

# LABOR ACTION

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FIVE CENTS

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## THE FIRST MASS WORKERS' REVOLTS IN SATELLITES SHAKE THE RUSSIAN POWER



### Defi by Einstein

While Eisenhower declaimed against book-burning at the same time that his State Department was applying the match, Dr. Albert Einstein also issued a statement on the pall of fear over the country. We mention the two in the same breath for contrast.

Einstein's letter—written to a school-teacher, facing dismissal for a six-year-old lecture in a Board of Education course on "Techniques of Intercultural Teaching," who refused to answer questions about his political affiliation "on principle"—was a masterpiece of direct statement, in this day when even the queasiest expressions of anti-McCarthyism take some courage in the case of people who have a great deal to lose. What he wrote speaks for itself:

"The problem with which the intellectuals of this country are confronted is very serious. The reactionary politicians have managed to instill suspicion of all intellectual efforts into the public by dangling before their eyes a danger from without. Having succeeded so far, they are now proceeding to suppress the freedom of teaching and to deprive of their positions all those who do not prove submissive, i.e., to starve them.

"What ought the minority of intellectuals to do against this evil? Frankly, I can

(Turn to last page)

By HAL DRAPER

The first workers' revolts on a mass scale have exploded against the Russian totalitarian power in the satellites—in East Berlin and the surrounding area of East Germany, and in Czechoslovakia.

That is already clear from the reports of the first two days of the unarmed uprising in the Russian sector of Berlin, no matter what happens in sequel. Like a brilliant gleam of light in the gathering darkness of the post-war years, the rising of the German working class has already shattered myths and shamed despair. It has already answered a host of questions that had been posed by those who became panicky-stricken before the seemingly invincible strength of Stalinist tyranny.

These June days may well go down in history as the beginning of the workers' revolution against Stalinism—the beginning, in the historical view, quite apart from any over-optimistic predictions about the immediate aftermath to be expected from this action itself.

*Is the Iron Curtain empire monolithic? Have the workers of East Europe been so duped by Stalinism as to become cowed creatures, hypnotized, straitjacketed by the Stalinist "mystique"? Has the working class lost its revolutionary dynamism? Is the Russian power so solid, or all-intimidating, within that there is no hope of stopping its menace except by Western military might and the third world war?*

**The German working class has given an answer, and it is the answer we independent Socialists have looked to.**

In the midst of the shabby maneuverings of the two war camps in Korea, which at its best will bring an inconclusive truce to a futile war, a truce which we are yet constrained to welcome and do welcome, in the midst of a seemingly endless picture of deepening reaction in the whole world—the revolt in Germany represents a massive intervention on the stage of world events by a revolutionary working class, which alone points to a progressive future for humanity.

Beginning as a spontaneous, peaceful mass demonstration against the latest speedup decree increasing work norms, in 24 hours it necessarily became a battle with the real power in the country, the Russian troops. Beginning as a movement for economic demands, it was at bottom, and quickly became overtly, a political demonstration.

Five hours after it began at 9 a.m.

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## Eisenhower Makes a Speech But 'Bookburning' Goes On

By GORDON HASKELL

The widespread opposition to the rash of "book-burning" which has become a feature of the attack on the freedoms of the American people appears to have received support from no less a personage than President Eisenhower. In an unprepared, off-the-cuff speech to the graduating class at Dartmouth College, Eisenhower had the following to say:

"Don't join the book-burners. Don't think you are going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed.

"Don't be afraid to go to your library and read every book as long as any document does not offend your own sense of decency. That should be the only censorship.

"How will we defeat communism," the president continued, "unless we know what it is—what it teaches—why does it have such an appeal for men—why are so many people swearing allegiance to it?"

"It's almost a religion, albeit one of the nether religions. Now we have to fight it with something better, not try to conceal the thinking of our own peoples.

"They are part of America and even if they think ideas that are contrary to ours they have a right to them, a right to record them and a right to have them in places where they are accessible to others.

"It is unquestioned or it is not American."

(Turn to last page)

### Without Quote Marks

The words "book burning" need not be placed in quotation marks, as far as the State Department is concerned.

At a press conference on June 15 Secretary of State John Foster Dulles admitted that at least eleven books had literally been burned by Information Service libraries in the wake of the McCarthy investigations of a few months ago. Dulles claimed not to know the titles of the books, nor would he identify the places where they were burned, although it appears that Sidney, Australia, and Singapore are at least two of them.

In the course of questioning by reporters, Dulles indicated that he "agrees" with Eisenhower's speech on book-burning, but claimed to interpret it only in the most narrow and literal meaning of the words. He in no way retreated from the position that books would continue to be weeded out of overseas libraries, but only indicated that the department will use more "common sense" in the future in its directives to librarians. Many overseas librarians had been left in doubt, he indicated, as to what to exclude from the shelves.

In the meantime, a survey by the New York Times of college libraries over the country shows that in many of them the works of Marx, Lenin and other "controversial figures" remain on the shelves. Most Catholic colleges, of course, keep such books under lock and key and make them available to students only on specific assignment from their professors. This is in line with accepted Catholic doctrine which prohibits the reading of books placed on an "index" by the church.

## ISL Wire to President on Rosenbergs

The following telegram was sent to President Eisenhower by the chairman of the Independent Socialist League on behalf of the organization, joining with millions of anti-Stalinist socialists and democrats in the United States and all over the world in protesting the death sentence for the Rosenbergs and demanding executive clemency for them.

LABOR ACTION goes to press before the date set for the execution. By the time it is received by our readers, either they will have been executed as part of America's "tough" policy in the cold war, or world public opinion will have restrained the hands of the execution.

For an extended discussion of the issue, see LABOR ACTION's editorial on the case in our January 19 issue.

**ALL APPEALS FOR CLEMENCY IN THE ROSENBERG CASE HAVE BEEN REJECTED. THE LIFE OR DEATH OF THE ROSENBERGS IS NOW IN YOUR HANDS, MR. PRESIDENT. AS AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS BEEN UNCOMPROMISING IN ITS STRUGGLE AGAINST STALINISM SINCE ITS INCEPTION, WE ASK THAT YOU COMMUTE THEIR SENTENCE. AS SOCIALISTS WE CAN ASK NO LESS THAN THAT. WE CONSIDER THE DEATH SENTENCE AN OUTRAGE BOTH AGAINST THE HUMANITARIAN AND POLITICAL INTERESTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. TO EXECUTE THE ROSENBERGS IS A CRIME COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE AND A DISGRACEFUL APING OF STALINIST METHODS. IT ENCOURAGES A KNOW-NOTHING CHAUVINISM AND HYSTERIA THROUGHOUT THE LAND; IT GIVES WORLD-WIDE STALINISM AN EFFECTIVE WEAPON, EVEN THOUGH THE DEATH SENTENCE IS CHARACTERISTIC OF ITS PROCEDURES. WE THEREFORE JOIN WITH MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO LOVE TRUTH, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM IN URGING CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS.**

MAX SHACHTMAN, CHAIRMAN, INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST LEAGUE



## NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

# Schemes for Peace in Steel and Auto— 8½ Cents and a Good Feed for Senators

By BEN HALL

Steel has followed auto in reaching a peaceful settlement of union wage demands. Major steel producers granted the United Steelworkers an increase of 8½ cents per hour and agreed to wipe out wage differentials between North and South by July 1954. But the union demand for the establishment of a joint committee to "study" the problem of a guaranteed annual wage was rejected.

On small incidents like the amicable settlement of these contract negotiations, ephemeral philosophies of labor are concocted.

Last month, in accepting the Vermilye Medal for industrial statesmanship (founded by a former vice-president of the National City Bank), Benjamin Fairless, chairman of the board of U. S. Steel, called for peaceful relations between labor and capital "based on mutual confidence and understanding." As productivity rises, he said, industry would be happy to raise wages. "But the tragic truth in America today is that industry's capacity to pay could be greatly increased if it were not for strikes and slow-downs. . . ."

A novel thought deserving of a medal. As every worker knows, if unions rejected strikes, wages would zoom upward. For some reason that escapes us, this philosophy is supposed to be treated with respect because Fairless has just invested in 8½ cents worth of mutual respect.

His philosophy does not yet cover the guaranteed annual wage, which may have to be incorporated in it by a strike in 1954.

And since 8½ cents cannot but create waves of deep thinking about our social system, David J. Macdonald, president of the steel union, reflects, "I am happy that we were able to resolve our problems over the collective-bargaining table. That is the American system—and I like the American system." If a struggle is necessary for the guaranteed wage, he will have to decide which is more a part of the American system: friendly talks around the table or a strike for the new demand.

## THE REAL ANGLES

It might be comforting to ascribe the peaceful settlement to profound social causes and enlightened statesmanship but life is disappointing. The real factors include the following:

(1) Steel production is at a high figure and still backlog orders jam the books and cannot be quickly filled. In this circumstance, steel corporations want to avoid strikes.

(2) The companies are anxious to soften labor's attitude toward the Republican administration in its first period and to give Eisenhower every chance to entrench himself. As the *New York Times* puts it: the companies want "to convince the new union chief [Macdonald] that the companies did not intend to use . . . the ending of New Deal rule in Washington as an excuse for seeking to undermine the union and force it into another costly strike."

(3) David J. Macdonald has just assumed the presidency of the union. The companies desire to bolster his power, give him a chance to create a strong regime so that the union may be free of wild-cat, maverick tendencies. This is confirmed by reports in the *Times* and in *Business Week*.

(4) Price increases are guaranteed and the wage increase affords the usual opportunity to blame it on labor and wages. "The suddenness of the settlement caught company price calculators unprepared and they began a feverish weekend to figure out what increases the higher pay would entail in steel prices."

This spectacle of price men rushing to their slide rules and logarithm tables is a bit exaggerated. Price increases were decided on long before wage negotiations began and were certain to come whether a wage increase was granted or not. Only the timing of the increase was involved.

" . . . even if there were no increase given on wages," wrote *Business Week* three weeks ago "there will probably be some jacking up of base prices for steel products. That certainly will be the case if the demand for steel has not slackened off. . . . Steelmakers feel they were gypped by Uncle Sam last year when they didn't get so big a price increase approved as they wanted."

## The Way to a Senator's Heart

Speaking of peace plans, watch the front pages of your favorite comic book for reports of a sensational new scheme.

A private dinner was arranged for senators at a hotel in Washington, D. C. and all senators except Joe McCarthy and Pat McCarran were invited. Vice-President Nixon, who was asked to come, was there, as were about one-third of the senators, including many bitter foes of the labor movement.

The official host was the CIO. Walter Reuther told them, "We want to know you better and you want to know us better." It was all very friendly. This be-kind-to-senators day, to take its cherished place in American folkways with Mother's Day, is to be followed by a dinner for representatives.

It is all part of a brand-new strategy for winning friends and influence for the CIO in Congress. If it succeeds, labor's road will be strewn with rose petals.

For many years now, the labor movement has struggled on picket lines and has fought in elections to advance its program. The CIO has outlined a broad social platform, appealed to workers and to all common people for a mighty crusade to advance the cause. It has bitterly opposed opponents of progress in Congress and sought, in many cases unsuccessfully, for their defeat.

The scars of battle are to be healed and the resentments created in the struggle dissipated by old-fashioned good-fellowship. Tragedy it is that this idea was never devised before and all the fuss and bother of the past avoided!

The aftermath of the 1952 elections sees the Eisenhower administration and

the big corporations walking in gingerly concern for the reactions of the labor movement. Their aim seems to be the achievement of a period of goodwill during which they can entrench their power. They fear to arouse and enrage the unions. What holds them back is a fear that labor will begin to act in nasty fashion.

It would be terribly unsportsmanlike of the CIO to take advantage of this fear by adopting a distrustful and menacing attitude!

These dinners help to create the impression that labor is passive, docile, and willing to accept what comes.

The trouble is that this impression is erroneous. And when the administration begins to act as though labor can be ignored, it will discover what Truman discovered during labor's walkout from all war boards: if the unions are compelled to fight, they will fight.

## Leads on Tresca Case Fizzle Out

NEW YORK, June 10—There is no evidence in the district attorney's office that Carlo Tresca, anti-totalitarian editor, was killed "by a Communist thug, who, in turn was murdered in the Balkans." Nor has that office any evidence that Tresca was "killed on Mussolini's orders by the Mafia, with \$300,000 being paid for the murder."

Norman Thomas, head of the Tresca Memorial Committee, announced today that he had received this negative but specific information from Alexander Herman, assistant district attorney in charge of the Homicide Bureau. It came because of a letter sent by Thomas to District Attorney Frank S. Hogan asking confirmation or refutation of those opposing charges, lately publicized by television and the printed page.

Commissioner Monaghan wrote: "As far as this department is concerned, the Tresca case is carried as an open and active homicide. In view of the foregoing and in accordance with the established policy of this department, under no circumstances can any information be divulged or revealed in connection therewith."

So the Tresca murder remains unsolved.

# LABOR'S SCOPE

## Boomerang: Government vs. Harry Bridges

By LARRY O'CONNOR

By a four to three decision, the Supreme Court has reversed the decision of the lower courts in the perjury case against Harry Bridges, president of the West Coast International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union. Bridges and two other officers of the ILWU had been found guilty of conspiracy and perjury in swearing that Bridges had not been a member of the Communist Party when he applied for naturalization papers in 1945.

The Supreme Court verdict was based solely on the contention that the statute of limitations had run out before Bridges was indicted on the perjury charge, and did not take up any other aspect of the trial and conviction.

Bridges has been the leader of the ILWU ever since the West Coast longshore union broke away from the International Longshoremen's Association (AFL) in the '30s. From the beginning of his prominence in the labor movement, Bridges and the men most closely associated with him have followed the Communist Party line on all important questions. The union was expelled from the CIO following the convention of that body in 1949 which voted to expel all Stalinist-controlled unions.

## HARASSMENT

Bridges has been subjected to a long series of government persecutions on a variety of charges, all relating to his Stalinist sympathies or membership. Before he became naturalized, he twice underwent long hearings by the immigration authorities in efforts to deport him. The final disposition of these cases was closely tied to the relations between the United States and Stalinist Russia at the time they were in process.

Finally, the Department of Justice attempted to have him imprisoned and/or deported on the perjury charges in the present case. And even now, after the Supreme Court's rulings, the Justice Department may move to have Bridges denaturalized on grounds that he perjured himself when he applied for naturalization. It appears that the statute of limitations does not apply to this type of procedure.

Throughout his legal battles with the

government, Bridges has enjoyed the support of a large majority of his union. Although most of the longshore locals of the ILWU are run by anti-Stalinist groups, Bridges and his supporters maintain control of the international by virtue of their solid domination of the field workers in Hawaii and most of the warehouse locals.

The support for Bridges in his legal battles is quite apart from the differences he may have with leaders of the longshore locals and sections of the membership. Although his Stalinist sympathies and connections are well known, the longshoremen feel that it is their business whom they elect to lead their union, and they don't want the government interfering with it. The long series of legal persecutions of Bridges have been closely tied in with attacks on the union by the West Coast shipowners, and the longshoremen have not failed to note the connection.

## MANUFACTURED MARTYR

Another reason for the continued support of Bridges by the union has been the horrible alternative held up to them by the revelations of gangsterism and corruption in the AFL longshore union. Although the Stalinists are neither democrats nor humanitarians, they are not tied in with the worst elements of the American underworld who prey on the members like wild beasts.

To the West Coast longshoremen, their hiring hall is the most precious institution won through long and bloody strikes. And until some leadership appears in the union which can challenge Bridges on a progressive basis, they are likely to string along with him rather than risk the breakup of their union and their hiring halls by the government or the AFL gangsters.

In fact, the continued government persecution and prosecution of Bridges has strengthened his hold, and that of the Stalinists, on the ILWU, rather than weakening it. As long as he remains under fire on purely political grounds (and that is all it is, no matter what legal gimmicks the government may figure out with which to prosecute him), he appears as a martyr to the longshoremen.

It is easy for him to claim that the attack on him is an attack on the union, and on the conditions of the men. And it is difficult for anyone to raise an effective, progressive attack on Bridges inside the union, as the Stalinists see to it that anyone who attempts this is immediately identified with the government's attack from the outside.

Harry Bridges has got a new lease on legal life in the country by the Supreme Court's action. It is really high time that the government stopped hounding him. The membership of the ILWU is the only body competent to decide who should be their leaders, and that decision is hampered and hindered as long as the government keeps sticking its legal nose into the union's affairs.

Orwell's personal account  
of the Spanish Civil War

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by  
George Orwell

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# Two Consequences of the Great Russian Relaxation

By HAL DRAPER

During this past week, which saw a new series of steps by Moscow continuing its "peace offensive," the American contribution toward "taking the initiative" away from the Kremlin was made by that GM bull in the Washington China shop, Defense Secretary Charles Wilson. He expressed the confident opinion that the U. S. could "ultimately" win in a war with Russia.

**This, no doubt, relieved the anxieties of the congressmen who were questioning him. But while Wilson was talking about winning the war that is not yet on, the Great Russian Relaxation—in these days after Stalin—was putting his administration on the spot in the political war that is going on.**

The Russians have announced concessions on the forms of their rule in East Germany and Austria, have declared willingness to exchange ambassadors with Yugoslavia, have taken steps to ease relations with Turkey, have made a bid for tranquilizing disaffection in their national republics by bouncing Melnikov, Moscow's boss in the Ukraine, on grounds of "Russification," etc.—They have made the major concessions which appear to be bringing a truce in Korea to realization.

Meanwhile, in the West, the U. S. is appalling its European allies more than ever with its book-burning hysteria. Its European allies, in turn, specifically Britain and France, are appalling the rest of the world with the crudest outbreak of open imperialist repression in their colonies—particularly in Kenya and Tunisia, while even the king of Cambodia flees his own land in order to take a stand against the French in Indo-China.

**And what has passed unnoticed in all of the ballyhoo in Britain and America over the Coronation in London is the inevitable impression this episode must have had upon the peoples of the Iron Curtain countries: no matter how we, on this side, may view the Coronation euphoria, with whatever distaste, to the peoples under Russian rule this anachronistic fuss over a monarch must underline for them the demagogic propaganda of their own tyrants about the political life of Western capitalism.**

## HOG-TIED

"Deeds, not words," demanded Eisenhower, and it cannot be doubted that Moscow is putting on an impressive display of deeds. It is only a rearguard action when Eisenhower banks his chips on Russia's refusal to settle the Austrian question. The Russians may continue to avoid an Austrian treaty—though they have already softened even this stand by their concessions on the Austrian occupation regime—but, Eisenhower apart, their easing-up in other tight corners is impressing the world.

It cannot be met by merely saying that they are doing so in order to consolidate the power of the new Kremlin rulers, who need a period of relaxation and "peace and quiet" in order to settle themselves in the old grooves. This is true.

But the motives behind the Russian strategy are one thing; likewise for the question how permanent or long-lasting this new-found "peacefulness" of the Kremlin may be; quite another thing is the fact that the Western capitalist camp is still showing itself dumb, blind and hog-tied with respect to taking up the challenge, the "initiative," or any positive line to counter Moscow's appeal.

In more traditional language, it has shown itself bankrupt of ideas and politics in the situation. But this is what LABOR ACTION has been pointing out for many weeks, and the past week only makes it more acute.

## THE OLD ILLUSION

All that is one side of the picture. The other side is to be seen in growing signs that the Great Russian Relaxation is sowing new illusions (or rather, reviving old illusions) about the nature and perspective of Stalinism.

There are three straws in the wind which we wish to point to.

The N. Y. Times, in its stories about the new steps by the Stalinists in East Germany, has been insistently using the term "de-sovietization" in reference to them. What exactly is this "de-sovietiza-

tion" supposed to mean? That Russia is moving toward pulling out of East Germany and leaving it to the Germans? Not an iota of fact points to this happy denouement, as compared with the reasonable expectation that Moscow's ease-up is designed to make its continuing rule more palatable.

Does de-sovietization mean that the social-economic system of East Germany will be turned back to private enterprise, from Stalinist-type bureaucratic collectivism? The same is true. And surely de-sovietization cannot have the literal meaning of the abolition of soviets, since there have been no soviets behind the Iron Curtain even juridically since 1936 when the formal soviet system in Russia itself was abolished by the new "Stalin constitution."

## DEUTSCHER AND BEVAN

The cropping up of this term all over the Times is pure fluff-headedness. But we cite this "straw" first not because we think that this staid conservative pro-capitalist organ is really yielding to illusions about "democratic Stalinism." We cite it because fluffheads pick up stray ideas like this when they are "around"—and this one is very much "around."

The term de-sovietization is especially used by the Times' Russian specialist, Harry Schwartz—who, however, also writes that it looks as if Beria is edging out Malenkov. Be that as it may, the spectacle of a "democratization" process under the GPU chief's aegis is something to behold.

Schwartz has not written "democratization." But that is the next step in this burgeoning of illusions. It will be a stronger tendency in Europe than in America, just as the expectations of Titoist "democratization" were stronger in Europe than in America.

Isaac Deutscher's new book *Russia, What Next?*—from accounts of it—presents this thesis explicitly. To be sure, this was Deutscher's tendency even before Stalin's death; but now it bids fair to have more influence.

Aneurin Bevan has plugged this thesis too (again, even before Stalin's death, in his book *In Place of Fear*). Bevan has his own angle: he has a theory that "a

modern industrialized society is bound to develop toward democratic forms of organization" and that "it will be impossible in the long run to industrialize the Russian nation and at the same time maintain an oppressive dictatorship."

Although Bevan did not develop this notion as a reflex to the Relaxation, he took advantage of the new developments (at the Paris Council Conference of the Socialist International recently) to plug it. "Stalin," you see, "was an extremely conservative man. He resisted any change that would have reflected the new conditions of the modernized Russian economic structure."

This thesis—both Deutscher's variant and Bevan's, as well as the forms in which it is likely to crop up from Stalinoid liberals anywhere—merits, to be sure, serious discussion (we would say: refutation) since it has all the earmarks of being due to make its way. The following is not a substitute for such analysis but a comment on the basic reason why, indeed, it is due to make its way.

## SOLUTION FROM THE TOP

It is a form of "solution" for so many—and so many different kinds of people—who yearn for a solution to the problem of the real Stalinist menace without having any. It is a "solution" which purports to tell us, in effect, that the "Stalinist menace" will solve itself.

And that is a wonderful consolation especially for political types who do not want to break with support to the Western imperialist camp's "solution" to the Stalinist menace, while at the same time seeing its inadequacy, futility and reactionary character. That is one reason why illusions about Russian democratization will make their way most strongly in the atmosphere of European "neutralism" and American Stalinoid-liberalism.

The solution will come from the top—from the tops in Russia, in this case—just as others looked to a fundamental break with national-Stalinism under Tito from the tops of the Titoists themselves. . . . For that matter, just as American liberals look for a solution to the problems of capitalist society from the top down (under a Fair Deal aegis). The Russian ruling class is to change its spots—and at bottom this is closely related to the liberal belief that the capitalist ruling classes will change their spots, too, if only given the right pressure.

As mentioned, this does not "disprove" the democratization-thesis, but it does indicate the reason why it tends to rise so powerfully with the aid of a minimum number of illusions and fewer facts.

# France Flounders in Cabinet Crisis but Colonialism Stays

By ALLAN VAUGHAN

LONDON, June 10—This week's *Economist* contains a short but revealing article on what it describes as "French Bevanism." In its June 6 issue, the French Radical leader, Mendès-France, is taken to task for attempting to form a government based on "neutralist" principles, as the conservative *Economist* sees it here.

Mendès-France went to the Assembly with a drastic home and foreign policy which would have recast the whole shape of France's position internally and externally. The main features of his policy were: (1) loosening of France's ties with the U. S. and strengthening of her links with Britain; (2) a drastic cut in France's arms program; (3) negotiated peace in Indo-China—this was broadly hinted at, to be precise; and (4) a reversal of the repressive policies in North Africa, in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria.

The fact that Mendès-France only narrowly missed being elected premier on this "Bevanite" program could not but lead to agitated and alarmed comment in this sober theoretical journal of the British ruling class, the *Economist*. Already Georges Bidault, in effect, returned to the old formulas for running French governmental affairs, but Mendès-France's electric speech, which fired the benches of the left (particularly the French Socialist Party, now the largest party in the Assembly) appears to have jolted the even tenor of muddle and hopeless confusion that now dominates French politics.

## CHANCE FOR SP?

It is no accident, of course, that the French SP should have taken a role in this attempt (even though unsuccessful) to steer France out of her impossible contradictions. For some months now, the SP has refused to participate in the government coalitions. The result has been a strengthening of its position—even if slight—among the working class. This was clearly brought out in the recent municipal elections.

Yet another factor which has loosened French political life has been the breakup of the Gaullists, a breakup indicating the lack of objective conditions for the growth of totalitarianism on the right. As far as the Stalinists are concerned, it seems likely that for their own devious reasons they may give oblique support to recrystallization of independent left life around the SP and/or the Radicals of Mendès-France's persuasion. In any circumstance, the monopoly of political "life" has been broken, and the French SP—including its not too vocal left wing around Marceau Pivert—has a chance of redeeming itself to an extent, or at least of making an attempt in that direction.

## LONDON LETTER

# TU Leaders Fall for Tory Wiles and Smiles

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, June 10—Between 1945 and 1952 the Labor movement treated the Trade Union Congress almost as a governmental agency. Having provoked the capitalists by their nationalization proposals, they attempted to placate the Federation of British Industries wherever it was possible to do so in regard to other matters, and so the two sides of industry received almost equal recognition.

Among the Tory ranks are some very wise birds. They realized that this country could not be ruled without the cooperation of the trade-union federation.

When they first announced their intention of returning the transport and steel industries to private hands, the Labor movement was in an uproar. Practically every single member of the TUC, the Labor Party and the Cooperative Movement opposed this. The latter two, being political bodies, felt it right to protest by every means possible. But although at the time there was talk by a strong minority of the TUC of organizing industrial strikes, the TUC as a whole took strong exception to the idea.

The fact of the matter is that the TUC leadership does not want to engage in class struggle at present. The Tories have been as courteous as possible to them in an attempt to shame them out of

taking unequivocal class action. Witness to this was the knighthood accorded to Sir Lincoln Evans earlier this year. Churchill has also consulted the TUC on a number of occasions.

The latest move in this direction is the appointment of Sir Lincoln Evans, Jack Owen and Andrew Naismith (knighted in the Coronation honors)—all members of the General Council of the TUC—to be members of the Iron and Steel (denationalization) Board. These gentlemen, in accordance with their policy of not mixing the trade unions in Labor politics, accepted the appointments.

A meeting representing 16,000 foremen and technicians of the Association of Supervisory Staffs Executives and Technicians passed a resolution calling upon these three trade-union leaders to resign "because they have joined a board set up to pursue policies in conflict with those of the Labor Party and the trade-union movement."

## "LOYAL" NATIVE

Members of the Labor Party are expected to protest violently at the latest move in the "security" arrangements in Kenya, following the arrival of General Sir Brian Erskine.

The "government" of Kenya yesterday proscribed the Kenya Africa Union—the only representative, democratic African political organization in the territory. It

will be remembered that Jomo Kenyatta, the head of this 100,000-member organization, was recently condemned by a "European" court to the maximum seven years' hard labor for allegedly managing the secret organization Mau Mau.

Shortly afterwards, the "government" allowed a Mr. Odede, whom it considered to be "loyal" (in its own words), to be made head of the Union. Within a few weeks he was arrested for the same alleged offenses as his predecessor.

It is hardly necessary, given the legal system in Kenya, to characterize the justice of the trial and diverse circumstances associated with it. Under the martial law which exists in Kenya, it would not be rash to say that the evidence on which Kenyatta was condemned and Odede arrested were of a nature which British courts would consider very unsatisfactory. Furthermore, after he was found guilty, it seems vindictive to have given him the maximum penalty.

The real and dangerous sequel to this latest government move will be the frustration of all genuine African sentiment. Even from an imperialist point of view, the blocking of a safety valve can only lead to an explosion. It will have the effect of forcing all honest Africans, both "terrorist" and non-terrorist," to feel that only in violence can their views

This can only lessen the life expectancy of the population, the British troops and British rule in Africa.







# MARXISM for TODAY

## BOOKS and Ideas

### The Planned Muddle Of Russian Economy

**HOW STRONG IS RUSSIA?** Propaganda and Reality of the Five Year Plans, by T. Zavalani.—Frederick A. Praeger, N. Y., 244 pages, \$4.00.

By PHILIP COBEN

Zavalani's book demands special attention, among the plethora of books on Russia which pour out of the presses. Not untypically, as far as the more meaty books are concerned, it comes from a minor publisher.

The author is an Albanian ex-Stalinist who received training in Moscow and worked for the Comintern in Germany, before breaking. He is now an economics writer and member of the staff of the British Broadcasting Company.

It is the subtitle of the book, not the title, which describes its contents. Its distinction is that Zavalani puts the spotlight on that aspect of the Stalinist economy which he well calls the "planned muddle."

That is, the thesis which runs through his study is that the so-called planned economy of this stultified system is basically a myth—that Stalinist economy cannot effectively plan and has not effectively planned.

To this extent, it is the thesis which has been the subject also of some recent articles in our columns. We called attention to its importance then, and recommend Zavalani's work as one of the few which offers a study of it.

#### PERMANENT CRISIS

From this point of view, two chapters are most noteworthy. (The bulk of the book is an economic analysis of the successive five-year plans.) These two are a section of Chapter 6 titled "The Planned Muddle as Before," and especially the last chapter "End of the Gosplan."

The first summarizes, with respect to the post-war period some of the reasons why Russian economy is an endless series of snarls, botches and crises. As in the whole work, Zavalani pours out an endless series of examples from the official press and documents, noting truly (as a report of the Russian finance minister put it, indeed) that "Such examples could be multiplied at will."

Zavalani does not systematize such analysis, nor does he approach it from a theoretical standpoint—except insofar as a theoretical standpoint is implied in his apparent view that his exposition proves the superiority of capitalism—but he has this side of the problem by the tail. He notes at one point: "in the state-run agriculture of the Soviet Union the farmer has been denied all initiative and must do all his work under strict direction and tight control from above." He does not systematically apply this line of approach to his material on industry, although it cries for it. Nor does he often raise the general question of the why behind the phenomena he describes. He is, however, generally aware that it is the political regime which produces the planned muddle.

#### BOTTLENECK ECONOMY

His discussion of the "End of the Gosplan" is extremely suggestive. The Gosplan was the State Planning Commission, abolished in 1950. On the eve of this change, the Russian economist G. Sorokin had written: "The unified and comprehensive plan of economic development implies first of all the proportionate and harmonious development of all branches of economy so as to avoid bottlenecks on one side and overproduction on the other, which is at the root of economic chaos." This is just what the economy could not avoid; the "planned" chaos is Zavalani's subject. With the elimination of the Gosplan, three technical bodies attached to the Council of Ministers took the responsibility. Zavalani comments: "From now on, Soviet economy will be managed as an army on the battlefield. . . ."

With all its limitations, there are few books on the Russian economy which are as rewarding.

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## British Marxism—II: From the World War to Bevan

By ALLAN VAUGHAN

### II

The Russian Revolution brought together the three Marxist streams in the Labor Party, with the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1920.

But here again Lenin was forced into a vigorous polemic with indigestible sects and factions that believed that parliamentary action was a thing of the past, or that it was inadmissible to support the Labor Party. The Labor Party, up to that time, was sufficiently loose to allow for dual membership of both affiliated parties and the Labor Party proper.

And even after the formation of the CP, close collaboration between both organizations continued. For instance, the two Communist MPs, Walter Newbold and Saklatvala, were both elected on a Labor ticket. The Communist Party itself was loosely federated, and it was only in 1922 that it was tightened up all around, in conformity with the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

There can be little doubt—in retrospect—that the CP should have entered the Labor Party, even after the conditions it laid down for affiliation were rejected by the National Executive Committee of the Labor Party. Its influence was very great in its early years, despite its small membership, because of its very close identification with the left wing of the Labor Party and of the ILP, and, most important of all, with the trade unions (e.g., the Minority Movement—the left-wing, Communist-influenced tendency in the trade-union movement).

#### CP COLLAPSE

The general strike of 1926 saw the peak of CP influence. Here again the CP was closely integrated with the left wing of the Labor Party, particularly with the Greater London Left-Wing Committee, whose secretary, Tom Colyer, was a prominent lecturer in the National Council of Labor Colleges. The collapse of the general strike, followed only too rapidly by the complete Stalinization of the party, greatly reduced its significance for both the Labor Party in general and for Marxism in particular.

By the '30s, particularly after the 1931 betrayal by Ramsay MacDonald, a new spirit had arisen in the Labor Party. The ILP, which had broken off in 1932, with 30,000 members, had moved steadily to the left. Until about 1935, this direction was

non-Stalinist. Trotsky urged the ILP to turn away from the CP and face the mass organization of the working class, the Labor Party. Later events confirmed his penetrating analysis and sound advice.

Meanwhile the National Council of Labor Colleges, as labor's educational arm, was hard at work, publishing, republishing and lecturing. Again a non-Stalinist Marxist current developed. One of the prominent men of that time was Edward Conze, a former Social-Democratic deputy in the German Reichstag and well-acquainted with Stalinist methods. Another, later on, was Len Williams, secretary of the Leeds Labor Party and author of *What Is Marxism?* (He is now national agent of the Labor Party.)

#### POPULAR FRONT PERIOD

There was much sympathy in the Labor Party for Trotsky's struggle against Stalin. A curious reminder of this was afforded by Herbert Morrison's favorable review of Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*, in 1934 in the *London News* (organ of the London Labor Party).

But the Popular Front turn of the CI recaptured the left wing of the Labor Party, the right wing of the ILP and many important trade unions, for Stalinism. The Socialist League inside the Labor Party, campaigning for a Popular Front, had a formidable leadership—Sir Stafford Cripps, G. D. H. Cole, G. M. Trevelyan (the historian), G. N. Strauss, D. N. Pritt and Aneurin Bevan. The Left Book Club, with an editorial board including John Strachey, John Lewis (CP) and Harold Laski, poured out a stream of Stalinist books which did much to build up pro-CP and Popular Front support.

The NCLC published such books as Patrick Gordon Walker's *Man's History*, J. F. Horrabin's *Political Geography*, McLaine and Colyer's *Economics*, Edward Conze's *Introduction to Dialectical Materialism*, T. Ashcroft's *What Is Imperialism?* and Ellen Wilkinson and Edward Conze's *Why War?* Most of them had a Popular Front slant.

During that period, only C. L. R. James' *World Revolution* countered the Stalinist falsification of Marxism. The prospect at that time was anything but rosy.

Except for the relatively short period from August 1939 to June 1941 (the Hitler-Stalin Pact period), the war years saw a continuation of the Popular Front period. Stalinism gained enormously in all fields, and only the ILP, with its erratic left wing led by F. A. Ridley and Bob Edwards (of the Chemical Workers Union), and one or two Trotskyist groups, prevented Marxism from being completely "appropriated." And inside the Labor Party, the closest approach to a non-Stalinist, semi-Marxist analysis of the war came from the pen of Harold J. Laski in parts of his book *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*.

#### AFTER WORLD WAR II

Altogether, with the end of the war, a new situation became apparent. On the one hand, Stalinist influence and Stalinist ideas remained relatively strong. On the other, the CP itself was pretty well wrecked in the 1945 landslide Labor victory.

Meanwhile the Marxist forces which had united to form the Revolutionary Communist Party (Trotskyist) in 1944, shortly before the breakup of the coalition government, made the mistake of (1) overestimating the tempo of developments following a Labor victory, and (2) underestimating the capacity of the Labor leadership to fulfill its election program. On top of these errors of analysis, the RCP, which had grouped together a new stratum of industrial militants with considerable potentialities, mechanically and ritualistically repeated Trotsky's three "conditions" for entry into the social-democracy as an argument against entry into the Labor Party from 1945 onwards. Above all, the absence of any flex-

ible plan of political work within the Labor Party prevented the RCP from making any important or significant contribution to living Marxist thought and practice in the post-war years.

It must be freely admitted, however, that the period of 1946-51 did not seem to be exactly a promising one from the point of view of the Labor Party left. Ward activity was at a low ebb during this period. The same goes for the trade-union branches. NCLC lecturing was hit by this apathy. And the Labor League of Youth was not re-formed until 1948, and even then on a local basis, with no right to a national conference and with an upper age limit of 21.

This was the era of Ernest Bevan, when the "Keep Left" group fizzled out again and again at Labor Party conferences.

#### BEVAN UPSURGE

But April 1951 saw the resignation of Aneurin Bevan from the Labor cabinet, and with this a new and promising period for Marxist integration opened up.

Labor Party and trade-union activity increased. The discussion and debate within the party acted as a healthy stimulant to the wards, trade-union branches and Leagues of Youth. *One Way Only* and *Going Our Way*, the *Tribune* pamphlets, and later on, the four-penny *Tribune* weekly with its new format, effected a veritable revolution in the party's thinking. Bevan's book *In Place of Fear* placed Marxism right in the forefront of advanced thought in the movement. NCLC lecturing took on new meaning.

Today, for instance, the NCLC is financed and controlled by the British and Scottish Union Congresses, by the Cooperative Wholesale Society, by local trade unions, Labor Parties and Cooperative Societies. It runs 750 classes with 13,000 students, and 200 day and weekend schools with 13,000 students each year—this in addition to its 18,000 postal students. Lectures to trade-union branches number 2000, with an attendance of 65,000. Potentially, five and a half million trade-union members can be reached via this extensive organization. The NCLC's links with the Labor Party and the trade unions are exceptionally close—particularly today. And significantly, Stalinist influence in it is extremely small.

In such an atmosphere, with the Bevan current assisting, it is indisputable that the "objective conditions" for the reception of Marxism in the Labor Party are more favorable than at any time in its history.

#### THE WAY IS OPEN

The CP is at rock-bottom, and the right wing of the Labor Party is bankrupt of fresh sources of inspiration. The ex-Marxists like John Strachey, who "revisited" Marxism in order to remove its revolutionary essence, these are discredited too. The impact of Titoism, particularly through the pages of Deijer's *Tito Speaks*, has also served to drive a wedge between the left wing and Stalinism.

And most weighty of all these factors is the present struggle of ideas and programs for the Margate conference of the Labor Party. This struggle may well be decisive, for it is now, at this early stage, concerned with the character of the economy under the next Labor government: capitalist or non-capitalist, this is now the question.

Experience has proved that Marxism can make steady progress in the Labor Party.

Of course, there are, as there always have been, the indigestible sects which stew in their own doctrinal juices, which merely moan about the "backwardness" of the rank and file, which find the Labor Party unreceptive to sectarian periodicals that represent half-baked views—but this does not worry serious Marxists who have real ties with the movement. For they realize that "No serious student who studies the history of the last half-century can deny the ferment of ideas associated with the names of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Their effectiveness in arming the minds of working-class leaders all over the world with intellectual weapons showed that their teaching had an organic relationship with the political and social realities of their time." (Bevan's *In Place of Fear*.)

This realization will become more generalized throughout the movement.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

Received from New American Library, publishers of Mentor and Signet pocket books, published June 24:

- Mythology*, by Edith Hamilton, Mentor, 336 p., 50¢.
- Your Body and Your Mind*, by F. G. Slaughter, Signet, 192 p., 25¢.
- Spark of Life*, by Erich Maria Remarque, Signet Giant, 320 p., 35¢.
- The Devil's Passkey*, by Jimmie Shannon, Signet, 144 p., 25¢.
- Wise Blood*, by Flannery O'Connor, Signet, 144 p., 25¢.
- A Husband in the House*, by Stuart Engstrand, Signet, 192 p., 25¢.
- The Snake Stomper*, by Joseph Wayne, Signet, 144 p., 25¢.
- My Life in Crime*, by John Bartlow Martin, Signet, 192 p., 25¢.
- Frail Barrier*, by Philip Gillon, Signet, 168 p., 25¢.

#### Readers Take the Floor

##### British Greeting

To the Editor:  
I am taking the opportunity of the Whitsun holiday to write to you. . . . The main thing that prompted me to write was to comment on your excellent edition of LABOR ACTION on May 5 [special issue on Socialism and Democracy—Ed.]. I thought it was one of the best attempts to adapt the program of real socialism to the conditions of an advanced capitalist country. I think it would actually be a good idea if we were to take, say, a dozen copies for England. If you could send us them, I am sure we could make good use of them. . . .

Fraternally,  
A. S.

England, May 25.



# The Martyrdom of ANDRES NIN

This is the fourth and concluding installment of a section from the recent sensational book, published in Mexico, by a former top leader of the Spanish Communist Party, Jesus Hernandez. The section we have published deals with the role of the Russian GPU and its foreign agents in organizing the frameup of the POUM and the murder of Andrés Nin, POUM leader, during the Spanish Civil War. Translated from La Batalla, the POUM's organ.

In Diaz' office—which remained closed—I found Codovila and Togliatti. Both of them looked astonished when I told them my conversation with Negrin. I did not know whether this reaction was genuine or whether they were acting out a comedy for my benefit.

Codovila opined that the comrades of the "special agency" [GPU] must have held on to Nin in order to question him, or for some other business, before turning him over to the authorities. Togliatti, close-mouthed, now recovered from his feigned or real amazement, said nothing.

On my insistence that we ought to know something definite before 4 o'clock in the afternoon, when the meeting of the Council of Ministers was beginning, he opened his mouth to say that we should not take the matter so hard, since the comrades of the "special agency" knew what they were doing, were not novices at the job and were political people before everything else. He promised to go to the [Soviet] embassy to find out what was going on, and went out to go there.

The Soviet embassy was a few minutes away from the Plaza de la Congregación. I decided to wait.

Neither Codovila nor I said anything. Each of us had our own reason to be worried. I was a prey to presentiments of the worst.

## Worried by POUM

Andrés Nin was a prize of the first order for the GPU: an intimate and personal friend of the great leaders of the October Revolution in Russia, he had worked with them since the foundation of the Red International of Labor Unions, as one of the secretaries of that organization. On the death of Lenin he did not hide his sympathies for Trotsky. He was not convinced by the course of Stalinist politics, and he expressed his disagreement publicly. A little after the defeat of the Opposition in the Bolshevik party, Nin was labelled a renegade and expelled from the Soviet Union. When the republic was proclaimed in Spain, he returned to the country. Together with the ex-Communists who had organized the Workers and Peasants Bloc, he formed the Workers Party of Marxist Unity (POUM—Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista). The organ which spoke for this party, *La Batalla*, was an anti-Stalinist cry in the stirred-up and revolutionary conditions of Spain.

The POUM was not a big movement, but the voice of Nin and the majority of its leaders undoubtedly had repercussions in some centers of the Catalonian proletariat and, above all, outside our borders. In any case, they worried Moscow more than they worried us. The moment was propitious. The war permitted the GPU to operate freely in republican Spain and Orlov's men had set up a police apparatus as if they were lordling it over conquered territory.

## The Political Motive

Raids on the POUMists got under way in order to show that both inside and outside of Russia the friends of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, etc. were a gang of counter-revolutionists, agents of fascism, enemies of the people, and traitors to the fatherland, who had to be shot in any country, anywhere; to silence the comments of the suspicious: it was not Stalin's personal phobia that caused the extermination of the old guard; the case of Spain proved it; here in a democratic country, ruled by a Popular Front, here too they were being unmasked and executed as traitors.

I grasped the political "motive" easily. What I didn't imagine—I was not long in finding it out—was the criminal lengths to which the GPU's henchmen were capable of going in the struggle against the men of the ideological opposition.

From the balcony I saw Togliatti's car approaching. A moment later he told us he had been able to find out nothing at the embassy, neither Nin's whereabouts nor Orlov's.

All my worries and nervousness broke out in anger. I announced that I would not attend the meeting of the Council of Ministers, that I did not want to be a catspaw for Orlov and Co. in an affair which had seemed illegal and murky to me from the beginning.

**"Not to show up, to dodge the debate, that would be the biggest piece of stupidity. Let's evade the concrete case of Nin and base ourselves on the existence of the evidence which shows that the POUM leaders were in contact with the enemy. Let's not make our stand on their ground; let's pose the question around the existence or non-existence of a spy organization. Once it is shown, as it is possible to show, that this exists, the scandal over the whereabouts of Nin will die down. And when Nin shows up he will already be up for treason."**

## "This Friendly Country"

From Togliatti's explanation I deduced that he already knew Orlov's whole scheme and that his visit to the embassy had not been an idle one. Nin was being held, and they would turn him over when the "affair" took on an official status. Some of my fears were dissipated. And although Togliatti's plan did not please me very much, I was ready to follow it at the ministers' meeting. "In the end," I told myself, "the courts will be assigned to investigate what really happened in this whole GPU scheme."

At four o'clock the ministerial cars began to arrive at the gray building of the Presidency.

The newspapermen accosted the ministers in the waiting room hung with musty, dull, peeling velvet:

"What do you know about Andrés Nin?" one of them asked me.

With an evasive gesture, I dodged a reply and entered the council room.

When the president, [Negrin] opened the meeting, the minister of public administration, Zugazagoitia, asked for the floor.

**With unanswerable logic and firm argumentation, correct in form, Zugazagoitia told what he knew about the "Nin case" and his comrades, "arrested not by the authorities of the Republic but by an 'outside agency' which operates, as we have seen, in our territory in all kinds of ways, without any law other than its will, without any restraint other than its own whim."**

"I would like to know," he concluded, "if my jurisdiction as minister of public administration is determined by the scope of my post or by the standards of certain Soviet 'technicians.' Our gratitude to this friendly country should not force us to leave our personal and national dignity in rags at the crossroads of its policies."

## Russian Aid as Bludgeon

Prieto spoke. And Irujo. Their speeches were an angry protest against Soviet intervention and abuse in our land. Their dignity as men and Spaniards rose up against the excesses of the "tovarichi," who, in exchange for providing arms, thought they had a right to scoff at us and even to rule us. In their speeches there was a declaration that they would resign before accepting the status of "straw men."

Velao spoke, and Giner de los Ríos. All of them spoke. They demanded Nin, and asked for the dismissal of Colonel Ortega, who was a visible and direct accomplice, though an unconscious one, in Orlov's abuses.

**Then we, the two Communist ministers, took the floor. Our argumentation was poor and colorless. No one believed in our sincerity when we said we did not know Andrés Nin's where-**

## The Revelations of Jesus Hernandez—IV

**abouts. We defended the presence of the Soviet "technicians" and "advisers" as the expression of the "disinterested" and "fraternal" aid which the Russians gave us and which previous governments had accepted. We once again explained what the USSR's provision of arms meant for our war and about the support on the international scene that the Soviet Union gave to us.**

## Concession and Threat

Since, in spite of everything, the atmosphere remained hostile and brows frowning, I gave in on the dismissal of Colonel Ortega—the sacrificial goat—for overstepping his power and failing to inform the ministry in due time; but I threatened that all the compromising documents of the POUM would be made public and also the names of those inside and outside the government who protected the spies of that party "just for questions of procedure." It was a demagogic and disloyal expedient, but I did not hesitate to use it.

Negrin, conciliatory, proposed to the council that it suspend the debate until all the facts were known and it had the evidence of which the Communist ministers spoke, waiting till the Ministry of Public Administration could give us definite information on Andrés Nin's whereabouts.

We had weathered the first storm, the most dangerous one.

Going out of the council room, Uribe told me: "You were very clever in that combination of concessions and threats."

My Pyrrhic victory gave me such nausea that I wanted to vomit.

It was another two or three days before we knew anything definite about Andrés Nin. Our Madrid organization informed us that Nin was in Alcalá de Henares, in a certain prison that Orlov and his gang used. When we raised the question with the Soviet delegation, they thereupon told us that indeed—what a coincidence!—they had just been informed that Nin had passed through Valencia, without stopping, in the direction of Madrid; that Orlov was thinking of taking him directly to the *Prison Celular* in Madrid, but that he was afraid of an escape by the criminal and chose to put him into jail at his headquarters in Alcalá pending the arrival of most of the other people arrested, all of whom were to be moved from the Valencia jail to the one in Madrid.

## Negrin Cooperates

**As Diaz and I had foreseen, the political scandal around the arrest of the POUM leaders turned into a bitter political struggle against our party and against Negrin himself. Socialists, Caballeroites [followers of Largo Caballero, an SP leader], Anarchists, syndicalists, and also (although more weakly) even Republicans, joined in denouncing before national and foreign public opinion the abuse of the rights of people and the democratic laws of the country, as well as the illegal arrest of Nin, Andrade, Gorin, Arquer, Bonet and the rest of the POUM leaders. All of them demanded the immediate freeing of the prisoners and, as a slogan, raised the question: "Where is Nin?"**

Our press unleashed a furious attack against the POUM and all of its political advocates. Nevertheless, it was necessary to give "evidence" of the prisoners' guilt in order to silence the outcry. Now it was the Political Bureau [of the CP] that demanded the documents showing the guilt of the POUMists, in order to make them public and calm the storm that had broken out over the head of our party.

One day during this time, on visiting Negrin,

# And the Accomplices of the GPU

I could see on the president's table a pile of telegrams from all parts of the world asking the government where Nin was and protesting against the arrest of the POUM leaders. Negrin asked us for a solution which could put an end to this discreditment of his government inside and outside the national frontiers.

"There is no remedy other than for the government to take into its own hands responsibility for the trial against the POUM. By giving it official status, there will be an end to the attacks against the work of the GPU as author of this 'affair' behind the back of the Spanish authorities, which is the strong point of all the protests," I advised Negrin.

"Why should I compromise the whole government in this troublesome case?" Negrin protested.

"Because at times, against one's wish, one is obliged to sweat through another man's fever."

I do not know what arguments Negrin used to convince Irujo, the minister of justice, a Basque Catholic, who bore little fondness for the Communists and was frankly opposed to playing with the GPU. But the day after this conversation, an official communiqué of the Ministry of Justice appeared in the press, announcing the indictment of the POUM leaders, together with some Falangists [Franco fascists] named by the engineer Gofin, maker of the scale-plan drawn up for Franco, a scale-plan which showed the fixed military emplacements of the capital, all of which constituted a criminal act of espionage and high treason.

**While the printing presses of the daily papers were running off the official communiqué of the Ministry of Justice, the treacherous hand of Orlov consummated one of the vilest crimes in the annals of political criminality in our history: Nin was assassinated by the henchmen of Stalin's GPU.**

## Nin Could Have Been Saved

The crime against Andrés Nin was not only the responsibility of the material authors of the deed; it was also the responsibility of all of us who, though able to prevent it, by submission to or fear of Moscow facilitated it by our behavior. Afterwards, consciousness of our complicity silenced our tongues or, as in our case, added infamy to crime. The walls of Spain were covered with questions painted by underground brushes at the risk of life: "Where is Nin?" And, in order to cover up, our Agit-Props wrote, underneath, the blood-reeking slander: "In Salamanca or Berlin!" [That is, with Franco or Hitler!]

Did the president know where Andrés Nin was confined? Did the minister of public administration [Zaragozaitia] know? Did the minister of justice [Irujo] know? If we take the testimony of one of the defendants, Julian Gorkin, in his book *Contra Políticos*, on page 159 we find the following conversation with Garmendia, the inspector general of the Madrid prisons, who belonged to the Basque Catholic party and was a personal friend of the minister of justice, Manuel Irujo, who had been assigned by the government to move the POUM prisoners from Madrid to Valencia. This is what he says:

"I took (Garmendia) aside and we held an interesting conversation.

"Fear nothing," he said. "You will get to Valencia alive. I've promised that to the government. An Assault Guard captain in whom I have the fullest confidence, in command of 50 men, will accompany you. They will be along not to watch you but to protect you."

"He showed great interest in getting acquainted with our political positions. Afterwards he told me in a sincere voice:

"I am entirely acquainted with your case. I don't think anything will happen to you people. The minister of justice is ready to resign before permitting a political crime against you."

"I asked him about Andrés Nin. He confided to me:

"The government ordered me to discover his whereabouts. Right now I am getting in my car and will stop at the very gate of the building that holds him. But to rescue him I would need a military force such as the government refuses to put at my disposal."

"Why?"

"It fears the consequences perhaps. I would have to engage in a real battle with other military forces. Perhaps you don't suspect everything that lies behind the POUM affair."

**If this account is true, the government could have rescued Nin and did not want to, or did not dare to. I am inclined to believe that it did not dare to. The more weight Soviet "aid" had in the wishes of the ministers,**

**the more Stalin's police agents in Spain acted with audacity and impudence.**

## The Dry Method

Andrés Nin, the old friend of Lenin, Kamenev, Zinoviev and Trotsky, was assassinated in Spain by the same hand that, in Russia, had physically exterminated the Bolshevik old guard. Here is how the crime was perpetrated:

Orlov and his gang imprisoned Nin with the aim of wresting from him a "voluntary" confession, admitting his services as a spy for Franco. As executioners experienced in the art of "breaking" political prisoners to get "spontaneous" confessions, they thought that in Andrés Nin, given his ill health, they had found the right subject in order to offer Stalin a resounding success.

**The questioning took place for days that went on without any night, without beginning or end, for ten and twenty and forty hours at a time uninterruptedly. The person from whom these facts came had abundant reason to be well informed about it. He was one of Orlov's most trusted aides, the same one who later was to tell me of the plan to assassinate Indalecio Prieto.**

In the case of Nin, Orlov began by using the "dry" method: an implacable grinding-away for hours and hours with "Confess," "Make a statement," "Admit," "Be smart," "You can save yourself," "It's better for you," alternating "advice" with threats and abuse. It is a scientific method which tends to break down the prisoner's mental energy and demoralize him.

Physical fatigue will overcome him, lack of sleep blunts the feelings and nervous tension destroys him. Thus his will is undermined and his integrity broken. They keep the prisoner on his feet for whole hours, without letting him sit down, till he collapses in a heap from unbearable pain in the kidneys. When it gets to this point, the body feels frightfully heavy and the cervical vertebrae refuse to support the head. The whole spinal column feels as if split into pieces. The feet swell up and a mortal weariness weighs upon the prisoner, who wants nothing except to get a moment's rest, to close his eyes for an instant, to forget that he exists and that the world exists. When it is physically impossible to continue the "questioning," it is suspended.

The prisoner is dragged to his cell. He is left alone for a few minutes, enough for him to recover his mental equilibrium a bit and to begin to get conscious of dreading the continuation of the monotonous "interrogation," which is always the same in its questions and in its callous disregard of any replies which do not admit full guilt. Twenty or thirty minutes of rest are enough. They do not give more.

And once again the session resumes. Again the "advice," again the hours without measure in which each minute is an eternity of suffering and fatigue, of moral and physical weariness. The prisoner ends by collapsing, body invertebrate. Finally he neither discusses nor defends himself, he ceases to think, all he wants is to be left alone to sleep, to rest, to sit. And the days and nights follow each other, with time implacably at a standstill. Discouragement overpowers the prisoner; his will fails him. He knows that it is impossible to escape with his life from the talons of his tormentors, and his yearning concentrates on an unrestrainable desire to be left to live his last hours in peace or be finished off immediately. "They want me to say yes? Maybe if I admit guilt they will kill me right away." And this idea begins to eat away at the man's integrity.

**Incredibly Andrés Nin resisted.**

## The Passion of Andrés Nin

In him there appeared no symptoms of the moral and physical collapse which brought some of the most outstanding collaborators of Lenin to an extraordinary abdication of their will and revolutionary firmness, to that absurd thought that "Stalin is a traitor, but Stalin is not the revolution, nor is he the party, and, since my death is inevitable, I will make the ultimate sacrifice for my people and my ideals by declaring myself a counter-revolutionist and a criminal, so that the revolution might live!" With what astonishment the whole world heard these great men of the Russian revolution abjectly defame themselves, without opening their mouth for a single word of condemnation for the strangler of that same revolution that their silence was intended to save!

There has been talk of special drugs of which the Russian police possess the secret. I do not believe in such a version. If I could not grant the disordered idea of "serving the revolution" in *articulo mortis*, I would believe indeed in the workings of certain human considerations which bring a man who knows that he is clearly lost to try to save his children or his wife or his parents from the tyrant's vengeance, in exchange for his "confession."

**Nin did not capitulate. He resisted, to their dismay.**

His torturers grew impatient. They decided to abandon the "dry" method. Now came the living blood, the rended flesh, the twisted muscles, which would put to the test the man's integrity and capacity for physical resistance. Nin bore up under the cruelty of the torment and the pain of refined torture. At the end of a few days his human shape had been turned into a formless mass of swollen flesh.

Orlov, in a frenzy, crazed by the fear of failure—a failure which could mean his own liquidation, slavered over with rage against this sick man who agonized without "confessing," without implicating himself or seeking to implicate his party comrades who, for a

single word from him, would have been stood up against the wall for execution, to the joy and heart-felt satisfaction of all the Russians.

**Nin's life was taken. In the streets of loyalist Spain and all over the world, the mounting campaign demanded to know where he was and demanded his liberation. The situation could not go on much longer. To turn him over alive meant a double load of scandal. Everyone would be able to verify the dreadful physical tortures to which he had been subjected and, what was even more dangerous, Nin could denounce the whole infamous scheme gotten up by Stalin's henchmen in Spain. And the torturers decided to finish with him.**

Professional criminals would think it through as follows: "Should we finish him off and throw him in a ditch? Assassinate and bury him? Burn the body and scatter the ashes to the winds?" Any of these methods would have gotten rid of Nin, but the GPU would not have freed itself from responsibility for the crime, since it was notorious and public that it was the perpetrator of the kidnaping. It was therefore necessary to look for a method which, at one and the same time, would relieve the GPU of the responsibility for Nin's "disappearance" and also incriminate him, by showing his relations with the enemy.

## The Fake Abduction

The solution, it seems, came to the brutalized mentality of one of Orlov's most inhuman collaborators, "Commandant Carlos"—Vittorio Vidali, as he is called in Italy, or Arturo Sormenti and Carlos Contreras, as he was and is called in Mexico and Spain. His plan was the following: to fake an abduction by Gestapo agents disguised as International Brigaders, an attack on the Alcalá building, and a new "disappearance" of Nin. It would then be said that the Nazis had "liberated" him, which would show the contacts that Nin had with national and international fascism. Meanwhile Nin would be made to disappear permanently, and, in order to leave no trace, his body would be thrown into the sea. This infamous trick would be a crude one but it offered a way out.

**One day the two guards who watched the prison of Alcalá de Henares were found tied up—two Communists who carried Socialist membership cards; they declared that a group of men looking like ten soldiers of the International Brigade, speaking German, had attacked the house, disarmed and bound them, opened the prison cell and carried Nin away in an auto. To give a greater appearance of realism to this sinister melodrama, thrown away on the floor where Nin had lived was found his wallet with a number of documents which showed his relations with the German spy service. So that nothing should be wanting, there were found also some German mark notes.**

Three questions are enough to lay bare the infamous lie embodied in this tale invented by Orlov's gang.

If the writing on the back of the engineer Gofin's scale-plan matched Nin's handwriting, why not turn it over to the authorities together with the evidence? For what reason was it decided otherwise?

If Nin was brutally tortured in order to wrest from him a confession that would implicate him, how explain that the GPU failed to spot a wallet full of espionage evidence, which later shows up on the floor of the cell, and how come it did not occur to Nin to destroy this evidence?

If the prison-house at Alcalá de Henares was so well guarded that Garmendia, the inspector general of the Madrid prisons, declared that he did not rescue Nin from jail because the government refused to give him the necessary forces, since he would have to engage in a battle with the Russians, then how could it be that only eight or ten men attacked it quietly, without firing a shot, made their way with impunity to the guards, overpowered them and carried away the prisoner?

## Court Farce

Through the version of the man who had direct contact with Orlov, it was later possible to reconstruct the facts. But the day after the consummation of the crime I was fully convinced that Andrés Nin had been assassinated. Comrade X let me know that she had transmitted a message to Moscow which said: "A. N. affair settled by method A."

The initials coincide with Andrés Nin's. What could "method A" be? The absurd version of the "abduction" by Gestapo agents pointed to the GPU's crime. Then "A," in the Soviet delegation's code, stood for death. If this were not the case, the delegation—that is, Togliatti, Stepanov, Codovila, Guéré, etc.—would have transmitted something less than "affair settled."

The trial which followed against the rest of the POUM leaders was a crude farce based on forged papers and statements wrenched out of the miserable Franco spies, who got promises that their lives would be spared (they were later shot) if they declared that they had had contact with the POUM people. The magistrates and judges condemned them because they had to condemn them and were ordered to condemn them. The "evidence," which W. Rozes had a very active part in "elaborating" documentarily, turned out so hollow and false that none of them could be put against the wall for execution (in spite of the fact that a book was published with all the documents of the alleged espionage, a book for which José Bergamín wrote the preface); some of the defendants were set free and others sentenced to no more than 15 years "because of the defendants' participation in the Anarchist-POUM rising of May 5, 1937 in Barcelona," a movement in which the POUM had never denied its active participation.

The collapse of Catalonia brought about the liberation of all the prisoners.



# First Mass Workers' Revolts in Satellites—

(Continued from page 1)

On July 16, the regime had already capitulated on the immediate issue of the speedup, withdrawing its ukase.

On the second day of the action, Russian tanks, armored cars, artillery and soldiery had taken over from the East German police, who had refrained from blocking the riotous demonstrators.

In the vanguard of the march, and apparently its inspirers, were several hundred construction workers who had downed tools, openly heading the demonstration under the banner "We Building Workers Demand the Lowering of Work Norms." Every report in the New York press emphasized the working-class character of the action.

According to the AP, workers from outside Berlin in nearby areas poured into the city to join the movement, 15,000 from Oranienburg and 3000 from the Hennigsdorf steel works. In the rain in Marx-Engels Plaza they shouted an old strike slogan of the German labor movement: "Wheels do not turn when our strong arms will it." Estimates of the mass turnout run from 10,000 to 100,000. A general strike called by loudspeaker trucks was solidly shutting down the city.

The political slogans appeared immediately: "Ivan, go home!" "We want to be free!" "We don't want a people's army, we want butter!" "We want free elections!" "Tear down the borders!" "We don't want to be slaves!"

Here, in this Eastern zone of the country where American occupation officials, in West Germany, were burning books and

wondering what colleagues were safe to talk to, for fear of the knout wielded by a man named McCarthy, here workers under the Moscow heel booed the police and Russian troops, and gathered before the government buildings to throw bricks and stones with bare hands.

A cabinet minister who tried to talk to them, Fritz Selbmann, was shouted down; and a nameless bricklayer stepped forward to shout the workers' demands at him and threaten a general strike. The AP reports that a group of workers tore a portrait of fuhrer Ulbricht off a wall and "threw it derisively in the faces of Soviet tommygunners approaching in a troop carrier."

At 2 p.m., loudspeakers all over the streets blared the order of the Russian commandant banning all gatherings of more than three persons. Gaston Coblenz reports in the N. Y. Herald Tribune: "The crowd muttered and even laughed and paid no further attention. The same reaction was witnessed by another reporter, who was in Stalinallee."

The Russians were deploying an entire armored division including T-34 tanks in addition to armored cars and truckloads of machine-guns, under martial law, but so far, seemed to take care to avoid a massacre, largely firing into the air or ricocheting bullets off building walls.

"At Potsdamer Platz on the western frontier, a leader told the milling throng to avoid clashes with the Communist German people's police. 'They may soon join us,' he said ominously." (AP.)

"... East Berlin was a city of a thousand counterparts of New York's Union Square. On countless street corners crowds of a dozen to several hundred listened while the dissidents and those loyal to the government argued it out." (N. Y. Times.)

The events in Germany have been learned in detail, and witnessed, because of the special situation of East Berlin, easily accessible from the West. Elsewhere in the satellites this transparency of the Iron Curtain does not obtain. A similar action in Poland or Bulgaria would be likely to filter through only in the form of rumors. In the case of Czechoslovakia, however, this same past week the Stalinist press itself confirmed previous reports of a mass workers' action in the city of Pilsen, where important armament works are located, on June 1. The Pilsen Pravda circumstantially denounced what it called "making Pilsen the springboard for a counter-revolutionary putsch."

In the case of Czechoslovakia, rumor passed on via Vienna had it that an American flag had been displayed in the course of an assault on the plants. That, of course, is not impossible on the part of some elements in the midst of a spontaneous, unorganized action. It is well to keep in mind, however, that it is the line of both the Stalinist propaganda and Western pipelines to claim such a tie-up. In the case of Germany, where eye-witness accounts are had, not a word in any report has indicated pro-U. S. slogans or manifestations in the course of the agitation.

Western authorities in Germany denied any connection. In fact, according to the N. Y. Times, Minister for All-German Affairs Jakob Kaiser, broadcasting over the American radio station in Berlin, seems to have counseled moderation to the East German workers, telling them not to "allow yourselves to be carried away by distress or provocation."

The behavior of the German Stalinist and Russian forces, however, belies any suspicion of provocation. Not incredible, though unsubstantiated, is the theory of some that some sort of demonstration may have been originally planned as a showpiece by the Stalinist authorities, only to get out of hand. That would hardly make any difference now.

More important is the fact that the event shows the imprint of the classic pattern of revolution in more than one respect. It may be debatable to what ex-

tent the explosion was brewing even before the last period of relaxation and concession on the part of the Russians following Stalin's death; but what is clear is that this policy of easing-up and concession inevitably had the effect of encouraging and whetting demands.

It is the classic dilemma of the hard-or-soft policy: the new masters are weak; they would be "soft" in order to appease and ally, in order to re-consolidate; but such appeasement betrays their weakness; with cracks showing on top, the masses below surge forward to take advantage of their difficulties. Then, on a higher plane, the hard-or-soft dilemma is posed again: crush the movement with a hail of gunfire, with the reverberating impact that such a massacre must have—or buy it off, with the sure danger that this will encourage others? In the last analysis, no regime has succeeded in solving this contradiction in the end.

As already indicated, no doubt the greatest likelihood is that the German rising, which is still going on as this is written, will be quelled by force or fraud or a combination of both, and a lull will follow. But shake the whole Russian empire it must, at least its European segment—shake it: that is, not overthrow it, not necessarily cause it to totter on last legs, but make it tremble from the Rhine to the Pacific. The workers of the other satellites will not remain in ignorance of what took place.

The question even arises of what effect it must have on the Russian troops which are called on to quash it, especially if it is true that these troops are not special GPU detachments but regulars.

Finally, these June days in Germany are, to us, the greatest blow against the third world war that has been struck in recent times. We are not thinking only of what it should mean to those renegades who have deserted the socialist banner out of panicky despair in the ability of the working class to deal with the Stalinist menace itself, and have therefore decided to "save civilization" under the banner of the U. S.'s atom bomb; who ask "Where is your Third Camp?" and "Where is your working class?" More basic is the perspective, of which the German workers' action is the earnest, that the power which can blow up the Russian juggernaut is the workers' revolution, and it will not do so merely in order to prop up the old system of capitalism in the world.

## SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 1

see only the revolutionary way of non-cooperation in the sense of Gandhi's. Every intellectual who is called before one of the committees ought to refuse to testify, i.e., he must be prepared for jail and economic ruin. In short, for the sacrifice of his personal welfare in the interest of the cultural welfare of his country.

"This refusal to testify must be based on the assertion that it is shameful for a blameless citizen to submit to such an inquisition and that this kind of inquisition violates the spirit of the Constitution.

"If enough people are ready to take this grave step they will be successful. If not, then the intellectuals of this country deserve nothing better than the slavery which is intended for them."

It is not necessary to be a Gandhi-ist to honor Einstein for this.

### Sociology of Sincerity

Harking back to President Eisenhower's declamation on book-burning, our lead article in this issue properly points out that we do not question the president's personal sincerity on the matter, just because his rhetoric does not square with his deeds. This is not said as a grudging concession. On the contrary, it underlines a far more important point than the comparatively trivial one of whether he is an "honest man" or not.

If the trouble with our capitalist politicians, capitalist statesmen, and capitalist leaders in general was that they were all lying hypocrites, demagogues, doubletalkers and dishonest deceivers, then the remedy would be a very simple one. It would, indeed, be precisely the remedy that liberal men-of-good-will traditionally advocate: elect "honest" politicians instead of dishonest ones, "sincere" men instead of hypocrites, "good" men instead of bad.

It would be very difficult to convince the liberal that a man must be dishonest just because he is pro-capitalist, and the chief difficulty would be the fact that it isn't true. Obvious though this may be, perhaps it has to be said in view of the ignorant stereotype that exists of the "radical" as one who denounces all powers that be as double-dyed scoundrels who beat their wives.

There undoubtedly have been "radical" soapboxers who were responsible for this stereotype. But any degree of acquaintance with the socialist viewpoint—specifically, the Marxist viewpoint—indicates that such a "radical soapbox" interpretation is the very antithesis of the socialist one.

What makes Eisenhower's tender treatment of McCarthy truly significant on the social plane is precisely the fact that he is doubtless sincere in his personal protestations. But social trends and forces are more powerful than he and his sincerity. The point is how to fight social

reaction, and the impossibility of doing so within the frame-work of the political program and movement on which Eisenhower rests.

Turning the picture around, the same goes for the question of McCarthy's sincerity or lack of it. That is, here we have a man who is undoubtedly a cheap demagogue and unscrupulous liar. But the fact that this is so has not much more social weight than Eisenhower's presumed honesty. McCarthyism is not the menace that it is merely because this SS-type senator is a scoundrel, and the social cancer behind McCarthyism will not be cured if McCarthy's personal goose is cooked by the president or anyone else, including the Wisconsin electorate.

## The Bookburning Goes On — —

(Continued from page 1)

While Eisenhower was voicing these commendable sentiments, the purge of American libraries abroad continued without abatement.

Latest reports show that among the books banned in the State Department's overseas libraries are former Ambassador Joseph Davies' *Mission to Moscow*; *Union Now* by Clarence Streit, one of the most powerful spokesmen of one of the world-federalist movements; and *Washington Witchhunt* by Bert Andrews, conservative Washington bureau chief for the New York Herald Tribune which deals with the first loyalty purge in the State Department in 1947. Other titles removed from the libraries are *The Stilwell Papers* by General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell; *Stalin* by Isaac Deutscher; *Rising Wind* by Walter White, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; *The Good Earth* and other books by Pearl Buck; and *Middletown* by Professor Robert Lynd of Columbia University.

It is reported that the reaction to this abroad has been so negative that several ambassadors have cabled the State Department protesting the purge of the libraries, including High Commissioner Con-

ant in Germany and Ambassador Briggs in South Korea. Their protests have so far been in vain.

President Eisenhower's speech and this very partial list of books purged from the libraries abroad are not mentioned together so as to make the point that the president's remarks were personally insincere. Far from it. Surrounded by the atmosphere of academic tradition represented by one of America's oldest colleges, it is quite likely that Eisenhower voiced his best, and probably most honest personal sentiments.

The important fact is, however, that regardless of these sentiments, the government agencies for which he is ultimately responsible are proceeding with their very real "book-burning" and there is no reason to think that they will now put these and other books back on their shelves.

### THE FAIR DEAL LIONS

The witchhunt has a logic of its own, and political forces are arrayed behind it which cannot be combated by noble sentiments, but only by effectively organized political forces willing and able to oppose them. Eisenhower accepts the basic political logic of the witchhunters, as shown by his administrative order which continues and extends the purge of government employees. Further, he is in the same political camp with them, and has shown that he places the unity and welfare of that camp above all other considerations.

It is clear, further, that the Democrats and their liberal well-wishers and supporters have placed other considerations above their own opposition to the most repulsive aspects of the witchhunt. Their failure to put up an effective resistance to McCarthy can be explained only on two grounds: (1) Their spokesmen in the Con-

gress do not really find McCarthyism very abhorrent. (2) They have placed their own political fortunes above their desire to defend civil liberties and freedom of thought and expression in the country. In fact, this is the explanation which they give for their failure to attack the Republican administration effectively to date.

When the Republicans won the election last fall, we heard pledges from the labor leaders and the spokesmen of liberalism that reaction could be turned back only by a fighting resistance to the assaults of the new administration on the achievements of the New and Fair Deals, on the labor movement, and on the freedoms of the people. We were skeptical at the time. There were always fewer "fighting friends" of labor in Congress than the union movement pretended, even during the most positive phases of the Democratic rule. We doubted that "labor's friends," who had proved so vacillating and timid under Truman, would begin to roar like lions under Eisenhower.

Most of them have actually been so quiet that one is led to believe they are hoping that the Republicans will go away and lose themselves if only they are not irritated by opposition. Isn't it asking a little too much of the good general to expect him to take on McCarthy and the other Chief Book Burners when most of the valiant defenders of labor and democracy have found it expedient to look the other way?

The president's words are welcome enough, but as yet they mean very little where the real struggle is concerned. If the book-burners are to be driven out of the libraries so that people with dissident ideas can really "have them in places where they are accessible to others," the job will have to be done by a reorganization of the democratic forces in this country, and not by President Eisenhower.