

The American
Socialist

Negro Integration:

**SCHOOL FIGHT
GOES ON**

**The Yalta
Controversy**



**The
Fifteenth
Convention
of the
Auto Union**

MAY 1955

25 CENTS

CLIPPINGS

SOUTHERN labor is beginning to stir—a development of hope to labor ranks throughout the country, and dismay among the reactionaries. 50,000 workers of the Bell Telephone System went out on strike in nine Southern states. Then, 22,000 members of the CIO steel union in the Birmingham area joined them in a sympathy strike to protest the police brutality against the telephone strikers. AFL and CIO leaders began discussing the possibility of a general strike as a demonstration against police strikebreaking.

On April 15 the Brotherhood of Firemen and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen called out 4,000 members to join the 25,000 non-operating shopmen's crafts who had been striking the Louisville and Nashville line for a month. The Brotherhood's strike call came after the company's dismissal of a number of their members for refusing to report for work.

At the same time, 25,000 New England cotton textile workers of the CIO textile union struck thirty-three mills in Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont against company attempts to impose a 10-cent-an-hour wage cut and elimination of a number of fringe benefits.

HARRY LUNDEBERG, head of the AFL Seafarers International Union and the subsidiary Sailors Union of the Pacific, has won his tainted NLRB vote to represent the cooks and stewards. Out of 5,322 valid votes cast, 3,931 went to the AFL, 1,064 for Harry Bridges' longshore union, and 327 for no union. The cooks and stewards were swamped in the vote, as the NLRB had ruled that both the seamen and firemen divisions would participate in the representation election.

Lundeberg has thrown all maritime unions into a crisis by signing a back-door agreement with one of the shipping companies which provided a full crew for the SS Tonsina, and which violated the jurisdiction rights of the West Coast maritime unions, and undercut all existing contracts on wages and working conditions. The San Francisco Chronicle on March 15 bannered the story across its first page: "AFL Sailors Move For 'Cheaper' Crews." Lundeberg alibied his reactionary act by explaining that he wanted to put American ships in a competitive position with foreign ships. Lundeberg topped his cut-rate agreement by leading an AFL walkout from the Conference of American Maritime Unions, which was set up last year to coordinate activities of AFL and CIO organizations in the field. The CIO union officials issued this blast: "Lundeberg's move was for the sole purpose of covering up a contract drawn up by himself and a company on the Pacific coast . . . This deal of Lundeberg's was a deliberate sellout of the fundamental gains of union seamen. When all labor is seeking a reduction in hours even below the 40 hours, Lundeberg advocates and signs an agreement returning seamen to the 56-hour week."

The Seattle branch of the marine firemen adopted by a vote of 134 to 2 a resolution introduced on March 17 by R. D. Casey,

chairman of the opposition "Green Slate," calling on the firemen to disaffiliate from the sailors union. The firemen branches are currently voting on the Seattle resolution. In a handbill distributed to the coast membership, the opposition declared: "We propose to take our contracts and our union out of the Lundeberg camp for keeps. We propose to begin contract negotiations with the ship-owners immediately. . . . We propose that these committees be instructed by the membership to accept no cuts in wages, manning scales, or in the present overtime provisions of our expired contracts. We propose to participate in the formation of another Maritime Federation which will control jurisdiction raids and other types of union disruption. We propose to picket the very first ship we have a jurisdiction beef with Lundeberg on, and if necessary, to bring out the entire coast to settle the Lundeberg problem once and for all."

The General Executive Board of the AFL Masters, Mates and Pilots repudiated the action of its president in associating himself with Lundeberg, and invited the CIO Marine Engineers Beneficial Association to renew negotiations for a merger of all licensed personnel.

THE March 14 issue of The Peacemaker, publication of a pacifist organization called the Peacemakers, reports that postal authorities at Boston have apparently destroyed 1,000 copies of a pamphlet by A. J. Muste, entitled, "The Camp of Liberation," which had been shipped from England last November but were never delivered. The Boston Post ran several articles recently describing the activities of the overseas mail division of the

Boston post office, which processes annually 150,000 sacks of international mail, and operates, according to the Boston Post articles, "like a secret-service branch." So far, 800 publications have either been banned or confiscated. Recently, seven publications sent from England to the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) in Cambridge, Mass., have also presumably been incinerated.

MAURICE E. TRAVIS, secretary-treasurer of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, is being brought to trial charged with making a false statement at the time he signed the Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits. Travis publicly resigned from the Communist Party in 1949 when the union voted to sign the Taft-Hartley affidavits. His last signature in 1951 had only a little more than a month to run before the statute of limitations would have applied. . . . The NLRB ordered the independent United Electrical Workers to show cause why it should not lose its rights before the board on the grounds that no affidavits had been filed for two district presidents. . . . One more state—Utah—has been added to the list of those with "Right to Work" laws, making a total of eighteen. Attempts to repeal these laws have failed in South Carolina, Tennessee and North Dakota. In the most recent fight over the law in Kansas, the governor vetoed the bill after it had been passed by the state legislature. . . . The International Harvester Board voted to leave the UE and affiliate with the CIO auto union. The conference taking the action represented over 7,000 workers in the Harvester plants, and negotiations are underway to effect the merger. . . . Another "security firing," similar to the "John Lupa case" in Detroit, is building up, this time at the Bell Aircraft plant in Buffalo. The Defense Department and the company are after the scalp of Mert House, a straight militant unionist, who happens to be a strong Reuther supporter as well.

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The Yalta Controversy

WHOM the gods would destroy, they first make mad. This piece of wisdom of the ancient Greeks comes to mind as we watch the ideologists and spokesmen of the mighty United States stage another grisly snake dance around the totem of the Yalta Conference. Tory bankers, silver-haired generals, cynical editors and suave Congressmen are again flagellating themselves into a stage of hallucination and violence over the "sell-out." And while there is crafty calculation behind the shrieks of indignation and self-righteous frothing at the mouth, the hysteria is so genuine, and the absence of the sense of proportion and objectivity is so pronounced, that we may very well question the political sanity of this ruling class of ours, the modern Goliath with (as John L. Lewis once said of a government official) "the size eleven shoe and the size four hat."

Even though all the essential information was carried in the memoirs of Churchill, Stettinius, Byrnes and Leahy, the official publication of the Yalta papers was highly embarrassing to many of the living participants, and will help breed mass cynicism and contempt for the lofty declamations of the leaders in high places. The consensus of American newspaper opinion is that the papers were published to provide the Republicans with campaign ammunition against the Democrats. But the Russians are not wrong either when they charge Washington with the attempt to discredit the very idea of big-power conferences. In a letter to Senator Humphrey, replying to the question why the Yalta papers were "leaked" at this time, Assistant Secretary of State Morton explained:

Another factor which influenced the timing of the publication was that it was certain that German and French ratification of the Paris

accords would lead to more intensive consideration of another conference with the Russians. It was obvious that the full story of Yalta illuminates graphically the dangers, as well as the possible values, of such talks; the need of adequate prior preparations, and the importance of a clear definition of principles which will not be sacrificed to secure agreement. These are the considerations which led the Department to make the publication.

Obviously, Dulles decided to kill two birds with one stone.

AS was to be expected, the McCarthyites, the Knowlands, the David Lawrences immediately began rehashing the lurid details of how Roosevelt was allegedly bamboozled at Yalta, or else conspired with spies and traitors to deliberately do America dirt. But what expresses the depth of American reaction and confusion most starkly is that the liberal Democrats, who recall with nostalgia the days of the New Deal, have no more potent defense of Roosevelt than to say that hindsight is always clearer than foresight. In other words, the ADA liberals accept the same premises as the extreme right wingers, but simply give

Roosevelt a clean bill of health on the ground that no human can be omniscient.

As the controversy over Yalta goes far beyond a simple analysis of a historical event, and is intended to provide justification and ammunition for the cold war, it becomes doubly important to have a clear understanding of what happened ten years ago, and what conclusions can be drawn for today.

There is no question that the minutes of the plenary and private sessions at Yalta make very unpleasant reading. Here is all the sordidness, cynicism and big-power greed of the Versailles Conference. Three old men carving up nations, haggling over spoils and spheres of influence, disposing of the fate of millions with a stroke of the pen, while the flower of the world's youth was still pouring out its blood on the battlefields. There is plenty for a socialist or even a plain honest liberal to get indignant about. But it is not these aspects of the negotiations that trouble either the critics or defenders of Roosevelt.

Both the Republicans and Democrats agree it was the height of virtue, morality and justice for the United States to have grabbed up everything within its reach. The sole question that is occupying them is: Who is responsible for the Soviet bloc emerging big and strong after the war? The Republicans answer: "It is the crime of the Yalta agreements, due to Roosevelt's softness toward communism or to treachery within the Democratic councils." The Democrats pipe up timidly in rejoinder: "No, it is just due to human mistakes and Stalin's later violation of the Yalta agree-



ments." The Democratic as well as the Republican answers are part of the ideological underpinning justifying and rationalizing the cold war and have to be refuted and exposed if the American people are to start thinking clearly about foreign policy and the question of peace.

AT THE time of the Yalta Conference, German defeat was a matter of months away, and Roosevelt, standing at the head of the triumphant forces of American capitalism, was confronted with the necessity of coming to an agreement with the Russians on how to organize Europe, and of getting their cooperation for the war against Japan. The Russian armies had already broken into Poland and the Balkans and were due shortly to crash into Germany itself. The collision of the Anglo-American and the Russian military forces was thus imminent.

Without an over-all agreement between the three major powers, frictions were bound to develop, local conflicts would inevitably flare up which could and very likely would have blown up into an actual full-scale war between the Allies. Churchill, faithful to his past reputation as an adventurer, had been campaigning since 1942 for a second front in central Europe to head off the Red Armies, but this was a proposal to launch a new war within the existing world struggle, and was rejected as an irresponsible strategy headed for disaster by Roosevelt and his whole military and civilian entourage. Thus the choices before American capitalism and its leader, Roosevelt, were restricted to : 1) Come to an agreement with the Russians, or 2) start a cold war, which in the existing circumstances of two huge armies facing each other across Europe could have quickly blazed into a shooting war by spontaneous combustion.

It is indeed true, as Churchill feared, and as our present cold-war strategists accuse, that in agreeing to Russian influence over large parts of Eastern Europe, the fate of capitalism in those countries was put into the irreverent hands of the Red Army, and that capitalism, in short order, expired in its brutal embrace. But neither Roosevelt nor Churchill agreed to this out of softness toward or sym-

pathy with Russian communism. Those were the military facts in 1945, and they could not be altered unless one wanted to entertain the insane idea of starting the third world war without any time interval after the second.

THERE was an element of American miscalculation in the agreement for the Pacific. The main body of military leaders both in the United States and Britain believed that it would take 18 months to crush Japan after the conclusion of the war in Europe. They therefore held that Russian offensive operations were necessary against the powerful Japanese army in Manchuria if the war were not to drag out indefinitely at great cost of American lives. Japan proved to be weaker than they thought, and collapsed four months after Germany's capitulation. Even so, the military miscalculation altered very little. As is now widely admitted, Russia's entry into the Far Eastern war was a major factor in Japan's collapse, rated by some military men as more decisive than the dropping of the two atom bombs. Then, Stalin and his associates would have entered the war in any case, as they were resolved to have a voice in the Far Eastern peace settlement, and would have seized the Kuriles, Sakhalin, and the other concessions that had been held in the past by the Czarist empire.

Since the United States was in no position to prevent the expansion of Russian influence either in Eastern Europe or in the Far East, and since no one dares suggest that war should have been declared on the Russians at the time of Yalta, then what is the tumult and the shouting about? Why is there so much cursing and cavilling in the upper echelons?

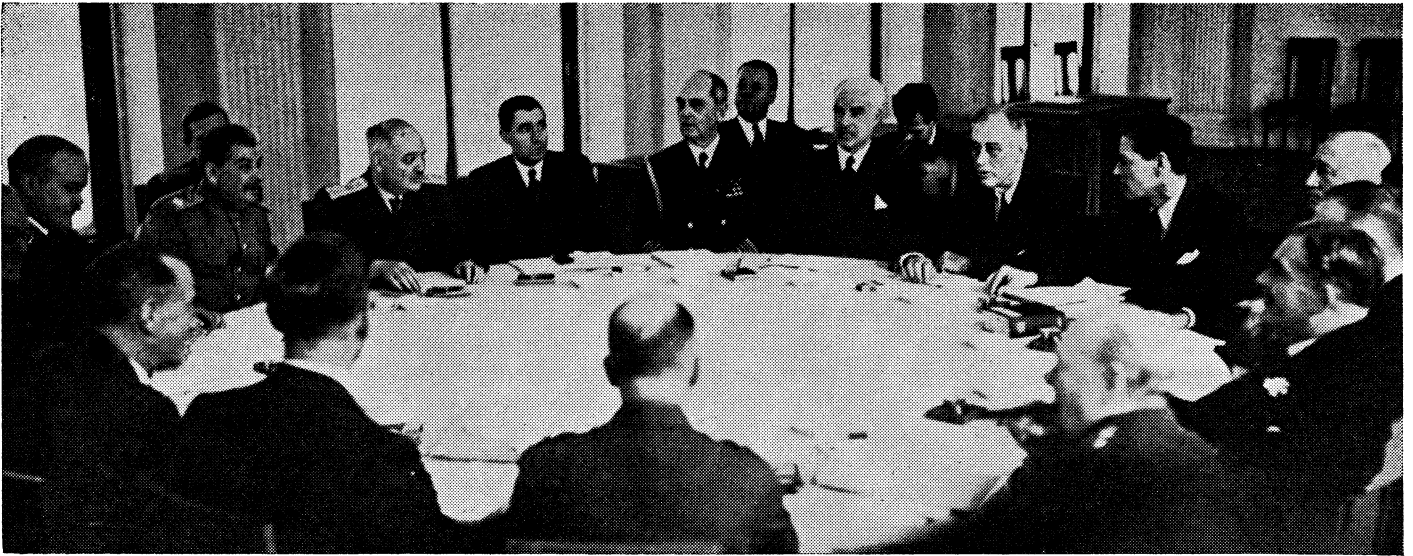
At this point the sanctimonious hypocrites of American imperialism come into the discussion and opine that while the American representatives could not stop the wicked Russians from their evil work, it was their duty not to agree to it, "not to lend to Russian aggression America's cloak of idealism." We are thus back through a different door to the previous proposition that while Roosevelt could not prevent Stalin from expanding his spheres of influence, he should have started a cold war against him. This cold-war solution might have ap-

peared in 1946 to some as the perfect answer towards rolling back Russia. But the cold war is no longer a theoretical concept. It has been given a good try for over eight years. And it has failed so unqualifiedly to frighten the enemy or dislodge him from his positions that even Churchill, its original author, has grown dubious about its efficacy.

ROOSEVELT and his advisors may have had delusions of grandeur in February 1945 of how wonderfully they would reorganize the world under their suzerainty just as did Wilson in 1919 when he left for Paris, but the practical, immediate and concrete aims of these top representatives of American capitalism had nothing idealistic or disinterested about them.

Roosevelt and his advisors were keenly aware of America's preponderant military, industrial and financial power, as against Britain which was reeling from the blood-letting to which it had been subjected, and Russia, which was ravaged from the fury of the original Nazi advance. The essence of American policy was to balance Britain against Russia, while the United States with its superior strength would become the arbiter of all conflicts, and the general overlord of the globe. The Americans were already moving in on the French empire in North Africa, on the Arab states in the Near East. Roosevelt ventured the opinion to Stalin that Hong Kong ought to be a free port, that the British be kept out of any trusteeship of Korea, that the French had no business in Indo-China. Already during the war, he had brought pressure on Churchill to ease his grip on India.

The Washington representatives were quite willing to let Russia have enough so that it could act as a counterweight to the aging British lion, and as a matter of fact, in terms of nationalist, big-power politics, Russia's demands struck them all as neither unreasonable nor excessive. Churchill, caught in a squeeze play between his dear allies, maneuvered desperately to keep his hold on the empire, and to devise a setup for western Europe which would give Britain the upper hand. The Kremlin leaders were likewise thinking in terms of old-world diplomacy, trying to ex-



tend their spheres of influence, to ring themselves with weak dependent states, to gouge out of Germany all they could to aid in their immense tasks of reconstruction.

NOT only Roosevelt, but the entire American delegation left the conference with the conviction that they had accomplished their essential aims at Yalta. Part of the present propaganda attempts to picture a sick and tired Roosevelt being outsmarted, outmaneuvered and taken at every turn by a sly and scheming Stalin. But this piece of chit-chat fails to explain the satisfaction of the highly capable assemblage of American diplomats and militarists who participated with Roosevelt at Yalta. At one point in the proceedings, Hopkins slipped Roosevelt a note which read: "The Russians have given in so much at this conference that I don't think we should let them down. Let the British disagree if they want to."

Let's say Hopkins was just an egg-head, and his opinion another example of New Deal stupidity. But here is the testimony of Admiral Leahy, a hard-crusted old Tory militarist, and by all accounts a very cool customer, indeed. He attended the conference in his role as the presidential chief of staff and came away with the impression that Roosevelt "showed great skill and his personality dominated the discussion. Since he was the presiding officer and most of the arguments were between Stalin and Churchill he played the role of arbiter."

In the current issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* published by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Leahy writes that Stalin's demands in the Far East "generally seemed reasonable to the Americans that spoke to me about them and met with no objections from either Churchill or Roosevelt . . . Subsequent to the president's return from Yalta much publicity was given by the press and by political opposition to charges that special advantages were conceded at Yalta to the Soviet and British governments without adequate return to the American cause. This was not apparent to any members of the American Conference."

We can see today that part of the dream of the American empire builders has come true. The British empire is a shadow of its former self, and even countries that remain nominally members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, like Canada and Australia, are actually satellites of Washington. France has become a second-rate, if not a third-rate, power. And Washington has stepped into the breach and its voice is dominant throughout the "free world," in the Near East, as well as the Far East, in South America, and even in western Europe.

But the scheme of balancing Britain against Russia has proven an unmitigated disaster. The power of the Soviet bloc is on the increase. China, the main prize of the war in the Pacific, has been snatched from America's influence. This has so altered the relationship of forces that capitalism as

a world system feels itself endangered. Only a short time after Yalta, the United States policy-makers reestablished their full alliance with Britain against the menacing threat from the East. Has not history then rendered its unassailable verdict that the Yalta agreements were a mistake and ill served western capitalism?

THE record shows that Washington's main disasters had nothing to do with Yalta, or any alleged Russian violations of the Yalta pacts. Let us take the most important case in point which has had such a traumatic effect on the American plutocracy—the communist victory in China. According to the recent mythology, China was lost for America by Roosevelt's cave-in to Stalin on the Far Eastern agreement. But this mythology has not a scintilla of evidence to back it up. The fact that it is so assiduously propagated and so fervently accepted by the American men of affairs is testimony to the astigmatism of a decaying class when it cannot face up to a new revolutionary reality.

The facts are that in return for receiving the old Czarist sphere of influence in the Far East, Stalin agreed to recognize Chiang Kai-shek as the sole national authority in China. The record shows that he went through with his part of the bargain, holding the Manchurian cities until Kuomintang administrators arrived, and in other ways facilitating Chiang's taking over. He advised the Chinese communist leaders to come to an agreement with Chiang Kai-shek, because

he had no faith in the communists' ability to win national power. This is given further credence by the early Russian removal of machinery and equipment from Manchuria, indicating that Stalin expected the Kuomintang regime to continue. The American rulers cannot and will not get through their heads that it was not softness or blindness at Yalta, or espionage machinations, or treason in their diplomatic corps, but a million-massed revolutionary upheaval which swept the rotted Chiang regime—and with it every vestige of imperialist privilege—from the Chinese mainland.

The Yalta Conference disclosed that not one of the Big Three, neither Roosevelt, nor Churchill, nor Stalin, had a real appreciation of the mass upheavals which were about to sweep across the continents, and make hash of a lot of their solemn covenants. Churchill thought he could handle any trouble the way he put down the rebellion in Greece. Stalin told the British Prime Minister that "he did

not believe the Labor Party would ever be successful in forming a government in England" (Bohlen minutes). Roosevelt decidedly erred in his thinking when he placed his conflict with the British Empire on practically the same plane as his differences with Russia, and figured he could maneuver between the two. He was impressed with Stalin's succumbing to nationalist thinking and big-power politics, but he did not give sufficient weight to the fact that Stalin and his associates remained leaders of a socialist-type state, with all that implied. Subsequent events demonstrated he was distinctly mistaken in thinking he could charm away the conflict between two antipathetic systems. History has not proceeded in accordance with the concepts or blueprints laid down at the Big Three Conference.

IN the decade that has elapsed since Yalta, a revolution has been wrought in the art of warfare, so that nuclear extinction threatens mankind, and cer-

tainly modern civilization, if a new major conflict is permitted. General MacArthur said in his January 26 speech in Los Angeles: "This very triumph of scientific annihilation—this very success of invention—has destroyed the possibility of war being a medium of practical settlement of international differences. The enormous destruction to both sides of closely matched opponents makes it impossible for the winner to translate it into anything but his own disaster." The popular demand for a new practical settlement between the two major power blocs has thus become an unpostponable *must*. A new *modus vivendi* will not solve all outstanding problems of the human race. It will not answer all the needs and aspirations of the laboring masses. It will not insure a *status quo* for the next century, or even the next decade. It will simply provide the basic framework of activity in which peoples and classes will carve out their destinies, and without which there will be no future of any kind.

An Important Civil Liberties Conference

THE "Rebirth of Freedom" conference called by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee on April 16 was a big success. The conference consisted of five different panels which met in the morning, with a good attendance at all the sessions. Royal W. France, well-known attorney, was moderator at the panel on "Orthodoxy, Heresy and the Individual Conscience." J. Raymond Walsh, author and former CIO Research Director, presided at the panel on "Labor and Livelihood Under Tyranny." Leonard B. Boudin, counsel for the committee, headed the panel on "Passports, the Right to Travel and World Understanding." Dr. Broadus Mitchell, well-known economist, took charge of the panel on "Conformity vs. Creativity in Art and Education." And I. F. Stone, publisher of *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, led the one on "The Politics of Fear."

In the afternoon, the full conference attended by almost 1500 people met in the main auditorium of Carnegie Hall. The featured speaker, Senator William Langer of North Dakota, showed a lot of courage in participating, as he had been harassed and badgered on all sides against having anything to do with the "communists." Senator Langer referred to this in his address: "As I was coming into the hall, a newsman asked me if I didn't know that the sponsors of the meeting included some people who had been cited for contempt. I want to repeat here what I also told newsmen who questioned me in Washington. I am delighted and proud and happy to be here with you this afternoon because there are too few brave men in America."

Clark Foreman, ECLC director, introduced Langer, and remarked that while the Senator had voted to cite Harvey O'Connor, the ECLC chairman, for contempt, credit must be given Langer for recognizing his mistake and voting against citing Corliss Lamont. Both O'Connor and Lamont refused to answer questions about their political beliefs at McCarthy's hearings on the grounds of violation of their rights under the First Amendment.

Prior to Langer's appearance, a round-table discussion was conducted, participated in by all the moderators of the morning session, and presided over by Harvey O'Connor. I. F. Stone spoke of the reversal of the reactionary trend and predicted the gradual dying away of the witch-hunt. The other participants were rather dubious of Stone's interpretation. Boudin accounted for a few of the recent liberal manifestations, such as former Senator Cain's qualified repudiation of some of the worst aspects of the witch-hunt, as due to the excesses of the police-staters, and the attempts of powerful forces in the country to keep the machinery of repression operating within regulated boundaries.

J. Raymond Walsh, who made the collection speech, pointed to the war campaign and the fear of anti-capitalist developments abroad as the underlying elements feeding the terror. He bore down hard on the necessity for intellectuals and professionals to get connected with the labor movement, and help initiate discussions on these questions within labor ranks, as labor was the fundamental force which could bring about social change in this country.

The conference was a demonstration that the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee is establishing itself as a broad organization in which all supporters of civil liberties, regardless of their political viewpoints or affiliations, can cooperate and participate, and which will defend the civil liberties of all victims of the witch-hunt on a genuinely non-partisan basis. Previous attempts by some to establish civil-liberties bodies on either a narrowly partisan basis, or catering exclusively to just one faction within the Left, naturally failed of their purpose. With the old American Civil Liberties Union succumbing in part to the fumes of the witch-hunt, the ECLC steps forward as the continuator of the original splendid tradition and purposes that animated the Civil Liberties Union at its birth, and as a body that fills a crucial need to protect the essential freedoms of the American people.

Supreme Court decision on how to go about school integration will not avert a long battle no matter what it provides. Racists are organized and have many tricks up their sleeves.

School Fight Goes On

by William Raleigh

OVER a year after the Supreme Court's historic decision declaring racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, the question of Jim Crow in the field of education is still very much with us. Five states, speaking for the diehard Southern racialists, continue their previous tactics of stalling and playing for time. Thurgood Marshall, counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has demanded a specific time limit, preferably next September but not later than September 1956, in which racial integration must be put through.

But the Justice Department virtually endorsed the delaying tactics of the Jim Crow states, proposing to the court that no "forthwith" decree be issued, and that the disputed cases be sent to the Federal district courts. In his argument before the Supreme Court April 12, Thurgood Marshall stated that there could be no "moratorium on the Fourteenth Amendment, or local option" to enforce a constitutional decision of the court. But the fact is that for the past year there has been such a moratorium in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Virginia, Texas, South Carolina, Maryland and other Southern states, and in several border as well as Northern states, the decree has been only partly implemented.

Mr. Marshall also made it amply clear that if the matter were referred to Federal district courts to "decide how much time is necessary, the Negro in this country would be in horrible shape."

SCHOOLS IN TRANSITION, Edited by Robin M. Williams, Jr. and Margaret W. Ryan. The University of North Carolina Press, 1955, \$3.00.

This is the second important volume produced on the question of Negroes and education by scholars financed by the Fund for the Advancement of Education. The first, Harry S. Ashmore's "The Negro and the Schools," stated the problem. This book surveys the experiences of a group of border-state communities in the process of desegregating their school systems during the last few years.

On the not-too-well-founded thesis that the transition from segregation to integration in the border states provides a guide to what will happen in the South, the editors tend to weight their evidence in favor of a gradual, patient approach, buttressed by strict legal provisions to back school administrators in the work of racial integration. But what may work in Illinois or New Jersey—and even in these states there was plenty of trouble—may prove to be impossible in Mississippi or Georgia.

Nevertheless, there is a wealth of factual material gathered together by investigators, very revealing as to the state of race relations in a half-dozen states which face the South.

W. R.



It is considered unlikely that the Supreme Court will adopt the clear position of the NAACP. Because of the enormous pressure from the South, it is more likely to take some sort of intermediate position. Either by granting a prolonged period of time for localities to obey the law, or by entrusting the fate of the Negro people to local courts, the Supreme Court will in effect be guaranteeing a long-term battle between the contending forces in the states.

IN some respects the situation is analogous to that existing after passage of the Wagner Labor Relations Act in 1935. Legal recognition of the right of labor to union representation, like the right of Negroes to equal and non-segregated education, came only after a protracted struggle. In the case of labor, the legal victory came after the great strike wave of 1934; in the case of the Negro people, it came after a whole period of organization, struggle, and legal battles. But in neither case did the legal victory seal the conquest.

After passage of the Wagner Act, the big corporations first refused to abide by it on constitutional grounds; after the law was declared constitutional by the Supreme Court, they fought without letup to circumvent its provisions, and in the last analysis the issue has never been resolved in any real sense. The right of workers to union representation is still decided on the basis of the strength of the contending camps, and constantly called into question by union-busting employers.

The unions had one advantage under the Wagner Act; there was an NLRB, a federal body, through which they could process their disputes, in some cases to their advantage. The Supreme Court decision on desegregating education provided no such federal agency. What is far more probable, Negroes seeking to force local communities and states to live up to the Fourteenth Amendment

will be compelled to take their cases to hostile district courts. Taking a case of equal rights for Negroes to a Federal District Court in Mississippi, or appealing for justice through any state judicial channels, is comparable to expecting unions to get justice from local police or judges, who are controlled lock, stock and barrel by powerful corporation interests.

The Justice Department in its recent Supreme Court recommendations also stressed the need for a period of "adjustment and education" to prepare communities for desegregation. Thurgood Marshall, speaking before the convention of the United Automobile Workers in Cleveland, March 31, exposed this proposal as a phony:

People say: "We should have a period of study and education. We should explain to the people involved that segregation is bad." Well, to a group of experienced organized labor people that certainly will not make sense. Just think for a moment, if you had left problems of your wages, your hours, your working conditions and now the other objectives you are driving for—if you had postponed them until the NAM and the big corporations had been educated to the fact that you were human beings and entitled to something. I am sure that you will agree that in General Motors and other companies like that, you would at least be no further advanced than when that period of education started.

One can well imagine the effects of an educational campaign of enlightenment upon Governor Shivers of Texas, or Governor "Hummon" Talmadge of Georgia. "Groups of people that have made their living, have made their livelihood by holding other groups of people down," Marshall told the UAW, "are not going to be easily educated to giving up anything that they have been using all these years." Marshall's solution, which he urged upon the Supreme Court, was to tell such interests, "If you don't get educated to this point we will put you in jail." Marshall was correct to conclude, "After decades of struggle . . . those of us who have been in the organizing fight are beginning to realize that . . . the goal of equal dignity for all Americans can only be obtained by uncompromising struggle, a continuous struggle. . . ."

THE stakes in this struggle are tremendous. Those Southern state officials who have openly avowed their determination to resist, by any means necessary, the integration of white and Negro students in the schools, know that a retreat on this question will seriously undermine the whole structure of white supremacy in their bailiwicks. Given a victory in this field in the deep South, the Negro people would press for further gains: desegregated housing, full integration and representation in union organization, full social, economic and political equality in all fields.

Such developments would wreck the political monopoly of the reactionary Democrats who have controlled the South, and through their long tenure in Congress have wielded such powerful influence in the House and Senate. Moreover, once a solid victory is chalked up in the educational field, the Negro workers would feel greatly en-

couraged to wipe out the low-wage conditions in the South, and thereby cut off the retreat of the runaway plants from the North. With such explosive political and economic issues involved, it would be foolhardy to assume that the Supreme Court decision does more than set the stage for further struggle.

In a study of desegregation and integration of public schools in states bordering the South, "Schools in Transition," edited by Robin M. Williams Jr., and Margaret W. Ryan, the second volume based on research financed by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, community case-histories are presented to show how the change-over will probably take place in the South itself. The general conclusion of this book seems to be that a patient effort made by local authorities proceeding quietly, can achieve integration with a minimum of trouble.

In the communities studied, ranging through the states of New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, New Mexico and Arizona, with varying Negro populations, desegregation was with a few notable exceptions accomplished without violence.

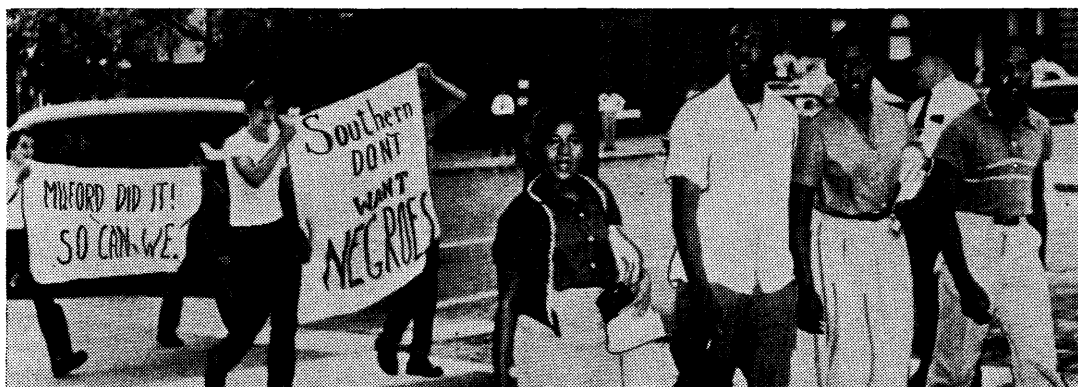
ONE of these exceptions was Cairo, Illinois. More than any city in the border states studied, Cairo is "Southern" in its social, economic and political set-up. One-third of the population is Negro. The wage level was less than half the average for the state of Illinois; Negroes were frozen out of all but the most menial jobs; a great proportion of them lived on relief. Politicians habitually herded these relief clients to the polls, to perpetuate their corrupt machines in office.

But in 1949 state laws were strengthened against school segregation, and by 1951 the NAACP had mounted a considerable organizational campaign on behalf of equal rights in the school system. When the NAACP appeared before the school board demanding geographical districting of schools, instead of racial separation of schools, the entire official white community went to work. The white lawyer who represented the NAACP was completely ostracized—he couldn't even get served at a store, or secure a doctor for his family. The ministers, with one honorable exception, devoted their full time in the pulpit and out as fighters for white supremacy. The police force was tripled in size.

On the night before the new school term was to open, crosses were burned in Negro neighborhoods. The next day when Negro parents took their children to the white schools in their district, they were told to go to the Negro schools or go home. The superintendent of schools agreed to transfer Negro students in groups, but intimidation prevented the appearance at white schools of all but ten Negro children. In January 1951, a Negro doctor's home was bombed. Grand juries refused to indict those accused of the terror. Finally one man was given a year's suspended sentence for the bombing.

Since that time some of the Negro students have been transferred to previously all-white schools, with the school authorities constantly attempting to delay and harass those who pushed for complete desegregation.

Only the persistent efforts and courageous struggle of the NAACP and the Negro community in Cairo brought the struggle through to partial victory there. If this is



Picketing by kids inspired by white-supremacy groups fails to stop Negro students arriving at Southern High School in Baltimore last October. Baltimore ended school segregation in September 1954, following Supreme Court decision in the spring of that year.

the case in Cairo, Illinois, the scope of the struggle in the towns of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi can well be imagined.

SOUTHERN states have already made clear that they have no intention of abiding by Supreme Court dictums. Some states threaten to abolish the entire state educational system, and to allow all education to revert to private institutions. Gov. Shivers of Texas has stated he does not know when—"if at all"—Texas will desegregate her schools. Georgia has proposed an amendment to the U.S. constitution making the educational system the concern solely of the states. A proposal is before the Maryland legislature to repeal that state's compulsory school attendance law, so that no white child would be required to attend any school which has a Negro teacher or student. A similar bill has been introduced in South Carolina. In Tennessee a legislative proposal would maintain separation of the races in the state's schools in defiance of the Supreme Court ruling.

But while the hard-bitten white-supremacy states remain stubborn and gird for a last-ditch fight, the NAACP and its allies are also preparing. In one community after another the NAACP is filing suit against local authorities demanding to know why they have not abided by the law. The Negro people are organized to demand their rights, and are pressing for admission into the schools on a basis of complete equality.

In Virginia, for example, in the face of the state government's announced intention to fight integration of the races in the schools with all means at its command, 2,017 Negroes in nine Virginia counties signed their names to a statement opposing all forms of segregation. Dr. E. B. Henderson, vice president of the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP, stated recently that not all whites in the state support the governor's anti-Negro stand, since "practically all of the responsible church leaders are on record as favoring integration."

While white support for the Negro cause is not very vocal or noticeable as yet, white opposition to some of the more extreme efforts to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling is quite evident. This is due to the wild spending spree initiated in some states to provide "equal" facilities for Negro students—a belated admission that the old "separate but equal" dictum of the Supreme Court had never been abided by. Many Southern newspapers have questioned the wisdom of taking on a fantastic fiscal burden to achieve something which has been declared un-

constitutional by the Supreme Court. Moreover, state bond issues based on an illegal education system find no buyers in the North.

But by and large, the Negro people in the South are depending on their own organizations for the struggle. They are risking everything. They confront such menaces as that presented by the White Citizens Councils in Alabama and Mississippi, which threaten:

The white population (in these areas) controls the money, and this is an advantage that the council will use in a fight to legally maintain complete segregation of the races. We intend to make it difficult, if not impossible, for any Negro who advocates desegregation to find and hold a job, get credit or renew a mortgage.

IN retaliation, the NAACP has acted to strengthen the Negro-owned Tri-State Bank of Memphis, so that it can make funds available to farmers, businessmen and home-owners in Mississippi and Alabama. This commendable project is of course on a small scale. The segregation fight, like the fight to organize unions, will take its toll of victims.

What the editors of "Schools in Transition" fail to understand about the deep South is that it is in no way comparable to the communities they studied. The communities where desegregation proceeded peacefully and gradually toward a successful conclusion were those in which a large body of official opinion was on the side of integration of the races. This is not the case in the South. The entire officialdom, and the vast majority of the white population, are for strict and complete separation of the races. The struggle in this area is of a different order.

No matter what the decision of the Supreme Court, the fight is just beginning in the South. If it is pursued with courage and determination, the process of the social and political transformation of this bastion of conservatism will be impelled forward, to the benefit both of the Negro people and the American workers generally, upon whom Southern reaction has weighed heavily. At one point or another the labor struggle to organize the South, and the necessary attendant struggle for sufficient political democracy to achieve that end, will merge with the Negro struggle for equal treatment. When that occurs, the death knell of Dixiecrat dictatorship will have been sounded, and a new bright chapter opened for the American people as a whole.



Fifteenth Convention Of the Auto Union

Despite whittling away of old traditions of democracy and militancy, an auto union convention is still an impressive affair. But this one saw few surprises; Reuther's approach to 1955 bargaining carried with very little dissent.

by A Delegate

Cleveland
THE fifteenth convention of the United Auto Workers meeting here from March 27 to April 1, was an impressive affair. The UAW has grown to about one and a half million members. Over 3,000 delegates were in attendance at the Cleveland Public Auditorium, and at times, counting visitors and guests, 7,000 people crowded into the hall. The secretary-treasurer's report showed a net worth of \$20 million for the international union, and the convention approved a sliding-scale dues increase to establish in addition a revolving \$25-million strike fund. The booklets distributed to the delegates chalked up a distinguished record of achievement for the past eighteen years in wage increases, vacation and holiday pay, pensions, health plans.

The auto union is rightly viewed by outsiders as a model for its honesty in administration, its comprehensive medical and health services, its broad educational and recreational activities. Now, by its convention action, the UAW took the lead in stemming the policy of retreat which has marked the negotiations and economic positions of most

unions for the past two years and had enveloped the UAW as well. The convention endorsed an all-out drive to win the Guaranteed Annual Wage in the negotiations which are now getting under way with the major automobile producers, and it is understood that a strike will be called if the manufacturers prove recalcitrant.

These circumstances might make it appear as if the auto union has reached the high point in its development, and is now on the verge of writing a new brilliant chapter in the history of American labor. Unfortunately, the wrapping around the package is more dazzling than the contents. The truth is that behind the aura of organizational and financial prowess, the union is face to face with excruciatingly painful and increasingly critical problems arising out of automation and the further concentration of the industry, and that its leadership lacks the militancy to tackle them in a fundamental way. What might have been a passable program in a period of prosperity is less than adequate when confronted with the revolution of automation.

In the old days, even when the top officials didn't have the answer, or lacked the courage to embark on a risky course, the feelings of high insurgency that animated the ranks and the free spirit of democratic interplay which marked the operation of the union often pushed the timid or over-cautious into the fray. Out of the crucible of democracy and militancy came at least partial solutions to the problems at hand. Today, the ranks are conservative and staid compared to the stormy thirties. And in place of the self-assertive give-and-take of that period, the smooth-functioning, deadly machine has taken over, which grinds down all opposition, which stamps out all independent initiative, which jealously guards its own monopoly of leadership and control. The democracy of Reuther's administration—and the UAW has at least as much democracy as most CIO unions—has this much similarity to the democracy of capitalism: There are generally stiff penalties attached to exercising your rights.

ON the face of it, 3,000 delegates, duly elected by the membership, gathered together to decide on their economic program for 1955. But actually it was all cut and dried. The machine had done its work effectively. The decision was a foregone conclusion. Everyone knew the union was going out for the Guaranteed Annual Wage. In practice, the program couldn't even be significantly amended, much less changed in a basic way.

This program has been analyzed pretty thoroughly [*American Socialist*, February 1955], and nothing new has transpired since to alter that analysis. The convention bore out the earlier impressions. Everyone is going along with the Guaranteed Annual Wage. The membership will hit the bricks if a strike has to be called. But there is no sense of exhilaration about it. No one is particularly inspired, or thinks the union is about to break new paths through the underbrush that will lead labor on to the broad sunny highlands. Reuther tried a number of times to whip up the delegates with talk about the big crusade, but his words failed to strike a flame. The auto delegates figured that it will finally add up to some kind of supplementary unemployment insurance, and they are all for that. But no one conceives of the GAW as a basic solution to the problem of unemployment, and certainly no answer to speedup and the steady deterioration of working conditions and union authority in the shops.

This underlying feeling that job insecurity and unemployment were going to remain as major problems was brought out clear and sharp the very first day of the convention. In the discussion on the resolution for the expansion of maternal and child-health services, and later on the resolution for equal rights for women workers, delegate after delegate came up with the old scissor-bill solution for unemployment of having women go back into the kitchens!

A delegate from Union, N. J., observed: "As I look out into the parking lot [from the plant] and see some of the 1955 automobiles of the very finest make I wonder sincerely how many of the women who are helping their husbands out would not better put their services to mankind and to their families by staying home and taking care of their children." Another delegate from Grand Rapids, Mich., chimed in with the same sentiment: "I

cannot see how this convention can go on record supporting a resolution concerning child delinquency and then adopt resolution No. 5 supporting job security for married women in the plants, when it is one of the causes of child delinquency." This same delegate took the floor on the second debate to sum up the feelings of others besides himself when he stated flatly: "It [married women working] is one of the causes for unemployment of a great many of our men."

President Walter Reuther, with his genius for slithering over and slopping up any embarrassing problems or questions, summed up the whole proposition in this inimitable fashion:

I would like to say just before I put the question that I believe what we have done here is that a lot of people have substituted emotion for what the resolution calls for. It does not deal with whether you think women ought to work or not to work. It deals with whether women are going to be protected when they are working. That is what it deals with—I come from a family that, thank God, had a mother who stayed home and took care of her children. But there are good mothers and there are bad mothers, and there are good fathers and bad fathers.

This discussion is dwelt upon not to show that unrealistic and reactionary sentiments still move some of the auto workers—that is not so unusual or even disturbing—but to illustrate how deeply the psychology of job insecurity and of a scarcity economy is swaying the workers again, how dog-eat-dog thinking is reappearing, based on the uneasy conviction that the basic job problem will not be solved by the union.

THERE has been a considerable amount of propaganda around the union this past year for the 30-hour week. The leaders of Ford Local 600 carried on a spirited campaign for it, as part of a general forward-looking program including the lowering of the pension age from 65 to 60, and other demands. This group of officers received a surprising amount of backing for their ideas from different local unions, but the support was unorganized. The opposition forces were nebulous and chaotic, reflecting the confusion in the ranks, and the lack of a commonly accepted alternative group of leaders to that of the official machine. When the Reuther crowd put on the heat for its own program, and made any opposition to it distinctly unpopular and possibly even risky, Stellato and the other Ford local officials decided to pull in their horns and go along with the official line. Their decision made it a pre-determined proposition that the Reuther program would go through the convention without any hitch.

Quillico, one of the Ford leaders, hit the floor to reiterate the need for the shorter work week during the discussion on the 1955 economic demands, and another delegate from the Highland Park Ford local made a good speech on the need to improve contract provisions to safeguard working conditions. ("Every time we get certain economic benefits from the corporation, we, back in the factories and the shops find that the company tries to take our demands that we have gotten from them in hard-fought fights out of our hide, out of our back, out of our



AFL PRESIDENT George Meany addresses delegates.

sweat. It is for that reason that these economic demands dealing with working conditions in the shop, dealing with shop problems, dealing with contractual language, are just as important as any economic demands.") But these speeches were just thrown into the hopper for their general educational effect. It was clear that once the Ford group decided to sit this debate out, the chances were gone for a real battle to strengthen the union's economic goals in the coming round of negotiations.

Reuther is unquestionably in the forefront of America's union leaders in his understanding of the implications of automation and the changing pattern of American industry. He deserves credit for popularizing the problem that confronts labor ranks today. But he fell short of true leadership in sidetracking the fight into the limited channel of an augmented unemployment insurance scheme with a fancy slogan, instead of utilizing the present unexampled opportunity to launch a genuine crusade for the shorter work week—the best trade-union answer to the burning problem of creeping unemployment. He himself seemed to be aware that his protestations had a hollow ring, and repeatedly assured the convention that the Guaranteed Annual Wage was not "a panacea, a cure-all," but just "one of the tools," and promised that the next objective would be the shorter work week.

DESPITE the machining process in the UAW, remains of the past democratic tradition persist. Every recent convention has witnessed a minor rank-and-file explosion. At the last convention two years ago it occurred on the proposal to lengthen the period between local elections. In the convention before that it was on the dues increase. This time, having bulldozed the potential opposition out of any contest on the main issue of the economic program, Reuther deliberately maneuvered the convention into a big debate on a secondary issue where his victory was assured. For a day and a half, with his active encouragement, the delegates disputed over the proposal to set up the \$25 million strike fund, and even here most of the discussion was centered on the question whether the strike funds should be distributed on the basis of need, or in

fixed lump benefits to all. Since the arithmetic was on Reuther's side, he couldn't lose.

Even with this crafty maneuver, the administration faced a completely unplanned demonstration against itself during the nominations for vice presidents. No sooner did Quinn of Dodge Local 3 nominate Stellato, president of Ford Local 600, than a spontaneous demonstration began, participated in by at least half the convention, that literally forced the latter to accept the nomination. It was the most enthusiastic demonstration seen in any UAW convention since 1947, and was by all odds larger and more spirited than the one received by Reuther. Stellato's acceptance speech, where he mildly pleaded for a little bit of democratic free play, unloosed another ovation.

The administration received a further pointed rebuke with the nomination of Nathaniel Turner of the Flint Buick local on the motivation of providing Negro representation. In his acceptance speech Turner said: "In the Buick Motor Company where I work there are 24,000 dues-paying members; 8,000 or approximately that number are Negro workers. The whole foundry is composed of Negro workers, without a Negro in supervision or management. In discussing that with management they say you haven't a Negro on your International Union Executive Board. You haven't a Negro that makes policy, why do you expect us to do something that your International Union doesn't do? That is the bridge I'm talking about in this International Union. I don't care who it is, it is now time that we cross that bridge."

To this day, despite its noise about the Fair Practices Department and a lot of genuine good work in the plants in eliminating discriminatory practices, the Reuther administration has remained adamant against giving Negroes representation in the top councils of the organization. In this respect, it is behind many of the other CIO internationals.

The machine really went to work before the scheduled roll call. With the pork choppers busy intimidating some, Stellato still polled 31 percent of the total vote—a remarkable showing in the present circumstances inside the UAW. Turner got about 10 percent of the votes cast.

IN the political sphere, the UAW remains in the labyrinth of the ADA brand of progressivism. A few years ago, the labor bureaucracy acted as if it were dead set on repealing the Taft-Hartley Law. By now they have got accustomed to living with this oppressive statute. The political anemia of this powerful labor movement is so obvious to one and all that the convention of the leading CIO organization simply contented itself with passing a ritual resolution of protest, which moreover put big emphasis on amending what has correctly been dubbed a "slave labor law."

The increasingly pressing matter of civil liberties was treated in the same cursory manner. This business of the Defense Department easing out of the plants the widest variety of militants, aggressive unionists, radicals, or ex-radicals by simply labelling them "security risks" has become a Damocles sword suspended over the head of the entire labor movement. The so-called anti-communist law which set up a governmental licensing of unions will plague even the most respectable and obsequious of the

union leaders as labor conflicts grow more acute. But the UAW just went through the motions of passing another ceremonial resolution. Although the committee split into a majority and minority on this resolution, it was just over a matter of wording. Neither section of the committee had yet graduated to an understanding of the Bill of Rights and the legitimacy of persecuted workers employing the Fifth Amendment when under fire by the McCarthyite committees. The majority report (supported in substance by the minority) read:

To protect our members against contempt for constitutional rights that has resulted from abuse of the Fifth Amendment both by Communists and by Congressional investigating committees, the International Executive Board in 1954 adopted a declaration of policy with respect to members who plead the Fifth Amendment. Noting the unfair standards and pressures that are often imposed on innocent persons who refuse to take refuge in the Fifth Amendment, it recommended that nevertheless it is better not to use the Amendment, but it also declared it to be the policy of the UAW-CIO that no member or employee will be prejudiced in any degree in his relationship to the Union merely and solely because he claims the privilege of the Fifth Amendment. . . . Such a person who in good conscience does resort to the privilege of the Fifth Amendment because of compelling personal reasons will not be judged by the UAW-CIO on that fact alone. Rather, that person will be judged in our Union by his actions, past and present, and by the position that he has taken on the basic issues which sharply divide members of the Communist Party and fellow travelers from the great and overwhelming masses of loyal workers in the American labor movement.

The union proposes to establish its own thought-control loyalty board—in the resolution on civil liberties, no less! Still, the resolution represents a distinct advance over the

union's stand of two years ago. But there was no time in the convention to discuss the committee reports, and the whole matter was referred to the incoming executive board. The union's stand on the question was further vitiated by the convention approval of the administration action in dropping the grievances of Martin Trachtenberg, an alleged member of the Communist Party who was fired by the Buick Company in Flint in the summer of 1954 at the time of the Clardy House Un-American Committee hearings in that city, and the subsequent terror against all those who had used the Fifth Amendment in the course of the committee hearings.

THE resolution on international relations was the usual piffle. But the grim realities of the world conflict are slowly working their way into the consciousness of Reuther and his associates. It was reported at the time of the recent CIO convention that Reuther was toying with the idea of proposing the admission of China into the UN. The current resolution mumbles something about a Big Four conference. This uneasiness was brought out in some of the remarks made by Reuther in the course of his opening convention address. He said: "The question of peace transcends every other question that we face as free people. . . . Nobody can win a war fought with atomic H-bombs and therefore what we need to realize is that we can win only if we find a way to avoid a war."

We can sum up the fifteenth convention by saying that there was no surprises and everything went off according to Reuther's schedule—except the demonstration for Stelato. The UAW is no longer the insurgent organization of the thirties. It has hit complacent middle age. But there are enough of the juices of militancy left, and the conditions of the industry are sufficiently unsettling and disruptive of the lives of the auto workers, to ensure that when the mass mood veers leftward—as it will—the UAW will again be out in front of labor's battles. Meanwhile, the UAW is setting the pace for 1955 with the struggle for the Guaranteed Annual Wage.

Brain-Washing Experiments Stir Opposition

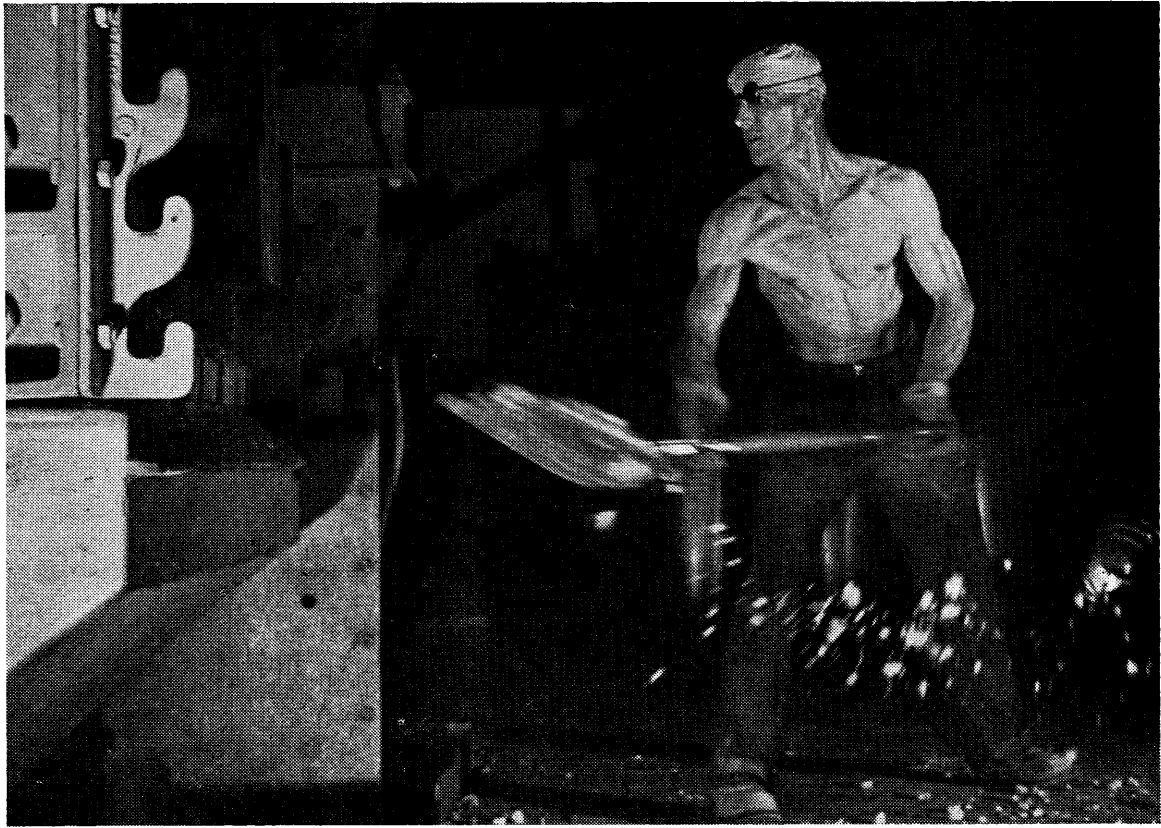
THE publicity given to a technique being practised and developed at the University of Minnesota called "narco interrogation" has resulted in a strong burst of resentment on that campus. Narco interrogation is a method of questioning people when they are deprived of control over their replies by drugs. A full page of extracts from a speech by the chief practitioner of the method was published in the *American Socialist* together with an editorial analysis ("Brainwashing in the United States," April 1955).

Letters to the campus paper, *Minnesota Daily*, are taking up the controversy in energetic fashion. The two experimenters in narcoanalysis, C. B. Hanscom of the university's Department of Protection and Investigation and James H. Matthews of the Division of Anesthesiology, defended it in a lengthy letter on March 29: "The fact and not the manner of its ascertainment is more important to justice. . ." In the same issue a letter signed by five graduate students and by an instructor in anthropology hit hard against narco interrogation: "The police are already heavily armed and any change in their armament should be in the direction of lessening it. . . . While the hose is brutal in the hands of the police, the needle is an insidious assault on our humanity." This led to more letters, and to the publication of a synopsis of the technique by the paper.

A few days later, the campus magazine *Ivory Tower* reprinted the full speech by Hanscom describing the technique, together with critical comments, including an excerpt from the *American Socialist*. Finding it impossible to obtain a picture of himself from Mr. Hanscom, *Ivory Tower* concludes that he wishes to avoid notoriety, and comments that there are other ways of achieving that end: "No newspaper will have any excuse for printing your picture if you just keep your mouth shut."

A letter to *Minnesota Daily* by professor of law Monrad Paulsen makes perhaps the most pointed comments on the drug method of third degree. He quotes from Mr. Justice Felix Frankfurter to show that the use of some methods of gaining information would "be . . . calculated to discredit law and thereby to brutalize the temper of a society," and then goes on: "Apart from resorting to physical force, it is hard to imagine a method of interrogation more 'brutalizing' than questioning an accused human being who has lost, by the injection of drugs, the use of those powers which are the distinguishing mark of his humanity."

As a result of this opposition, a state legislator, Seth Phillips, was thinking of starting an investigation by the state legislature of the use of narcoanalysis, it was reported in the March 31 *Minnesota Daily*.



Rift in Steel

Among the most peculiar pictures in the entire U.S. labor movement is that of the steel union: Over a million strong and headed by a fatuous popinjay who is his own greatest—and almost only—admirer. But a rift has opened in the steel-union leadership which promises future changes.

by **A Special Correspondent**

THERE'S a saying that when things start scraping bottom they have to get better because the only way they can move is up. The news that an opposition to David J. McDonald has arisen in the CIO United Steelworkers of America is a case in point. This appears to be one of those contests where it is not even necessary to find out who is on the other side before starting the hand-clapping. Accustomed as we have become to the toady, the lackey, the self-seeker and careerist, the petty Hitler and the flattery-soak in the unions—McDonald has really exceeded all bounds. He may not have shown us anything new under the sun, but he sure put a shine on everything we've seen before.

With the death of James G. Thimmes in January and the consequent need to elect a new vice president for the USW, that mammoth and well-bureaucratized union is now heading into the first serious internal conflict

among the leading officers since it was founded as the Steel Workers Organizing Committee 19 years ago. A strong minority grouping of district directors, representing about nine of the 31 districts, challenged McDonald at an early March meeting of the executive board, refusing to go along with his choice of replacement and demanding an early election. They won their point to the extent of limiting McDonald's appointment of his long-time chum and office secretary Howard R. Hague to simply "fulfilling the duties" of the vacated office without assuming any titles, and secured an election for later in the year, when the pending negotiations with the steel companies on a wage increase are settled.

Since its foundation, the steel union has displayed a lower-than-average level of internal life in comparison with most of the unions of the CIO. For the first six years of its existence, it had neither constitution, nor elections, nor conventions, nor in fact any real mode of

rank-and-file control. Only in 1942 was the "organizing committee" transformed into a permanent organization, and even then the leading strings were kept firmly in hand.

FOR a host of special reasons, the transplanted miners' officialdom in the steel union was able successfully to graft its methods of rule onto this union. Differences of opinion, contests for important offices, internal factional struggles, contending platforms and polemical campaign literature—all the hurly-burly of inner-union democracy which educated a whole generation of militant unionists in rubber, auto, textile, maritime, packinghouse and other unions—were absent. Later, when the strikes began, at periodic intervals, to close down the industry, they were massive, top-regulated affairs. The turbulent union experiences of the thirties were only occasionally experienced by small segments of the steel union. For the rest, the union remained the true picture of the sleeping giant.

The general result has been an overall stultification. Local leaders have been slow to develop; full-time local officials, paid by the local union, remain the exception rather than the rule, although many large locals need and could afford this. The staff is probably less competent in the steel union than in many lesser unions. Local union newspapers are also a rarity, and the international's paper, *Steel Labor*, does not meet even the mediocre standards set by the run of the union press.

Only this can explain how David J. McDonald was able to take the president's oath of office in 1952 after Philip Murray's death as the unopposed and unanimous leader of over a million steel workers. McDonald rose to his present high position from his original post as private secretary to Philip Murray in the mine union; a job he got in the mid-twenties. Relied upon to handle clerical and administrative duties, he was appointed to the post of secretary-treasurer of the newly formed steel union in 1936, and held that post until 1952. He utilized his position to build a machine of loyal personal supporters who hoisted him to the president's chair in a union which had too dead an internal life and too bureaucratized a tradition and set-up for anyone to be able to do anything about it, although there must have been misgivings in the house.

IN the two and one-half years since taking over, McDonald has blossomed without restraint. His chief characteristic has been revealed—not so much ambition as a truly insatiable and almost pathological vanity. Within a short time, he had exhausted almost every means whereby he could make a public spectacle and intra-union menace of himself.

His first official act of importance was to get himself crossways with an important segment of his union by coming to an inferior agreement with the American Locomotive Company in settlement of a six-month strike. The workers at three striking plants in upstate New York, led by district officials including New York director Joseph P. Molony, simply didn't pay any attention to McDonald's low-grade hand-shake agreement in Washington, continued the strike for another month and won a consider-

ably better contract. Nothing of the kind had ever happened in the steel union.

McDonald rapidly became embroiled in big inner-union politics entirely beyond his understanding. At a time when the CIO was trying to negotiate a unification with the AFL, and needed unity in its own ranks in order to get the best possible terms for industrial unionism and those progressive policies long nourished by the CIO in distinction from the AFL, McDonald went sailing off on his wild adventure with John L. Lewis and Dave Beck. To this day nobody, least of all McDonald, can explain what he hoped to accomplish in that flyer, beyond venting his personal spleen against Reuther.

As contract negotiations loomed, McDonald got a boost from his staunchest friends: the heads of the steel companies. The corporation crew had by this time come to the firm conclusion that David J. McDonald as head of the steel workers was money in the bank for them. McDonald's fall on his face in the American Locomotive Co. negotiations had raised a murmur around the industry—as a matter of fact it was widely printed at the time—that David J. wasn't going to be able to hold on. The 8½-cent package settlement in 1953 and the easy repeat in 1954—at a time when the industry was down to 65 percent of capacity and could have ridden out a long strike—was in the nature of a campaign contribution, or, to put it another way, labor-leader insurance. If McDonald had only known it, he probably could have squeezed out another few cents. But he was too grateful for what he got to ask for more.

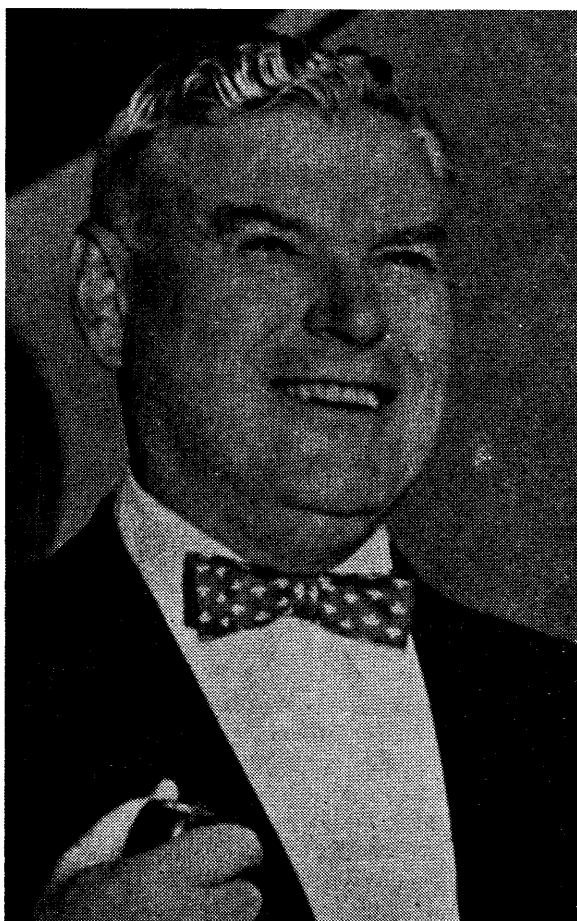
MCDONALD next launched himself with a great splash on the wave of "mutual trusteeship." He toured the steel mills with the corporation executives, he joined with them in dinners and made gushing speeches which they answered with calculating ones, he financed a tour for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, he joined committees, went abroad, made noises like a statesman and civic leader; in brief, he became the very model of a modern Civic Federation unionist—a Matthew Woll in Brooks Brothers tweeds.

Now it may not have struck anybody else that he was doing anything sensational or accomplishing anything substantial—either in a union or civic way—but it appeared that way to McDonald. In fact, he soon was giving free rein to the long-bridled conviction that nothing and nobody like McDonald ever came down the pike in this country. He figured he had given the public so much to celebrate that, within a year, he organized a ludicrous "David J. McDonald Day" in Pittsburgh, and all the steel company executives collaborated with straight faces. The airports and railroad stations were covered with signs, the buildings of downtown Pittsburgh were lighted up, the steel companies bought up the tables for ten at \$20 a plate, and festivities went on in two hotels for the "Man of Steel," as he was dubbed for the occasion.

McDonald had a movie made of the history of the steel union in which Philip Murray hardly got a look-in. He caused his official biography to be written, in which the cloying adulation is plainly insincere and paid for; the riotous extravaganza of bad-taste compliments is beyond belief.

With all this, McDonald is proceeding with a most pathetic incompetence, as this revolt against him shows. To try to saddle the union with his boyhood playmate as heir-apparent, an office clerk without even McDonald's pretensions to a background in the labor movement, was probably the worst move he could have made. Among the powerful and ambitious district directors, it raised a muttering which some were angry enough to express. The entire episode can be explained only by assuming that McDonald has talked himself into a gross over-estimation of his abilities, prestige, and authority.

THE main centers of opposition are two important and very large sections of the union: the Buffalo and Youngstown districts. Joseph P. Molony, director of the New York State district of the union, with headquarters in Buffalo, has been nominated for the vice-presidency, and his nomination has been backed by district conventions in both these key districts. Molony has no special aura of progressivism—he is an average district director in a union where officials run to narrow viewpoints and heavy hands. Last year he obligingly told a book editor of the *Buffalo Evening News* (who was interviewing notables on "Books That Have Shaped My Thinking") that he had read Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" as an 18-year-old in Ireland, and for the next 12 years panted after a chance to serve labor until he got on the staff of the United Steelworkers. But, in a more prosaic interview



DAVID J. McDONALD

two weeks earlier, he told a *Buffalo Courier Express* reporter:

My salary is good and, of course, I can't discount the prestige attached to my job. But most of all, I like it—period. Nothing would make me more violently ill than to read I had joined the labor movement because of some obscure idealistic motives.

The Youngstown district has a record of considerable militancy over the past few years and is headed by James P. Griffin, who bears the distinction of being the only district director (or top official of any kind) to have been carried into office in a rank-and-file campaign against the machine incumbent. Of course that was seven years ago. But in that district there are many with memories of the 1947 upset who understand the possibilities of an opposition campaign.

Molony's district is the second-largest in the union, comprising over 70,000 workers; Griffin's is also very large, taking in some 55-60 thousand. These districts, together with those which supported them at the outset, apparently give the opposition a base of about one-third of the union. So that it is clearly a potent opposition.

MCDONALD hasn't yet signalled which way he's going to jump; he hasn't even come out for his own appointee as yet, and some rumors have it that he may try to ride the revolt out by letting Molony take the post without contest, or by throwing in a compromise candidate. But a battle-royal in the top echelons of the union appears more likely. Moreover, attempts by the insurgents to act as though they are merely honoring a long-time democratic tradition by running a candidate, and to pretend that there is nothing out of the ordinary in the matter, are not likely to succeed. By all indications, this will not be merely an election, but the beginning of a bitter faction battle.

McDonald may not be the smartest strategist in the world, but he controls the central apparatus of the union and most of the districts. In a bureaucratized union, that's the next best thing to being smart—some say even better. In addition, the ranks of the union are not particularly stirred up about the matter, and, in the present situation, are not likely to become exercised to any great degree. In such a fight many advantages lie with the machine, and the position of the opposition is thus a precarious one, where it must roll up great strength and display fortitude and militancy in order to survive.

Although there is no question that the opposition will attract all that is healthy and militant in the union to its side, illusions about its program or physiognomy would be foolish. It does not differ significantly from the rest of the cold-war conservatized leaders of the CIO. But it does display, at least, the minimum competency and standard features of CIO leaderships today, and is not a total hazard to the very existence of the union. In its struggle, moreover, it is bound to lighten the heavy internal atmosphere of the union, to make dissent more possible. If the opposition persists, the fight will accomplish a great task in bringing the steel union into line with the rest of the CIO.

Self-Portrait of a New Look Labor Leader

MAN OF STEEL, The Story of David J. McDonald, by George Kelly and Edwin Beachler. North American Book Co., New York, 1954, 181 pp., illustrated with 26 pictures of David J. McDonald.

ONE of David J. McDonald's first acts in his tenure as steel union head after Murray died was to assist in the publication of an "official" biography of himself. The result was a book of CIO history as it has rarely been written before: a study in transparent egotism and petty vanity of shocking proportions.

The book consists almost entirely of narratives which could have come only from McDonald himself, solemnly recorded with the original self-admiration intact. McDonald reviews his career in the spirit of the self-made man who is convinced that his "success" results from his being a marvel of industry and talent—with a sprinkling of genius—but who occasionally lapses from this pose in order to pay homage to the homespun philosophy of the "lucky break."

Thus, throughout the opening portions of the book, the authors strain the facts to try to show that McDonald was a union man practically from birth. But they unwittingly let the truth show through when they set down his own story of how he got into the union movement as secretary to Philip Murray. McDonald was working as a clerk when he ran into a friend who had just passed up a chance to get that job:

"'And who is this Murray?,' McDonald wanted to know.

"'Why, you ought to know him. He's the vice president of the miners' union.'

"'Nope, never heard of him. But how much did he offer to pay you, Mark?'

"'Oh, about two hundred and twenty-five dollars a month.'

"'Dave whistled sharply. That was nearly three times more than he was making at Wheeling Steel.'

McDonald's relationship to Murray is painstakingly pictured—by means of what the authors and subject of the book thought were subtle nuances but which are just about as subtle as a sixteen-pound sledge—as the relation of a brilliant underling to a doddering dullard who would have fallen on his face if not for the pitching, fielding, hitting and back-stopping of the talented aide he was fortunate enough to have. "Dave carried the heavy behind-the-scenes load. . . . In a very real way his light has been hidden under a bushel. His job was to keep Murray out front. . . . However, it was not until he had succeeded to the presidency that the wraps were thrown off, revealing a dynamic leader who had been loyally straddling a difficult situation like a Colossus."

AMONG the stories which you've never heard before, related for the first time in this book, is the tale of how David J. McDonald saved John L. Lewis from annihilation at the AFL convention of 1935 where the battle over industrial unionism took place which led to the formation of the CIO. Lewis got into a sharp exchange with William Hutcheson of the Carpenters, and Hutcheson called Lewis a "bastard." That much has been known up until now. For the unpublicized remainder of the story, we will let our authors take up the tale:

"Lewis resented this by promptly whopping his fist against the bigger man's eye, ignoring the risk of a severe beating from his oversized foe. Before Big Bill could retaliate, McDonald, a wiry 185-pounder, conditioned by handball and other strenuous exercises, leaped upon Hutcheson. Although Big Bill nearly doubled him in size, Dave pinned him to the floor—employing an old friend-saving trick he had mastered in numerous Greenfield street brawls. . . . The day had been saved for Lewis, not to mention his features. And McDonald won his undying gratitude."

Now came the task of organizing the steelworkers. "Many of the heavy problems fell on his broad shoulders," our Boswells inform us in that tone of never-failing awe and admiration which they maintain throughout. What were the problems? "The financing details," we are told, "were enough to break the back of a weaker man than McDonald." But McDonald was not to be daunted: "Fortunately, he found a sympathetic banker, Clarence W. Orwig, vice president of the Commonwealth Trust Company in Pittsburgh. Through him, he arranged for a checking account. After Dave explained that he would be writing the checks, they shook hands and Banker Orwig said: 'I wish you fellows success.'"

This piece of backbreaking labor completed with his back intact, McDonald moved on to the Little Steel strikes: "But from here in it was tough." Here we are treated to the story of how "Dave . . . averted a possible massacre in Youngstown, Ohio." The director in that district, it seems, was all played out, and "McDonald rushed to the scene. From his room high up in the Ohio Hotel, Dave looked out the window and saw three or four men poised with rifles on the roof of almost every nearby building." This is an illustration of how important it is for every leader to get an overall view of things, a larger picture. McDonald, learning there was to be a "Communist demonstration" that night, called a meeting of his staff, threatened to fire every one of them who had anything to do with the demonstration—"There will be no parade. . . . Now get back to the picket lines where you belong"—and saved the day.

Among the more striking passages of

purple prose in the book are those which describe McDonald as he likes to see himself. McDonald goes in for Brooks Brothers clothes, fancy office suites, and "goes first class everywhere." That, of course, is not so unusual with our present generation of labor leaders, although McDonald, in terms of ostentation and over-playing the thing, is more like an old-line AFL leader than a CIO official.

But McDonald has a theory about the matter: "Striving to achieve the best possible in life for all steelworkers, Dave feels their officers should set the pace." This old joke of the union pie-cards, which they have repeated among themselves for a laugh ever since the first business agent registered at a top hotel and treated himself to filet mignon on the swindle sheet, McDonald takes dead seriously. He makes a point of membership in Pittsburgh's swank Duquesne Club and New York's Union League.

"Nobody was poorer than I was. . . . Now . . . I'm a V.I.P. . . . That's how far labor has come today."

THE authors purvey the McDonald philosophy as though it were a brand-new thought instead of the oldest story in U.S. business unions: "Onto the mid-twentieth century has come a New Look in labor leaders. . . . Dave rarely assaults management with the hackneyed charges that the old-style labor leaders still employ. . . . Instead of kicking his way through the door, he more often charms his way in. . . . Measuring up to Lewis and Murray in ability to pull out the dramatic stops, Dave differs in that he resembles the polished and erratic John Barrymore rather than the fire-eating William Jennings Bryan or spellbinding Billy Graham."

The final interview of the book takes place aboard the S.S. United States, where the peripatetic McDonald is about to take off on a historic mission to Europe. Here our authors catch him in a sombre and philosophic mood:

"Summing up his own career, the Man of Steel gazed out a porthole and said: 'The greatest influence on McDonald has been McDonald. . . . Lewis and Murray influenced my mind, of course. But they didn't change it one bit.'

"There isn't much more," the authors continued, "a man of destiny can say. But Dave McDonald has a final word.

"'Steel is a funny thing,' he mused. 'I remember my first day at National Tube. I went down into the mill. Right in front of me a 50-foot piece of half-inch tubing leaped out of a trough. It was white hot and missed me by a foot. It could have drilled right through me had I taken one more step.

"'But it missed.'"

With these words of the "man of destiny," the book concludes.

Jungle War In Malaya

by Philip Samen

DURING seven years of civil war in Malaya, British armed forces and auxiliaries have been fighting a guerrilla army without being able to vanquish it. Victor Purcell (whose most recent book is reviewed in this issue), a 25-year veteran of the Malayan Civil Service, describes what he saw in Malaya on a 1952 United Nations'

Philip Samen is a San Francisco socialist of many years' standing.

mission in words which recall Indochina before the Geneva truce and China under Chiang Kai-shek:

There was a restlessness, friction, anxiety, wide-spread corruption and a general feeling of discontent. Everywhere there were the symbols of force—troops, barbed wire, helicopters, road-blocks and mobile police in their myriads. The essentially civilian atmosphere of pre-war Malaya had vanished, and a fashion-

able barbarism was taking its place. Politics (except for the "put 'em against a wall" variety) were taboo as a subject of conversation. Meanwhile the "get rich quick" spirit, always too noticeable in Malaya, was stimulated to new excesses by the uncertainty of the future.

British imperialism's stakes in this civil war are high. With an empire already badly weakened, Malaya now substitutes for India as the "brightest jewel in the crown." In 1951, for example, Malaya's exports of tin and rubber earned a net of \$400 million. She paid 83 percent of this into the London sterling pool, to pay for imports from the U.S. The magazine *British Survey* stated in June 1952 that without these earnings, imports from the U.S. would have been cut in half. Malaya furnished during the six years 1946-51 dollar earnings of \$1,713 million, or well over three times the total calculated investment in Malaya as of 1938, coming to over \$285 per capita for Malaya's six-million population. No wonder Britain is vitally interested in holding on to Malaya!

But Malaya exemplifies much more. Here is the last old-style colonial holdout of Western imperialism in an Asia in revolt, a complex of forcible rule

MALAYA: COMMUNIST OR FREE, by Victor Purcell. Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., issued under the auspices of the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1954, \$3.00.

THE COMMUNIST STRUGGLE IN MALAYA, by Gene Z. Hanrahan. Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1954, \$2.00.

MR. PURCELL spent some twenty-five years as a British government representative in the Malayan Civil Service. Using this experience, and two recent trips to Malaya as a UN official, he has attempted in his book what he calls "... a short primer of Malayan politics."

The first concern of Mr. Purcell is to propose a course which will keep Malaya in the British empire. The Chinese and Indochinese revolutions and the independence movements of other Asian countries have infected Malaya. The British reaction—physical extermination of their opponents—has destroyed for Purcell "Malaya's 'golden age' of between the wars . . . which, contrasted with the Malaya of today, was free, cultivated and even glorious."

He proposes a middle road between

communism and colonialism starting with measures of self-government. He would rely on the middle classes in Malaya's "plural society" to carry out the destruction of feudal landlordism but not make "such revolutionary changes as would occur under Communism." The present relations of Britain with India and Ceylon are regarded as the desirable future for Malaya. He is willing to cross his fingers on the chance that a self-governing Malaya would at first break economic ties with Britain but would remake them under a general East-West Asian settlement of the cold war.

Purcell has the merit of showing that the communal divisions, as Malay versus Chinese, would play less of a role if not abetted by British policy and would give way to class divisions which he considers "natural" and, of course, desirable from his point of view.

The trouble with Purcell's proposal is that the British can't afford his experiment. His own work shows why. And the class divisions he says he wants to foster on a European model will make his middle-of-the-road, moderate, third solution only a civil servant's dream—class divisions are already sharpened and basic to the present civil war. The whitewashing of General

Templer (see, for example pp. 240-1, 246) shakes his own solution and does as much as anything else to show its weakness.

HANRAHAN'S mimeographed study is one of a series on Communist movements in Eastern and Southeast Asia. The foreword reports him as a specialist in the study of guerrilla warfare and as having done research in this field for the U.S. Army.

Using documents from many sources including the British colonial government, Japanese occupation authorities, the Malayan Communist Party, Mr. Hanrahan presents his version of the history of the Malayan Communist Party and its struggles. As with the work of Mr. Purcell, Hanrahan is at pains to show that any Communist-led opposition to British rule is purely a foreign and Chinese-imported conspiracy. In this respect his work becomes more of a handbook for police work.

The latter one-third of the book is taken up with translations of Communist documents, or alleged documents, mostly of the Malayan Communist Party. Hanrahan's work, like that of Purcell's, furnishes much material.

P. S.



TAPPING RUBBER TREES

and religious, racial and class conflict. The long, narrow finger of the Malay peninsula in Southeast Asia extends south from Burma to Thailand. It is an area of some 51,000 square miles covered four-fifths with dense tropical jungle. In early times, the aboriginal inhabitants gave way to Malays who engaged in fishing and agriculture. The lower tip of the peninsula, sitting astride ancient trade routes, attracted first Chinese merchants and later skilled craftsmen. In time, Singapore and a few other sites such as Kuala Lumpur grew from villages to cities.

ACTIVE British intervention in the 1870's found a population of diverse character and origins. Extending their interests beyond trade, the British and lesser competitors such as Chinese capitalists brought in Chinese labor to work the tin mines. Rubber trees were imported in the 1870's to be planted in large estates held mainly by Europeans and worked with Indian labor, also imported. In this way originated the "plural" population of Malaya, which, by the census of 1947, was composed as follows:

Origin	Number	Percent
Chinese	2,673,694	45.1
Malay	2,551,458	43.1
Indian	603,105	10.2
Other	95,282	1.6
Total	5,923,539	100.0

If we break down these figures by occupation we get a picture of class relations. Of the Malays the great mass are peasants, growers of rice, coconuts and other food crops, and rubber smallholders; also, Malays are used almost exclusively as Asian recruits to the colonial civil service and police. Some 350,000 to 500,000 Chinese are peasant squatters on land originally reserved by law for Malays. Chinese market gardeners are also found on the outskirts of the few cities. And the Chinese are dominant in retail trade, with Chinese and Indian moneylenders competing where the peasants' distress requires credit. Chinese capitalists with investments in rubber, tin and secondary industries held about 30 percent of total Malayan capital in 1938, and Europeans held the other 70 percent.

The miners, largely Chinese, numbered about 60,000 in 1937. Workers on rubber plantations were about 500,000 in 1952. Of these, the largest number were Indians, a lesser number were Chinese, but in tin mining, as in rubber, almost half were women! Outside of rubber and tin, the working class is employed in other mining, harbor work, and public works. Factory and colliery employment was 25,000 in 1948.

The working class, though it is not an industrial working class in the Western sense, represents a greater relative weight in Malaya than in any other Asian country, embracing about 30

percent of the population according to an estimate of the Malayan Communist Party, which is confirmed by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas' figure in his book, "North from Malaya." Most of the remaining 70 percent is peasant population, with the final total made up by an urban and village middle class, on top of which sits a small native and foreign capitalist and landowning class.

THE economic climate in Malaya depends entirely on world markets and prices for tin and rubber. Three-fourths of agricultural output has been rubber. Of the close to 6 million acres of land cleared of jungle in 1940, only 14 percent was devoted to rice, the principal food. Malaya has produced only half of its rice needs.

The tax structure is different from the rest of Asia as it relies mainly on export duties on tin and rubber and not primarily on the traditional land and consumption taxes. This acts as an additional prod on the colonial government to extend or maintain rubber plantings and tin-mining leases as opposed to any extension of food crops. The emphasis on tin and rubber resulted in a lack of attention to soil fertility and plant diseases. Soil erosion, silting, floods, depletion of freshwater fish followed. Laborers on the estates were discouraged from keeping livestock because of possible danger to rubber trees. The lack of animal husbandry added to the impoverishment of the soil. Thus Malaya has exhibited the historical tendency of those imperialist-exploited nations which, as they were developed as sources of raw materials, have become less and less self-sufficient in food supply and more and more dependent upon the world price of the raw materials they sell.

When the price of tin fell from a high of \$1.27 a pound in 1951 to \$.80 in 1953, and crude natural rubber fell from \$.49 a pound to \$.20 (these drops came with the cessation of U.S. stockpiling as the Korean War ended), economic crisis came to Malaya. Indian and Chinese workers on the rubber estates found themselves unemployed. The Malay rubber smallholders and Chinese squatters can turn to subsistence food crops in the absence of a market for rubber, but then they find themselves enmeshed with the

moneylenders for credit to satisfy current needs.

The Malay peasant has an average holding estimated at 2½ acres. One government official estimated in 1939 that it required four acres to provide a monthly income of \$8 after paying religious tithes. Out of the \$8 came at that time the water rate and feudal quit-rent. The report of the Rice Production Committee (1953) let out that for the previous ten years there had been continual evictions of Malay peasants for failure to pay rents and "tea money" (extracted as an extra fee when renewing a lease). This is the condition of the "favored" Malay peasant to whom colonial apologists have pointed with pride.

IN Malaya, there is collected a last residue in Asia of all the century-old devices of imperialist rule, a mosaic and cross-compounded complex resting upon force. The British have used federalism, citizenship restrictions, immigration controls, appointive government, local government despotism, feudal hangovers, Malay preference in civil service and land reservations, an attempt to enforce English at one time and Malay at another as the common language, and, most recently, registration and licensing of businesses. All of these are part of a calculated policy of divide and rule, with the weight of discrimination against the Chinese. The Chinese and Indians (together over 55 percent of the population) have been virtually deprived, except for a few hand-picked upper-class representatives, from any political participation.

The apologists for continuing British rule point to the "plural" character of the Malayan population. As F. G. Carnell put it, "In view of the country's multiple disunities, the only realistic policy is, therefore, the retention of British control for an indefinite period. . . ." (*Pacific Affairs*, June 1953). Each apologist cites a bewildering list of disunities: class divisions, Malays versus Chinese, divisions within the Malay and Chinese communities, no common political parties, differing allegiances to India, China, Indonesia, no common language, no experience of common citizenship, religious differences, etc. Many of these differences certainly exist, but what is left out of these recitals is that it was the

British who helped create many of these divisions, perpetuated them, and utilize them to this day. Purcell, in his above-cited book, states: "It is an irony that if our predecessors had not 'betrayed the Malays' by creating an equally balanced plural society, and thus ensured our continued possession of Malaya, we in Britain might have to do without American films and tobacco and go on half rations."

Malaya is in the earlier stages of the same process of nationalist and social revolution which has come to a climax in China and Indochina; the guerrilla war that continues so stubbornly is proof of that. Behind the flareup of the guerrilla war in 1948 was a developing movement for independence which the British tried frantically to suppress. And in Malaya as elsewhere, that developing movement was closely bound up with the growth of the modern labor movement.

DEVELOPMENT of trade unions in Malaya has been intimately connected with the Malayan Communist Party. The high point was in 1947, when the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions under left-wing leadership was at the head of 214 out of 277 registered unions in Malaya, including the largest and most important ones: tin, rubber, longshore. The left wing was able to claim leadership over 75 percent of all organized workers in Malaya at that time.

The colonial government, always quick to listen to rubber, tin and other

employers, had passed the Trade Union Enactment of 1940, providing for the compulsory registration of all unions, auditing of union accounts, prohibition of use of union funds in politics, and legalizing some aspects of collective bargaining. The most notable enforcement of this act came in 1941, on the eve of Japanese occupation, when all strikes were declared illegal and troops and armored cars were used to enforce the ban.

After the end of the Japanese occupation, open union activity resumed. Beginning in Singapore and then extending to the States of the Federation, General Labor Unions were formed under left-wing leadership. A general strike of two days was called in January 1946 to protest the arrest by the British of 30 former members of the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), which had been active during the occupation against the Japanese with official British approval. The colonial government used this strike as a pretext to re-institute the act of 1940. The General Labor Union thereupon reorganized into the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, claiming a membership of 463,000.

The rise in the influence of the Left-led unions was met further by the enforcement, from June 1948, of the Trade Unions (Amendment) Ordinance. This barred union officials with less than three years' experience in the industry concerned, barred officials convicted of crimes, and banned all union federations other than those in

"What About them Kiddies?"

AS we were leaving, a soldier said, "What about them kiddies, sir?"

I said, "What about them?"

He answered, "Well, I was wondering, sir, whether they'd have enough to eat while the grown-ups were all away."

It struck me, then, that we had found no food in the house, so we went back and I told Lee Cheng what we were looking for. He went up to the open matti fireplace, which was raised on a rickety wooden stand in the kitchen, put his hand behind the stand and pressed some gadget which was hidden there. A trapdoor fell open near his feet and revealed a large hole. I shone a torch into it and saw a store of rice and other Chinese foodstuffs. I told Lee Cheng to bring it all up and stack it in the

kitchen. It took him ten minutes to finish the job with the help of the soldier. I left enough for the children to feed on for four days and took the rest away. It was obvious that there was more food here than could be eaten by all the members of the household over a period of three months. I assumed that the balance must be destined for the bandits. In any case, it was unlawful for householders to store food in excess of their requirements. I took another look at the children, who were all sitting quite still and quiet in exactly the same positions as when we first came in. We left.

"Jungle Green" by Arthur Campbell. (Incidents such as these in his pro-British novel, Campbell claims, are based on fact.)



one occupation or industry. The Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions was outlawed, and the labor movement atomized. The unions were left to the leadership of imported British "experts," who attempted to form "legal" unions. The number of registered unions dropped from 339 just before the outbreak of civil war to 162, and the total of union members fell to a low of 40,000 in 1949, then rose back again to 165,493 in 1951. In the latter year, most of the membership was made up of Indians.

The Malayan Communist Party gave leadership to the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army during the Japanese occupation. This army attained the numbers of 6-7,000 in 1945. Accepting British technical aid during the war, it held in abeyance the demand for a republic. The departure of the Japanese left the MPAJA in control of Malaya.

BBRITISH arrival in Malaya in September 1945, reinstatement of their control, and the pushing out of the MPAJA, was facilitated by the inertia of the Malayan Communist Party. The wartime agreement of the MCP with the British, its lack of deeper roots in the Malay and Indian populations,

and the favorable attitude toward the British on the part of the Malay aristocracy and Chinese capitalists ensured British success. Some 6,800 members of MPAJA disbanded in December 1945, receiving \$350 each, and gave up their arms, although the British complained later that many arms caches remained.

In 1946, the Malayan Communist Party organized meetings and demonstrations on the fourth anniversary of the fall of Singapore to the Japanese, to commemorate the victims of the Japanese occupation. The British forbade the meetings and looked upon them as an anti-British demonstration. They raided in advance the MCP headquarters, its Youth League, and the Singapore General Labor Union. The demonstrations were broken up in Singapore and the state of nearby Johore with bloodshed, and ten Communist leaders were deported.

According to Hanrahan in "The Communist Struggle in Malaya," the Malayan Communist Party at that time stood for a nine-point program: self-rule in Malaya, a democratic constitution to provide for an all-Malayan National Assembly and democratic state councils, the vote to all without discrimination, civil liberties, expansion

of the economy, price control, reduction of oppressive taxation, multi-language education, eight-hour day, improved working conditions, equal rights for women in politics and society, and a foreign policy of aiding independence of Far Eastern nations and the preservation of world peace.

The Malayan civil war broke out in June 1948. Although the usual British explanation blames the outbreak on the Communists, charging that a plan for an uprising was drawn up at the Calcutta Congress of the CP of India in February 1948, Purcell remarks that the "outbreaks" had the appearance of being spontaneous and un-coordinated.

The British proclaimed a state of emergency in the Federation June 18, and extended it to Singapore on June 24. The pretext was "terrorist activity" against rubber-estate owners and against Chinese supporters of Chiang Kai-shek. The call of the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army in July 1948 for its former members to take up arms against the British and for the organization of a Malayan Peoples' Liberation Army was the answer to the purge of the trade unions and the outlawing of the Malayan Communist Party. Hanrahan describes the opening stage as follows:

Instead of mobilizing quietly and attempting a lightning coup (their only reasonable chance of success), the Communists were content first to declare their intentions, then to mobilize slowly, relying upon the classical theory of a protracted war. This strategy only served to telegraph their punches. The British, on the other hand, mobilized immediately. Before long, the government instituted a special static defense system, organized special police and militia forces, imported former Force 136 personnel [used in the Japanese occupation] and Palestine police to track down the Reds and, in addition, set up a national registration and identity-card system.

In addition to the national registration and identity cards, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, reporting on his 1952 trip to Malaya, lists the following measures and punishments employed by the British:

Possession of arms—death penalty.
 Giving supplies to guerrillas—death penalty.
 “Consorting” with anyone in illegal possession of arms—life imprisonment or death penalty.
 Failure to inform—ten years.
 Collective punishment against communities for aiding and abetting guerrillas—fines, curfews.
 Control of food and medicine in certain areas.
 Searches, seizures and arrests without warrants.
 Dissolution or receivership for a business aiding guerrillas.
 Deportation or detention of suspects without trial.
 No *habeas corpus*.
 No jury trials.

But Douglas insists that “these episodes, oppressive as they are, do not make Malaya a police state.” Instead, he finds “in the courtrooms there is a flowering of British justice.” Why? Because all who go through the courts get “due process of law.” The legal mind!

NO doubt due process of law covers also this emergency regulation: Where “a person is found in possession of supplies intended for the use of terrorists, and it is not possible to produce any person from whom they were demanded: In future such a person will be sentenced to death unless he can prove that he has not been a collector of subscriptions or a receiver of supplies for bandits.” (The *London Times*, July 13, 1950.)

And the author of the pro-British novel on Malaya, “Jungle Green,” wrote the following concerning the trial of a rebel:

It was a very difficult figure to estimate, but, when everything had been considered, including the man's board and lodging while the case was being prepared, the cost of the police guard, his lawyers, which the Government paid for, and the cost of the court itself, a very rough estimate would run at well over two thousand pounds. . . . The total gave me food for thought. A bullet cost 1½ pence.

The British High Commissioner and “bandit-killer” General Templer gave official approval to this novel.

The most drastic of the measures is collective punishment, a device of long history in British colonial rule. Communities suspected of collaboration with “bandits” [this British term, incidentally, is the same that the Japanese always used for opponents of their colonial rule] were resettled in new villages. The official reason, of course, was “protection” of the new villagers. That protection consisted of double barbed-wire enclosures, floodlit stockades, sentries, curfews, and the constant threat of detention on suspicion in the midst of all this protection. It was estimated that, beginning in 1950, this plan, carried out initially under Director of Operations General Briggs and then by the notorious High Commissioner General Templer after February 1952, had resettled over 500,000 people in some 500 new villages by the end of 1952. The economic effects of this were that rice production had fallen by one-third, vegetable growing, pig rearing and rubber tapping were interrupted, not to speak of the confiscation of many rubber smallholdings or their reversion to jungle growth.

But of course officially, these measures were not collective punishment.

Officially admitted collective punishment included such incidents as the following: In 1948, Kachau village was burned down by the police. At Batang Kali, 24 Chinese were killed “attempting to escape” and the towns of Pulai and Tras were heavily fined. In retaliation for the ambushing of a British patrol near Tanjong Malim, a 22-hour curfew was put on the town of 20,000 people, its rice ration reduced, and sealed answers to a questionnaire were required of the villagers. Some 28 people were arrested in this town. After 13 days, the curfew was lifted and the rice ration restored. Similar punishment was issued in a whole series of cases into 1953.

A Chinese resettlement officer was slain in the village of Permatang-Tinggi in August 1952. When the village did not respond to Templer's demand for information, 62 men, women and children were put in detention, the village was levelled to the ground, and some of the villagers deported.

BUT collective punishment (“civic courses,” in Templer's words) failed to stamp out civil war. In November 1953, collective punishment



was officially "abolished." In its place, according to Han Suyin, writing from Johore in the *Reporter* for Dec. 16, 1954, there was food restriction (read: partial starvation); curfews in two-thirds of the country from 7 P.M. to 6 A.M.; all-day-and-night curfews where military operations are in progress; house-to-house searches; confiscation of literature and of "extra" medicine, rice, etc.

A Federation Government White Paper stated: "It may sometimes be necessary to detain a man before he has actually committed any offense at all." By Sept. 15, 1948, it was officially announced in the House of Commons that 7,000 were detained without charge and 183 trade union leaders were imprisoned. In March 1950, it was reported in the *Daily Telegraph* that since the beginning of the civil war, 10,000 had been deported and 10,000 had been held in internment camps. By March 2, 1951, the concentration camps held 11,530 prisoners. Purcell reports that in 1953, 3,703 persons including 493 dependents — mostly children! — were detained in the Federation, and 70 in Singapore. The head of the Government Workers Union complained to Justice Douglas in 1952 of the use of the detention law in labor disputes.

Each year, the Malayan government issues a balance sheet of the civil war and expects to "clean out all the bandits" by the next year. The cost to the Federation government was reported to be 700 million Malay dollars to August 1953; the British aided with large additional funds.

In 1953, the Federation Government casualty figures for the civil war up to January 1953 were 7,640 for the Liberation Army, 2,803 civilians killed or missing, 3,588 casualties for the Government forces, with the figures mounting into 1955. Yet by May 31, 1954, Purcell reports (*Nation*, June 19, 1954) the Liberation Army was still estimated at 5-6,000, facing 40,000 British troops, 100,000 police, and over 200,000 home guards. At present writing, it is expected that Australian troops are also to be brought in!

THE main forces of the Liberation Army are in the jungle, where they plant food crops for subsistence. Although the jungle covers a large por-

tion of Malaya, the peninsula is laced with modern roads, railroads and tele-communication lines. In addition, the rubber estates and smallholdings and the tin mines are scattered to remote areas adjacent to jungle and agricultural areas. Most of Malaya is accessible from the city of Kuala Lumpur in one day. This kind of terrain makes it easier for a sympathetic population to aid the Liberation Army. The Min Yuen, an organization formed to aid in the supply of the revolutionary forces, was estimated at 20,000 in 1950 and at 10-15,000 in 1954.

British paratroopers who recently attacked the jungle food patches have been set upon by aborigines armed with blow-pipes and poisoned darts. Many of the aborigines, totalling 35,000 in the Federation, have been angered by attempts at resettlement. The Federation Government complains of the "radar screen" of aborigines protecting the guerrillas, and has become alarmed because the aborigines have received aid of seed, poultry and new agricultural methods from the Liberation Army. It is doubtful that the recent use of jet planes spreading poison on jungle food patches has helped the British any with the aborigines.

But what has hit the British harder than anything else is the beginning of a movement among the Malay peasantry. The *London Times* reported already in 1949 that 25 percent of the guerrillas were Malays, vehemently denied later. Han Suyin, in his *Reporter* article, cited claims that 30,000 Malay villagers support the Malayan Communist Party. Constant recruiting for the Liberation Army is assured by the ever-declining standard of living: official government figures show that real wages are 20 percent below pre-war, while rubber profits have reached as high as 60 to 100 percent annually.

The most important recent development is the beginning of disaffection among layers of the population formerly depended on by the British. A "left wing" of journalists, minor civil servants, Western-educated Malays, etc., hostile to the British, is reported to have arisen and begun to demand Federal and State elections. The United Malays National Organization and the Malayan Chinese Association are the two chief organizations representing capitalist, petty-capitalist, professional

and civil-services social layers in Malaya. Their programs have looked to cooperation with the British in the hope of eventual self-government in the British Commonwealth. Whereas in their formative periods both UMNO and MCA had official approval as a counterweight to the Communist Party, they are now starting to develop frictions with the sultans and the British High Commissioner. They have demanded that the government assure them of a 60 percent elective council, to make possible a government of their party alliance. This demand has been refused by the British Colonial Office in London. Thereupon the UMNO-MCA alliance called for withdrawal from all councils in the federation.

MEANWHILE the "liberals" among the British both in Malaya and England, feeling that the military operations have failed, favor giving the UMNO and MCA the self-government they demand. They complain that the Communists still offer the only hope to Malayan nationalists, and plead that a change of policy could deprive the Communists of much support. But British rejection of the demand for a council with a 60-percent-elected composition eliminates these prospects.

In his *Reporter* article, Han Suyin cites a typical answer he received on asking opinions of well placed Malaysians of various groupings as to why they were elated over the fall of Dien-bienphu:

Well, of course in one way I don't like it. I don't like Communism. But in another way I'm pleased about it because the French ought to have got out long ago. It's a good lesson for the whites. Colonial government is out.

With the economic situation not improving, with more and more unbearable conditions of life for the people, with the recent example of Indochina fresh in mind, and adding the extensive demonstrations against National Service Registrations in June 1954 to the fever chart, it would be safe to say that "colonial government is out" in the not too distant future in Malaya as well.

Each of the three articles published in this space deals with a very important aspect of socialist analysis. The first, written by an economist for a large Midwestern firm, discusses the possibility of a 1929-type collapse of the American economy. The second, sent to us by a college instructor, goes into the question of the type of socialist party the author believes necessary in America. The third article, written by a teacher and active

leftist, polemicizes for the point of view that the Left needs independent political action.

Each of the above articles was unsolicited by us, a fact which leads us to believe that there may be many more such expressions of opinion latent among our readers. Contributions should not exceed 1,500 words; articles will be judged solely for their seriousness and interest.

Another 1929?

by Henry Haase

IT seems to be commonplace nowadays to find statements to the effect that the increased role of government in the economy makes unlikely another 1929-type crash. For instance, in *Monthly Review*, December 1954: "Turning now from the past to the future, it should be obvious that our analysis provides no support for the view that there is likely to be a repetition of the Great Depression." Or, in a speech by Bert Cochran (*American Socialist*, January 1955): "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. . ."

There will be recessions or severe but short depressions, it is said, but a catastrophic crash and prolonged depression is no longer in the cards. The armament expenditures will see to that. Though these people cannot be accused of succumbing to the "new era" optimism that is drummed out today no less than in the twenties, still these phrases seem to have caught up with that stream of thought.

Just how much has the growth in armament expenditures increased the stability of the American economy?

The table below divides the total domestic output of the economy into stable and unstable sectors. The stable sectors increased their percentage of total output from 1929 to 1933, while the unstable factors fell, as the figures indicate, as a percent of total output. But from then to the present, the trend has been in the other direction.

Table I
Total Output of the Economy Divided into Stable and Unstable Sectors; 1929, 1933 and 1955 (Percentages)

Stable Sector	1929	1933	1955 (est.)
Consumer Non-Durable Spending	38.9	47.4	33.7
Consumer Service Spending	24.2	29.7	24.1
Government Spending	9.1	14.4	19.4
Total	72.2	91.5	77.2
Unstable Sector			
Consumer Durable Spending	8.7	6.5	8.2
Investment	18.0	2.0	14.4
Total	26.7	8.5	22.6

Government expenditures as a percent of all expenditures more than doubled from 1929 to 1955 and now account for about a fifth of the production of goods and services in this country.

But not all of the increase in the government sector was at the expense of the unstable elements. In fact, the two very unstable elements of business investment and consumer durable goods purchases accounted for less than half of the increase in the government sector. The largest gain in the government sector was at the expense of the other two more stable sectors in the economy: consumer expenditures for non-durables and for services. Though the unstable sectors have become less important in the economy, the change has not been quite so great as merely looking at the government sector alone might lead one to believe.

THERE are other indications that the so-called stability in our economy is not so great as we might think.

Layoffs in a depression are heavily concentrated in manufacturing. The manufacturers prefer to limit production rather than reduce prices. In agriculture, however, total employment is unusual; rather there is underemployment and also low returns because of greatly declining prices.

As Table II shows, employment in 1953 was more heavily concentrated in manufacturing than it was in 1929.

Table II
Employment in Agriculture, Government and Manufacturing; 1929 and 1953 (Percentages of Total Employment)

	1929	1953
Agriculture	9.8	3.8
Government	8.9	18.1
Total	18.7	21.9
Manufacturing	29.1	31.2

Though stable government employment had more than doubled between 1929 and 1953, almost two-thirds of its gain was at the expense of the equally stable agricultural sector. The other one-third came from sectors of employment such as finance and trade that tend to be slightly unstable in a downturn. The really unstable manufacturing sector increased almost as much as the combined government and agricultural sectors.

Probably the greatest upsetter of the economic applecart is business spending for inventories. The changes in business inventories are included in business investment and this is a chief cause of instability in investment.

But the level of business inventories is also very significant, for the higher the level of business inventories the longer factories can be completely shut down as business lives on its inventories.

Overproduction appears as inventories and so inventories serve as an indication of the extent of overproduction in the economy.

In 1929, inventories were about twenty billions. Now, they are at about eighty billions or four times as great. Over the same period total output about doubled, so that in relation to output inventories are now double what they were in 1929.

When these things are considered in light of the fundamental fact that the basic class structure of American society, with its attendant distribution of income, remains at about what it was in 1929, the possibility of a 1929-type crash certainly can't be ruled out.

A Debs-Type Party

by George Woodard

DURING the 1908 presidential campaign, Gene Debs sat in the home of Victor Berger and was interviewed by the famous writer Lincoln Steffens.

Steffens wanted to know what the Socialists would do about the trusts if elected to office.

"Take them!" Debs shot back.

This brought Berger in protest from his chair.

"No! No you wouldn't. Not if I was around. And you can't say it for the Party either. It's as much my party as it is yours. My answer is that we would offer to pay for them."

Debs let Berger blow off this steam, and then cheerfully went on with what he was saying. It did not worry Debs that another leading member of the Socialist Party publicly disagreed with him.

In an article called "Sound Socialist Tactics," Debs



EUGENE V. DEBS

said that he thought it was a good thing that other Socialists at times expressed views which were in sharp disagreement with his own.

In this same article, Debs explains the sort of party in which he himself believed.

Of course the Socialist movement is essentially a working class movement. . . .

An organization of intellectuals would not be officered and represented by wage-earners; neither should an organization of wage-earners be officered by intellectuals.

There is plenty of useful work for the intellectuals to do without holding office. . . .

I believe, too, in rotation in office. I confess to a prejudice against officialism and a dread of bureaucracy. I am a thorough believer in the rank and file, and in ruling from the bottom up instead of being ruled from the top down. The natural tendency of officials is to become bosses. They come to imagine that they are indispensable and unconsciously shape their acts to keep themselves in office.

The officials of the Socialist Party should be its servants, and all temptation to yield to the baleful influence of officialism should be removed by constitutional limitation of tenure.

Mr. W. Z. Foster has criticized Debs very sharply for failure to understand the need for a "party of a new type" and for what Foster calls "bourgeois-democratic prejudice."

There is no doubt that the Communist Party, for which Foster speaks, is, in its organizational forms, the exact opposite of the sort of Socialist Party in which Debs believed.

AT a time when the CP is bearing the brunt of the blows of reactionaries one might prefer not to call attention to its shortcomings. Yet there are two facts which we cannot overlook.

Until recently the CP was the main current of American radicalism. This means that in some way the CP had more on the ball than any other group in the American Left. At the same time this dominance by the CP has ended in the collapse and destruction of the American Left. This means that the CP threw the ball in the wrong direction. It is necessary that we understand the reason for the CP's downfall so that American socialists will never make that same mistake again.

I think that the fundamental thing that was wrong with the CP was its concept of the party, as contrasted with Debs's concept of what a socialist party should be.

Take a specific incident to illustrate this. In 1944 Mr. Earl Browder, then head of the CP, developed the somewhat startling theory that there need be no more class struggle in America because the capitalists, out of enlightened self-interest, were about to lead the country by a gradual and peaceful route into the promised land of socialism.

Mr. Foster violently disagreed with this new line. Yet he kept this disagreement to himself even during the

period of discussion prior to official adoption of this line. He kept his real thoughts to himself while individuals who expressed their disagreement with the line were ruthlessly hounded out of the organization.

We cannot understand this behavior of Foster's unless we see that it is based upon a particular idea of what a socialist party should be. And we cannot understand what sort of party Foster wants unless we see that he is at least trying to follow the example of Lenin and the other leaders of the Russian Revolution.

The greatness of Lenin and the other Russian leaders was that they built a movement which exactly suited the needs of an illiterate people living under brutal police repression.

As any reader of Jack Reed's "Ten Days that Shook the World" knows, Lenin's party had a kind of rough-hewn democracy about it. There was a tremendous amount of discussion within the party, factional activity, and so on, as well as interplay with other political groups. Two or three years later this rough-hewn democracy gave place to the bureaucracy and officialism which Debs feared.

Yet a study of Lenin's "What Is to be Done?" will show that from the beginning there was a certain paternalism in his attitude toward the non-party workers. This was caused by the illiteracy of the Russians, just as the conspiratorial methods which Lenin used were caused by the brutal police repression.

Lenin taught that the non-party workers would have to let the Party do their thinking for them, because only members of the Party have the kind of organized contact with one another which makes group thinking possible.

When CP leaders, in Russia and elsewhere, began to take the same paternalistic attitude toward the rank and file of their own party that Lenin had taken toward the rest of the working class, bureaucracy took control.

FOSTER'S behavior is an example of just that sort of bureaucracy. It shows that he assumed that such an important theoretical question could not be decided by the rank and file. It could be decided only by the top leaders. Therefore he would not bother the rank and file about something which it was not in their province to decide.

Debs from the beginning sensed the mistake in the CP's approach to the American people. He stated that the American Communists were fine people, just as good socialists as he himself, and he wanted to be in the same movement with them, but he thought that they were going off on a wrong path.

He rejected their conspiratorial methods because he felt that they would repel and demoralize the American workers. He also warned that the use of such tactics in America would bring with it a host of informers who would fasten themselves upon the socialist movement.

He rejected the CP idea that other members of the working class should let the Party do their thinking for them. In every one of his speeches to the American people Debs assumed that each of his hearers was a man and had a brain, and Debs called upon him to use it.

Anyone who has any experience with the American CP, whether or not a member of it, knows that bureaucracy was the cancer which ate away the vitality of that

organization. We now need a new Marxist party which will be free from that malignant disease.

Yet before we can achieve the above goal, it is necessary that American Socialists see that the original mistake which led to this bureaucracy was a failure to understand that in some ways Debs knew more about what America needed than Lenin did.

Bad as the thinking of the American working class is at times, it will only follow a leadership which assumes that the workers have brains, and calls upon them to use those brains. They will only follow leaders who try to share with them the task of thinking.

This brings us right back to the sort of party which Debs wanted.

Yet such a genuinely democratic American Socialist Party was never achieved during Debs's lifetime.

For American Socialists it still belongs to the future. It is the future form of American Socialism. More than that, it is the future of America herself.

Needed: 3rd-Party Movement

by An Active Leftist

THE doubters of third-party politics at this juncture in American history offer one underlying reason to justify their position: the danger of further isolation. Their argument runs something like this: The American people must pass through stages; at each stage a new level of consciousness will develop which will call forth a new level of political activity; to move faster than the masses are prepared to go will lead to further isolation—that is, leaders without followers. Since most people still have faith in capitalism and the Democratic Party, independent politics will further sever the distance between the Left and the American people; therefore, their advice is to stay where the people are and work within the existing organizations to bring about an atmosphere that will make an independent position more feasible and easy to deliver.

As coherent as this kind of reasoning sounds, it will not bring about the desired objective; that is, the defeat of the tyrannical trends in our culture and the emergence of the Left into the mainstream of American political life. Isolation is the result of abstinence from the right kind of independent politics and not because of it. The Democratic Party cannot be revived to move forward where the New Deal stopped. This is only wishful thinking. The impending Western European crisis, the relative military and economic strength of the Eastern world, and the contradictions in our own economic system are issues which keep the Democratic Party from developing a sufficient core (aside from a few isolated individuals) that is capable of attempting an honest, liberal solution to our problems. Furthermore, the few leftists who are thinking of reviving the Democratic Party are neither numerically strong enough nor sufficiently influential to do the job.

OUR present political and social climate will change only to the extent that a third-party movement originates to change it. The failure to uphold an independent political perspective in as critical a period as the one in

which we are today living has dissipated completely the creativity of the Left and caused further ingrown ideology that is separate from immediate and mass issues. The politically sterile sects that shout out only revolutionary "truths," or that part of the Left which too frequently makes expedient adjustments at the expense of basic education, are the outcome of a long separation of ideology and immediate issues. An attempt to organize a broad third-party movement is the first step needed to bring about a semblance of unity on the Left and an opportunity to present a meaningful alternative to Washington's policies.

The main source of the American radical movement, the Communist Party, has historically swung between two extremes. It has either tended to label every reformist movement as fascistic (as was the case in the early thirties), thus detaching itself from the bulk of the issues which the masses were trying to understand; or it has dissolved its energy and self into reformist organizations, thus causing a loss of identity and creative deliverance of radical ideas to the American people. Fluctuation between these two extreme positions has culminated in a situation where there are a large number of sincere leftists who are "floating" without being able to find a suitable organization for work.

In regressive situations like the one which we are pass-


ing through now, third-party politics is pressure (if nothing more) on the Democratic Party to remain in the center and not become too much like the party on the right. When the Progressive Party was relatively strong in 1948, the Democratic program was most liberal, because of its concern about those marginal voters who were considering the Progressive ticket. The Democratic Party's liberalism decreased in proportion to the dissipation of the PP.

It is time now for a third party, in spite of all the difficulties that will be encountered in its organization. To prophesy that this is not the time or that one cannot exist is to keep it from actually forming.

The organization of a third party should grow from honest, open debate about the concrete situation. Whether the isolation of the Left is increased or diminished does not center so much about the existence of a third party in and of itself, but centers about the content, program, and tactics of that party.

Commodity men say it will be hard for Washington to take action that will keep farm commodities from sagging still further. Price support programs are no longer effective in reducing the glut, they say. A drought or other crop disaster might do it, they add. . . .

Business Week March 26, 1955



BOOK REVIEW

The Informer

FALSE WITNESS, by Harvey Matusow.
Cameron and Kahn, New York, 1955,
\$1.25 paper, \$3.00 cloth.

THE once-glimmering galaxy of government witnesses has been growing dim of late: Paul Crouch is being "investigated," Manning Johnson and Leonard Patterson have been acknowledged as "unreliable," Elizabeth Bentley is a broken person who has found refuge in a small Southern school, Marie Natvig and Lowell Watson have quietly admitted their lies, and Matt Cvetic reportedly has been institutionalized for severe mental illness.

With the publication of Harvey Matusow's book the informer world is illuminated once more, but this time by the light of exposé. Under the expert guidance of the author, the reader makes a startling tour of the upper world of American cold-war politics.

Matusow is one of those marginal people who occasionally creep into the crevices of the social structure and manage to shake it a bit. Regardless of his personal motiva-

tions, he reflects wider social forces because of the scope of his activities. He has stressed this himself: "I'm quite amazed at the type of approach the anti-McCarthy press has taken on this. That is, forgetting the real issue. . . . I consider that in what I'm doing and the revelations that are coming out now, I am completely unimportant. The question is, who used me, that is important. For what ends?"



HARVEY MATUSOW

Matusow joined the Communist Party in 1947 in search of "identity," contacted the FBI in 1950, and was expelled from the CP early in 1951. His "disillusionment"

with the CP was not occasioned by political disagreement. Party life apparently did not properly gratify his ego: "The Communist Party all too frequently regarded its membership as Man—with a capital M—forgetting that man—with a small m—existed." One strongly suspects that he would not have objected to the party regarding Man with a capital M, provided the M stood for Matusow.

WHILE doing a stint in the Air Force he was initiated into the arcana of witnessing by a couple who had been FBI agents. They handed down to him such rites as playing his "big cards one at a time," and pointing an accusing finger at a member of the audience in a hearing room. He finally landed a job as "investigator" with the Ohio Un-American Activities Commission (\$300 per month plus expenses), and assisted that outfit in setting up its big top in the major industrial cities of Ohio where he helped do a job on the independent United Electrical union. He compiled the required lists with the help of police files, company personnel records, and the active assistance of the IUE-CIO ("Bill Snoots, then head of District 7, IUE, told me that his union was cooperating with the commission in order to capture jurisdiction of the UE shops.")

From there on, his progress was rapid. He testified at the second Smith Act trial against CP leaders (Roy Cohn "worked feverishly hard in getting me to memorize my lines"), reported on the "Communist plot" to "indoctrinate tots" with "political nursery rhymes," had William Jansen, New York City Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. J. J. Theobald, president of Queens

College, grovelling at his feet in their search for "names," helped to get Owen Lattimore indicted ("I climaxed my testimony with the dramatic assertion that Owen Lattimore's books were used as the official Communist Party guides on Asia. Once again, I told a complete falsehood."), and campaigned extensively for Senators McCarthy, Watkins, McCarran and Cain. By the time he was permitted to call McCarthy a "Fascist son of a bitch" with impunity and watch him "float to bed in a sea of bourbon" on election night, Matusow had reached the big time he had been eyeing so long. It was chiefly as a result of his false testimony that Clinton Jencks, organizer for the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union, was convicted of perjury.

And so the sordid, cynical, humor-spiked story draws to a close, with Matusow finally repenting: "I had been helping create a system in this country whereby these children and those to come would no longer be free to inquire as to things, places and people."

THE informer system is the result of a confluence of established traditions of due process and incipient fascist forces. To achieve their repressive aims through ostensibly democratic procedures, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations required the witness and his "facts." The book thus dramatically reveals the widening gap between the professed ideals and actual practices prevailing today. This gap was pointedly brought out when the *N. Y. Times* for over a year considered as not fit to print an affidavit by Matusow recanting his charge that this newspaper employed 126 Communists on its Sunday supplement.

Matusow's sensational and graphic narrative packs a powerful political wallop, for it may help large numbers of people to better appreciate the inroads of police-state practices into our national life. It is gratifying to learn that the first printing of 50,000 copies has already been exhausted.

There can be no doubt that the informer racket was dealt a severe blow by Matusow's revelations. It would be unwise, however, to believe that this book, as John Steinbeck recently put it, "may well be the little push which causes the pendulum of common sense to swing back."

The forces which made a Matusow possible are still inherent in the logic of the cold war and have not abandoned their aims. Attorney General Brownell is trying to get a law passed which would permit perjury prosecutions for conflicting testimony without the prior necessity of establishing in which case the witness testified falsely. The FBI has not ceased searching for new Matusows to replenish its stables. And both Matusow and one of his publishers have been charged with contempt.

This book, however, brings important aspects of the witch-hunt home to a large potential readership, topples many false idols, and, in spite of its grim story, makes us laugh at them. And where laughter sets in, fear and paralysis recede. The rebirth

of our democratic tradition will result from the interaction of many events and personalities, and "False Witness" will surely contribute to this end.

The publishers are to be congratulated for sticking to their guns in the face of powerful attempts to suppress this book.

F. G.

Man-Hour Output: East and West

*LABOR PRODUCTIVITY IN SOVIET
AND AMERICAN INDUSTRY, by
Walter Galenson. Columbia University
Press, New York, 1955, \$5.50.*

ONE of the truest indices of a nation's economic development is the productivity of its labor. It is possible for a country to achieve pre-eminence in this or that sphere through specialization, or concentration of effort at the expense of the economy as a whole, but high labor productivity results only from an integration of basic achievements and requirements: A trained engineering and managerial corps with the requisite experience and know-how, a skilled and adequate labor supply, mechanization and rationalization of the production process, a proper relationship between industry and agriculture, national resources, etc.

That is why a tourist can sometimes be astonished in visiting the capital city of a backward country with the modern up-to-date buildings on its leading thoroughfares, or the plush accoutrements of its leading hotels, but he will not be astonished with its labor productivity: It is invariably abysmally low.

One of the advantages of a planned type of economy over capitalism is that it can invest capital and build up certain industries that are not profitable at first, but are necessary for the people's needs. But assuredly the virtue of socialist economy over capitalist does not consist in operating unprofitable enterprises. In the final analysis, a socialist economy has to justify itself by its ability to raise the productivity of labor above that of capitalism, and provide the people with an abundance of the material needs of life.

What is Russia's labor productivity in comparison with that of the United States? One must recall that Russia at the time of the 1917 revolution was one of the most backward countries in Europe, while the United States represents the acme of capitalist achievement, with its productivity at least twice as great as that of Britain. Walter Galenson, Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of California, has undertaken a comprehensive statistical analysis by studying a number of basic comparable industries of the two countries. The technical problems involved in trying to make comparisons are enormous, as industries in different countries are organized on different lines, do not invariably manufacture identical products; as statistics do not disclose the quality of the products, as the methods of statistics-gathering vary,

and information is often scanty. Professor Galenson has solved many of these difficulties in his rigorously scholarly work, but it is important to keep in mind that statistical studies of this kind are necessarily only rough approximations.

GALENSON explains: "One of the first questions asked of students of the Soviet economy is likely to be: Are Soviet statistics reliable, and are they adequate for working purposes? With respect to reliability, I should merely like to add my voice to the weight of expert opinion that Soviet statistics, though they may be deficient with respect to the techniques of collection and processing, are not pure fabrications and may be used for analytical purposes provided sufficient care is exercised. . . . After 1936, however, a progressive decline in the volume of productivity data set in, until by 1950 virtually nothing was being published which would permit the independent calculation of productivity data on an industry basis. Suppression rather than falsification appears to be the policy of the Russian authorities. Fortunately for our purposes, the worst suppression did not occur until after the war."

Comparing the two countries in coal mining, we find that in 1939, the annual output per Russian wage earner was approximately 40 percent that of the American, but the daily output was only 29 percent, reflecting the greater number of days worked in Russia. According to Soviet information, annual labor productivity in 1950 had not yet risen to the 1940 level. In the United States, however, output increased 38½ percent in bituminous coal mining from 1939 to 1950. The weighted figures for 1950 therefore read as follows: Russian output per man-year: 30 percent of American; Russian output per man-day: 23 percent. The author emphasizes that American superiority rests on better organization and greater mechanization, but is also due to the more favorable natural location of U.S. coal resources from the standpoint of mining mechanics.

In iron-ore mining, Russian annual output per wage earner in 1937 was 54 percent of the American in 1939 in open-cut mining, and 51 percent in underground mining. Annual output per wage earner rose in the United States by 25 percent from 1939 to 1950. Output in Russia would have had to rise as much merely to maintain the 1939 relationship. The author doubts that Russia was able to achieve quite this increase, as this industry was very badly damaged during the German invasion.

RUSSIAN annual productivity per worker in crude oil and natural gas stood at 48 percent in 1938 compared to American in 1939, but only 44½ percent in man-hour productivity.

Output of steel ingots and hot-rolled steel was 43 percent per Russian wage earner in 1937 compared to the American producer in 1939. Russia claimed to have increased its productivity by a third in 1950. The most optimistic unofficial esti-

mates of U.S. growth claim a roughly similar figure between 1939 and 1950.

In the machine industries, the study confines itself to locomotives and railroad cars, tractors, agricultural machinery, construction machinery and automobiles. Russian economic literature often cites the figure of 41 percent as the relative productivity of workers in its machine industry compared to the American. This study finds Russian productivity as 47 percent in 1936 compared to American in 1939 in the manufacture of locomotives and railroad cars. In 1947, Russian labor productivity was said to be below the 1940 level, and the fourth five-year plan set the goal of doubling productivity in this industry.

Russian productivity was 58 percent in 1936 as against American in 1939 in the production of tractors. In 1947, Russian productivity was still below the 1940 level.

In agricultural machinery, Russian productivity is set at half in 1936 of the American in 1939.

In construction machinery, it is set at 15 percent of American for 1939, although the author estimates on the basis of limited information, that Russian productivity probably rose quite a bit by 1950, while American productivity is estimated to have slightly declined from 1930 to 1950. For automobile production, Russian productivity in 1936 is set at 42 percent of American in 1939.

NOW we proceed to three consumer industries, cotton textiles, shoes and beet-sugar processing. Unlike many of the heavy industries, these three have a long history in Russia with large-scale plants in existence before 1917. These industries have had very little capital invested in them since the beginning of planned production in 1928. Productivity in cotton yarns stood at 48 percent in 1937 of American in 1939, and 23 percent in cotton cloth. Labor turnover was also very great in this industry in which women constituted 67 percent of the work force in 1938. (U.S. proportion of women in cotton mills was 42 percent in 1939.) The peak of turnover in Soviet cotton manufacturing was in 1932 when the number of voluntary quits comprised 72 percent of the average payroll; it fell to 43 percent in 1934, and rose again to 49 percent in 1936. It is possible that the 1940 level of productivity was reached again in 1950. There is no adequate data for U.S. productivity in cotton textiles for recent years.

In the shoe industry, small cooperative enterprises, of the size that are generally not even included in the American census, still play a considerable role in Russia. The variety and styles in Russian manufacture are also very inferior to the American products. In 1939, 236,000 workers produced 200 million pairs of shoes in Russia, while 236,000 workers produced 435 million pairs of shoes in the United States, with Russia's relative productivity standing at 46 percent. The war destroyed 70 percent of the Soviet state-owned shoe industry, but by 1950, the industry may have reached its 1940 level again. In the

U.S., man-hour productivity increased almost 6 percent between 1939 and 1950.

A study of beet-sugar processing shows Russian productivity as 21 percent in 1938 of American in 1939. The sugar manufacturing facilities of the Ukraine were destroyed or damaged during the war and required extensive reconstruction. The reported sugar output in 1950 indicated that production had been restored to the 1940 level. In the U.S., output per worker increased 13½ percent from 1939 to 1950.

COMPUTED overall indices show that during the decade 1928-1938 Soviet industrial productivity rose about 6 percent per annum, compounded annually, the sharpest rise coming in the latter five years. Our author concludes: "The guess may be hazarded that the Soviet rate of productivity increase from 1928 to 1938 has been unmatched." To contrast it with United States development, during the 40 years from 1899 to 1939, the average annual rate of productivity increase in manufacturing was 2 percent per man and 2¾ percent per man-hour.

While the Russian levels are still far below the American, the rate of growth of planned economy is unprecedented compared to the highest capitalist example, and has, to this extent, vindicated its superiority.

The Soviet official index shows an average annual increase of 12 percent from 1946 to 1950, offsetting a drastic wartime decline. (Our author's estimates are a bit lower.) The fifth five-year plan calls for a 50 percent increase in industrial labor productivity for the period 1950-55, or an average annual rate of 8½ percent. This study figures U.S. productivity rose about 1 percent per year between 1939 and 1947, according to studies based upon the 1947 census of manufactures, and possibly about 2 percent per year thereafter; leaving the comparative productivity rates in 1950 not too different from the pre-war years.

Soviet productivity, though catching up, remains comparatively low: "Contemporary Soviet industry as a whole, for example, cannot be equated at any stage of industrial development in the United States because of tremendous differences among industries. For coal mining, one would have to go back well before the turn of the century to find a time when U.S. labor productivity was as low as that of Soviet coal mining today; for blast-furnace products, to around 1925; for steel mill products, to 1900; for most machinery items, to the 1920's; for cotton and sugar, to a time for which U.S. statistics are not available. On the other hand, Russian 1937-39 productivity was above that of Great Britain in 1937 for some machinery items and for coal mining and was not far behind in many other industries."

On the basis of a hypothetical annual productivity increase of 2 percent for the United States, and 6 percent for Russia—the outside limit according to this study—Soviet productivity would stand at 59 percent of the American in 1960, and 86 percent in 1970.

B. C.

The Day the Bottom Fell Out

THE GREAT CRASH, 1929, by John K. Galbraith. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1955, \$3.00.

ONE cannot be sure what caused Mr. Galbraith, a professor of economics at Harvard with a flair for popular writing, to review at this time the catastrophic behavior of the stock market in the late twenties and along with it the ludicrous behavior of our rulers at that time. Galbraith testified at the recent Senate Fulbright committee hearings on the present state of the market, and in his remarks gave more emphasis than possibly any other witness to the possibility of a new market collapse if speculation should continue to rise unchecked.

But, regardless of whether Mr. Galbraith was moved by a spirit of apprehension or merely by the urge to fill a gap in history, he has written an informative and amusing book; one which should ring a bell in this day and age of the Cadillac Cabinet. Whether it is also a helpful book, analytically speaking, is another matter.

Economists and historians, both professional and amateur, have vied with one another for twenty-five years in heaping scorn upon the "senseless frenzy" that was the stock-market boom of the latter twenties. Yet, like all of the cruder manifestations of capitalism's contradictions, the collective folly was made up of individual self-gain calculations which made the frenzy inevitable. In a market which is rising so rapidly that one may double his money in a few months, it can be stated as an absolute law that a sufficient number of speculators will be produced to turn the market into a winged fury and eventually into a shambles. That is the nature of the economy; it places a premium on the ability to enrich oneself through the legal processes of purchase and sale. "We can count," writes Mr. Galbraith, "on some future period of prosperity carrying us on into a mood of exhilarant optimism and wild speculative frenzy. . . . The wonder, indeed, is that since 1929 we have been spared so long."

THROUGHOUT his book, Mr. Galbraith proliferates the amazingly dense remarks and predictions of politicians and professors who saw nothing ahead but an endlessly rising bull market. Coolidge, leaving office early in 1929, stamped a departing approval on the economy ("absolutely sound"), and recommended stocks as "cheap at current prices." Professor Irving Fisher of Yale in the autumn of 1929: "Stock prices have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau." In June, Bernard Baruch: "The economic condition of the world seems on the verge of a great forward movement." And Professor Charles A. Dice of Ohio State University: "Led by these mighty knights of the automobile industry, the steel industry, the radio

industry . . . the Coolidge market has gone forward like the phalanxes of Cyrus, parasang upon parasang and again parasang upon parasang."

But, as emerges clearly from Galbraith's book, such well-publicized inanities have obscured the fact that among high governmental and business circles there was much concern, and a pretty widespread realization that things were headed for trouble. Those who worried, however, were confronted by the choice of doing nothing or else undertaking measures which would collapse the boom a little earlier, with no guarantee that they could stop things where they wanted them, and with no assurance that they wouldn't do serious damage to the entire economic position of the country. In other words, about the only remedy available to those in an authoritative position was to bring on the collapse artificially a little sooner than it would come naturally, and in addition fix the onus clearly upon themselves. Is it any wonder that they kept silent, or took measures only to make sure that they wouldn't be blamed when the bubble finally did burst?

It is this feature of preventive medicine in boom times that causes Mr. Galbraith to worry—insofar as his rather flippant and jocular attitude can be called worrying—about a future repetition: "Booms, it must be noted, are not stopped until after they have started. And after they have started the action will always look, as it did to the frightened men in the Federal Reserve Board in February 1929, like a decision in favor of immediate as against ultimate death. As we have seen, the immediate death not only has the disadvantage of being immediate but of identifying the executioner." At the time when Galbraith completed this book, apparently towards the very end of 1954, he described the present stock boom as still not more than "a pale imitation of 1929." "Yet," he adds, pointing to various complacent actions and attitudes of administration spokesmen, "for

the person who loves history and yearns to see it repeated, there is encouragement."

MR. Galbraith's previous book, "American Capitalism, the Concept of Countervailing Power," had an odor of "new era capitalism" about it; it found the system stronger than ever and pitched a bit of good-humored ridicule at the businessman's own fear that "private capitalism is inherently unstable"—a fear for which Galbraith found little justification. In fact, should we dive once again into an economic crisis, it would not be too difficult for the historian of the future to select a few quotations from Galbraith to place alongside the smug reassurances of *Fortune* and Secretary Humphrey.

This new book is far more guarded. It allows that capitalism may be endowed with "inherent contradictions," at times it even seems to indulge an anticipatory gloating over the future discomfiture of the self-assured prophets of the present. True, the present book in the main holds to the orthodox line of insistence that the economy and the governmental machinery have changed enough in the past quarter-century to make a basic difference. But interspersed with such commonplaces there is a definite air of insecurity.

Partly this change in tone is due to the nature of the material under consideration. No historian can write at length about the absurdities of 1929-type complacency without being impelled into journalistic caution in his own remarks about the present; it would never do to risk becoming another Professor Irving Fisher even while ridiculing him. But there is more to Galbraith's new air. It is unquestionably a reaction—not limited to him alone—to two years of the General Motors administration, two years seemingly devoted to proving that a federal administration can duplicate, in the main, the actions and attitudes of a Coolidge or a Hoover in the face of economic trouble in spite of the experience of 1929.

It is this that has many of the Galbraith-type Keynesians concerned. The worry is this: With the stimulus of a constantly rising war budget removed and the conditions in the non-governmental portion of the economy more and more resembling those of 1929, will trouble of one kind or another really be averted?

H.B.

Old and New

THE DARK CHILD, The Autobiography of an African Boy, by Camara Laye. The Noonday Press, New York, \$2.75.

THIS is a moving account of the author's life as a young African boy, the son of a blacksmith of Kouroussa, in the interior of French Guinea. Followers of the Moslem religion, they are descendants of a Sudanese people who had carried on a rich trade with Morocco, Egypt and Portugal hundreds of years ago.

One gathers that the daily lives of the people of Camara Laye's tribe are carried on in a communal fashion, allowing the people to preserve their traditional proud dignity. The part of the country he comes from seems blessed with a lack of gold, diamonds or raw materials that would entice imperialism to break into and break up the communal farms or the self-sustaining economy of the compound. They maintain their culture and customs, some derived from their tribal ancestors of hundreds of years ago, mingled with the Mohammedan practises. So he describes the snake worship, polygamy, the secret rites of circumcision, etc.

It was only when, at 15 years of age, he left the compound for the coastal city of Conakry that he began to come across the impact of French colonialism on African tribal life.

He went to a technical high school which gave him a general education and taught him a trade. When he was offered a scholarship to go to Paris to study engineering, he left French Guinea. This book was written in Paris, after he had been away from his home for several years, unable to return because of lack of money. He worked in a factory by day and wrote the book at night.

This is not a book of revolt, nor of protest. It is a simple account of a boy's life. This boy was a fortunate one. His family were artisans, clerks, railroad workers, farmers, and they succeeded in seeing to it that he had an education. Yet, he is in the grip of that same conflict described by Richard Wright in "Black Power," the story of the Gold Coast. This is the conflict of the men and women who have been rooted out of their tribal existences, beliefs and customs, and thrust into the twentieth century, the white man's civilization. But they are treated as second-class citizens, and, no matter how many of the appurtenances they acquire, until they achieve the right to order their lives in their own way and to fuse the old and new as they see fit, this conflict will exist.

M.B.



New Yorker

"It's such a little country. Couldn't we counteract Communism by just giving everyone a few shares of General Motors?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Honest Leadership

There is one question about socialism I have never heard satisfactorily answered. How are you going to keep the leadership honest and responsive in a socialist government? I've heard about the new moral climate and the removal of incentive for corruption but there would still remain the desire for power, it seems to me.

Would enjoy reading your reactions to the selection of "On the Waterfront" as an Academy Award winner. Maybe I'm in error, but it seemed to me that the plot contained huge distortions in motivation merely to serve the status quo of unionism.

Thank you for your efforts to explain a most complex subject. I'm gradually becoming educated. Renew my subscription for another year.

F. W. C. San Bernardino, Cal.

Trends in Soviet Music

As a more recent reader of the *American Socialist*, your article on Soviet art has just come to my attention ["A Drama with Conflict," June 1954], and I would like to make a few comments on the question of music in the USSR, which was only lightly touched by Mr. Gross.

The problem of Soviet music has been much discussed since the Communist Party initiated the widespread criticism of "bourgeois formalism" in 1948. The basic presumption is that music has some kind of objective meaning—thus, rhythm and melody may be derived from internal physiological processes, or from the inflections of speech, and so-called "absolute music" may draw on more stereotyped forms, such as liturgical, folk and program music. All of this merely means that music, like every art, rests on economic, social and even biological substrata, and that it communicates in socially conditioned ways.

Once this kind of approach is accepted, demands can be made upon the composer. His music must inspire the people, and not be a mere technical exercise. It must be in harmony with the culture. The composer is thus entrusted with social obligations.

The 1948 criticisms of the composers by the politicians were along that line: not enough works dealing with contemporary problems, not enough of a kind which peoples' choral organizations could perform, children's music was not sufficiently emphasized, and last but not least, people preferred Tchaikovsky to Shostakovich.

Some of these criticisms were legitimate, but there were important errors made by the critics. It was forgotten that the material conditions simply did not exist to make for the intimate familiarity between the composer and the people. It was also forgotten that one cannot turn the clock

back in music. Though Tchaikovsky was a great composer, anyone who sounds like him today is bound to be dull. What is more, a hack can do just as good a job of sounding like Tchaikovsky as the greatest composer. Thus the essence of the criticism was reactionary.

Nevertheless, some remarkably good efforts to follow instructions were made. Shostakovich's "Song of the Forest," dealing with the gigantic reforestation project, has been performed by choral groups throughout the Soviet Union, and probably inspired a good deal of feeling about reforestation, but that sort of thing is no substitute for original, inspired creation. One might, in fact, point out that Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" and "Alexander Nevsky," written in the thirties, do the same job for their themes in music that is likely to be remembered for a long time. Not only had there been no musical improvement, but the tremendous number of "politically correct" works written by hacks became tedious to the people, for they were but poor imitations of Tchaikovsky or of their own folk music.

As Aram Khachaturian pointed out in the article he wrote last year for *Soviet Music* (the same which you quoted at length in your article), even the narrower goals of the 1948 policy were not achieved. The people found their home-grown music superior to the hot-house variety fed to them, and the label "culture" did not sweeten the taste.

The only work composed after the Khachaturian article calling for "bold and daring" musical works with which I personally am familiar is Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony. Here one may listen to Shostakovich's natural style, seriously applied and artfully constructed. While I do not consider it one of the great masterpieces of musical literature, it has the virtue of originality. This would seem to mean that some of the 1948 errors are being corrected.

What about the future? It does not lie with the fads that have overtaken Western music, such as twelve-tone music, nor does it lie in a return to the nineteenth century. The twentieth century has produced two socialist titans: Bartok and Prokofiev, but the great music of today must be as different from them as they were from Moussorgsky and Beethoven.

F. W. Chicago

More Effective Vehicle

Your little article "What's Cooking with Gas?" [March 1955] was so good that when the local paper carried the first half-page ad of the "Oregon State Natural Gas Committee" or whatever they call themselves, I adapted your article and used it almost verbatim as a letter to the editor. It drew blood, as the enclosed reply from an

industry representative shows. I am sending an answer. . .

The *American Socialist* is very good and easy to read, although I sometimes think some articles could be longer and more exhaustive. But the reception it seems to be having seems to indicate that it is probably a better and more effective vehicle for ideas by being less exhausting through being less exhaustive.

S. M. Oregon

Can't Equal '29 Record

The article on the depression ["Spotlight on the Stock Market," April 1955] makes a parallel with 1929, but it seems to me that the next depression will not be quite so bad. In the twenties, the government and financiers did about all the fool things that were possible to make the depression worse and last longer. They cannot equal that record now. . . .

Economists still have the idea that giving the rich more money will stimulate investment. They ought to know better. Too much idle money is what makes depressions. The trouble is that private economy is a different thing from the public welfare, and our economists are the private kind.

With regard to unions and socialism: The socialist party must welcome all comers, without regard to their attitude toward unions. A large proportion of the unionized skilled workers are now as prosperous as they would be with a fair division of the products of labor. It cannot be said that they have nothing to lose but their chains. It is those outside the unions who need socialism most, and propaganda should be directed to them. They stand to win by socialism, in a material way.

To the more prosperous members of the community the appeal should be made to their sense of justice and love for their neighbors. . . .

A. C. Pennsylvania

Quite a Magazine

Your recent issue is fine, especially revealing is the article on the oil-soaked pirates in Iran ["The Iranian Oil Grab," by Harvey O'Connor, April 1955]. If you but knew it, you are getting out quite a magazine. I enclose a check for a bound copy of Volume 1.

M. W. Iowa

Better than Ever

I am enclosing two subscriptions, for myself and a friend.

I know that there are many socialists in this state and in Tacoma and Seattle. I am quite sure that an effective and working organization can be achieved here. I was a member of the Socialist Party years ago, had an active part then in organizational work and as editor of a couple of socialist papers. I am sure that the new party will go over better than ever.

E. L. C. Tacoma

Message to Unionists

IN this issue, we publish two important reports on the two biggest unions of the CIO: the auto and steel unions. Although many periodicals have reported the events recorded here, we pride ourselves that both of these articles, from the analytic point of view, are better designed for extracting the essential meaning of recent developments than anything we have seen elsewhere.

If there is any one thing upon which the entire Left must agree, it is that the future of American socialism—and of the American nation, in the last analysis—lies with labor. Social awakening and the development of a new and militant movement of progress can only come from an evolution of the labor movement in a leftward direction.

Thus it is clear that it is more important to understand the U.S. labor movement than any other single facet of American society. Also, that it is more important to reach workers with a socialist analysis—especially thinking and militant union workers—than any other social group. The Left can surrender the trade unions to their present backwardness only at the peril of ensuring its own demise.

Quite a few thinking workers in all of the basic unions are already reading the AMERICAN SOCIALIST. But the job is to reach more. Won't you send a few subscriptions to unionists with whom you are acquainted, so that a socialist analysis can be spread more widely throughout labor?

Do it today.

NEW YORK READERS:

The spring lecture series of the AMERICAN SOCIALIST in New York features two lectures on the U.S. economy today. Harry Braverman will speak on Friday, May 13, on "The Permanent War Economy," and Friday, May 20, on "Automation and Labor."

Don't fail to come and bring a friend. Both lectures will be at 863 Broadway (near 17th Street), New York. Starting time is 8 p.m.; there will be opportunity for questions and discussion; refreshments served. Contribution: 50 cents.



DETROIT READERS:

Be sure to be on hand to hear Bert Cochran speak at the Detroit Labor Forum, on the topic: "The Next Ten Years." This survey of prospects and trends will be of great interest to every worker, active unionist, liberal.

The Detroit Labor Forum meets at 2515 Woodward Avenue. Bert Cochran will speak on Saturday, May 14, at 8 p.m. Questions and discussion.

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