

LABOR ACTION

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U.S. Joins Anglo-French Gang-Up on Egypt In Crisis Over Suez Canal Nationalization

By HAL DRAPER

The conflict over the Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal is no simple case of the Good Guys versus the Bad Guys. It couldn't be, with the demagogic saber-rattling Nasser dictatorship on one side and British-French-American imperialism on the other.

But the rights of a *people* do not depend on the virtues of its own rulers, and the sins of imperialism are not lightened by the vices of its victims. It happens, patly, that in our last two issues we have been taking potshots precisely at Nasser, among the three neutralist leaders who lately made the headlines. But after everything that can be said of the Nasser regime has been said, the outstanding fact about this imbroglio over Suez is this: it is the imperialism of the big powers which feeds everything that is reactionary in the world, including authoritarian regimes in small countries, just as it is the imperialism of the capitalist powers which plays into the hands of Russian totalitarianism.

The Big Three governments in the world are now in the process of expertly con-

fusing two questions: Egypt's right to nationalize the canal and take over the assets of the privately owned Suez Canal Company, for compensation; and the alleged sanctity of the existing treaties guaranteeing unimpeded shipping through the canal.

There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever about the fact that the Suez Canal zone is purely Egyptian in sovereignty. The canal company is a corporation registered in Egypt under Egyptian laws. The Egyptian state's nationalization of this company is not in the slightest degree in itself a violation of any treaty to which Egypt is or is not a party, including the operative 1888 Convention, which sought to give international guar-

antees for the freedom of shipping through the canal.

This does not stop part of the press from deliberately stating the opposite. For example, an editorial in the N. Y. *World Telegram* (Scripps-Howard) for July 30, stated baldly that "Egypt's Nasser has violated the international agreements which control that waterway." This is false. The uproar from London and Paris is based on alleged fears that Nasser will do so, or even simply on the annoying fact that he has it in his power to do so or try to do so.

Nasser has announced that company shareholders will be compensated at current value. We have not seen any argument that the rate of compensation he offers is too low; only, a *Times* editorial has grumbled vaguely that Nasser proposes to set the price "by his own edict."

NATIONALIZATION AT ISSUE

There is great effort being made, diplomatically and journalistically, to claim that the nationalization itself is no issue. For the discomfited imperialists (especially the imperialist caretaker in Paris who calls himself a "Socialist") realize that they have the weakest case on this point, not only legally but morally and politically. Hence the attempts at putting the spotlight on everything else.

The London and Paris stock exchanges, however, did not fall in with this game. "In London a general paralysis gripped the stock exchange, with oil shares slumping badly for a total cumulative loss of \$308 million and renewed pressure against the British pound. In Paris the franc continued to drop, a situation believed due largely to the canal seizure." It is doubtful whether the stock exchange was worrying about the sanctity of international treaties.

(Speaking of the sanctity of the 1888 Convention, by the way, this document called for the guarantee of unimpeded shipping through the canal not only in peacetime but also in wartime. During both world wars, the British observed this particular sanctity somewhat less than religiously. They closed the canal, clearly regarding the convention as a scrap of paper.)

Nor is the uproar over the Suez nationalization due simply to the fact that Egypt's adherence to the capitalist war

NATO and the U. S.

As we go to press, the open involvement of the U. S. in the Anglo-French assault on the Suez nationalization is deepening. Washington has followed Britain in freezing the assets not only of the Suez Canal Company but also of the Egyptian government. Dulles has reversed himself about personally joining the London cabal and has flown there, an action hailed in advance as a demonstration of support for Britain and France. At the same time the press reports a high tide of chauvinism sweeping France, and demands from Paris that the Suez issue be treated by the U. S. "as a test for North Atlantic alliance."

It would indeed be a vivid international demonstration if NATO is openly used as the instrument of imperialism against Egypt.

But whether this truth is acted out or not, the American people are bound by elementary international decency to demand that this government stay out of the Anglo-French assault now being planned in London against Egypt, military or otherwise.

Steel Settlement Follows Union Attack on Co. Profits

By EMIL MODIC

Pittsburgh, July 29

The steel strike was settled politically—it was settled by the government.

But the government stepped in only after the leadership of the Steelworkers Union abandoned temporarily their "partners-in-industry" role and came out swinging.

A few hours after the union had issued a heavily documented study charging the industry with flagrant price-gouging and reckless inflation-mongering (charges completely true, by the way) the Eisenhower administration put on the pressure for a settlement. The union's charges were dynamite; the entire course of militant action upon which McDonald was embarking was dynamite; therefore, the government stepped in.

On July 21, negotiations were hopelessly broken off; the companies stood by their ultimatum of a five-year contract. McDonald had plane reservations made for a tour of the nation's steel mills where he planned to address strike rallies in the violently bitter language he had begun to use for the first time.

It was Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey, one of the most authentic representatives of big business in the Eisenhower millionaire cabinet, who stepped in to settle things. Previously,

Secretary of Labor James Mitchell had tried to patch things up, but without success.

Humphrey is a first-rate example of a politically aware capitalist. He felt that a continuation of the strike might endanger Eisenhower's chances for re-election, and he did not see why the inordinate greed of the steel barons should endanger what is in effect their own administration.

Therefore, he got on the phone and, in the words of one Pittsburgh steel executive, "The industry simply was hit on the head with a hammer." Humphrey told the industry leaders that unless they abandoned their ultimatum and compromised with the union, a presidential board would be appointed to investigate profits, prices and wages in the steel industry. This is about the last thing that the steel industry wants.

The result was the sudden settlement, resulting in a three-year contract and a raise of about fifteen cents an hour per year.

(Continued on page 2)

The Horrors of Arab Nationalism

In case anyone is unclear about what Nasser's crime is, exactly, in the eyes of the Western imperialists, the N. Y. *Times* rounds out the picture with a supplementary dispatch from Beirut, Lebanon, headlined "Arab Trend Seen in Suez Seizure."

Correspondent Sam Pope Brewer writes: "Lebanon in a small way has taken the same path [as Nasser]. A law passed unanimously June 29, and put into effect Thursday, imposes an income tax on foreign companies formerly exempt. Under it, back taxes from January 1, 1952, are to be collected." (July 31.)

The nerve of these foreigners to dare to tax the profits which our corporations take out of their people's hide. . . .

Steel Strike Shook 'Labor Peace' Talk

By BEN HALL

Steel profits are at an all-time high but steel workers had to strike for a month to win their demands. In the end they got a wage increase, an escalator clause to protect wage levels against cost-of-living increases, premium pay for Sunday work as such, improved fringe benefits, and a supplementary unemployment-pay plan.

Details on the unemployment-pay plan are not available. In general, it applies to workers with at least two years' seniority; it provides for payments "up to" one year; and is financed, as in the auto industry, by payments of 5 cents per hour into a fund.

For years, the steel companies refused outright even to discuss the idea of such a demand. But last year the United Auto Workers blazed the trail for a guaranteed wage; and this year the steel bosses gave in without even a stiff argument.

Ninety per cent of all steel capacity was shut down. The steel strike demonstrated, as 650,000 men quit their jobs, the deeply rooted union solidarity of the American working class—as did the Westinghouse strikers, also, under more difficult conditions.

The corporations had insisted upon a five-year contract, not subject to reopening, guaranteeing them a strike-free period. They cut their demand to 52 months and finally settled for a three-year agreement.

Now the commentators, whose musings were disturbed for a month, can return to talk of "labor peace" and explain that America has everywhere abolished the class struggle, or at least has done so in the steel industry for the next three years.

But the four-week steel strike has reminded everyone that the conflict of interests between worker and boss lies always under the surface of calm and that the employers are ready, when it suits them, to compel their workers to fight.

THE HONEYMOON

Only a year ago, assorted liberal journalists touted the end of class struggle when contracts were signed by the UAW with Ford and GM without a strike. They predicted a new era of labor peace, complete with class harmony, social engineering, and industrial statemanship. Their vision has vanished like a mist.

In Michigan the UAW denounces the auto companies for social irresponsibility; they refuse to discuss with the union while hundreds of thousands of unemployed look vainly for work. Auto union leaders demand a congressional investigation of price rises in auto and agricultural implements accusing the big trusts of milking the public.

But if class harmony had any future it was in the steel industry.

On July 25, 1952, U. S. Steel Chairman Benjamin Fairless came in person to address the Wage Policy Committee of the Steelworkers Union. From then on, it was nothing but talk of harmony of interests and cooperation between union and company. The big steel strike that year had just ended and both sides pledged to glorify their future relations with sweet perfume.

A year later Fairless and McDonald, smiles fixed, toured steel plants together to show how well they got along.

CHARGED LANGUAGE

Still the month-long strike came. It required only that the steel corporations saw big stock piles on hand, a chance to cut down their workers' morale, a pretext for a price grab. Not a thought of mutual interests; not a twinge of regret for the new era. They rejected even the possibility of avoiding a strike by agreeing to extend negotiations and conceding any new terms retroactively. They were insisting upon a strike.

It came as a surprise. Everyone who spoke so glibly of the era of labor peace became nervous and jittery, proving that they had not even convinced themselves. The New York Times, whose editorials last year were fullsome with praise for the new era, predicted a long and bitter

strike that might paralyze the nation's economy. Later, Eisenhower, who wanted to remain aloof, "demanded" a settlement.

But it was David McDonald who crackled like a lightning rod in the charged atmosphere. As the strike began, he wrote in a special edition of *Steel Labor*:

"Is this a simple suspension? No! This is a strike—this is a strike! Your mettle is being tried. Either you are men of putty or you are men of steel. Your mettle is being tried. But we are not men of putty, we are men of steel, and we'll fight them, by the eternal gods, until the contract we desire is wrung from them. Fight them, men of steel! Fight them and we will win; Fight them, by the gods, fight them!"

The words of a ham actor? Perhaps. Discount the melodrama and we hear a man who anticipates the worst and has to prepare his followers. These are the words, mind you, of a man who spent years lecturing on class cooperation.

MCDONALD APPEALS

"The steel workers are on strike," wrote McDonald. "They strike against deceit and lies... against five years of concentrated greed... against selfishness, complete lack of fairness and greed run amuck."

"This I say to you," he warned, "is a challenge of reaction in America to the entire American labor movement. If they can beat the United Steelworkers down into the ground what happens to our weak brother unions? The forces of evil, the forces of reaction are aligned against us... Call on your brother unions to aid you—I am not talking about financial help. If anybody attempts to violate a picket line by a truck going in or out, call upon the Teamsters Union to live up to its agreement and to support your contention. Call upon the Railroad Brotherhood Unions should an incident occur... Call upon the building tradesmen and their great unions to refuse to construct new facilities while you are on strike."

What relief when he learned that the mills would not try to reopen! But he couldn't be sure because he hadn't yet hypnotized himself with the glitter of eternal class friendship. Harmony of interests makes a good subject for sermons and orations, but not when a strike threatens.

IN FOUR WEEKS

It turned out all right in the end. But a lot of people were shaken up.

On August 7 last year, A. H. Raskin, New York Times labor editor, underlined his predictions of labor-management peace by pointing to prices: "It is precisely in this area of price and wage manipulation that labor-management may prove as damaging to the public welfare as labor-management conflict." In steel, he pointed out, the union winked at price rises.

But this year the union denounced the companies for seeking to raise prices. Wage increases, said McDonald, were possible without price increases; and he demanded a congressional investigation to prove it. For a minute he sounded like a UAW leader.

But did he really mean it? After the settlement, he told reporters that he was not any longer burning with concern over prices. As an owner of 12 shares of U. S. Steel he was satisfied to learn the facts from the next company report.

Sincere or not, McDonald was forced to do more to stimulate the hostility of his union members against the profit-hungry corporations in four weeks than he can eradicate in years of guided plant tours.

LABOR SCOPE

"LABOR'S ONLY LEGITIMATE ALTERNATIVE"

Labor's Daily columnist B. A. wants a labor party. In the July 18 issue, he asked his readers:

"Should the AFL-CIO, in its first year as a united organization, support a presidential candidate or, carte blanche, one of the two parties? If so, whom? Or should an organization representing 15 million workers sit on the sidelines like a fourth-string tackle, watching the game but never getting in?"

He has his own answer based upon the conviction that "Neither major party properly represents labor." The best that labor can do in 1956, in his opinion, is to sit out the presidential race and concentrate on the congressional campaign.

But he mercifully avoids setting up standards for judging aspirants for the House and Senate except to ask that their "beliefs line up with labor's"—a rather indefinite scale for a man who seems to reject all presidential nominees out of hand.

But what he wants in the next four years is clear enough; he concludes:

"Labor's best path for 1956? Work at a local and state level. Labor's only legitimate alternative in 1960? A labor party."

RANK-AND-FILE CONTROL

One United Auto Workers local wants more control by the rank and file over appointed International representatives. General Motors Body Local 23 at Indianapolis has sent copies of a special resolution to all UAW locals and to the International Executive Board. The key sections are:

"It is our desire to retain and improve the democratic procedure by which our union is governed, and we feel that in order to retain our democracy and leadership respect for the wishes of the rank-and-file worker, our field representatives should know exactly what goes on in our plants and the daily situation with which our workers are faced."

The local calls for "a plan to be worked out by the International Executive Board, directing that all appointed representatives of the International Union be returned to their respective shops for re-constitution and familiarization not less often than once every three years."

It also asks that "before any member

can be pulled out of a local for extended field work, such action must be sanctioned by membership action of the involved local union."

There is an important angle that the local does not even consider. In every union, International reps are appointed by higher officials and hold their jobs only at the will or whim of their boss. Since they are dependent upon the union tops and not upon the rank and file, they tend to be more eager to please the official who holds power over them than the ranks.

It seems to me that a quick degree of rank-and-file control would come if reps were elected instead of appointed; elected, for example, by direct vote of the membership or by democratically chosen councils.

In the UAW, industry-wide or company-wide councils already exist. In the IUE, district councils form part of the regular constitutional union structure.

ONE FOR THE CWA

Encouraging to labor's friends was the action of last month's convention of the Communication Workers Association. By a vote of 5-1, the 1500 delegates voted to take the case of a discharged local president to arbitration.

Stephen L. Kreznar, former president of CWA Local 5501 in Milwaukee, was fired by the Wisconsin telephone company when a government agency declared that he was a member of the Socialist Workers Party. Kreznar denied membership but admitted that he had attended meetings and made financial donations to the SWP.

Through the regular grievance machinery, the union tried without success to induce the company to rehire Kreznar for non-classified work. Finally the case reached the CWA National Executive Board, which at first decided against arbitration but soon reversed itself and decided to press for Kreznar's reinstatement.

But one member of the board refused to go along. He appealed to the convention to reverse the decision to go to arbitration and to drop the case, arguing against defense of "communism." But by an overwhelming vote, the delegates endorsed the fight for Kreznar's reinstatement.

Steel Settlement — —

(Continued from page 1)

There are several instructive aspects to the whole affair. It certainly underlines Marx's famous description of one of the functions of modern governments:

"[The state] is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, may not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society becomes necessary, whose purpose is to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of order."

And the situation is roughly the same, whether it is a Republican or Democratic administration. Although the steel industry issued a sweet statement hailing the settlement, management figures around Pittsburgh are privately complaining to the local newspapers that the Republicans treat them about the same as the Democrats.

It is interesting to see big-businessman George Humphrey acting more or less like a Fair Dealer. This is a phenomenon that occurs again and again—take a corporation executive who is bitter about "creeping socialism" in government, put him in a position where he has political responsibility for the system and not just for his own company, and he acts just like the New and Fair Dealer. Which is just another way of saying that Roosevelt and Truman were acting in the interest of capitalism, even when their actions were unpopular with some

or a majority of the capitalists.

Thinking steel workers will realize that they got the very good settlement that they did precisely because they hit the bricks and because their leader talked tough for a change. If McDonald realizes this, it is not apparent. He is no doubt relieved that he can give up his unnatural role of agitator.

Already, he has made the foolish statement that the settlement will not be inflationary. His own union's recent study of the industry disproves the statement.

The settlement need not be inflationary, but it will be. The industry will jack up prices and gouge the public and the small businessman even further.

Nevertheless, the brief weeks of the strike show how precarious is the "class peace" of the Eisenhower era. When it appeared that the steel industry intended to really fight McDonald, McDonald attacked the industry's price policies immediately.

This is the first time in the twenty year history of the Steelworkers' union that this has ever been done. Murray never did it. An attack on the industry's price and investment policy is really an attack on private enterprise and private property itself, as General Motors was quick to point out to the UAW during the GM strike of 1945-1946. Yet McDonald, one of the most conservative of modern labor leaders, was forced to take this radical step only a few weeks after the strike began.

McDonald says he hopes this will be the last strike in the steel industry. It's theoretically possible, of course, but don't hold your breath.

REPORT FROM ROME

The 'De-Stalinization' Crisis in Italy

Togliatti's Time of Troubles

By LUCIO LIBERTINI

Rome, July 19

The votes obtained by the various parties in the Italian elections of May 27 had not yet been counted when it suddenly became known that Palmiro Togliatti, secretary of the Italian Communist Party, had left for Belgrade to meet Marshal Tito. The Italian press related this unexpected visit to the new Russian policy toward Yugoslavia: most believed that Togliatti, after a strenuous and critical election period, was hurrying to align himself with the new bosses in the Kremlin. A brief polemic ensued but did not lead anywhere and the whole incident was soon forgotten.

The events, however, which have since taken place in the "popular democracies," as well as other reliable information, suggest another interpretation of the Tito-Togliatti meeting.

There is no doubt that the leader of the Italian CP has been hurrying to catch up with the new Russian line on Yugoslavia, but already his report to the Central Committee following the 20th Congress of the CPSU had revealed a clear and thorough-going revision of the Stalin position on this subject. Moreover, had his Belgrade visit taken place at a later date, it could have been better prepared and would have acquired a spectacular character which would have been more useful to the Italian and Yugoslav Communists both.

It would seem that Togliatti's sudden decision to leave for Belgrade should rather be related to Tito's trip to Russia last June. Evidently, and this is borne out by the developments which I shall outline below, the leader of the Italian CP and the head of the Yugoslav state met to exchange ideas of considerable importance in connection with the imminent Russo-Yugoslav meeting. This has been confirmed by the reports on the discussions between Tito and the new Russian leaders in Moscow.

In the course of these discussions, a wide agreement was reached toward resuming friendly relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR, and a common position was reached on foreign policy matters: Russia modified its attitude toward "independent states," which had been one of absolute hostility, and Yugoslavia accepted the Russian theses on disarmament and on the German question.

MURKY ISSUE

One issue, however, is barely touched upon in the final releases of the conference: the issue of the relations between the Russian and the Yugoslav Communist Parties, and in general between the different CPs. In fact, considerable disagreement was registered on this subject.

Since 1948 Tito has not confined himself to the demand of independence for his country alone, but has assumed the attitude of a champion of those Eastern European countries which the Russian propaganda calls "popular democracies." This more general demand for national independence took the form, in 1946-48, of an initiative for the constitution of a Balkan federation, including Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria and perhaps other countries of the Danube region, and which led to a dramatic clash with Stalin.

At the end of a victorious struggle, Tito now resumes this campaign and asked Khrushchev and Bulganin to extend their revision of Stalinism to include a revision of the relations between Russia and the "popular democracies." As could be foreseen, the Russians, although proclaiming all over the world their respect for Yugoslav independence and the importance of friendship with Tito, make a strong resistance to requests of this nature.

As is known, Stalin's system was founded in part on the colonialist domination of the "popular democracies" by Russia: the Russian center imposed its plan on all countries without regard for their needs or demands, while the notorious "mixed companies" organized the flow of profit and of economic goods toward Russia. A system of commercial treaties, also imposed by Moscow, oriented the foreign trade of the Eastern countries in a compulsory direction. A

mainstay of this system was the solidarity of the bureaucratic ruling caste in Russia and the bureaucracy of the "popular democracies." The leaders in the Eastern countries who had dared to oppose these colonial methods in the past (such as Gomulka) were eliminated from power, sentenced and sometimes killed.

DOSE OF COUNTERFEIT

In recent months, however, the process of "de-Stalinization" raised anew the whole problem of relations within this system, between the countries of the so-called Warsaw bloc. In Poland and Hungary especially, the Stalinist leaders and a great part of the secondary cadres and rank-and-file are pressing for revision of these relations in the direction of national independence and consequently of a greater degree of internal democracy. The workers of Poznan have signed with their blood these irrepressible demands.

The Yugoslav government naturally supported these demands of the Eastern European countries for which Titoism had been a tempting example since 1948. The Yugoslavs assumed a position of principle on this question, but also considered the problem from the point of view of national interest.

The Belgrade government knew that only the independence of the Eastern countries could relieve the Russian pressure on their borders in a permanent manner. Also Tito and his friends considered that the process of "détente," which they are strongly interested in supporting, could only develop further if the independence of the Eastern countries became, in international negotiations, a bargaining point against German unity and neutrality. All these factors explain Tito's firmness in Moscow and the persistence of disagreement on this specific but important issue.

Faced with this situation, the Moscow government has attempted to realign the Communist Parties in Western Europe more rigidly, and to re-establish the discipline which had somewhat suffered from the "trial of Stalin." This explains the trip to Russia of delegations from the Communist Parties of various countries, in particular of the Italian and of the French delegations.

It seems, however, that this attempt to re-establish a rigid unity on a new "line" has encountered serious difficulties. The French Stalinist leader Maurice Thorez—who has been proudly called by his comrades "the foremost Stalinist of France and Europe"—has consented to support the Moscow government against the "deviationism" of the Eastern Stalinists, but has stressed repeatedly and clearly that his support is given only under the condition that the trial of Stalin should not become a trial of the whole system.

This position of the French Stalinists—which badly conceals their attachment to the "harder" forms of Stalinism—may come in very useful for Khrushchev-Bulganin at the present time, but in the long run it is bound to interfere with the trend of internal development in Russia, which is irreversible.

BEHIND THE SCENES

In any case, Togliatti has publicly assumed a different position from Thorez and it appears that, behind the scenes, this difference has become a bitter struggle. The Italian CP leader, in his now famous interview with the review *Nuovi Argumenti*, has not only raised questions about the personality of Stalin, but also about what he called the "degeneration of the Soviet system." Moreover Togliatti has proclaimed the end of the theory of the "Leader-State"; agreeing explicitly in this respect with Tito, he outlined the theory of "polycentrism in world Communism" which, in other words amounts to an independence of the various Communist Parties from Moscow.

The Central Committee of the CPSU has deplored his position in an official document, but has not succeeded so far in obtaining a specific retraction from Togliatti. It is likely that the Italian CP leader will not sharpen this controversy further, but neither will he resign himself to a new mechanical and permanent realignment.

The debate that is now taking place in the Italian Communist Party, in preparation for its National Congress next autumn, must be understood in the context of the above events and perspectives. For those who follow this debate closely, its outstanding feature appears to be a definite disarray in the leadership as well as in the base.

Among its local cells and sections, the discussion has sometimes taken a violent character, and often degenerates into general and bitter individual outbursts. The leaders who "knew" but did not tell are harshly blamed; attacks are made against dogmatism, bureaucracy, apparatus rule, conformism and fear of truth. However, so far it has not been possible to detect in this general criticism a trend toward a specific political alternative—only confusion and bitterness.

At the top, the picture is different. Togliatti and his friends have immediately reversed their policy by 180 degrees, attempting to take the lead in the "de-Stalinization" process, referring themselves to Gramsci and attempting to elaborate a theory of "polycentrism."

There is in this new turn a heavy dose of counterfeit: the old bureaucracy is

attempting to remain in power also under the new policy, and tries to control the new turn. However, it is important to recognize that this new policy also corresponds to an old tradition of particularism in the Italian CP, and to certain temptations of independence that Togliatti is known to have had in the past but which he always stifled and sacrificed on the altar of Stalinist conformity.

TOGLIATTI'S OPPOSITION

The opponents of Togliatti in the Executive and in the Central Committee have nothing to oppose specifically to this policy. When it comes down to it, they have remained more Stalinist than Togliatti, and are uneasy in the new situation: they seem to stress their greater loyalty to Russia, but there is among them great bitterness and resentment against Khrushchev, the destroyer of the Stalin myth. They also criticize Togliatti's reformism in vague terms, without having the courage to advocate a policy of definitive break with the existing institutions. In short, if the rhetoric is set aside, they indirectly defend the policy of the past against the new policy of which Togliatti has become the champion.

Finally, a heavy shadow looms over the whole debate: what will the socialists do? The CP fears a growing independence of the PSI [Nenni's Socialist Party], but knows that they are in no position to attack this trend openly, and gives the impression of having no clear line to follow on this question.

In a general way, Togliatti's position within the CP seems rather solid. In all likelihood, he will defeat his opposition at the coming congress and will carry his party over to the new position: the position, that is, of Khrushchev, overlaid perhaps with a timid, vague and underlying Titoist temptation.

DISPATCH FROM DUBLIN

Irish Labor Left Loses Out

By M. M.

Dublin, July 1

The 1956 conference of the Irish Labor Party has come and gone. The revolt of the ranks against the continued tie-up of the ministers in the capitalist coalition which was anticipated by this correspondent fizzled out. The only socialist criticism of the coalition came from two isolated sections of the party, N. Wicklow and Dublin S. W.

The N. Wicklow comrades withdrew the motion "to leave the government" at the last moment but only in order to avoid an outright and overwhelming endorsement of the collaborationist line of the leaders; but first there was a long debate that underscored the torpor of the ranks on the crucial question for the party's future.

Nonetheless, the anti-coalition utterances of non-affiliated union leaders and isolated criticisms by local party leaders have had their effect on the Labor coalition cabal led by Norton. In his reply to the "break the coalition" debate, he was the soul of democratic humility.

Whereas in the past he has thundered against the subversive socialist minority and heaped personal abuse on the heads of the few socialists who dared expose his policy of capitulation to the forces of capitalist political reaction, on this occasion he offered his "title deeds of office" (as he termed it) to the party's parliamentary group or to the party conference at any time, if either one or the other body indicated this course. He knew in advance of course that his personal influence and his ability to dole out largesse to the faithful made such a demand unreal at this juncture.

Just prior to the conference, about a half-dozen party members from the Dublin organization were hauled before an inquisitorial commission of the party and were accused of activities "harmful

to the party!" It was generally assumed that pre-conference discussions among socialist members was being used to suspend their membership and preclude their attendance at the conference. It is reported, however, that several members of the commission had very red faces when the session ended. As usual the dirty hatchet work was shared by a brace of former Communist Party members.

BODY-BLOW TO CP

Speaking of the post-Stalin Stalinists: Feverish moves are being made to erect a front organization with an organ like *New Statesman and Nation*. Hard on the heels of the Khrushchev line-switch, overtures were being made even to intransigent anti-CP elements for support to the venture.

The CP, which never really amounted to much here at any juncture, has suffered a tremendous body-blow to its coterie of members and sympathizers by the debunking of Stalin. For them, with their minds conditioned by Catholic authoritarian doctrine, the passage to Stalin worship was quite effortless. The subsequent exposé by Khrushchev, of Stalin's undivine character in certain selected fore fields, has brought the whole doctrinal edifice into question.

The Catholic Church in Ireland is bound to benefit at the expense of the Irish Workers League (the CP). The Catholic Church, ever awake in its propaganda activities, has recently featured at its Sociological Congress none other than Douglas Hyde, ex-editor of the English *Daily Worker*, no doubt with the intention of recruiting the totalitarian faithful back to Rome.

Unemployment will become a real problem in this country as full employment in Britain becomes less full and as the impact of automation is really felt on the British economy. Unless emigration to the U. S. and the Dominions supersedes emigration to Britain (12,000 to 15,000 per year), a social crisis will be on the order of the day. The danger is that in the absence of a genuine revolutionary socialist party, a nationalist-fascist mass movement led by Sinn Fein will bid for power on the slogan of ending the partition of the country as a means of ending the economic crisis.

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POLAND

Consequences of Poznan

We are glad as always to publish the views and analysis of our contributor and comrade Andrzej Rudzienski on Polish affairs. In the case of this article, however, we must add for ourselves that we are aware of no evidence whatsoever to sustain the prospect he seems to depict for a transformed Polish regime, the role he ascribes to the official CP organ, and his related discussion.—Ed.

By A. RUDZIENSKI

The Poznan workers' strike was smothered in blood. The special troops of the Stalinist pretorians are pursuing refugees from the Poznan battle in the forests of West Poland, with tanks and planes.

No bourgeois government, not even in the time of the dictatorship of the colonels, unleashed such force against the workers. This honor has gone to the "socialist" government of the Stalinist party. Without any doubt thousands of workers have been arrested, including many in army and police uniforms who refused to use their weapons against the people.

Never in the modern history of the country was the class war so clearly defined as it was this time: on the one side, the striking workers, in a spontaneous strike movement, without any party leadership but backed up by the whole people; on the other side, the police and the army, armed to the teeth as the representative of the hated ruling class. This is the irony of history: the "popular" power of Stalinism is the most hated enemy of the people, the bearer of the deepest reaction in the country.

The movement in Poznan will probably be liquidated by the police measures of terror, standard under the Stalinist regime. But this time it is not a question of simply "liquidating" an opposition or of murdering "enemies of the people." It is a question of the working class itself, because the conflict revealed the open war between the working class and the Stalinist power.

If the working class spontaneously broke out in class warfare, then it cannot stop short of pursuing the aims of the fight to the final victory, or to the final defeat. The uprisings in Berlin and PLZEN (East Germany and Czechoslovakia) in 1953 and in Poznan in 1956 are not passing events in the political struggle; they are stages in the workers' class war against Stalinism, their socialist war against the totalitarian bureaucratic dictatorship. They are the forerunners of a new workers' revolution, directed against the usurpers of socialist power in Russia.

The event is more serious than the lords of Moscow and Warsaw think. It is bigger than the historic Lena strike, which Lenin rightly appraised as the herald of the new revolutionary upsurge in Russia.

The revolutionary opposition in Russia, after 30 years of Stalinism, has learned theoretically; the masses are learning not from books but with their own bodies; by their practical experience and through the political and class struggle, they are overcoming the Stalinist stage of fraud and deceit in the workers' movement. This is the most important meaning of the Poznan rising.

We shall not have to wait very long for the political consequences of this historical event. It will probably bring a halt to "de-Stalinization" in Poland and a new sharpening of the totalitarian terror against the people.

But this time, as mentioned, it is not a question of an internal fight against an artificially isolated opposition. The adversary is the majority of the working class backed by the entire Polish people. Therefore the police terror must be very cautious and very limited if it is not to provoke the rising of the entire nation against the government.

But after this period of a new "frost" must come a new "thaw," deeper and stronger, which will have to yield real concessions to the workers and peasants and not only to the upper layer of the bureaucracy. It must end with the reorganization of the government, with the punishment of those responsible for the

repression used against the Poznan strikers, with new elections, and a new government organized on a broader social basis. This means the end of the Stalinist regime in the present form and the establishment in Poland of a new type of government, perhaps like Finland's, or else the explosion of a new social revolution.

Of course, such a change is improbable in Russia without a change in Russia. But the Poznan uprising will deeply shake the internal structure of the Stalinist regime in Russia itself. If it is true that the East Berlin uprising provoked the fall of Stalin, then it is even more true that the Poznan insurrection can bring about the breakdown of the "collective" leadership of Boss Nikita. Then after Khrushchev comes a new boss, with deeper-going revelations about the crimes of Stalin and Khrushchev, and so on until the Russian people revolt.

The immediate consequence of Poznan was a clear definition and delimitation of the "de-Stalinization" process. Like Bloody Nicholas in his day, Boss Nikita advised "no dreaming" about a second party in Russia, because the Communist Party is the "sole leader and master of the thinking masses," and this means that Nikita aspires to be the sole master of Russia.

He also limits the scope of "de-Stalinization" to the last years of Stalin's dictatorship and he resists the demands of the Russian people for the rehabilitation of all of Stalin's political victims, of the Bukharinists, the Trotskyists, the Mensheviks and the S-Rs. He resists the demand of freedom for all political opinions and for new democratic and secret elections, with various candidates, not only the nominees of the Politburo.

These demands of the Russian people cannot be won without a fight. Russian freedom must be fought for by the Russian workers and the Russian people. But the Poznan uprising is a stimulus, a herald of the Russian revolution, for the fist of the Polish proletariat struck harder at Khrushchev than even at Ochab.

There is no doubt that after a period of political terror, must come the resignation of the Polish government and of the present leadership of the party. The autocratic epigones of Stalin know very well that this time the working class is not joking, that it has decided to fight to the bitter end.

After thousands of arrests in Poland and after big drives against Poznan refugees in the forests, the official organ *Trybuna Ludu* violently attacked the party organization in Poznan for its incorrect policy and its bureaucratic negligence. Perhaps this is a new scapegoat policy, but it is more likely that this attack on the Poznan organization stands for an attack on the leadership of the party, the Warsaw Politburo, the Ochab leadership, the Cyrankiewicz government and maybe the Kremlin.

For *Trybuna Ludu* was very violent in its attack on Stalinism, even more violent than Khrushchev himself. It led the "thaw" tendency, as the organ of the intellectuals *Nowa Kultura* led the writers' criticism against the party. The inaugural speech by party chief Edward Ochab was directed against this tendency among the party's intellectuals, branding them a harmful anti-party tendency.

If *Trybuna Ludu* and *Nowa Kultura* reflect new tendencies, which can be called the "left wing" of the PZPR [the ruling Stalinist party], then the Poznan uprising can accelerate the process of its ripening and the creation of a force capable of defending the Poznan workers. This process corresponds to the revolutionary tradition of the Polish working class movement and to the independent past of the SDKPL [Rosa Luxemburg's party], as against the organizational and ideological principles of the Bolshevik fraction of the Russian social-democracy.

The changes in the Polish political situation and in the composition of the Warsaw leadership will naturally be preceded by changes in the Kremlin. The Poznan uprising has not only shaken the political leadership of Nikita Khrushchev but will probably be the cause of his political decline.

LONDON LETTER

Class Lines Tense in British Auto Strike

By OWEN ROBERTS

London, July 24

Giants of capital and labor are now locked together in what promises to be the most important and hard-fought industrial battle in Britain since the war.

On one side are lined up the 15 trade unions with members in the automobile industry and on the other the mammoth British Motor Corporation.

The strike call went out to some 48,000 BMC workers employed at a dozen different plants in various parts of the country. As previously anticipated by observers who had carefully taken stock of the situation, the reception to the strike call by the day-shift workers early yesterday morning was mixed. In some plants there was a total stoppage; in others very few workers heeded the unions' call to down tools.

The management, anxious to spread as much confusion as possible and to create the impression that the strike was a complete flop, soon released details of the number of men it claimed were at work. It said that 23,245 of the workers called on strike (nearly 54 per cent of the total) had defied the unions and checked in at the plants. Everywhere, said the company, some of the workers were on the job and production was continuing.

These figures were quickly disputed by the unions. In several plants, they said, the stoppage was complete and in most plants the key men—such as maintenance engineers and electricians—had downed tools and production would soon come to a halt.

If allowance is made for the tactical propaganda of both management and unions it still remains pretty certain that a fair proportion of the workers failed to heed the strike call. A quick survey of the situation reveals the reasons for this state of affairs.

Firstly, it is a very long time since many of the unions called an official strike and, as one union leader put it, "the machinery is a little rusty."

In fact it was so rusty that in many instances thousands of workers entered the plants before the pickets appeared on the scene. Many of the plants are fairly large and have several entrances—and often the pickets were concentrated on one gate while the blacklegs [scabs] were entering by another.

WARMING UP

A second reason for the lack of response to the strike call is the poor state of union organization in many plants. In plants where the union membership and organization is strong, the response was good; but in others where membership is low or organization is weak, the response was very poor. At one plant in Birmingham, for instance, where 7500 workers are employed making components for the main plants the stoppage was 100 per cent, and in this plant the union leadership is strong and militant. In another plant, near Oxford where MG cars are made, only one of the 1040 workers struck, according to the figures provided by the company. This man, incidentally, is a labor member of Oxford City Council and secretary of a local trade-union branch.

Today the situation is pretty much the same, with the employers claiming that more men have gone in and the unions claiming that more have come out. But it is clear that the situation is warming up.

At the largest plant in the group—the Austin works at Longbridge—pickets and police mounted on horseback clashed as the strikers held up trucks leaving the plant with car bodies on board. The Austin plant is considered a strategic point in the strike. It employs some 13,000 men and the company claimed yesterday that nearly 80 per cent of them reported for work as usual. The unions are now concentrating a great deal of their energies to bring this plant to a standstill.

One of the outstanding features of the strike so far has been the efforts of the

Transport and General Workers—Britain's largest trade union and one which caters for a large number of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the automobile industry. The TGWU has been characterized for many years by its extreme right-wing attitude in both industrial and political matters, but recently it has undergone a slight change for the better. Following the recent death of Arthur Deakin and Jock Tiffin, two extremely right-wing leaders on the national trade-union field, the TGWU has stepped up its policies.

This may be judged by the fact that today it has called upon the dockers to stop loading BMC cars at the docks, the truck drivers to stop hauling BMC supplies, the bus drivers to stop running the buses to the plants and the building workers to down tools on building jobs being carried out for the BMC.

STRONG WORDS

The TGWU caters for all of these workers—and among the dockers and the truck and bus drivers it is particularly strong. That it is prepared to throw its whole weight into the current fight shows just how much is at stake and just how much the TGWU is prepared to fight now that two of its more right-wing leaders are no longer on the scene.

The London Times summed the situation up today when it said: "It is many years since an important official strike has been started by the TGWU and the AEU [the Engineers] and it is evident that the prestige of the union movement as a whole must be closely involved. The membership of the unions concerned is so widespread that repercussions must be expected in many places. A defeat for the unions would have its effect on the whole movement."

Harold Hutchinson, right-wing journalist of Labor's *Daily Herald*, burst into revolt today and said that what was at stake was more than just an effort to force a rich employer to accept some degree of responsibility for workers as human beings. It was, he said, a battle between the workers on one hand and a company on the other which was pushing home the Tory government's policy of weakening the workers and "freezing" wages. If this strike is lost, he warned, employers and the government will have the green light to extend the policy all over industry.

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LYL Leaders Hand Down the New Line

By SAM TAYLOR

As a result of the Russian Communist Party's 20th Congress, the CPs throughout the world are negotiating a major shift in tactics and strategy. In the United States, the ponderous effort to screech to a halt and do a 180-degree reversal is readily apparent in the pages of the *Daily Worker*. The return to the "Popular Front" is the No. 1 task before the CP today.

Just as the CP is shifting into reverse gear, its youth organization, the Labor Youth League, is following suit. The "Popular Front" strategy will be formalized at national conventions for both organizations to be held later this year.

In preparation for the convention, the National Council of the LYL met in May and subsequently issued a discussion bulletin. If the "discussion" bulletin and the prepared speeches of outgoing National Chairman Leon Wofsy and incoming National Chairman Earl Durham are indications of the future "discussion," then it is certain that everything may be discussed *except* politics.

Long articles may be written and even printed on how to strengthen the cultural life of the LYL, or on how to increase recreational activities, on how to "unite for unity," or how to sell their magazine *New Challenge*. But on politics, nothing or very little, and that by indirection and vague reference.

To eliminate the fuss and bother of electing new officers at the coming convention, the elections were settled in advance at the National Council by a simple maneuver: The old national chairman and national secretary took a leave of absence from the LYL and new officers were elected. Of course until the convention formalizes the decisions, each newly elected officer will wear the "acting" before his title. The new leadership will not be saddled with any responsibility for the errors of the old Wofsy leadership, but will be the bearers of the "new" tactics. It will also tend to thwart any "rotten elements" who may have any ideas about holding a democratic convention.

The discussion which appears in the Stalinist press at the time of a convention has a certain other-worldly quality to it. Articles appear which contain all sorts of nostrums to explain and rectify the growing isolation of the CP.

ALREADY DECIDED

After the Browder era, the attacks were centered on "right deviationists"; today we read about "left sectarianism." We may read that the reasons for their isolation from the labor movement is because "progressives" did not pay enough attention to the AFL, or that the party misinterpreted the mood of the times and thus lost contact with the masses. We read now that it was a mistake to launch the Progressive Party or to pursue policies in the CIO which led to the expulsion of the Stalinist-led unions like the UE and the Fur Workers.

Assuming for the moment that every one of the writers is sincere and honest, then there is a pathetic quality about these discussion articles. They all assume, granting our assumption, that the "mistakes" of the past were just political errors by leaders who adopted short-sighted policies, that now the party has been alerted to these "errors" and a new policy will develop out of open and fruitful democratic discussion by the ranks of the CP.

The reality of the situation is that the new policy has already been decided upon, and the only real discussion takes place on how to implement it.

Whether or not all CPers, and especially members of the LYL, realize what is going on is another question. The real

interest is to see exactly how the switch in policy takes place, at what speed the new policy is hammered home to the membership and what happens to those members who persist in their disagreements. It's like watching a whodunit when the solution is already known; only the craftsmanship with which it is carried out is in doubt.

BREAST-BEATER

The main interest at the LYL National Council meeting lies in the speech by Leon Wofsy. Wofsy, who has been a leader in the Stalinist youth for about as long as Harold Stassen has been a presidential candidate, is the voice of the CP in the LYL. He is now taking a leave of absence as national Chairman, as he puts it, "to take on other responsibilities in the working-class movement," i.e., the Communist Party. His speech is a fairly typical Stalinist example of breast-beating self-criticism for the failures of the past, an attack on the stifling atmosphere in the LYL which prevented the new line from coming into effect years ago, and the presentation of the new line.

We know that there is going to be a major tactical shift by the Stalinist youth, if for no other reason than that Wofsy announces that his "intention... [is] to do everything possible to untie our new leadership from any restraints or sense of responsibility to old methods and old approaches. The point is to open the door not only to new faces, but to new questions, new approaches."

"Our leadership has not been open enough to new ideas, new questions, differing opinions. We have stayed too much in the groove, with set ways of thinking and hard and fast answers that stifle curiosity, variety, and creative experience in all parts of our League."

Therefore the new leadership, elected before the convention to insure that Stalinists and not mere Stalinoids control the LYL, will be the bearers of the "unite for unity" line. The rank and file LYL will now be dished out the new line bit by bit until the time of the convention, at which point the new line and the new leadership will be ratified, not elected or decided upon.

SUBSTITUTE FOR POLITICS

In still another way the LYL "discussion" and the Wofsy speech is a typical Stalinist caricature of democratic processes. The door is open to new questions and approaches, Wofsy announces; he is going to discuss "the two biggest problems we have thought about and tried to answer over these past years"; he is going "to bring forward the most fundamental questions which we haven't adequately answered, or in important respects have wrongly answered. This includes questions which up to now we have shut our eyes to or have sometimes considered as off limits."

"Of course," he continues, "the big feature of the present moment in Marxist circles is that no question is 'off limits.' The present stormy discussion is challenging all those things past and present that chain the left to isolation in a period of historic test and opportunity. Surely the youth movement is and should be no exception."

After this mouth-watering introduction, one may almost be deceived into thinking that a discussion of politics will follow. The wraps are off, and nothing

is "off limits." But nothing follows.

The "two biggest problems" which still remain unanswered because "the leadership [i.e., Wofsy] has not been open enough to new ideas, new questions, differing opinions," we discover on reading the next sentence, are: "the problem of youth unity, and problem of the perspectives of the League itself."

The "most fundamental questions which haven't been adequately answered" and which were "sometimes considered as off limits" will now be dealt with in the most forthright manner. Open for free-for-all discussion are the following burning and decisive issues of the day:

"Is the League the wrong kind of youth organization? Is there any basis for a youth organization with a Marxist educational program? Is there a need for something broader, which young people will be more willing to join?"

"Has the League hurt itself by trying to pay attention to the activities of progressives in the major youth organizations? Should that be left to others? Are some of our ideas on youth unity too grandiose and based on wishful thinking?"

The two paragraphs are italicized in the original. Wofsy wants to make no mistake that anyone will think that the real Stalinist politics of the LYL will be discussed. From here on in, everything is, in a sense, anti-climatic—the whodunit has been solved.

"SECTARIAN?"

Of course, what is happening is a typical Stalinist discussion. The mistakes of the past are laid at the doorstep of short-sighted policies, narrow-minded bureaucratic leaders, ministerial interpretations of the political situation in the U. S. and isolation from the working class (or in the case of the LYL, "not knowing" what youth are thinking about).

All of these may be true to one extent or another. However they are all irrelevant as an explanation for the crisis and isolation of the Stalinist movement. They have nothing to do with the reasons why the CP and the LYL adopted policies which are today criticized as "left sectarian."

The hard or "left sectarian" line was pursued because it flowed inevitably from the particular period of the cold war. The Stalinist movement was defending the policies of the Russian and Stalinist bloc elsewhere in the world in a period which reached the most dangerous point during the Korean War.

How relevant is it to discuss the fact that the LYL has been "much too narrow and rigid" or failed to understand what young people were thinking about, when the reason they adopted the past tactics stems from world Stalinist politics? How supple and non-dogmatic can you be while defending the Stalinist armies and politics in the Korean War and automatically repeating the germ-warfare stories? How can you properly interpret the thinking of young people when the starting point of the CP's (and thereby the LYL's) politics is to defend Russia's politics and political directions at every twist and turn?

Any honest discussion of the real or alleged tactical failures should have as its starting point: what is the politics and theoretical basis behind these tactics?

The Wofsy line is designed to preclude this kind of discussion, while going as far as possible in the direction of appearing to discuss fundamentals and taking the "off limits" sign from areas of discussion. LYLers can discuss what Wofsy calls "fundamental" questions for a month of Sundays without coming any closer to understanding or touching upon the real politics of the LYL.

The basis for the new tactical turn

has very little to do with domestic political considerations. The reasons are to be found in the pronouncements of the 20th Party Congress in Moscow calling for a new "Popular Front" and the changing international situation. As against the previous period Stalinist tactics now place in the forefront the fostering of neutralism and "peaceful coexistence."

It still remains to be seen how far the new tactics will go. The question has been raised as to whether or not the LYL will disband in favor of a newly organized youth front.

The main reason, it would appear, that no definite answer can be given is that the CP has not yet decided whether to dissolve the LYL and set up a "broader" youth organization. For when Wofsy hints around the idea of dissolving the LYL, he does not give his views; he merely brings up the subject and then lets it hang in mid air.

CP VOICE

But whether or not the LYL is dissolved, the LYL will be "broadened" into an AYD-type organization. Early in his report to the National Council Wofsy goes out of his way to engage in a bit of self-criticism in which he all but comes out and says in so many words that he is the CP leader in the LYL and the transmission belt for the CP line:

"By the language of our programs and reports—I cite my own as the primary example—by the pattern of our leadership, by our approaches to activity and organizational set-up, we seem to make it almost principle to champion and in many ways imitate the Communist Party at every turn. Thus despite the fact that we definitely do not want to be and are not a junior Communist Party, that is just how we often appear to others." [Italics added.]

This type of criticism is also repeated in the Durham report at the same meeting. The CP line for the LYL is to make the LYL appear to be more independent in the future. But this does not mean that it will not be the CP's youth organization—a charge which is now admitted to be true.

Another way in which the LYL will be "broadened" is the emphasis on work in other youth organizations with special interest in the Young Democrats. The repeated emphasis on "youth unity" does not mean that they want to unite the LYL with any other organization but that they want to operate in other groups while placing less stress on pushing for specific Stalinist political slogans.

In this sense the CP has given up on the LYL. The National Council was told that the LYL must "stop thinking simply in terms of how to bring about THE Youth unity center, THE united Negro youth movement, and so on." (Emphasis in original.) But what will take its place isn't clear.

What does appear more certain is that the LYL will become a more diffuse political organization in the immediate future. There will be less emphasis on politics and more on rock-and-roll; less on issues which would point out Stalinists, more on issues that would make it difficult to distinguish an LYLer from an SDAer. And in the name of finding out what youth are thinking, the LYL, although perhaps not officially, will be supporting Democratic and even Republican candidates in the coming elections.

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CLAUDE GERARD REPORTS ON: The Algerian Liberation Army As I Saw It

INTRODUCING CLAUDE GERARD

By ANDRE GIACOMETTI

The article by Claude Gérard which is republished on this page of LABOR ACTION is a close-up look at the liberation army of the Algerian people, in their revolutionary war of emancipation from French rule. Like the article by Mlle. Gérard which LA published in its July 9 issue, this one too originally appeared in the French weekly *Demain*, which represents European-federalist circles of French socialism.

Much of the background has already been recounted at some length in recent issues of LA. To recapitulate the organizational names: the *fellaghas*, or Algerian guerrilla troops, are organized in the National Liberation Army (NLA). This fighting force, like the nationalist movement generally, divides politically between two wings which were described in detail in a series of LA articles on June 4, 11, and 18.

The left wing, led by the revolutionary socialist leader Messali Hadj, is organized in the MNA (Mouvement National Algérien). The right wing is grouped around the so-called National Liberation Front (FLN). Hence the two wings are also referred to as "Messalists" and "Frontists."

The author deserves to be introduced more fully than we did the last time.

Mlle. Claude Gérard was a leading personality in the French resistance movement. As a Catholic militant, she joined the "Combat" group in 1940, and became the second in command after its leader Edmond Michelet. After the latter's arrest and deportation to Dachau, she became one of the top leaders of the "Armée Secrète" (non-Stalinist underground) in southwestern France. In 1944 she was arrested by the German police, viciously tortured and condemned to death, but was saved at the last moment by the arrival of the Allied troops.

At the end of the war, she joined the MRP, and ran as a candidate on the ticket of that party in October 1945. In 1947 she was sent on a government mission to Madagascar, at a time when the repression against the nationalist movement was in full swing. This mission revealed to her the destructive and inhuman nature of colonialism; on her return to France, she started an unrelenting battle against it, partly through her news-bulletin *Afrique-Informations*.

Her article is important in several respects as a document. It completes the account by Robert Barrat published last September in *France-Observateur*, the main excerpts of which were also published at the time in LABOR ACTION.

PERSECUTED

Like Barrat, Claude Gérard shows the extent and the depth of the Algerian population's allegiance to the nationalist partisan army. At the same time, however, she gives a clearer picture of the relationship of forces between MNA and FLN, and points out significant differences in the type of warfare, military and political, of the two organizations.

Finally, her article is a testimony to the courage, the integrity and the deep sense of responsibility of this woman, who is taking terrible risks to do her duty as a democrat and as a human being while so many others, with greater liberal and radical pretense, behave reasonably towards the peoples of France and Algeria.

On May 30, Claude Gérard was arrested and imprisoned for "threatening the external security of the State" by her articles (in *Demain*, the London *Observer* and the Moroccan daily *Al Akm*, organ of the Istiqlal Party) and by her contacts with the MNA. She was about to be transferred for trial to Algiers, that is, to be handed over to the tender mercies of the colonialist police, when Robert Lacoste did her the favor of bringing a new charge against her, which kept her in the relative safety of a Paris prison. The social-democratic Resident Minister of Algeria admitted on this occasion that he had no idea that

she was going to be arrested, showing that he has no control over his own administration.

This admission helps to relate her arrest to the general political situation, specifically, to the campaign of intimidation conducted by the police and certain sectors of the administration against the non-Stalinist Left and the bourgeois liberals. The arrest of Robert Barrat last September, the police measures against Claude Bourdet and *France-Observateur*, the continuous seizures of *La Vérité* and of other left-wing publications, the propaganda on the theme of "treason in high places" organized by reactionary and fascist circles during the "defense leaks" trial, along with many other incidents, show the general trend of this campaign: it purports to strike at vulnerable left-wing minorities but in fact the blows are aimed at the present government, which is indirectly connected with many of these groups.

CAPTIVE OF RIGHT

The Minister of the Interior, Bourges-Maunoury, backed by the corrupt and reactionary police apparatus in France and Algeria and by powerful financial interests, is taking measures in the name of the government that aim at the overthrow of the government. Under the guise of carrying out government policy, its replacement by an authoritarian regime of the Right is being prepared. Magnanimously, Mollet and Lacoste accept responsibility for this policy and its consequences, thus becoming the instruments and accomplices of the would-be Salazars.

The arrest of Claude Gérard occurred at the same time as the arrest of Jean de Maisonseul, the director of the urbanism department of Algiers. De Maisonseul is a liberal, as harmless and impotent as they come. He has been arrested under an absurd charge of plotting treason against the government; all he did was to publish an appeal with Albert Camus asking that the civilian populations be spared by the military operations of either side.

His real crime is dissociating himself from the extermination policy advocated and carried out by the Algerian administration. Along with Claude Gérard, the Algerian nationalists of all shades and unnamed "high-placed" politicians, he is now part of a fantastic and ominous amalgam built up by the police and the reactionary press.

GRASS-ROOTS REFLEX

The SP in government is a prisoner of the authoritarian Right; the CP is a prisoner of Russian foreign policy and is paralyzed by its internal conflicts. No resistance can be expected from these parties—hardly even an elementary reflex of self-preservation.

That reflex, however, is taking place on the grass-roots level of the labor movement. To write that the CP is behind the current demonstrations against conscription and against the Pujadist meetings is a simple and convenient explanation of what is happening, but it happens to be wrong. In fact, the CP is disoriented, and drifts with the wave of popular action that has developed everywhere spontaneously, cutting across political and organizational allegiances.

These are the forces that are now opposing the maneuvers of the Right; they are the only ones that matter, and that can be counted upon to fight. The maneuvers of the Right are a race against time, against the development of coordination and unity in labor action.

By CLAUDE GERARD

I was waiting in a small village in Kabylia for the arrival of the fellaghas. I had been brought there by a succession of mysterious appointments and astonishing trips by bus and taxi, then by guides who one after the other led me over the mountains without revealing their plan and purpose. . . .

I am sitting in a poor hut with five or six mountaineers who do not notice how scared I am. They give me peppered tea and follow all my gestures with their eyes. Through an open door, in a yard, I see a woman. I get up and show that I would like to talk to her. I follow her in a smoky room.

First I see a mule and a calf: their heads look across the partition which divides the room. Little by little I have the impression of returning to consciousness.

Women and children are sitting around an open fire in a hole in the ground; I sit down with them. Immediately covers are brought and laid out on the floor. Then more peppered tea and coffee. These people go out of their way to receive me well. A woman touches my stockings and all others do the same. They see stockings for the first time. So I also stretch out my hand and touch the tresses they wear rolled up on their heads. My gesture creates good humor. The children laugh loudly. The "conversation" has begun.

Showing the poverty of their clothing and of their surroundings, they repeat: "Miseria . . . Miseria." But what are they trying to explain to me? It seems to me that they mention France. They ask me if I saw something or somebody. I hear a name and hesitate. These women, here, would they be interested in politics? At any event I repeat the name I thought I heard: Messali? Sure enough, "Messaali . . . Messaali!" they shout exuberantly.

An old woman starts crying. All crowd around me and embrace me. A little girl stands on tiptoes and stretches out her arms. I did not expect this kind of demonstration. Later I would be less surprised: I often saw such manifestations in my unusual trips. . . .

"OUR ARMY. . ."

A peasant arrives from a neighboring village: this one speaks fairly good French! I remember that I came to "look" and to ask questions. I ask him what his budget is, and he complains that he has to pay 2000 francs in taxes on his mule, as much as for himself.

"And are there other taxes than these?"

Now the attitude of the peasant changes. He seems to discover a new pride in answering me. Here is what he said, word for word:

"Certainly, there are the taxes we pay to support our soldiers, but those we pay gladly since they are spent for ourselves." He thinks for a moment and adds: "We shall not get out of this poverty unless we get independence, and without our army we will never get independence."

"Your army? Your soldiers?" I had been scared before, but now I was amazed. I had forgotten: he was speaking of the fellaghas. I returned to my previous assumption: this sort of silent agreement among the population, the undoubtedly solid link between it and the fellaghas: this seems to be the essential feature of the unknown "system."

The dogs bark louder, become furious and suddenly fall silent. Someone enters and then leaves. The peasant I was talking to quietly gets up. Here each word and gesture seem to have been fore-ordained since eternity. "They have arrived," he says. "Who?"—"Well, the soldiers who are about to meet you."

MEETING THE SOLDIERS

We walk about ten minutes in the rain. Here, near the forest, a small, seemingly abandoned village. We enter. A young soldier in uniform gets up; his gun is leaning against the wall next to him. I look him over, trying to see if something is missing from his equipment. I see the grenade attached to the belt, the cartridge belt, the cap, the leggings. . . .

He stretches out his hand. I hadn't expected this military appearance. He in-

roduces "his men," since he commands a section. The uniforms are a little motley, so are the weapons, but all have a gun and most of these are military guns. Most of the soldiers are very young. Scattered among them, as I found out later, are former workers from France, peasant sons, students from the Algiers bourgeoisie.

"Are you of the National Liberation Front or of the MNA?" I ask the young leader.

"Of the Algerian National Liberation Army," he answers. I try to get a more specific answer.

"Since when are you in the underground?"

"Since early 1955."

"And before, did you have a, shall we say, illegal activity?"

"I was in the MNA."

That evening, I found out many things about the "Liberation Army": the military command of each underground zone is independent. Each zone includes several groups. The smallest element is the section, which includes 35 men. Several sections form a company, which is led by a commander and by a political commissar. . . .

"NOT WITH EGYPT. . ."

I asked my traveling companions how they pictured the future of their country in a perspective of independence, such as they believed in. The point of view of the zone commander struck me as important enough to quote here:

"We do not want to build the Algeria of tomorrow with Egypt. Egypt has not been able to get its own people out of their poverty. We do not understand why France seems to want to show us as dependent on Egypt, whereas we'd naturally prefer an orientation such as Morocco has taken. . . . Why try to isolate us from the West?"

I asked the question which I invariably put to all those I could meet who knew French, from the simple soldier to the section commanders: "Why did you join the Liberation Army?" I always got the same answer; this time again:

"Independence or death: the fight to a finish. We are military men and we shall attack French soldiers as long as we'll find them in front of us. We don't want to hurt French civilians, but the military forces have no business in our country."

The same words always return: "Independence or death."

It would be a mistake to believe that these are the answers of fanatics, of indoctrinated madmen for whom life no longer counts. Within minutes of conversation each of these people revealed human reactions of men who hope to live, or rather to survive. One asked me if I would be able to see his mother, living 100 km. from Constantine. Another asked me to take along a letter for his parents in Algiers.

However, I insisted: "Why do you want independence for Algeria?" There, too, I always got a firm and precise answer, as a self-evident truth: "Only independence will enable our people to get out of its poverty." When I asked detailed questions about technical solutions, I usually got the answer: "That is the business of the 'politicals'—we are soldiers. . . ."

"But first you will need a cease-fire? This is a problem that concerns you primarily. What are your conditions and from what authority would you accept a guarantee?"

I can summarize as follows the answer I got from all those I asked:

"The cease-fire that is necessary for a consultation of the Algerian people will be accepted by the soldiers of the NLA only after a declaration of the French government recognizing independence for Algeria [the political commissars say: recognizing the right of the Algerian peo-

(Turn to last page)

BOOKS AND IDEAS

WHEN LABOR MARCHED, THIS IS HOW IT WAS

By BEN HALL

Twenty years has not sufficed to wipe out the memory of the great sit-in strikes that founded the modern labor movement. But, as Walter Reuther says in an introduction to Edward Levinson's new volume, "While they happened in the bright daylight of the life of every American over forty today, they are remembered as out of another age." History has been handed down, warped and distorted; the rise of industrial unionism has not been forgotten; its story is misrepresented.

Official history, stripped and refitted for the convenience of contemporary liberals addressing labor conventions, would go as follows: For generations, American workers fought in vain for the right to organize, always beaten back by the big corporations; but in 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, bringing joy and hope, gave the workers the right to organize, encouraged them to join unions, and smote their enemies: thus it was that he and other liberal politicians established the labor movement.

Two years ago, the author of "Is There a Republican Majority" wrote, "... it had been mainly through Roosevelt's help and guidance that the union movement had been able to enjoy the success it had."

Labor on the March brings a welcome corrective. Written almost 20 years ago, it is republished by University Books exactly as it was put on paper then.

In 1937, when Ed Levinson finished his book, the sit-in strikes were still alive; rank-and-file workers by the tens of thousands had seized factories. That was known to millions; and it is all put down here accurately, just as it happened. To bring these events back to life is a big contribution; not only to restoring the self-confidence of unionists everywhere but to recreating truth and dispelling myth.

Initiative was in the hands of self-sacrificing, courageous men, their organizations and leaders; it was the politicians, the courts, the liberals, the statesmen who were dragged along, some quite reluctantly. It is all here in this book. Read it for yourself.

Those who watched the struggles unfold, those who lived through them, and those who participated will refresh their memories; those who did not, will have the rare opportunity of following a chapter in the unfolding tradition of class struggle in America.

WHITEWASHING

If that were all, I could recommend the book not only strongly but wholeheartedly, even unreservedly. But there is more.

Even while he chronicled the great achievements of ordinary workers below, the author remained an apologist for the leaders above. Not for all leaders! He was not an apologist for the conservative AFL tops who blocked labor's advance; he was not an apologist for Roosevelt and the Democrats. That is why he could write a work of lasting value. But he was an apologist for the CIO officialdom, especially John L. Lewis.

He could write a work of value because the leaders of the CIO at the time were at the helm of a mighty mass movement fighting genuinely and militantly with them against the big corporations. At the same time, however, in his own way he watered down the history of the American working class, its historic initiative, its democratic socialist traditions.

The role of the leaders of the CIO was crucial and progressive in the fight with the AFL. They brought to the emerging mass movement the support of the already organized working class. Without them, the struggle would have been harder and bloodier, and perhaps would even have been defeated. They supported "labor on the march"; it was not only proper, it was imperative that every decent person

LABOR ON THE MARCH, by Edward Levinson. Introd. by Walter P. Reuther; foreword by James T. Farrell.—University Books, repub. 1956, 325 pages, \$3.50.

support them in this task. But Levinson did more than support them; he whitewashed them, especially their past.

His concluding chapter on "Lewis and the Program of the CIO" presents the mine workers' president in terms of unrelieved praise—laudatory, eulogistic. "In the annals of labor leadership in the United States, Lewis' name came to stand by those of Debs and Gompers."

Debs? Lewis smashed democracy inside the United Mine Workers Union; he helped destroy socialist consciousness within it; he turned a union which had emerged as one of the most socially progressive in the nation into an organization dominated by a personal machine. Levinson charily avoids this chapter in Lewis' career; all Lewis' contributions cannot wipe out this record: More, they cannot compensate for it.

At least this much must be demanded from anyone not an apologist: he must measure the value of his contribution to the rising CIO against the evil of his destruction of inner union democracy.

In those days, the Stalinists were carving out positions of power and influence in the labor movement. Levinson, himself a socialist, echoed the official CIO line, denying that any problem existed, concluding that in any case, the Stalinists "brought good and evil to the labor movement," a formula typical of the times that looked on the CP as a more or less legitimate radical pro-working-class tendency.

The author, however, was not interested in protecting the CP. By refusing to face the problem of Stalinism he sought to "protect" the good name of the CIO. By denying the evident fact of CP strength within it, he wanted to make the CIO more respectable.

RESPECTABLE HISTORY

But all this is minor compared to the book's fundamental defect. Consider this: The author, Levinson, was once a member of the Socialist Party and a writer for the *Socialist Call*. The man who writes the introduction, Walter P. Reuther, was a member of the Socialist Party while the events were occurring. The man who writes the foreword was once an independent socialist and contributor to revolutionary Marxist publications. Yet none of them refers to the important socialist traditions and the socialist past of the American working class and of the contribution of socialism and socialists to the development of the American labor movement.

That, too, is part of making American labor respectable: to itself and to its enemies.

The author delves back into history; he recalls the struggles of the Knights of Labor; he tells of historic strike battles. Describing the 1935 AFL convention he writes, "For moments during the many hours of tense combat the debate reached the high levels that had made noteworthy the convention of three decades ago when Gompers led a young, aggressive, keen group of devoted craft unionists in defensive battles against the able attacks of Max Hayes, the Cleveland printer, and other Socialist trade-unionists who aided Hayes' onslaughts

on the policy of craft exclusiveness." It was only a passing reference, yet it illuminates the importance in the author's own mind of socialism in the past of American labor. But he lets it be forgotten.

He ignores, too, the big battles before the CIO and before the New Deal led by independents and radicals and even by Stalinists that prepared the way for the upsurge of the '30s. His history of the sit-ins is vivid and inspiring. His background history of American labor is watered down. And why?

It is clear now that when this book was written it was a perfect summary of the state of mind of a whole stratum of militants in and around the labor movement.

They were socialists molting into left bourgeois democrats. The dissolving socialist movement was coming into contact with the rising mass movement of American workers; to facilitate their entry to it, the old radicals imagined that it was necessary to abandon their own program and this book found them in the process of shedding their socialism. Levinson was writing it out of the past while he and his friends were stripping it from their lives.

While the mass of American workers were at last acquiring a union consciousness, the socialist minority was slowly abandoning socialist consciousness as an encumbrance. It could hardly seem an apt moment to ponder the meaning of socialist traditions or to examine the link between labor and socialism, past and present. As socialists drifted into left New-Dealism, the subject was best ignored. They simply entered the struggle and were carried along with it.

PICTURE OF CLASS STRUGGLE

Levinson could present a vivid picture of the rising class movement; he didn't tarry to look where it was going; but as we read his book today, that is no defect, for we can see for ourselves. But he lost all awareness of the connections between socialism and unionism in America.

The pressure of our times is to wipe out all memory of the impact of socialism in the past. What seemed a simple oversight in the fighting days of the thirties becomes a gaping omission in the era of conformity. It is because it presents this inadvertently censored view of labor history that *Labor on the March* can take its place so easily on the left side of the union official's bookshelf while so noted a work as *The UAW and*

Walter Reuther by Howe and Widick is still officially ignored.

Labor on the March erases the consciousness and traditions of socialism in the labor movement. Nevertheless, it preserves the memory and traditions of the class struggles of the thirties; it is for this that we can still value it.

Levinson is at his best describing just what was going on. Nowadays we get a version of events adjusted retrospectively to the current mood of pro-Democratic Party liberalism. But he gives them to us just as they crashed through the news headlines.

As the upsurge of unionism begins he writes: "Most of the strikes were led by rank-and-file leaders who had arisen to meet the need of the hour." One of the early secondary leaders down below was Walter Reuther, who comes in for only four fleeting references. In 1934, rank-and-file steel union leaders, sick and tired of Roosevelt doubletalk, wrote him that it was "useless to waste any more time in Washington on the National Run Around." As the Flint UAW strikers mulled over strategy, they decided to seize another GM plant; Levinson considers their deliberations: "There was also the consideration that it would be a practical demonstration, in the midst of the court proceedings, of the strikers' contempt for judge-made law and injunctions."

CIO SWEEP

It was the combination of a mighty upsurge from below led by new worker-leaders with a movement from the leaders of the old unions above which gave the CIO its irresistible sweep. There is no apotheosis of Roosevelt.

"The core of the NRA," he points out, "took on meaning only where labor assumed the task of enforcing it." The NRA was incapable of enforcing its own decisions, he relates, and it "caused millions of workers to term the NRA 'The National Run Around.'"

Where government boards were unfavorable to labor, he doesn't hesitate to point out that they were appointed by Roosevelt. He relates with approval that Lewis had decided "that real cooperation from the White House, if it was to be had at all, was not to be obtained by fawning."

The liberal Democrats looked different then. Between September 1936 and May 1937, 484,711 workers participated in sit-down strikes. It was then that the Supreme Court approved the Wagner Act, "Giving an inescapable impression of cause and effect." Still "Most of the congressional liberals doubted the legality of labor's new weapon," adding "but were inclined to place responsibility for its emergence on the shoulders of die-hard employers." Democrats and Republicans alike denounced the sit-ins; the Senate by a vote of 75-3 declared them "illegal and contrary to public policy."

But a few years later, every half-way liberal had climbed on the bandwagon of a labor movement which had been victorious despite them. The struggles and sacrifices which made that victory possible are recorded in *Labor on the March*.

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

Readers Tell Us

To the Editor:

In the July 23 edition of *LABOR ACTION*, you published a letter under the caption "Anyone Know Any More About This?" dealing with the possibility of a Bartell faction splitting off from the Socialist Union ["Cochranites"] and seeking membership in the CP. This information was out-of-date.

Mike Bartell and his cohorts were expelled from the Socialist Union three months ago, for deliberately attempting to smash the organization because they disagreed with the neo-Stalinist line of "Free criticism of the Soviet Union." Bartell then applied to the CP for membership, but was refused. Thereupon he founded a "Bartellite" sect, which is currently conducting weekly membership meetings. They have no official publication.

C. SPEARE

Having received the above letter, we made inquiries directly to the Cochran group. They refuse to talk, so we are still confined to reports, which we pass on for whatever interest they may have.

Another reader has informed us that the Cochran group (minus Bartell) has decided that its perspective is to get together with the disciples of Sweezy's *Monthly Review* and of the *National Guardian* (i.e., the independent Stalinoids), this combination to plug for a "new party of socialism" that will unite them in holy wedlock with the CP but not with the CP wearing the pants... they hope.

In making our inquiries to a leader of the Cochran group, we ran unexpectedly into a puzzling circumstance. After he had politely informed us that he would not give any information whatever on the Bartell split, we remembered that we had a point of information to clear up: the exact name of the Cochran group, which we remembered as Socialist Union of America—was that correct? He told us he could not discuss that either. Thinking we hadn't heard straight, we tried to make clear that the inquiry was simply on the name of the group. No, he couldn't discuss it. It's the very first time we've run into a group that kept even its name a secret. Caution is fine but isn't this going a mite too far?—Ed.

Suez Canal — —

(Continued from page 1)

could afford to plunge into an expensive industrialization program that had peculiarly Marxist overtones." (July 29.) He does not undertake to explain Nasser's "Marxist overtones," for the result could be nothing but absurd. However, for the imperialists to tie up the goal of industrialization of small countries with "Marxist overtones" is the sort of way in which they are cutting their own throat in the eyes of most of the people in the world.

SABER-RATTLING

But this is not to say that the nationalization is really the only consideration that prompts the imperialists' reaction. In all such cases, there is another one which follows from the total situation:

"The British army is reliably reported to be in the van of government departments pleading for a 'tough' policy against President Nasser. 'If Nasser is permitted to get away with this move it will start the erosion of British and Western influence in Jordan, in Iraq and even in Turkey,' a high army source declared." (N. Y. Times, July 30.)

One sees: it is not only Nasser who is playing the game of prestige politics, even with saber-rattling. Such complaints, however true, come with bad grace from the anti-kettle pots.

And if Nasser has been saber-rattling vis-à-vis Israel, it has been a long time since the world has seen such uninhibited and open saber-rattling by the imperialist overlord-countries. With France's government reportedly in the lead, London and Paris have been openly making military threats, in language and in deed. The most enthusiastic applause vouchsafed to the applause-starved Eden in the House of Commons was when he promised to "take care" of the two destroyers Egypt got from Britain. British cruisers were activated in the Mediterranean. It was announced that the military and naval staffs were drawing up plans for armed intervention "if necessary."

The U. S. put its head together with the imperialists who were directly involved. While there were some early indications that Washington was thinking of trying to pose as an unbiased arbiter (who would throw the case to its friends out of sheer impartiality), this was quickly cast aside as Dulles denounced the nationalization and a State Department commando rushed to London to make joint plans on how to twist Egypt's arm.

"Mr. Murphy was accompanied by Admiral Walter Frederick Bone... The mighty atomic-weapon-equipped U. S. Sixth Fleet, which is on constant patrol in the Mediterranean, is part of Admiral Bone's operational force." (N. Y. Times, July 30.)

And don't let them forget that.

It seems that the French and British allies argued that it was all Washington's fault anyway, for pulling the rug from under Nasser on the Aswan Dam project. "Therefore, the allies argue, the U. S. is deeply implicated and cannot hold aloof in the hope of later becoming a mediator, as U. S. news dispatches have hinted."

So the U. S. is in this with both feet, on the side of the imperialists.

INTERNATIONALIZATION?

France's Mollet, who has the handicap of having to pose as a socialist leader, has been especially industrious in claiming that it is not the nationalization of a "capitalist enterprise" that bothers him but rather Egypt's breach of its international obligations, (a breach, remember, which however possible has not yet occurred).

Since Mollet's main preoccupation at the moment is organizing the massacre of Algerian fighters for national freedom, the chief contribution of his speech on Monday was devoted to wrapping up two of Nasser's "sins" in one bundle: his aid to the Algerian "rebels" and his national-

CALL FOR WAR

The London Times, time-honored spokesman of British imperialism, greeted Dulles to its shores with an editorial which shows frankly enough that anyone who thinks the issue is "international confidence" (Dulles' phrase) should confine himself to tiddleywinks:

"Anyone who thinks that victory for Nasser would not encourage other extremist demands against oil fields—and against strategic bases—should confine himself to tiddleywinks or blind man's buff... it [the London conference] must be speedily summoned, present the strongest terms to Egypt and be ready from the start to use force if Nasser answers with hesitancy or with refusal."

Meanwhile Nasser, in a reportedly conciliatory mood, has pledged free shipping through the canal. Clearly the British call for immediate armed force does not depend on his intentions, whatever they may be.

ization of the canal. No one need wonder why Nasser is becoming a hero of the Arab world, as he aspires to be: there is always a Mollet to help him.

As an answer to Egypt's nationalization of the canal, there is much talk of an "internationalization": i.e., taking over of control of the canal by a group of the powers. Egypt would be kindly allowed in too.

In the first place, such an international grouping already exists in the form of the 1888 Convention, if it is only a question (as sometimes put in the press) of "guaranteeing" free shipping under multiple responsibility. Obviously the plan, which has not yet been detailed, calls for something more.

Secondly, if there is something impermissible about one "unfettered" nation controlling the canal, these "internationalist"-minded people should also propose that the Panama Canal be internationalized. Although the difference between the two cases is likely to appear clear as crystal to most Americans, it would be very hard for any of them to explain this difference to anyone unfortunate enough to be born in a less aristocratic country.

Thirdly, it is already perfectly clear that the "internationalization" plans being thought up look toward giving Egypt only a "share" of the revenue. Under cover of "internationalization," the old economic consideration crawls back.

Fourthly, all talk of internationalization is predicated on the assumption that Nasser will block free shipping. No one has explained why the jittery powers cannot wait and see whether this will happen, before acting as if it is a foregone conclusion.

PROVOKING EGYPT

More than that, one has a right to suspect that they hope, by their own actions, to PROVOKE such reprisal by Nasser so as to bring into being the only excuse they want for forcible intervention.

Britain has already leveled economic sanctions against Egypt. London is obviously thinking over a gimmick involving refusal to pay the canal fees to the Egyptian government, thus necessitating action by Nasser.

Both imperialist states are talking about pulling out their technicians who are needed to run the canal; if they do, the canal operation may break down and excuse be provided for intervention. The way is being prepared by protests against "forcing" the technicians to stay at their posts. Obviously the whole problem could be avoided if England and France used their good offices to persuade their nationals to stay and keep the canal going—if continued operation of the canal is really their consideration.

Furthermore, Britain has halted arms shipments to Cairo, as an additional reprisal.

Western reprisals can drive Nasser to reprisals of his own, even if he really contemplated an open canal. The big powers are preparing a squeeze on Nasser such as operated on Mossadegh in connection with Iran's oil nationalization. The U. S. is playing on their team, as in that case too. Thus Western capitalism digs its own grave, in full view of all the uncommitted peoples of the world.

Algerian Liberation Army - -

(Continued from page 6)

ple to self-determination), the liberation of Messali Hadj and of all political prisoners. The only Algerian authority we will listen to and which could guarantee respect of the cease-fire would be our national leader Messali Hadj."

This is exactly the same answer I got from the political commissar of the group which I was traveling with. But this was no simple matter. The young zone commander who was present felt that the matter was sufficiently important to refer to the liaison headquarters for confirmation, and it was agreed that I should pick up the answers to the interview near Biskra. I had hoped that it would be possible for me to go from there and visit a group in the Aurès mountains. Unfortunately military operations and controls had become such that this was not possible...

NIGHT MARCH

The meeting had been organized in Kabylia. Through the liaison headquarters, the group knew that another company of the NLA was going to move south in the Western Constantine region. The company commander, who later told me that he served three years in Indochina as a sergeant in the French army, and the zone commander with him, had come themselves to pick me up in Constantine.

We got to the encampment without trouble. The men were sleeping when we arrived; they had marched all night. The sergeant explained who I was and that I intend to travel three or four days with them. Here, all is simple: they immediately receive me as if they had always known me. I found the same atmosphere here as in Kabylia, the same insignias of the National Liberation Army, the same diversity in the uniforms.

The sergeant explains the reason for the group's maneuver: "Our group had become sufficiently strong to detach a company from it; we shall station it further south. Another group of the NLA, which is stationed east of our point of arrival, is sending a liaison section to meet us. We shall probably meet them the day after tomorrow."

We leave the camp just before nightfall. Short commands are given: "First section, second section, third section... March!" I am riding on a mule at the end of the column. A while later, the sergeant orders a man to get up on the mule in front of me, because I could fall at night, in the mountains. The man is wounded, and walking would be difficult for him. The 150 fellaghas march silently through the night.

Alarm! Armed men are signaled in front of us. A patrol is sent out to reconnoiter. Shortly afterwards, from the mountain across, we see the luminous signals of the NLA. The "armed men" were another group of the NLA...

MESSALISTS

"Frontists" and "MNA" are fighting in one sector only. In this sector, the population appeals to the "Messalists" of the NLA (because it so happens that these NLA groups are Messalists) against the "Frontists," which it condemns because of their terrorist methods and which it denounces as not being "real" soldiers. When the population of these regions "rallies" to the French administration it means it cannot do otherwise. But it looks upon such "rallying" only as a means to defend itself against "those who endanger the revolution," and the arms which it is given will be used in the fight for independence... in cooperation with the Messalists.

These groups of the NLA, which are Messalists, have contacts with practically all groups in Eastern Algeria, which means, at the very least, that they are not fighting with these groups and which demonstrates that in the NLA as a whole, there is an important enough number of Messalists.

We have arrived at the end of the night's march. It is completely light now. We all assemble for the salute to the flag which takes place in the name of Messali. We resume the march in the afternoon. The passage of the column arouses astonishing enthusiasm everywhere... The inhabitants of the village which had housed and fed us at dawn said (without accepting any payment for the flour, milk and dates): "Our houses

may be burned down, it does not matter, since we have been able to help our people fighting for independence."

Young recruits ask to join. The rate of recruitment depends on the group, which can increase its size at will. As a security measure, all civilians seen near the column are asked to identify themselves. It is considered as common, and the civilians do it gladly. A slight incident: one man, seeing the column from afar, ran away so fast nobody could catch up with him: he had run to hide his hunting gun, mistaking the fellaghas for French soldiers.

Toward midnight, we halt. The men are tired after several nights of marching. I am staying with the command section, which includes the two commanders, the political commissar, the man in charge of police duties and another officer. They are telling stories in Arabic while they are eating and getting settled for the night. From my corner, lying on the best blankets they could find, I watch my new companions laughing and making a lot of gestures.

ON GUARD

Before picking up my interview at Biskra, I had the time to spend another three days in Kabylia, with another group of the NLA.

"Ah! If you knew how glad I am to see you," said the leader of the small detachment which had come to meet me. He brought a letter signed by an NLA group commander in Kabylia who apologized for not coming himself because of "skirmishes" which were taking place all over, and for being able to send only 35 men. He offered to arrange another meeting, within a few days, 60 km. from there, I would be able to see a new operating base of the group; it had grown in size and 300 men would be assembled there.

The leader of the detachment... proposed two other visits, which had become possible thanks to an imminent contact in the East and North Constantine region. If I had had several weeks to spend, I could have moved about all over eastern Algeria.

I asked another question: "Do you have contacts with the groups in the Aurès?" He showed me a typewritten note, with the seal of the NLA and the signature of Ben Boulaid [the leader of the NLA in the Aurès and one of the most important military leaders of the NLA in general—A.G.]. The note is marked "confidential" and concerns the attribution of ranks.

"I only looked at the signature," I said, returning the paper to him. "But I thought that the command of each zone was independent?"

"On the military level, yes," he answers, "but on the level of organization we try to multiply contacts as much as possible. That is the role of our liaison."

I spent those three days partly with the section, partly waiting in farm houses, because of a military convoy of twenty trucks stopping ten kilometers from where we were stationed; later a patrol passing through our zone disturbed our plans.

We were informed, at three o'clock in the morning, that the convoy had stopped, and that all headlights had been turned off. The news had reached us almost as quickly as a telegram. Everybody is on guard in the mountains at war, from the smallest shepherd to the old men...

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