

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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FIVE CENTS

War Economy or Depression Economy: The Dilemma Is Still Posed for Capitalism

Prosperity Depends on Cold-War Spending, Say These Defenders of 'Free Enterprise'

While beginning-of-the-year reviews and forecasts purged out expressions of love and affection for "the strength of our economy," the Foreign Operations Administration has permitted a peek into the underpinnings of that economy.

Statistics being circulated by the FOA (according to Dana Schmidt in the N. Y. Times, Jan. 3) "show the extent to which the United States economy has benefited from, or become dependent on, the foreign-aid program." (Our emphasis.)

The foreign-aid program, of course, is only one facet, and not the main one, of the Permanent War Economy whose "health" is being toasted so happily nowadays:

Here are some key figures cited by the FOA with regard to the 1954 fiscal year:

- A whole quarter of U. S. exports was financed by foreign-aid outlays — \$3860 million out of \$15,350 million worth of exports.

- The agency financed 17 per cent of this country's agricultural exports, or \$500 million out of \$2930 million.

- The latter figure included the financing of 36 per cent of wheat and flour exports, 28 per cent of cotton exports, and 29 per cent of machine tool exports.

What the FOA is demonstrating, in the course of its statistics, is the dependence of U. S. prosperity on the Permanent War Economy.

The Schmidt dispatch also comments:

"In addition, the statistics are meant to demonstrate the advantage to the United States of building up the industrial potential of other free countries. They show that three-fourths of the money spent for foreign aid goes directly into orders for United States goods and agricultural products, or ocean freight paid to United States flag vessels."

By GORDON HASKELL

As the American economy swings into 1955 it is cheered on by a chorus of newspaper and magazine writers, public officials, and others who help to manufacture "public opinion" in this country. The year ahead is hailed as one in which business will be good, in which the recession of last year will be definitely overcome, in which more profits, better wages, more sales and more general all-around activity will take place than in any previous year except 1953.

And yet, in the midst of all the optimism and hopefulness, one cannot help detect a distinct note of caution. At times, this note takes on the overtones of fear.

For instance, Sylvia Porter, the New York Post's wide-eyed Pollyanna economist, writes in her column for December 30:

"Just to mention that we have conquered the [business] cycle is enough to terrify most older businessmen I know. The young adult of 1955 did not 'live' the depression of the '30s but men over 40 will never forget it. 'This sort of talk sounds like the tinsel we thought was real in 1929,' one top banker told me and he shuddered.

"Just the suggestion we have

discovered the secret of maintaining economic stability and growth makes responsible authorities in Washington wince."

Actually, probable developments in 1955 do not indicate any strong reasons for bankers to shudder and wince, unless they are more concerned with the general welfare than with their own particular prospects. Government economists, whose job it is to urge policies which will keep their party in power, have a good deal more to worry about.

The reason for this is simple. Economic activity has been picking up for three months, and there is no reason for it to stop gaining at least till the summer. The high inventories built up during 1953 have been pretty well liquidated, and the cut-back in industry which permitted this liquidation is giving way to another spurt of high production.

LIMITED OPTIMISM

The government's credit and monetary policies are designed to make financing of this spurt easy, and to encourage business activity in general. Military and other government spending is also on the increase, and Democratic control of Congress gives every reason to believe that such expenditures will be boosted further rather than cut back. The stock market is booming, consumer credit is expanding again at a rapid pace, all types of construction are holding up at very high levels with the prospect of further increases in road building and other public construction.

Yet, despite all these "encouraging" signs, it is difficult to find a responsible economist who will predict a steady rise in the economy beyond next fall. And it is almost impossible to find one who claims that even if the most optimistic predictions are fulfilled, there will be a major decrease in unemployment.

Actually, indications are that unemployment will remain around the three-and-a-half-million mark, or climb above it during the year. The increase in gross production, according to the best esti-

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Economic Shadows over Detroit: Fears and Doubts Assail Auto Industry

By JACK WILSON

DETROIT, Jan. 1—Any industry that spends over \$125,000,000 each year for advertising purposes on radio and TV and in newspapers and magazines expects something more than just ordinary treatment, and the auto industry is getting what it expects. It is not likely that any publisher forgot how General Motors canceled a \$250,000 advertising contract with the powerful Wall Street Journal when this paper had the temerity to print a story on the 1955 models that GM didn't approve.

This observation on the power of money on the press provides a proper background for analyzing the amazing flow of amazing stories on the auto industry that is flooding the country. Taking a few examples will suffice to illustrate what we mean.

On the matter of the cars themselves: The safety engineers protest the lack of proper safety features. Who pays attention to them, or gives their point of view space, say next to a juicy auto-industry ad?

A national convention of industrial stylists deplores the bad taste and poor features of car styling. It gets a brief mention in the press, and then is buried. The mad rush for excessive motor power, with the consequent increased jeopardy to human life, continues unabated without a single article of criticism anywhere.

The poor quality, the high finance charges, the exorbitant repair bills and charges? Discreet silence everywhere except among the victims.

On car production: Yes, 1954 exceeded all expectations in car production. Of course, 1,300,000 new cars of the 1955 model were poured out in the last ten weeks of the year to achieve that result,

but who mentions that? Or that stocks in dealers' hands zoomed to a 500,000 mark in two months?

And a continuation of the production race will put double that figure in the dealers' hands by the time spring is here. Perhaps the banks will put the pressure on the industry by refusing to finance dealers any deeper? Otherwise it's a mad race, and its consequences aren't hard to foresee. Will the small manufacturers survive the forthcoming throat-cutting? Even Fortune magazine asks the question.

SYMBOL IN MICHIGAN

What about the employment picture? The official government figure is that 1955 unemployment will average only 180,000 a month in Michigan compared to 213,000 in 1954. But even that figure is deceptive, for unemployment is down to about 120,000 now at the peak of auto production.

How about next summer when the market is glutted? Once again Detroit expects huge unemployment lines, even if the industry achieves its estimated goals of car and truck production. For the rate of production is so high that a sharp let-down is inevitable, just as the 1954 recession pattern devastated the Detroit area. The Michigan auto area may serve as a symbol of what the industry

as a whole is likely to go through in 1955.

UAW PLAN

One would expect these and other important economic factors to be discussed concretely, if not at the general sessions of the American Economic Association held here last week, at least in the big panels dedicated to the problem of a guaranteed annual wage, such as the Industrial Relations Research Association held in conjunction with the gathering.

Significantly, the auto industry didn't bother to be represented by any important spokesman for the Big Three, although a few minor flunkies were around.

Between the lack of concrete economic analysis, the academic occupational disease of safe abstraction and judicious moderation used as a valuable technique for avoiding a definite point of view, and the failure of the UAW-CIO to present a concrete plan itself, the discussion took on a sort of Don Quixote form. Everybody tilted with economic windmills.

The personification of this approach was Professor Seymour Harris of Harvard, whose paper on the guaranteed annual wage was the paper on the subject. He wandered all over the lot, followed by Nat Weinberg of the UAW who did little to bring the subject back to the ground. Just to pose and answer the main points of Harris' paper will serve to show what a question-mark the guaranteed annual wage program of the UAW is at this time.

(The UAW just put out a pamphlet with 65 answers on the plan, but not a single one of them says what the plan is,

(Turn to last page)

THE LADEJINSKY LANDMARK: The Witchhunt Arrives at Anti-Semitism

By H. W. BENSON

Wolf Ladejinsky is a man highly recommended in respectable circles; but his references were not good enough to save him from being dumped by the U. S. Department of Agriculture as a security risk.

Even now, Secretary of State Dulles holds out a haven in the State Department; and he is offered a job by the Foreign Operations Administration to "fight Communism" in South Vietnam. Only seven months ago, the McCarthyite super-snoop of the State Department, Scott McLeod, cleared him; a clearance of that kind is not to be sneered at.

John M. Allison, Eisenhower's ambassador to Japan, protested against the removal of Ladejinsky; a former minister of agriculture in the Japanese cabinet spoke up for him; the *New York Times* refers to him as "one of the most respected specialists on Asian land problems" and "the chief architect of the post-war land-reform program in Japan under General of the Army Douglas MacArthur" and a man who "is given major credit for a program that broke the power of landed estates and made land owners of about 90 per cent of Japanese farmers, formerly mostly tenants."

Ladejinsky headed the Far Eastern Division of the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations and was agricultural attaché at the U. S. Embassy in Tokyo under the aegis of the State Department. But in an organizational reshuffling, his job was transferred to the Department of Agriculture, which is now concentrating on digging out seeds of subversion; but he was rejected, denied the right to come into the department with his job.

THIS IS EVIDENCE

Even in these days, the incident caused a minor sensation: there was a storm of protest. Secretary of Agriculture Benson had to hash up an explanation. In a long statement, steeped in doubletalk, he mentioned the delicate matter of "security" only once in passing. He hinted that "there was some security information that had to be considered with reference to the highly sensitive position of agricultural attaché."

If the poor victim in this case had been an ordinary citizen—say, a seed-catalogue filing clerk—the weight of evidence convicting him would have been clear and all would be in order.

Or if Benson were not an ordinary-citizen cabinet member—if, for example, he were J. Edgar Hoover—he might assume a somber and mysterious air, utter the magic incantation "secret security information," and no one would dare lift his eyes in question to the top of the glittering pedestal.

Or if he were a general disposing of a simple soldier, he might utter, in summary clipped tones, the word "classified," and who would insist on peering into the guarded chambers of national security? The "evidence" might remain forever concealed from prying public eyes.

But Ladejinsky is not a filing clerk and Benson is not the Chief. Protests were not silenced and at last the nation could see what scraps pass as evidence in "security" cases.

DOUBLETALK PROOF

Devastating was the charge that as recently as 23 years ago, our victim was employed by Amtorg, Russian trading company in the United States; and, said the Department of Agriculture, on the basis "of testimony of former Communists" (unnamed), he "required clearance from the Communist Party." Ladejinsky replied that he had received no hearing, fair or unfair, on this or any other charge.

His job with Amtorg was a purely technical post as interpreter, he said, and had nothing to do with the CP; in any case, there was no secret made of this fact when he had been cleared by the State Department.

Benson's aides proceeded, then, to unleash their really heavy stuff. Ladejinsky was obviously a typical Communist conspirator, proved John Glen Cassidy, in an irrefutable if novel argument. The accused had written a series of anti-Communist articles in 1944 and 1945. (It could be added that in the early thirties he had written a series of such articles in the *Saturday Review of Literature*.)

This proves, totally to the department's

satisfaction, that he is a Communist. It seems that he has relatives living in Russia, said Cassidy; he knows that they would suffer for such articles unless . . . unless he had a secret agreement with Moscow to hide his identity as its agent by writing anti-Russian articles.

The beauty of this proof is that it is foolproof. . . . The more anti-Communist Ladejinsky seems to be, the more obviously he is serving as a Russian agent.

Three courses were open to him: (1) He could write pro-Russian articles; (2) he could be silent; (3) he could write anti-Russian articles. If he wrote for the Russians, he would be convicted by his own words. If he were silent, a man of his talents would be clearly evading the task of fighting Communism and be convicted for that.

Obviously, this sneak attempt to outwit everyone by writing against the Russians failed only because of the vigilance of America's agricultural sleuths.

"CLASSIC" STORY

But while this chain of evidence was clearly damning to the legally trained minds of surplus butter and potatoes storers, the average citizen was mystified and confused. So the department was compelled to emit its all, to empty its dossiers, and make public the ultimate

proofs on which their case rested.

Milan D. Smith, executive assistant to the secretary, proffered what he termed a "classic" explanation of why Ladejinsky was a security risk. The classic turned out to be a letter from a reactionary White Russian anti-Semitic crackpot who did not even pretend to know anything specific about Ladejinsky except that he was a Russian-born Jew. But this weird character George N. Vitt provided the department with its "philosophic" justification.

Out of custom-fashioned history, Vitt explained, "Regrettably . . . all through the last 65 years or so, there was a sprinkling of Russian revolutionaries of various persuasions coming into the U.S.A. for asylum. . . . Equally regrettable was the fact that a goodly share were . . . Russian Jews who came here running from the tsarist regime. . . . Jews who turned into Reds . . . were the worst kind of traitors, not only to their new mother-country, the U.S.A., but to their own people because Stalin's persecution of Jews in Russia really was a persecution. . . . Mr. L. may be innocent 100 per cent but facts from his past speak against him. Thus, for the sake of Uncle Sam, he must go."

BENSON LEARNS

The department, obviously, was amazed when this letter aroused public indignation. After pondering this unanticipated reaction for a day and a half, Secretary Benson decided to dissociate himself from its publication: "It was a mistake to show the letter to reporters and by so doing imply the department's approval of its content."

Benson is learning quickly. His men may be experts at counting crated eggs but they have a lot to learn about the

politics of hunting subversives.

Next time, as in other departments, such letters will not be publicized; they will not be shown to reporters; they will not be "approved"; they will merely be placed in the dossier and acted upon without explanation.

And, as of this writing, Smith and Cassidy, the guardians of American security in the Agriculture Department, are still on their jobs judging the characters and lives of department employees who are less prominent than Ladejinsky.

BEHIND THE STAMP

This, then, was a case of extraordinary injustice. It was so extreme that President Eisenhower is reported to have personally approved the new FOA appointment for Ladejinsky, an act that is a slap in the face to Benson. The incident is exceptional only because its course sped so quickly to a momentary exoneration of the victim. It reminds us of the case of Chief Justice Warren whose confirmation by the Senate was delayed by similar complaints from screwballs.

But is the Ladejinsky affair really so extraordinary? For every Ladejinsky and Warren, protected by high position and respectability from the final fate of star-chamber justice, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of common citizens who are tried without trials, convicted and sentenced to the loss of their jobs and reputations on evidence just as flimsy. When such men ask "Who has accused me? of what?" they are told that the answer is "classified."

The Ladejinsky case, for all of its "happy ending," is a landmark in the witchhunt in its revelation of what lies behind the "classified" stamp on the witchhunters' dossiers.

BRITAIN

Why the British Railwaymen Plan Strike

By BERNARD DIX

LONDON, Dec. 28—For the second time in just over twelve months Britain is faced with the possibility of a nationwide strike of railway workers. Six days ago the executive committee of the National Union of Railwaymen decided that it would call a strike of nearly all its 400,000 members at midnight on January 9 in pursuance of a long outstanding wages dispute with the British Transport Commission—the body responsible for the operation of the nationalized railways.

[For first article on railway strike threat, see last week's London Letter.—Ed.]

The dispute has its origin in a claim for a wage increase of 15 per cent made by the NUR in July 1953—some 17 months ago. After months of hard bargaining—including the threat of a total strike during the Christmas period of 1953—the Transport Commission eventually agreed to pay wage increases varying between 8 and 11 per cent. This offer, made last October, was initially accepted by the NUR leadership which conducted the negotiations on behalf of the railwaymen.

PREPARE TO FIGHT

The rank and file of the NUR, however, had other thoughts on the matter and demanded that the union leadership pursue with the utmost vigor the claim for the full 15 per cent increase originally demanded. Faced with this rebellion by its rank and file the leadership of the NUR once again approached the Transport Commission and requested that the 15 per cent increase be met in full.

To this the Transport Commission replied that, as the NUR executive committee had accepted the proposals advanced by the commission in October, the present claim would have to be considered not as a continuance of the negotiations for the original claim for a 15 per cent increase but as an entirely new claim. This reply the NUR leadership found quite unacceptable for it meant that they would have to undergo a further prolonged process of negotiation using the same machinery which caused them to issue their previous strike threat in an endeavor to speed up a satisfactory settlement.

It appears that this time the railwaymen are not prepared to tolerate endless months of talking and are instead preparing to launch a large-scale assault upon their employers.

A factor complicating this dispute is the demand by the railwaymen that government funds be used to offset the financial losses which are crippling the railways and which the Transport Commission consistently use as a counter to wage claims. Each year the commission has to pay more than 40 million pounds in interest charges, most of it on railway stocks prior to nationalization; in addition millions have to be spent on new capital investment in order to modernize the almost museum-like equipment which the commission inherited from the previous private owners.

Such a situation is likely to continue for some time and the NUR, seeking to counter this oft-repeated reason for holding railwaymen's wages at a low level, now suggest that the government—through exchequer funds—should pay a subsidy to the British Transport Commission in order that its workers can receive higher wages. This solution finds a great deal of sympathy in the labor movement primarily due to the fact that the railwaymen are amongst the lowest paid workers in the country.

BOGEY ON THE RIGHT

The Bevanite weekly *Tribune* states that the railwaymen have for too long subsidized the industry and that there is no suffering among the shareholders; it assures the railwaymen that the labor movement will "back them to the hilt" during their strike. The *Daily Herald*—official Labor daily which is always found on the right wing—points out that the Tory government bears full responsibility for this dispute because it returned to private ownership the profitable road haulage section of the British Transport Commission. Road haulage, says the *Daily Herald*, was making a profit of 8 million pounds a year—sufficient to meet the extra pay demanded by the railwaymen.

As a contrast to this attitude certain sections of the Tory press are raising once again the bogey of "political strikes"—thus seeking to conjure up memories of the 1926 general strike when the government used the same argument

to frighten the middle class and confuse the working class. Typical of such an attitude is a leading article which appeared in the *Sunday Times*—a Tory newspaper in the Lord Kemsley group—which said:

"The threatened strike, then, is intended fundamentally to coerce Parliament through industrial action. Whatever the merits of the case, this cannot be tolerated if the constitutional order in this country is to survive. If necessary Parliament should be called back at once to approve measures necessary to defend its own supremacy."

In a last-minute effort to avoid the strike the minister of labor has set up a Court of Inquiry to examine the causes of the dispute and, after a four-day delay, the NUR has agreed to take part in the court's work; it has refused, however, to call off the threatened strike and the court therefore meets knowing full well that if it does not produce speedy results the railways stop on January 9.

Jim Campbell, the burly and hard-hitting secretary of the NUR, clearly expressed the feelings of his members when he said, after a meeting with the minister of labor, "If the Transport Commission can't do it and the Ministry of Labor can't do it—then damn it!" Only, the verb used by Campbell was not "damn."

Have You Read Labor Action's Pamphlet-Issues?

- No. 1—The Principles and Program of Independent Socialism.
 - No. 2—Independent Socialism and War.
 - No. 3—The Fair Deal: A Socialist Analysis.
 - No. 4—Socialism and Democracy.
 - No. 5—What Is Stalinism?
- 10 cents each.

Right-Wingers Entrenched In French F.O. Congress

By A. GIACOMETTI

PARIS, Dec. 15—From November 22 to November 26 the CGT-Force Ouvrière (F.O.) held its fourth national congress since it split from the CGT in 1947. In the main, this congress was one of bureaucratic consolidation and confirmed the social-reformist orientation of the federation.

The class-collaborationist leadership (Bothereau, Lafond, Le Bourre) entrenched itself more firmly, and succeeded in having its line adopted by the majority on several important issues, against attacks from the various left-wing minorities: "Révolution prolétarienne," "Combat syndical" (New Left), "Unité syndicale" (PCI), and independents.

It reversed the correct position of the 1952 congress regarding participation in the "National Council of Productivity."

"Productivity" is another name for "production per worker"; an increase in productivity can be achieved just as well by technological progress as by intensifying the exploitation of labor (speed-up, time-clock studies, etc.). In its general use, it is an ambiguous term admirably suited to confuse the issues.

The "National Council of Productivity" is a government and big-business-sponsored body; its purpose is to find ways to increase production, one way or the other. In 1952, the F.O. congress had recognized that it could not influence the policies of this body, and that collaboration with it could only provide the government and big business with the labor window-dressing they needed to get their policies accepted by the workers. This congress decided otherwise, on the grounds that "workers should be present wherever their fate is being influenced."

UNDER FIRE

The F.O. leadership came under fire for not having declared a general strike in August 1953. Hébert, secretary of the F.O. Federation of Loire-Inférieure, and one of the opposition leaders, accused the bureau of having ended the strike prematurely "at a time when the government and the CGT were thrown off balance and F.O. was leading the working class. By refusing to call a general strike the bureau ensured the success of an anti-labor government and returned the initiative to the CGT."

The leadership attempted to defend itself by saying that concessions had been obtained after all and that "the strike had to be ended to avoid adventures."

In the discussion on international orientation, Le Bourre was attacked for having written an article in the conservative *Le Figaro* extolling the defunct EDC. Le Bourre had written that "if EDC was a mistake, so is independent trade-unionism."

At the congress he declared that he was in favor of a united Europe "not only on the social and economic but also on the military level" because "between Stalinism and ourselves no alliance is possible." Whose Europe? Opposition to Stalinism on a capitalist or on a working-class basis? So many evaded questions.

The bureau's resolution carried nevertheless over one presented by Hagnauer of "Révolution prolétarienne," which

stressed the need for an independent working-class policy on the international level and for solidarity with the colonized peoples.

Finally, the bureau's position prevailed on the question of unity of action with the CGT, continuing the rejection of such united action on any level, in any situation. This disastrous position (if carried out) can only block F.O. in its efforts to win workers from the CGT.

DISASTROUS LINE

The CGT, although Stalinist-controlled, is not the CP: it is a union, and workers do not join it nor stay in it for the same reasons. It is not a homogeneous body—the Printers Union, for example, is not Stalinist-controlled at all; other unions or regional federations are only relatively so. Experience has shown that CGT locals can be absorbed where struggles are conducted by F.O. on a clear workers' program.

Within the labor movement, the aim of F.O. should be to break the Stalinist strength by absorbing the members and sympathizers of the CGT. This can be done only by demonstrating the superiority of an independent working-class program over the Stalinist program, and such a demonstration can be made only in the course of common struggles. It is significant that the F.O. federations which advocate united action with the CGT are those led by the left-wing minorities; those, that is, that feel solid and confident enough to face the CGT in common trade-union activities without fear of disintegration and absorption.

The relative strength of the minorities, as shown by the votes of the congress, is about one-fifth of the F.O. membership. The bureau's report to the congress (covering the period of the August strikes) was adopted by 9309 mandates against 1195 and 434 abstentions; the bureau's resolution on international orientation carried by 8016 mandates against 2146 cast for the resolution of "Révolution prolétarienne"; the bureau's resolution against unity of action with the CGT carried by 8719 against 1066 mandates, and 374 abstentions. Finally, a minority resolution in favor of a democratization of the statutes was rejected by 8318 mandates against 2030 and 129 abstentions. Although the minorities remain divided by different political orientations, there has been a closer collaboration between them in this congress.

ALGERIAN SPEAKS

A more significant aspect of the congress, though, was the appearance for the first time of the real colonial delegates. In previous congresses the delegates from colonial territories had represented only the French workers' aristocracy, notorious for its chauvinism and lack of understanding for the native working class. This time, colonialist statements met with strong opposition. Manchon of Algeria (Constantine) took the floor to protest against the suppression of the MTLD:

"... in the three departmental unions of Algeria, two concepts oppose each other: one wants to build the French Union by recognizing the legitimate aspirations of the peoples involved—this is the concept I have made my own—the other is held by the comrades in Algiers and Oran who favor colonial paternalism, the cause of tensions and explosions such as we know in Algeria.

"I come from the department of Constantine, where military operations take place now or will take place. The comrades in Algiers and Oran are more protected: their departments are richer than mine. The department of Constantine is inhabited almost exclusively by Moslem workers. . . .

"... There have been arbitrary arrests, and certain elements have been liberated later, but there has been a mistake, and I said so at the time: this mistake is the dissolution of the MTLD, which only benefits the Communist Party and the CGT. . . . in the department of Constantine, it is thanks to the nationalist movement and thanks to the help of the militants of the nationalist parties that we practically liquidated the CGT and the Communist Party. If the CGT still exists today at all, it is because it is backed by the employers and the administration."

The interventions of the colonial delegates were highlights in a congress dominated by the leadership, a congress which only underlined the need in F.O. for a united opposition with a coherent over-all policy.

ICELAND TOO

OCCUPATION BY NATO TROOPS GIVES STALINISTS A VICTORY

According to a report published in *Social-Demokraten* of Copenhagen, the Stalinists have re-established their hold on the Iceland Federation of Labor. At the congress of the federation in November, the CP fraction succeeded in electing its candidates to the leadership, thanks to some complicated factional maneuvering and to the betrayal of a social-democratic trade-union leader.

The dubious hero of this adventure, Hannibal Valdimarsson, is a social-democratic member of Parliament and a former president of Iceland's SP. He has become known in recent years for advocating a policy of collaboration with the CP, especially in local elections.

At the recent congress, a little more than 300 delegates represented the four main parties of the island: 125 SP delegates, 115 delegates of the CP (officially called "Unity Party"), the remaining 65-70 being divided among the Progressive Party, a liberal farmers' group, and the Home Rule Party, a conservative group. The social-democratic caucus had decided to present a straight SP ticket at the congress, headed by Jón Sigurdsson, former secretary general of the IFL and president of the Seamen's Union. The bourgeois delegates could be expected to remain neutral in a conflict opposing the SP and the CP.

When the election for the chairmanship began, Valdimarsson broke the party caucus and was elected as Congress chairman on a "unity ticket" with the support of the Stalinist votes.

Once in control of the chairmanship, Valdimarsson moved to readmit the Stalinist-controlled Reykjavik Industrial Workers' Union, which had been expelled from the IFL for breaking the Federation's statutes. With a small majority, the RIWU was reaccepted. As soon as this had been accomplished, Valdimarsson moved that the RIWU be given voting rights at the Congress, and thereby ensured a stable majority in support of the "unity ticket." In the elections for the executive that followed, the "unity ticket" won the majority and thereby the control of the federation.

SP COMEBACK

This is the latest episode in a bitter factional struggle that has opposed Stalinists to social-democrats in the small trade-union movement in Iceland (25,000 members out of a population of 145,000, or 17 per cent of the total population). In the first phase of this struggle, the Stalinists had succeeded in making deep inroads in Iceland's labor movement.

Until 1940, the IFL was affiliated as a body to the SP, as the Trade Union Congress is affiliated to the British Labor Party in Great Britain. In 1940, at the demand of members belonging to the other political groups, the IFL discontinued its organizational affiliation to the SP, but the social-democrats nevertheless retained control over the leadership of the federation.

This situation ended in 1944, when a coalition of the conservatives (Home Rule Party) and the Stalinists succeeded in unseating the SP leadership. From 1944 till 1948 the IFL was controlled by the CP which proceeded to turn it into a Stalinist bastion. Their conservative allies, alarmed over this turn of events, broke coalition with the CP and joined the SP and the Progressive Party in a "Democratic Union," which won a majority at the 1948 and 1950 congresses.

In 1949, the SP-led majority discontinued the IFL's affiliation to the Stalinist World Federation of Trade Unions and, in 1950, voted to affiliate with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. By 1952 the CP fraction was down to 105 delegates as opposed to the SP's 118. Since then, and especially since the successful general strike of 1952, led by the social-democrats, the Stalinists have tended to lose strength in the local unions. The recent congress has shown that it is no longer possible for them to obtain a majority without treason in the ranks of the social-democratic fraction.

Yet Iceland remains, along with Finland, the only Scandinavian country where a strong Stalinist party can exist despite the existence of a strong and well-organized socialist movement. In

Iceland, the main reason for this situation must be sought in the uninterrupted presence of U. S. or British troops since 1940.

WHY CP THRIVES

In a small country like Iceland the establishment of a large naval and air base, with the accompanying sudden influx of personnel and goods, caused a tremendous inflation: within a few months of the arrival of Allied troops, prices soared from ten to twenty times their pre-war level, with wages trailing behind. In 1952 the IFL finally got around to dealing with the problem, and reluctantly called a three-week general strike. The strike was well-organized, and brought the activity of the island to a total stop. Among other demands, the workers won a substantial lowering of prices on such items as potatoes, milk, sugar, coffee, etc. Wages remained the same or were raised in certain industries.

Moreover, the economic factors are completed by political considerations. Even if the economic burden imposed by the presence of U. S. troops should be considerably lightened, the Icelanders can't be expected to accept indefinitely a state of virtual occupation, imposed by foreign interests in peacetime, in a conflict which is not theirs, and which exposes their country to the gravest dangers in case of war.

It is a situation on which the CP thrives. It can be expected to end only with the withdrawal of U. S. troops, or with the emergence of a socialist movement-willing to fight as energetically for the island's independence as the CP purports to do.

So. Vietnam Strike Flares over Wages

By A. GIACOMETTI

PARIS, Dec. 26—While the Franco-American protectorate of South Vietnam heads into anarchy, the independent labor movement of South Vietnam continues to assert its vitality.

At the beginning of the month, the Vietnamese workers employed in the workshops and services of the French armed forces declared a general strike in support of their demand for adequate wages. Specifically, the union, which is an F.O. affiliate, demands that the wages of the workers involved be raised to the levels prevailing in comparable state services. At present, the wages paid to state-employed workers are from 20 per cent to 100 per cent higher than those paid by the French army. The strike affects 20,000 workers out of 23,000 employed by the French army in Saigon and in South Vietnam.

On December 7, French authorized sources considered a settlement imminent, and declared that the wage adjustment had hitherto been retarded for "administrative reasons." On December 13, however, the French High Command addressed an ultimatum to the strikers to resume work or face sanctions, and declared the strike "groundless." At the time of the present writing the strike continues.

On the other hand, according to a report in *Le Populaire*, the Asian Socialist Conference, meeting in the last week of November in Tokyo, has asked the Socialist Party of Vietnam to join it as a full member. Two delegates of the SPV were expected to attend the meeting of the conference in Tokyo, but were denied exist visas by the government. The Asian Socialist Conference has intervened with the government of South Vietnam to obtain the respect of elementary civil liberties for the socialist representatives, in particular the right to freely leave and enter the country.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 13
8:45 p.m.

Michael Harrington
on

Literature and
Marxism

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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

The Leftward Trend in The German Trade Unions

To the Editor:

Stein's article [LA, Nov. 1] may mislead your readers in judging the situation in the German labor movement. The caption certainly is over-optimistic.

The Frankfurt Congress of the DGB (Federation of Trade Unions) in fact constitutes one step forward in German trade-unionism. The Stalinist and Christian Democrat elements in the Congress were weaker than ever, both in number and drive, whereas no DGB congress before saw such a big number of organized Social-Democrats among its delegates. They alone could swing the "Parliament of Labor" in any direction they wanted.

Dr. Adenauer, aware of the importance of this congress, sent two of his Bundesministers and Dr. Heuss, president of the German Federal Republic, was the first head of the state in the history of the German trade-union movement to address a Trade Union Congress. This combined effort to give the movement a less radical direction, however, was a complete failure. In adopting the resolution against rearmament almost unanimously, and in formulating a Program of Action to be finally published in April 1955, the Congress gave the working class a new spur for further action.

The basic failure of the Congress was not to safeguard deeds. This could be reached only by a radical change in the Executive Board. But all 25 members of the old Executive were re-elected. It is fantastic to believe that these men are able and willing to carry out a program which they dislike at heart. Only three days after the Congress, Walter Freitag, re-elected president of the DGB, gave his "own interpretation" of the resolution against rearmament without being reprimanded by the rank and file.

The two men in the Executive representing the militant group did not win their positions in the Congress. Otto Brenner, co-president of the Metal Workers' Union, and Heinz Seeger, president of the Wood Workers' Union, recently won leadership of their unions, thereby automatically gaining a seat in the DGB Executive. Dr. Agartz' economic and political theories are not fully backed either by militant trade-unionists nor by the Socialist left.

You must not forget that there is yet no organized left in the German labor movement. There is no prominent figure able to take the lead. There is no magazine of some importance to serve as rallying point. There is just a slowly growing leftward trend. Don't confuse an anti-militaristic stand with adoption of a left socialist policy. In this question liberal and even conservative elements in Germany join with the Socialist left while there is also an influential pro-armament faction in the German labor movement.

Bert WOLF

Frankfurt-am-Main

Thanks to correspondent Bert Wolf for his comments on the article dealing with the recent West German Trade Union Federation Congress. We also read with interest the additional information on the different tendencies in the West German trade-union movement.

Although correspondent Wolf criticizes the "over-optimistic" headline, the substance of his letter confirms what was indicated in the body of the article. As he points out, "There is just a slowly grow-

ing leftward trend." This is just what was important and new in the development of the West German trade-union movement after years of stagnation, and its first manifestations crystallized out at the DGB Congress. The militancy of the Metal Workers Union, the anti-militaristic stand of the DGB, and the rise to leadership of such people as Brenner and Seeger are all signs of this leftward trend.

Wolf points out that the old leadership still maintains its hold over the Executive Board. Yet this did not prevent the younger elements like Brenner from forcing through two vital changes before the DGB Congress. They compelled the old Executive to reverse itself on wage policy and fight for an increase, unleash a powerful strike movement in September; secondly, they forced a reversal on the question of militarization of West Germany under American auspices.

The explanation is that the real power does not lie in the central Executive Board but with the individual unions. The Allied powers prevented the formation of a highly centralized trade-union federation and left most of the power of decision on big questions with the leadership of the 16 trade unions that make up the DGB. A united and articulate majority or even minority of these individual trade-union leaders can override the wishes of the conservative central leadership. And that is just what has been happening. Of course, at a certain point the real power relations must assert themselves and a big change take place in the central executive. But that most certainly will come later. What LABOR ACTION was describing was the fact that the first step in this direction was being taken; and it is really not a question of over-optimism (i.e., a prediction) but of noting a healthy trend.

A. STEIN

Tresca Memorial Meeting on Sat.

NEW YORK, Jan. 5—Friends of Carlo Tresca, Italian anti-totalitarian editor who was murdered in 1943, again will lay flowers at the scene of his death, on Saturday, January 8, at 1 p.m. He was shot down in the wartime dimout at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 15th Street.

The 8th was chosen for the flower-laying by the Tresca Memorial Committee instead of the actual anniversary date, the 11th, because a Saturday is much more convenient for most of those who annually honor the slain editor's memory.

Philip Heller, an old friend of Tresca, is to speak in tribute to him. Samuel H. Friedman, member of the Socialist Party's national executive board, will preside at the flower-laying. If the weather is bad, the speaking will be held in Rand School, 7 East 15 Street.

"We remain convinced that Tresca's murder was a political crime," Norman Thomas, the memorial committee's chairman, said today. "An uncompromising champion of civil liberties, he effectively fought both the fascists and the Communists, and had many enemies in both camps. More than any one else, Tresca was responsible for keeping Mussolini's Black Shirts off the streets of New York, and defeated Il Duce's attempts to transplant his evil forces into the Italian communities in American cities."

YOU and SCIENCE

Photosynthesis Makes the Headlines

By PHILIP COBEN

A landmark in science has just gone past us, and, though properly signaled on the front page of the N. Y. Times, it has perhaps not been appreciated at its worth by readers who are understandably more interested in the death potential of atomic science than in the life-giving potential of biological science.

A group of scientists at the University of California for the first time have succeeded in duplicating the process of photosynthesis outside the living plant cell. Photosynthesis is the process whereby green plants manufacture sugar and starch directly out of air and water with the energy supplied by sunlight. It is a basic process of all plant life, and therefore of all life, which depends on it.

Now why does it deserve to be called especially to the attention of socialists? Not only for the reason which motivated the Times in giving it page one.

The implication seen in and emphasized by the Times write-up dealt with the possibility of artificially producing food from the same elemental factors. The possibility was seen as still far off, of course, but as laying a scientific basis for the solution of the problem of feeding the billion masses of humanity crowding this planet.

This is important enough, though not the subject of this column. Its social and economic bearing is also obvious enough.

LIFE AND MATTER

What needs pointing out, perhaps, is the fact that the great achievement is a major step toward an even greater achievement which would have incalculable consequences on man's thinking. It is a major step toward the creation of life itself.

It is not yet that, of course. But the gap between the present stage of research and the actual creation of life in the laboratory is perhaps less than the gap between it and the outcome emphasized by the Times. We have an even more realistic right to speak of it.

It is not the only form of attack on the problem of life which science is making. As a matter of fact, when Dr. Linus Pauling received the Nobel Prize this past year, it was in recognition of his work on the nature of the molecular bond in complex proteins. Here, too, from another angle, the nature of life is being investigated, for there is good reason to believe that living protoplasm is made up simply of enormously complex protein molecules, the property of "life" being determined by the specific complexity of the molecule.

"Life" thus appears as the property of matter organized in a certain way. This is an extrapolation from present-day research, but it indicates the possible philosophical consequences of this line of work.

In any case, success for science along these lines means a demonstration of the physical basis of life, a demonstration of the fruitfulness of the materialist hypothesis.

NEW GENESIS

Such a success will not, of course, abolish philosophic idealism from the cobwebbed corners of men's minds, including (quite possibly) the minds of the very men who carry through the work. For the roots of philosophical idealism do not lie in the power of its rational appeal. But, with an eye to the future, such a demonstration will leave idealism without one of its great pillars of supports: the "intuition" that living "mind-stuff" is the primary constituent of the world, and that "matter" is either derivative or an illusion.

For the first time, man will become Jehovah, and create Adam, even if the first Adam is only a cluster of self-moving protein molecules with a capacity for reproduction and a limited amount of response to environment.

It is not here a question of "refuting" the Genesis story of creation, or "refuting" religion. Except for the relatively few Fundamentalists and the ignorant, the Bible story is reinterpreted as metaphor, poetry or parable. The impact will be, rather, on the philosophic underpinnings.

We have read that fears have been expressed that religious belief may suffer (in a distant science-fictional future) from extensive space travel if life is discovered on other worlds. Though the danger is not imminent, we might reassure the fearful. Religious beliefs which

have survived the theory of evolution will not likely be dropped just because the hand of the Creator has not been limited to one planet; they will adapt, as always. The Biblical story of creation-on-one-planet will seem simply provincial. Paradoxically, much more serious is the threat to supernaturalist notions that comes—here, today, and on this planet—from the laboratories of California. Truth can be stranger even than science-fiction.

It is one thing for man to find life somewhere; it is another thing for man to breathe life into finely calculated dusts of the earth in a test-tube and produce a living organism which, in turn, has the capacity to evolve into a scientist in a laboratory . . . if we ignore a little matter of time-spans.

SUBVERSIVE SCIENTIST

Reference to Dr. Linus Pauling recalls a related thought.

We mentioned the "materialist hypothesis" above. For it should be understood that for Marxists, materialism is not a metaphysics, but a working hypothesis for the guidance of scientific investigation—a working hypothesis which is continuously being "proved" in all senses: that is, which is continuously being tested, being partly confirmed and partly adapted. Those scientists who hold this hypothesis consciously and knowledgeably have, at the least, a minimum of conflict between their scientific work and their prejudices. It is true that whatever "philosophy" is consciously held in a scientist's mind, every reputable scientific investigator rebels against making his conclusions conform with accepted ideas. But conformism may have a somewhat bigger role in deciding what problems he will attack.

Thus, even the great Newton, devout man that he was, could attack only such problems as did not, in their very statement, clearly contradict his cherished Biblical beliefs. Thus also, some scientists today object to the very idea of research on the subject of telepathy since they are sure in advance that they already know it doesn't exist. The prejudices in a scientist's mind may have more effect on what he chooses to investigate in the first place than on how objectively he pursues a determined line of investigation. The other side of this is that a scientist may also be freed for, or stimulated to, certain inquiries by other beliefs.

We are reminded of this by the fact that Dr. Pauling, who was honored by a Nobel Prize, had been previously honored by the State Department in a different way, when the government refused to give him a passport to go abroad.

It seems there is something "subversive" about him; he was at any rate suspected of some sort of non-conformism. Perhaps at some time in his life he had lent his name to a Stalinist-front organization! perhaps he had some Stalinist sympathies; it doesn't matter. Some kind of non-conformist he was, and possibly more subversive inside his laboratory than when traveling abroad.

READ ABOUT SOCIALISM

- The Fight for Socialism cloth \$2 paper \$1 by Max Shachtman
- Socialism: the Hope of Humanity10 by Max Shachtman
- Marxism in the U. S.35 by Leon Trotsky
- Plenty for All: The Meaning of Socialism25 by Ernest Erber
- The Principles and Program of Independent Socialism10 (LA Special Issue)

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Belgian Socialist Students Adopt a Left Wing Platform

We publish below the political platform adopted by the Socialist student movement of Belgium, *Etudiants Socialistes*, at a special National Committee meeting in Brussels in October, as published in *Le Peuple Estudiantin*. Headed "Our Political Position," it is a left-wing statement for the most part, and should be of interest to *Challenge* readers.—Ed.

(1) The National Committee of the Belgian Socialist Student Federation unanimously points out that the ideological foundation of its movement remains the Marxist conception of society. We reject any idea which tends to turn our movement into an organization limited to the reform of bourgeois society. The goal of every socialist movement is the destruction of the capitalist regime based on profit and its replacement by a socialist society whose economy is based on human needs. Reforms won by the working-class movement cannot be considered as ends in themselves. Only the conquest of power by the working class and the establishment of socialism are capable of resolving the contradictions of present-day society.

We place the idea of the socialist alternative as the central point in our program and in our action and agitation. We adopt a socialist policy of struggle against the war. This struggle must be independent of the two existing blocs and must base its action on the fundamental interests of the working class and on the perspective of the destruction of capitalist society.

ANTI-WAR DEMANDS

(2) We declare ourselves against the arms race, which can lead only to war. We decide to carry on a campaign for the reduction of the length of military service and reduction of the military budget within the framework of a general, progressive, simultaneous and controlled disarmament. We demand that all atomic-weapon tests be ended and that industrial applications of nuclear energy should be developed instead. We decide to struggle for the socialization of the means of production and exchange. We demand the confiscation of capitalist profit in war industry and its investment in useful public works (schools, playgrounds, workers' housing, etc.).

(3) We greet the struggle of the colonial people for their independence and we give them our unconditional support, looking toward their development toward democratic socialism. We invite all sections of the Young Socialists of Belgium to send delegates to the Eurafrikan Congress which will meet in Brussels on December 27-29, 1954, to study overseas problems and their relations to European integration.

Young Socialist CHALLENGE

organ of the Young Socialist League, is published as a weekly section of *Labor Action* but is under the sole editorship of the YSL. Opinions expressed in signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the *Challenge* or the YSL.

In Next Week's Challenge

Max Martin will report on the successful Educational Conference held over the New Year's weekend in Chicago by the Young Socialist League.

We demand that the Belgian government recognize the government of People's China. We declare ourselves in favor of the admission of People's China into the UN. We believe that the problem of Formosa is an internal question of China's, and, in order to avoid any conflict in this part of the world, we demand the cessation of all aid to Chiang Kai-shek and the withdrawal of the U. S. fleet from Chinese waters.

We demand that funds, particularly the funds made available by reduction in the military budget, be allocated to a fund to aid the underdeveloped countries, in the form of gifts, while respecting their political, economic and cultural independence.

AGAINST REARMAMENT

(4) We declare ourselves against the rearmament of Japan, which can only sharpen the tension in Asia, and against the principles and aims adopted by SEATO.

(5) We believe that the rearmament of Germany prevents any peaceful solution of the country's reunification; that this rearmament is a weapon in the hands of the reactionary Adenauer, who is seeking an organized force on which to lean as against the German workers' movement and the Social-Democratic Party in particular; while the reunification of Germany, on the basis of free elections, would give the country a socialist leadership and this would give European socialism its biggest chance to bar the road to both capitalist reaction and Stalinism at the same time.

We greet the courageous struggle carried on by the SPD and regret its isolation within the Socialist International. We declare ourselves against any rearmament of Germany, and demand the unification of the country through free elections. We demand negotiations on this basis with Russia, in order to find a solution to the German problem. We demand the withdrawal of all occupation forces from the country, as well as from Austria, and the maintenance of the social and economic benefits gained by the working class in Western and Eastern Germany.

FOR SOCIALIST EUROPE

(6) We declare ourselves for the creation of a United States of Europe. We believe that socialism can develop only on a world scale and that a socialist Europe must be a step toward the Socialist United States of the world. We believe that the socialist movement must clearly oppose the solutions proposed by the European-unity movements, for these solutions (a) cannot in any case resolve the fundamental contradictions of capitalism; (b) mean, above all, an attempt to preserve the shaky capitalist regime; (c) are dictated by military needs; and (d) would be, in the end, a weapon aimed at the European working class.

We declare ourselves for a political and economic unification based on the principle of the class struggle. We decide to present this resolution to: the International Union of Socialist Youth, the Bureau of the [Belgian Labor] Party, the Political Congress of the Young Socialist Guards, the Socialist Movements for the United States of Europe, and Socialists for Peace.

We emphasize the importance of international socialist action, and urge the Socialist International to put forward a real socialist and international program of common action.

Within the framework of the Young Socialist organizations, we decide to use the next congress of the Socialist Youth International to present concrete proposals for struggle against the war and to make it into a living organization, capable of playing a role in world events. We ask that the Socialist Youth International put before the Socialist International a proposal to prepare an international conference for struggle against the war by clearly posing the socialist alternative.

Army Worries over Draftee Attitudes

By LEWIS O'SHEA

Pentagon officials who in recent months have shown concern over the apparent slack in applicants to the service academies—a significant sign of youthful apathy for militarism as far as concerns the prospects for an officer's career—should take greater interest in the reports which their Army Psychological Survey teams are making as to the attitudes of the enlisted men. They reveal a far keener insight into the reaction of today's peacetime conscript soldier than the data being collected by top professional human-relations experts hired by the army to find why so many GIs are shunning officership.

This latter group of "experts" has expended some \$4,000,000 so far, according to a United Press dispatch dated December 19, and found that most qualified and aggressive enlisted men refused officer training because they simply did not want to add more active and reserve service on their hitch.

The APS teams, however, made up for the most part of enlisted men, have a better vantage point from which to study army training methods, motivation, morale and "psychological warfare." Their reports are not as classified as the outside agency hired by army officials, and their findings do not corollate with the thinking which a conformist military career man might have.

MIXED BAG

APS has found that trainees in army camps today present perhaps the most heterogeneous mixture of men ever grouped together in the service under peacetime conditions. The accepted course of post-graduation induction into the service has seen an influx of college graduates in the summer and fall months. Other college students, despondent over the lack of any positive future following graduation, have enlisted or volunteered for the draft. This situation has caused some training companies to consist almost half of college-trained men, or sometimes even more than half.

This, together with the usual number of three-year enlistees (usually in the 17-18 age bracket, just out of secondary school), in addition to the older grouping of married workers, those who had occupational deferments, make a cross-section to delight any psychological investigating or study group.

Organized to report on and recommend improvement for the basic training curricula, the APS personnel have found trainee sentiment to be far from the thinking of the "big brass." As an indication of the democratic and anti-militaristic sentiment of American youth, this presents more problems to those who have to mold a military machine without the assistance of wartime patriotism, chauvinism, or the "we've got a job to do" line. More important, however: it brings home the fact that the military is absolutely devoid of any sound ideological program upon which to instill any enthusiasm into its conscript army.

Survey teams found that while service itself has created no general feeling of despondency or apathy among inductees,

there is a definite passivity among the trainees which even the APS could not overlook. This is created, in no small part, by the basic orientation which is given the first few weeks ("make the best of it," etc.).

Attitudes of processing personnel, who can offer the inductee no guarantee of classification or assignment in line with his qualifications, only increase this ("getting a good job while in, and in most cases promotions, depend generally on right time, right place and 'fucking out'"). The new trainee soon learns that though the army is one huge "rumor mill," he soon must differentiate between official orientation and consulting and that which filters through the "barracks grapevine." Often as not, the best of the situation which he can make for himself will come from following the latter.

"INDOCTRINATION"

A factor which the army's professional human experts and even its own APS agency have apparently overlooked is the obvious lack of any positive program to explain to the inductee and trainee why he is where he is. Besides the presentation of a film tying in fascism, Nazism, Stalinism and Japanese "militarism" (sic), no other attempt is made to acquaint the trainee with a positive understanding of the supposed threat to his way of life, which he is called to defend.

Army indoctrination is the work of the Information and Education Branch, or Troop Information Program (TIP). Essentially the propaganda arm of the army, it was infiltrated during the Second World War and the initial phase of the cold war by Stalinists to such a degree that Pentagon officials still question its "trustworthiness." Army savants speculate that most of its work is taken up putting security checks on applicants for TIP School, its own personnel and those who handle the "classified" material.

PASSIVE ACCEPTANCE

Something which cannot escape the attention of any study of present army basic-training procedures is the obvious implication that the enemy-to-be will not be Russian but Oriental, primarily Chinese (the mythical aggressor is always "Joe Chinaman"). This is carried through in the secretive "behind enemy lines" classes, in which the "enemy's" customs, attitudes and vantage point are most decidedly not Western.

Among the men, the greatest mental strain is devoted to ways to "bug out" of the scheduled training. The negative attitude carried over from the vacuum created after high school or college, or from leaving a wife, home and job, is maintained by the new member of the conscript army. His is an attitude of subjection to conformity in an age of conformity; he accepts a void of two years in his life, two years of regimentation, as an unfortunate cross of his generation which he too must bear.

To be sure, this is not an attitude of revolt, but it is also not an attitude which augurs well for American military thinking.

New York YSL Forum

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7—8:15 p.m.

Abe Kimbay

on

A. A. Berle's Book

"The 20th Century American Capitalist Revolution"

Labor Action Hall

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WORLD SOCIALISTS MUST RAISE THE CRY:

HANDS OFF DJILAS AND DEDIJER!

By HAL DRAPER

It is possible that Tito's sub-fuehrers in Belgrade (headed by Edvard Kardelj while No. 1 is away charming Nehru) overreached themselves in publicly announcing criminal prosecution for Milovan Djilas and Vladimir Dedijer, the two heretics who demand steps toward socialist democracy. But in any case the second week's developments in this installment of the Djilas-Dedijer case has further shown the totalitarian pattern of Titoist (national-Stalinist) politics.

The announcement of the criminal prosecution can be understood only as a conscious (and no doubt enraged) defiance of Western pressure, which is being just as consciously mobilized by the press corps in Belgrade.

What has to be kept in mind is that for the regime to bring the two deviants up before a criminal bar in the hot spotlight of publicity now beating down on the case is far from necessary from their point of view, if it is only a question of gagging them. Thousands of deviants and critics have gone through Titoist jails without any legal trial whatsoever. The regime could just as easily have effectively isolated Djilas and Dedijer, imprisoned in a jail or imprisoned in their own homes—as easily as the UDBA plainclothesmen broke up Dedijer's dream of calling an open press conference last week.

It is not, then, a question of what induced the rulers to swing the legal club, instead of simply expelling Dedijer from his posts and the party. It is a question of what induced the rulers to call world attention to their plan for criminal prosecution, instead of just doing it in the dark of night, as is more customary. Hence the conclusion: a gesture of defiance.

It is worthwhile making this point because of the tendency of some comment on the case to speculate on the "hards" and "softs" in the top of the regime. Is Kardelj "hard" against Djilas (for jailing him), and has Tito ("soft") held it up, perhaps because he is only for expelling him? We don't think this line of speculation means much.

There can be little doubt that before Tito left the country to begin his Asian junket, the decision was made to reactivate the case by calling Dedijer before the Control Commission. Thus the ball was set rolling, to be steered by Kardelj, who had also acted as the hatchetman at the purge of Djilas last January.

But one can well believe that the defiance campaign by Dedijer and Djilas was not anticipated. When the acting-fuehrer replied with criminal prosecution, it may or may not have been on the basis of cables from Tito (Foreign Minister Popovic said no), but this is tactics.

Tito is not a soft, not a medium-soft, and not even a little-bit-soft. He is by training and experience and predilection given more freely to brutal solutions of opposition than any member of his entourage, bar none. Any speculations about Tito's role in the affair which has him playing a "soft" role is nonsense pure and simple.

SECOND THOUGHTS

But on the plane of tactics, it is not impossible that the first rageful reaction in Belgrade to throw the whole totalitarian machinery at the two "criminals" was called to heel either by calmer heads among the bureaucracy (say, Piyade) or indeed by Tito. There may indeed be a hold-up on Djilas's fate till at least Tito returns.

There are indications that there were second thoughts in Belgrade. The quick public announcement of a criminal trial would seem to indicate the intention to hold a public trial, a show trial. But on December 29, the federal prosecutor hinted that the regime might not make it an open show. In a show trial (assuming that the Stalinist "confession" technique is out of the question in this case), the idea would be to spread before the people the evidence of Djilas's "collaboration" with "hostile elements" and "foreign

agents" (the *Times* reporter, for example); and we can assume that the UDBA has evidence of varying sorts that could be used.

Who could use the tribune of the court most effectively—the regime to successfully smear Djilas as a capitulator to capitalism, or Djilas to make his pro-democratic ideas resound? The regime has the advantage of controlling what is reported of the trial in Yugoslavia itself, though it cannot control all grapevines; and the regime has also the advantage that Djilas and Dedijer are far from being clear enough in their own minds about their program or ideas so as to make effective use of their opportunity. But it is a gamble, and the Titoists are well-advised, no doubt, to think twice.

In the midst of what is perhaps a state of indecision among the rulers with regard to this tactical question, the *Times* correspondent (who, remember, is part of the cast and not just a spectator) injected a warning and a plea, in his January 2 dispatch. He ends it by asking: Will Yugoslavia's regime distinguish itself from "Soviet communism"? "Even after these events there are many observers who believe liberalization will be resumed, but they could use some fresh evidence now." (End of article.)

He is saying: If you drop the criminal charges, that is, if you take no personal sanctions against the heretics, we Western "observers" (who after all have to reconcile the American people to aid programs for you) will once more be able to say that this Tito regime is "different" from Moscow, will once more be able to toss around the pleasant nothings about "liberalization" of the national-Stalinist dictatorship in Belgrade. . . .

THE STALINIST REFLEX

But whatever the Titoists decide to do—caught as they are in their contradictory position as an independent Stalinist-type bureaucratic collectivism which needs the alliance with the capitalist powers—the totalitarian pattern of the Djilas-Dedijer case has been too clear to be overlooked by anyone who doesn't work hard at being a dupe.

In this second week of developments, the slander note of the regime has resounded in answer: Djilas is a foreign agent. It is the Stalinist reflex.

Kardelj launched it, as is only his right, by precedence, in his speech of December 27 in which he let it be understood that the democratic oppositionists had served the interests of "people and circles to whom perhaps the Yugoslav foreign policy and especially the journey of Comrade Tito in India will not be favorable."

On Dec. 31, the government's press spokesmen clearly ascribed the case to a campaign from "abroad" (that is, the West) to change the country's system. This was polite language addressed to the foreign correspondents. Translated into Serbo-Croatian, it means that Djilas is a foreign-dog capitalist-restorationist collaborating with the Western imperialists against his own country, etc.

Djilas and Dedijer were expressly described as "foreign agents" in another typically totalitarian document, a letter in *Borba* (CP organ) by the unfortunate Colonel General Dapcevic, the army chief of staff. The point of this letter lies mainly in the signature. Readers may remember that Djilas's last and most violent article of last January, in the course of his journalistic putsch, was one in the

magazine *Nova Misao*, in which Djilas described the brutal treatment given by the wives of the bureaucrats to Dapcevic's bride, a former actress who didn't "belong." The steel edge of this article was its devastating description of the bureaucracy as such, as a ruling bureaucracy separated from and imposed upon the people.

And so Dapcevic is trundled out to denounce Djilas.

We wrote last week about the background to the case of Mitra Mitrovic, who also was hauled before the Control Commission. A day after Dapcevic, *Borba* carried a letter over her signature, also denouncing Djilas. Apparently she had found her sessions with the Control Commission very educational.

The totalitarian Stalinist pattern goes right through. Although Dedijer's ideological crime was committed last January, when he stood up on his legs at the Central Committee meeting and defended Djilas, it is only now that he is being expelled from such worthy front organizations as the Serbian Journalists Association and the Society for International Law, and recalled as deputy from his district.

TOTALITARIAN TANG

The special tang of totalitarian hypocrisy is not missing. The Control Commission, in its decision condemning Dedijer, denounced him for "hypocritically" voting in favor of Djilas's expulsion in order to preserve his own position. To get the flavor, it must be stressed that they denounce him now, not when he so voted. In putting the light on this fact, they do not realize how they reveal the whole totalitarian climate in which they (and Dedijer) live. Then it was accepted, and was indeed inevitable, that a man who notoriously supported and continued to support Djilas should raise his hand in order not to interfere with the totalitarian ritual of the unanimous vote.

Djilas and Dedijer will have a fair trial, says the federal prosecutor, Brana Jevremovic, in accordance with Yugoslav law and in keeping with the UN Convention on Human Rights. This is revolting Stalinist cynicism. The truth is that a fair trial is excluded in advance by the Yugoslav law

Re Those Well-Known 'Model' Exploiters, The Belgian Colonialists in the Congo

The Belgian Congo is sometimes cited as an example of "enlightened" colonialism. Following is a brief note on it (from Toward Freedom, Dec. issue) by the president of CORE, who returned from Africa a few months ago.—Ed.

By GEORGE HOUSER

In the Belgian Congo race is a strong factor. I felt I was to some degree being prepared for what I expected in South Africa.

In spite of the fact that theoretically an African, by becoming educated and adopting Western ways, can be raised to the status of an "evolue" and therefore be looked upon as a European, I didn't see any such person in my travels around the Congo. There undoubtedly were some "evolved" Africans in the Congo, but they would have to carry papers to prove it. . . .

The population of the Congo is about 12,000,000, of which about 100,000 are Europeans. But as in South Africa, the urban areas are the domain of the white man. There are definite African sections of all Congo cities. There is a curfew—no African allowed downtown without a permit after 9 p.m.

In the post offices, a white person can go in front of any Africans who may have been in line waiting for service for some time. In railroad stations there are entrances and ticket windows for "Indigène" and "Européen." The government controls the influx of Africans to urban areas by making it obligatory for an African to have a permit allowing him to go to a city.

Although the Belgians claim that they are slowly going to bring some changes

itself—by its very text, without even discussing anything else.

The oppositionists will be tried under Article 118 of the code, which reads:

"(1) Whoever with intent to undermine the authority of the working people's defensive power of the country or the economic bases of socialist development, or with intent to destroy the brotherhood and unity of the peoples of the Federated People's Republic of Yugoslavia by means of cartoons, writings, speech before a gathering, or in any other way carries out propaganda against the state and social organizations or against political, economic, military or other important measures of the people's authority shall be punished by imprisonment.

"(2) The same punishment shall be inflicted on a person propagandizing fascist or other ideas hostile to the people and the state."

The law itself is simply a statement of the totalitarian creed outlawing democratic opposition.

It was in strict accordance with Yugoslav law that the parliament went through the farce of stripping Dedijer of his immunity as a deputy, so that he could be brought up on criminal charges in the first place. In seven minutes, with a burst of applause, Deputy Dedijer became outcast Dedijer, at the simple request of the Supreme State Prosecutor.

DEFENSE NEEDED

At this writing, according to reports, Djilas and Dedijer are not yet under arrest. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the bureaucracy may think it wisest to retreat at this juncture, and leave them physically alone, at least for a period. But if the government does go ahead with its threat, then it is incumbent on Western socialists to react in defense of Djilas and Dedijer, that is, in defense of their rights.

If the Tito regime wants to get tough about it, and risk displeasure and a bit of grumbling, there is no really good reason to believe that the Western capitalist governments will be able to do much for Djilas and Dedijer, or want to. But in any case it is a duty of SOCIALISTS to raise their voices, and stimulate voices all over the world, to save the democratic oppositionists in Yugoslavia, if their necks are put on the chopping-block, quite apart from the extent to which any particular socialist may agree or disagree with their views or actions.

Kardelj, Tito, Rankovic and Piyade will no doubt continue to yell "Blackmail," but in spite of this—in fact, because of this—it is the British Laborites who should thunder "Hands off Djilas and Dedijer"; it is the German Social Democrats; it is the Indian socialists and Nehruites whom the Titoists want to woo; it is the socialists of the world, including American socialists, who should try to make this case an international Sacco-Vanzetti scandal.

into the picture, the pattern which obviously prevails is one of segregation.

There are no political rights for anyone. Real colonial administration is from Europe. There are no elections and no legislature.

But there is a set policy of social welfare. The business enterprise of the Congo rests upon the base of African labor. The Belgians treat their labor in as enlightened a way as they think is practical. There are minimum wage laws. There is free hospitalization required by employers. In addition to a wage, a certain amount is stipulated for rations either payable in cash or in actual food allotment. The government subsidizes the mission schools, regardless of denomination, so long as they meet certain standards.

Furthermore, housing is provided for workers by companies. The housing projects of the large companies such as the railroad, or the Union Minière du Haut Katanga (the powerful copper mining company in Katanga province) are very neat and contrast with the mud and stick houses of the African seen in rural areas. Finally, the Congo administration is trying to protect the African from a possible influx of European immigrants.

It is difficult for a white person to meet the conditions demanded by the government of any settler. The government does not want poor whites on its hands. So a settler has to put into a special bank account \$1000 for himself and another \$1000 for his wife, as well as \$500 for each child to guarantee that if his business enterprise does not make good, money will be on hand to send the family home.

The Attack on the American Indians

Following are analysis and reports on the Eisenhower administration's program to terminate federal responsibility for American Indian tribal communities, provided by the Association on American Indian Affairs, which publishes Indian Affairs as its bulletin.

The first section below is by the Association's chairman, Oliver La Farge. The rest is condensed from Indian Affairs.

In overwhelming majority, informed friends of fair treatment of the Indians have condemned this governmental program, as an abandonment of the Indians after failure to prepare them for integration.

By OLIVER LA FARGE

The 1955 prospect for American Indian progress and welfare is increasingly ominous. Federal policy and action in Indian affairs the past year showed little if any effective concern to protect and conserve the Indian landed estate or the right of Indians to an Indian identity.

In the recent record, both the land and the people are under attack. More than half a million acres of Indian lands were stripped of protective safeguards in the last 12 months. Tribal authority and tribal chieftainship are being challenged.

The "termination" program begins to look less and less like a mere effort to end federal jurisdiction and more and more like a plan to obliterate Indian life from the American scene.

The United States does not have an enviable record in its treatment of the Indians, but for a brief period—at most the last generation—the nation embarked on an enlightened and honorable course. The Indians were given a chance to govern themselves, to work toward economic independence, and to keep Indian ways of thinking and living that they cherish as right and good.

The promise of that period is rapidly vanishing. Unless the present vicious trend is reversed, 1955 may add a black and shameful chapter to our history.

From INDIAN AFFAIRS

Before the 83rd Congress adjourned, six Indian groups were "terminated." Strongly opposed in the congressional hearings were proposals which were shown, in testimony of Indians, officials, and others, to disregard factors essential to an orderly and equitable end of federal jurisdiction.

These necessary conditions are: effective Indian adjustment to American life; economic conditions adequate for decent standards of living; Indian willingness to dispense with federal aid; and readiness of the states to assume responsibility.

Among Florida Seminoles, for example, illiteracy was proved to be more than 90 per cent. The Turtle Mountain Chippewas of North Dakota and the Kansas-Nebraska tribes were shown to need more federal economic aid, not termination. Flatheads of Montana proved unwilling to accept termination; and New York State Indians refused to endorse an end of their treaty status. In California, the legislature memorialized Congress on April 8, 1954 against legislation to terminate California Indians. None of the bills for these Indian groups were enacted.

Two termination acts, by ending federal regulation of valuable Indian natural resources, are almost certain to make conservation impossible. Menomini and Klamath timber, heretofore used on sustained-yield principles, will be open to unregulated exploitation and exhaustion.

Whatever the effect of these enactments on Indian individuals, there can be little doubt that they are weighted, economically and legally, against Indian tribal life. Indian reactions are only beginning to come in. Rumbblings of discontent are already reported among the Uintah-Ourays; and, according to newspaper accounts, the Menominis—thought to be substantially in agreement with termination—are already disillusioned and are warning other tribes to guard against a similar fate.

ABANDONMENT PROGRAM

The proposal to terminate four backward groups of Paiute-Shoshone Indians of Utah (Now Public Law 762) was a test of administration attitudes. Its enactment is ominous in the extreme.

Admittedly, these Utah Indians—

appears in the Interior Department's own reports—are poorly-educated, with many illiterate; and very poor, with more than half wholly or partly dependent on charity and relief. Their average income is less than one-half that of non-Indian neighbors.

Apparently aware of the facts, the 83rd Congress did not include them in its original termination program. The late addition of a bill to terminate them was justified, not by their readiness, but by the argument that little had been done or was being done for them by the federal government and they would be better off on their own. It was also generally understood that these (at first six) bands wanted an end of their Federal status.

Unexpectedly, inquiries by the Association and others brought prompt protests from two bands—the Washakie and Skull Valley Shoshones—that they did not want termination. The House struck these two groups from the bill; the Senate and House also concurred, after the evidence of the hearings, in additional amendments to safeguard the Indians' oil and other subsurface property rights for the next ten years.

But the final act terminated two other bands whose protests reached the Association and were transmitted to Congress in May—the Indian Peaks and Koosharem Paiutes; and did not meet the fundamental objection that unprepared, backward Indians are being terminated before federal obligations have been met.

This action apparently commits both administration and Congress to a more drastic, precipitate "termination" program

BOLIVIA

Lechin's 'Workers' Congress' Ends an Era

By JUAN REY

SANTIAGO—The recent "workers' congress" in Bolivia signaled the end of the revolutionary period in that country.

The idea of a "workers' congress" emerged in Bolivia after the 1952 victory of the workers over the army. It was then looked on not only as the "workers' parliament," the instrument of workers' control over the government, but also as the organ of the future workers' power.

Two years have passed before the congress could be organized. The reason for this delay was the fear of the ruling Nationalists that the congress could make serious trouble for them if it was convoked before the consolidation in power of the MNR, the Nationalist party. The convocation depended in practice on the "workers' minister" in the government, Juan Lechin, as general secretary of the trade-union federation (Central Obrera Boliviana).

In 1952 the situation was that the COB and Lechin could easily have become masters of the country if they had really wanted to. Only now has the "workers' congress" been brought together—now that the revolutionary wave has passed, now that the MNR Nationalists have consolidated their position, now that Lechin has been dismissed from the cabinet and has gone "back to his base."

At the congress Lechin presented a report on his own activity in the regime and a general accounting of the "national revolution." In the first place, he defended his own policy against attacks from the "left," that is, from the Stalinists and from the Trotskyist POR.

LECHIN AND STALINISTS

Lechin argued, in self-defense, that the nationalization of the mines has "emancipated" the Bolivian workers from the yoke of the foreign capitalist, that it gave the mines to the workers so that they are now working under "workers' control." He rejected the charge that the Nationalist regime has capitulated to U. S. imperialism and surrendered oil and iron concessions to U. S. enterprises. With regard to agrarian policy, he defended the bourgeois agrarian reform carried through by the regime, which created a new layer of small landholders and organized the Indian peasants in the unions. According to Lechin, "workers' control" is the greatest conquest of the proletariat, because, he said, the workers

than anything put forward earlier. If it is a portent, it means that the Indians who have been most neglected—and who are therefore most entitled to increased federal consideration until national obligations are met—may be in line for what is literally "abandonment."

STATE DISCRIMINATION

The 1953 repeal of the antiquated federal Indian liquor laws is being followed by prompt action in a number of states to end the continuing discrimination of state Indian liquor laws and restrictive provisions of state constitutions.

Nebraska and Iowa courts this year ruled unconstitutional state laws prohibiting sale of liquor to Indians. New Mexico and Arizona repealed discriminatory clauses in state constitution. In Idaho, where the constitutionality of the state liquor law is being challenged in the Supreme Court, the Association has filed a brief amicus curiae.

Indians, however, still fear state jurisdiction and local justice with reason. The effort of San Diego County, California, to deny Indians county relief was defeated in higher courts only this July. Weeks earlier, the federal courts threw out Arizona's effort to win federal support for a Social Security program for the disabled that excludes Indians.

Fishing and hunting rights, based on ancient treaties, are still locally challenged. It took court action this year in Idaho to validate Indian hunting rights, and in Washington, currently, alleged infringement of Indian fishing rights is reported.

even control the foreign export of tin, that is, 80 per cent of Bolivia's foreign trade.

Lechin thus identifies "workers' control" with the controls of the Nationalist regime and its bureaucracy, in the same totalitarian way as do the Stalinists (for whom, also, anything belonging to the state is also automatically spoken of as belonging to the "people").

But this similarity did not prevent him from making a severe attack on Stalinist policy in Russia and elsewhere. The congress was given a very serious criticism of Stalinism among the masses not only in South America but in the world as a whole. Never before was Stalinism so vigorously attacked for its treachery to the revolution, its exploitation of the workers, its bureaucratic totalitarian regime, and its international imperialist policy.

In this respect the Bolivian workers' congress shows that the Bolivian workers have remained immune to Stalinist propaganda and organizational methods because their revolutionary sentiment is higher historically than the Stalinist policy. But the defeat of Stalinism was obtained not from the standpoint of revolutionary socialism but of nationalism. It is quite possible today for nationalism in the backward semi-colonial countries to overcome Stalinism politically insofar as it can be progressive.

IN MNR GRIP

The workers' congress, under the leadership of Lechin and the nationalist group of ex-Trotskyist leaders (Moller, Salazar, Mercado, Zegada), was transformed from an organ of workers' control over the government into an instrument of petty-bourgeois-nationalist control over the workers. It did not raise the problem of a worker's government, the deepening of the revolution, the nationalization of industry, the banking system and foreign trade, the old program of the left parties. Only the ex-

Local discrimination against Indians continues in northwestern Nebraska, culminating this year in two cases of violence. In one a Pine Ridge Sioux named Broken Rope was fatally shot by the Gordon, Nebraska, chief of police. In Chamberlain, South Dakota, local prejudice against Indians living in the town or attending the schools proved so strong that plans to transfer the Ft. Thompson agency to Chamberlain were countermanded.

UNDERMINING A PEOPLE

After Congress adjourned, the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs issued a report in late September which has just come to hand. It declares a long series of tribes ready for termination enactments within five years—based on 1952 opinions of local officials of the Indian Bureau. Taking a strong position for rapid assimilation and against Indian tribalism, it makes the flat statement: "The Indians as a whole have adopted the civilization and moral values of western civilization and must be dealt with having these considerations in mind"—an assertion contrary to the findings of most first-hand observers.

A few years ago the Hoover Commission Task Force on Indian Affairs said: "The destruction of Indian tribal government, the liquidation of tribal organization, and the hostility to all Indian ways and culture that characterized so much of government policy now appears to have been a mistake which defeated rather than furthered the government's ultimate objectives."

Current policy makers could well take note of that apt criticism, and of the enlightened Task Force statement on assimilation: "People move from one base to another, and move slowly. The loss of an existing base before a new base has been consolidated means simply frustration and degeneration."

Behind the fear and despair among Indians today is apprehension that their right to Indian identity itself is being deliberately undermined.

"workers' deputy" Salamanca, in the name of the Liga Obrera Revolucionaria, presented these socialist demands in his "workers' program," but his voice was silenced by Lechin's well-organized majority.

On the contrary, the congress, kept well in hand by Lechin, confirmed and approved all the Nationalist policies, even the concessions to the U. S. which are so unpopular among the Bolivian masses. Victor Paz Estenssoro, the president of Bolivia, was hailed as the "economic liberator," and Lechin was re-elected secretary of the COB.

In spite of attacks by the CP and the POR, the congress was so organized and prepared by the Lechin caucus that opposition was absolutely eliminated, and the MNR controlled the discussion and all resolutions. Thus the congress demonstrated the Nationalists' stability in control of the state power and their control of the workers' movement.

FAREWELL TO REVOLUTION

It represented farewell to the social revolution to which the workers had aspired, a farewell of the Nationalist revolutions to its own tempestuous period. It was the end-product of the fact that the achievements of the national revolution had remained within the bounds of purely bourgeois and state-capitalist reforms, had never broken out of these bounds and into the social revolution which the workers and the country had demanded.

The nationalization of the mines had liberated neither the working class nor Bolivia; within the bounds, it had helped to create only a new stratum of the Nationalist bureaucracy and the Nationalist bourgeoisie, who now are masters of the situation and the new exploiters of the workers. Bolivia has not been liberated economically, but rather depends more than ever on U. S. policy. The Nationalist regime has given the U. S. political and economical concessions, and is alive only thanks to U. S. assistance.

The real historical need for social revolution was replaced by a petty-bourgeois farce, by a Nationalist imitation of the revolution. Now the workers' congress had liquidated this period of imitation and begun a period of brutal bourgeois restoration, that is, of the victory of state capitalism and private capitalism over the workers' demands and the socialist program. Perhaps the MNR is the

(Turn to last page)

War or Depression — —

(Continued from page 11)

mates, will hardly overtake the increased productivity. This means that the hiring which is going on now in some industries will be offset by layoffs elsewhere, or in the same industries later in the year. To this must be added the increase in the labor force which takes place annually, and the possibility that the number of men in the armed services may be reduced somewhat.

From the long-run point of view, the shudders of the bankers and government economists are quite understandable. Although all of them are very much relieved at the relative ease with which this recession was overcome, and can feel that they now have a breathing-spell in which to prepare themselves for the next one, the over-all picture is not one which can really inspire confidence.

THE CURSE

The recession which began in the fall of 1953 was generally ascribed to overstocked inventories in both industrial raw materials, semi-finished goods, and finished consumer items. Many writers seemed to feel that if it could be demonstrated that this was "merely" an "inventory recession," the curse would be taken off it. The idea seemed to be that since an overstock of inventory could be

ascribed to poor planning by purchasers, the "cure" would be working off the inventories and then planning more carefully in the future.

All of this was nonsense. Industry and all aspects of the economy, as well as consumption, were booming along at record rates in 1953. But despite the high level of production and consumption all along the line, commodities began to pile up and clog the pores of the economy. In other words, that situation demonstrated that the economy tends to produce more than it can consume, a fact which Marxists have pointed to as a basic feature of capitalism for a hundred years.

So production was cut back and the inventories were absorbed. But what confidence can this inspire in the future? One of the things which prevented the slump from becoming too deep was continued plant expansion during 1954. Added to this is the new flowering of automation which will increase productivity manyfold while cutting down the numbers of workers in the basic production industries.

MOTIVES IN AUTO

All that means is that the factors which led to the inventory pile becoming too high are still in operation, and can be counted on to reproduce the same sit-

uation, but at an increased intensity sometime in the future. And the capitalists are now behaving in a way which makes it appear that this future will be sooner rather than later.

The automobile industry is a good example. Last year, the manufacturers overproduced heavily during the first part of the year, loaded up their dealers with cars, and then cut back production to a trickle during the last months of the year.

This year they are going through the same thing, but at an even more brutal pace. Production is being maintained at such high levels now that there is widespread conjecture that the companies are getting ready for a big strike later in the year, or at the very least want to have an enormous backlog of cars so that when they sit down at the bargaining table with the United Automobile Workers they will be in a strong position to talk tough.

That may be one factor in the frantic pace at which automobiles are being produced, with the widespread reaction this has in the steel and other industries. Another factor is the deadly competitive race among the various companies. Each wants to get its new models on the market in ample supply for all possible customers, so that none will be inclined to go to a rival because of delayed delivery. But if the annual demand is going to be satisfied in great part in the early months of the year, that simply means that for the rest of the year the workers and dealers will have nothing to do.

PROSPECTS

The military sector of the economy remains as a vast prop under it, as does government spending in general. Thus, no matter what happens in the civilian part of the economy, activity and employment are supported by a rate of governmental expenditure which dwarfs anything attempted by the New and Fair Deals in the way of pump-priming. Yet it is clear that if military expenditures are stabilized, full employment and a healthy economy can be guaranteed only if there is an annual expansion of something in the vicinity of \$25 billion each year. And nothing coming even close to that is likely in 1955.

Thus the prospects are: a lot of action in the early months of the year stimulated by auto and other industries which have new models to offer and in which inventories have been reduced during the last recession; a continued high level of government spending; unemployment of over three million workers during most of the year, with the number expanding toward the end of the year.

And after that? It would be foolish to try to predict the trends beyond that. The exact rate at which overproduction will again begin to have serious economic consequences can only be estimated with the greatest difficulty. But if the government maintains stability in its expenditures (and keeps operating on the basis of a considerable deficit), it is altogether likely that the next dip will be deeper and more serious than was the one of 1953-54.

Bolivia — —

(Continued from page 71)

only party capable of carrying out this political task and of playing in Bolivia a role similar to that of Stalinism in Russia, in spite of its criticism of Stalinism. [Comrade Rey here is referring to his own view that the Stalinist social system is state-capitalism—Ed.]

True, the historical limits of capitalism could not be overcome in Bolivia, and the socialist revolution realized, because of the economic development of the country, the state of ideological consciousness of the workers, and in the first place, because of the international situation. In this limited sense, the Nationalist victory over the workers' movement represents the "objective fatality of today." But this is not an expression of "historical objectivity," that is, of the historical needs of the country, of its social and economic development, of its future. The reactionary "fatality" has won against the objective historical need not only because of internal Bolivian reasons, but because of the nature of our time, the time of the Big Lie, of the imitations and falsifications and ersatz-substitutes for socialism. But no totalitarianism, no falsification of socialism, can replace the real historical need for socialism, which is the only hope of mankind and the historical objectivity of tomorrow.

Fears & Doubts — —

(Continued from page 11)

what it may cost, and how much a worker may benefit. These questions are obviously too simple to be answered.)

Harris says, for example: The guaranteed annual wage is more likely to be successful and to do a minimum harm to the economy, or even do positive good, if it is introduced in a high employment economy. Neither Harris nor the UAW answers the question: Will there be a high employment economy in the next period? If there is one (comparable, say, to the World War II period), why should the fight be for steady jobs? In wartime that existed automatically.

If we are entering a period of not-so-high employment — "chronic unemployment" is the word Harris used at one point — shouldn't the struggle for a shorter work week be included in any grand strategy? No answers.

BIG QUALIFICATIONS

Another Harris qualification: If large recourse is made to reserve financing at least until the plan affects a large part of the economy. He estimates, as does this writer, that on the basis of previous auto industry records, the equivalent of 10 cents an hour per employee per year would be required to build up the kind of fund the UAW is talking about. Meanwhile, the auto workers would get little if anything, and if the industry dove-tailed its model changeovers with regu-

lar production as they did in 1950, the cost would be negligible to the employers in the future.

More qualifications: If there are built-in safety features, devices such as limitations on the percentage of payrolls to be charged to it (a 5 per cent charge would be equivalent to the 10 cents we mentioned), and reductions of workers to be covered in industry suffering from large technological and/or demand changes. The UAW seems to be completely in the dark on this second point. What is the actual impact of automation in concrete figures? What about fluctuations in the car market? Silence!

A very big qualification: If declining industries are not touched. In auto this means no GAW demand on anything but the Big Three, and if Chrysler doesn't recover it could limit the demand to General Motors and Ford. What about the rest of the industry, the vendors, the tool and die shops, and the whole aircraft industry covered by UAW contracts now? Not to mention the agricultural-implementation industry. What plan does the UAW propose for this section of the union? No answer, at least not yet, after a three-year study on proposed guaranteed annual wage plans.

Harris' last qualification: If the problem is integrated with unemployment compensation and hence cost reduced; if the incentive to move into growing occupations and regions is not dulled excessively by paying under the guaranteed annual wage the full wage but rather something less.

ACHILLES HEEL

Since Weinberg said in his report that most of the qualifications or "ifs" in Harris' paper were taken care of by "built-in" features of the UAW plan (which is now called a guaranteed employment plan rather than a guaranteed wage plan) it may be presumed that for Ford and General Motors something along those lines will be presented as the demand of the 1955 negotiations.

If the complications of the proposed plan tended to make the discussion at the Association meetings somewhat more abstruse, the explanations given by UAW leaders at local union meetings haven't held up either.

This is a truly extraordinary feature of this demand by a union: For the first time in modern union history a major union is asking for a plan that very few of its leadership and none of its ranks understand at present. In fact, outside of a special UAW technical committee working on it, it is not likely that anyone in the country can be found who understands just what the UAW is asking for.

This may well turn out to be the Achilles' heel of Walter Reuther's strategy for the 1955 negotiations. For the power of the corporations, and the stormy economic weather ahead for auto employment next summer makes imperative a strongly convinced rank and file to summon it successfully into a decisive struggle. There is no visible sign in that direction at the present time.

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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