

LABOR ACTION

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SPOT-LIGHT

A Complete Analysis Of Ike's Monday Speech

On Monday President Eisenhower gave a chat over TV and radio to the American people, to tell them about his legislative plans. We were all set to comment on it, especially since (because of the schedule by which LA is printed) we will not be able to comment in this issue on the president's State-of-the-Union message on Thursday.

Naturally we weren't the only commentators poised to take off. Another one, for example, was the N. Y. *Herald Tribune's* staunch Republican columnist, David Lawrence. He had obviously saved his Tuesday morning column for the words with which it would be necessary to hail the president's wisdom.

In said Tuesday morning column, however, we note that all Lawrence found to write about, was a vigorous discussion of Eisenhower's sentence-structure (literally).

We can't think of anything else ourselves.

'These Foreigners ...'

Washington's new embroilment with India over aid to Pakistan illustrates two apparent fatalities that accompany the U. S.'s position in the world as top dog, given its policies.

From the angle of the American chauvinist mind, no doubt, the Indian reaction shows deplorable small-mindedness: *Bah, these Asiatics, so rutted in their petty quarrels, while we have to take the global view ...* the global view, of course, being the necessity of the U. S. to think in terms of world-wide imperialist domination.

Naturally, before the United States became so global-minded—say, when it was carrying on its own "dirty war" with Mexico—it would not have been so happy to see a European power step in to arm its enemy, for any reason whatsoever. Someone recently pointed out that Nehru's foreign policy, which so many in the U. S. today pretend to think is so mysterious, wayward, and even reprehensible, is—virtually identical with the foreign policy followed by the U. S. from 1776 to 1937, only yesterday. (This is a good point of which to remind American chauvinists, but incidentally, it is not very flattering for Nehru.)

Two things that dog America's footsteps in its present role as arbiter of the capitalist world are:

(1) By some fatal tropism, when faced with a choice of pleasing one prospective ally or another, the U. S. tends to choose the more reactionary. In the present case, it can be granted that there is a difficulty in pleasing both India and Pakistan. Regrettable as that may be from the point of view of Washington's international maneuvering, nothing can be done about it except to make the choice. Washington does. It seems to be Pakistan, the more reactionary half of the Indian subcontinent.

The reasons for this tendency are not far to seek. For one thing, it is most often the more reactionary among the

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This 'Orthodox Recession': How Unorthodox Can It Get?

By GORDON HASKELL

The economic decline which started last summer shows no sign of letting up at the beginning of the new year.

In Detroit, New York and a dozen other cities, the lines of the unemployed have stretched out of the employment offices and extended out to the biting cold of the streets. Business failures have taken a sharp upturn, and loan agencies report that increasing numbers of small and middle businesses are unable to meet their obligations on time.

Everyone recognizes that things will get worse before they get better. Among economists the question now is not whether the boom conditions of last year can be preserved, but simply how deep the recession will go, and how long it will last.

Most analysts content themselves, and hope to content their readers, by insisting that even though 1954 will not be as prosperous a year as 1953, it will be the second best in American history, or something like the year 1952. Even if they are justified in their optimism, that will be a real catastrophe for millions of American workers.

For workers cannot simply look back at 1952 and figure that they will be in about the same situation

as they were then. Although this might be true for many of them as individuals, for the class as a whole it would be far from true.

THAT 8 PERCENT

For this must be borne in mind: the boom conditions of 1953 were based on an increase in production of about 8 per cent over the previous year. With the productivity of labor and the work force itself increasing every year, to preserve the same boom conditions another

8 per cent or so would have to be added this year to the 1953 figures. But if, instead, there is a drop of 8 per cent, that will not bring us right back to 1952. In relative terms it means that the economy would be 16 per cent below what it needs to keep the boom rolling.

There is no way to translate such rough figures into numbers of employed workers and average weekly hours of work for the economy as a whole. But one thing is certain: a constant rise in productivity, plus a constant increase in the number of workers, plus a drop in total production—means unemployment, short work-weeks, long layoffs. Some industries will be hit far harder than others, and some regions of the country will feel it heavily while others will remain only slightly affected.

At their recent annual meeting, the economists got into an argu-

(Turn to last page)

Washington Stands in the Way of Peace In Indo-China, as France Gets Ho's Bid

By PHILIP COBEN

While sentiment is mounting even in right-wing circles in France for an end to the futile fighting in Indo-China, the United States seems to have adopted the thankless role of insisting on the continuation of the war.

If this is not the U. S. position, then Washington has allowed its eminent Asian tourist, Vice-President Nixon, to blacken its name needlessly.

It was Nixon who, during his trip through the Far East, warned against a peace of "appeasement" between the French military command and the forces under Ho Chi Minh. This can have only the meaning of warning against making a negotiated peace. It can mean only raising the aim of unconditional surrender—that is, war to the bitter end in a situation where any possible end is an interminable distance away.

It is true that Washington has become the financial prop of this dirtiest of dirty wars in the world, but if the American leaders want to fight to their last dollar, the French do not want to fight to the last Frenchman. The situation is an absolutely hopeless one for French imperialism, and an intol-

erable one for the French people.

Granting that it is important to defeat Stalinism in Indo-China, it has become increasing clear to even the most stubborn conservatives in France that this aim is impossible along the present lines. Military communiqués from Indo-China in the course of the past year, as before, have had the makings of a slapstick comedy. The French general announces periodically that the enemy is in flight, retreating all along the line, so many outposts taken, so much territory "liberated," following which it is learned that the French have again suffered a smashing defeat somewhere.

The latest scene in this farce was a series of announcements of French victories followed by the

admission that the Vietminh forces of Ho had cut Indo-China in two by a drive across Laos.

Granted the claims from Washington—and note that they come from Washington, not Paris—that this is not really a very serious situation for a number of good reasons, it is clear that it is certainly no token of a quick French victory. Typically, French military headquarters followed it up with a prophecy that the war will be cleaned up in six months; this is a bad sign; two more boasts of this kind by the French and, according to the rule, they will be pushed into the sea.

IN A TRAP

A conservative and more or less pro-American French editor can write: "we are all, as it were, in a trap. In an incredible atmosphere of hopeless irresolution, which prevails equally in Paris and Saigon, we fight on." The cost of the war to the French budget eats up all American aid and more. A dozen French divisions are pinned down

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Even the Likes of Ike Can't Straddle T-H Issue

By BEN HALL

On January 11, President Eisenhower in a message to Congress will at last reveal his proposals for amending the Taft-Hartley Law.

He is not a "dynamic" and "crusading" political leader, as Walter Lippman has just informed us, adding that "His appointed role, the role for which he was chosen—the role for which he is fitted—is that of the restorer of order and peace after an age of violence and faction." As a man who wants to smooth things over, Eisenhower has the opportunity to display these talents in handling the Taft-Hartley hot potato.

He need only work out a series of amendments which can satisfy the labor movement and at the same time meet the demands of reactionaries in Congress and soothe the feelings of powerful big-business interests. That's all.

When the law was first passed, the labor movement insisted upon outright repeal, nothing less, and rejected the line of fighting for amendments. But a Democratic administration was in office; labor felt that it had a chance to make a speedy comeback.

After the Republican victory in '52, union leaders slowly softened their position. Without abandoning their demand for its repeal, they are ready to support, in the language of a CIO convention resolution, "any sincere attempt to bring fairness and justice into the law." The International Ladies Garment Workers Union phrases its own point of view in these words: "the act requires basic modification to an extent that would justify its repeal."

In campaigning for office, Eisenhower promised to revise the law to make it more satisfactory to labor, in particular to remove some of its most notorious union-busting provisions, and his new secretary of labor reiterated these promises to the recent CIO convention. The president wants it; the unions are ready to support it—the elements of a friendly deal are present.

ALAS, A DREAM

And if such a compromise could be worked out, it would be a spectacular achievement for the Eisenhower administration; hostility to the new Republican regime among its most hardened opponents, the labor movement, would be softened. But this dream is not to be.

If his proposals are vigorous enough to win support from the labor movement, which is virtually impossible, he would stir up a hornets' nest in his own party, among Southern Democrats, and others to be mentioned. And if they were mild enough to satisfy conservative Taft-Hartley diehards, which is just as impossible, they could only irritate labor still further.

Eisenhower's only refuge, as a man of compromise, can be found in a series of recommendations so feeble, so mild, so ineffectual, so meaningless that they will succeed admirably in annoying both sides. Such a program would embody one impressive feature standing out above all criticism: it would be consistent with his record and personality.

Eisenhower aims to win back what he lost when Martin Durkin resigned as secretary of labor. He cannot hope to have the support of organized labor but he can hope to stimulate moods of neutrality among some of its sectors. But when Durkin resigned, both the CIO and the AFL made clear that they were insisting upon the Durkin program of amendments and it was the rejection of this program by the president that got him into trouble with labor. He rejected Durkin's program in response to pressure from conservative Republicans and big-business spokesmen.

PRESSURE ON

This pressure is not easing up; in preparation for the forthcoming session of Congress, a new campaign begins to make the Taft-Hartley Law even more oppressive to unions.

Two weeks ago, the General Electric Company, in a special bulletin, warned

that the administration might try to soften the law in order to win a sprinkling of labor support in this year's congressional elections, and it announced that it was against any changes. Less than a week later, the National Association of Manufacturers went further. It demands that the law be amended—its way—to outlaw all forms of the union shop and to include a "right-to-work law" that would give a man not the right to a job but the right to be a strike-breaker.

The labor movement and the pitifully weak band of so-called liberals in the Democratic Party await the presidential message before deciding whether to back Eisenhower's proposals. When the Taft-Hartley question comes to the floor of Congress, if it does, more will be tested than the sincerity of Eisenhower's campaign promises. The labor movement will get a chance to see how aggressively or how feebly the Democratic Party will fight for the union's program.

ACLU Gives Brownell Too Much Credit For Those Non-Existent Hearings!

By ALBERT GATES

Several weeks ago, the American Civil Liberties Union issued its exhaustive report on civil liberties from January 1951 to June 1953. In this generally excellent survey, there is one section which is misleading because of ambiguity.

Writing about the attorney general's List of Subversive Organizations, the report says:

"The problem presented by the attorney general's list has been reduced but not finally resolved. The attorney general has listed approximately 200 organizations mainly as Communist, Fascist, totalitarian or subversive. The list has been compiled without giving an opportunity to each organization for a hearing, and membership in such organizations was generally the chief evidence against employees in loyalty cases. Though a 5-3 decision in May 1951 of the U. S. Supreme Court resulted in a ruling that hearings should be granted, no steps were taken by the Truman administration to grant any such hearings. The new administration won the congratulations of the ACLU for granting hearings to organizations already listed and to those it proposed to designate on the list. . . ." (Emphasis mine—A. G.)

Most of the above is true, particularly as it applies to the Truman administration. The decision of the Supreme Court itself was confusing, although the instruction that hearings should be granted was unmistakable. In seeking to bring some kind of order to the methods of the previous administration's successive attorneys general, President Eisenhower issued a new Presidential Order 10450 which provided for hearings to be granted to organizations to be listed. A series of steps were elaborated by the attorney general which would result in hearings.

However, the attorney general proceeded to reconstruct a list of alleged subversive organizations by placing all of the organizations that were on President Truman's list without hearings on the new list, likewise without prior hearings. Before any new organization is to be placed on a list, the attorney general would first have to grant a hearing. But for more than 200 organizations, the hearings, when and if granted, would come after the placement and not before.

Even for new organizations proposed for the list after a hearing has been granted, the attorney general announces and convicts in advance by public statements (as he did in the case of the National Lawyers Guild).

But as yet, and this is the important point, not a single hearing has been held by the attorney general, throughout the year of 1953.

In the case of the Independent Socialist League which, after four years of effort, succeeding in obtaining a Statement of Grounds and Interrogatories, to which it replied at considerable length (see LABOR ACTION of Sept. 28, 1953) no hearing has yet been granted. And this, despite the fact that the ISL has com-

plied with all the rules and regulations issued by the president and the attorney general.

It is true that the ISL finally obtained a State of Grounds and Interrogatories and for the first time learned the basis for the initial actions of the attorney general. A thorough reply was made to these charges and interrogatories. According to his own procedures, the attorney general was obligated to set a date for an early hearing. To date, however, he has effectively evaded his responsibilities and refused to set a date for such a hearing; as a matter of fact the attorney general has made the matter of a hearing a purely provisional matter.

Waiting in vain for a month after replying to the attorney general, on Oct. 8, 1953, the ISL sent the following telegram to Attorney General Brownell:

"When may we expect date set for hearing in the case of Independent Socialist League?"

On October 21, 1953, the attorney general sent the following reply:

"Reference is made to your telegram of October 8, 1953, requesting advice as to the date of a possible hearing under Executive Order 10450 in the matter of the Independent Socialist League, et al.

"Please be assured that it is the policy of this Department to give ample notice to the designee of any hearing which may take place in connection with this program." (Emphasis mine—A. G.)

The point of the letter was not lost on us.

It is clear that the matter of a hearing is not a settled thing. It has yet to be granted by the attorney general and there is nothing certain about it since the whole question remains in the exclusive hands of an administration bureaucracy. If the Department of Justice is not a very zealous defender of the Bill of Rights, it is expert in the well-known practice of stalling.

PRESSING THE A-G

The ISL reiterated its demand for a hearing in a reply dated October 29, 1953, which reads as follows:

"We have received your letter of Oct. 21, 1953, in reply to our telegram of Oct. 8, 1953, requesting that we be advised of the hearing date which the Department contemplated in the case of the Independent Socialist League.

"We note, however, that your reply to our request for specific information is made in pointedly provisional terms, even hypothetical. You refer to a 'possible hearing' and to 'any hearing which may take place.'

"In this connection, we would draw your attention to the provisions of Sections 41.4 and 41.5 under Part 41, Chapter I of Title 28—Judicial Administration of April 29, 1953, as follows:

"Request for hearing. Section 41.3.—Any organization filing a reply as provided in this Part may accompany its reply with a written request for a hearing. In the absence of such a request, the attorney general shall determine the matter on the basis of the information

gathering."

"Luciano's offer tends to bear out what we have long contended," said Thomas further, "that the Tresca killing was done by hired gangsters, and that their identity was and is known to various members of the underworld. And because of Mr. Stern's report on this, we have in mind certain constructive suggestions in connection with the Tresca inquiry to submit to District Attorney Frank Hogan.

"Mr. Stern dealt with the Luciano interview in a revealing book entitled *No Innocence Abroad*, on Random House's current list. But the point therein about the offer of the names of the Tresca slayers to the governor apparently received no publicity. If it was cited in any of the reviews, we missed seeing it. . . .

"Lately we had occasion to write to District Attorney Hogan about a report that his office had a new lead in the Tresca case. An answer came from Alexander Herman, Homicide Bureau head, assuring us that that investigation was 'continuing actively.' . . . We remain convinced that it was a political crime."

available to him and the reply of such organization."

"Notice of Hearing. Section 41.5.—Upon receipt of a request as provided in Section 41.4, the attorney general will set a date and fix a place for hearing and notify the organization thereof by registered mail."

"The Independent Socialist League, et al., have complied completely with the provisions of Section 41.4 above. We remind you once more of the concluding paragraph of our reply to the attorney general's Statement of Grounds and Interrogatories, which said:

"Having herewith completed the replies requested by the Interrogatories and thus complied with the regulations established by the attorney general, the ISL and SYL which it represents in this proceeding, reiterates its request for an early hearing before the attorney general or anyone deputed to act for him in our petition to be removed from the 'subversive list.'"

"This request was reiterated in our communication accompanying our reply to the aforementioned grounds and interrogatories, and brought to your attention once again in our telegram of Oct. 8, 1953.

"A reference to Section 41.5 above referred to, makes clear the provision for the setting of a date and place of hearing by the attorney general 'upon receipt of a request' as provided for in the previous section. This section does not place a hearing in the realm of 'possibility' which 'may take place,' but is presumed to be integral to the procedures laid down by the attorney general in connection with Executive Order 10450.

"We appreciate the suggestion, of course, that we will receive ample notice of the time and place of 'any hearing which may take place,' but we desire to point out that, for our part, we have been waiting four years for an opportunity to prove the error of the attorney general in placing the aforementioned on his list and that the Department has had many more years to prepare its case. We therefore request, sir, that a specific date for a hearing be forwarded to us, in accordance with the rules of procedure laid down by the attorney general, and to remove the matter of a hearing in connection with our case out of the provisional and hypothetical position in which you have placed it by your communication."

The attorney general has not rejected a hearing for the ISL. He just has not replied to the above, not set a date for a hearing and simply will not be "rushed" into one. While it is true that the new administration has "granted hearings," the hearings remain a purely theoretical proposition. In the only case, to our knowledge, where a hearing is long overdue, the attorney general has not actually granted one. To say that he has "granted hearings," is to create the impression that they are being held, when, in fact, not a single one has yet been granted or held.

The ACLU has taken the attorney general's announcement of procedures as good coin. As yet, only counterfeit currency is being used.

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LONDON LETTER

Britain's Economy Sensitive to Talk Of 'Recession' on This Side of Ocean

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, Dec. 30—Earlier this week the Organization for European Economic Cooperation published its report, which included a section on Britain.

It showed that last year the capitalist economy of Britain had shown a slight profit. Despite the fact that defense expenditure had increased by 50 per cent over 1950, the total reserve of gold and dollars of the United Kingdom had gone up by \$753 million over the past year. Nevertheless these reserves still stand at the perilously low figure of only \$2520 million.

The production in this country compared with 1950 was 105 per cent, but this was very little increase compared with the American figure of 129, and the OEEC countries' average of 128. There has also been a reduction of the ratio of consumption to gross national product; this was 65 per cent compared with 68 per cent in 1950, and is indicative of greater use of resources for export and foreign investment.

WHY SENSITIVE

What were the reasons for the improvement in Britain's position? Perhaps most important was the "terms of trade." This the relation between the cost of exports and the cost of imports. Since Britain is mainly an industrial country, for it the terms of trade are virtually the same as the relation between the prices of industrial products and of raw materials and food. After the buying spree created by the Korean war, the price of raw materials fell considerably, much more than the prices of capital goods and machinery. Thus the "terms of trade" moved considerably in Britain's favor. Also militating in favor of the British economy was an exceptionally high level of world trade.

This cannot be expected to continue, and Britain is particularly sensitive to the talks of "recession" we hear from the U. S. side of the Atlantic. Many British imports in the U. S., like bicycles, woollens, etc., are in the semi-luxury class, and it has been pointed out that a one per cent decrease in American trade would produce a 5 per cent decrease in American demand for British goods.

This year the Conservatives took off a considerable slice of the purchase tax which we still pay on practically all goods except food. It varies from one-sixth to two-thirds of the price of each article. A threatened slump here this time last year stimulated the Tories into cutting a lot of purchase tax; this together with increased profits, increased wages, and increased money in circulation has caused an all-round increase in demand for goods. Improved home demand not only means that there is less for export but that the producers have less interest in the export market, when they can make bigger profits at less risk at home.

RESILIENT

The great home demand tends to make people invest less money in the modernization of industry. Insofar as Britain produces many semi-luxury goods which have a fluctuating demand, they must be of a competitively higher standard than those of other countries. This requires considerable investments, which are not being made.

In order to achieve a reasonable balance of payments, Britain aims at a surplus of \$970 million for next year and the subsequent few years. This can be done only by increasing overseas sales, but for cotton goods, wool, pottery, etc., world demand will obviously continue to decline. It is on aircraft, engineering goods, tractors, etc., that British industry will have to concentrate.

What will all this mean? Simply this: By dint of a favorable win in world economics, and of a certain amount of American aid, Britain has once again

staggered on to her feet. It has shown a remarkable degree of resilience. Despite a "defense" budget of \$3.75 billion and despite fighting small-scale wars in Malaya and Korea, while preparing for others in Egypt and maybe elsewhere, this country has been able to improve its economic position.

This improvement may not last many years with the severe competition of Japan, Germany and Italy, who are not burdened with vast armies and far-flung empires. Most of their production can go to raising their own economic levels.

CONTRADICTION

The OEEC reports seem to me to underline some of the basic contradictions of capitalism. All the industrial countries are fighting tooth and nail for the limited markets which exist. This is not just a stimulating sport; this competition is vitally necessary to each country to maintain its own economic activities under the capitalist system.

In fact, many of Britain's political troubles have arisen from the necessity

of its capitalist system to maintain hold over primary producers of raw materials. It is no coincidence whatever that there is a war in Malaya or that London intervened in Guiana. In world competition, cheap raw materials are Britain's lifeblood.

Even the Labor Party in office realized that, as long as it was operating within the framework of the capitalist system and was unprepared to initiate steps toward socialism in England, it too had to be a party to colonial oppression. No wonder its leaders talked of a "realistic" policy.

It has been pointed out that since the war, Britain has been a prey to economic troubles every two years. This is based on the world cycle of demand and production of raw materials. In 1950, before the Korean war started, the economic surveys used to read similar to the OEEC survey this week. Neither offers a basic remedy to the problems of capitalism; both treat the disease in the body social symptomatically rather than basically.

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

prospective allies who have the least difficulties, internal, ideological and otherwise, standing in the way of becoming military pawns for the U. S. colossus.

(2) Wherever Washington turns in its attempt to organize the world under its command in a firm war bloc against Russia, it runs into disrupting antagonisms that rip its own camp.

In Europe, the French-German antagonism is threatening to sink the EDC project and tear NATO to pieces. In the Middle East the Israeli-Arab antagonism alternately gets Washington embroiled with one side or the other, and sometimes with both simultaneously. In the Far East it cannot always get its other Asian friends to stop cavilling at the prospect of a remilitarized Japan. Then there is Burma vs. Chiang Kai-shek, Italy vs. Tito on Trieste, Britain vs. the Continent, North Africa vs. France...

How long can a big power stand this sort of nonsense? It tries our patience, it does. It's all right to talk about the "free world" but there's got to be a limit somewhere. These foreigners just don't know what's good for them. Clearly we have to make them see the light even if we have to knock their heads together a bit, like a loving father—or uncle. Here we are, turning our pockets inside out for them, and money doesn't grow on trees you know, and what gratitude do we get, nothing, just bickering and squalling and childish hair-pulling while we carry the big burden of our happy family. They lack humility, that's what. So we've just got to crack the whip over these fellers and bring them into line. Sure, sure, communists and radicals and eggheads may call this imperialistic but WE know that it's all for the good of freedom and democracy....

That's what imperialists tell themselves.

Europe's Atom-Pool

In all the discussion in the press over the Eisenhower proposal for a pool of atomic-energy development efforts, there was a not unimportant fact which we must have missed, if anyone mentioned it. In case our readers are in the same fix, we quote the information for them, from I. F. Stone's *Weekly*, where it is usefully recalled:

"The U. S. is in danger of falling behind in the race to develop the peacetime uses of atomic energy. France in June of last year and Britain last December launched atomic power programs. Both countries are also participants in an organization of which little has been heard in this country—the European Organization for Nuclear Research established in May of 1952 to study the non-military uses of the atom. The other governments participating are Belgium, Denmark, Western Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland. A \$30,000,000 laboratory is being erected in Geneva, where construction was approved in a

referendum over Communist opposition after safeguards were adopted permitting the Swiss to shut the project down in event of war. Three Soviet satellites, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, were invited to participate originally but turned the offer down. There are some in Washington who regard the Eisenhower atomic proposal as an effort to take this purely European project over, as the Brussels pact was taken over in the Atlantic Pact."

That last speculation may or may not be true, but certainly the existence of this European atom-pool organization makes the Eisenhower speech even somewhat less brilliant than it appeared at the time, and that isn't saying too much. Remember too that in making this proposal Eisenhower was supposed to be taking the initiative in foreign affairs...

Big Koestler Hoax

For the Hoax of the Year, we nominate, for 1953—next to the Canadian whose thrilling secret-agent story of *The Man Who Wouldn't Talk* turned out to be imaginary—an article by Arthur Koestler called "A Guide to Political Neuroses."

This piece got itself featured in the new monthly *Encounter* put out by the Congress for Cultural Freedom and then reprinted in the *New Leader*. Both editors were taken in.

Koestler's article is written with all apparent seriousness, in the great tradition of hoaxes. It purports to give a "Freudian" interpretation of the politics of our time: all about the "unconscious guilt complex" and "repressed guilt" of the German people, the "collective amnesia" of the French and their "neurotic pattern," the "repetition-compulsion" of appeasers, etc.

More than that, the joke is pushed further, still with a perfectly straight face: "For nearly every aberration of the sexual drive, we can find a corresponding type of disturbance of the political libido," writes our humorist. He details it: ambivalence, eternal adolescence, "political oversexedness," fetishism (with "Stalin's high-necked tunic" taking the place of women's riding boots, etc.)....

In Sartre he discovers the "incestuous type of political libido"; he also spots "the political equivalent of a nymphomaniac," the "political masochist," etc. In modern times, "the political libido of man was turned loose like an adolescent's erotic craving." Stalinism "has all the sex appeal of a strong monolithic creed...."

The whole thing is an excellent take-off, an inimitable caricature, of the tendency of some vulgarizers of Freud to make politics an appendage of the Oedipus complex.

We suppose the editors of *Encounter* and the *New Leader* will claim that Koestler is serious about it, just as they are.

Peace in Indo-China —

(Continued from page 1)

in Asia while the threat of German rearmament grows. The dragging on of the war is one of the biggest single boosts for the popularity of Stalinism in France.

In this situation, Ho Chi Minh has taken the initiative in offering opportunities for a negotiated peace.

An end to the futile slaughter in Indo-China is devoutly to be wished, and no good to either the Indo-Chinese or French people can come from any possible continuation of the present war. A peace must then be negotiated, and if France hesitates, it is only for two reasons, no doubt: (1) pressure from Washington against it; and (2) irresolution in the minds of the French imperialists themselves, for while they are increasingly convinced that they cannot continue, still they cannot bring themselves easily to admitting that their hard heads have been beaten in.

FIRST STEP

But a negotiated peace can have a progressive meaning for Indo-China only if it is a first step. By itself it may mean the end of much useless fighting and dying, but not any solution for the people.

After a peace, the problem will still be acute of what to do about the division of Indo-China between the Stalinists and Viet-Nam. But here the problem is far from being as hopeless as it seems to be in Korea in the choice between Syngman Rhee and Nam II.

On both sides there are known to be substantial independent forces who wish no subordination to either the French or the Stalinists. The Viet-Minh movement, according to many reports, has been quite Stalinized in the course of the fighting—thanks to French policy and its Bao Dai—and no doubt there is no open opposition. But this does not mean that great chunks of important support which Ho has now couldn't be torn away from him by an Indo-Chinese movement which is truly independent of France and imperialism.

A negotiated peace could be a step toward a real solution to the division of Indo-China only if it served to bring together the forces now scattered on both sides of the lines who belong together by virtue of opposition to both Stalinism and capitalist imperialism. The basis for such a rapprochement exists. It can be initiated from the Viet-Nam side by a militant democratic-nationalist movement.

The best contribution which the French can make to this end is very simple: get out of Indo-China and stay out. The same goes for the American dollar. While imperialism can scarcely be expected to release its talons unreluctantly, in this case a militant Indo-Chinese movement could enforce its will. This decrepit French imperialism is not what it used to be, and its claws can be chopped off while it is in a weakened condition.

The present impasse shows only a blank wall of hopelessness. A negotiated peace is necessary, yes, but a progressive program for the defeat of Stalinism must go beyond it to the achievement of Indo-Chinese independence.

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"SCIENTISTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE BOMB"

By CARL DARTON

Someone else has virtually written this column for us. All we have to do is review the current article "Scientists Before and After the Bomb" by R. L. Meier and E. Rabinowitch. The writers are respectively a former executive secretary of the Federation of American Scientists and the current editor of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*. It appears in the November 1953 issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.

The article opens with: "The Second World War and the atomic bomb have greatly changed the pattern of scientific activity, particularly in the United States. All scientists old enough to remember feel the difference in their bones; and many of them are not very happy about it."

During this approximately ten-year period, the United States has taken the leadership in world science with 600,000 professional scientists and engineers, compared with 375,000 before the war. Most of the increase has occurred in government and industry. Expenditures for research and development in industry, universities and government passed the billion mark in 1943. From 1940 to 1952 non-military research increased by a factor of four, while military research and development, including the Atomic Energy Commission, has increased forty times.

Considering the demand for scientists, their economic rewards have been meager, barely keeping abreast of inflation despite their increase in prestige and power. Further on the debit side are the "occupational hazards" of scientists such as loyalty checks and security investigations. Today the word "scientist" invariably evokes in newspaper-conditioned America the word "bomb" and "spy." This has resulted in unprecedented harassment in work and travel.

Likewise, continue Meier and Rabinowitch, whether the scientists like it or not, they have tended to lose their "individuality," being grouped in team research in vast laboratories with huge equipment such as atom-smashing machines. Through government subsidy, together with the contract system, much of science is regulated by the functioning of bureaucracy. The objectives and scope of research are carefully planned and continuously checked upon and evaluated. To quote further:

"Not so long ago, theirs [scientists'] was a small, dedicated group, keeping rather aloof from the rest of the world in what were referred to as 'ivory towers' but were more often grimy basement laboratories. They lived in intense communion with their colleagues all over the world—an international fraternity which even wars and revolutions could not altogether disrupt." On the other hand, now, "Some of them, who grew up with the atomic spy scares, restrictions on scientific publication, and curtailed international exchange, may find it easy to look at scientists in other countries as competitors, if not enemies."

"RESTLESS, FRUSTRATED AND APPREHENSIVE"

The scientist's belief in himself and society has changed: "Scientists of the pre-war era did not doubt the fundamental worth and virtue of their vocation." Now, however, "The short path from the discovery of nuclear fission to Hiroshima has shattered their feeling of remoteness of science from the folly of man's pursuit of power over man, and from the crime of nations warring on nations."

These developments agitated the scientist after the war to press for civilian and international control of atomic energy. They banded together in the FAS and founded the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* to give organizational form to their concern over the misuse of science. That they have not succeeded very well the social-conscious scientists are the first to admit. The situation, they realize, however, will not remain static. The way ahead is uncertain. The writers Meier and Rabinowitch close on this note:

"This, then, is the American scientific scene ten years after the chain reaction that led to the atomic bomb: a greatly expanded army of scientists, with vastly increased funds for research but little improvement in their own economic status; enjoying new respect in society and new influence in academic and industrial organizations, yet looked upon askance as a group of doubtful loyalty and an almost demonic capacity for evil; consulted by the Executive and rubbing shoulders with the legislature, but frustrated in attempts to make the national leadership fully understand the nature of science and its fearsome implications."

"In the face of this contradictory picture, the majority of scientists, particularly of the younger generation, tend to seek refuge in a political professionalism; while the minority remain intensely concerned with the way in which the 'age of science' dawns upon mankind. They are depressed by their incapacity to make the world understand that the eager acceptance of new scientific gadgetry for war and peace without the acceptance of a new rational code of political behavior is a path of disaster. They feel restless, frustrated, and apprehensive."

Science Knows All

Among science's new contributions to the understanding of society is the discovery by a Boston doctor—who told all about it to the recent convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science—that "Money sickness is the most common psychosomatic illness of our times."

It seems that the lack of it, and the psychological consequences thereof, may cause stomach trouble, headache, back pains or even heart trouble, muscle and joint pains, or serious emotional disturbances.

Lily-White Reformist Mind at Work

A spokesman for the Labor Party of South Africa, writing in the bulletin of the Socialist International, explains to his world comrades why the party is so weak. Keeping in mind that this party basically supports the racist policies of the white masters of South Africa, though deploring Malan's excesses, his words can be quoted as a cross between humor and piteousness:

"Many are the explanations for the weakness of the Labor Party and it is easy enough to attribute it to the absence of the real proletariat, the non-European, from the ranks of the party. But this explanation does not remove the fundamental need of a party with a sound economic policy."

So although the real proletariat of the country is excluded from this "Labor Party," that must not be thought to be of first importance in answering the question. Rather the South Africa-type Laborite finds consolation in the mournful thought that "where nationalism is rampant, no political movement of the workers can thrive"—especially when that movement sets itself apart from the nationalism of the oppressed and supports the chauvinism of the oppressors.

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MARXISM for TODAY

History for Pocketbook Readers

By PHILIP COBEN

Comments on another couple of "serious" historical works recently published as pocketbooks for the edification of the masses: *Greek Civilization and Character*, excerpts from ancient Greek historians, chosen, translated and edited by Arnold J. Toynbee; and *The Shaping of the Modern Mind* by Professor Crane Brinton. (Week before last, this column also commented on the pocketbook edition of René Sédillot's *History of the World* in a nutshell.) All three of these are Mentor pocketbooks.

In spite of all remarks to be made below, the superiority of these pocketbook choices over Mickey Spillane is taken as axiomatic. New American Library, which publishes the Mentor pocketbooks, is by far the leader in the field of low-cost paperbound non-fiction as far as quality is concerned.

But if we take Professor Toynbee's book as the serious anthology on historiography which it purported to be when originally published as part of the series *The Library of Greek Thought*—and not merely from the point of view of whether it is worth 35 cents as a reprint pocketbook—then one must wonder.

The briefest example we can give for what we wonder about is Toynbee's chapter on "Democracy." Now the subject of ancient Greek democracy, its limitations, its character, its bases, etc., is large, important, and interesting. Professor Toynbee has managed to find only two brief squibs on the subject worthy for inclusion in his chapter.

In one of these squibs, Herodotus remarks that the virtues of democracy gave the Athenians a greater military strength than did despotic systems, because the citizens felt that they were fighting for their own advantage. In the second, also from Herodotus, we hear of Aristagoras of Miletus, who unsuccessfully tried to convince the rulers of Sparta to make war on the Persians, but who did succeed in winning the Athenian democracy over to his view. This latter passage ends with the observation:

"Apparently it is a simpler matter to delude many individuals than one, considering that Aristagoras found himself unable to delude Cleomenes the Lacedaemonian in isolation, while he successfully accomplished the feat upon thirty thousand Athenians."

The two squibs take up one short page and constitute the sum-total of what Toynbee includes under the subject of Greek "Democracy."

BANAL METHOD

At first glance the reader might think that Toynbee was merely making a collection of interesting anecdotes, like a department of *Reader's Digest*, but this would be an injustice to the eminent professor. He has an aim, based on an idea. It is that Greek life and its problems provide parallels for our own time from which we can learn. His method is to find the parallels. The two squibs mentioned above have caught his attention because they remind him of something about modern life.

If the whole thing adds up to a banality, it is because his method is banal. It is, however, the same method of shallow parallelism which also produced his *Study of History*, where the bare bones of the method are overlaid with masses of erudition in sometimes-fascinating gobs.

Taken individually, many of the excerpts which Toynbee translates are quite interesting. Taking the book as a whole, as presumably a study of the Greek mind in self-revelation, we cannot imagine anyone getting any appreciable understanding about what happened in Greek history or Greek thought. The above-described chapter on "Democracy" strikes us as more revealing of Toynbee than of Greek civilization.

TOUR DE FORCE

Toynbee is the leading example today of the historian who has risen to eminence on the basis of an historical method which is at the opposite pole from the materialist conception of history. He is a *conscious* idealist in historical method. Crane Brinton is, on the other hand, rather typical of much of American professorism in not being very conscious about his own method at all; but he does know that he won't stand for any of this "economic interpretation," thank you.

So in *The Shaping of the Modern Mind*, Professor Brinton has managed to pull off something of a *tour de force*, at least for these days.

This pocketbook edition is a republication of the second half of Brinton's *Ideas and Men*, being "a self-contained volume

that covers the period since the Renaissance." It begins with a discussion of humanism, rationalism and Protestantism and goes on to and through the mid-twentieth century.

And it does this without ever, at any point, bothering to discuss or relate the fact that this period saw the development of a new social system, capitalism!

We are not here complaining that Professor Brinton is not a Marxist—far from that. It doesn't take a Marxist historian to realize how important the background of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of new classes are to any attempt to sketch Western thought since the Renaissance.

Brinton is rather an extremist. "We are now well out of the once fashionable and innocent economic materialism that explained all human group conflict as a struggle for economic goods," he writes in his Introduction. Yes, indeed, "we" are out of it, so far out of it that the clock of historiography can be turned back a hundred years.

EXTREMIST

Thus, in his final summary section, Brinton can sum up the intellectual development of our era without even mentioning the existence of capitalism or any other economic change. And in the body of his book, capitalism gets mentioned virtually only at points where the author is polemizing against any suggestions of an "economic interpretation" of history.

As we said, this is very extreme. The typical American historian likes to think of himself as a "pluralist"—that is, an eclectic—who is as willing to throw in a bit of "economic" interpretation as anything else.

Perhaps it is only coincidental that both of Mentor's recent reprints are of such "extremists," i.e., Toynbee and Brinton. Or perhaps not.

Now, of course, any modern historian who can write a whole book on *The Shaping of the Modern Mind* without reference to the rise of capitalism thereby also shows that he has a whole slew of other qualifications for making an expert analysis of Marxism. It happens that Marxism had to be one of the subjects "covered" in the book.

EXPERT

For this purpose, one of Crane Brinton's qualifications is his expert ignorance. He knows, for example, that (1) Kautsky was a defender of "the 19th century 'revisionist' movement associated first of all with the name of Eduard Bernstein"; (2) that Marx himself used the terms "dialectical materialism" and "historical determinism" as "almost equivalent"; (3) that for Marx the fundamental determinant of society was "the means of production," which Brinton explains as "the way men make a living"; (4) that Marx "worked out a complete outline of social change in accordance with his dialectic"—no doubt in some as yet undiscovered manuscript; and many other things that no Marxist ever knew before.

Another qualification is Professor Brinton's sharp memory . . . of all the tired ways of "refuting" Marx. Marxism is a religion—Brinton goes through this gambit exhaustively, playing with a "definition" of religion which would make ANY ideological movement come under its terms.

More interesting is the passage in which Brinton accepts Stalinism as the "practical" version of Marxism—that is, specifically approves the Stalinist line of thought which argues that Stalinist policy was truly imposed by inescapable realities of Russian life, etc. This passage on Stalin almost becomes a glowing tribute; Stalin's role for Marxism is compared with that of St. Paul for Christianity! There is an affinity here between our idealist Democrat and the Dictator which may not be entirely accidental. . . .

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American Socialism: Eyed from France

It will be of interest for LABOR ACTION readers to see the following appraisal by a French socialist organ of the socialist movement in America.

A recent issue of the French socialist newspaper *Le Peuple Valaisan* carried an article on "The Situation in American Socialism" by Herbert Leroy, part of which we republish below. The article begins with a short discussion of the fallacy of considering the Democratic Party as "socialist," and makes clear that all socialist groups in the U. S. are very weak and small. Next comes the section we reprint, describing the socialist groups. And the last half of the article discusses the reasons for the weakness of socialism in this country and the backwardness of the labor movement.—Ed.

THE SITUATION IN AMERICAN SOCIALISM

First of all, there is the Socialist Party of the United States (SP-USA), which is part of the Socialist International. There is the Independent Socialist League (ISL), which is a revolutionary socialist organization and, on the international field, defends the position of the "Third Camp": neither Washington nor Moscow, but for a third socialist and working-class camp against all forms of imperialism. Next, there is the Socialist Workers Party (SWP); it is the Trotskyist party and, with reservations, supports the Stalinist camp. Finally there is the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), which is the oldest of the socialist parties in America. Today it is a narrow isolated sect which ceased having any original ideas since the death of its founder, Daniel De Leon. . . .

The Socialist Party has been going through a serious crisis for several years. Its general orientation is pro-"Atlantic"—i.e., with reservations it supports the American bloc. Its opposition to the government has been very much weakened since the reforms instituted by the New Deal. Class-collaboration being accepted on the international field, it was also possible to accept it on the domestic scene, this being facilitated by the exceptionally high standard of living of the masses of workers and by the reformist ideology of the trade unions.

Consequently, it has become more and more difficult to distinguish the right wing of the Socialist Party from the "left" wing of the Democratic Party. The Socialist right wing, headed by the party leader, Norman Thomas, tries to trans-

form the party into a propaganda group on the "left" wing of the Democratic Party and the reformist unions.

This state of affairs has not been swallowed by the left wing of the party, which is made up particularly of the Young Socialists, whose political position is very close to that of the "Third Camp." This conflict came to a head this past summer with the expulsion of the Young Socialists by the SP. It is likely that the latter will join with the Independent Socialist League and that the SP will become a kind of propaganda circle.

The Trotskyists are also in the midst of a full-fledged crisis, which has just ended in a split.

Since 1948 they have been following a policy with respect to the USSR which is analogous to the policy followed by the SP with respect to American capitalism—the policy of "critical support." As in the case of the SP, differences began to blur. Looking at the policies of the SP, one might often wonder where socialist politics left off and bourgeois reformist politics began. So too, in the case of the Trotskyists, one might wonder where revolutionary socialist politics left off and Stalinist politics began.

And within both groups, each from its own side, the same thing happened: a minority drew the conclusions which pressed upon them, and went off, in the one case toward the bourgeoisie, in the other case toward the Stalinists. The results of the division of the world into two imperialist blocs are thus manifested within the socialist movement itself: each of the two blocs exerts an attractive pull which was finally stronger than the intellectual and moral qualities of certain militants.

Thus we can say that the ideas of genuine socialism are today defended most particularly by the Independent Socialist League, by the Young Socialists, and some related groups.

These comrades are the only ones to defend these simple truths: that the working-class and socialist movement must play an independent role; that one cannot defeat one imperialism by allying oneself with another; that socialism will not be advanced through class-collaboration and "sacred union"; that socialism and democracy are inseparable ideas. Therefore they have succeeded in having their voices heard in some anti-war and pacifist circles and in the periphery of the working-class movement, and their influence is growing slowly.

BOOKS and Ideas

One Browser's View—

It's a Hard Life for Novelists

By GABRIEL GERSH

At the end of the year a book addict is tempted to cast his mind back and reconsider in a mood of seasonal benevolence, the books he has liked or disliked, and perhaps even to generalize about the present condition of American letters.

The temptation to generalize about this subject came to me the other day when I was browsing in a few bookshops. Now in most bookshops in New York City, the merchandise on sale seems at once standardized and quite different from that in most of the bookshops of Europe. Prominent in the window there may be large art books; also in the foreground, the latest political biography or autobiography with the subject's portrait on the cover and the promise of exciting journalism inside; next to it, the fashionable sea saga; the nice piece of fiction everyone is reading this season; the latest novel of raw life, lust and passion; and, of course, the "How" books—"How to Grow Tea-Roses," or "How to Have a Happy Sex Life."

Inside: a table of miscellaneous books, a few shelves of well-bound world's classics and several stands of detective and wild-west thrillers. . . . It was disturbing, for there was nothing to get hold of in such a bookshop. Could the novel as art form flourish in this atmosphere?

To place all the blame on commercialism, as so many of us tend to do, is too easy an answer, and is, in fact, inadequate. In spite of the flood of trash, more and more people are reading the "serious books" and the classics. Yet what are the causes of the barrenness of the present literary era?

ORWELL'S VIEW

In retrospect today it is not hard to see the years 1914-18 as some kind of turning point in our history. George Orwell, in reflecting on his life, was also haunted by the sense of change. The sense of a peace and *douceur de vivre* irretrievably lost around 1914-1918, dominant in all his work, was the theme of his novel, *Coming Up for Air*, which he wrote in 1938 in expectation of the war to come.

Orwell always wrote his essays in a reminiscent mood, conjuring up the pre-1914 era as the ideal time for anyone to have lived. He felt, as many of us undoubtedly do, a certain nostalgia for the days when life appeared simpler and more reassuring.

In a brilliant essay, *The Prevention of Literature*, published after the outbreak of World War II, Orwell tried to trace the impact of present-day political developments on literature. Here, among other things, is what he said:

"Prose literature as we know it is the product of rationalism, of the Protestant centuries, of the autonomous individual. . . . In the future it is possible that a new kind of literature, not depending on individual feeling or truthful observation, may arise, but no such thing is at present imaginable. It seems much likelier that if the liberal culture which we have lived in since the Renaissance actually comes to an end, the literary art will perish with it."

TREND

The causes of the social and cultural change are not easy to define. One could say that in World War I a certain sense of security was lost; that the years marked a growing turn from optimism to pessimism on the subject of technical progress; that the years since 1914-18 have brought us an increasing invasion of personal life by politics, the totalitarian nightmare of Hitlerism and Stalinism and now the H-bomb.

All these have contributed to social and political change, but I do not want to go too far afield. As far as literature is concerned, the important words in Orwell's quotation are "autonomous individual." And from the writer's standpoint—and here we come back to the new literature displayed in the average bookshop—the great change has been the trend toward an ever more centralized form of society.

The term "centralized," as used here, does not refer to the increasing powers of the government. It stands for the obvious and fundamental development of today, the organization of an ever-larger number of people in ever larger, more complex, more interlocked and impersonal processes of production. This development is seen in its clearest form in the bureaucratic civilization of Moscow. In the U. S. (politics apart) it is represented by the growth of Washington, by the giant size of General Motors and Du

Pont, by the vast intricacy of atomic research, by the giant radio and television networks, by the multi-million circulations of *Life*, *Time*, the *Daily News* and *Look*—all aspects of the new centralized society around us.

It is a society which has wrenched the writer, too, from his state of relative individual autonomy. It has turned him in many cases into a literary functionary and forced him into one of the big magazine, radio, film or advertising corporations. The degree of cultural satisfaction of these employments may vary, but the essential factor is that in each case a writer works under instructions handed down from above, often as a member of a team. In his office he is no longer the "autonomous individual," as outside it he has less and less time to play his part. In Russia the process has been carried to its logical conclusion. As a result, what was yesterday one of the greatest literatures has simply vanished. In the West, the centralization of modern society has tended to divert readers toward the "functional" literature predominant in the new type of bookshop and has created the present-day literary confusion and gloom.

SUGGESTION

All this has been described before, but I should like to make another suggestion, namely that the centralized society lends itself less and less to treatment by novelists. At a first glance, at least, was not the heyday of the great novel the 19th century, with its stress on individual differences, tastes and values? One might remember how much 19th-century European novels relied on emotions which have, it seems, lost their artistic meaning in our modern society today with its urge toward uniformity, toward social interchangeability, which undoubtedly blurs individual character.

When one thinks, for instance, of the effects achieved by Dickens through stressing the visual eccentricities of his characters, it is obvious that this could not be done in certain parts of the U. S., where everyone wears much the same clothes, drives the same cars, reads much the same books and magazines—that world of outward sameness, in fact, suggested in a novel such as John O'Hara's *Appointment in Samarra*.

The question is whether in such a uniform society differences of inward character are not also lessened, or at least blurred so far as the novelist is concerned. One could give many examples of this; the point, however, need not be belabored. Social uniformity does not change the basic facts of life. But the suggestion can certainly be made that our modern age with its blurring of outward forms of character distinctions does present an infinitely harder problem to the novelist today.

RED CROSS WORK

Conscription News points out that the Red Cross is willing to lend itself to military propaganda, by recalling the following item from the N. Y. *Times*' news columns:

"A nation-wide orientation program for high school boy seniors on just what they may expect in the armed services may result from Junior Red Cross participation in panel sessions. It was suggested by Delbert J. Lacey, 17, of Oklahoma City and received enthusiastic endorsement. Several chapters reported that they had successfully conducted such courses in cooperation with local draft boards.

"John A. Hannah, Assistance Secretary of Defense, told the night session that only 850,000 young men turning 18½ were available for the draft, with 1,000,000 replacements needed. He appealed to the Red Cross to help make army service more tolerable so that more men would re-enlist. He said that one way of helping was to lift, as far as possible, the serviceman's worries over the welfare of his home folk."—(New York *Times*, June 23, 1953.)

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A DISCUSSION OF PACIFISM —

The 'Pragmatic' Side of Non-Violence

By HAL DRAPER

The letter from Comrade Harrington (published on this page) confines itself, as he points out, to questions of "pragmatic tactics" and does not raise the question of "principled rejection of violence as such." From our point of view, this approach is naturally more congenial, more meaningful and more fruitful than the abstract-unhistorical approach of ethical-pacifism. In the discussion article by the pacifist Comrade David McReynolds which we published last week, there is also a section in which this "practical" approach is taken; we will discuss this section along with the present article.

First we would mention, however, that insofar as the "factual" or "pragmatic" approach is taken, it is no longer at all the question of PACIFISM that is under discussion, but rather a question of tactics which has often been mooted in Marxist movements without any reference to pacifism whatsoever.

But we wonder: for the "principled" pacifist, what is the relation between the "practical-tactical" arguments and the basically ethical foundation of the pacifist doctrine? How does it happen that the non-violent method which is absolutely necessary for the good of our soul is also, fortunately, the only "effective" and "practical" way of struggle? Is this a fortunate coincidence—like the lucky cat celebrated in the Kentucky proverb, "How wise of Providence to have made holes in the cat's fur just where the eyes are!"—or is it supposed to be in the nature of the universe that right always makes might? And do we know of any principled pacifist who would yield his doctrine if ever convinced that, in any given situation, a certain use of violence would be more effective than the pacifist formula?

We raise this question in the interests of candid discussion with our pacifist friends. For we sometimes tend to get the feeling that the "principled" pacifist will never be convinced, or change his mind, even if every "practical" argument were annihilated—for the simple reason that basically his views are founded on an entirely different mode of thought. We are led to feel, rightly or wrongly, that sometimes such discussion is herefore just beating about the bush, or that the principled pacifist regards the "pragmatic" arguments simply as sugar-coating for the "real" stuff, the abstract-ethical heart of pacifism.

But that needn't bother us in discussing the tactical questions because, as already mentioned, they are questions for Marxists to consider from the point of view of their own policies, and not merely from the point of view of an argument with pacifists.

CARICATURE AND REVOLUTION

Comrade Harrington's first point suggests that it is "suicidally romantic" in any case to think of using violence against a modern totalitarian state. This was also the idea which McReynolds pressed in last week's discussion: McReynolds rather poked fun at "the radical who thinks he is going to overthrow this or any other government with shotguns and Molotov cocktails." "... It is no longer the muskets of the king's troops against the muskets of the people," etc.

In the case of Comrade McReynolds' discussion of this point, I would say that he is clearly thinking not of modern socialist revolution but of old-fashioned putschist ideas. If McReynolds knows any radicals who are making plans to overthrow some government or other with shotguns, Molotov cocktails and even a brace of pea-shooters, then he is clearly traveling in the wrong circles.

His argument suggests that he thinks the Marxist view of revolution is something like this: The Revolutionary Party, at the right moment, forms a Revolutionary Workers' Militia, armed with the latest-type revolvers and preferably a few machine-guns, which thereupon marches on the government and engages in a pitched battle with the government's armed forces outside the local equivalent of the Winter Palace, while armed detachments suddenly fall on the telephone exchanges, railroad stations, radio transmitters and public water-closets to seize them for the Revolution. . . .

Comrade Harrington also seems to be thinking in terms that a revolution in a totalitarian country is to be "made" by a "workers' militia," etc.

Although they may know better, their way of putting the question seems to reduce the problem of revolution to an armed assault on the bastions of the government. To call this kind of stuff "suicidal romanticism" is to compliment it. If it exists at all, it is the hare-brained adventurism of a lunatic fringe, and not at all interesting.

Fortunately, the Marxist socialist's conception of revolution has little in common with this caricature.

In the first place—to take Harrington's problem of revolution "in a modern totalitarian state"—as long as the state can still rely substantially on its own armed forces, then clearly the revolutionary situation has not matured. In every modern revolution, the despotic state has been overthrown only when its armed forces, in whole or in overwhelming majority, went over to the revolution.

In the German revolution of 1918 which ended the First World War and overthrew the kaiser, little violence had to be used. This was so only because virtually all the forces of coercion were on the side of the revolution. The more a revolution is prepared to meet the problem, the less violence has to be actually used.

In the Russian Revolution, both of March and November 1917, fewer people were hurt or killed than the usual rate of slaughter-by-auto-accident in a busy American city. It was a comparatively "peaceful" affair. The bloodletting came with the Allied intervention in support of the counter-revolution.

In Germany the biggest bloodletting came after the "January days" of 1919; and what happened then? The Berlin workers had massed in a gigantic demonstration against the government; and there was no revolutionary leadership to organize their struggle. Futile acts of sporadic violence broke out, not as part of any revolutionary strategy but—note—because of the absence of any strategy or leadership. After a couple of days of this, the Social-Democratic government in power was able to rally some corps of Prussian officers, put them under the Social-Democratic bloodhound Noske, and start a bloody massacre of workers (it was in the course of this terror that Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered).

Most typically in such situations, the cruelest bloodbaths have taken place in cases where revolutionary forces have hesitated or stopped halfway, not where they have known what they wanted.

In any case, the first point that would be discovered from a study of what has actually happened in revolutionary upsurges, as against merely romantic or adolescent notions of what revolutions are, is this:

As long as a state is stable in its despotic controls; as long as it can control its own armed forces; as long as it has a "monopoly" over its own weapons of violence; as long as this "centralized state" remains centralized and untouched by the disintegrative influences of revolutionary feeling; in other words, as long as this centralized, despotic or totalitarian state is in the situation that Harrington and McReynolds are discussing, then of course it is suicidal and "romantic" and just plain stupid to think of "launching" workers' militia against it!

But it is precisely one of the characteristics of a revolutionary situation that the condition of the state has become quite different. And this has been brought about, not by "violent" methods, but by the political methods of struggle of the working-class and revolutionary movement which has brought the revolution to maturity.

As I emphasized last week in a different way: at least 99 per cent of the work of "making a revolution" comprises "non-violent methods" of all sorts, that is, the organizational, propaganda, political, agitational, etc. work of the movement. It is this which wins over the minds and hearts of the people, including the workers who compose the armed forces of the mighty state, and which gives the revolution its "force." In comparison with this, any use of violence is incidental, subordinate, auxiliary and of secondary significance—however necessary.

But the pacifist tends to think about "revolution" in the black-and-white metaphysical tones of "violence" or "non-violence," as if these represented antagonistic and mutually exclusive methods.

GENERALIZING ON E. GERMANY

Comrade Harrington's reference to East Germany is intriguing. The June revolt of the workers was unarmed, therefore the violence used by the workers was strictly limited ("non-violent," says Harrington), and it was "dictated by tactical necessity rather than by principle," but Harrington suggests that we "generalize the pragmatics of that particular situation."

Willingly. The generalization is: Never start a fight unless and until you think YOU can win. And: the first steps in the unfolding of a revolution are not the same as the last stages.

This is a very "pragmatic" matter indeed, but what has it to do with pacifism? The outstanding example in revolutionary history of the deliberate restraint of a revolutionary demonstration to non-violent methods, to fit the situation, was the policy of the Bolshevik party in the "July days" of 1917. Lenin did not learn this from pacifists.

The June revolt in East Germany represents the beginning of a revolution, historically speaking. Even so, evidence shows that the armed forces of at least the satellite government (the Volkspolizei) were unreliable. What is likely to happen in the last stages (to come) of the Russian empire in East Europe cannot be seen as yet in our crystal ball; but if anyone thinks it will be unmarked by violence against the Russian oppressors, then he is suffering from pacifist wish-fulfillment. In any case, the excellent strategy of the workers in the East German June revolt cannot give the pacifist much comfort.

Comrade Harrington's way of thinking on the subject is well indicated, I think, by his tell-tale question: "Is it [violence], at the present time, a method of anti-Stalinist activity for the East Germans?" No doubt, in asking this question he is thinking of something like an armed assault on Russian tanks; and perhaps we have made clear by now that this is an unlikely tactic at this stage of development of the anti-Stalinist revolution.

But—is factory sabotage a "non-violent" method in the eyes of our pacifist friend? Well, even "at the present time" we can conceive of it involving a speck of violence now and then, mostly involuntarily. . . . Are there anti-Stalinist cells of workers, formally or informally, here and there, organized or semi-organized, in the plants? We can conceive of their activities, and survival, sometimes demanding a slight infusion of "violence" for strictly limited purposes. . . . Is there a

TWO QUESTIONS

To the Editor:

I would like to take up your offer of space for a discussion of pacifism, not on the specific point of pacifism and democracy, but on another area in which I think a fruitful dialogue may take place between pacifists and socialists.

First off, I am not raising here the question of the principled rejection of violence as such. I am deliberately confining myself to a limited area of concrete circumstances and pragmatic tactics. I feel that this approach must be explored as well as that of general philosophic attitudes.

Engels once wrote—I believe it was in a preface to the *Class War in France*—of the effect that changes in military technology had on socialist tactics. I want to apply this point to two particular situations:

(1) In a modern totalitarian state, where the central power possesses a monopoly of technological violence, do you not think it suicidally romantic for a resistance movement to think in terms of "workers' militias" and the like—of counter-violence? Specifically, would violent resistance have been a viable method of anti-fascist activity for the Germans under Hitler? Is it, at the present time, a method of anti-Stalinist activity for the East Germans? The non-violent character of the East German events was indeed dictated by tactical necessity rather than by principle—at least the evidence seems to point to that conclusion—yet I think it worth while to generalize the pragmatics of that particular situation.

(2) In the case of international struggle, is it not possible that the advance of military technology has made modern warfare, at least, incapable of any good end? Specifically: assuming the most purer-than-the-pure socialist government, could it "defend" itself with hydrogen weapons? I ask this question from two points of view: socialist ethics—and socialist tactics. Could the Third Camp ever be a coalition of nations using modern, hydrogen-bomb warfare?

I purposely raise these questions on the pragmatic level of tactics. I think that there is often more possibility of understanding when a total re-evaluation of position is not required and where the dialogue grows out of immediate situations.

Above all, I am anxious that socialists should benefit from pacifist discussion and experience with non-violent techniques which I feel have a particular relevance in the situation of resistance to a totalitarian state monopolizing technological violence.

Fraternally,

Michael HARRINGTON

Dec. 18, 1953.

job action in a plant every now and then? These can be very peaceful indeed, but if, now and then, unavoidably, some foreman or some informer gets roughed up, how shall that cause us to answer Comrade Harrington's question?

We get the feeling that, even by the way the questions are put, the pacifist method tends to put "violence" and "non-violence" into two separate watertight compartments, and this does not correspond to what happens in life. It corresponds only to the pacifist wish to abstract from a whole situation that element alone which relates to the doing of bodily harm or physical injury. This cannot be given any "pragmatic" sanction.

SOCIALISM AND A-BOMBS

Comrade Harrington's second question asks whether a genuinely socialist government could "defend" itself with atomic weapons. I assume he means: under conditions where it has been attacked by a reactionary government using atomic weapons.

That assumption is necessary because otherwise he is asking, merely whether such a socialist government would use A-bombs first. The difference is important because our approach to such questions is above all political. It is, in the first place, a political question that Comrade Harrington is asking.

There is a political difference between the use of "conventional" weapons in war and atomic weapons; it is a question of the effect of such steps on the morale and thinking of the people on the other side of the lines.

There is a big difference between a socialist way of conducting a war and the capitalist way: For the socialist, the political and social struggle is the primary one. For the capitalist, therefore, the military considerations around the use of any weapons, whatever they might be, would be subordinate to the question of political consequences and results.

For both the capitalist and Stalinist war camps, once a war starts, there is no real perspective for them of ending it except by military struggle to a decision, that is, A- and H-bombs to the bitter end.

But a genuinely democratic socialist state which has (say) been attacked by Stalinist Russia in an atomic assault? We would maintain—in what could be an extended line of argumentation which we hope Harrington knows and agrees with now—that the strongest weapon of such a state would not be its military superiority but its ability to disintegrate the armed forces of

(Turn to last page)

Orthodox Recession —

(Continued from page 1)

ment as to whether what is happening is "just" an "adjustment," a "rolling adjustment," an "orthodox recession," or a "depression." These are terms which describe varying degrees of the same-kind of thing, except that since 1929 the word "depression" is avoided like the plague, and is taken to mean an acute collapse of the system from which there is no way out except a major war.

ORTHODOX?

Most of the experts agreed that what we have is an "orthodox recession." We trust that the term will make everyone happy, as it is always easier to get a short paycheck or to have to go on unemployment compensation if you know that what is happening to you is "orthodox," or in other words that it is according to the book.

Actually, there is nothing very "orthodox" about this recession. This is a decline which is taking place at a time when the federal government alone is still spending upward of \$50 billion a year. The federal government's estimated DEFICIT this year will be greater than the total federal income of 1939—a year of New Deal pump-priming. And government deficits are supposed to be anti-recession devices.

The lack of certainty among the economists about the prospect for 1954 is based on two things: (1) The failure of most of them to understand the fundamental, built-in

contradictions of the economic system, and (2) the fact that the Permanent War Economy is still a relatively new development in our economic history.

Although a large number of professional economists recognize at least in a general way the role of the military budget in keeping the economy propped up, few of them are willing to accept the obvious fact that without it the economy would not function at all.

THE BIGGER THEY ARE—

Thus, in pointing to sources of economic strength in the country, they keep talking about the high levels of personal income, the high levels of consumer buying, the continued growth of the population which leads to the formation of increasing numbers of family units, and the like.

But the fact is that none of these factors have anything to do with the basic problem of continued economic growth and stability. All of them were in operation in 1929, just before the crash. In fact, it is precisely in the growth of the productive capacity of the country to unheard-of heights, of which high incomes and massive buying are results, that one danger to the economy lies.

Where a capitalist economy is concerned, size does not produce health or safety. The old saying goes: "The bigger they are, the harder they fall."

But the Permanent War Economy is new, and its size does have something to do with economic sta-

bility. The real question to which economists must address themselves is this: Once a certain level of armament expenditure (and all that goes with it, economically speaking) has been reached; once it has ceased to act as an inflationary stimulus to the economy; once the production of the country has "grown up" to take this level of armament in its stride, so to speak . . . what happens then?

No one really knows the answer to the question, because we have not, until the present, experienced such a situation. But at least one aspect of the answer can be ventured with a good deal of assurance.

A growing economy would need a constantly GROWING military sector to keep it booming along. Without such growth, it will begin to sag. Whether it can sag only to the point at which the ratio of the military sector to the economy as a whole is re-established at about the proportions at which they stood when the boom really got going, or whether it can sag much further, that is the question.

These are technical matters which have some importance to anyone who feels it desirable to be able to look at least a few months into the economic future of the country. But to the unemployed and the people on short weeks what is far more important is a program which can give hope for their economic future.

WHERE NOW?

Unless the armament sector is vastly increased in size, this problem is going to be with us in varying degrees of acuteness for a long time to come—as long as we have capitalism, in fact. And although the only permanent answer to it is the abolition of the crazy system which breeds it, the labor movement has the responsibility to devise a program to meet the most pressing needs of the workers now.

At the moment, all the talk is of the guaranteed annual wage. So far, the unions have been very sparing in any information on just what this plan may involve. But if we are not mistaken, the tendency will be to devise a plan which will help the skilled workers and those who have high seniority most, while doing least for the lowest-paid workers who need it most.

Whatever may come eventually of the guaranteed annual wage, it must be supplemented by other measures. The labor movement will have to rise from its boom-induced lethargy and begin to give real leadership to the workers.

The thirty-hour week without reduction in take-home pay; extension and increase in the amount of unemployment compensation; and above all, the political and economic unity of labor which will make it possible to throw its united weight into the struggle on behalf of the workers—these are the kind of things which will be needed in the days ahead.

First Victims

Small businessmen, as well as workers in hard-hit industries, are among the first victims of the "orthodox recession" going on. Business failures rose sharply in 1953.

Figures released by Dun and Bradstreet show that the number of failures in the third quarter of 1953 were 28 per cent higher than during the corresponding period of 1952.

The ISL Program in Brief

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Discussion of Pacifism —

(Continued from page 6)

Stalinism politically. We would maintain that only such socialist power offers hope for a struggle against Stalinist power which need not involve an Armageddon to the finish with A-bombs. We certainly do not agree with fatalists who think that, come what may, civilization is doomed the minute the first A-bomb falls. (McReynolds, for example, wrote along such lines.)

The military problem for a genuinely socialist state would be to defend itself in order to bring its political weapons into play. But by its "political weapons" we mean precisely its aim to WIN OVER the workers on the other side, both of the armed forces and of the country. Military decisions are subordinate to this aim. Military decisions about the use of atomic weapons would also have to be subordinate to this aim, but these decisions are not automatically to be made by some "principle" or other.

If it is argued that such political considerations would in all likelihood, or even certainty, rule out (for example) dropping an H-bomb to wipe Moscow off the map, then we can give sympathetic

ear to the argument. If it is argued that such political considerations might tend to exclude any use of atomic weapons over primarily civilian population concentrations, then surely a powerful case can be made.

Obviously more difficult problems would arise too. But all we can do here—not to be foolish and try to lay down a military policy for a non-existent socialist republic in an unknown world situation—is to show that the method to be employed is not that of pacifism but of Marxist political and social analysis.

I think it very likely that, in the case of comrades like Harrington and many other pacifist or pacifist-inclined militants, our resultant conclusions might tend to coincide, give or take a little here or there; though obviously this would be less likely in the case of the most doctrinaire absolutistic pacifists of the purest water. But if we stay on the terrain of political ("pragmatic") considerations in the spirit of Harrington's letter, we think that the present discussion indicates a substantial measure of "practical" agreement with revolutionary pacifists who are not completely bound by such a rigid absolutism.

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