

# LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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APRIL 2, 1956

FIVE CENTS

## KEFAUVER AND THE LIBERALS

Success of His Appeal Shows People Down Below Are Restive

By GORDON HASKELL

Senator Kefauver, without any state organization to speak of, has whipped the pants off Adlai Stevenson and the highly organized Democratic Party of Minnesota in the primaries. Further, the people of Minnesota turned out in unprecedented numbers to vote in the primary, and swung heavily into the Democratic column.

Some of Stevenson's supporters have been claiming that his defeat by Kefauver is to be accounted for by a heavy infiltration of Republicans into the Democratic primary for the purpose of defeating the Democrat's most dangerous potential candidate. But this claim grows ever fainter as the really crushing impact of the primary results sink in.

Whatever may happen in the coming primaries in Florida and California, it is clear that in Minnesota, at least, there is a mass revulsion against the Eisenhower administration, and that this revulsion has swung not to the "moderate" Stevenson, but right past him to the type that is closer to a New-Dealer Kefauver.

Most analyses which have come to our attention stress the swing of the farm vote and discuss the danger this represents for Republican ambitions in the fall. But in discussing why these voters swung to Kefauver rather than to Stevenson, they tend to get wound up in discussions of whether Stevenson spoke "above" his audiences, whether Kefauver's "warmer" and "more direct" approach didn't appeal to the homespun folks of Minnesota more than Steven-

son's more "distant" and "intellectual" manner, and the like.

It would be foolhardy to deny that this question of the "style" of the two candidates had something to do with the outcome. But the people of Minnesota are not overwhelmingly ignorant yokels who apply the same standards to presidential candidates as to town clerks. They have shown at least as much sophistication in the selection of their representatives and in their votes in presidential elections as the rest of the American electorate, and often a good deal more than can be said for many another state.

The point is that however unmoved they may have been left by Stevenson's sallies, it appears they were left even colder by his politics, his program.

However much many of them may sympathize with Stevenson's much-touted deep respect for the office of the presidency (it is because of his respect for this office, he says, that he is unwilling to promise anything in the election which he isn't sure he could deliver as president), it appears that what they really want of

a presidential candidate is to have some respect for THEM, that is for, their needs.

On this score, the tendency of most newspapers and commentators has been not to discuss much of what Stevenson and Kefauver have been "promising" the voters, but to content themselves, rather, with general discussions of Stevenson's evasion of political issues, while stating or implying that Kefauver was promising the voters the moon, or as many varieties of moons as their heart might desire. (It might be noted that, as usual, most newspapers are for the Republicans, and those which are for the Democrats lean strongly to Stevenson.)

### BENEATH THE STREAM

But whether Kefauver is simply a demagogue or not—or any more of a demagogue than was Harry Truman in his demagogic 1948 campaign—is a question for Kefauverites. What we are interested in are the political forces and currents which gather strength molecularly beneath the stream of bourgeois politics and then show themselves in such test-events as elections.

And if Kefauver appealed to the Minnesota people, it was not because he is a demagogue promising liberal measures, but because he is a demagogue promising liberal measures.

As socialists, we are not for Kefauver or any other Democrat. One of the reasons we are not for them is precisely that we know that, the Democratic Party being

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## Gov't Launches Police-State Raids on CP

On Tuesday afternoon, federal Treasury agents swooped down on Communist Party national headquarters and *Daily Worker* offices in New York City and other cities, and seized them with the melodramatic trappings of a Grade B movie.

The crude and transparent pretext was non-payment of taxes. However, no previous move had been made by the government to present the matter to court or otherwise give the Stalinists an opportunity to defend their case. The trumped-up tax case, which is ridiculous in itself, was simply used as a thin subterfuge for police-state action.

As the American Civil Liberties Union said: "The issues raised by Communist tyranny are real and pervasive, but this method of attack smacks more of Communist totalitarianism than American democracy."

This step was taken by the government while the "subversiveness" of the CP, as decided by the Subversive Activities Control Board, is still waiting for a Supreme Court decision. The government cops acted to outlaw the organization on their own say-so.

This step is not only a despicable and authoritarian flouting of civil liberties. It is also the typical stupid product of the cop mentality of the post-McCarthyites who run the government.

Just as this moment, when the ranks of

(Turn to last page)

## STALINISM WITHOUT STALIN:

### Part II—The Test for Democratization, and the Needle on the Meter

By HAL DRAPER

Last week in Part I of this discussion we stressed that what the Khrushchev leadership is presently engaged in doing is *sloughing off excesses* of the Stalinist system, within the framework of the system itself—excesses that inevitably arise in a totalitarianism where there is no control from below. This is essentially what determines the limits of the Khrushchev reforms—for example, the limits of who is going to be rehabilitated.

But this is only the beginning of an analysis.

Unfortunately, anyone who is busy speculating airily about a "break with Stalinism" cannot possibly even make this beginning, cannot study realistically what the current upsets mean when viewed *within* the context of Stalinism.

And by Stalinism we always mean a social system, the social order which should be called bureaucratic collectivism in order to detach its connotations from the proper name of the individual under whose leadership it was created. Bureaucratic collectivism—under which the state owns and controls the entire economy, while a totalitarian bureaucracy "owns" and controls the state as the new ruling class—is the social system of the Stalinist world in the same way as capitalism is the dominant social system of the Western world.

This realization by itself should make us expect to find this system capable of varying in its forms, just as capitalism does. (One need only think, for example, of the enormous differences in forms between American capitalism and Japanese capitalism.)

This approach provides the necessary social framework for reining in the free-wheeling imagination of those uninhibited speculators who think that Russia is some kind of political never-neverland where anything-can-happen.

In this sense, we emphasized last week: The limits of the Khrushchev reforms are the limits of the Stalinist system as a system.

Now we add: But these limits are not rigid, any more than under capitalism.

We pointed out, in Part I, that every one of the men so far named for rehabilitation, without exception, is a man who was murdered by Stalin in spite of the

fact that he was a loyal Stalinist. As Khrushchev reported, the staunchest sycophant trembled for his head, with reason.

But is it impossible for the Khrushchev revision to go beyond these types, in spite of the fact that there is no sign that anything like this is being done now? Is it really excluded that genuine critics or even opponents of Stalinism (who are dead and harmless), or dissident Stalinists, should be rehabilitated to any extent?

Of course not. On the contrary, when and if this happens, it is a barometer of the pressures building up with the system.

Analogous developments have taken place under capitalism in every country. Under revolutionary pressure, prodded from below by a radicalized working class, capitalist parties have come out for socialization of industry and everything else in the book; capitalist governments similarly. The Weimar constitution incorporated soviets into its articles, as long as the ground was still burning with the post-war proletarian upsurge. In 1918-19 leading bourgeois parties all over Europe put forward socialization planks more radical than those now held by most social-democratic parties. In China, at one point, in order to curry favor with the workers in revolt, Chiang Kai-shek affiliated with the Comintern. The examples of this frequent pattern could be cited endlessly.

Formally these maneuvers extended outside the limits of the social system they were designed to protect—or rather they stretched these limits under the impulsion from within. The greater the internal pressure, the greater the stretch.

We have here a jury-rigged meter to register and measure the elusive social category called internal revolutionary strain.

In the next period, use this meter on the Russian regime, where (unlike the capitalist cases cited above) we cannot look into the "works" but can mainly keep our eye, from the outside, on the "needle" as it registers.

### ANALYSIS OF A SPECULATION

Take the thick-flying speculations about a rehabilitation of Trotsky's name by the Kremlin, which have turned out to be so unfounded. The rise of these rumors is quite understandable. They did not originate from, though they were helped along by, the misunderstood telegram of Natalia Sedova Trotsky to the 20th Congress.

As soon as one starts playing with the idea that maybe Khrushchev & Co. are

(Continued on page 4)



# IUE Whips Westinghouse After Epic Fight

## Emerges as a Major Militant Labor Force

By JOHN WILLIAMS

The final settlement of the Westinghouse strike revealed an unprecedented show of militancy on the part of the Westinghouse workers.

Strike leaders were kept up to the wee hours of the morning by James Carey, president of the striking electrical workers' union IUE, before he could get the majority of the union's Westinghouse Conference Board to accept a new peace plan. In this new plan the company had made further concessions on the time-study issue and on the issue of the strike leaders who had been fired during the strike.

It was the strike-firings issue that was the heart of the dispute at this point between Carey and the union militants. The latter wanted everybody reinstated as a condition for settlement. Carey was for accepting a plan which placed everybody fired (about 36 key militants) in "indefinite suspension" and left each case to local negotiations and arbitration. This was a little more than the federal mediators' plan which the union had rejected.

The Pittsburgh and Sharon locals were among those that put up a stiff fight on this score. As this is written, the Sharon, Pa. plant is still on strike, demanding reinstatement for all strikers fired at this point. Westinghouse at Pittsburgh has threatened to fire over 1500 militants carrying on a similar last-ditch struggle.

What is prodigious, in the context of recent years, is the fighting spirit displayed by Westinghouse workers after almost six months of the struggle. They felt they had the company over the barrel. After five months the company had started to move in their direction, and, following their class instincts, they were out to give a definitive whipping to this arrogant and vicious strikebreaking corporation. If Carey had not applied the pressure, it is entirely possible that the workers would have insisted on going on to win a complete victory on the firings issue.

They had already forced the company a big distance away from its "sole right to manage" posture on the time-study issue. Any disputed time-study was to go to arbitration. The number of jobs to be time-studied was considerably narrowed

down, and these were essentially production jobs. This type of production job which was to come under time-study was not the type that the workers were mainly concerned with.

Although reports of the agreement are still vague at this point, nevertheless it is now evident that the company's attempt to time-study day-workers and service men was essentially defeated.

Also defeated was the company's attempt to convert incentive workers to day-workers, to give these workers day-workers' pay with incentive quotas. This, of course, amounted to speedup and wage-cut.

The workers also won the right to reopen the five-year contract every year on local supplements, and in 1958 on the Guaranteed Annual Wage.

The company has also agreed to something of a raise in wages, pensions and welfare plan as compared with its pre-strike offer.

### NICHE IN HISTORY

Outside of the firings issue—which, incidentally, is not at all over—the gains already registered are of first-class importance for the union. The IUE has established once and for all that it is here to stay.

This was the union's first massive struggle, and it wrote a truly glorious page in the history of organized labor.

The IUE met and threw back one of the most determined and best organized company attacks on labor of this post-war decade.

It is safe to say that Westinghouse and other corporations will think many times before they attempt strikebreaking on a mass scale again.

Westinghouse workers have won a special niche for themselves by initiating on a mass scale the first struggle against speedup under conditions of automation.

Above all, they have given an answer to cynics and backsliders who have lost faith in the capacity of the working class to fight in its own interest.

The Westinghouse strike has cleared the way for the growth of the IUE as one of the major progressive and militant forces. In this country and era of business-unionism, the emergence of such a force can have a powerful and beneficial effect on the American labor movement.

By BEN HALL

Picket signs are dumped into trash barrels, their paint faded after five months on the strike lines; and 55,000 Westinghouse workers return to assigned operations on their old jobs in the old plants.

A few hours after their strike is settled, their stories disappear from the news headlines and they are forgotten. Their union meetings become routine; their grievances go through procedure; the dramatic struggles which thrust them into public attention are ended; their union activity goes on—the humdrum day-to-day routine conecals the growth and maturing of their union consciousness which erupts only occasionally into spectacular struggles.

But for those who have forgotten, the Westinghouse settlement comes to remind them of the class struggle and of the basic character of the modern labor movement.

The Westinghouse management, which provoked this strike, intended to show their fellow employers how to tame the union or crush it; it rested its case on the basic "prerogatives" of employers and refused to compromise, until the end, its right to determine production standards without permitting union resort to arbitration. Above all, it was determined to shake off union control.

It failed; and it failed completely. But Westinghouse tried hard.

The company tried to reopen its plants in the face of mass picketing, the first such attempt on a national scale against a major union since the founding Ford strike of 1941. It organized back-to-work movements; it got police protection to ram scabs through picket lines in cars and trucks; it got injunctions and jailed the leaders of one UE local; it organized a company union in one plant; and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for back-to-work propaganda. Yet production could not effectively be resumed.

And it failed because it could not wipe out the basic union consciousness of Westinghouse workers, a consciousness which they share with the majority of the American working class.

For 158 days, for 22 weeks, for 5 months, Westinghouse workers manned the picket lines. And toward the end, after more than 140 days, the union felt strong enough to reject a mediation offer (accepted by the company) because it insisted on spelling out terms more definitely.

### BEHIND THE SACRIFICE

This was not an army of tired strikers rushing back in panic; they were victors choosing their own time. The IUE electrical workers union had succeeded in subduing the second largest manufacturer of electrical equipment in the United States.

In admonishing Westinghouse workers, the New York Times points out that they lost \$74 million in wages during the strike. And, adds the Times, they would have to work more than 10 years at their increased rate of pay to make up for what they lost. Arguments like this reveal the total inability of the editorialist, shared with personnel directors and management labor experts, to understand the union consciousness of American workers.

Simple arithmetical calculations are deceptive; no one knows whether they will work for ten years at the same rate of pay; this strike may loom in the mind of management when it "voluntarily" decides to grant increases in future years without a strike. If there were no strike or if this strike were lost, wages would not simply remain where they were; they would decline. But most decisively, without their union and without strike resistance, the loss to the workers in freedom on the job, in human dignity, in security would be incalculable in cash figures.

But taking the Times at face value: 55,000 workers were ready to sacrifice wages, risk the loss of homes, and even go hungry to defend their union. They were not alone. Behind them was the strength of 18 million organized unionists. Millions of dollars was voted for strike aid; hundreds of other unionists joined Westinghouse picket lines, a token of the potential outpouring of class power on tap for emergencies.

An awareness that they were a small part of a mighty army of organized workers undoubtedly sustained the morale of these men and women so long. But there was something to sustain. Here were 55,000 people who knew that they needed union organization; who wanted it and who were ready to fight for it. In this, they resemble the majority of American workers.

And this, one of the basic facts of na-

tional life today, had passed Westinghouse by.

### LEARNING THE HARD WAY

Its decision to force a strike and extend it interminably, came as a surprise. Was this not an era of harmony between labor and management, an epoch of "labor peace"? The solidarity of the strikers and the settlement which they won demonstrate again that this "peace" and this "harmony" are based essentially upon the fighting power of unionism and the realization by employers that they cannot break it without risking the disruption of their profit-making apparatus.

But employers have to learn over and over again. One or another company probes for weak spots in unionism: a Kohler, Perfect Circle, Southern Bell, and finally Westinghouse. If unionism proved to be weak in each case, the highly touted "peace" would soon evaporate as employers rushed to get rid of "their" unions.

Westinghouse miscalculated, but it was not alone in its utter failure to perceive the deep-rooted union loyalty of American workers. During recent auto negotiations, Ford brain-trusters, too, were captivated by self-deluding wisps of their own imagination.

In the best of private schools, they had learned that Americans worship "free enterprise" and "fair" profits. Why not undermine unionism by turning their workers into capitalists, token capitalists anyway? They proposed that Ford workers repudiate their union and withdraw their demands in return for which they would be permitted to buy gilt-edged Ford stock at reduced rates.

This bombshell went off with a veritable "puff." The proposal lasted for one evening; union leaders read it and simply replied: Let the workers vote on your plan or ours. With that, the Ford plan to circumvent unions and class struggle evaporated.

Westinghouse had to learn the hard way. The IUE was in a relatively weak position; it had never proved its power in a major strike; it had been unable to unify all workers into one union; the rival UE still claimed 10,000 Westinghouse workers. But in the strike there was no division and no faltering.

### ARMED PEACE

And now peace returns to Westinghouse, a peace which is possible only because the organized working class can fight.

Charles E. Wilson tells us how peace came to General Motors. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on disarmament, he compared relations between the union and the company to those between Russia and the United States. Recalling the sit-in strikes, he remarked, "We didn't make much progress until we were willing to sit down and talk to them [the UAW] and to recognize the strength on their side." The New York Times then reports, "This analogy applies also to disarmament talks between the East and the West, Mr. Wilson said. Each side must realize that the other has enough military power to fight a devastating nuclear war, he added."

Westinghouse has only now discovered the power of unionism in its own plants.

The strike is over and no other national strike impends. Conversation which was interrupted can now revert to talk about "class harmony" and the "common interests" of labor and management. Then it can drift into a melancholy contemplation of the sad collusion between "two power blocs, labor and capital, against the public." So it can continue.

Until the next struggle.

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### ISL FUND DRIVE

## Now: A Thousand a Week!

By ALBERT GATES  
Fund Drive Director

We had a nice little spurt this past week with contributions reaching the highest weekly total thus far in the campaign. With New York and Los Angeles showing the way, we received \$903, lifting our national receipts to \$4541.20 or 45.4 per cent of our quota.

With a contribution of \$314.45, Los Angeles jumped into third place in the standings. Its percentage is now 80.9, and if there were any doubts about LA making its rather large quota, that can now be dispelled. It will be hard stopping Los Angeles from finishing at the top of the larger quotas or near it. Right now, it is way out in front.

New York, too, did a nice job this past week with a payment of \$480. It certainly has made quite a change in its standing to a more respectable place. Of course, New York has the largest quota in the drive. But it is doing a good job nonetheless, despite the rough road ahead.

Other showings this week were from Newark, Detroit, Philadelphia and Cleveland. Detroit is beginning to show some life, this being the second straight week that a contribution was received.

Even though we did a fair job, only six areas made any showing, leaving

twelve to be heard from. There's the rub. If we could gear the drive so that every quota responded weekly, there would be an even rhythm to the drive and we would be much further ahead than we are now.

From the time of this writing, five weeks remain in the campaign. That means, of course, that half of the drive is now over and we are five percentage points or just about \$500 behind schedule. Arithmetically speaking, that means we have to raise \$1000 a week to finish the drive successfully.

It sounds pretty formidable if we bear in mind that we haven't yet been able to hit \$1000 in any one week. But it can be done. If the areas with large quotas make a weekly payment, and those from whom we hear little or nothing cooperate, there is no doubt about a successful finish. This holds particularly for those quotas that remain under 50 per cent.

### FUND DRIVE BOX SCORE

City	Quota	Paid	%
	\$10,000	\$4,541.20	45.4
St. Louis .....	25	60	240
Oregon .....	50	50	100
Los Angeles ....	650	526.45	80.9
Streator .....	25	15	60
Chicago .....	2,000	1135	56.7
Newark .....	400	223	55.7
New York .....	3,800	1631	42.9
Natl. Office ....	1,250	525	42
Detroit .....	350	100.75	33.5
Cleveland .....	150	50	33.3
Philadelphia ..	200	57	28.5
Bay Area .....	400	100	25
Pittsburgh .....	200	48	24
Seattle .....	150	20	13.3
Buffalo .....	150	0	0
Indiana .....	100	0	0
Akron .....	25	0	0
Reading .....	50	0	0

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

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# William Faulkner's Blood and Kin: Where Are the Zolas to Cry Out Against This Evil?

By MAX MARTIN

That outstanding creative artists and intellectuals can be political idiots is no violation of the laws of nature, any more than the contrary proposition that political virtuosi can be literary cretins.

For this reason one is not exactly taken unawares by the reactionary political idiocy embodied in William Faulkner's response to the heroic struggle being waged by the Negro people for equality and democracy.

**But what is so utterly stupefying about Faulkner's attitude is the complete moral and spiritual bankruptcy it reveals.**

Just consider: The Negroes in the South, emancipated from chattel slavery over ninety years ago, still have to fight for the basic rights which all citizens theoretically enjoy, the right to vote, the right to use on a basis of equality all public facilities such as schools and the means of transportation, the right to live where they choose so long as they can pay the rent or meet the mortgage, the right to work at all jobs their skills can fill, and so forth.

If there was ever a struggle in this country which should personify for all democrats the elements of political justice and morality, this is clearly it. If there was ever a blight in the land which should call forth unequivocal passionate protest and condemnation, then the status of the Negroes is it.

If there was ever a fight against injustice which should receive the unambiguous and uncompromising support of all those who have any moral sense whatsoever, the struggle of the Negroes against the oppression which afflicts them—and corrupts the nation—is it.

**Where are the ringing declarations from American intellectuals, the writers, the artists? There have been none.**

One intellectual has spoken out, one who is perhaps the outstanding novelist in the country today, and what he has said ought to fill all those who work in the cultural field with shame—shame that his attitude is what it is and shame that no equally authoritative intellectual voice on the other side has yet been heard.

## SOUTHERN LIBERAL

We refer to two recently published pieces of Faulkner: his "A Letter to the North" which appeared in *Life* of March 5, and his interview with Russell Warren Howe, New York correspondent of the *London Sunday Times*, which the *Reporter* printed in its March 22 issue.

Faulkner has a reputation for being a Southern liberal, particularly on the question of civil rights for Negroes. This reputation derives in part from various statements he has issued during the course of the last few years and in part from the view of the Negro which emerges from his literary work.

One sees in his novels the theme that slavery and the subsequent oppression of the Negroes have been the curse of the South. One senses in them a certain admiration for the human dignity he finds in his Negro characters.

And while this admiration is to a large extent chauvinistic in that it is based on the calm and patient demeanor of the Negroes in the face of oppression, still one senses that it is not merely that. Of the Negro characters in his *The*

*Sound and the Fury*, who carry their decayed white masters on their backs, Faulkner says with genuine respect, "They endured."

One might therefore have expected from Faulkner something better than what he has produced even if it would have been too much to think that he could create that outcry which the situation demands from intellectuals.

## IN THE MIDDLE, HE SAYS

What did Faulkner say? It is not easy to summarize his attitudes, for he has written these statements in the same kind of language as in his novels, in a prose which clearly belongs in his imaginative work but sticks out like a sore thumb in expository writings. In addition he contradicts himself several times. The following, however, clearly emerges:

- He is against compulsory segregation, which is "simple incontrovertible immorality" and "wrong and untenable"; which "stinks," which has to go, and whose disappearance is inevitable. The Negroes, he says, are right, and the white Southerners wrong. The basic cause of race prejudice is economic. "To produce cotton we have to have a system of peonage," if high profits are to be maintained.

- He opposes compulsory integration both because it won't work and "from principle." Things are going too fast. And if things keep on going so fast the Southerners will fight; there will be another civil war. The Negroes have to let up their struggle and let the white-chauvinists become accustomed to the gains already registered.

- "The Supreme Court decree came ninety years too late. In 1863 it was a victory. In 1954 it was a tragedy. . . . It will mean twenty years of trouble." The Supreme Court decision itself was "force and violence" and following "as inevitably as night and day" came other violence.

- He has been "Southern," yet not part of the "general majority Southern point of view" and "attained neither by Citizens' Council for NAACP. He has been in the middle but that middle is becoming untenable and then where will he go?"

- If there's no middle ground he's on the side of "Mississippi," his "native country," on the side of his "blood and kin and home." He'll fight for "Mississippi" against the United States even if it means "going out into the street and shooting Negroes."

- Why? Because of "blood and kin," and for one other reason: Heretofore he has favored the Negro because the latter was the underdog but as a result of the Supreme Court decision and other recent developments the Negroes are no longer in that position. ". . . the underdog will be that white embattled minority who are our blood and kin." So Faulkner will side with the new "underdog."

What is one to say about this? From the romantic-reactionary references to

"blood," reminiscent of Nazi ideology, to the nonsensical statement that the Southern Negro is in the process of becoming "topdog" while the white-chauvinists who rule the South become "underdog," we are provided eloquent testimony on the emptiness of Faulkner's social understanding. But more than that, however: to the vacuity of his soul, as well, to his failure of moral sense.

## AS THE NEGRO FIGHTS

The Southern Negro lives under a Jim Crow system which blankets all areas of his life with restriction and discrimination, with segregation and economic exploitation—and with violence if he protests. As Faulkner himself testifies, political rights, the enjoyment of democracy (that democracy which is so severely limited under capitalism but which is still precious), equality and simple justice—all of these are denied to the Negroes.

As a result of a number of factors the Negroes have succeeded in making a few gains, most of them on paper. Now they demand that the paper advances be translated into reality.

Aatherine Lucy attempts to enter the University of Alabama. Some Negroes try to vote. Court suits are brought to effect that integration of the schools decreed by the Supreme Court. The Negroes of Montgomery, Alabama refuse to ride the busses on which they are segregated, humiliated and brutally treated.

The white-chauvinists and racists who rule the South answer with violence, intimidation and defiance. They openly announce that they will not permit the court's decision to be carried out in their states, not speedily, not gradually, not at all, Negroes who register to vote are murdered. Others have their homes blown up. A mob tries to drive Aatherine Lucy from the Alabama campus and what it fails to do the university's Board of Trustees accomplishes. The White Citizens' Councils exert a brutal economic pressure on the Negroes and on anti-Jim Crow whites.

And Faulkner?

He issues a proclamation. To the racists, demanding that they end their inhumanity?

No, to the Negroes, urging them to go slow, to pause a while, to let the racists get used to things.

What can one say to Faulkner? There is only one answer which would serve political justice and morality. And that is for the Negroes to contemptuously ignore his advice and to redouble their efforts. Fortunately, they are doing just that.

## ALL PASSION SPENT

In 1898 Emile Zola wrote his electrifying *J'accuse*, in which he thundered, almost alone, against the injustice of the Dreyfus case. Where is the Emile Zola of today who will take up the cudgels of struggle, without regard for expediency and compromise, against the injustice perpetrated not against one man, but against millions of people whose skins are dark? Where is the Emile Zola who will write a flaming manifesto on the outrageous conviction of the Rev. King in Montgomery, whose "crime" is his leadership of a movement to refuse to patronize the bus line?

If Faulkner lacks the head and the heart to be the Zola of today, where are the others? Are there no intellectuals to answer Faulkner's "letter" with one of their own, one vigorously and militantly denouncing the racists and standing side by side with the Negro people?

We are afraid that too many of them, including even the best (including even Murray Kempton who has used his pen valiantly in behalf of the Negroes), are too busy feeling sorry for Faulkner since he must be so lonely in his "middle ground."

To be sure, the intellectuals are in their overwhelming number against Jim Crow. But quietly, passively, with accents of moderation. The passion of Zola's *J'accuse* just doesn't exist, the passion with which he indicted the government, the army, the church for its role in the Dreyfus affair.

Zola said: "To proclaim Dreyfus innocent is to indict the French General Staff!"

What intellectual of today will say: "To fight for the end of Jim Crow is to fight against the Stevensons and the Democratic Party"?

## ARKANSAS LABOR ATTACKS RACISM These Are Faulkner's Blood and Kin Too . . .

By H. W. BENSON

As the struggle for democracy begins in the South, this crucial question arises: What is the attitude of organized labor in the South toward the fight of Negroes for equal rights?

Thus far, the press has highlighted the fact that a group of steel workers protested against AFL-CIO support of civil rights for Negroes and circulated stories of an impending split in the Southern labor movement. We are left with the definite impression of a Southern labor movement whose leaders at best are afraid to face up to the issue and who momentarily expect their membership to run away into the camp of reaction.

But are these reports accurate? At the very least, we believe that they are totally one-sided.

And now comes a report of the merger in Arkansas of the state councils of the AFL and CIO into one united body: the Arkansas State Federated Labor Council.

Unity in itself is a blow at racism. Tragically, the division of the old federations often pitted one union against another in the poorly organized South, and encouraged backward sections of the labor movement to play upon race prejudice in order to stall the advance of the CIO. Prejudices undoubtedly remain; but the inter-union rivalry which stimulated and encouraged it is gone.

## OVER-ALL MOOD

474 delegates from 210 locals made up the Arkansas unity convention while 300 others sat in as guests: the largest delegated assembly of labor in the state's history. (Speaking of "history" in the South: in the Miami hotel strike, over 10,000 unionists rallied to hear Reuther and Meany, the largest labor demonstration in Florida history.) While the Negroes begin their fight, labor consolidates against the enemy common to Negro and white.

Sitting in assembly room at Hotel Marion in Little Rock were representatives of thousands of organized unionists. These delegates, like members back home, were of many minds—just like delegates at any union convention. Doubt-

less many had learned from their own experience as active unionists that unity between white and Negro was essential. And doubtless others were lukewarm; and still others were undoubtedly victims of white-supremacy propaganda: it would be a miracle if it were otherwise.

But what was the over-all mood of the gathering on this matter? Listen to some of the speeches reported by the AFL-CIO.

A key speaker was John Livingstone, AFL-CIO organizing director, but better known as former UAW vice-president, who in the UAW was a conservative. But consider his speech in Arkansas:

"He was roundly applauded when he warned that employers will use every possible method to try to destroy and divide the new unity of labor and added: 'They will use phoney issues to try to divide us such as pitting race against race if we permit them. I want to point out that many in the South who are leading the fight against integration are the same people who promoted the right-to-work bills in 18 states.'" (AFL-CIO News, March 24.)

Another speaker was former Governor Sidney S. McMath. We are not acquainted with his record in general or in detail. What interests us here is what he felt called upon to say to this meeting of labor.

He "warned against letting employers establish a 'Trojan Horse' within the ranks of labor because of race. He pointed out that the oil lobby had backed the States Rights party against ex-President Truman and [supported] the Dixiecrats in the last election for selfish reasons. . . . 'They are going to save the white man from the Negro—again. They are going to sow discord and strife. They hope to insure another victory for the old guard Republicans with whom they are ideologically allied.' Charging that the leaders of the White Citizens Councils were the leaders of the Dixiecrats in 1948 and of the Eisenhower Democrats in 1952, McMath said that a drive is now under way to sign up union members in Citizens Councils as a means of destroying labor."

When representatives of Southern labor applaud attacks on the enemies of integration, they herald the dogma of Southern reaction.

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# Stalinism Without Stalin

(Continued from page 1)

sincere about a return to Lenin or workers' democracy, then the natural test suggests itself. It is the name of Trotsky, and none other, which is indissolubly linked to the fight for the revolutionary democracy of October against the Stalinist counter-revolution. Any regime in the Kremlin which made even a half-turn in that direction would find that name before it. By the same token, any regime which wanted to convey the impression that it is turning in that direction must likewise conjure with that name, however demagogically.

If at any time—in five years or ten years or tomorrow—the full truth about Trotsky is rehabilitated in Russia then it will be time to come out with the sensational headline which adorns the front page of the optimistic U. S. News & World Report this very week: "Revolt in Soviet Russia Starting."

But there are many stages possible before such a happy event.

What rational purpose did it serve Stalin not only to defeat and suppress Trotsky's political views and install his theory of "socialism in one country" and its political consequences, but also to decree that Trotsky's name must be wiped out of the history of the Russian Revolution? not only to exile Trotsky so that he was not a present organizational danger, but also to label him "fascist mad-dog," etc.? not only to blacken his name, but also to murder his unpolitical kin?

Now these draconian intellectual and other measures did serve their purpose of a sort in the totalitarian rationale though they are not themselves rational, just as the terrible excesses of the blood-purges also served a purpose that could not have been accomplished by more measured and less frenetic blood-letting; for one thing, one cannot always hope to exactly measure out the amount of blood one needs—better too much. . . . But this constantly risked going over from method to madness and had to be reined in even under Stalin.

## THE VITAL TERM IN THE EQUATION

What is widely forgotten is that Stalin himself periodically had to call a halt and retrench; switch over to a period of relative relaxation, as when Beria took over the GPU reins from the wild butcher Yezhov—who, by the way, was also denounced as "unbalanced" and "insane" to account for his "excesses" and "mistakes" after his usefulness was over, and he may or may not have been so.

Even in rehabilitating Stalinists like Voznesensky, Khrushchev & Co. had to try to consider the dangers—weigh them against the advantages. Even rehabilitating a Bela Kun has its dangers, not because this hack was anything himself but a tool who unfortunately got in the way of the juggernaut, but simply because of what the very need for rehabilitation confesses about the system and its present leaders as well as the past ones.

So the rehabilitation of men like Bela Kun and the others denotes a certain degree of registration of the needle on the meter.

Likewise with the wrecking job on the image of Stalin. The need to denounce Stalin and appease the hatred of the regime registers a level of pressure through the needle on the meter.

They may think on the Presidium: What do we gain and what do we lose if (say) we let it out that Trotsky really was physically present in Petrograd in November 1917 and that he was not at that moment engaged in shining the kaiser's boots? or that Trotsky was falsely accused of being a fascist spy, whereas he was "merely" a homegrown counter-revolutionist of his own kind who was only "objectively" a wrecker? or suppose we make an international grandstand play with the "humanitarian" act of giving Mrs. Trotsky the information about her son Sergei which she requested? . . .

Anyone who wants to can try to draw up the pluses and minuses that would accrue from the point of view of the bureaucrats, but obviously not anyone can answer it here; for the decisive factor in the equation is not some intellectual consideration but the internal strain to be appeased—i.e., the registration of the needle on the meter.

## TEST OF "GOOD FAITH"

Yes, indeed, revision of the various Trotsky myths is a test for the Moscow regime but not exactly the sort of test that is commonly supposed. It is a test of how far the desperation of the despots extends, of how dangerous are the moods of discontent that they feel. It is not a test of their "good faith."

Well but why not? we may be asked. How do you know such steps do not reflect democratic intentions? Isn't such a statement simply doctrinaire, a priori?

Not in the least, and the reason is so simple and elementary that the absence of this thought from the ratiocination of the various speculators is itself a first-class commentary on the politics of these bourgeois would-be analysts.

Because there is another decisive test for democratic "good faith."

Because the only real test of the "good faith" in Stalinist protestations about return to democracy or Leninism is something else—not rehabilitations—and as long as that something else is missing, everything else is a blind.

That "something else" is: some steps, however gradual or tentative to begin with, to introduce the right of genuinely free political opposition.

(I do not wish to take the space here to explain what "free political opposition" means, as distinct from the various standard counterfeits invented by the Stalinists under the generic title of "self-criticism" and "criticism from below.")

There is no substitute, not even a partial one.

This is not ultimatic. We do not demand full-blown workers' democracy and socialist freedom overnight. As we said: let them introduce any genuine steps toward permitting real political opposition, any whatsoever, but real ones.

The proof of the true nature of the current turn represented by the 20th Congress is that there has not been, and no one even claims that there has been, the slightest move in this direction.

## SAME SYSTEM, SAME CHEERS

On the contrary, the turn itself has been carried out with the same full-blown totalitarian machinery, style, method and consequences as under Stalin-Stalinism. The same unanimity and cheers. The same groveling before the new leaders and the new line. The same follow-up of purges directed against any elements that do not make the turn fast enough—as is now reported taking place in the party administration in Tiflis. These latter are accused in the same old way of failure to indoctrinate the students in the new line which is to be shoved down their throats. New textbooks on party history will be substituted for the old, it is announced—in exactly the same totalitarian way; indeed, as of old, all teaching of certain subjects has been suspended till the new orthodoxy can be printed up. There were the same obligatory hosannas at the 20th Congress for that wonderful agrarian program of Khrushchev's—the virgin-land program—which, as everybody and Ivan knows, was a bust. The monolith is dead; long live monolithism!

There is not a hint—not a shadow of a suggestion—not a half reason for any well-practised dupe to fool himself into believing—not a claim that the slightest gradualist move is to be taken toward the real right of political opposition.

No, there was one exception as we discussed last week: the fairy tale invented by Isaac Deutscher for the Reporter, which so soon revealed itself as a pure fabrication. In this invention Deutscher did exert himself to depict a situation of political opposition developing. This is very significant. This is what had to be shown, he realized.

If I am right about the trend to democracy, Deutscher reasoned to himself, then this is what must be happening; and since it must be happening, why then it is happening; and if it is happening, why not write it up and tell the world? (See the climax of Gilbert and Sullivan's Mikado for a full exposition of the Deutscherian methodology as a Russian expert: Pooh-Bah explains why Nanki-Poo is really as good as dead.)

All this is why it is so basic to point out that the Khrushchev revisions are being

made in the same totalitarian way as before. We are not alone in pointing this out, of course. It is even done, as a kind of snide jibe, by the same people who, in other paragraphs, dandle the notion of a "break with Stalinism." But it is not a jibe. It goes to the heart of the matter.

Even the current totalitarian-type assault on the "cult of the individual" is being carried on with the ideology of—the cult of the individual. Yesterday Stalin was glorified—and that was the "cult of the individual." Today the crimes and failings of the past are ascribed to this individual, not to the system—and this is the cult of the individual. Tomorrow the glorification will be back too—but for another individual Vozhd.

## WHAT IS STOPPING THEM?

If, as so many professional and amateur gulls of the Kremlin tell us, these well-intentioned libertarians in Moscow are just getting ready in their own good time to roll back the film of the counter-revolution and democratize all over the place—exactly what is stopping them from taking just one small but solid step, any step, in that direction in the three years since Stalin died? or even in the weeks since the 20th Congress? one little token? one little installment?

Let us get real modest in our demand: just one little microscopic souvenir—but in the direction of nothing less than real political opposition!

"Be not so lengthy in preparing the banquet lest you die of hunger," remarked Walter Pater.

What is standing in the way of their good intentions? Why didn't they even want to dress up one single fake delegate at the 20th Congress who would stand up for the gallery and vote no, if only as a demagogic though meaningless token?—as indeed was permitted at points, on secondary matters, even in the Yugoslavia of the Tito-Stalinists.

If the deflating of Stalin is their way of approaching a new democratization, then why is it necessary for them to use the same police-state methods against any misguided and unreconstructed Stalin-Stalinist who declines to admit in the space of 24 hours that Stalin was not a demi-god, as he had thought a few minutes ago, but rather a "criminal," as he has just been informed? Is this natural lag, which was to be expected by democrats, so very dangerous to the state—or to whom, or to what? What could be so harmless, even for totalitarians, than to allow that micro-gram of dissent represented by the innocuous opinion that the Father of Socialism was not really quite so fiendish as he is suddenly painted?

But of course such a question is naive—from our standpoint. It is not a question of the relative harmlessness of this or that dissenting opinion. It is a question of the right to any dissenting opinion on a matter that has just been decided On High. This is totalitarianism, unreconstructed, unrepentant, unvarnished.

## WHEN THE NEEDLE IS IN THE RED ZONE

Let us put it as sharply as possible: let them rehabilitate Trotsky, let them raise a monument to the victims of the Moscow Trials, let them promise or write or pass any number of new laws or constitutions or scraps of paper about democratic rights, let them even repeal some of the more horrible and hair-raising provisions of the Russian penal code and factory legislation, etc.—and it will mean only that they are shaking before the specter of the coming Russian Revolution, i.e., that the needle on the meter is in the red zone, unless and until such maneuvers to appease discontent are accompanied by revolutionary steps to democratize the whole socio-political structure: which means, to begin with, steps to permit open and organized political opposition.

But permitting opposition, in this system, means bursting the very integument of the totalitarian structure. That is why it is a process which cannot even be begun, let alone completed, by the same ruling class which will be overthrown as soon as it begins.

This was proved, as scientifically as such things can be, by the experience with the Yugoslav National-Stalinists (Titoists) when they tried maneuver after maneuver to counterfeit democracy and when they finally confessed the true state of affairs by purging Djilas for even suggesting the possible propriety of permitting real political opposition.

Socialist democracy will be introduced in Russia by the revolution that destroys this bureaucracy, and by nothing else.

But there is still an organic connection between the maneuvers of this bureaucracy and the oncoming of that revolution—a connection which exists quite against the will of the bureaucracy and which it cannot avoid. This connection is the lesson of the Tiflis demonstration, and it is so classically simple and basic to the pattern of revolution that it can be adequately explained without any pretense at deciding the still largely unknown political character of that demonstration, not even whether it was pro-Stalin or anti-Stalinist.

## The Alvahuante Fake

In reply to inquiry by LABOR ACTION, Natalia Sedova Trotsky has definitely exposed Felipe Alvahuante as a publicity-seeking imposter.

On March 21 last week, the N. Y. Times and other papers printed an AP dispatch from Mexico City quoting one Felipe Alvahuante, who claimed to have been Leon Trotsky's "private secretary" for the three years of his stay in Mexico, with a fantastic tale about how he and other "Trotsky admirers" had been invited by Moscow to "pay homage" to Trotsky's memory at the November celebration of the Russian Revolution anniversary.

This tale, which would normally have passed into editors' wastebaskets, was picked up by the press in the atmosphere created around the 20th Congress by commentators who were already busily speculating about a "rehabilitation of Trotsky." This, no doubt, was also what suggested the stunt to Alvahuante.

Natalia Trotsky confirmed the fact, which we reported last week, that this person had never been any kind of secretary to Trotsky nor any member of the Trotsky household in any capacity. His only connection, and the reason indeed why his name was known at all, was that he had at one time been a sympathizer of the Mexican Trotskyist group. "At present he is a lawyer who is looking for publicity; I consider him unbalanced and unworthy of being taken seriously," she writes.

A reply by a second source with whom we checked in Mexico City said the same thing and added, "I don't think Alvahuante acts for anybody or with any second thought, save that of publicity."

By the way, speaking of Stalin myths . . . Do you remember Harry Truman's lowdown that "good old Joe" was just a "prisoner of the Politburo" . . . ?



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To the Stalinist Youth in the LYL

## Did a Lunatic Despot Build Your System?

The impact of the 20th Congress of the Russian Communist Party has reverberated throughout the world and indeed its effects are far from spent even now. The posthumous repudiation of Stalin by those who rule Russia today, that is to say, by his heirs, by his former co-workers and co-assassins, has burst like a bombshell upon the Communist Parties throughout the world, not excluding the Stalinists here in the United States.

It has created the kind of turbulence and confusion in Stalinist ranks that the Hitler-Stalin Pact produced in its day. The CP in the United States, for example, has been forced to admit that it does not know what to say about these developments and has had to initiate some kind of discussion in its ranks and in its public press on them.

There are of course many in the CP who react to the dethronement of Stalin by wishing only for the line to be spelled out so that they can quickly reorient their thinking in accordance with the dictates of the Stalinist leadership. In the columns of *Challenge* we are, however, primarily concerned with the effects of the anti-Stalin development on the CP youth in this country, with those students and young workers who are organized in and around the Labor Youth League.

For news and analysis of the events occurring in the Communist Party, as well as for the more important analysis of the meaning of the Russian events themselves, we refer our readers to the articles in this issue of *LABOR ACTION*, and to those in previous and forthcoming issues.

While we have no specific information on discussions among LYLers, we are certain that there must be many in whom the repudiation of Stalin has raised doubts—doubts not merely about their former views of Stalin but about the nature of Russian society and of the Communist Parties as well. Such doubts are a healthy and progressive development.

### MYTH IN REVERSE

We can only urge CP youth in this country not to let the Stalinist hacks in both the LYL and CP bludgeon them into giving their questioning up.

For years these young people have been told that Russia is a "socialist paradise," that in it the "final and irrevocable triumph of socialism" was consummated as early as 1936, and that this same Stalin who now is denounced as the institutor of the "cult of personality" and as a madman was the architect of it all. Stalin, they were taught, almost singlehandedly developed Russian industry, protected it from spies, saboteurs and wreckers, organized its military victory over Germany, and so on.

Today the whole myth is reversed. Khrushchev, the present leader, informs world Stalinism that Stalin falsely persecuted many Russian Communist Party leaders, that he rewrote history and falsified it, that he nearly led Russia to military disaster during World War II, etc. He is charged with having developed the "cult of personality" and with having been in his final years "insane."

These charges are made, not by the "enemies of the Soviet Union," not by the "counter-revolutionary wreckers" and "mad dogs"—as the Stalinists labeled revolutionary socialist opponents of Stalinist despotism and oppression—but by the leaders of Russia, by those who were Stalin's trusted and loyal aids in carrying out all of the perfidy they now accuse him of. His accomplices in assassination, in the purges, in the terror, in wiping out democracy root and branch, in destroying all of the gains of the October Revolution—these now point the finger of accusation.

These same Stalinist leaders—Khrushchev, Bulganin, Mikoyan, Malenkov, the whole perfidious bunch—did not raise their voices in protest when Stalin committed the crimes with which he is now

charged. Not a peep was heard from them. On the contrary, they led the Byzantine flattery and adulation, they sang the songs of praise to Stalin and demanded that all sing with them.

The leadership of the American Communist Party and of the Labor Youth League—where were they during Stalin's reign? Denouncing every criticism of the leader as "fascist counter-revolution," it goes without saying.

Questions on the role of the present Stalinist leaders of Russia during Stalin's reign and of the role of the leadership of the American CP have already been raised in the ranks of American Stalinists. Such questions are a good beginning for those who are troubled by much in that Stalinism to which they owe allegiance, but they are only a beginning.

### HOW COULD IT BE?

All of those young people who support Stalinism out of the mistaken conceptions that it is a socialist or working-class movement and that Russia is a socialist society, but who are disturbed about much in that society and movement, must ask themselves a basic question: How could all of this happen in a "socialist state of workers and peasants," as the Russian constitution de-

ceitfully defines Russian society?

If Russia is a socialist society then classes have disappeared or are on the verge of disappearing; then the state has withered away or is on the verge of withering away; then to speak of rulers and ruled makes no sense; then society has already taken or is on the verge of taking that "leap into freedom" which Marx spoke of. And under these conditions an "insane" dictator could conceivably terrorize a whole society, keeping his closest lieutenants in fear, conducting false purges and rewriting history?

It makes no sense.

### IT'S NOT SOCIALISM

The answer is that while this "madman" did rule Russia and commit outrageous crimes, there is not the slightest trace of socialism in Russia.

Long ago, the social and political power held by the working class in the days of Lenin and Trotsky was wrested from the workers by the reactionary and totalitarian bureaucracy which rules Russia today and ruled it under Stalin. And if the decision of the bureaucracy to do away with the excesses of Stalin's rule needs explaining—and there is an explanation—it is not because this decision is in conflict with Russia's "socialism." Of socialism, there is none in Russia.

It is along these lines that honest young people who have given their support to such CP organizations as the LYL, because they honestly believe them to be socialist, have to start to think. There are, to be sure, many Stalinists who support this reactionary social sys-

tem not despite but *because* they recognize it for what it actually is. With these we have no concern. It is in the former that we are interested.

We know that in the ranks of the LYL there are some who have had doubts about democracy in Russia. Some of these young people may be led to believe that the repudiation of Stalin and the end of the "cult of personality" is a step toward democratization being taken by the Russian rulers. Such a view is mistaken.

### THE SAME PATTERN

Indeed, in a certain sense the "cult of personality" is not being eliminated at all but just being given a new twist. Whereas heretofore Stalin was credited with all "achievements" he is now to be posthumously blamed for all evils.

This may succeed in duping some. Indeed, one of the motivations of Khrushchev and Company may be to try to achieve that end among the Russian people.

Of the resurrection of democracy for the workers in Russia there is not the slightest sign, nor will there nor can there be any given by the present dictators. Free speech, free press, free assembly, the right to form political organizations and parties: the workers did not have them yesterday under Stalin and do not have them today under Khrushchev. The right to strike, to organize trade unions, to bargain collectively: not under Stalin nor under Khrushchev. To win these rights the workers will have to overthrow Khrushchev and the entire bureaucratic ruling class which robs and oppresses it.

Just look at the reaction of the Russian rulers to the manifestations of "pro-Stalin" sentiment in Georgia. (Whether this was actually pro-Stalin sentiment and what its significance was we need not discuss now.) How did they react when the students of Tiflis University attempted to use the "new freedom" and demonstrate? Suppression, closing the university, purge.

The reactions of a Stalin in other words, that is, of the Stalinists bureaucrats which they are.

### EXPLORE!

In the Communist Party and also in the LYL three lines have developed on the meaning of the 20th Congress: a pro-Stalin line, Foster's "let's wait and see" line, and the line of admitting embarrassment and raising questions about the American CP's role. The bureaucrats who run the CP had to allow such a discussion because they do not know with what line they should unitedly speak and because not to permit discussion might have resulted in a real explosion in CP ranks.

At the same time they will make sure that the discussion does not spill over outside of this framework, that no questions about what the anti-Stalin development reveals about the true nature of Stalinist totalitarianism and about the regime and policies of the Communist Parties are raised.

Moreover, when the line from Moscow becomes clear, the CP bosses will put an end to the discussion.

It is the duty of honest LYLers, of honest supporters of Stalinism, of those who actually believe that Russia is "socialist" and the CP and LYL "progressive working-class movements," not to let this happen. They should explore the real significance of the latest developments in Russia to see if they are compatible with their views. They should speak out freely and frankly; they should demand that the discussion not be ended when this suits Foster. Only in this way can the recent developments lead to the beginning of the end of the monstrous perversions which Stalin and Stalinism introduced into the working-class movement, the beginning of the end of its ability to negate the struggle for socialist emancipation.

## YSL Meeting at UCLA Campus Dissects Adlai Cult and Demos

By J. WEINBERG

Los Angeles, March 19

The Young Socialist League made its first public appearance at the University of California at Los Angeles, with Ted Enright, of the Los Angeles branch of the Independent Socialist League, speaking on "A Socialist Analysis of the 1956 Elections" at the University YWCA.

"Never before," Enright stated, opening his discussion, "have there been fewer issues in a presidential campaign. In fact, the only issue involved seems to be one which no voters, with the exception of Eisenhower's doctors (presuming they vote) are qualified to pass judgment on."

The state of Eisenhower's heart seems to be the only issue in the 1956 elections, Enright pointed out, at a time when one of the most important historical events which this country has ever witnessed, the struggle of the united Negro people in the South, is on the front pages daily and on everyone's lips.

The speaker cited Stevenson's record of evasion on the Negro problem, observing that the difference between Stevenson and Eisenhower on this question is that Stevenson is deceptive through his usual eloquence and attempts at erudition, while Eisenhower is characteristically muddleheaded and incoherent.

### CP AND KEFAUVER

Enright concluded his talk by pointing to the American labor movement, now united in one powerful organization, as the only force capable of injecting political issues into the campaign. Ultimately, he said, the American working class will most likely have to form its own political party which will be able to go before the electorate and raise genuine political issues.

There was a complete and conspicuous absence of Stevensonian sentiment during

the lengthy question-and-answer period that followed. Not one of the students rallied to the defense of the "Great Liberal." Some of the Stalinoid students, however (and this may be significant for the coming campaign), took up the cudgels for Estes Kefauver. At the convention of the California Democratic Party, held recently in Fresno, the Stalinists, who are wading up to their thighs in the Democratic Party in this state, played a big role and won the machine for Kefauver.

The Stalinist line is at present as anti-Stevenson as it is pro-Kefauver out here. Enright, and the YSLers present at the meeting, pointed out that the same Stalinists who are on the Kefauver bandwagon now, when and if it becomes apparent that Kefauver hasn't a chance, will transfer to the Stevenson trolley without a bat of the eyelash.

The general feeling of the YSLers at the meeting, which was attended by thirty-five people, was that it was a solid success, particularly in view of the fact that the University of California's notorious Rule 17 not only prohibits political meetings on campus (the YWCA is technically "off-campus") but specifically makes it illegal to publicize on campus a political meeting occurring off the campus.

The Los Angeles YSL is now very active on the UCLA campus and looks forward to many other meetings, both formal and informal, at which it can present its ideas to the students of the university.

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## Silone's Reply to Our Open Letter:

# 'My Political Faith': 2nd Round

By IGNAZIO SILONE

In reply to my article which it published January 31 entitled "My Political Faith" (and reprinted in Italy by *Giustizia* among others, under the title "A Socialist Writer,") LABOR ACTION has renewed the discussion with an Open Letter on February 6, in which it posed to me a score of questions of an ideological, political and ethical nature, all more or less pertaining to the actions of socialists during the last world war and their current attitude toward the military blocs.

The tone of the Open Letter is inevitably the one that is characteristic of dissident communists, those little exasperated epigones of Trotsky and Lenin: that is to say, it varies between insolence and pseudo-doctrine, and what is more—since we are dealing with American extremists—with a distinctive inquisitorial accent that horribly re-echoes the interrogations of their now famous Committee on Un-American Activities. There is nothing strange about this, since the urge to imitate, in discussions with their friends, the odious manners of their own persecutors, has always been one of the satisfactions of the persecuted. To which one must add the fact that these American extremists, in contrast with their European comrades, have never participated in a broad workers' movement, and as a result of the environment in which they have developed, they are scarcely endowed with a conception of liberty and intellectual fairness, and even from Marxism they have assimilated only the crudest and by now outmoded aspects.

Despite this and the limited time available to me, I wish to reply to their Open Letter since we are dealing here with a non-conformist journal which has—or so it would seem—a hard life. Christian and socialist education creates these obligations also: one must be kind to one's persecutors even if they talk nonsense. I must add that it will never be polemics, no matter how bitter, that will drive me further away from

### TRANSLATOR'S CORRECTION

Two words should be corrected in my translation of Lucio Libertini's article as published in the Feb. 27 issue.

At the bottom of the first column, next to last line: take out "only." (The point is that Silone was a candidate, not that he was the only candidate.)

Middle of last column: I inadvertently left out Libertini's word "objectively" in the sentence which ends: "... a worthy representative of this Company of Jesus which the Committee for Cultural Freedom objectively represents on behalf of American imperialism." A. G.

these extremists than I already am, since I have learned to establish my line of conduct on the basis of reasoning and not bad humor. It goes without saying that I consider myself excused from the need to reply to purely rhetorical or pseudo-witty questions such as: If Silone considers the various ideologies handed down to us from the last centuries to be in crisis, why not also bourgeois democracy?

### TWO ARGUMENTS

I will reply instead to a serious question to which I have already replied on previous occasions, but *repetita juvant*. Thinking to embarrass me gravely, LABOR ACTION asks: "In 1939, before the outbreak of the great war, in an interview with an American writer in *Partisan Review*, to the question: In case of conflict between France and Italy for control of Tunisia, which side would you support?—you replied: The side of Tunisia; but on the contrary a year later you came out in support, albeit critical, of the democratic powers in the war against the Axis. How do you explain this betrayal of the international proletariat?"

I reply with two arguments—one with regard to the different character of the Second World War as compared with the hypothetical conflict between Fascist Italy and France over the possession of Tunisia; the other concerning the change in my personal responsibility from an independent writer, which I already was in 1939, to the socialist leader which I became as a result of the requests of Italian socialist émigrés in France, who were placed in the position of not being able to act any longer because of the German occupation.

It seems to me that my first argument is irrefutable and well-founded. Even today, if I should be asked: "If a war should break out between two states over the possession of Morocco, which side would you support?" I would reply without hesitation: "The side of the Moroccans." But Hitler's war was another matter. The victory of Hitler would have meant the destruction for a long

time of the premise for any political activity whatever and hence also for the struggle for socialism. Anti-war sabotage actions on the part of Western workers' organizations would have led to this. It would have been a collective suicide. On this there was agreement also among the few old internationalists of the Zimmerwald period who were still alive in 1940: Modigliani, Balabanoff, Rosmer, Monatte, and the head of the international religious socialists Leonhard Ragaz. For me the problem was a different one: one must not identify the cause of socialism and liberty with the belligerent states, one must safeguard socialist independence. In my opinion, during those years this was the most radical position within European socialism, since, starting from the necessity of defeating Nazism, the majority of socialists were collaborating with the military apparatus of the democratic states and in no way differentiated themselves in their propaganda. I know only of a single case of absolute intransigence: that of the Neapolitan, Amadeo Bordiga, who was of the opinion that the two belligerent blocs were "objectively" identical, and that, rather, Hitler's victory, destroying Anglo-Saxon imperialism, would have smoothed the road to proletarian revolution. . . . This was madness.

### A TENSION

To suppose that my point of view was inspired by expediency is a gratuitous insult. I remained in Switzerland, for the anti-fascist struggle, despite repeated offers of an American visa, even when a Nazi occupation appeared imminent. But I was also aware that my platform of a "Third Front" was a compromise between the spirit of Zimmerwald and the new reality of Nazism. Precisely in those years (1940-41) I wrote *The Seed Beneath the Snow*. This novel was a poet's revenge against contingent reality; for me, almost a biological need. That book appeared during the war and everywhere aroused the impression (typical, for example, was the criticism in *Partisan Review*) that I had definitely withdrawn from politics. Instead, as I say, I had begun to write that book precisely at the time when I had just recently accepted a political post, albeit a clandestine one. The distance in ideas during those years between my pamphlets, my articles, my practical political work, and that serene and stoical atmosphere of *The Seed Beneath the Snow*, reveals precisely the extreme tension in which I found myself. Certainly, revolutionary consciousness, when it includes both the duty of political struggle and the transcendence of the

### Note

As we reported last week, this reply by Silone to our Open Letter was sent to us in the form of corrected galley-proofs by the Italian social-democratic paper *Unità Socialista*, which is publishing it in Italy under the title "Socialist Independence in War and Peace."

Silone's social-democratic friends on this paper are publishing this reply by Silone without publishing the Open Letter to which it is a reply, or any explanation of the discussion of which it is a part—like one side of a telephone conversation caught in the middle.

They thus demonstrate to us the high moral, intellectual and political standards of socialist discussion which these sanctimonious social-democrats like to claim.

However, as our readers know, the independent socialist *Risorgimento Socialista* is publishing in full the entire series of articles pro and con in this debate with Silone—an enterprise which has already excited wide political interest in that country.

The floor is now again open to Silone.—ED.

present in one's thinking, embraces a dimension which is almost inhuman and ultimately even unbearable.

### PRINCIPLES

With this, I feel I have implicitly replied even to the other objections on military pacts. On this point the difference with LABOR ACTION is substantial. But it is not a personal difference of mine, because both the aversion to the Atlantic Pact as well as the critical and conditional acceptance after it had become a law of the state, I shared with the unanimous leadership of the PSU [United Socialist Party] of which I was a part. But I do not at all intend to give the impression that I want to escape from my past responsibilities, while I must still make clear that for me today every discussion of political tactics has only a retrospective value. When one is a socialist but does not actively participate in an organized movement, the only interesting problems are problems of principle and not tactics. My principled position is pacifist and libertarian. So long as I was a militant of the PSU, I saw the political problem in these terms (forgive me the horrible Stalinist jargon): how to link tactics with strategy. Tactics demand that one not lose contact with existing reality, without being absorbed by it. For the great danger in defending the liberties which we may lose is that of becoming conservative. The defence must be carried out therefore with the maximum of independence fore with the maximum of independence the most desperate situation the demands that go beyond the existing order.

### IMAGES

The duty of the writer is a good deal simpler. It may even be that my instinctive inability to endure active political life is simply the inability to endure the necessary tactical compromises. The writer, and even the socialist writer, has the duty of keeping clear of the claims of the apparatus, and of refusing to become a propagandist.

The socialist writer betrays his mission if he does not depict human suffering and does not embody in his writings the sense of the true and the just that springs to birth in the humble and the oppressed. I certainly do not consider myself free of weaknesses and contradictions, and I confess moreover that I am not made of steel or aluminum; but whoever wishes to criticize me should take my books. Only in them do I wholly recognize myself. The others are only partial images, already superseded by myself.

I hold to nothing as tenaciously as to my independence as a socialist writer. To believe that I can give up my liberty in this or that association of intellectuals—what foolishness. But I must add that I reject once again the slanderous appraisal that LABOR ACTION wants to give to the International Congress for Cultural Freedom, and particularly to Sidney Hook.

From all accounts, it is a united front of intellectuals in which each has his own individuality, and it is not a herd of sheep.

But, perhaps, to talk about freedom to LABOR ACTION is like talking about color to the blind. As a socialist and as a writer, I consider freedom the supreme good. The day on which I cannot freely write what I think, you can be sure that I will turn to writing illegally, and, in the absence of newspapers, I will write on the walls.

## Economists See Declines Ahead in 1956

By JACK WILSON

While the daily press is filled with optimistic economic prognoses for the remainder of the year 1956, largely due to political estimates issued from Washington and calculated to assist the Eisenhower administration in its campaign for re-election, far more sober judgments are emanating from responsible professional economic sources.

Four top economists, speaking before more than 75 representatives of labor, management and education at a program sponsored by the Wayne University Institute of Industrial Relations, agreed generally on this perspective: 1956 will find the nation's economy continuing a leveling-off process from last year's record peak. They said that any declines will be gradual and not particularly serious.

The economists were George Hitchings, manager of the economic-analysis department of the Ford Motor Company; Edwin B. George, director of economics, Dun and Bradstreet; Dr. Edwin Nourse, former chairman of the President's Economic Advisers; and Stanley Ruttenberg, director of research of the AFL-CIO.

For the bellwether auto industry, as some economists call it, Hitchings projected a car production of 6,500,000 for 1956—close to an 18 per cent decline over 1955. A spring pick-up will work mainly to reduce fantastic inventories which still hover around the 900,000 mark.

What this means to labor is a continuation of 100,000 unemployed auto workers. For Detroit it signifies, remaining on the distressed area list, with unemployment

totaling slightly over 6 per cent of the total work force.

The outlook is further complicated by the fact that the small auto companies face the possibility of collapsing this year. Last week Studebaker-Packard, fourth largest maker of cars, reported another bad year, losing over \$29,000,000 in what was the greatest sales year in auto history. For those auto workers that means not only less work but a fate such as Hudson, Midland Steel, Kaiser-Frazer, and other small companies here have had. All the UAW benefits evaporate when the jobs disappear.

For the auto workers now unemployed with no prospect of re-employment on this model, the irony of the situation is emphasized by the fact that the modified Guaranteed Annual Wage does not go into effect until June, and thus they are not eligible for benefits.

Reports of fabulous business spending for 1956 were discounted by these economists on the basis by which these estimates were made. Common agreement that market saturation in residential building in some areas would contribute to the leveling-off was also voiced by these spokesmen.

Although the word recession is a dirty word in American economic life, hints that the third quarter would be "murky" suggested something close to a 1954 situation developing, in spite of the fact that government spending for both war and other expenditures would increase soon.

As for 1955 high points, these came from a disturbing increase in two important fields. Consumer credit rose 16 bil-

lion, and business piled up an additional 6 billion inventory. These were two major factors in bringing the 1953-54 recession. A halt in these two sectors of activity would disrupt the economy quickly.

Hedging against steel price increases and the possibility of a steel strike were given as important reasons for the continuation of the high rate of steel production, with much duplication of orders now giving a deceptive picture of excessive steel demand.

Further cloudiness in the economic picture comes from the amazing blindness of even these sober economists on the impact of declining farm income on the total economy, and the negative effect of the continuing crisis in England, which threatens to have an adverse influence on world economy.

Nor should anyone be deceived by the current flood of optimistic news reports from auto circles on the March pick-up. Sales may reach 570,000 cars but this would be a far cry from the 698,000 of last year. Meanwhile, in Michigan alone 155,000 manufacturing workers are unemployed currently, while one year ago the plants were roaring with full production.

For labor, the over-all picture is one of increasing unemployment in the vital sector of manufacturing as the leveling-off continues, and a dismal prospect of permanent dislocation as automation processes are accelerated precisely because of the leveling-off and the pressing urgency of the companies to remain in business by lowering costs via automation.



## A Rejoinder for Labor Action:

# Silone's Politics—Then and Now

By HAL DRAPER

Despite the difficulties, let us try again to keep the spotlight on the political problem to which our Open Letter was devoted—the question of socialist policy on the war camps into which the world is divided.

Our Open Letter tried to put aside all other matters which Silone had raised in his article "My Political Faith," in order to concentrate on this only. We would still like to do that.

But for raising such questions in our Open Letter, we now find ourselves scolded by Silone with a series of epithets which he apparently finds necessary for a rounded exposition of his thinking: it was "insolence" . . . "little exasperated epigones" . . . we are "inquisitorial" like McCarthyites and, being "American extremists," we are imitating our "persecutors" . . . no "conception of liberty and intellectual fairness" . . . "slandorous" . . . "gratuitous insult" . . . and there are more such amiable expressions designed to underline Silone's contrasting intellectual tolerance and dispassionate objectivity, so different from our own insolence in raising gravely embarrassing questions.

It is a good thing, as he says, that he was not moved by "bad humor" when he wrote all this.

But as we did in our Open Letter in the case of Silone's previous invective against "imbeciles" and "little would-be politicians" and "communist deviationists" and other hapless objects of scorn, let us put it all to one side in order to keep political questions on the floor.

Let us put aside also a more valuable aspect of Silone's second round: those passages, in the latter part of his article, where he speaks in a personal vein of the tension between his life as a creative artist and as a political leader. We put it aside not because it is uninteresting—on the contrary!—nor because it is irrelevant, for surely Silone's peculiar political course is illuminated somewhat, at least from the subjective side, by his personal explanations.

There is another thing in this connection: I take full responsibility only for my literary works, says Silone in effect; "whoever wishes to criticize me should take my books." In the long run, this may well be true, for in the long run whoever wishes to criticize Silone will take his books and not the polemical and programmatic writings left along his political path.

But more immediately, a man who is also an artist must still expect to be taken at his word when he chooses to write in the different capacity of political leader and ideologist. Artists who, wisely or unwisely, also choose to be politicians should reply to political criticism as political persons.

So it was exclusively with the political questions that our Open Letter dealt and that we deal now.

### WHAT WE ASKED

Our Open Letter asked Silone: "Why have you abandoned the ideas of Third Camp internationalism" which you held when the war broke out? And then we tried to examine this conception of Third Camp anti-war socialism in terms of the very document to which Silone himself had referred us: his excellent statement of his anti-war position in a *Partisan Review* interview of 1939, which we reprinted separately.

In the looming war between the bourgeois democracies and the fascist states—Silone indicated in his interview, as we read it—he was in favor of supporting neither war camp. "Real peace depends today on the rapidity with which a third front is created. . . . This third front did once actually exist in the form of revolutionary Russia and of militant workers' parties elsewhere. . . ."

The thought seems quite clear: the "Third Front" (or "Third Camp") means building a revolutionary socialist opposition to both war blocs, both the bourgeois-democratic bloc and the fascist bloc.

But at this time, just as a little later, the concepts of "collective security" to "stop fascism" were already long ascendant among social-democrats and liberals, together with the stock arguments which they used against the Third Camp approach. These arguments did not spring up only after the start of "Hitler's war."

The "partisans of collective security" to whom Silone himself referred in this 1939 document had, for years already, been arguing that the Third Camp policy was "foolishness": first defeat Hitler

—to preserve democracy—then go ahead and fight for your socialism if you insist; but first settle with the fascists; bourgeois democracy has its imperfections, to be sure, but it is far better than fascism; let us first defeat the common menace and then think about going forward from there. . . .

### ANTI-WAR LINE

It was precisely against this dominant conception that Silone polemicized in his 1939 interview, even though he realized, he said, that "the revolutionary writer must risk isolation" in advocating such a Third Front.

"The dilemma: status quo or regression" is a false presentation of alternatives, he argued. "The reactionary trend of our epoch" is shown by the fact that "Most of the progressive forces . . . are content to struggle to preserve the existing order, lest they fall under the fascist yoke," and so the Third Front is not built.

But support of capitalism will not stop fascism, he went on to argue. (All along here we asked our readers to apply Silone's train of thought to the present case of the Stalinist totalitarian menace.) "Fascism's power, its mass appeal, its contagious influence, all are due to the fact that fascism means false solutions, easy solutions, ersatz solutions—but, all the same, solutions of the real problems of our time." But capitalism ("conservative democracy") has no solution of these problems.

Socialism has. "When the socialists, with the best possible anti-fascist [read: anti-Stalinist] intentions, renounce their own program, put their own theories in mothballs, and accept the negative positions of conservative democracy, they think they are doing their bit in the struggle to crush fascism [Stalinism]. Actually, they leave to fascism [Stalinism] the distinction of alone daring to bring forward in public certain problems, thus driving into the fascists' [Stalinists'] arms thousands of workers who will not accept the status quo."

Our Open Letter inquired: "Is this not a hundred times truer today?" Isn't this what accounts for Stalinism's "power, its mass appeal, its contagious influence" from Rome to Bandung?

Very carefully Silone-1939 made clear that he did not equate bourgeois democracy with fascism, nor was he derogatory of the value of bourgeois freedoms. He was obviously aware of the existence of gentlemen who like to reduce all politics to that incontrovertible distinction. It was a question of how to fight fascism—by supporting one imperialist war bloc against another, or by fighting for a socialist transformation of society against both?—just as it is now a question of how to fight totalitarian Stalinism, which is able to win victories today only insofar as it can convince its victims that the only realistic alternative to its own rule is the continued rule of the old discredited system of capitalism.

### HE HAS LEARNED . . .

Now, when we direct Silone's attention to his brilliant argument, and ask "Why did you change?" he replies—merely by summarizing in three sentences precisely the political position which he had torn apart and stomped on in his 1939 document: "The victory of Hitler would have meant the destruction for a long time of the premise for any political activity whatever . . ." and so on. He introduces this by hailing it in advance as "irrefutable," as if he had never even heard of it before his conversion to its ineluctable logic.

Maybe so, but in that case one of the many Mothball Socialists whom he had scorned in 1939 has a right to ask: "Dear Comrade Silone, but this is exactly, word for word, what we were telling you in the 1930s when you were bemused by the sectarian madness and extremist nonsense that you called the Third Front. It is late but it is nice to see that you have learned."

This would be quite in order, though men have a right to change their mind.

We do not begrudge Silone the exercise of this right. We insist only that political accounts not be juggled. Silone insists that he has not changed his viewpoint.

It is objective conditions that have changed, you see. He was right then, and he is right now. And in-between he was right all through the various intermediate shadings he went through as he switched over from a critical partisan of the Third Camp to a critical partisan of the Atlantic war bloc. . . .

### CONCOCTED QUOTE

To make this account balance is, under the circumstances, a feat that takes some doing, of course, and not all of his methods would be approved by all of the characters in *Bread and Wine*. He launches his exposition, for example, with what purports to be a quotation from our Open Letter, or at least so the innocent reader would assume, "LABOR ACTION asks" writes Silone in his fourth paragraph—and he follows these words with a colon and a passage enclosed in quotation marks.

This quoted passage was concocted by Silone alone and appears nowhere in our Open Letter or anywhere else. This accounts also for its language about "betrayal of the international proletariat."

That might not be so bad. But it is not even a paraphrase of anything in our Open Letter.

This "embarrassing question" which Silone has invented (in order to show how easily he can escape from the odious traps set for him by American inquisitors) is adapted by him from the beginning of his own 1939 interview, which began as follows:

"Q.—In the event of a war between Italy and France, which country would you favor?"

"A.—Tunisia."

"Q.—What do you mean?"

Whereupon Silone proceeded to expound what we have already summarized, without any further reference to the little witticism about Tunisia but as a political position on the war blocs.

Now see how Silone has tailored his fabricated "quotation" from LABOR ACTION, undeterred by the fact that our Open Letter had not bothered to mention this initial by-play about Tunisia, let alone pose questions to Silone about it.

### EVASION

It enables him to maintain that his views have not changed. "Even today," he insists, in a war "between two states over the possession of Morocco," I would still answer similarly. . . .

The fabrication is convenient. For one thing, having "quoted" LABOR ACTION's non-existent embarrassing question, he is relieved of the embarrassment of taking up what we did pose questions about.

But even so, the dodge is not quite satisfactory.

The Second World War did not break out over possession of Tunisia—not Tunisia alone. No one expected it would, in spite of the little whimsy. The colonial and imperialist stakes were much more extensive, extending even into European territory itself. It broke out over many Tunisias. What exactly does this change for a principled policy on the war?

The third world war is not likely to break out as a result of a conflict of two states over Morocco, so that Silone can show us his good faith by supporting "Morocco." This threatened war is, as everybody knows, likely to break out as a conflict of two blocs for control of—all the peoples of the world. Should we not then support the latter against both contending war blocs, Mr. Silone, if you have indeed been right all along, before, after and during all your changes?

But this is only playing with phrases, that is, Silone's phrases. There is no political content to them. Silone, unfortunately, is only interested autobiographically in squaring his past with his present, not with facing the meaning of his political switch.

### AMNESIA

Inevitably political amnesia sets in, an occupational disease of political figures who try to prove that they have always been right even when they were on opposite sides of a question:

(1) As the alternative to his switch-over, he denounces "anti-war sabotage actions" (our italics). Has he really and truly forgotten that anti-war socialist fighters have always rejected "sabotage" as a course of action, as Lenin did specifically during the First World War?

Yes, we suppose he has forgotten this along with much else.

(2) As the alternative to his own switch-over, he poses the "absolute intransigence" of . . . a notorious ultra-super-sectarian named Bordiga! But not only that.

According to Silone (I do not know, myself) this Bordiga, the genuine dyed-in-the-wool guaranteed "intransigent" article in anti-war goods, thought that Hitler's victory would smooth the road to proletarian revolution! The unwary reader might get the impression, which of course Silone cannot possibly want to convey, that he is saying: *If you're against this imperialist war, you must be "pro-German," at least "objectively" . . .* To people with a better memory than Silone's, this again has a familiar ring.

### WRITER OR LEADER?

So much for the first of the "two arguments" which Silone says he will adduce. The second we do not quite understand insofar as it bears on the switch-over. This second argument, says Silone, is the fact that in 1939 he was a "socialist writer" but later he became a "socialist leader."

Clearly this can not mean that it is correct to be for the Third Camp when you are merely a socialist writer, but that when you reach the exalted station of Socialist Leader more "practical" policies are called for. Therefore we do not understand it.

One other thing we do not claim to understand exactly. In a parenthetical clause, Silone says that he does not like the Atlantic Pact, as we already know, but refers to his "critical and conditional acceptance [of the Pact] after it had become a law of the state."

What if any is this relation between "accepting" the Pact, i.e., becoming a "critical and conditional" supporter of the Pact, and the "law of the state"? We do not understand it.

### THE PRINCIPLED MAN

Silone sums up his "principled position" today as: "pacifist and libertarian." That is very nice. But there is a certain irony about it.

Once Ignazio Silone was a revolutionary socialist, and he was an antiwar fighter then. Now he is in "principle" for pacifism—and he becomes a supporter of the Atlantic war bloc.

Once Ignazio Silone put the fight for socialist democracy as the task of the day. Now he has graduated to the principled rank of "libertarian"—and so he defends Sidney Hook against our "slander," as well as the Cultural Freedom outfit—"particularly Sidney Hook," he says.

Does that mean that he defends the "libertarian" Hook position on witch-hunting Stalinists—ousting Stalinist teachers from their jobs, for example—for which the man is noted in this country? Is he a defender of the Sidney Hook position on cracking down on Stalinists as members of a "conspiracy"?

If so, does he advocate this position in Italy? Or are "objective conditions"—those handy things—such that Sidney Hook is right for the United States but wrong for Italy?

Would Silone keep Sidney Hook's discreet silence about police-actions to put the whole leadership of the Italian Communist Party in jail on the charge simply that they are leaders of a Communist Party—as has been true in this country?

Would Silone keep his mouth shut—like Sidney Hook, the leader of his "Cultural Freedom" libertarians—while teachers who are known to have broken with the CP but who refuse to turn stool-pigeon and informer in order to point the finger at other ex-CPers are fired from their jobs after refusing to testify on constitutional (Fifth Amendment) grounds?

Would Silone go along with the refusal by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom to condemn the infamous and racist McCarran anti-alien and immigration act?

### THE WORM WITHIN

Silone retorts "Slander!"—it seems to be becoming a habit of his—perhaps because he thinks we are referring to some private information of our own about these American friends of his "pacifist and libertarian" principles. No, we have none. We are referring to their public and well-known positions.

In Italy, socialists and democrats have a duty to bring before public opinion—and in the first place, before socialist opinion—the nature of these American political friends of Italian socialist figures who pose as libertarians or who want to be libertarians. Silone should be forced to make a public statement as

(Turn to last page)



# The CP Faithful Get a Rundown-and-out on the Line — Uncle Milty at the Jeff School

By GEORGE POST

Every Wednesday evening for the past month, the Stalinist faithful and close sympathizers in New York have been meeting at the Jefferson School to listen to a number of leading party hacks explain the Russian 20th Party Congress to them. A LABOR ACTION correspondent infiltrated the third of these meetings on March 21 by the clever ruse of paying the \$1 admission fee.

The speaker for the evening was Milton Howard, one of the literati entrusted with putting out the *Daily Worker*, and his subject was "Paths to Socialism." The hall was crowded with about 300 truth-seekers, part of the audience having to be accommodated in the basement where they listened to Howard's voice piped to them appropriately from above.

In addition to a few independent Stalinists and a few anti-Stalinist radicals present, those attending seemed to be from that petty-bourgeoisie which has been the backbone of the CP in New York City, sprinkled with types who were the backbone of the International Workers Order, cultural isolates who are not really fully aware that the CP in 1956 is not exactly the same organization which the Socialist Party's language federations were instrumental in founding in 1919.

Those expecting much in the way of edification were disappointed by the formal part of Howard's talk. It was filled with dull "basic lessons," half-developed ideas, and parrotings of the line of the 20th Party Congress.

After engaging in a 25-minute lecture on the contradiction between the social

production of the socially necessary product and the private ownership of the means of production, in order to demonstrate how socialism arises in the first place, Howard threw out some vagaries about the relationship between socialism and democracy.

Then he turned his gaze upon The Two Errors of Marx and The Two Major Contributions of Lenin. The two errors were Marx's belief that the socialist revolution would occur first in one of the Western advanced capitalist countries (so said this ignoramus) and his notion that the socialist revolution would have to be an international one spreading from country to country. And Lenin (not the Lenin of real life, of course, but the Lenin of "Lenin's Struggle for the No-Strike pledge," a common figure for readers of the Stalinist press) corrected these two errors by his understanding that socialism would come first where capitalism was weakest and that of course "socialism in one country" was possible, especially when that country was backward Russia.

At this last point Howard, gagging a bit on what was even for him too ridiculous, commented that in waging the "struggle" for these two theories, especially that of "socialism in one country," Lenin was aided by Stalin—and that one must acknowledge this "contribution" of Stalin. But he carefully qualified this bit of information by declaring that after all "it was only my opinion." (He meant: "my opinion at the moment.")

Having now spent about 85 per cent of his time saying almost nothing, Howard proceeded to repeat the 20th Party Congress formula on "the peaceful and parliamentary transition to socialism." And then he added a postscript to all this concerning the CP's current position on civil liberties.

## ON THE RUNWAY

He let his listeners into a secret which had previously not been leaked to the public—the Stalinists were absolute civil-libertarians. Furthermore, they are about to tell the entire world this in the forthcoming April issue of the independent Stalinist magazine *Monthly Review*. (The *Monthly Review* posed a series of questions on socialism and civil liberties almost a year ago—and the CP had studiously avoided answering them up until the present.) Howard said that in this article, the CP, of course, comes out "in favor of the Bill of Rights" which would continue in force under "socialism" and declares that under "socialism" one would not only be free to pose alternative ideas on "how much socialism," etc., but would be free to advocate the return to capitalism.

He was in that expansive, madcap, generous mood where he was rarin' to concede anybody's right to advocate the return of anything—of capitalism . . . of democracy . . . of Peter Ibbetson . . . or almost anything, with the possible exception of the return of Stalin's medals to the Museum in Moscow. Nobody asked him about that.

But the real fun of the evening began in the question period. Released from his prepared hack address, Howard allowed himself to become a cigar-store Romeo playing up to the middleaged Juliets in the audience.

After having gone through the pretense of gathering questions from the multitude, Howard "answered" precisely two questions: "What do the Russian

events mean?" and "How did the Yugoslavian error happen?" As for all other questions, he shrugged them aside by courageously telling the audience: "They are very good; some I can't answer because of time considerations, some because I don't know the answer. Come back in a year or two and I may be able to deal with them then." (Laughter.)

The gist of Howard's answer to the first question was that he didn't know more than the audience. Coming out (as it were) onto the runway, Howard bared his breast to the audience and told them that he did not know what was going on in Russia. Then he proceeded to explain these events he did not understand—for, of course, loyal Stalinist hack that he is, he had to accept the official story and make sense out of it. His version went something like this: Stalin committed many mistakes, in particular that of one-man leadership. This arose partially due to capitalist encirclement, etc., but partially also because of Stalin's ego. Repressive measures had been utilized—but they were now a thing of the past.

## IN THE CONFESSIONAL

Then warming to his task, he asked a question which brought down the house, with the ticket-holders below stomping their feet and laughing out loud. Howard insinuatingly inquired: "Where were the present collective leadership when all these mistakes were going on? Were they afraid of being killed? Probably. Were they cowards? I don't know. Where were they, for that matter, since their barmitzvahs?" (Why watch Uncle Milty Berle when you can have Milty Howard?)

After the rousing success of this foray, Howard decided to use "Self-Effacement" as the next gambit. Having determinedly practiced self-criticism for years, of course, he was equal to the task. He decided to show all how even the lower-level leaders of the American CP had been like Stalin and had utilized repressive measures. And he told the following story whose moral is plain:

"Once upon a time, not too long ago, I utilized repressive measures against a writer for the *Daily Worker* who had submitted a movie review of a Russian film. The review not only was highly critical of the movie, it criticized the political

line of the film, which had glorified some Russian naval hero who everyone knew was a skunk—a Russian skunk." (Laughter for a full minute. Woman next to me whispers: "Now he is free to say it.")

"I suppressed the movie review after Alan Max and myself had gone to the movie ourselves. By the way, we got in free, because the manager saw who we were and knew we would give the film a favorable review. We slept through it and then came back and wrote a letter to the reviewer telling him that we could not print the review."

After more of the same, a woman got up from the audience and requested a moment to ask a question. It was granted. Obviously quite upset by the entire affair, she suggested that if criticism was the word of the hour, then wasn't it obvious that one had to be critical of the criticism leveled by the Russian leaders against Stalin? And of course Howard, keeping everyone happy, said: "A very interesting point which we all should consider."

## LET'S ALL CONSIDER IT

In answer to the question about Yugoslavia's fall-from-grace and rise into the holy circle once again, Howard attributed the fall to Stalin's ego. Not a mention of Beria, who up to yesterday, had been the devil who had committed the dastardly crime of saying that Tito was a nogoodnik. On this note the meeting adjourned.

But all was not over. A loud, powerful voice was heard demanding three minutes to speak, which was granted. The voice identified itself as belonging to William Mandell, a former teacher at the Jefferson School, and an occasional contributor to *Sweezy's Monthly Review*. He told the story of how he had been expelled from his teacher's post at the Jefferson School because he had made slightly critical remarks about the Soviet Union, and he demanded reinstatement at the school. For that matter, he said, the students of the Jefferson School should work for academic freedom at the school itself.

When he had completed his statement, Howard replied: "A very interesting point which we all should consider," and on his way out called to Mandell, "Good point, Mandell." At that point one expected the Stalinists and the independent Stalinists to link arms and sing a chorus of "Solidarity Forever."

There was no question that the evening had been memorable for all. Outside, in the slush on Sixth Avenue, one woman was overheard saying to her companion: "The man's right. We've been too dogmatic. We'll have to learn how think!"

Good point, lady.

## Raid CP — —

(Continued from page 1)

the CP have been blown sky-high in confusion over the Russian revelations on Stalin and have been shaken loose from their moorings of party loyalty by the impact of these confessions, when dispute and debate are extending even into the *Daily Worker's* public columns—just at this time the U. S. government comes to the rescue with a move which is guaranteed to solidify their ranks, give them something to rally round, take their attention off their inner troubles, and make it twice as hard for any of them to make the hard break.

Ironically, the *Daily Worker's* managing editor Alan Max, caught in the midst of the "soft" line promulgated by the 20th Congress, complained to reporters that the seizure was only a "reversion" to McCarthyism, whereas "this country ended the violations of McCarthyism, except for such reversions as this."

The picture of America that this seizure creates in the eyes of the world (and of Americans) is ludicrous. The government in its majesty finds it necessary to invent such flimsy excuses in order to close down a CP so weak and discredited that they could find only four headquarters (if that many) worth closing in the whole country. Agents sent to Newark to do the job there couldn't find anything to seize.

All that will be accomplished in the rest of the world is to strengthen the Stalinists by giving them a companion-piece to exhibit alongside the embarrassing disclosures of Stalin's "monstrous" excesses.

The enormity of it all is compounded when, as we write this, it is announced (or claimed) that this action was taken on his own by one Donald Moysey, who is merely director for Lower Manhattan (where the CP national headquarters are located) of the internal-revenue division of the Treasury Department.

According to these reports, Washington officials claim "they did not even know whether the [Communist] party and the newspaper actually owed any taxes" and that the amount of taxes levied "were arbitrary figures arrived to force disclosure of the Communists' finances."

Asked about the neo-Palmer Raids, the federal Internal Revenue Commissioner hesitated and then said: "Well, I guess I'll have to take responsibility for them."

Will they? Has this country gone so far that they can get away even with this, without exciting a storm from enemies of Stalinism who are also enemies of a home-grown police state?

## Silone's Politics — —

(Continued from page 1)

to whether he agrees or disagrees with Hookism on civil liberties, now that he has gone out of his way to solidarize himself with "particularly Sidney Hook." Sidney Hook.

*Pacifist and libertarian!* "In no century have words been perverted from their natural purpose of putting man in touch with man as they are today," says Don Paolo in *Bread and Wine*. "To speak and to deceive (often to deceive oneself) have become almost synonymous."

And an old man says later: "Each one of us has within himself his own thief, or his own worm, or his own hail. . . . One must frankly admit that in the post-war years the circumstances were ideal for the thieves, worms, and hail that each one of us carries about within him. But that does not absolve any of us of responsibility."

## Kefauver and the Liberals — —

(Continued from page 1)

what it is, even the most liberalistic program is bound to get ground to bits and be thrown out in unrecognizable condition if this party is put back into power, even if we assume the undemagogic sincerity of a candidate.

If Stevenson were to suddenly come up with a rip-snorting program to save the poor farmers, tear up the Taft-Hartley Act and go back to Wagner, for a capital levy, vast school program, and strict enforcement of the law against the Southern racists as well as a democratic foreign policy instead of the Acheson-Dulles lunacy—if he came out for all that he could rightly be charged with having compounded his political pusillanimity with demagoguery. From all the evidence it appears that he is an "enlightened" conservative who has been terribly misunderstood only on one respect. His liberal-labor supporters have insisted on believing that he is at least something like them, when he really isn't at all. What befits Kefauver would be for Stevenson transparent political trickery.

But Kefauver can point to his record, and it is indeed, it must be admitted, the record of one of the least conservative of the Democrats in Congress. (This is as close as one can get to talking about liberals there.) We remember that Kefauver, at least, was one of those who held out against the Humphrey "Communist Control Act." We recall that he spoke out on the Kutcher pension case.

As we pointed out several weeks ago, Kefauver has been there right along as the most logical candidate for liberals and liblabs who within their own narrow limitations want to support a capitalist-party candidate in the field. It is only now when, without their aid, Kefauver has shown strength that some of them are now turning to take a second look at him.

It is a noteworthy example of what radical sociologists have often pointed out about the liberals and which considerably infuriates them when it is said:

These "powerless people" love to pride themselves on their objectivity and powers of intellectual discrimination, as against the Ignorant Masses who are swayed by "emotion" and other non-scientific motivations; but in real life, like all middle-class elements, there are none more than liberals so easily taken into camp by power, raw power. Nothing succeeds with them like success. They were born to be camp-followers, for they have no program of their own that can hang together.

But the Minnesota result is of more immediate importance for another reason.

If Stevenson demonstrates increasingly that he cannot win the nomination, or that if he does he will really be a weak candidate for the Democrats this year, the repercussions may go far beyond a simple reshuffle among the party leadership with another generally acceptable candidate getting the nod.

After all, the more Stevenson cleaves to his line in the face of Kefauver's evident successes, the more it becomes clear that he is the candidate above all of the conservative wing of the Democratic Party. Liberal-labor forces who were willing to have him woo the Southern leadership as long as they felt reasonably sure that it was their man making a deal with the enemy for their mutual advantage cannot help but feel differently if he turns out to be as much the "enemy's" man as theirs. If the Minnesota experience should be repeated in California it would become fairly clear that, at this moment, the American public is ready to listen to something quite different from the subtle nuances of liberal conservatism versus conservative liberalism.

This could mean real trouble for Democratic Party unity. For nothing could be so explosive as a running together of the two streams of the Negro struggle for equality and a struggle for political, economic and social gains by the workers and poor farmers.