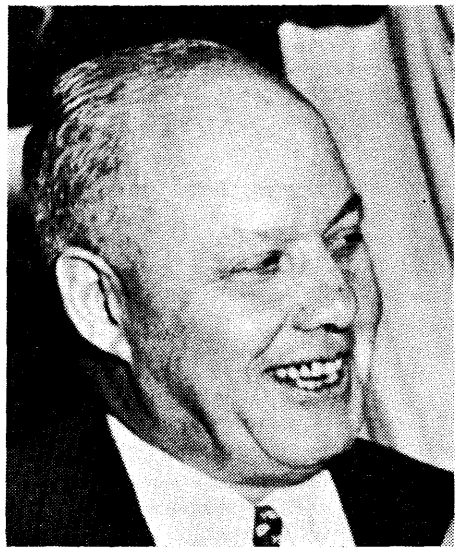
THE AMERICAN Socialist

A Symposium:

American Radicalism—Present and Future

AFL-CIO Leaders Talk Unity



MEANY

REUTHER

One Year of the American Socialist

Comments by William T. Baird, Cedric Belfrage, Arthur K. Davis, Harvey Goldberg, George B. Holcomb, Charles C. Lockwood, Clifford T. McAvoy, Carey McWilliams, Carl Polson, I. F. Stone and Hugh Weston.

JANUARY 1955 25 CENTS

CLIPPINGS

MILITANT picket-line action in aid of a striking United Rubber Workers local by many auto unionists in the Detroit area brought victory last month.

Last April, the Midwest Rubber Company, near Detroit in Macomb County, refused to renew its union agreement. The long-drawn strike came to a climax early in November when the company attempted to operate the plant despite the picket line. Militant Detroit locals of the auto union went into action, in a display of hold-the-line spirit similar to that during the recent United Electrical Workers' strike at the Square D Company. Workers and union leaders from Ford, Detroit Steel Products, Briggs and other plants manned the picket lines.

Assault cases are in the courts as a result of a plant-gate scuffle that came when company officials armed themselves with wrenches and attacked the pickets. The seven-month strike was finally settled with a union shop contract at the end of November.

AFTER a hearing before an inquiry officer, the Immigration Service ordered Cedric Belfrage, editor of the National Guardian, deported to Britain. Mr. Belfrage immediately replied that he would appeal the order, and that the fight against his deportation would be carried on as long as resources were available.

Mr. Belfrage charged that his deportation had been ordered under the Walter-McCarran Law because his "politics were wrong seventeen years ago." "The fight to protect the right of any publication to criticize the Government in any way it sees fit—for that is the essence of this fight as we see it—is an enormously costly one, but our many friends and readers are back of us," he said. Belfrage was detained on Ellis Island for a month during 1953.

The Belfrage case will now be appealed further up the scale of authorities in the Immigration Service, after which it can be taken into the courts.

THE Pentagon is getting into the position where it can control admissions to land-grant universities where ROTC is compulsory. A rider to the 1955 Defense Appropriations Act requires that a loyalty certificate be signed by all students in ROTC. In these universities, there are mandatory freshman and sophmore ROTC classes. Therefore, the loyalty certificate must be signed by every male student admitted to the university.

Thus at the UCLA, returning men students this fall were confronted with form DD-98. Twenty-one students refused to sign or submitted qualifications, and their names are being sent to Washington. If Washington refuses to permit these students to enter ROTC courses, the university may be forced to expel them. The University's regents have authorized President Robert Sproul to investigate and possibly to ask Washington to rescind the order.

Similar incidents have occurred at other colleges. The issue, Chancellor Clark Kerr of UCLA said, "is whether or not the Defense Department can control our admissions."

THREE of seven Smith Act victims are in prison in Denver, and have been there for five months despite the fact that they have not been tried or convicted of any crime. The reason: excessive bail.

The Denver chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union says: "The bail amounts here are so high as to provide punishment before conviction, in violation of the democratic tradition that there be a 'normal presumption of innocence' for all defendants."

The three are Lewis Johnson, held on $15,000 bail, Mrs. Anna Bary, $25,000, and her husband Arthur, $30,000. Arthur Bary, according to court-appointed lung specialists, is suffering from bronchiectasis, for which the treatment is good food, fresh air and rest. He has twice been put in the punishment cell, where he must sit hunched over in a windowless room.

Another Smith Act arrest in the South has brought the total of current victims to 131.

IN A suit to compel the State Department to issue to him the passport which it has refused to grant, Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Independent Socialist League, has appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Earlier this year Shachtman, who wishes to make a trip abroad, was denied that right by the Passport Office of the State Department, which gave as its ground the listing of the ISL by the Attorney-General as "subversive." A District Court ruling has backed that denial.

Shachtman is represented by Attorney Joseph L. Rauh Jr., who has submitted a brief against the State Department's arbitrary action, in which he argues that the Passport Act and the executive order under which Shachtman was discriminated against are unconstitutional. "They abridge his freedom to travel, speak and assemble in violation of the First Amendment, and . . . they deprive him of liberty and property without due process of law under the Fifth Amendment."

A WELL-ATTENDED meeting on "Academic Freedom and the Sweezy Case" was held on Nov. 29 at the Cornish Arms Hotel in New York. Paul M. Sweezy, Marxist economist of international repute and co-editor of Monthly Review, an independent socialist magazine, is under jail sentence for contempt of court in his home state, New Hampshire, pending appeal. Sweezy, who told a state investigating committee that he is a Marxist and a socialist but has never been a member of the Communist Party nor attended any of its meetings, had refused to answer questions concerning ideas, beliefs and associations on the ground that such queries invade his right to freedom of belief guaranteed by the First Amendment.

The meeting was addressed by Sweezy, Leo Huberman, Monthly Review co-editor, I. F. Stone, whose Weekly co-sponsored the meeting, Prof. Broadus Mitchell of Rutgers, and author J. Raymond Walsh, who chaired.

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AFL-CIO Leaders Talk Unity

FOR THE first time since the CIO was formed almost twenty years ago, prospects for labor unity appear promising. Both the AFL convention which met in Los Angeles in September and the CIO convention, meeting in the same city in December, confirmed that the leaders are serious this time about a merger, and that if some of the difficulties are ironed out, a single labor federation representing 14 million organized workers can become a reality in the near future.

AFL-CIO unity has been in the discussion stage since 1937, but all negotiations heretofore have proven fruitless. Why is unity possible today? The original split was the responsibility of the AFL craft bureaucracy which in the early Thirties was determined to keep the "rubbish"—as Dan Tobin called the workers of the mass production industries—out of their unions. They would not chance these unruly hordes invading their organizations and upsetting their smoothly functioning machines. When Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky and others set up the original Committee for Industrial Organization inside the AFL in 1935, and proceeded to launch a massive organization campaign, the AFL potentates got panicky and expelled ten unions out of the federation. The split didn't prove to be such a bad thing. For the next five years the labor movement exhibited more life and militancy, and recorded greater progress in every department of endeavor, than it had in the previous twenty years.

In the fall of 1937, when the CIO had established strong unions in the auto, steel, rubber and a number of other industries, it took the initiative in proposing unity negotiations to the AFL, and conferences followed in Washington between the two sides at the end of that year. John L. Lewis, at that time president of the CIO, proposed that the AFL issue charters to all 33 CIO affiliates on the basis that the industrial form of organization would be preserved, and that after entry, joint committees would be appointed to settle the remaining conflicts between the unions. The counter-proposition of the AFL big-shots made it obvious that they were not interested in unity, but only in breaking up the CIO. They flatly rejected Lewis's offer, and proposed as their counter-proposition to admit back into the AFL only the ten unions that were originally expelled, leaving all other CIO organizations outside with their status to be determined later on. It was clear

JOHN L. LEWIS

that the AFL leaders feared they could not maintain their position in a united organization, and they were probably right.

AT THE 1940 CIO convention in Atlantic City, the unity question flared up again in a big way with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' officials pouring on the fuel. Sidney Hillman had already gone to work for Roosevelt's war agencies, and was probably egged on in his unity campaign by Administration officials who were anxious to have the conservative AFL machine serve as a counterweight to the more exuberant leadership of the CIO. John L. Lewis ripped into Hillman's unity campaign, and with scathing contempt virtually invited the Amalgamated Clothing union to leave the CIO as Dubinsky had done a short time before when the International Ladies Garment Workers re-affiliated with the AFL.

"There is no peace," Lewis thundered at the opposition, "because you are not yet strong enough to command peace upon honorable terms. And there will be no peace with a mighty adversary until you possess that strength of bone and sinew that will make it possible for you to bargain for peace on equal terms."

But the tide of reaction which was getting under way in 1939 favored the AFL, just as the wave of progressivism had given the advantage to the CIO before. In January 1939, the AFL maneuvers resulted in the introduction of the Walsh-Green amendments in Congress to emasculate the Wagner law. With this, the AFL chiefs started their long series of informal alliances with manufacturers' groups and reactionary politicians to destroy progressive legislation, which in the nature of things was favoring the industrial unions more than the older crafts.

The big CIO campaigns had so raised the spirit of labor solidarity that they indirectly helped sweep huge numbers into the AFL as well. But the AFL didn't rely on labor militancy alone, or even primarily. Becoming often the jackal to the CIO lion, it began peddling itself to the employers up and down the country as the cheaper, more "responsible," "American" trade union organization. Hundreds of thousands were dragooned into its unions by means of "sweetheart agreements" with the employers.

When the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed in 1935, the AFL had a membership of slightly over 3 million. If we deduct 800,000 from this figure—the 1935 membership of the ten expelled unions that formed the nucleus of the CIO—we get an AFL membership of approximately 2,200,000 at the beginning of the CIO crusade for industrial unionism. By the end of 1937, the AFL had grown to approximately 3,400,000, but the CIO had shot up to 3,718,000. In 1940, the AFL had gone past the 4

million mark, and the CIO was close to it. But in the war years, the AFL was able to pile up a greater membership because of its many closed-shop agreements and the greater number of trades and industries it had relations with, and has maintained its normal growth since then, so that in 1953 its membership stood in the vicinity of 8½ million, while the CIO accounted for probably no more than 5 million.

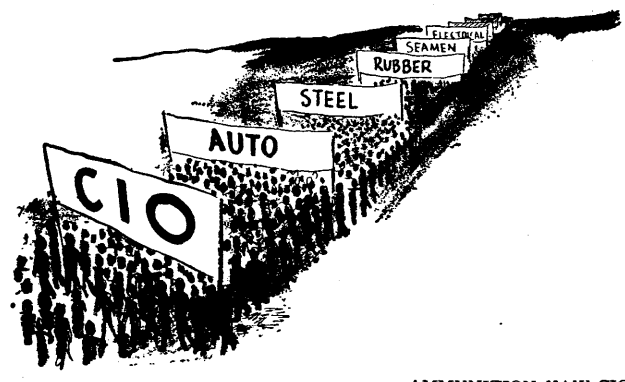
YET THOUGH the AFL has grown numerically stronger than the CIO, its negotiators have tentatively accepted the essential terms proposed by Lewis in 1937. Of course, from the CIO's viewpoint, this is not as conclusive as it may appear, as only 70 out of 111 AFL affiliates signed the no-raiding agreement, and the holdouts include the Teamsters with a membership of 1⅓ million, and the Carpenters with 800,000. Unless definite guarantees are given, there is nothing to prevent the other 41 AFL unions trying to raid the CIO, anymore than membership within one labor federation has prevented the craft unions from constantly and repeatedly raiding each other. It was not for nothing that the AFL had been dubbed, "The American Separation of Labor." That is why the CIO is seeking a hard-and-fast no-raiding compact. It also wants protection for the principle of industrial organization so that if substantial efforts are made to organize the chemical or other industries still largely unorganized, the crafts will not be able to nibble to death the infant union organizations. Reuther in his report to the CIO board at Los Angeles also set down two additional propositions as a basis for unity: elimination of racial discrimination, which still exists in a number of AFL unions; and vesting in the central organization the power to eliminate corrupt elements where the individual unions fail to act.

Why are the AFL chieftains now inclined to accept terms which they rejected out of hand seventeen years ago? It would be comforting to think that rank-and-file pressure had forced the hands of the officialdom, and that the blows of reaction have acted on one and all to close ranks against the common enemy. Unfortunately, pressure from the ranks is not the moving force in the current negotiations, and the need to close ranks in the face of Taft-Hartleyism is only a subordinate part of the explanation. The unpleasant fact is that it was the splendid militancy of the CIO in its early days which ruled out unity as a realistic course for the AFL hierarchs; and it is the conservatism and relative membership-decline of the CIO in the post-war years, as well as the virtual identity of the political aims and methods, both at home and abroad, of the two leaderships, which makes unity a practical possibility today. The AFL sachems in the past doubted their ability to maintain the balance of power if the CIO unions came into the fold. Today, the two sets of officials talk a common language, and can conceivably come to a business-like arrangement of dividing the revenues, honors and posts.

THE MORE the two federations get down to brass tacks in their unity talks, the clearer it becomes that the matter of industrial unionism is not at all a dead issue which both sides now fully accept, as glib newspapermen so often assert. The bargaining will now take place precisely over this question. (We can assume that Reuther's latter two points on Negro discrimination and racketeering will be resolved finally with the adoption of pious resolutions.) Any move, therefore, that weakens the hand of the CIO at the present time means the possibility of a bad compromise that cuts across this vital principle.

That is why the attempted alliance of Beck, MacDonald and John L. Lewis represented such a danger to the CIO. This combination of an AFL arch-reactionary, a light-weight clique politician of the CIO, and the able leader of the mine union, who since his break with the CIO has given full rein to his streak as a reckless adventurer, was organized on no discernible basis and with no clear purpose, except for the launching of marauding expeditions against other unions. Had the bloc succeeded in splitting the CIO —and that was one of its main aims —it could have forced the industrial unions, or most of them, to dump themselves into the AFL on any terms they could get. Unity in that case would have come about because of the disintegration of the industrial union federation, and would have been a retrogressive step for American trade union development. Fortunately, the unprincipled bloc of adventurers is apparently stillborn, and the CIO has succeeded in restoring a measure of harmony into its own counsels.

AFL-CIO unity, given the present relationship of forces, even if the fusion is finally achieved with the principle of industrial unionism intact—and that is still an if—will take place on the programmatic basis of adherence to "Democratic Party liberalism" at home, and "State Department liberation" abroad. In other words, the united federation would champion the very policies which led to the present disorientation and retreat. Unification would have big positive effects, nevertheless. By eliminating much inter-union raiding and strife, and talking with one voice on the political field and in legislative matters, labor's striking force would become measurably enhanced. Above all, it could impart to the ranks a growing self-confidence and feeling of labor's potential power. If the latter proves to be the case, then unification may furnish an important impulse to the development of labor's independent political activity, and eventual formation of its own political party.



AMMUNITION UAW-CIO

The Labor-Party Debate At the CIO Convention

ON DECEMBER 8, a curious incident occurred at the CIO convention in Los Angeles. Michael J. Quill, head of the Transport Workers Union, a national vice-president of the CIO and president of its New York Council, rose to quarrel with the resolution on Political Action Committee policy, and demanded the formation of a labor party.

Stating that "we are tying ourselves tighter and tighter to the Democratic Party," and that union members in New York don't want to support "Tammany racketeers," Quill went on to make a few much-needed observations. "All across the country we find the blundering of the Democratic Party weighing us down." He pointed to the fact that, of the seventeen states with so-called "right-to-work" laws (really, anti-union laws), fourteen are controlled by the Democratic Party. He reminded the delegates of the 600,000 vote total reached by the American Labor Party in New York in 1944. And he concluded that, if labor were to make its voices heard and influence policy and candidates, it would have to form, on the state and national level, "a third party, a political party, a labor party, a trade-union party, call it what you will, but a party of labor."

While Quill's words rang very bold, he was plainly not undertaking the kind of a fight that would have to be waged in the CIO today by any leader who made up his mind to follow the labor-party idea right down the line. It was plain to the delegates that he was blowing off steam as a result of the cold-shoulder given him and other New York union leaders in the selection of a gubernatorial candidate for this last election; the unions had wanted Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., and Tammany dictated the choice of Averell Harriman. Quill confirmed this impression by permitting himself to be un-convinced quickly by CIO president Walter Reuther, and voting with the other delegates who unanimously approved the PAC policy and voted to continue in the "traditional" manner.

Since Reuther's reply represents a rarity at recent labor gatherings—an attempt to defend the present CIO

MICHAEL J. QUILL

political policy with reasoned arguments—it is worth examining. Reuther, first of all, denied that the CIO is "a tail to the Democratic kite." The CIO does not hesitate to attack Democrats in Congress or anywhere else if it believes them to be wrong, he said.

It is easy for anyone who knows the facts to see that Reuther has the worst of the argument on this score. In actuality, much of CIO election literature and most of the political speeches by CIO leaders are an elaborate evasion of the truth about the Democratic Party. Mr. Reuther himself illustrated this at the CIO convention when, in discussing the Communist Control Act of 1954, he failed to mention the fact that its "outlaw" provision was written and inserted by the Democrats—and by the liberal Democrats, no less!

THEN Reuther emphatically denied that the Democratic Party is out of step with labor aspirations, and insisted that the CIO is pushing the Democratic Party along toward increasingly progressive policies. This argument really flies in the face of the whole recent evolution of the Democrats, who have been moving rightward at a rapid rate since the early Forties. We are a long way from the day when Roosevelt was reported to have told his party leaders to "Clear everything with Sidney [Hillman]"; labor gets only back-door audiences today. The liberal portions of the Democratic Party program are in tatters. In fact on some fronts, such as Negro rights, many have become convinced that the Republican Party is making a superior record! And the worst enemies of the CIO and AFL today are the labor-hating Democratic administrations of the Southern states, which are preventing union organization there and thus making possible the runaway problem that is increasingly plaguing the unions.

Reuther spoke also about the chances for labor-party organization: "Now . . . everyone who knows anything about the elementary facts of political history in America knows that third parties will get no one anywhere. . . ." Reuther failed to notice that the Republican Party began as a third party movement, and was able to smash into the previous two-party Whig-Democratic setup because the time and the issues were right for it. He also neglected the tremendous progressive impact of the third-party movements of the turn of the century —populist and socialist—which put much of our present social and political gains on the statute books. He forgets finally the experience of Great Britain, with a very similar two-party political tradition, where the forces of labor were able to heave the impotent Liberals into the political dustbin and realign British politics in a comparatively short time.

Mr. Reuther's arguments notwithstanding, American politics needs such a realignment and will get it sooner or later because the two old parties no longer stand for different things, and neither is able to give expression to the aspirations of the American people for a better and more secure future. This fact, temporarily muffled by the continuing armaments boom, is bound to assert itself.

Bevanite left wing in British Labor Party shows increasing strength as a result of ferment in the unions, dispute over German rearmament, and new Churchill revelation.

Bevanism vs. "Butskellism"

by Our European Correspondent

THE STRUGGLE between the Right and Left of the British Labor Party reached a new climax at the November 25 National Executive Committee meeting. The leaders, Morrison, Gaitskell and others, had preferred charges with a threat to expel from the Labor Party Michael Foot, Jennie Lee and J. P. W. Mallalieu. The three Bevanite editors of *Tribune* had sided with the unofficial dockers' strike against Arthur Deakin, the Dave Beck of the British labor movement. Also cited for disciplinary action were the seven Labor MP's who refused to follow the Party Whip in abstaining from the vote on German rearmament in the House of Commons.

The threats proved all sound and fury. The Bevanite editors were let off with a reprimand and warning.

In the background were the two big issues which had dominated the recent party conference at Scarborough. The first was German rearmament; the second, machine control of the party by a handful of powerful trade union bureaucrats. Both issues are summed up by the revolt against what is called "Butskellism" (a combination of the names of right-wing Laborite Gaitskell and Butler, Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer) meaning a policy indistinguishable from that of the Tories. In leading this revolt, the Bevanites almost won at Scarborough and have been gaining in momentum ever since. As time goes on, the right wing remains with no other means to stop this revolt but disciplinary measures, expulsions, split. But it is no easy thing, as we have indicated before, to discipline a movement that represents half and more of the party.

The first *gaffe* of the right wing was a typical bureaucratic miscalculation. After committing the Parliamentary Labor Party (the caucus in Commons) to vote for German rearmament, they had hoped that the Bevanites would go out on the limb of public opposition and could then be sawed off for breach of discipline. But the Bevanites wisely decided to roll with the punch, and announced they would abstain if a division of the House were called. Some 70 MP's had voted against the steering committee's position in caucus. But as it was clear that these and many more, knowing the real temper of the party and their constituents, would abstain in parliament, the right wing to save face ordered a general abstention in the vote.

THAT ONLY made matters worse—face and shirt both were lost. Naturally the differences could not be concealed, and the exchanges between the two wings of the Laborites were even more acrimonious than those between Laborites and Tories. In a small way it was the Scarborough debate all over again. Richard Crossman, hitherto considered a moderate Bevanite, declared he and his friends were following discipline because, although "passionately opposed to the treaty [they] were threatened with expulsion if they voted against it." But when the vote did come, seven MP's broke ranks, six of them pacifists who voted against the treaty and one, a right winger who voted for, saying "he had the courage of Attlee's convictions."

JENNIE LEE WITH RICHARD CROSSMAN

Then by a mere 20-vote majority, the Parliamentary Labor Party drummed the dissidents out of the caucus. That made the right wing look even more ridiculous because it was Bevanites, not a handful of pacifists, they were really aiming at. The Tory press lectured them about the integrity of an MP's vote, and even Churchill couldn't refrain from shedding a crocodile tear for the loss of democracy in the Labor Party. At this point, the Bevanites took the offensive. Michael Foot sailed into the punitive decision. Emrys Hughes, one of the pacifists, was given a full page in *Tribune,* in which he said he had received less opportunity for self-defense from the steering committee than from a court-martial which had once tried him for his views. An editorial in the same paper told Morgan Phillips, secretary of the Labor Party, that he had "no business" writing to the French Socialist Party that despite the abstention "all the Labor MP's, with the exception of only a few, conformed with the decision of the party to accept the Paris agreement."

To rub salt in the right wing's wounds, Churchill celebrated his 80th birthday by his mocking Woodford speech, in which he remembered a telegram to Montgomery at the end of the war ordering German weapons stacked for the use of Nazi troops if the Russians advanced too far. Laborites were saying everywhere that had their leaders

pursued a socialist foreign policy, this brazenly revealing remark could have brought down the Tory government.

Not quite so dramatic as the rearming of western Germany, the conflict over the recent dockers' strike is fraught with even greater significance for the struggle within the Labor Party. For the first time, the Bevanites intervened directly in a trade-union dispute, taking the side of the rank and file against bureaucratic leaders. It was, in a way, the fulfillment of Bevan's promise at Scarborough to carry the Labor Party fight into the unions "where the real power lies."

Longshoremen organized in a small union, the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers, had struck against compulsory overtime. They were soon joined by the bulk of the dockworkers in the Transport and General Workers Union, despite the opposition of their official leaders to the strike. Arthur Deakin, General Secretary of the T&GWU, in a typical reaction, called the walkout a "communist plot." *Tribune,* in a front page editorial, rose to the defense of the dockers, said that opposition to compulsory overtime had been officially sanctioned by the T&GWU, accused Deakin of slander and of being so remote from the rank and file that he didn't dare go down the waterfront to address the longshoremen in person.

This was lèse majesté to the right wing; no one attacks Arthur Deakin with impunity. Morgan Phillips summoned the Bevanite editor before the NEC to explain "how you reconcile the attack on the leadership of the T&GWU with your membership in the Party." The editors replied in a ringing public declaration "The Case for Freedom." We cite a few sentences—because they are or should be applicable far beyond the shores of Britain:

> *Trade Union leaders are not a special brand of humanity, always to be shielded from the rough breezes of democracy, rare birds to be protected by special game laws. They are there partly to be shot at—like all elected persons who must run the risks of public life if they aspire to hold the prizes and the power. In our democracy, they must muck in with Prime Ministers, Members of Parliament, City Councillors, shop stewards, strike leaders, both official and unofficial, and Ward Secretaries. If they expect to be praised—as most public men do—they must also expect to be criticized.*

The longshoremen's strike, after many weeks, ended in a compromise, the issues still being adjudicated before an arbitration board. In revenge for the failure of his red bogy to crush the strike, Deakin threw the small dockers' union out of the Trade Union Congress. Nevertheless Deakin emerged weakened among the dockers, in his own union, in the Labor Party. And this was due in good measure to the fact that the Bevanites had challenged the bureaucratic power, stuck to their guns—and finally established a right without which the socialist movement cannot progress.

THE OUTCOME of the dockers' battle has reinvigorated others sections of the trade union movement. A representative conference of 58,000 London bus drivers carried a proposal for 25s. a week wage increase demand ($3.40), or four times what had been offered by the employers. The proposal was carried in face of the opposition of the leaders of the union, also a part of the T&GWU, and before the assistant general secretary of the union could speak. The leader wrote an indignant letter to *Tribune,* which had publicized the facts, but there were no further threats of expulsion.

The National Union of Railwaymen, although a more democratic organization, went through a similar shakeup. On October 8, a long-delayed arbitration board decision on wages was accepted by the union negotiators. But "the flood of rank-and-file protests" against it was so strong that on November 11, the union leaders announced they could no longer accept the decision. Railwaymen in London, Manchester and Birmingham are now urging strike action to back up their negotiators.

In the Amalgamated Union of Engineers, 800,000 strong, an important victory was scored for democracy in the party and in the unions. At the Blackpool Trade Union Congress conference a few months ago, the officials of the union had dictated to their delegates the slate to be voted for the General Council of the TUC. Delegates appealed to the rank-and-file Appeals Court of the AEU and were upheld against their officials. The effect in the Labor Party becomes clear when it is remembered that officials of the union also obliged delegates at Scarborough to vote for Gaitskell as party treasurer against Bevan.

Slowly but surely the bloc vote that keeps the right wing in power is being shaken.

And again as at Scarborough, the right wing is taking out its impotent wrath against the smallest and most helpless minority. A half-dozen supporters of *Socialist Outlook,* which was banned at the party conference but has since discontinued publication, have been expelled for allegedly retroactive misconduct. The British press was almost unanimous in heaping scorn on this act of petty vengeance, an outrage to democratic procedure. As a result, Alice Bacon, chairman of the roving purge commission, wrote in a letter of resignation to the party secretary that it was impossible to carry out her functions "without being singled out for attack in *Tribune* and misrepresentation in others papers."

The party crisis is highlighted by the imminence of general elections. A recent defeat in a by-election at West Derby, a working class residential area near Liverpool, which was considered a sure thing for the Labor Party, is prodding the discussion. With one exception, all the Bevanites were kept out of the campaign. The candidate talked Butskellism and "thousands of voters," says the *New Statesman and Nation,* "expressed their acceptance of bipartisanship in a very sensible way. They stayed at home." Bevan lays the apathy of the voters to the muting of the socialist program which alone gives the Labor Party a reason for existence. He links this directly to the problem of unity in the party:

> *Discipline is called in when enthusiasm goes out. What we need are fewer proscriptions and more prescriptions. More "let's do this" and fewer "don't do that." We can easily afford differences of opinion if they are not carried to the point of mortal combat. Standing Orders are alright in their place. But remember they are "standing" orders. What we want is TO MOVE.*

A recent phenomenon in U.S. politics—Negro campaigns for representation in office—is pictured and analyzed here through the medium of a recent Flint campaign.

Negro Workers In Politics

by Marvin Towns

Flint

IN THE recent election, there were two Negro candidates for City Commission here in Flint. Although neither of these candidates was successful, these campaigns in the Third and Ninth wards highlight a process of considerable significance in America today, a process of increasing pressure for representation on the part of the Negro people, and especially the Negro workers.

In 1952 Pontiac elected its first Negro City Commissioner, and Toledo did the same. Lansing followed suit in the 1954 elections. And of course, the biggest example from this part of the country was the successful campaign of Charles Diggs Jr. for U.S. Congress in Detroit, a campaign which was headline news from beginning to end. The race conducted by Floyd McCree in the Third Ward here, while it did not win election, typifies this nationwide development, and a description of it will help to show the pattern.

Floyd McCree is a young Negro auto worker who has been employed for the past seven years in the Buick foundry. It is probably unnecessary to describe the special hardships of foundry work to many of the readers of the *American Socialist*. The foundry is universally recognized as the hell-hole of a plant. Intense heat, hazardous operations, oppressive concentration of molding-sand dust in the air, etc., make the reputation of foundry work well-deserved. As a result of continuing company discrimination practices, the Buick foundry, like almost all foundries around here, employs mainly Negro workers. The departments that are predominantly white are the skilled, higher-paying sections, like core-making or maintenance. The Buick foundry represents the largest single concentration of Negro labor in the city of Flint.

UNTIL about a year ago, not much was stirring in the Negro community, but the pains and aches, the grievances, were all there. Housing was desperately in demand. Restaurants and other such establishments maintained the Jim Crow fort with a rigidity typical of the backwater counties of Mississippi.

For a number of years, the Negro struggle for betterment in Flint has been along two main lines: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Fair Employment Practices Committees of the auto union locals. As in a good many other towns, the NAACP in Flint had been a club for the advancement of Negro professionals and businessmen. Dominated by a conservative professional element, its record of achievement over the past ten years has been very poor. To add to its discredit, in a number of important conflicts it allied itself with the conservative elements of the community.

The FEPC committees were often not much better. Launched for the purpose of struggle against management's discriminatory practices inside and outside the shops, they have many times become an instrument for dampening fighting spirit. Like many other union posts and committees, they are always good for some "lost time" payments out of the union treasury, a few trips to conventions every year, and a few other special privileges. And, as in so many other union posts in this period of conservatism, the atmosphere of self-grubbing affects the officials and committee members.

Approximately a year ago, however, things began stirring in Buick Local 599 of the UAW-CIO. A group of young Negroes fired with a determination to alter conditions found themselves together on the FEPC committee of their local. Their first project was a limited one: breaking

down Jim Crow in bowling. The project was carried out with militancy, and proved to be a complete success. It gave the group self-confidence and faith in a militant approach. The next project was the election campaign.

In Flint's Third Ward, the influx of Southern migrants in recent years has made the Negroes a big majority. Floyd McCree was chosen to run for Commissioner from that ward. The obstacle course he was forced to navigate in his battle for support offers an excellent view of the political mechanics of a Negro community as well as of the CIO Political Action Committee on a local level.

THE INCUMBENT, Carl W. Delling, a white real estate dealer, had a background which could hardly be called pro-labor. Earlier in his career he had been a cop, and a Republican. His opponent, Floyd McCree, strictly a labor man, a member of his union local's executive board, offered a sharp contrast, besides being a more natural representative for a Negro ward. Nevertheless, PAC endorsed Delling.

To understand this, one must understand the especially close relations between the PAC and the Democratic Party here. The Democratic Party virtually *is* the PAC. Local Democratic boss Jake Waldo, Tammany-style manipulator, is the hand that holds the most important political strings, including those inside the labor movement. Certain business interests are involved in this, and Delling, together with two other commissioners, make up what is called locally the "Concrete Bloc." (There has been a long-standing controversy over the question of asphalt *vs.* concrete for city paving.) This factor plus the Jim Crow sentiments of the Waldo clique tipped the scale in the PAC, and unfortunately the leaderships of the various local unions did not oppose Waldo's wishes.

In the Negro community, the overwhelming majority of the younger working-class Negroes rallied behind McCree, with the Buick foundry group as the center. On the other hand, Negro middle-class and professional elements, timid in the presence of a bold bid for representation by the more fervent element of their own community, supported Delling. Dr. Leach, president of the local NAACP branch, and a group of Negro ministers, announced their support for Delling. The cleavage was sharp and antagonisms became intense. A newspaper published by the McCree Campaign Committee summarized the view of McCree workers as follows:

> *A few prosperous would-be big-shot Negroes have been silent or antagonistic toward our campaign. The reasons are clear. They have profited by our misery. The shameful mistreatment of our people by callous welfare officials and others is no concern of theirs as long as they make money. Their selfish and immoral ways have exposed them as cowards afraid to talk straight and be men, so they run for cover. Until they come out and join the ranks of those who advocate equality of opportunity for all, it is hoped that they will be starved to death like the cheese-eating animal they resemble deserves.*

STRONG WORDS like these show the spirit of indignation and militancy that pervaded the entire campaign. Fundamental issues were raised; the link between the local, national and international struggles of the colored people was clearly established. Basic questions concerning freedom and equality in every facet of American life were translated into the vernacular of local issues. The struggle for Negro representation was pushed with boldness and vision. On the local level, the powers-that-be received their full measure of criticism, and the red-baiters their full measure of scorn. Police brutality, and the tie-ups between vice, crime and the city administration were courageously handled.

A particular incident illustrates the temper of the campaign. After the primaries, a period of registration of new voters for the final voting opens up. The practice of "arm-chair" registration was inaugurated as a result of pressure put on the city commission by PAC. This measure permits each recognized political group to deputize as city clerks 30 people, and send them door-to-door registering new voters on the spot. A number of non-partisan Negro groups sought to qualify so that they might increase Negro voting. The city administration refused, on one pretext or another, the application of every Negro group.

At the next meeting of the City Commission, Edgar Holt, McCree's campaign manager, took the floor and made a scathing denunciation of the Jim Crow policies of the city administration. His statement visibly shook the politicians, and was feature news the next day. This bold move had the desired result. The following day, the Democratic Party, frightened that its stand might alienate a substantial segment of the Negro vote, offered two-thirds of its quota of deputized clerks to the McCree committee.

THE FINAL tabulation of the votes showed 1,600 for McCree to 2,100 for Delling. Many signs point to a fairly solid white vote against McCree, partly as a result of Negro-baiting which was carried on even by some PAC personnel. The Uncle Tom segment of the Negro community was able to split the Negro vote sufficiently to give Delling his majority.

This campaign, like other Negro political bids in this and other areas, stemmed from the growing rebellion of the Negro against his second-class citizenship, a process which has been under way for three or four decades and which became quite strong with the rise of the CIO and the organization of Negroes in the mass-production industries. It is thus interesting to note the working-class basis of the McCree campaign, a feature which it shares with other similar campaigns. This same bloc of Negro workers is becoming an important factor in the control of the important Buick local here, to the consternation of some of the conservative officials.

Another feature of these campaigns is that they generally throw the Negro workers into opposition to the Democratic machines which control most of the industrial cities. This may take different forms—a primary race inside the Democratic Party, or an independent campaign as in the McCree case—but in each instance the conflict with the machine is clear. Thus there is ground to hope that the working-class Negro bids for representation can be the harbingers of labor's independence of the Democratic Party at a later date.

Crisis in the Socialist Party during the first World War gave the left wing its chance for a comeback. This account and analysis continues our history of socialism in America.

American Socialists In World War I

by Bert Cochran

AFTER striking down the left wing at the May 1912 convention and railroading its main leader, William Haywood, out of the party soon afterwards, the middle-class leaders of the Socialist Party, with a long sigh of relief that at last they had rid themselves of the uncouth "bummery" elements, settled down to the sober and not unrespectable or unremunerative business of building a mild reform organization, and getting themselves and their friends elected to public office. The prospects for Fabian gradualism looked good in an America where the tide of middle-class Progressivism was rising like a flood. Despite Theodore Roosevelt's "trust-busting" and Wilson's "new freedom," Debs got almost a million votes that year.

On the industrial front, the right-wing leaders proceeded to divest themselves of any traces still remaining from the left wing's labor activities. Let the union bureaucrats run the economic end; they, the socialists, would attend to politics. They quickly put a stop to the nonsense of irritating Gomper's AFL machine with boisterous demands for industrial unionism, or running opposition candidates against the old-line officials. The 1912 AFL convention was the last one in which the socialist delegation put up a strong fight. At the 1913 sessions, the socialists introduced a watered-down motion on industrial unionism, but did not even bother to speak on it, with the result that the motion was rejected without a roll call. No candidate was put up against Gompers, who was elected unanimously, although William Johnston, the socialist leader of the Machinists union, ran against the Gompers candidate for vice-president and polled over a third of the vote. By the 1914 convention, Johnston, instead of running as a socialist candidate, personally nominated his former opponent, who thereupon was elected without opposition. Within another year, socialist influence within the AFL had all but disappeared.

The right-wing leaders had over the years developed the theory that strikes were of little value. They could now practice the theory uninhibitedly, as they no longer had to put up with disturbing criticisms within the party from their erstwhile opponents. The national party had contributed over $21,000 in 1912 in support of strikes and labor defense. In 1913, the amount dwindled to $400, and by 1914 it had dropped to zero. John Reed, who with other artists got interested in the labor movement during the Paterson silk strike of 1913, voiced the general opinion of the left intelligentsia at that time when he wrote that the Socialist Party was "duller than religion and almost as little in touch with labor." When an Italian weaver wanted to know why the socialists were not helping in the Paterson strike, Reed told him that "a good share of the Socialist Party and the American Federation of Labor have forgotten all about the class struggle, and seem to be playing a little game with capitalistic rules, called 'Button, button, who's got the vote?'"

BUT THE Fabian politics of the Rand School crowd and the Milwaukee socialists was based on a smug misreading of the social reality. Their dream of a slow, gradual, painless transition to a socialist order was blown sky high in August 1914, when all the furies of hell broke loose in Europe, and capitalist society settled down for the next four years to human butchery and slaughter on the wholesale scale. In common with so many others, the American socialist leaders were horrified at this descent into barbarism, and bowled over by the realization that the Socialist International, which they had imagined to be a mighty bulwark against war, had proven the weakest of reeds. As soon as they caught their breaths, they hastened to issue thunderous manifestoes against the war and reaffirmed their conviction that the basic causes for the armed conflict were the commercial and imperial rivalries between the major capitalist states.

Some of these pronouncements were very fiery and gave an impression of considerable militancy. On August 12 the National Committee called upon workers, and especially the foreign born with ties in the several belligerent countries, to organize demonstrations against the war. Two days later, the National Committee demanded that the government seize all properties of the food industry and prohibit export of money and munitions. "Starve the war and feed America," was the ringing slogan of the Socialist Party. After the sinking of the Lusitania, the manifesto of the National Committee of May 1915 exhorted: "Not a worker's arm shall be lifted for the slaying of a fellow worker of another country, nor turned for the production of man-killing instruments or war supplies! Down with war! Forward to international peace and the world-wide solidarity of all workers."

On April 21, 1916, when relations with Germany were growing very strained as the latter intensified its submarine warfare, another manifesto was broadcast which even outdid the previous ones in its trenchant tone: "We repeat the accusation that business interests of this country,

bankers, the Wall Street gang, and especially the munition manufacturers, are not only interested in perpetuating the war in Europe, but are exerting their influence through every conceivable channel to the end that this country be plunged into the bloody maelstrom." The manifesto called upon workers to oppose the war with mass meetings and other means "leading to the final and extreme step of a general strike."

HOWEVER, the position of the right-wing leadership was not half as revolutionary as these proclamations might indicate. The actual content of the official party policy was very much in line with the neutralist program of American middle-class pacifism and liberalism of this period, and as a matter of fact, enjoyed widespread approbation in high places before America entered the war.

It must be recalled that, in contrast to the political climate prevailing in the Second World War, there existed a considerable middle-class anti-war movement in the 1914 period, led by powerful Senators like LaFollette and Norris, William Jennings Bryan, three-time Democratic candidate for President, Jane Addams of Hull House, Rosika Schwimmer of Ford Peace Ship fame, and innumerable influential personalities in religious, newspaper, literary and educational circles.

Morris Hillquit, the National Committee chairman, relates in his autobiography: "The objective of the Socialist Party to keep the country out of the war at first did not meet serious resistance. On the contrary it seemed fully in accord with the policy of the government and the temper of the nation. The president had enjoined the people of the United States to remain neutral 'in thought as well as in action.' Our statesmen, newspapers, and churches joined in a chorus of condemnation of the war and abhorrence of its atrocities. Pacifism was the vogue, and the socialist anti-war propaganda generally met with favorable response."

The SP anti-war position virtually duplicated the proposals of these circles, if one discounts the Marxist verbiage and exalted terminology, and the contents of its leaders' activities fell in line with, and was certainly thoroughly acceptable to, middle-class pacifism. From the first, the main axis of its anti-war policy was the attempt to get the war called off through U.S. Government mediation. To this end, it sent innumerable cablegrams to the Socialist parties of Europe, and attempted to convoke an international socialist congress "to work for the speedy termination of the war." American mediation to end the war was likewise the program of the American League To Limit Armaments, the American Neutrality League, and most other middle-class organizations, and in keeping with Wilsonian diplomacy and State Department intrigues in the first years of the war. The attempt to get together an international socialist congress to set forces in motion to mediate the conflict was similarly pursued, and in a similar manner, by the Social Democrats of the neutral countries in Europe: Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Holland. On behalf of this objective, the Socialist Party had its lone Congressman, Meyer London, introduce a resolution calling on Wilson to convoke a conference of neutral nations which would offer mediation to the belligerents, and the party sent a committee composed of London, James H. Maurer of Reading, Pennsylvania, and Hillquit to meet with President Wilson and urge the proposal upon him. This was the actual type of anti-war campaigning that the right-wing leaders were doing. Their calls for workers' demonstrations and general strikes were mainly in the nature of rhetoric.

IN THE big Peace Program that the National Committee adopted in May 1915, the hiatus in their thinking was incorporated by the Socialist Solons right into one document. The preamble is full of excellent Marxian explanations of how "capitalism, functioning through the modern national state with its vast armaments, secret diplomacies, and undemocratic governments, inevitably leads to war," and that "the supreme duty is to summon all labor forces of the world for an aggressive, and uncompromising opposition to the whole capitalist system and to every form of its most deadly fruits—militarism and war." Then they tossed into their program every pacifistic nostrum and panacea that later received world notice, or notoriety, as the case may be, in the League of Nations talking shop: International Federation, International Congress with legislative and administrative powers, International Police Force, International Court, disarmament, neutralization of the seas, abolition of the manufacture of the munitions of war for private profits, etc. How this millenium was to be realized through the instrumentality of the very capitalists, or their governments, who were declared responsible for the carnage to begin with, our statesmen didn't feel called upon to elucidate. Apparently they didn't even notice that the preamble and the platform were at sword's points.

Finally, one of the most tell-tale positions of the right wing, which showed that beneath the bluster and big talk they had learned nothing from the debacle of the Socialist International and were hoping in their heart of hearts that once the smoke of war cleared away they could go back to the ways of doing business of the good old pre-war days, was the assiduous care with which they tried to shield the war socialists of Europe from the party's anger, and to drown in circumlocution and double-talk the clear facts that the war socialists had broken their pledges and had betrayed their trust. In its September 19, 1914, declaration, the National Committee announced: "We do not presume to pass judgment upon the conduct of our brother parties in Europe. We realize that they are the victims of the present vicious industrial, political and military systems, and that they did the best they could under the circumstances."

Hillquit, in a series of articles in the *Metropolitan Magazine,* traveled up and down the lanes of history to demonstrate that the conclusions from history, philosophy, sociology and other sciences all demonstrated irrefutably that the socialists could not have acted any differently than they did, and that they all deserved a clean bill of health. "The socialists of all belligerent countries have temporarily surrendered to the compelling forces of the great world catastrophe, but in no country have they abandoned their faith in the eventual coming of the brotherhood of men. Physically the Socialist International lies bleeding at the feet of the Moloch of capitalist militarism, but morally and spiritually it remains unscathed."

WORDY explanations notwithstanding, the moral position of the right wing leaders was badly shaken with the rank and file of the party when their opportunist counterparts abroad went over to support their various war governments. The National Committee's position was further compromised by its attempted whitewash of the renegades, and the appearance of cracks in its own leading circle on maintaining the party's anti-war stand. What happened was that after the sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine in May 1915, and the floating of the first allied war loan in the autumn of that year, pro-allied war propaganda literally began to inundate the American public. The attempt to involve America in the war followed the tactic at first of a cry for preparedness. In December 1915, Charles Edward Russell, Upton Sinclair, and a considerable number of other prominent socialists caved in under the pressure and became advocates of preparedness.

Debs, as usual, was running his own show in the Socialist Party, particularly in the Midwest. As soon as the war in Europe began he made a broad sweep across the Midwestern states, talking everywhere to big crowds. Debs' anti-war speeches were a far cry from the "high politics" of the Rand School statesmen. His tone was militant and unyielding, his policy rested on an attempt to arouse the workers and the poor, his program called for a resolute mass struggle. When asked whether he was opposed to all wars, Debs replied: "I am not a capitalist soldier, I am a proletarian revolutionist. I am opposed to every war but one; I am for that war with heart and soul, and that is the world-wide war of the social revolution. In that war I am prepared to fight in any way the ruling class may make necessary, even to the barricades. That is where I stand and where I believe the Socialist Party stands"—and then he corrected himself—"or ought to stand, on the question of war."

When Upton Sinclair asked Debs to endorse a statement he had drawn up on preparedness, Debs turned him down cold: "Any kind of an army that may be organized under the present government will be controlled by the ruling class, and its chief function will be to keep the working class in slavery . . . the workers have no country to fight for. It belongs to the capitalists and the plutocrats. Let them worry over its defense, and when they declare wars as they and they alone do, let them also go out and slaughter one another on the battlefields."

DEBS SENSED the necessity of rearming the socialist movement in the light of the treachery of the war socialists. He called for a new international movement where "those so-called socialists who prefer nationalism to internationalism must never be given another chance to betray and destroy the movement." On the home front, Debs wanted to bury the past disagreements with DeLeon's SLP because of that organization's anti-war position, and make a common front against the war danger.

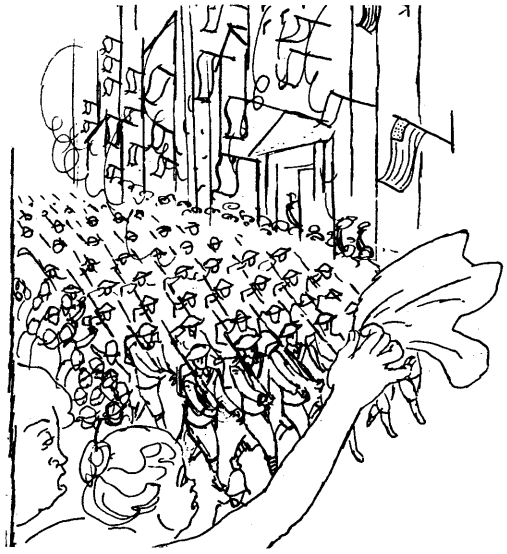
As usual, his instincts were remarkably sound, and his basic positions clear-cut and true to the Marxist tradition. But, also, as was true from the foundation days of the Socialist Party, the control of its affairs was not in the hands of Debs or of his supporters. Consequently, he could swing the party in his direction, if at all, only by the tortuous methods of moral suasion. He actually managed to pressure the party leadership into appointing a negotiating committee which met with the SLP to discuss unity, but for one reason or another, the project fell through. But on his basic approach, powerful world events came to his help.

The outbreak of the war in Europe and the collapse of the leading socialist parties had aroused the American ranks as nothing had before. A wave of indignation passed through the membership, and with that grew their suspicion of their too glib and smooth-tongued right wing leaders. In the ensuing year, they learned that not all the European socialists had hopped on the bloody bandwagon, that Liebknecht and others had fought the good fight, and that attempts to rebuild the movement and redeem the honor of socialism had been made at Zimmerwald in 1915.

The left wing, which had been crushed in 1912, slowly began to come to life again under new leadership in the fight against war and for adherence to working class internationalism. The *International Socialist Review,* the organ of the old left wing, began to sharpen up its anti-war stand. In Ohio, Charles E. Ruthenberg, who stepped forward as an important left-wing figure at the 1912 convention, was fashioning the Socialist Party organization into a tightly knit left-wing formation. In Boston, a left-wing grouping called the Socialist Propaganda League issued a searing denunciation of the opportunist socialists who had succumbed to jingoism. The virtually autonomous foreign-language federations, which several years later were to play a leading part in the fight between the Left and the Right, were enlarging their influence in the party, and contributing to its more militant tone. The membership figures of 1915 already show their strengthened position. Whereas in 1912 the language federations accounted for less than 16,000 members out of a total party enrollment of 118,000, in 1915 between 25,000 and 30,000 were in the language federations out of a total membership of 79,000.

WILSON was re-elected to the Presidency in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." But this was strictly electioneering demagogy, and it was soon obvious that America was moving full steam ahead towards war. Before the year was out Congress set up a Council of National Defense and an Advisory Commission to clear the decks for action. The Commission was staffed with such watchdogs of the public interest as Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Guggenheim and George Pope, president of the National Association of Manufacturers. Gompers, the AFL head, accepted the chairmanship of the Labor Committee of the Advisory Commission, and on March 12, 1917, he called together all the main trade-union wheels to line up the labor movement behind the war machine. The conference solemnly avowed: "Should our country be drawn into the maelstrom of the European conflict, we . . . offer our services to our country in every field of activity . . . and call upon our fellow workers and fellow citizens . . . devotedly and patriotically to give like service."

Now was revealed to the full the frightful ability of the modern capitalist state to fan a community into a frenzy of hate, and to cajole, trick, threaten and whip an unwilling population into the holocaust. Opposition to war ran very deep. Many important unions, the Miners, Ladies



Garment Workers, Western Federation of Miners, Typographical workers, refused to have anything to do with Gomper's pro-war pep-rally. John P. White, president of the United Mine Workers at that time, wrote Gompers: "I see no humanitarianism in the present war. In my broad travels I find little sentiment among the working people in favor of this terrible war." Senator LaFollette in his philippic against the war resolution, declared that if its supporters dared to submit the issue to a referendum they would be defeated by a vote of ten to one. "The espionage bills, the conscription bills, and other forcible measures which we understand are being ground out of the war machine in this country are complete proof that those responsible for this war fear that it has no popular support." But the unorganized opposition of the people was not enough and on April 6, 1917, the United States was pushed into the bloody fray.

THE NEXT DAY about 200 delegates gathered at the Planter's Hotel in St. Louis in an emergency convention of the Socialist Party. The gathering tide of insurgency had blown up into a storm in the party ranks after the March 1917 revolution in Russia swept the Czar and his minions from power, and Hillquit and most of the right-wing leaders were forced to bend before it. The left wing distrusted Hillquit and Victor Berger, however, and wanted to destroy their influence in the party for all time. Their spokesman, Ruthenberg, telephoned Debs in Terre Haute to come to St. Louis and help them. But Debs, in line with his conduct over the years, absolutely refused to take part in the convention. Not even the war was going to change his individualistic way of operating. Ruthenberg refused to take no for an answer, and one night two carloads of delegates drove the one hundred and fifty miles to Terre Haute to put the case to Debs in person. The trip was made in vain. Debs insisted that he had already stated his position and now it was up to the delegates to make the decision.

For four days the convention Committee on War and Militarism argued and wrangled. Finally on the fifth day, Hillquit began reading to a tense session the majority report, written by a sub-committee of himself, Algernon Lee and Ruthenberg:

The Socialist Party of the United States, in the present grave crisis, solemnly reaffirms its allegiance to the principle of internationalism and working class solidarity the world over, and proclaims its unalterable opposition to the war just declared by the government of the United States . . . we call upon the workers in all countries to refuse support to their governments in their wars. The wars of the contending national groups of capitalists are not the concern of the workers. The only struggle which would justify the workers in taking up arms is the great struggle of the working class of the world to free itself from economic exploitation and political oppression . . . our entrance into the European conflict at this time will serve only to multiply the horrors of the war . . . it will bring death, suffering and destitution to the people of the United States and particularly to the working class. It will give the powers of reaction in this country the pretext for an attempt to throttle our rights and to crush our democratic institutions, and to fasten upon this country a permanent militarism. . . . We brand the declaration of war by our government as a crime against the people of the United States and against the nations of the world.

The document closed with a seven-point platform calling for "public opposition to the war through demonstrations, mass petitions, and all other means within our power," for the socialization and democratic management of the big industries and "of all land and other national resources now held out of use for monopolistic or speculative profit," and for "vigorous resistance to all reactionary measures."

AS THE report was a compromise between Hillquit and Ruthenberg, it contained no direct reference to the jingo socialists except by implication. With all of that, the St. Louis declaration was a magnificent document, and its flaming passages inspired socialists throughout the country to renewed struggle and resistance. It was doubly impressive because it was a challenge thrown into the teeth of the rulers after war was on, and not a rhetorical play-acting at militancy such as the synthetic SP leftists indulged in in 1936, only to forget their declamations once war was declared.

140 delegates voted for the majority report. A minority anti-war resolution introduced by Louis Boudin, which varied very little from the majority one, received 31 votes. John Spargo, who presented the sole resolution to go along with the war, received only five votes. In the party referendum, the majority resolution was endorsed by the similarly overwhelming vote of 21,000 to 350. Thus, the party declared itself in almost unanimous fashion as militantly against the war.

The left wing further drove home its advantage by having the convention repeal the so-called "anti-sabotage amendment" to the SP constitution with which the right wing had clubbed Haywood and others out of the party after the 1912 convention. Events had taken a full turn of the arc, and now the left wing had the majority of the membership behind it.

(*Next Issue: The Split In The Socialist Party*)

One Year of the American Socialist

Our Opinions space this month is given over to a number of appraisals of the American Socialist *on the occasion of completion of its first year of publication. Where the names of organizations, churches or publications are provided, these are for the sole purpose of identifying the contributors. The editors add some thoughts of their own at the end of this section.*

BAIRD— MUST UNDERSTAND SOCIALIST POSITION

AS A subscriber to the *American Socialist* for the past few months, it is a privilege to be able to recommend it to other clergymen. In my opinion there has never been a time in the history of this land when it was so necessary for a fearless voice to be raised that unqualifiedly endorses socialism. This magazine is an answer to that need; not that as clergymen we should espouse socialism; but rather that if we are to fulfill the role assigned to us by the World Council, we must of necessity understand the position of those who do. How better can this be done than by the continued appraisal of a magazine like the *American Socialist?*

Unless we are making an honest effort to understand "the other side," have we any right to pray for reconciliation? As an antidote for our natural prejudice, it seems to me that regular reading of this magazine should provide just what the doctor ordered.

William T. Baird
Minister, Essex Community Church, Chicago

BELFRAGE— CO-OPERATION ON THE LEFT

IN CONSIDERING recently what American publications I would want to receive if for some strange reason I were removed from these shores, I thought of about half a dozen of which the *American Socialist* would be one. I think of it as a magazine which consistently stimulates me whether or not I agree with it; one whose clear, simple style betokens the kind of editorial blood, sweat and tears which I especially admire; written by people whose brains are active and who think before they push the keys.

I welcomed the initial statements by the editors of their dissatisfaction with the political sterility of groups with which they had been associated in the past. To my mind they have kept their promise of by-and-large criticizing what most needs criticizing and of working to broaden mutual understanding among progressive groups. At a time when there are so lamentably few American publications which can remotely be called progressive, the *American Socialist* can do much valuable work outside the scope of the handful now existing. America does not need more bad radical publications, but it does need more good ones provided that their emphasis is on co-operation on the Left.

Cedric Belfrage
Editor, *National Guardian*

DAVIS— A DEVELOPING BODY OF SOCIAL THEORY

WE WELCOME the *American Socialist* on its first anniversary, partly because it is a fine socialist magazine, but especially because it is a sign—and we hope a source—of ferment on the American Left. More than ever, the strategy and tactics against fascist-tending reaction need rethinking. The New Deal liberalism of the 1930's is now a tradition, not a program. No party that accepts capitalism can permanently free us from the chronic threats of war and depression. Socialism is the only answer. Where does that leave us?

Socialism has now triumphed in two major countries, Russia and China. We have much to learn from them, but we can copy neither. Nowhere do we have a ready-made model for constructing socialism in an advanced industrial nation. As historical conditions differ from one country to another, so the policies of socialist movements must differ too. Marxism properly viewed is not a rigid dogma, but an ever-developing body of social theory and a guide to social action.

This means simply that we must assess our situation as realistically as possible in order to apply our limited influence most effectively. Although individuals and small groups do not cause great historical changes, they may capitalize upon the basic social currents, if their insightful and concerted action is brought to bear at critical points. The great leaders of socialism—Marx and Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao—were active agents of decisive social movements. They had a profound grasp of the history and conditions of their own societies, a mastery of Marxism, and a genius for combining theory and practice—for improvising creatively. As the American crisis intensifies and the people stir, these qualities will become increasingly necessary—and potent.

Magazines like the *American Socialist* have an important role in analyzing the social scene and posing all sorts of constructive questions on the policies of Left groups. Literary effort by itself, of course, will never bring us socialism. But publications with objective reporting, original interpretation and critical independence are surely indispensable to every socialist movement.

This role the *American Socialist* admirably fulfils. Its avoidance of sectarianism and its labor articles are especially notable. Perhaps we may hope for more long-range analyses of Left prospects in America, and (in the light thereof) some attention to problems like a critique of Left publications, possible tactics for a united front, and similar organizational matters. We look ahead to future anniversaries of the *American Socialist* with promise.

Prof. Arthur K. Davis
Calais, Vermont

GOLDBERG—
SOCIALIST CRITICISM AND THOUGHT

I AM DELIGHTED to answer your request for a comment on the first year's effort of your publication. Though I have seen only the last four issues, I have been thoroughly pleased with them. The major contribution, it seems to me, has been in the field of labor analysis, where the information (especially about the Detroit area) has been detailed, analytic, and completely fertile in suggestion. In fact, the recent discussion on automation and its effects—along with the picture of fairly uncreative thinking by trade union leaders—was a masterpiece of contemporary analysis. The reviews of books, in the hands of such able commentators as Deutscher (whom, I recall now, you reprinted), are quite rewarding.

I am pleased that your concern is with socialist criticism and thought—not with the repetition of atrocity stories. Occasionally, however, you tend to include a little too much sterile optimism about the glorious days to come. Let them come—but let us devote our thinking and scholarship to sound, productive hypotheses and actions. If there is an understress, I think it on international events, particularly in the colonial world (what of the African, Middle Eastern, and Asian blows for socialism?). Do continue the historical pieces, however.

Prof. Harvey Goldberg
Ohio State University

HOLCOMB—
MENACE OF TOTALITARIANISM

YOU ASK for an appraisal of the *American Socialist*. I must say that I have had little time actually to study it adequately to make a documented appraisal. My impression upon scanning it from time to time, however, is that it is a propaganda house organ (nothing wrong with that) whose editors are quite expert, but myopic about the menace of totalitarianism from the Left—and by "Left" I mean Communist agents, not democratic socialists.

I commend you for introducing dissenting voices into your "Opinions" pages. I daresay those pages are well-read. Too few magazines these days actually foster the competition of ideas honestly: you seem to be doing a little of that. I'd like to see more.

George B. Holcomb,
Editor, *International Woodworker*

LOCKWOOD—
ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT PRESS

I WOULD like to add my congratulations to a successful first anniversary. The role of the independent publication was never more important than today.

As defense attorney in the "security risk" cases of Milo J. Radulovich and others, I realize the great contribution that the independent press has made in the field of civil liberties and basic human rights.

It needs to be continuously pointed out that on most fundamental issues there is little difference between the Democratic and Republican parties; that neither appears interested in a realistic foreign policy or in building a sound domestic economy based on peace rather than war.

The few in this country have the wealth and position but the many have the votes. It is, therefore, the continuous job of the few to pull the wool over the eyes of the many by every conceivable means. And what a tragically successful job they have done.

If only there was some way to vastly increase the circulation of publications such as the *American Socialist* so as to provide the public with facts and not propaganda; with courage and good will and light, rather than hatred, dissension and blind reaction.

I trust the *American Socialist* will be with us for many years to come.

Charles C. Lockwood
Attorney at Law, Detroit

McAVOY—
A NEW PARTY BASED ON LABOR

THERE HAS been an unfortunate tendency in certain Left circles to regard any criticism of policy, strategy and tactics on the Left as tantamount to renegacy. This is a very unhealthy state of affairs.

American liberals and radicals owe it to themselves and to the causes for which they stand to welcome the widest kind of free and honest evaluation of their policies. It is refreshing that the *American Socialist* has consistently upheld the right of freedom of speech on the Left as well as in the other sectors of the political scene.

The *American Socialist* has been remarkably free of doctrinaire pronouncements and opportunist tactics which can only lead to further isolation of the Left from the people. Your attention to trade union problems and to a realistic approach to independent political action should help greatly in the very difficult task of forming a new genuinely independent political party based on labor.

I hope that your magazine will appeal to a consistently widening circle of readers and that you will continue to seek ways and means to reach the thousands of rank-and-file unionists who are looking for militant aggressive political leadership and who are fed up with the anti-working class and politically bankrupt policy of "coalition."

Clifford T. McAvoy
Vice-Chairman,
American Labor Party
New York

McWILLIAMS—
THAT FINE WORD "SOCIALIST"

MY CONGRATULATIONS to you and your colleagues on the first anniversary of the founding of the *American Socialist*. I have read it from the start with consistent interest and respect. It is good to see that fine word "socialist" used in a public, unapologetic manner. It has been encouraging too, to note how carefully you have avoided the snide red-baiting and petty sectarian bickering which has made a wasteland of American radicalism.

Carey McWilliams
Editorial Director, The *Nation*

POLSON—
WE NEED AN ORGANIZATION

WITH THE *American Socialist* as a publication I am well pleased. It is much needed. But, in my opinion, we cannot rest there. We need an organization, a party such as we had the year that Debs polled close to a million votes. It took a war to stop the march of socialism. Without a revival of such a party the cause cannot be advanced. The pale Norman Thomas brand is a farce.

The year Debs polled that unprecedented vote, I lived in Boone, Iowa, where I polled a thousand votes as a candidate for Congress on the Socialist ticket. I introduced Comrade Debs to an audience of 1,200 in the Boone Opera House. Those were the days.

I repeat, I am well pleased with the *American Socialist*. How can we rally behind it most effectually?

Carl Polson, Pastor
Congregational Christian
Community Church,
Brule, Nebraska

STONE—
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

I DON'T always agree with the *American Socialist* but I find it a breath of fresh air on the Left, which often appears to be a closed room fetid with Lilliputian pro- and anti-Communist splinter politics.

I. F. Stone, Editor and Publisher,
I. F. Stone's Weekly

WESTON—
NEED FOR REALISTIC OPTIMISM

MAY I EXPRESS my warmest greetings and most appreciative salute to the *American Socialist* on its first anniversary!

For many people, there have been three ways in which a socialist or radical magazine could approach the public: First, it might veer way over to the Left and present an extremist, revolutionary approach and nothing more; second, it might veer over to the Right and present a respectable, broad and "liberal" approach; or, third, it might strive to hit the middle of the road between these two.

All three of these approaches are wong, and the real success of the *American Socialist* is that it rejects all three of them. Learning from the great school of dialectical philosophers, stemming from Heraclitus down through Hegel and Marx, the *American Socialist* combines the vigor of a fighting Left socialist magazine with the breadth of approach which enables it to keep in touch with the events around us and thus keep the ear of the people. In other words, instead of choosing between the three choices, it boldly snatches the first two as its own, and unites both these two in a dialectical fashion.

Had this kind of leadership in socialism existed in the halcyon days of the Progressive Party, a million Progressive Party voters might not have gone from enthusiastic euphoria into the depths of the kind of disillusionment that recently saw one of the last sections of the Progressive Party—the American Labor Party—wiped off the ballot.

What the radical section of the American public needs today is neither wild euphoria nor bitter cynicism, but *realistic optimism*. This, the *American Socialist* is prepared to provide, in my opinion.

SOCIALISM does not have to wait for a "more favorable climate" to be proclaimed.

Even in this period of relative prosperity, there is a threat of war, a threat of unemployment, and a threat to man's creative freedom which impels and must impel many people to seek solutions for the problems induced.

In the first six months of 1954, major crimes increased 8.5 percent over the first six months of 1953. Meanwhile the population increased only two percent. Although precise figures are difficult to obtain, it is the almost unanimous opinion of psychiatrists that mental and emotional disturbances are increasing more rapidly than population. The same thing has been true for the extreme of mental-emotional disturbances, suicide.

Capitalism is not just some economic system in the abstract, which, when functioning well provides happiness

and when malfunctioning produces the war and unemployment which leads on to socialism. Capitalism, even when it provides relative peace and relative full employment, is a heartless, uncultured system (in its advanced age) which grinds spirits to distraction with its cut-throat competition, which dumps millions of people in the huge, uncared-for cities into the sewers of abject loneliness, which pits races and nationalities and religions against each other, and continues in these "normal" times to do all manner of evil.

Only if we consider capitalism in *all* of its manifestations, only if we present the answers not only to unemployment and war, but also to racial discrimination, cultural frustration, sexual and marital disruption, loneliness, fear and confusion in all its many forms under capitalism, can there be a basis for "realistic optimism" and for a modest socialist growth even in these "normal" times.

Such is the task of American socialism today, and such is the task which I believe the *American Socialist* has already set about to fulfill.

Hugh Weston
Minister, First Parish
Universalist Church
Saugus, Massachusetts

THE EDITORS— WHERE WE STAND

WE WISH to thank all those who responded on the first anniversary of our publication. We are appreciative of the encomiums, and will give serious thought to the critical comments and friendly suggestions. We have a definite point of view and are intent on presenting it. But we do not consider ourselves infallible, nor as possessing the monopoly of the sole and complete Truth. Like others, we are trying to learn.

As is clear from our year's work, we are not publishing a magazine as an end in itself. On the contrary, we view it as part of the preparatory work of building a mass socialist party in the future, the gathering together of part of the cadre, and laying some of the foundation stones of its program, outlook, attitudes and methods of work. This implies that no socialist mass movement exists today—which is a truism—but also that none of the existing organizations are the vehicles for such a party.

The Communist Party, despite its having been the mainstream of American radicalism for the past three decades, has lost out, in our opinion, as the leader of a coming resurgence. Not because it bears the brunt of the present persecutions and terror; on the contrary, that is to its honor, and could redound to its benefit when the political climate begins to change. But because its lack of independence and uncritical acceptance of all things Russian, and its intolerance and brutality toward all other labor groups, its recurrent Browderistic opportunism and gyrations, have damaged its standing in the public eye of the labor movement. And it is from here that must come the forces for a new renaissance. The Norman Thomas branch of socialism—what is left of it— is thoroughly opportunist, and wrong on practically all the great issues of our time. The small left socialist groupings are hardened into sterile sects and weighed down with anti-Russian phobias. What then can be done in an organizational way?—this is the question many of our readers have been putting to us.

America is passing through, as we know, a most reactionary period, and the times are not propitious for the starting of new organizations. The forces, the cadre, the mass following and influence are all still lacking, and will not come into being before labor has undergone new considerable experiences, and thrown up a left wing inside the unions. That is why we believe that educational work is the most important thing that socialists can do today to help forge a cadre, and to hammer out some of the theoretical and programmatic bases of the coming movement. Any attempt to prematurely launch new parties or the like would only discredit the idea and delay its actual realization.

THE WITCH-HUNT, coming after a decade of war prosperity, has reduced the socialist movement to small proportions and restricted it to elementary pioneering tasks. But this coin has its reverse side. The troubles and difficulties of the Left have forced many people to put on their thinking caps, and begin reviewing the experiences of recent years, how to make up for the lacks, how to correct the mistakes. We believe that a definite advance has been recorded in socialist thinking as exemplified in the writings of a few of the Left publications. We believe that this work will help educate a new socialist cadre which will play an important role in the forging of a new movement when the proper time comes. We are convinced that even preliminary to that, we will witness a growing unity of the Left forces, as old prejudices are discarded and agreement on essentials is realized.

As many readers have recognized, the *American Socialist* is more than a magazine. It is a point of view, a program; and that remains true even though we open our pages to those who differ with us. Our point of view is Marxian Socialist but not dogmatic or sectarian; working-class but not narrowly anti-intellectualistic; friendly to the Soviet bloc as the form taken by developing socialism in one portion of the world, but independent of it, and critical of its shortcomings and deficiencies. We propose that American socialists, while learning from the socialist experiences of other parts of the world, shall not become slavish imitators or uncritical adulators of movements and methods which would be a detriment to us, or apologists for oppression wherever it occurs. The rebirth of Western Marxism, and especially in England and the United States, will undoubtedly take place with the firm avowal of adherence to the preservation and extension of democratic rights, and the promise that socialist governments will give the people more, not less, political democracy than they have enjoyed under capitalism.

We begin our second year confident that we are making a contribution to the achievement of the above goals. We are grateful to all our friends who made it possible to establish *The American Socialist,* and hope the coming year will see progress, at least in a number of preliminary steps, on the socialist path.

American Radicalism—Present and Future

A Symposium

The following symposium took place on Tuesday, Nov. 16, 1954, *on the campus of the University of Minnesota, under the auspices of the Socialist Club. The three participants were James S. Robertson, an official of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party prior to its fusion with the Democrats in* 1944, *who is now State Secretary of the Progressive Party; Mulford Q. Sibley, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, author of an award-winning book, "Conscription of Conscience," on the treatment of conscientious objectors during World War II; and Bert Cochran,* American Socialist *editor.*

The discussion was chaired by David Herreshoff, secretary of the Socialist Club. Mr. Robertson, who was ill, sent his speech in to be read by the chairman.

The Socialist Club recently sponsored the appearance of Mrs. Helen Sobell on the campus. The discussion aroused by her visit is reported elsewhere in this issue.

These speeches are reproduced from transcriptions made at the symposium and corrected by the participants.

The Progressive Party

James S. Robertson

WE FORMED the Progressive Party six years ago in protest against the bi-partisan cold war and witch-hunt which threaten to put an end to the liberties and lives of the American people. We hoped that the people would see in the Progressive Party a real alternative to the joint Democratic-Republican program of militarism abroad and intolerance at home. Like the Populists and Debs Socialists before us, we have worked to build a third-party movement into a major force in American politics. Like our predecessors, we have had to fight the doctrine of the lesser evil.

We formed the Progressive Party as a coalition of two rather loosely defined currents. The Wallace Democrats composed one wing of our organization at the outset. They were people with strong intellectual and emotional ties to the American *status quo.* A large number of American radicals composed the other wing of the party. They were people with roots in the labor movement, the Negro community and other minority communities, and among the farmers. They were people whose status and political traditions gave them little or no material or emotional stake in the preservation of the American capitalist *status quo.*

The program of our party inevitably reflected its coalition character. It included nothing unacceptable to the Wallace right-wing. It was a program of reforms to be effected within the framework of the capitalist system. Wallace himself stressed the reform character of the program in his advocacy of "progressive capitalism."

Cold war and hot witch-hunt put the party and its program to a severe test. But the Korean War put the coalition which had formed the party to an unbearable test. Confronted in the Korean crisis with the necessity to chose between capitalism and progress, Wallace and his personal followers chose capitalism. They abandoned the party and sought reconciliation with the Democrats. The radical wing of the party chose progress, firmly refusing to sanction U.S. intervention in Korea. Gideon's Army proved to be made of sterner stuff than Gideon. The Progressive Party emerged from the Korean crisis a smaller but more homogeneous movement. It had ceased to be a coalition. It survived as the strongest organized expression of the American Left. It remained a party of capitalist reform in name and formal program only.

THIS WAS in 1950, and at this juncture I. F. Stone offered us a wise and friendly suggestion:

> *The Progressive Party,* Stone wrote, *under current conditions of hysteria can hardly elect a dog-catcher outside of New York. This weakness can be its strength. It has nothing to lose by being honest. It is down to bed-rock. People who are still Progressives are too tough to be frightened off. Many of them are old-time Populists, Wobblies, anarchists, Socialists, or Communists who know the score better than their leaders. Others are thinking youngsters more likely to be held and attracted by a vigorous radicalism than by phony talk about "progressive capitalism" . . . I plead for a strong infusion of Socialism into the anemic veins of the Progressives.*

We did not accept Stone's advice but instead sought a solution in the opposite direction. We modified our program to make it less radical than it had been in the first place: we eliminated the proposal for nationalizing key industries which had been a plank in our 1948 platform. This step proved to be no solution at all, since we continued to lose strength. It was an attempt to win support from people who are not ready to accept a radical program. But people who believe that mild palliatives can cure the ills of our society find it more logical to turn to the Democratic Party than to us. I believe the Progressive Party would be in a stronger position today if we had listened to I. F. Stone.

There is still time and opportunity

for us to become an avowedly socialist movement. If we do, we can play a vital educational role in preparing in these difficult times the next upsurge of American radicalism. In terms of human resources and tradition we are better equipped to perform the task of socialist education than any other radical organization in America. But if we let slip the time and opportunity which is within our grasp, some other organization will have to accomplish the necessary task.

The Progressive Party is at the cross-roads. The alternatives are clear: either we become the rallying center of the American Left, the best exponents of an independent farmer-labor party and the most persuasive advocates of the socialist society, or we succumb to lesser-evilism and become a new edition of the ADA, a despised and hopeless left flank of the Democratic Party. At the cross-roads I hope we will take the turn to the left.

Role of Illusion

Prof. Mulford Q. Sibley

THE FIRST question, it occurs to me, that we should ask ourselves is what we mean by this term "radicalism," and as I shall use it, it means a questioning of the fundamental basis of contemporary society and a viewpoint which would see fundamental problems existing in the contemporary policy and economy of the United States. Not mere problems involving tinkering or minor changes but problems which we think involve major alternatives or major changes. The term "radical" refers to root, of course. And radicals, generally speaking, try to get at the root of what they think the major problems are, rather than at the surface of things.

Now this is a very general statement and obviously much depends on how you apply it in particular instances. But roughly speaking, it seems to me that the American public today is operating under or within a series of illusions and I'd like to look at the problem from this point of view; that until these illusions are dispelled, the hope for American radicalism, the hope, in other words for a fundamental questioning of foundations, is rather remote. And when I say the American people operate under the illusions, I mean almost every segment of the American people, including the trade unions, with a few exceptions. That is, there is a cultural tendency in contemporary United States to operate politically within the framework of this series of illusions which I now mention.

The first is the illusion that there is any basic distinction between the two major parties. The whole election campaign recently was conducted, it seems to me, on the theory that there was some fundamental distinction. That there was a significant distinction between the two—all the analyses in the newspapers seem to point that up. The intensity of emotion which was aroused by the campaign both in Minnesota and nationally seemed to imply that it would make a difference if the Democrats control Congress as over against the Republicans, or vice-versa. And it is this illusion which I'd like to question. There is no fundamental distinction between the two major political parties as parties. Now, there are important distinctions, undoubtedly, between persons, let's say, within the Democratic Party like Senator George and Senator Humphrey. But the point I'm making is that as parties, as Democrats or as Republicans, there is no basic distinction between the two. Both of them accept, as do the American people, the set of illusions which I am about to comment upon.

The first illusion that both accept is one notion that a modern war as a last resort is an institution which can accomplish social and political good. This is the assumption that lies behind most of the comments of statesmen in both parties. This notion I not only question but deny. Modern war cannot achieve democratic ends or revolutionary objectives, you see, and by and large the American culture accepts the notion that, "as a last resort," it can.

SOMEONE might say, yes, but only as a last resort—but no one accepts it as a first resort. I'll defy you to find one person out of two and one-half billion inhabitants of the world who would say: "As a first resort, I want to go to war to solve social and political problems." Everyone says it's the last resort—true. But what I'm questioning is whether it's realistic even to accept it as a last resort.

Basically, the whole structure of the American economy today is tied to preparation for war. Our politics are dominated by war and preparation for war. That war is efficacious is an illusion, it seems to me, which must somehow be eliminated before there will be any prospects for American radicalism, because so long as we believe that national war can accomplish revolutionary ends, or even protect the so-called democracy that exists in the world—and there is some democracy in the world—as long as we are under that illusion, we will be tied to the logic of a war order and will be helpless to do anything fundamental about other issues.

Now there is another illusion, and that is the illusion, it seems to me, that there are very many "anti-welfare-staters" in the United States. Most of American culture accepts the "welfare

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The successful appearance of Mrs. Helen Sobell on the University of Minnesota campus has led to a discussion of the right to unrestricted free speech at that university. Mrs. Sobell is campaigning in an effort to get a new trial for her husband, Morton, who was convicted of "conspiracy to commit espionage," and to get him transferred out of Alcatraz to a different federal prison.

Mrs. Sobell, invited to the campus by the Socialist Club, was approved as a speaker "with some reluctance" by the dean of students. The *Minnesota Daily,* campus paper with the world's largest college circulation, strongly approved her right to speak, saying: "Socialist Club will be the loser if Mrs. Sobell's speech is merely a personal harangue," and ran a large story on the Sobell case. The meeting was attended by about 200 students, 30 of whom signed a petition on behalf of Sobell.

As an aftermath, the Socialist Club has initiated a move to get all restrictions on invited speakers removed. This view was also strongly expressed by Professor Mulford Q. Sibley and instructor Michael Scriven in letters to the student paper.

state" as a matter of fact—defining the welfare state as meaning a kind of hodge-podge of social security supported by regressive taxation and some intervention in the economic order; some haphazard experiments like TVA but without any overall systematic planning scheme. I'm suggesting that 90 percent, even of the two major parties, accept this notion, and the notion that the Democrats are welfare-staters and the Republicans are non-welfare-staters in this sense of the term is of course an illusion.

AS A matter of fact, our politics today, it seems to me, are frequently turning on minor issues. They're turning on issues such as how much additional social security shall a person get, five dollars or seven-fifty. This is not a major issue. This is what I mean by talking about superficial issues. They're turning on issues like this because basically both parties and American culture in general accept the "welfare state" as I defined it, but do not accept socialism; both reject anything that smacks of socialism.

Adlai Stevenson suggested in 1952 for example, that he was explicitly against the socialization of medicine and the socialization of law. But they all accept the welfare state in the above sense of the term, and about all they have to quarrel about is minor details of the welfare state—seven-fifty versus five dollars and so on. Moreover, they both accept the warfare state, as I said before, which makes their necessity to quarrel about minor things such as General Eisenhower's honesty or Adlai Stevenson's dishonesty (in the narrow sense of those terms) all the more imperative.

And thus we live in a world, in an American world, it seems to me, politically, where public discussion centers on either irrelevancies, such as how many communists did you dig out of the State Department last month, or trivialities. Those are the two kinds of issues that we're discussing primarily in the United States, today.

Now I suggest in summary that we're discussing issues on this trivial superficial basis because we are in the possession or in the grip of the illusions which I have mentioned. Now, you can argue which comes first, the chicken or the egg. In other words, do you dispel the illusion first, or do you change your attitude and then dispel the illusion. I can't go into that question now. But contemporary politics is associated predominantly with the illusion that war, the institution of modern war, can accomplish something of a revolutionary democratic nature.

Secondly, with the illusion that there is any fundamental distinction between the two major parties.

Thirdly, with the illusion that there is some fundamental opposition to a "welfare state" as defined a moment ago, as a kind of hodge-podge of haphazard collectivism with a large dose of traditional capitalism. There is universal assent at that point.

The result is that the debate in American politics today goes on at a very superficial level and I include in this statement not only the so-called representatives of capitalism but the so-called representatives of the labor movement as well, with a very few honorable exceptions. Until these illusions can be dispelled—eliminated—we will continue to see in American politics a constant discussion of irrelevancies or trivia.

Conditions of a New Radicalization

Bert Cochran

I WAS very appreciative of the remarks of Mr. Sibley. I am sure most of them must be right as they coincide so closely with my own.

The radical movement is at a very low ebb in America. It's a well-known fact to anyone, I am sure, that's at all acquainted or interested in these matters. And the reasons for it, in my opinion, are not mysterious either. They stem from two main causes.

First, I would put the fact that America has enjoyed a long period of unexampled prosperity. And when to that was added this wicked witch-hunt, the two have proven well-nigh impossible to resist, and have broken up the progress of American radicalism.

Now, I want to ask, can this be considered a temporary ebb in the fortunes of American radicalism, or do you have to assume, as so many claim, that this is the definitive drying-up of a movement that is not relevant—that's the correct sociological term, I think—to the solution of the problems at hand. In my opinion, the latter could only be true if the American system were able to provide a minimum of security and comfort to the people. Instead, I see that the economy began teetering in 1950, was only lifted up by the Korean war, and began wobbling again a year ago as that war was brought to a close. I see that we are in the worst wave of reaction in this country's history and that war and the danger of war, militarism and armaments, eat up a progressively greater part of the substance of our wealth and have become the daily accompaniments of modern living.

"The New Creep"

And so I don't believe the system can avoid a new resurgence of radicalism in America, because it can't maintain stability as a going proposition. The economic laws which have operated ever since capitalism became dominant are still operative. I don't mean to imply that we're approaching another 1929-type depression very soon. There will be many attempts to avert an economic downturn through increase of armaments, as many American policymakers fear another depression. Many of them are not too sanguine of the ability of the system to survive a blow of that character.

But armaments are a very poor solution. Today, the American economy is propped up by a $45 billion annual

war budget. At that, it cannot maintain full employment. Besides, it is an unproductive form of economy, and progressively lowers the living standards of the population. Further, the pressure of a growing military power is upon the whole of society, and you have a garrison state bearing down heavily on our traditional democracy.

IT'S INEVITABLE, under these circumstances, that America is going to have a revival of radicalism to give expression to people's resentments, aspirations and needs. Can these aspirations find adequate expression, or can they even be channelized successfully, through the existing political machinery?

As we know, the Democrats have made a bit of a comeback, and unless something very dramatic and untoward occurs in the next year, their recent election victory probably presages an even more definitive one in 1956. Can this in any sense be considered a victory for liberalism, not to mention leftism or radicalism? Can it be conceived in terms of a return to something analogous to Roosevelt's New Deal?

It would be the biggest mistake to think so, or to base any plans or projects on that eventuality. The New Deal expired back in 1938. It exhausted its mission as a reform movement. From that year on Congress was ruled by a reactionary coalition that blocked even the mildest reform measures and began adopting onerous, reactionary legislation. As the two parties went into the second World War, they became virtually identical patronage machines.

I would say that there were three basic issues of great concern to the American people in this past election, with all other important questions more or less subsumed under them. I would put first the question of war or peace. I would name as second the question of civil liberties and democracy or McCarthyism and police-statism. I would define the third as welfare statism or back-to-Hooverism.

On the first one, there is no difference at all between the major parties. It's so obvious, I won't belabor the point. I'll take for granted that it will be accepted.

On the second proposition, some people had an illusion that the Democrats were a bit more liberal. But the illusion was dispelled when, led by your swift-talking banner-bearer in the Senate, they grabbed the ball away from McCarthy and began running down the field so fast, it's still questionable whether McCarthy will be able to catch up with the so-called Democratic liberals. On the issue of civil liberties, the witch-hunt, the preservation of traditional democratic rights and constitutional freedom, the two parties showed that the only possible debate between them was which was slightly more reactionary than the other. Probably in a fair race they would carry off equal honors.

That brings me to the last point: welfare statism. Here I don't have quite the same nuance or slant as Mr. Sibley. I don't believe welfare statism is an accepted proposition in America at all. I can't view it that way when the powers-that-be have imposed the Taft-Hartley law, are in some places again trying to physically destroy unions, and fight like tigers, as they did in the Twenties and Thirties, over every penny or two wage increase.

ADMITTEDLY, this is not the America of the Twenties. Even Eisenhower accepts some measure of social security legislation. But that's not due to a change of philosophy. It's a question of different times and the necessity for Tory politicians to attune themselves to the new social line-ups. Why, even an old weather-beaten Tory war-horse like Churchill supports a whole lot of social legislation and welfare statism in Great Britain, because you simply can't operate in British politics today unless you pay lip service, and make some actual obeisance to it, because the people's will is so strong for it, and their organization is so powerful, they can break politicians and parties who avowedly turn their backs on it.

I think that's true of the leading capitalist statesmen today. Their philosophy hasn't changed, but they have to attune themselves to the times. Eisenhower can't just make speeches in the grim fashion of Hoover. He's even had to hire an actor to ginger up his television personality a bit so he appears a bit more sincere and humanitarian to the American people.

But even on this issue, where the Democrats are supposed to be the welfare statists and the Republicans are supposed to be the Tories, they've got this diabolical combination at work, whether by design or accident, where, in the event of a Democratic victory, the Dixiecrats and reactionaries take over most of the powerful Congressional committees, effect a coalition with the Republicans, block all progressive legislation, and push through all the reactionary laws, as they have done since 1938. Recall that the witch-hunt was started under Truman, not under Eisenhower. So, we're back to where we started from, and a Democratic Congress doesn't even mean the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law.

There are, in my opinion, great issues confronting the American people, but they can't break through the existing political forms as yet, and they certainly can't find expression through the existing political machinery. That's why you have this unholy confusion, this field day of demagogy, with electioneering reduced to a combination of pettifoggery, name-calling, cursing, cheap tricks and lack of any real debates.

LABOR, in my opinion, is the only basis in America for a new political realignment. Not because workers are smarter, or better-educated, or have superior blood in their veins, but because labor is the only social force on which a realignment can rest. But labor is tied to the Democratic Party today. It is committed to the war program, and is very hazy about civil liberties. The AFL, in an heroic attempt to give good marks to the politicians it wanted to support, didn't even put this bill outlawing the Communist Party on its list of test votes, so they wouldn't have to give demerits to these liberal heroes they were asking the workers to back. The only thing labor has been progressive and clear on has been some laws on the welfare-statist side.

Labor is very well organized politically, however. In this last election where the Democrats just shoe-horned in by narrow margins, labor delivered a tremendous bloc of votes in all the big industrial cities; a massive display of power, cohesiveness, discipline and organization. But labor will not be able indefinitely to keep the allegiance even of its own unionists on the basis of its present politics, and it certainly can't rally its natural allies—the minorities,

the Negro people, the unorganized workers, the white-collar wage-earners, the professionals and intellectuals—who could be won over to a broad program of leftism and social advancement in America.

But I believe that the very organization and the very victory will force through political realignment. Because labor will necessarily become outraged at the unfulfilled promises. It will necessarily feel that it's been played for a sucker. Will it swing back as it has so many times in the past to the Republican Party? I rule that out. It is a truism in labor circles that the Republican Party is the party of Big Business and reaction. That is why I think the disillusionment, which will necessarily come from the facts of life themselves, will be the precipitant that will urge labor forward to blaze a new trail. I envisage a split from top to bottom in this monstrosity—the Democratic Party which unites the Northern labor movement with the most reactionary section of American society, the Dixiecrats—and the creation of a new political force, resembling in some rough fashion the Labor Party of Britain.

A LABOR-PARTY development of this kind will witness a rebirth of radicalism as a by-product. I see a whole lot of radicalization because radical groupings arise more quickly than a big, massive labor party movement, which is held back by the conservatism of the unions, where political policy is often reduced to the lowest common denominator of its mass. Radical pioneering movements will be in part precursors and in part by-products of the massive labor-party movement.

I believe that development will represent a fresh wind that will dispel the present fetid and oppressive political atmosphere. I believe it will bring new vigorous struggles in the American scene, as awe-inspiring in their breadth and as momentous in their implications for human progress as the issues which were dramatized when the Republican Party came on the scene a century ago. I believe that the terrible regression into thought-control and police-statism is a passing phase of American history, and that when it has run its course, the clouds will be swept away, and mankind will go forward in its never-ending quest for a happier life.

Will the Turn Be to the Left?

Discussion

After the talks, the following panel discussion ensued. Mr. Michael Scriven, who participated, is an instructor in philosophy at the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Sibley: I have one or two questions. I think they're interrelated. Obviously, I'm much more pessimistic than Mr. Cochran about the labor movement turning radical. And the question I should like to put is this:

Presumably, the objective situation must be ripe before the labor movement turns radical. The economic situation must become much worse than it is now. I think we would agree with that. And that in turn would lead presumably to an elimination of many of the illusions that I think we agree are present in the public mind. But suppose, for example, you have an indefinite prolongation, as it seems to me to be entirely feasible, of a war economy for the next generation, or, alternatively, as it's sometimes argued, that both Republicans and Democrats are taking over Keynesian economics of some variety or other, and keep the economy going through a vast program of public works of some sort. I'd like to get your comments on either the first possibility or the second.

Mr. Cochran: I don't believe in the possibility of Keynesian economics being practiced except in its armament form. I don't believe the ruling classes would permit it.

Mr. Sibley: Do you mean economically or psychological? There would be a difference.

LABOR'S DAILY

Mr. Cochran: I don't think capitalism can or will permit it because it means building a rival economy which in time would upset its own private economy, and capitalists will not willingly and peacefully commit suicide. But I do believe in the possibility of Keynesianism in the armaments sphere; and it may be for a generation—who knows?

Now, that will affect the labor movement more gradually than a swift and dramatic economic crisis, and the labor movement being slow-moving and conservative, will react more gradually. But I don't believe it has the choice of reacting or not reacting at all. We see the same process at work in the civil liberties field. For years the unions tried to ignore police-statism. They weren't interested in civil liberties for radicals, communists, socialists. When this latest law was passed, the AFL paper had a headline: "AFL Not Affected." Which, first, wasn't true; and even if it had been, it was quite a flaming civil libertarian banner! But that is roughly the approach—I'll not deny that. I've worked in unions too long not to know it. But the labor leaders can't ignore the problem, as unions are already starting to choke.

The "right to work" laws are cutting in, the NLRB is cutting them to ribbons, especially the weaker unions, Taft-Hartley makes new organizations virtually impossible—to the point where the officialdom is quite concerned. Consequently, they are far more civil libertarian this year than they were a couple of years ago.

An armaments economy keeps people working. It will keep the unions afloat. It doesn't have quite the catastrophic effect of huge unemployment, but it eats up the substance of national wealth and lowers living standards. Now, change will come more slowly if that's the process, and it well may be so. It will in that case take longer for the unions to become more radical, but that's the only difference.

Mr. Sibley: One final footnote question. Might they not react in the direction of what I would call a fascist

dictatorship as easily as in the direction of what we might call democratic socialism?

Mr. Cochran: I know that many people are worried about that. I don't think it's correct to put the question in that form. I believe that when critical times come to America there will be many reactionary and fascist outcroppings. McCarthyism is a warning of that. But the labor movement as such has to be an opponent of these reactionary movements as a matter of life and death. What happens in a social crisis is a polarization of society, rather than the great mass moving in a rightist direction instead of a leftist direction. There will be a great polarization with the labor forces, by and large, swinging towards the Left. It means that America is in for stormy social developments.

Mr. Sibley: I agree that you believe this, but I'm not at all clear why you think the situation should be different from the situation, say in Italy or Germany, when the strong man offered social progress for the labor unions in return for political support. We will have to give arguments for thinking that if right-wing elements with a good deal of power can offer a lot to the labor movement, they are not going to get labor support.

Mr. Cochran: I'm not sure that your statement or implication of what happened in Italy or Germany is right. In both countries you had very powerful labor movements, socialist movements. In the case of Germany, socialist and communist movements. The countries were on the verge of civil war. By and large the labor movements were anti-fascist. The fascist movement drew its main support from the middle classes.

There was a great convulsion and contest, and in both cases the labor forces lost out, or flunked out, as the case may be. That was the way fascism took power.

Hitler started in Germany in 1922. He carried on a ten-year struggle, and there were many contests as to who would win. It wasn't a simple matter of a strong man offering his candidacy for dictator and the nation snapping it up and putting him into leadership.

I'm not trying to give an answer as to the fate of America in an overall sense. I'm speaking of the next period, and I say if social times become critical, as I believe they will, and social tensions grow, there will be a great polarization on the Right and on the Left. There will be a great contest between the two, without now trying to guess at the outcome of a contest of that nature.

Mr. Scriven: I'm prepared to drop the Italy and Germany case. What interests me though is whether you think that the labor forces are the only way by which we can get there: why you're so confident that it will be to the Left rather than to the Right. So far, the only reasons that you've given for a socialist shift, it seems to me, are reasons of expediency in economic situations, roughly. Now on the grounds of those there isn't much to choose between a strong but repressive state and the more liberal democratic type of state. I myself would prefer other reasons for expecting one rather than the other, and I would hope for those reasons to become decisive. In terms of expediency, I don't see it, and if the labor unions are merely interested in an efficient solution to the problems then I don't see any reason to think they'll go one way rather than the other.

Mr. Cochran: Well, so you don't take me too far afield, I'll just say that every labor movement in the world has been associated with the Left thus far and we are just going to have to assume that America is not going to break that rule. I'm speaking of Left in a very general sense.

Mr. Scriven: This is the expression of a very nice hope, but it seems to me that to some extent, in politics at the moment, the move of the labor unions is to the right, especially with the TUC [Trade Union Congress] in England.

Mr. Cochran: I don't know what you mean by that. A very powerful left wing has been formed in the British Labor Party led by Bevan, and the party is in the throes of a big struggle between the left and right wings. I wouldn't call this overall development a movement to the right. I don't see how it can be defined that way at all. I would classify it in the opposite sense.

Mr. Sibley: . . . You may be right about the labor unions becoming independent as a domestic political movement—this may or may not be true, I don't know. . . . But it seems to me, the crucial issue is, what would such a movement's attitude to wars be? Will it swallow the patriotic and nationalist mythology, as it continues to do all over the world? Or will it emancipate itself from it? And I'm very uncertain.

Mr. Cochran: If I may, I think you are trying to answer too much.

Mr. Sibley: Maybe I am, yes, but it seems to me that this is one of the immediate issues. It seems to me that whether labor becomes an independent political force or not, is a secondary question.

Mr. Cochran: No, not entirely, if I may, for this reason. The British Labor Party was conservatism personified, for years and years. Its present right-wing leadership has a Tory policy on foreign affairs. And in the domestic field it's trying to end the nationalizations, and pretty much call it a day; consolidate—to use their expression—the gains achieved. So from a formal point of view, you might say, well, the distance traveled between the present and support of the liberals in the past has been very slight. And yet I don't believe that's true. For this reason. Once labor formed its own party and gathered around it the liberal forces of the nation, it was in a position to learn, to draw lessons as a mass movement and to advance, in a way that it could not do before. Witness the impressive left-wing movement as a reaction to the war danger and German rearmament.

I'm sure American workers as individuals are not so different from British working men. Yet you don't see any comparable development here. In America today, the official trade-union movement speaks for State Department policy. There is no appreciable group inside the labor movement voicing a contrary policy. Because, tied to the Democrats, they're not in a position to draw lessons quickly, and learn. That's the great virtue, in my opinion, of an independent party. Even though its formal program may not be too basic at first from a socialist viewpoint.

Mr. Sibley: Its very existence develops political consciousness.

Mr. Cochran: Develops, or at least helps.

A Review-Article

Theory, Common Sense, and the American Tradition

by Harry Braverman

AMERICAN THOUGHT; A CRITICAL SKETCH, by Morris R. Cohen. The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1954, $5.

THIS IS a book which it is a pleasure to recommend. Although a Marxist finds much to disagree with in Professor Cohen's viewpoints, there is no question that this book is one of the most edifying and informative products of liberal thought in America. Professor Cohen was, up to his death in January 1947, one of the most learned and brilliant of all the liberal critics of capitalist society. He did the work for this book in the late Thirties and early Forties, so that it conveys the fresher breezes of another day, before cold-war conformity and heresy-hunting put the quietus on so many liberals, or made Sidney Hooks of them.

The book is a nine-chapter sketch of the background and chief trends in American thought in each of eight fields: history, science, economics, politics, law, religion, art and philosophy. Its 332 pages encompass a vast fund of information about thinkers and theories. Professor Cohen, a penetrating observer and critic, is able to delineate the chief trends, without which an account becomes a morass, and to bring to bear a sharp and at times astringent eye upon his material. Thus his work is not to be read for mere learning, but for critical acumen as well. His book, on a smaller and less ambitious scale, does for some of the fields he surveys what Vernon L. Parrington did for liberal thought in the area of American literature.

Professor Cohen opens with an introductory chapter on "The Background of the American Tradition," which, only ostensibly a "background" chapter, is mainly devoted to scourging the American business morality and ideology from the standpoint of liberalistic humanism. While one may differ from the standpoint, it is hard to derive anything but enjoyment from the gusto with which the whip is laid on, the accuracy with which it finds its mark, and the acid wit with which the lashes are tipped.

If Professor Cohen is armed with the strength of American liberal thought at its best, he also displays some of its most common weaknesses. There is a certain breaking point in liberal thought as it leaves the past and moves into the present. In the past, social and ideological trends were shaped by basic social and economic forces; thus far the more solid of the liberal thinkers take us. But as they approach current problems, they begin to shift over to idealist and utilitarian ground. Thus one finds oneself divided between a past in which social forces determined the direction of development, and a present in which men are to find their way by the guidance of sweet reasonableness. By the light of superior intelligence, men will quite simply determine what *should* be, instead of, through scientific examination of society, coming to an understanding of what *can, must* or *will* be.

Social theory must aim to approach the achievement of physical theory: to learn to change society by first understanding the social process, and from this extracting the necessities and possibilities of social development open to us, and the forces which must be strengthened on the road of progress. This form of social theory is practically absent from the official academic world, and it is hardly surprising that it is missing from Professor Cohen's book. But the merits of his descriptive and analytic work in the realms of the past certainly remain intact despite this shortcoming.

ALTHOUGH never expressly stated as the theme of the book, there is a single unifying idea that runs through every portion of it: the characteristic of American thought is its emphasis on the practical and its anti-theoretical bias. Repeatedly, Professor Cohen refers to the "subordination of the theoretic to the concrete," to the mentality "which glorified the 'hustler' and 'go-getter' and deprecated devotion to anything which was not immediately practical." "The prevailing temper of American life," he wrote, "remains pronouncedly anti-intellectual."

"The vaunted American love of technique," Cohen points out, "is restricted to practical machines and instruments. It does not embrace a love of the technique of intellectual analysis. Ideas—social, political, or legal—do not receive anything approaching the same analytic attention as a new motor or radio set."

Wherever he turns, Cohen finds this same characteristic. "Though American experience in lawmaking (and lawbreaking) has been extraordinarily rich in novelty and diversity, our contributions to legal philosophy have been impressive neither in quality nor in quantity. . . . The legal profession as a whole . . . still proudly professes to despise theorists and doctrinaires. . . ." Turning to architecture, Cohen notes the "seemingly national disinclination or ineptitude for general reflection." He speaks of the "thinness of reflective thought on music." In religion he finds "the systematic disparagement of learned theology and excessive emphasis on the type of emotional religious experience that is associated with re-

vivalism in the camp meeting." Political theorists have been marked by a "failure to develop an original and vigorous political philosophy," while philosophy itself displays an "intellectual anemia" which was even noted by De Tocqueville over a century ago.

The entire matter is best summarized in Cohen's description of the U.S. as a country "which, under the leadership of captains of industry and finance, worships a narrow practicality and acts as if theory could be safely ignored, if not despised."

It is clear that Professor Cohen, in seizing upon the thin practicality, the disdain for theorizing and generalized thinking, the opportunistic immediacy of American thought, has singled out its single most important and distinctive feature. "To be called a mere theorist is to be damned," he remarks, and the epigram strikes home. The best known and most influential of American philosophers have even erected the method of "no theory" itself into a theory, and, whatever subtleties and intricacies the various systems of pragmatism may have, they in the end reduce themselves to that common denominator.

THE CHIEF reason for the special cast in American thought are not hard to deduce. The formation of modern institutions in Europe was a complex and tortuous process; an intricate web of forces, counter-forces, actions and reactions. Modes of thinking corresponded; hence the great founts of social, religious, scientific and artistic thought, and the constant concern with the tools and techniques of thinking. The turmoil of change, adjustment, evolution and revolution—all built upon the massive heritages of the layers of the past—was most conducive to the burgeoning of speculative and theoretic reasoning and to salvaging the usable parts of classic Greek and medieval thought. The circumstances of Europe were such as to give rise to an all-sideness of thought, as well as to a preoccupation with the question, Why? alongside the recognition of the existing fact.

In America, the ground was almost clear of the heritages of the past. The country has, from the beginning, known one major and predominant social order, in appearance most "natural" and ordained by reason and right.

Unlike Europe, fighting its way through a thousand years of obscurely based institutions and customs, America and its institutions presented a fresh and secure appearance. The relative simplicity of American social evolution did not encourage the questioning of first principles, but led to their acceptance as natural dogmas. Such great social and political struggles as did occur never developed extensive independent ideologies, but scraped by with warmed-over scraps from Locke, Sidney and others.

In the major stretches of American time, the magnificent opportunities for the expansion of capital formed a broad highway. America's rapid capital-accumulation process did people's thinking for them, and the trappings of European speculative thought seemed to have been cast off for good in favor of the obvious truths of common sense. Apart from a brief period when Hegelian idealism had a dilettante vogue in the colleges, very little was known and almost nothing accepted of the rich theoretical heritage of Europe. The fancy-Dan theorizer was mistrusted; everyone worth his salt was up and doing.

IN A section devoted to the pragmatism and instrumentalism of John Dewey, Professor Cohen takes exception to these traditional American attitudes from a rather curious standpoint. He stigmatizes Deweyist thought for its zeal and fervor in the search for a practical application for all thinking, and he defends the right to "useless theory" primarily on the ground that, though useless, it is enjoyable, relaxing, broadening, and can be advantageous to humanity as an avocation even if no help to our vocation.

Clearly, this form of reply to the pragmatists suffers from yielding almost the entire argument at the outset. Cohen does not, however, restrict himself to this. At one point, he remarks that "genuine philosophic work. . . . frees us from the charnel house of petrified complacencies." This suggests a far more fruitful line of thought.

The most vaunted boast of common sense, that it is not "dogmatic," is its least justifiable claim. Common-sense thinking, as distinguished from theoretical generalization, does have certain merits and strong sides, but freedom from dogma is not among them; common sense fastens itself upon the mind as the most rigid and unquestioned of dogmas, the dogma of "what I see before my eyes." Its hold is all the more tenacious, and often pernicious, in that its victim does not see himself as the captive of the iron fetters of common beliefs, sanctified through endless repetition and guaranteed against challenge by the forces of social intolerance and conformity. He thinks that

Comments on the American Scene

The complacent assumption that commercial success always means superior intelligence is peculiarly American, though history shows that our men of wealth have often been distinguished above all for their sheer ruthlessness rather than for versatile intelligence.

* * *

Unlike any other, the American university is organized on the model of the factory. The board of trustees corresponds to the board of directors, the president is the factory superintendent or manager, and the professors are the hired men or help. But in this case the hired men are genteel. Unkind critics have referred to the American professor as a member of the third sex; but John Jay Chapman puts the case more piquantly when he says: "The average professor in an American college will look on an act of injustice done to a brother professor with the same unconcern as the rabbit who is not attacked watches the ferret pursue his brother up and down through the warren. . . . We know, of course, that it would cost the non-attacked rabbit his place to express sympathy for the martyr; and the non-attacked is poor, and has offspring, and hopes of advancement."

* * *

Mankind has been ruled by soldiers, clergy and lawyers, and now the businessmen control.

* * *

American latter-day nationalism is . . . due to fear—fear of new political and social doctrines abroad in the world today. Shall experiments now being made in foreign countries invade the United States? Shall principles of social philosophy other than those of a strictly business civilization flash upon American minds and grip American hearts?

Morris R. Cohen,
"American Thought."

in accepting "what everyone accepts," he is merely bowing to the indisputable evidence of his senses. The common-sense theory-despiser doesn't understand how usage and custom can stamp objects with special qualities that are not inherent in them: can make every black man "appear to be" a slave, every product of labor "look like" it is a commodity, the two-party structure seem to be a natural and fixed system.

The starting point of every great scientific advance has been a break in the iron ring of common-sense thinking by a bold new generalization which at first appeared to contravene natural facts and relationships. In every case, *the very first and basic principles were critically examined and modified;* and that is the chief function of theory.

"But," the pragmatist will interpose, "I do not deny this. I am not averse to theorizing, but I advocate that we limit it to tentative hypotheses which we can test in practice, and I claim that anything which I can't test in practice is not worth talking about."

Here we enter upon that realm of apologetics in which all differences become obscured by cautious qualifications. It can hardly be denied that the ultimate test for theory is experience. The pragmatist, however, while conceding the need for theory, in practice proves by his own works and influences that he has made a purely verbal concession. The fact is that the pragmatic outlook finds theoretical work wearisome and unrewarding, stifles and discourages it, pays no attention to how it is to be done, and, most important of all, fails to provide tools suitable to any but the most rudimentary theoretical tasks.

CORSETED in the outlook of narrow practicality, the pragmatist often scoffs at the most striking achievements of theory in a way that stems plainly from an inability to comprehend them. An example is in order. Marx founded his economic system upon the labor theory of value. To the pragmatic mind, a theory of value should be simply a theory of price. Hence, finding that Marx' theory could not tell him, except in general terms, the price of sugar or bonds, the pragmatist flies into a towering rage, and exorcises the labor theory of value as a piece of "useless" and "mystical" theorizing. In the grip of pragmatism, even some socialists have felt constrained to abandon Marx and base their economics on the charts and equations of the marginal utilitarians.

In reality, Marx' theory of value pursues a far deeper, more subtle and more potent purpose than the determination of the price of commodities, which are in any case easily available to any observer in the market place. Through this theoretical postulate and its ramifications, Marx laid bare the economic structure of capitalist society, its characteristic social relations, its basic tendencies and the inner contradictions. In their anger at not getting from Marx a price theory which could be "verified" at the grocers, the pragmatists failed to notice that he supplied a rounded theoretical structure of vast scope and implications, which has been receiving over the past century the most brilliant verification ever accorded any social hypothesis. While they fumbled nearsightedly for their glasses he built a giant telescope.

In a burst of pique, Max Eastman, the well-known foe of all theorizing outside of the *Readers Digest* variety, once put Marx to the final test and declaimed that he was a failure because he had to be supported all his life "like a baby." Every pragmatist to his taste in tests; Eastman certainly stands by the most common and typical of American pragmatic standards.

American socialists have not escaped the anti-theory climate to which Professor Cohen alludes so often. It is a striking fact that, in a country which has thus far given to socialists more time and opportunity for a basic defense of their theory than for the practise of it, the writings that can lay claim to any lasting theoretical value are very few.

Even more disturbing is the failure of American socialists to cope with the major trends of American social, historical, political, economic and philosophical thought. Most of the polemical material by socialists in this field has been of the most shallow and vulgar kind. Witness a recent "Marxist" book against pragmatism the central idea of which is that pragmatism is the fitting and characteristic mode of thought for imperialism because it holds that anything which works is justified. ("Pragmatism; Philosophy of Imperialism," by Harry K. Wells.) Such vulgarized and immature work is really nothing but the traditional American thinness of thought dressed up in pretentious phrases, and would be comic if not for the damage it does to the reputation of Marxism.

WILL American socialism deepen its thinking and begin to perform top-quality theoretical work in the future? On the whole, this reviewer sees no strong grounds for optimism in expecting rapid improvement. Socialists in this country are severely limited by their environment, by the capacities of the customary audiences (an American intellectual reads *Life,* and is taxed to exhaustion by an average copy of the *Nation*), by our own habitual limitations and training. The American climate of thought, changing slowly though it may be as specialized national traits are leveled by the force of great international pressures, will not rapidly become hospitable to theory.

Still, a certain minimum of creditable work is indispensable to give a more serious foundation to the American socialist movement, and there are grounds for expecting some improvement in the future. It cannot be denied that the present socialist and even the labor movement stand on a higher level of understanding now than in the pre-Depression days. Through a process of gradual accretion, our picture of ourselves and of our class and our country has become considerably clarified. Many small contributions by socialists as well as by academic and journalistic liberals have added up to this better understanding. In the next periods of radicalization, the fresh forces of youth and intellectuals who turn to Marxism will be able to base themselves upon the rich and variegated experiences of labor and the Left over the past two decades. There are also signs here and there of a more conscientious attitude towards their theory by socialists at the present time.

To close by returning to Professor Cohen: His book, with all in it that socialists would take exception to, is a fine contribution to the understanding of American thought in its development under our special social conditions. It should be read by serious students, and it should take its place as a helpful reference work in its field.

BOOK REVIEW

Partition and Poverty

INDIA SINCE INDEPENDENCE, by Robert Trumbull. Foreign Policy Association, Headline Series, 1954, $.35.

THE PARTITION of India which resulted in the formation of Pakistan in 1947 (considered by many Indians as Britain's "last stab in the back"), was accompanied by incredible dislocations and suffering. Over 12 million Muslims and Hindus were caught up in forced population transfers. As a result, the "impoverished and desperately unhappy refugee population on both sides is bitterly critical of authority and forms a highly inflammable element in the body politic." So writes Robert Trumbull in his well-written and informative little booklet.

Partition has caused intense economic disruption. East and West Pakistan are separated by a thousand miles of Indian territory! Pakistan was arbitrarily given the best food- and jute-producing areas, with India retaining most of the industrial resources. Prospects of greater economic independence thus received a severe set-back, a result which was not unanticipated by British interests. Ensuing conflicts, such as those over Kashmir and joint waterways, contributed to keeping passions inflamed. Recent American military aid to Pakistan has considerably aggravated the situation.

INDIA'S new constitution took effect in 1950. The first general election, held during 1951-52, saw the governing Congress Party rejected by over half the voters, and the emergence of the Communist Party as the most powerful single force in the opposition. The weakening of the Congress Party reflects an increase in social struggle and the crystallization of political consciousness in India, and goes far to explaining many of Nehru's seemingly ambiguous policies. Mr. Trumbull, who is the *N. Y. Times* correspondent in New Delhi, puts it this way:

"The Congress was an amorphous organization, including members of every shade of political opinion. When the original mission of gaining India's independence was accomplished, the binding force in the Congress began to weaken, and numerous stalwarts broke away to form their own parties."

In addition to the Congress and the Communist Party in the election, there were the Peasants, Workers and People's Party led by Acharya J. B. Kripolani, the Socialists under the leadership of J. Narazan (both former members of the Congress left wing), and a great number of local, religious and radical candidates. The holding of the election, an extraordinary event that involved more than 60 percent of an electorate which is 88 percent illiterate, helped to raise Nehru's prestige throughout all of Asia.

Perhaps because of the limited scope of his booklet, Mr. Trumbull does not go very deeply into the reasons for the success of Communist united-front policy. He observes rather vaguely that "in the Southern states, where there was a combination of incompetence in government, an exceptionally high rate of literacy, and the most oppressive poverty in India, the Communists revealed extraordinary strength."

In spite of the government's professions of regard for political rights, according to Mr. Trumbull "New Delhi has dealt more harshly with Communists than any other government in the world. The party was outlawed from time to time in various states, and several thousand Communists have been summarily jailed without trial under public safety laws."

THE CENTRAL FACT in Indian life is the poverty of the population. Mr. Trumbull is quite outspoken on this subject: "Most Indians exist in a foggy economic ghostland somewhere between starvation and bare sufficiency. The average *per capita* income is less than $60 a year. The average adult as of November 1953, was subsisting on one-half to one-third of the internationally recognized caloric intake for a working individual. . . . The word *famine* has been ruled out of the official vocabulary, to be replaced by *scarcity.*"

A feudal land-tenure system, marked by *zamindar* (landlord) oppression, religious hatred, and as yet unchecked natural disasters such as floods, are among the causes which continually force large numbers of peasants to the cities in search of work in the relatively few industries, and to the large plantations. Added to the considerable number of educated Indians that are seeking jobs that can be furnished neither by the government nor by industry, this has resulted in "a tremendous unemployment problem . . . such statistics as there are indicate that only one job-seeker in every five is being placed. . . . The *Eastern Economist,* an authoritative serious weekly, estimates that the army of persons looking for work is increased by 3.5 million new recruits every year."

To palliate the situation, the government has initiated a Five-Year Plan which depends to a considerable extent on United States assistance. The author, unlike other observers, omits to point out that this dependence on foreign capital has domestic repercussions, exerting powerful pressures upon the administration. It is of great interest, in this connection, that the recent "Shroff Report" by Indian industrialists insists that private enterprise in India is being stifled by government nationalization and labor policies which make the country a hazardous field for capital investment.

Mr. Trumbull's appraisal of Nehru's foreign policy is rather sketchy. He concludes that "it appears that while Nehru is often critical of American methods, he is in full sympathy with Washington's motives." He also finds that "Nehru's policy toward Communist China is apparently motivated by a desire to see Peiping break away from Russian influence. He is convinced that this will eventually happen. In fact, he believes that even today there is more concern over China in Moscow than in Washington."

This booklet suffers from several important shortcomings: The impact of the Chinese Revolution on India is hardly hinted at, no mention of the Indian labor movement is made, and the reading list, presumably prepared by the Foreign Policy Association, is inadequate. It is regrettable that this volume does not achieve the inclusiveness of an earlier one in the same series, "Restless India," by Lawrence K. Rosinger. Mr. Trumbull's little book, however, is useful as a popular introduction to a subject of great complexity and immense political and social importance.

F. G.

Politicians of Crisis

AMERICAN DEMAGOGUES: The Twentieth Century, by Reinhard H. Luthin. The Beacon Press, Boston, 1954, $5.

MR. LUTHIN has chosen a fascinating and important subject for investigation. Unfortunately, his theory of history is puerile, and his method is totally inadequate, and so he has botched the job. Before he is through, every possible type of political figure has been tossd into the book: William Jennings Bryan; the old agrarian populists like Ben Tillman and Tom Watson; their degenerate offspring in the South, Bilbo and Eugene Talmadge; backwoods reactionaries of the type of "Alfalfa Bill" Murray of Oklahoma and "Pa" Ferguson of Texas; Northern machine bosses as Curley of Boston and Thompson of Chicago; Huey Long, the fascist precursor; Marcantonio, the New York leftist; and McCarthy, the "communist-killer."

Apparently, the main rule governing the selection was to include those political figures who deviated from the author's notions of proper statesmanship, and what that is can be quickly gauged from Allen Nevins' favorable introduction to the book. The result is a series of disconnected and pedestrian biographies of a dozen unrelated individuals.

The emergence of McCarthy has focused attention on the problem of "peoples' politicians" who employ non-parliamentary methods to achieve their goals. A genuine sociological study of the Thirties and the type of political figures who came to prominence at that time would be rewarding, and throw light on the present, because the Thirties was a period of social crisis. Due to the essential strength of American capitalism, the crisis was resolved by the mild reformism of Roosevelt's New Deal. But throughout the period, as the system

was disintegrating at the edges, there occurred a political polarization of society.

On the Left, the CIO swept the mass production industries. This elementary radicalism saw its counter-part in laborite politics, epitomized by the rise of Marcantonio and the American Labor Party in New York, Floyd Olsen and the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota, and Upton Sinclair and his EPIC movement in California. Concomitant with the emergent leftism was the rise of the pioneer fascist politician, Huey Long ("Every man a king"), to national prominence, the popularity of Father Coughlin, and the mushrooming of a fascist lunatic fringe.

These fledgling political movements, both on the left and the right, all withered on the vine when America entered the war period and the economy started booming. But they will re-appear again in new garbs and in more powerful formations when the current social dislocations deepen into a new crisis. That is why an analysis of the Thirties from this viewpoint has practical urgency. Luthin's book can only supply some raw material for such a study.

B. C.

Food and Revolution

THE WHITE MAN'S DILEMMA, by Lord Boyd Orr. The British Book Centre, New York, 1954, $2.25.

LORD Boyd Orr writes: "This, then, is the white man's dilemma. He can attempt by force to maintain military and economic supremacy, in which case he will be involved in an almost worldwide disastrous war, worse than Korea, the final outcome of which will be the downfall of Western civilization. On the other hand, he can . . . use his present industrial supremacy to develop the resources of the earth to put an end to hunger and poverty . . . in which case he would lose his superior power. This is a hard decision to make."

Boyd Orr, who has been Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, tends to look at the world in terms of population and food. It is not a bad way to look at it, and far less deceptive than the vagaries of the academicians and the sloganeering of the propagandists. Food is, after all, an accurate index to progress or the lack of it. "It is not without significance," Boyd Orr writes, "that in the Lord's Prayer, the petition for our daily bread has priority even over the petition for the forgiveness of sins, a fact worthy of consideration by the Churches."

The majority of the world's people is today considerably worse off in respect to food and nutrition than 15 years ago. ". . . the average diet of the whole population of the world is worse today than it was in 1938. Before the last war 25 percent of the population of the world had over 2,700 calories per head per day. Now only 20 percent have that amount. The percentage getting less than 2,200 calories has risen from 40 to 60. The amount of animal protein in the diet gives a good indication of its nutritive value. Before the war 25 percent of the world population had over 30 grams per day; now only 20 percent have that amount."

Boyd Orr points out that even if all the plans and estimates, like Point Four and the Colombo Plan, make good on their goals, food production two years from now will still be ten percent per capita lower than in 1938. And he adds: "If this is the best that can be done . . . there is little hope of halting the spread of Communism in Asia, especially if China, which claims to be achieving a rapid increase in food production, manages to reach its target of a 30 percent increase in the next five years and 100 percent in ten years."

THIS book takes a careful look at the Malthusian specter of population growth outstripping food supply and cites the factual material to dispel it. Population will continue to increase throughout the world for quite some time, until birth control education scales families down throughout the world as it has in the West and among well-to-do Asians. But peak population at that time is not expected to exceed four billion, as against today's total of about two-and-one-half billion. However, "there seems no reason to doubt the estimate made by agricultural experts, that if modern improved methods were applied to all the land at present cultivated or grazed, the world supply of food would be doubled, and if known measures were taken to increase the area of the earth under cultivation by irrigation, bush clearance, and other measures, the earth could support a population of six billion. It is doubtful whether the world population will ever reach that level."

Boyd Orr then poses an excellent question and answers it succinctly: "One might well ask why it is, then, that two-thirds of the population of the world are short of food. The reason is that, in recent times at least, food production has never been geared up to full speed. The target in Western civilization has been, not the amount needed to supply human needs, but the amount that could be sold at a profit. . . . If there were a world guaranteed market at a price which would yield a return on capital comparable with that of oil, which is said to yield 17 percent on capital employed, the world food shortage would not last long."

His program for the future appears to be simply to urge, and continue to urge, upon the capitalist West that it cease to act in accordance with the profit motive and begin to guide itself by humanitarian enlightenment. But his prediction for the future makes a little more sense. The target for governments, he says, must be the amount of food necessary to maintain health; and then he adds crisply: "Any government which does not take that target and try to reach it deserves to be, and ultimately will be, overthrown."

H. B.

Police-Minded Academicians

THE APPEALS OF COMMUNISM, by Gabriel A. Almond. Princeton University Press, 1954, $6.

A GREAT amount of research and investigation went into the writing of this book, which is the first of a series to be published under the auspices of the Center of International Studies of Princeton University. Extensive "depth interviews" were held with 221 former members of Communist parties of the United States, Britain, France and Italy. The author and his collaborators further interviewed a group of American psychoanalysts who had communists as patients. Other collaborators made content analyses of communist publications. Furthermore, special arrangements were entered into to carry out interviewing programs in England and Italy.

The net results are somewhat less than sensational. The back-breaking analysis of several of Lenin's writings produce such startling findings as the fact that in "Left Wing Communism," "less than 4 percent of a total of 764 references to the party and its members have to do with the ultimate objectives of the communist movement." Undoubtedly a significant discovery, although its precise point escapes us. Lenin's brochure was on the subject of tactics, not ultimate objectives! The chapter on "Esoteric and Exoteric Communication" struck us as equally momentous. A heroic labor of research to demonstrate that the approach of the *Daily Worker* was more agitational than the approach in the Cominform organ, *For a Lasting Peace, For a Peoples Democracy!*

Other sections of the book deal with the results of the lengthy interviews, where the attempt is made to determine why people join the Communist Party, what happens to them after they join, why some of them leave, etc. Of course, you cannot turn a squad of researchers loose without turning up some informative data concerning the work, behavior and makeup of their quarry. What is positively infuriating about a work of this kind, however—discarding the woolly college terminology, and smug assumption that "all's right with the world" and that the path for the "normal individual" is to adjust and fit himself into the existing mold—is that it is essentially a policeman's job. Priests are often considered the "spiritual police" of the regime in power. Our university folk are gladly taking on the job of "ideological police" for the *status quo*.

THE concluding chapter, which attempts to answer "what kind of policies and actions are likely to be effective" in fighting the enemy, is positively laughable. Its researches have taught the authors that most Communist Party members in Italy and France, in dropping out of the party, did not turn to the church, or to church-related

movements. Their expert advice therefore is as follows: "If the church were to follow the injunction of Lammenais and give up its privileges and protected position and really rest itself on the voluntary and spontaneous support of the people, the ugly issues of clericalism and anti-clericalism might be removed from politics, and a healthy coalescence of likeminded political groups take place." At another point we learn "that an effective anti-communist policy will facilitate economic and political changes abroad that will meet the grievances of groups which are now disaffected and susceptible to communism."

Such are the judgments of our Solomons, and this is the type of social science being produced currently at our centers of higher learning.

B. C.

America's Iron Curtain

THE GOLDEN DOOR, by J. Campbell Bruce. Random House, New York, 1954, $3.75.

ON December 24, 1952, the crew of the French liner *Liberté* which had just docked that day were expecting to go ashore and celebrate Christmas Eve. Instead they stayed aboard and celebrated the first day of the McCarran Act. Rather than submit to the antics of the newly unleashed inquisitors hot on the trail of subversion and vice, they declined on principle to answer the questions devised for such occasions by the Justice Department.

In the relatively short time that has elapsed since then, there has been a sufficiently varied accumulation of experience under this law to provide J. Campbell Bruce with rich material for his revealing study, subtitled "The Irony of Our Immigration Policy."

Mr. Bruce, an opponent of the McCarran Act, seeks to demonstrate through numerous examples of injustice and indignity suffered under the act that it is not directed at communists alone, but at every alien in or out of the country. As a matter of fact, this law shows more than other such measures how far thought-control can be carried under the pretext of fighting communism.

The most obvious case in point is the persistent harassment of intellectuals seeking visas to enter this country. The American consuls and minor officials abroad are given the responsibility of keeping people out of this country who "think wrong." Imagine their dread of being summoned before a Congressional committee if they should let someone of unapproved ideology slip through. To be on the safe side, they simply deny a visa to anyone who can think.

AS A RESULT of this fear of intellect, a number of Europe's most distinguished professors and scientists, invited to this country to lecture at our most respectable universities, have been denied visas. Five important international scientific conferences scheduled to be held in the U.S. were abandoned and held elsewhere. No further conferences are being scheduled here because of lack of approved participants. Roughly 50 percent of all foreign and 70 to 80 percent of all French scientists fall into the banned category, according to Mr. Bruce.

This bigoted policy tends to backfire, as in the case of a recent conference of scientists held in Canada, which was attended by West European scientists as well as Russians and East Europeans, while the American thought-police could only grind their teeth in helpless frustration.

The McCarran Act, consisting of 302 finely printed pages, containing provisions for the exclusion or deportation of every category of alien and some citizens, abolishes the statute of limitations. It is an *ex post facto* law that can prosecute retroactively not only for past violations of any present law but of any future one as well. And yet there are regulations stemming from the law, originating with the State or Justice Departments, which even go beyond the law. And if that were not enough, the regulations can be exceeded by over-zealous administrators. These revelations by Mr. Bruce do not merely show what is *possible* under the law. They point to what is going on *in practice.*

JUST WITHIN the past few weeks there have been many examples: Graham Greene, the eminent British novelist, enroute from Havana to England by plane, was detained in Puerto Rico and sent back to Cuba by American authorities to whom he admitted joining the Communist Party in his youth "just as a joke." He was forced to find his way back to England without violating American territory. Yma Sumac, the Peruvian singer who has been here for nine years, was mysteriously detained by immigration authorities after a recent trip out of the country. "Miss Greece" and "Miss South Korea," contestants in the recent "Miss Universe" competition, were denied visas for no substantial reason. (Secretary of State Dulles gallantly intervened for Miss Greece at the last moment.) There are a number of Chinese students not permitted to return to China because "they know too much." The Soon Kwak brothers are facing deportation to South Korea.

The law offers unprecedented prerogatives to individual officials. Ex-Senator Benton counted forty-one places in the act "where power to exclude or deport is dependent on the opinion of a consul, or upon the opinion of the Attorney General." Also, "there are sixty additional places in the bill where deportation or other action in regard to aliens, or even naturalized citizens, is dependent on the facts being established 'to the satisfaction of the consul' or the 'satisfaction of the Attorney General.'"

Mr. Bruce concludes that the cause for these police-state practices is to be found in the unreasoning fear of communism which possesses our legislators, plus a heritage of racism and bigotry. And yet in his proposed substitute for the law, he would include the banning of ". . . communist agents." Isn't this where we came in? Clearly, the police-state psychology has gone very deep.

M. A. K.

Guide to the ADA

GUIDE TO POLITICS 1954, *edited by Quincy Howe and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Dial Press, New York,* 1954, $2.50.

THIS BOOK was prepared under the auspices of Americans for Democratic Action in an effort to win support for their point of view in the November elections. It lists fourteen issues confronting the American people, with discussions on these problems written by public figures.

The position taken by the editors is that the independent voter is decisive, and that he will determine the outcome of the elections. Now that the election is over, the point cannot be argued one way or another; since the results were indecisive, it can be said the independent voter didn't know where to turn. The ADA, obviously, didn't swing too much weight.

While as an election instrument the book was of limited value, it contains enough information on key questions to be worth having on your shelf. An article by Senator Wayne Morse on public power and the big grab sponsored by the Eisenhower administration is informative. Morse sees the issue as between private enterprise and monopoly, rather than between the people and private corporations; but nevertheless, his exposure of government machinations to despoil public resources for the profit of monopolists is worth reading.

On many other issues statements by such political figures as Senator Lehman and Averell Harriman, Leon H. Keyserling and Chester Bowles, give us a more extensive record of their views than we customarily get in the press.

Harriman, for example, spells out his opinions on foreign policy. He is for more armaments, and more cooperation with allies, because "we consider it better to resist the enemy in Korea and Germany than to wait until he can organize the world and fight it out with us on our own soil. . . ." This, we presume, is the "liberal" approach to peace and war.

Schlesinger expresses the liberal view on civil rights: "The situation cries out for a little less hysteria and a little more common sense," says he. While recognizing that the "frenzy for absolute security" is "placing a premium on yes-men, eunuchs and dimwits" and has imposed "an atmosphere of caution and fear on our intellectual life," his program boils down to a witch-hunt on a more respectable basis.

This book cannot be recommended to serve the function claimed by its title. It is rather a handy sourcebook of the ADA philosophy with all its faults.

J. G.

Literary Desert

PERSPECTIVES USA, Number Eight. Intercultural Publications Inc., New York, 1954, $1.50.

PERSPECTIVES USA is a pretentious cultural publication financed by a grant from the Ford Foundation. It is issued quarterly, and in addition to the U.S. edition, appears also in British, French, German and Italian editions. The paper and printing are of first class quality, the advisory board glistens with names eminent in the world of letters, and, according to its statement to the reader, the grand purpose of the whole enterprise is "to further friendship and understanding among peoples of all countries through cultural exchange."

If its basic aim is to provide an understanding of American cultural perspectives, then the publication is singularly ineffective. It is not that it is without interest. One can read in this issue a scholarly, somewhat Victorian sketch of "The Young Man Washington," by the well-known historian Samuel Eliot Morison, some fair poetry by Wallace Stevens, a clever one-act playlet by Tennessee Williams, and a rather informative article on the background and development of the American skyscraper by a staff member of the Museum of Modern Art. What the periodical lacks is precisely any sort of perspective. It doesn't seem to stand for anything in particular, it does not convey any picture of a literary trend or trends in America today. In this, it probably can be said to mirror the lack of direction and purposefulness of present-day American letters.

The ideological emptiness of the current crop of literature has been remarked on by many critics. John W. Aldridge concludes his recent literary survey in the *Nation,* with this frightening statement: "Integrity implies the existence of a standard to be maintained, and its loss the existence of a temptation to which it can be sold. The irony and terror of the writer's dilemma today are that the question of his integrity can no longer be raised. In the name of what can he hold out? To which temptation does he have anything left to sell?"

THE stodginess and sterility of the present contrast unfavorably with the literary turbulence of thirty years ago. The Twenties, with their outcropping of *avant-garde* reviews, were a period of rebellion against the philistinism, jingoism and Babbittry of bourgeois society. They produced their quota of junk and screwball schools. But they also blazed the trail for new ideas and expressions. They introduced the early works of a galaxy of talents like Eliot, Ezra Pound, Hart Crane, Conrad Aiken, Sherwood Anderson, Faulkner and Hemingway. The "little magazines" had a message and sacrificed to get it across to its interested public.

The present generation of writers are, with very few exceptions, not rebels but conformists. They haven't anything particular to say, and hence cannot get too excited about saying it. The present literary publications, as the *Kenyon Review, Sewanee Review, Hudson Review,* are published or sponsored by universities, they are sedate and respectable, and generally serve as outlets for Ph.D.'s, and professors of literature, or for prestige articles by name authors.

Perspectives USA doesn't mention, and may even be unaware of the smog that has descended over the world of American letters. But nevertheless it reflects the literary desert that the cold war has left in its wake by the absence in its pages of verve, life, purpose and direction.

D. A.

No Spark

A SPARK FOR MY PEOPLE, by Ella Earls Cotton. Exposition Press, New York, 1954, $4.

THE TITLE of this autobiography is misleading. Mrs. Cotton is a retired Southern Negro teacher who possesses, among other virtues, great patience. The central moral of this moral-ridden book can be summarized in this way: What Southern Negroes need above all is that more of their number surmount the obstacles and become teachers—whose real role is that of community leaders and centers of inspiration. And, it is implied, when enough of the right kind of teachers will be distributed among the people, and they have enough time to do their good work, then the Negroes of the South will have grown to the point where they are ready for emancipation. This is evolution with a vengeance!

No one will quarrel about the importance of the fight waged by Negroes for better education, or the value of good teachers. But an important political fact intrudes itself here. Even if Southern Negroes were willing and able to wait, and even if everything worked out as indicated, and Negroes were "ready" for emancipation (whatever that means), by itself this will not bring emancipation for Negroes in the Bourbon South.

But the author doesn't deal with such matters. The most striking thing about this autobiography is its apparent separation from the main stream of modern American Negro life. The author tells us that though she was born and raised in Virginia in the years after Reconstruction, she was not acutely conscious of the hurt and shame of Jim Crow till she reached her early twenties. (Richard Wright's play, "What It Means to Be a Negro" surely catches the reality far more truthfully.)

Dubois' cry of anguish at the Atlanta massacre, the heroic efforts to build a vehicle of struggle through the Niagara movement and the NAACP, the great advances won in battles on many fronts, ferment among Southern Negroes during and after World War II—none of these echoed in this "sociological autobiography." Negroes need—and have—sparks aplenty to fire the battle for equal rights and human dignity. But this book is not one of them.

I. B.

Seven Lean Years

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE VINSON COURT, by C. Herman Pritchett. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1954, $5.

THE seven years 1946-53 saw the most concentrated legislative and executive attack on civil liberties in the history of the United States. The Supreme Court of the U.S. sitting during this period was called upon to decide many important issues of law. This period also coincides with the tenure of the Truman appointee, Fred M. Vinson, as Chief Justice.

The author, who is chairman of the political science department at the University of Chicago, uses the same method he employed in his previous work, "The Roosevelt Court." Mainly interested in the mechanics of the Court, he uses only the indispensable minimum of background material to show the means by which decisions are justified. And a series of tables are employed to analyze the pattern of alignments in the Supreme Court.

In these tables, Justice Murphy shows up best from the point of view of civil liberties, with a 100 percent pro-civil liberties voting record in a tabulation of a considerable number of cases. Rutledge, Douglas and Black follow in that order, according to Pritchett, while Vinson and Reed are at the bottom of the list. It is noteworthy that Truman's crony, Vinson, appointed by the head of the party which made the "crusade for Negro rights" one of the chief points of its 1948 platform, voted against Negro claims in every case selected by Pritchett. The Chief Justice was the only member of the Court with a zero percentage record on this count.

The most interesting broad issue examined by Pritchett is that of free speech, especially as it relates to the "clear and present danger" doctrine of Holmes and Brandeis. His conclusion is that Chief Justice Vinson and the Court majority, while professing acceptance of the doctrine, actually twisted it into a rationalization for "putting men in jail despite the provisions of the First Amendment."

Of course, even according to Holmes, the First Amendment was to be suspended in difficult times, and when dissidents were about whom "no court could regard . . . as protected by any constitutional right."

Mr. Pritchett believes that judicial review should be based more directly on the Bill of Rights, rather than on the body of precedents and evasions that have been built up over the years. But there is little in his conscientiously compiled book to give rise to optimism on this score.

M. A. K.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Don't Soften the Blows

Usually I find I agree with your ideas and conclusions, although I often don't quite agree with your method of arriving at said conclusions. In fact, I think you have failed to learn many of the lessons that a study of the history of the last 6,000 years would teach. Being neither a Christian nor a communist, I feel I can appreciate certain aspects of the present conflict more than many.

I would like to argue with you for 10 or 12 pages, but it has taken me three weeks just to get enough time to scribble this note.

I probably won't see your magazine for a while after January but I have enjoyed it very much and I do want to say: Keep fighting like hell! Don't ever soften the blows as so many others have done.

B. E. *Massachusetts*

On Indochina Settlement

I have found the *American Socialist* to be useful and readable in the time that I have been subscribing. I disagree with many of your writers' specific viewpoints, and find a general tendency to fall back into outworn Trotskyist cliches when close analysis fails the writer's ability. Happily, the latter is the exception rather than a principle.

One specific example I might mention in connection with this was the analysis of the Indochina settlement as a betrayal of the Annamese people's right to colonial liberation by the Russians and Chinese. The evidence for this was rather shoddy. The thinking that produced it not quite forthright or directly stated.

On the other hand, I like many of your other points of view and have found a rather general improvement in quality and presentation since I began reading the magazine. I hope the improvement maintains itself and continues. Your book reviews are on the whole done very well and seem both intelligible and useful. Your coverage of American labor is good.

H. O. *Minneapolis*

Only A Few Remain Firm

I have received the *American Socialist* since its second issue. You have surely hit the nail on the head in all your book reviews. Your review of Granville Hicks' book in the September issue was particularly fine. I remember in one of E. Haldeman Julius's publications, he once had an article on "Where Are All the Old Radicals." You have told where Hicks is now. I'd be glad to have you write more on the same question. Only a few have remained firm and true to the end; Debs was one. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is another; many years a rebel.

The speech, "The Revolution of Our Time," in the November issue was great! Also the review of a book about Joe Hill. I am an 81 year-old Socialist and I lived through all this, including the Debs case and Sacco-Vanzetti story. When I reflect on these injustices I think violent thoughts.

I have never met anyone who has a passion for social justice as great as the socialists. All the victims of the un-American McCarran and Smith Acts, the McCarthy and Jenner Committees, should be freed and those who spend billions for militarism and not a dime for the aged should be put in their place.

Yours for more grand book reviews and articles.

C. M. E. *Kohomo, Ind.*

First Anniversary

Congratulations to the staff of the *American Socialist* on the first anniversary of its publication.

My subscription to the magazine has certainly brought me countless appreciation as I read the articles every month. In particular, I would like to commend you on the work done in your book review section. The technique of criticism along with analysis that you use has proved to me the sincerity with which you approach each phase of your publication.

Good luck for the coming years and for the increase of your work.

R. D. *Detroit*

Traveling Copy

Your editorial "Rift in the West" was the selling factor which helped me secure a new subscription for you recently. I showed a friend that issue after he had unsuccessfully argued some of the points it contained with some fellow-workers. I trust that after reading the facts in the *American Socialist,* his argument was more successful. . . .

A worker to whom I gave a back issue informs me that he mailed it from here to Port Arthur, from there it was remailed to the West Coast, and for all I know it's still traveling. Enclosed you will find my own renewal. Wishing you every success.

J. G. *Toronto*

An Open Letter

We have been asked to print the following statement. We call attention to the request for correspondence in the closing paragraph. Any letters sent to us will be forwarded promptly.

* * *

We are an informally organized group of college young people who are interested in the role which socialism can and must play in America, but believe that at this time there is no organized movement in this country which is sufficiently constructive in its approach that we can identify ourselves with it.

We therefore feel that the one positive thing which young people like ourselves can do at this time is to work in some systematic way to spread the circulation of, and in other ways help, the few genuinely socialist publications which are now available.

There are only two or three such publications at present which we feel to be sufficiently constructive in their approach to merit our support. The American Socialist, **however, seems to us to be very much on the right path, and we feel that it can make a very significant contribution to the development of a living socialist movement in this country.**

We also plan various study-group activities to be based upon articles appearing in the American Socialist.

We suggest that other groups of young people should do the same thing that we are doing, and we invite correspondence from other such groups or individuals who may write to us in care of the American Socialist.

R. P.
R. C.
P. L.
R. M.
S. M.
T. R.
G. W.
C. A.
Plainfield, Vermont

Let's Roll Up Our Sleeves

To Our Readers

WITH this issue, the AMERICAN SOCIALIST begins its second year. When we began publication, we said: "Our publication aims to dispense with empty sloganeering, and concentrate instead on some thinking about the problems that confront us." The response to the twelve issues which we have thus far printed leads us to believe that we have fulfilled this promise. Most of the comments we have received this past year have praised us for doing just that.

Our readers like that approach, and, since we think it necessary—the situation in America not having materially altered—we propose to continue it. We will present the best and most informative analyses we can prepare, or have contributed, during the coming year. As in the past, we will concentrate on significant social, economic and political developments in this country. Our international and foreign analyses will be as full as possible within the space we can allot them.

During the past year, we touched only lightly on questions of American socialism and its organizational forms. Readers have written to us often asking that we express ourselves more fully on the concrete problems of building a socialist movement—and eventually a strong new socialist party—in America. During the coming year we expect to provide more analysis and opinion on this all-important matter.

The circulation of the AMERICAN SOCIALIST has been growing since the day of its launching; not as fast as we should like, but in quite a healthy manner. What has been most striking has been the cooperation of many new readers in securing new subscriptions. There can be no better source of an enlarged circulation than this, as it makes for an ever-broadening circle.

We should like to repeat our perennial request that our readers undertake to help us increase our circulation. We look at it this way: Our first year was a period during which we gathered an initial core of readers and supporters. They have now had time to become familiar with our policies and our slant. Most of them appear to like our approach. During our second year, our circulation can snowball if we get the full support of our first-year readers.

You can do important work in the consolidation and revival of American socialism by becoming an agent for the circulation of the AMERICAN SOCIALIST. What can you do? We suggest the following:

1. Track down every subscription prospect among your friends. At $1 for a six-month introductory subscription, they aren't hard to get.

2. Check the newsstands in your city and locality. Many that carry left-wing literature don't yet have the AMERICAN SOCIALIST; perhaps you can arrange it.

3. Order a small bundle for sale or distribution to acquaintances to aid in getting subscriptions. We will give you a discount.

4. Check your library; many will subscribe; or donate a gift subscription as some of our readers have.

If you want further information, subscription blanks, or anything else, write to us. We will help you in every possible way to make the AMERICAN SOCIALIST a faster-growing magazine.

Attention: New York Readers

FIRST ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

"LOOKING FORWARD"

Speech by Bert Cochran
Chairman: Harry Braverman

New Starlight Restaurant — Friday, Jan. 28
55 Irving Place — 7:30 p.m.
$2.50 per person

Call WA 9-7739 — Write 863 B'way N. Y. 3

"CRISIS IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY"
Lecturer: Irving Beinin

Friday, Jan. 14 — 863 Broadway
8:15 p.m. — Cont. 35c — Near 17th St.