF-TRUTH

Lerner's system of apologetics for capitalism is extremely interesting, if wrong on virtually every count. "I have heard it said," he writes, "that we need not worry too much about corruption, because it is the price we pay for a free society. For a paradox it is a pretty good one, which means there is at least half a truth in it."

Lerner goes along with this half-truth and makes of it a whole one. "We live in a society in which the individual mostly makes his own choices on which his life and salvation rest," he continues. "You are saved or damned by what you decide, not by orders from above. You try to get rich or be a success and if you make it they applaud you. You are honest or dishonest, and if you get found out they turn the laurel into thorns for you. In that sense we live in a society open at both ends."

"Compare this," Lerner says, "with the closed society of the totalitarians, who have annihilated the individual. They have

almost no 'corruption' in our sense, because they have no people who dare make choices that are morally free even when they are wrong."

Lerner reveals here, unwittingly or not, that he too falls in with, rather than stands up against the mores of his times. We do not wish to enter into any discussion at this point whether the individual is possessed of a "free will" or whether he is the product of his total environment, its economics, politics and culture. Let us just say for the time being that the individual has alternative choices among those which are presented by a society over which the individual has no control at all, or little effective control.

The important, obvious point to make, and it is surprising that Lerner did not make it integral to his discussion, is that American capitalist society, based upon a monopolistic economic organization, has always produced corruption. Corruption is indigenous to capitalist society. Wherever and whenever business and government touch hands there is money in between—this has been true in all periods and in all countries. But never anywhere else with such frequency, audacity, and on the scale of American corruption.

SOCIAL CORRUPTION

The enormous wealth of the country so easily accumulated over the decades; the venality of which the bitch-goddess Success (as William James names her) America's business civilization in holds sway; the corrupting educational system which indoctrinates millions to worship money; the trinity of business, politics and gangsterism have joined to produce a totally corrupting cultural accent in American life.

It is true that there are elements of the broader American culture which call forth a contrasting idealism, but this is always represented by a minority and is usually produced in periods of crisis, either national or local. That is one aspect of the question. Secondly, why does Lerner choose to compare democratic capitalism with totalitarianism? Because totalitarianism is abhorrent? Because we are all opposed to the police state even if it contains no widespread corruption? Why didn't he compare it to Britain's Labor government, or to the Scandinavian countries, where corruption is at a minimum? Why compare what is rotten, corrupt-

ing, immoral, debasing and socially criminal with a worse form of

The sadness of this kind of social degeneration is that it forces even the liberal to lose sight of his ideals and reduces his discussion of social corruption to a choice of whether it isn't better to live in a "democracy with corruption" than in a totalitarian system. But not a word about a genuinely free society, not a ringing cry for social idealism and social good. It shows that even a good liberal, and Max Lerner is undoubtedly a good liberal, cannot pull himself out of his environment to totally reject an evil society unless he embraces a genuine ideal of a free society, free of exploitation, free of poverty, free of classes. But it is precisely this leap which the liberal cannot make. That is what makes him a liberal and not a revolutionary in a social sense.

U.S. Runs into Snags in UN —

(Continued from page 1)

ed by the American delegation and their superiors in the State Department. Thus, they seek to use strong-arm tactics as sparingly as possible.

Unfortunately for them, however, they do not have a free hand in this matter. Congress watches their every move, and Congress is far less concerned with the feelings and interests of other governments than it is with the political capital it can make by denouncing the State Department or the tendencies to "appeasement" and "selfishness" of other nations.

GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT

Further, the small nations have found that there is safety in numbers. If the votes in the UN are fairly evenly balanced on some question, the U. S. delegation can usually pick out one or a few vulnerable delegations which can be swung over. But when a large number of the governments which are dependent on the U. S. make a move together, the Americans find it difficult to resist the pressure which they can apply.

A current example of this has been the voting on a replacement for Yugoslavia on the Security Council. Greece is the American candidate and Byelorussia that of the Russians. A two-thirds majority is needed for election. To date, neither has been able to

swing enough delegations behind its choice.

There is a large prestige question involved, but that is not all. When the UN was first set up, a "gentlemen's agreement" was reached which provided that temporary members of the Security Council would be chosen on a regional basis. The current controversy is over the seat "assigned" to East Europe. Last time the U. S. was able to get Yugoslavia elected over a Russian choice, although the Russians insisted that this violated the agreement. But in that case many governments felt that Yugoslavia could be considered a genuine "Eastern European" nation, in the sense that it was in the area, it was "Communist" (even if anti-Russian), and it was then playing a strongly neutral role. In any event, it seemed a good idea at the time to do everything possible to widen the gap between Belgrade and Moscow.

Now, however, matters stand differently. Greece is such an obvious American satellite that its geographic position is clearly irrelevant in a regional arrangement which has been clearly understood to have political as well as geographical meaning.

WANT TO GO SLOWER

Many of the Arab, Asian, Latin American and Scandinavian governments whose delegates are voting for Byelorussia argue that

if the regional basis of representation on the Security Council is abandoned in this case, there is no guarantee that in the future the United States will not find good reasons to ignore it in cases in which their own regions are involved.

That is the logical argument, but abstract logic has as little to do with politics and the votes of governments as does friendship. Much more important is the feeling of large numbers of governments that the U. S. is driving too hard in the cold war and that it would be better, at this time, to tread more softly. The possibility of a truce in Korea seems to give a chance for something of a breathing spell in the conflict, and this is ardently desired not only by the governments of most countries but even more so by their peoples.

It is entirely possible that in the end the Americans will put on enough heat to get Greece elected. Even Britain under the Tories, it is reported, has been voting for Byelorussia, although Britain has special interests in Greece. But the U. S. has been putting on a good deal of pressure. She wants a sure majority on the Security Council on "vital" questions. And Greece has proven much more "dependable" than many other countries in these days of growing independence in the Western bloc.